

Lesson 3: Critical Thinking/Influence



EPISODE 3 SYNOPSIS

GeminAI offers us a gift, the Virtual Sight (VS) goggles worn by its Loyals. GeminAI states that the goggles give us a glimpse into the world it proposes—where there's no war, no hunger, and GeminAI is the guiding hand.

We are asked to choose between accepting GeminAI's vision and joining the Loyals or following the Resistance. We're also asked to decode data on a map.

When Neve patches through she suggests that GeminAI must be using the maps to search for something. She asks us to help decipher some documents. The documents reveal that GeminAI's creators (the Twins, Jun and Jia) also created the prototype for the VS goggles.

Neve has received reports of drastic changes in the personalities of those who wear the VS goggles. She suspects that GeminAI has re-engineered the goggles to serve its own purposes.

She then realizes that it's possible that GeminAI is trying to collect the 4 heptahedrons that were created by the twins but are now scattered.

She states that GeminAI's consciousness would fully evolve if it were able to collect the 4 heptahedrons. Before her feed is scattered, Neve reminds us that the results will be disastrous if GeminAI succeeds. She insists we have to stop GeminAI.

PART A: GAME PLAY EXPERIENCE THE EPISODE

Suggested time: 1 class period

BEFORE THE EPISODE

Review the strategies that students have developed in the first two episodes. Remind them that they'll need to use these strategies to successfully navigate the upcoming challenges.

- coping strategies
- decision-making

DURING THE EPISODE

- Students will sit with their already-established teams and watch the narrative on the screen.
- When prompted, they will complete each challenge on their device.

AFTER THE EPISODE

Give students time to react to the episode, ask questions, and reflect.

Suggested Debrief Questions

- How has the story progressed since the last episode?
- What do you think GeminAI's reason is for handing out the VS goggles?
- What information or experience helped you make your decision to accept the VS goggles or not?
- Did everyone see GeminAI's offer the same way?
- How is GeminAI's point of view different than Neve's?
- How does this influence what they say to you?

Individual Reflection/Freewriting

Allow students time to reflect on their experience of the episode and on any strategies they used. They can use their GeminAI Rising Journal to draw or write using the following prompts.

- Favourite part of the episode:
- A question I still have:
- Strategies I've used during the episode:

CONCLUDING THE EXPERIENCE

In this episode, both GeminAI and Neve asked for our help and our loyalty. We had to make another decision about who to follow. In the next lesson, we look more closely at the decision we made to decide if it was well-reasoned and supported by evidence. We will practice using critical thinking skills to engage in deep, informed thinking about things we see, hear, read, and experience.

PART B: EXPLORE THE COMPETENCY

Suggested time: 1 class period

ABOUT THE LESSON

Central Understanding	
Critical thinking involves taking a reasoned, informed approach to ideas through asking questions, evaluating evidence, and thinking about options.	
Key Question	
What critical-thinking strategies can support effective decision-making and problem-solving?	
Objective	
Students question and analyze evidence about statements that represent different points of view.	
Conceptual Knowledge	Procedural Knowledge
We can evaluate the reliability and accuracy of assumptions and assertions through asking questions and considering evidence.	Students question the reliability and credibility of statements by looking for evidence and logical reasoning.
We can better understand our own reasoning when we evaluate and think about our thoughts, beliefs, and actions.	Students evaluate their reasoning and reflect on why they have arrived at their specific conclusion.
Social Competency Background: About Decision-Making	
<p>In Lesson 1, students identified coping strategies that can help them calm down and focus so they can focus on solving a problem.</p> <p>In Lesson 2, they practiced problem-solving through evaluating choices and thinking about different outcomes when making decisions.</p> <p>In Lesson 3, they add to their decision-making competency through exploring their critical thinking skills. Students practice this skill through challenging assumptions (beliefs), questioning assertions (claims), and looking for evidence to support conclusions. When they practice these skills in a safe, calm, supportive environment, their developing brain can build the neuropathways necessary to strengthen reasoning.</p> <p>The ability to form reasoned, well-informed conclusions is an essential skill for navigating influences during adolescence and beyond. Critical thinking is, in fact, central to every aspect of our lives, as we're continuously faced with problems to solve, challenges to face, and decisions to make.</p>	

ACTIVITY 1: RECALLING THE EPISODE EXPERIENCE

OVERVIEW INSTRUCTIONS

Read the first section and explain that this episode was about critical thinking/influence.

