

# CRITICS METHODS

## Method 2



**TITLE:** *Critical thinking for survival - Stranded on an island*



**TIME:** *3 units à 50 minutes*



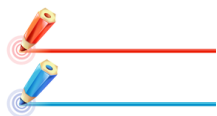
**Group SIZE:** *8 to 12 people*



### OVERVIEW:

*The following exercise is a planning/simulation game that requires a lot of critical thinking.*

*After a short introduction to the topic of forms of rule and decision-making processes, the participants have to develop a constitution as part of the exercise.*



### MATERIAL:

Projector	No
Flipchart	Yes
Printed handout	No
Other:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Map of the area</li><li>• Material to create flipcharts (pens, etc)</li><li>• Event Cards;</li></ul>

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### Additional information for trainers

According to the American Philosophical Association, critical thinking requires, on the one hand, a critical attitude, i.e. a fundamental willingness to question things and get to the bottom of them. On the other hand, it requires specific cognitive skills to be able to ask questions, to research independently, to analyze and evaluate information, and finally to come to justified and explainable judgments.

According to the 2015 meta-analysis "Strategies for Teaching Students to Think Critically" by Abrami et al., critical thinking (CT) is a purposeful, self-directed judgment that leads to interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and conclusions, as well as explanations of the reasoning on which that judgment is based.

The authors noted that critical thinking can be integrated into the classroom in several ways:

- (1) explicitly and independently of a particular topic,
- (2) based solely on a particular topic, with the principles of critical thinking revealed and explicitly addressed in the classroom,
- (3) based on a specific topic, without explicitly disclosing critical thinking activities,
- (4) as a combination of general principles of critical thinking and additional interweaving with one or more lesson contents.

This last approach proves to be particularly effective, although positive results can also be achieved with the other approaches.

Abrami et al. also explore the question of which didactic means are particularly suitable for promoting critical thinking. They distinguish between dialogical learning (various means such as teacher-centered interaction, small group work, "formal" group discussions) and mentoring/applied to teach (applied problem solving, (plan) games, simulations/role plays).

The meta-analysis shows that both dialogical learning and applied to teaching and mentoring are effective methods for promoting critical thinking on their own. Ideally, however, they are combined.

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### Preparation

All you need is a large room where the groups have enough space to work on their own. It is best to set up a few tables per group so that they can lay out their flipcharts and work on them.

You will need materials for designing flipcharts (pens, scissors, glue, etc.).

Before you start the exercise, you should talk about the following topics concerning political education (Not mandatory):

- Forms of rule (dictatorship, monarchy, democracy, ...)
- Possibilities of decision-making (majority decision, consensus decision, ...)
- What is a constitution?

### Process description

After a short introduction - as described above - by the trainer, the participants are divided into groups and the exercise is introduced.

**TIP: To divide the groups, depending on the number of groups, you could print out pictures of islands (templates can be found on <https://pixabay.com>) and cut them into as many puzzle pieces as participants per group should find together. Shuffle the pieces and place them face up. Each participant has to take one puzzle piece and then find their group partners.**



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### Brief description of the task

The participants are cruise tourists whose ship has capsized due to a heavy storm and now some are stranded on an uninhabited island.

To be able to adapt well to the situation, the trainer reads out a story (see worksheet: **introductory story in Downloading Material**).

#### Attention distress at sea

You have booked a cruise from Trieste (Italy) to Australia with your friends. But on the way, there is a terrible storm and the ship is in distress. Everything happens very quickly and suddenly there is no more room in the lifeboats for some of the passengers and you. You and some others have no choice but to go overboard and seek shelter on pieces of wood floating in the ocean. Fortunately, everyone has floated ashore and thinks they have been saved. But you find yourself on an uninhabited island far off Australia near New Zealand.

After recovering from the initial shock, you explore the island and find that water is flowing from a mountain. Unfortunately, however, the source is difficult to reach the top of the mountain. At the foot of the mountain are many fruit trees. But are these fruits edible? Back on the beach, you discover flotsam. The first island days can come.



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Afterward, the trainer hangs a picture/self-made sketch of an island on the wall, board, etc. On it there should be a mountain, a source of freshwater, an area with trees with fruit (rather undefined: i.e. no apple trees), plains, wild animals, etc.

The trainer then gives the participants the rules of the game.

**Worksheet "Rules of the Game"**

**Worksheet "Event Cards"** - The trainer gives out event cards when he thinks it is appropriate.

After the exercise is finished by the trainer, the participants gather in plenary and discuss the exercise together.

## Questions for the evaluation

- How did the participants feel during the exercise?
- How did they argue? Were they able to assert their opinion?
- What feelings played a role in the decision?
- How did the decision come about in the groups?
- Can everyone live with it?
- Do the participants find it discriminatory\* to have to exclude people?
- How do they feel about it?
- Who is excluded in our group, institution, or society?
- How does it work?




## DOWNLOAD MATERIAL:

**Checkpoint Question; Event cards; Introductory Story; Rules of the game**



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