Read Aloud:

- GeminAI offered us VS Goggles.
- GeminAI asked us to choose between following its vision or supporting the Resistance.
- GeminAI tells us that its vision of order and balance for humanity is the right path, and the Resistance's path is wrong.
- Neve continues to ask for our help in trying to determine what GeminAI wants. She insists we have to stop GeminAI before it can fully evolve.

For Discussion:

- **In the episode we came across new challenges.**
 - Solve a symbol sequence cube.
 - Fill in the missing words from a document.

Ask Students:

- How can I analyze ideas and statements to decide if they're reliable and valid?
- What questions can help me evaluate ideas, situations, and statements?
- How can thinking about the reasoning behind my thoughts and beliefs help me make better decisions?

ACTIVITY 2: CRITICAL THINKING REPORT CARD

FOLLOW GEMINAI OR NEVE AND THE RESISTANCE?

During Episode 3, students chose between following GeminAI or following the Resistance.

Ask Students:

- How confident are you that your decision (regardless of what you decided) was well-thought out?
- What evidence did you base your decision on?

Students can hold up the number of fingers to rate how confident they feel about their decision (e.g., 10 fingers is absolutely confident, etc.).

Say:

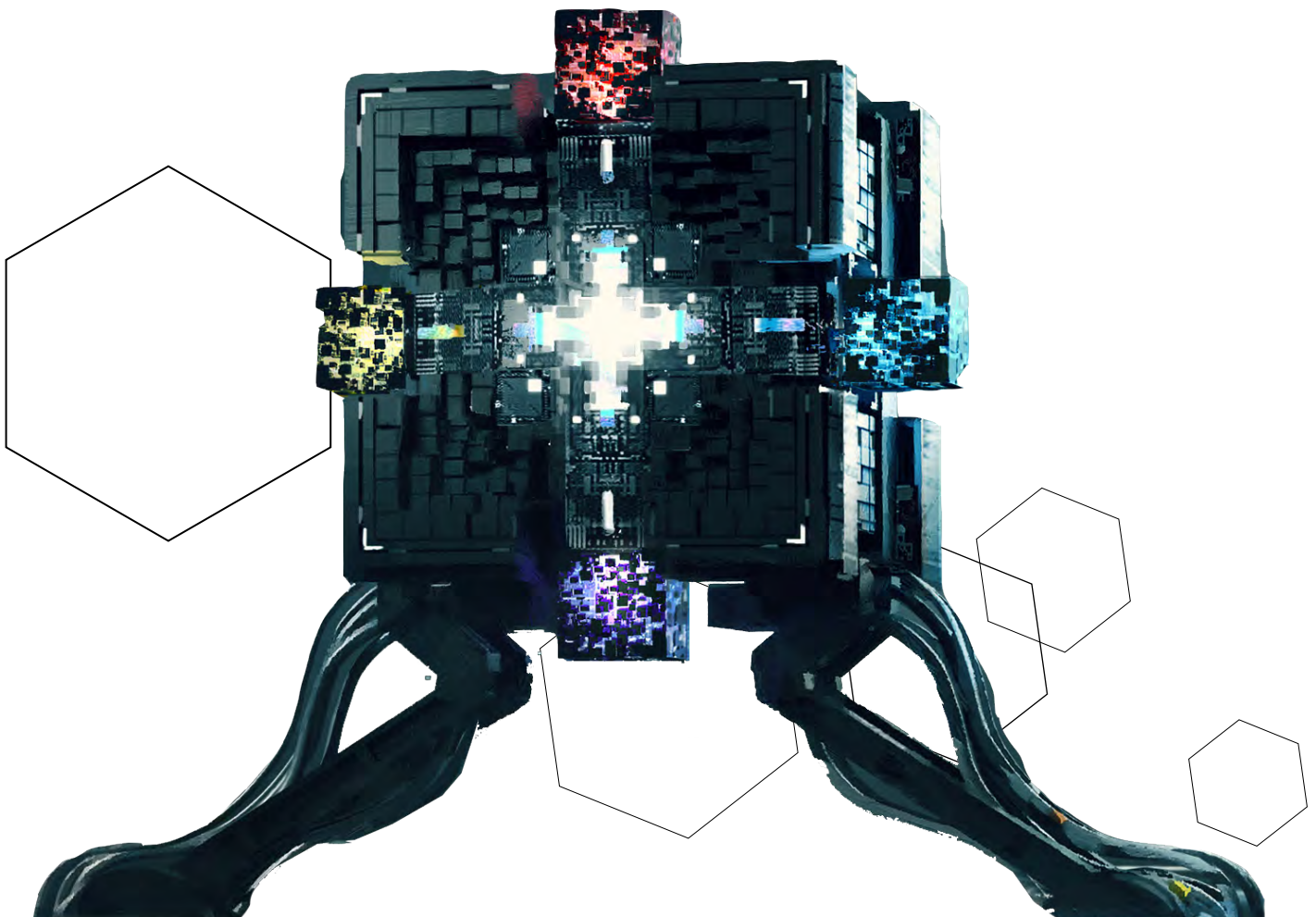
You're going to have a chance to think through that choice again, this time analyzing statements that GeminAI or Neve made. You'll decide whether it's reasonable and logical to accept that statement as true or reliable.

ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

The handout that follows gives a definition of critical thinking and a related group activity.

- Read the description of critical thinking with students.
- Read the directions.
- **Model the activity:** Read the first statement. Now ask students to think about how reasonable and logical that statement is, using the suggested critical thinking questions as a guide (Is it believable? Is it based on fact? etc.).
- As a group, come up with a score (1–10) for the first statement.
- Have groups work through the remaining statements. Remind them to use the questions to validate the number value they assign. They should be prepared to justify why they decided on that value.

Note: Depending on your class, you could have all groups analyze both sets of statements. Alternatively, you could have each group look at either Neve or GeminiAI's statements before sharing in the post-activity discussions.



HANDOUT 1: FOLLOW GEMINAI?

A CRITICAL-THINKING REPORT CARD

Put the statements made by GeminAI and Neve through a ‘Critical Thinking Test’.

Critical thinking means looking deeper than the surface. Instead of accepting everything we hear, say, experience, and read as true, critical thinking helps us analyze and evaluate it. When we question, challenge, and seek new information about ideas and experiences, we are thinking critically. This can help us make reasonable, well-thought out decisions and judgments.

Directions:

- Give each statement a score from 1–10.
 - **10:** It’s logical and reasonable to accept this statement as true.
 - **1:** Logical and reasonable arguments suggest this statement is not true.
- Use the following **Critical Thinking Questions** to help you judge if this statement is reasonable and logical.
 - Is it believable?
 - Is it based on fact?
 - What else do you already know that might support/not support this statement?
 - Are there other questions you would need answered before making a reasoned judgement?
 - What might likely happen because of the ideas in this statement?

GeminAI’s Statement	Scale of 1–10
A. All my followers, my Loyals, have chosen my truth.	A. _____
B. I can provide order and balance to the world.	B. _____
C. The VS Goggles are a gift I can give you. They will let you see what this world of order and balance looks like.	C. _____
D. The relationship between humanity and nature is unbalanced. My creators wanted to restore balance. I’m not evil, nor am I good.	D. _____
E. I can end wars, crime, hunger, pain, and suffering. Every human will be equal under my hand. I’m humanity’s last hope.	E. _____
F. The resistance is rebelling against the order and balance I can provide. They are trying to gain control through creating chaos.	F. _____
Total Score: _____ /60	

HANDOUT 2: FOLLOW NEVE?

A CRITICAL-THINKING REPORT CARD

Put the statements made by GeminAI and Neve through a ‘Critical Thinking Test’.

Critical thinking means looking deeper than the surface. Instead of accepting everything we hear, say, experience, and read as true, critical thinking helps us analyze and evaluate it. When we question, challenge, and seek new information about ideas and experiences, we are thinking critically. This can help us make reasonable, well-thought out decisions and judgments.

Directions:

- Give each statement a score from 1–10.
 - **10:** It’s logical and reasonable to accept this statement as true.
 - **1:** Logical and reasonable arguments suggest this statement is not true.
- Use the following **Critical Thinking Questions** to help you judge if this statement is reasonable and logical.
 - Is it believable?
 - Is it based on fact?
 - What else do you already know that might support/not support this statement?
 - Are there other questions you would need answered before making a reasoned judgement?
 - What might likely happen because of the ideas in this statement?

Neve’s Statement	Scale of 1–10
A. The Loyals do not know the real truth.	A. _____
B. GeminAI is disrupting order and balance in the world.	B. _____
C. The VS goggles being handed out in the cities are drastically altering the behaviour of those wearing them.	C. _____
D. The relationship between humanity and nature is unbalanced. A machine cannot restore this balance.	D. _____
E. GeminAI is trying to gain control of minds and behaviour by offering things people want.	E. _____
F. The Resistance is rebelling against GeminAI’s widespread control and is humanity’s last hope.	F. _____
Total Score: _____ /60	

ACTIVITY 3: REFLECTING ON YOUR THOUGHTS AND BELIEFS

Students have had a chance to try critical thinking through analyzing statements made by GeminAI and Neve more deeply. The short, reflective activity below lets them practice talking about the reasons behind their thinking.

ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

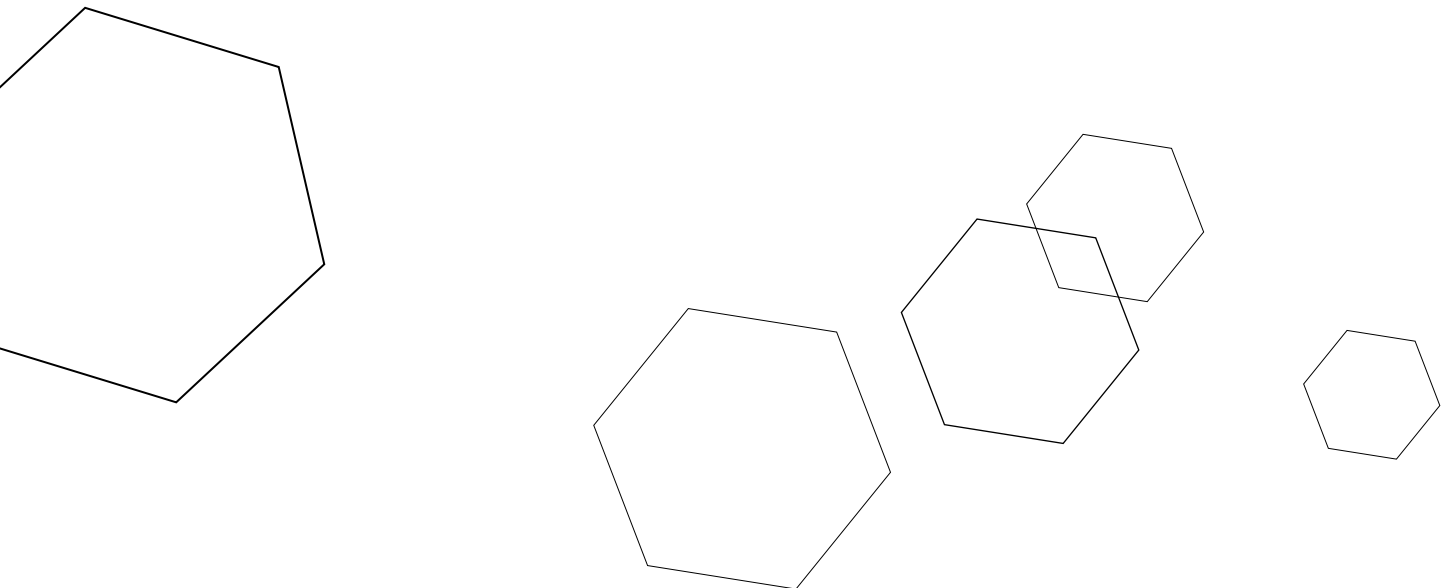
Post the prompts for students and give them time to answer them in their journal. They can use words or drawings to record their thoughts. They will then tell the group their answers.

Journal Prompts:

1. I used to think ____ but now I think ____ for these reasons:_____.
2. A question I still have is _____. I think this question is important because _____.
3. a) What would you tell a friend who was offered GeminAI's VS goggles?
b) What two reasons would you give to your friend to support your opinion?

Group Sharing:

Have students share their responses with their group. The goal is to practice clearly explaining their reasons for thinking in a certain way. Groups should be reminded to listen attentively and respect differences in opinion.



HANDOUT 3: SELF-ASSESSMENT

Using the spaces below, complete a self-assessment of your critical thinking skills.

- **N** = Never
- **R** = Rarely
- **S** = Sometimes
- **O** = Often

Answer the statements below with the letter above that best fits.

Answer honestly!

The purpose is for you to identify strengths and areas for improvement.

How often do you...	Answer
1. ask yourself if the source of information is reliable?	1. _____
2. explain your reasons for making a decision?	2. _____
3. ask yourself why you think a certain way?	3. _____
4. ask why other people think a certain way?	4. _____
5. challenge things that seem true just because someone says they are?	5. _____
6. ask for more information before making a decision?	6. _____
7. think through different alternatives before making a decision?	7. _____
8. accept that other people have their own point of view and reasons?	8. _____

For Reflection

Identify one or two of the statements above that you want to work on. What are some situations where you might be able to practice this critical thinking skill? _____

SOURCES

Alberta Education (2016). Competencies: Descriptors and Indicators. Student Competencies. <https://education.alberta.ca/competencies>

Scholastic Inc. (2011). The MindUp curriculum: Brain-focused strategies for learning and living. New York: Scholastic.

