

A COLLECTION OF QUOTES ABOUT THINKING SKILLS AND INTELLECTUAL VIRTUES

By Various Famous People

<http://philosophy.hku.hk/think/critical/quotes.php>

Plato is dear to me but dearer still is truth. – Aristotle

Absence of thought is indeed a powerful factor in human affairs, statistically speaking the most powerful, not just in the conduct of the many but in the conduct of all. - Hannah Arendt

To think and to be fully alive are the same. - Hannah Arendt

There are no dangerous thoughts; thinking itself is dangerous. - Hannah Arendt

It is a strange desire to seek power and to lose liberty. - Francis Bacon

Read not to contradict and confute; nor to believe and take for granted; nor to find talk and discourse; but to weigh and consider. - Francis Bacon

If a man will begin with certainties, he shall end in doubts; but if he will be content to begin with doubts, he shall end in certainties. - Francis Bacon

All colours will agree in the dark. - Francis Bacon

I carry my thoughts about with me for a long time, often for a very long time, before writing them down. - Ludwig van Beethoven

The aim of education should be to teach us rather how to think, than what to think -- rather to improve our minds, so as to enable us to think for ourselves, than to load the memory with thoughts of other men. - Bill Beattie

Do not believe in anything simply because you have heard it. Do not believe in anything simply because it is spoken and rumored by many. Do not believe in anything simply because it is found written in your religious books. Do not believe in anything merely on the authority of your teachers and elders. - Buddha

Reading without reflecting is like eating without digesting. - Edmund Burke

An intellectual is someone whose mind watches itself. - Albert Camus

The fact is that if you have not developed language, you simply don't have access to most of human experience, and if you don't have access to experience, then you're not going to be able to think properly. - Noam Chomsky

Democratic societies can't force people. Therefore they have to control what they think. - Noam Chomsky

To know what you know and what you do not know, that is true knowledge. - Confucius

To study and not think is futile. To think and not study is dangerous. - Confucius

Acquire new knowledge whilst thinking over the old, and you may become a teacher of others. - Confucius

Discovery is the ability to be puzzled by simple things. - Noam Chomsky

It is all right to say exactly what you think if you have learned to think exactly. - Marcelene Cox

Thinking is the hardest work in the world; and most of us will go to great lengths to avoid it. - Louise Dudley

The highest possible stage in moral culture is when we recognize that we ought to control our thoughts.
- Charles Darwin

I think. Therefore, I am. - Descartes

The most important attitude that can be formed is that of desire to go on learning. - John Dewey

We only think when we are confronted with a problem. - John Dewey

We do not learn from experience... we learn from reflecting on experience. - John Dewey

Education is a social process; education is growth; education is not preparation for life but is life itself.
- John Dewey

Anyone who has begun to think, places some portion of the world in jeopardy. - John Dewey

Genius was 1 percent inspiration and 99 percent perspiration. - Thomas Edison

Any intelligent fool can make things bigger, more complex, and more violent. It takes a touch of genius -- and a lot of courage -- to move in the opposite direction. - Albert Einstein

I think and think for months and years. Ninety-nine times, the conclusion is false. The hundredth time I am right. - Albert Einstein

The most incomprehensible thing about the world is that it is comprehensible. - Albert Einstein

Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler. - Albert Einstein

To raise new questions, new possibilities, to regard old problems from a new angle requires creative imagination and marks real advances in science. - Albert Einstein

Intellect annuls fate. So far as a man thinks, he is free. - Ralph Waldo Emerson

What is the hardest task in the world? To think. - Ralph Waldo Emerson

Be careful that you write accurately rather than much. - Erasmus

The force of the temptation which urges us to seek for such evidence and appearances as are in favour of our desires, and to disregard those which oppose them, is wonderfully great. - Michael Faraday

If you have knowledge, let others light their candle by it. - Margaret Fuller

Thinking is the hardest work there is, which is the probably reason why so few engage in it. - Henry Ford

Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young. - Henry Ford

All truly wise thoughts have been thought already thousands of times; but to make them truly ours, we must think them over again honestly, till they take root in our personal experience. - Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Irrationally held truths may be more harmful than reasoned errors. - Thomas Henry Huxley

The heart of man is made to reconcile the most glaring contradictions. - David Hume

There are two ways to slide easily through life: to believe everything or to doubt everything. Both ways save us from thinking. - Alfred Korzybski

Blind commitment to a theory is not an intellectual virtue: it is an intellectual crime. - Lakatos

New opinions are always suspected, and usually opposed, without any other reason but because they are not already common. - John Locke

You see, but you do not observe. - Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

It is a mistake to confound strangeness with mystery. - Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

Men are apt to mistake the strength of their feeling for the strength of their argument. The heated mind resents the chill touch and relentless scrutiny of logic. - William Gladstone

What is written without effort is in general read without pleasure. - Samuel Johnson

He who has imagination without learning has wings and no feet. - Joseph Joubert

The ultimate court of appeal is observation and experiment ... not authority. - Thomas Henry Huxley

A great many people think they are thinking when they are merely rearranging their prejudices. - William James

Genius means little more than the faculty of perceiving in an unhabitual way. - William James

A problem well stated is a problem half solved. - Charles Franklin Kettering

Creativity takes courage. - Henri Matisse

He who establishes his argument by noise and command shows that his reason is weak. - Michel Montaigne

As often as a study is cultivated by narrow minds, they will draw from it narrow conclusions. - John Stuart Mill

The logic of science is the logic of business and life. - John Stuart Mill

What I understand by 'philosopher': a terrible explosive in the presence of which everything is in danger. - Friedrich Nietzsche

I don't know what I may seem to the world, but as to myself, I seem only to have been like a boy playing on the sea-shore and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me. - Isaac Newton

The great composer does not set to work because he is inspired, but becomes inspired because he is working. - Ernest Newman

You need chaos in your soul to give birth to a dancing star. - Nietzsche

Only the mind cannot be sent into exile. - Ovid

Who controls the past controls the future: who controls the present controls the past. - George Orwell

The great enemy of clear language is insincerity. When there is a gap between one's real and one's declared aims, one turns as it were instinctively to long words and exhausted idioms, like a cuttlefish squirting out ink. - George Orwell

Man is but a reed, the weakest in nature, but he is a thinking reed. - Blaise Pascal

The best way to have a good idea is to have lots of ideas. - Linus Pauling

Men never do evil so completely and cheerfully as when they do it from religious conviction. - Blaise Pascal

Philosophical habits of mind do not come quicker through fiber optics. Clear thinking is not aided by better dot resolution. Understanding ourselves and feeling for others does not come with a software upgrade. - Linda Ray Pratt

All life is problem solving. - Karl Popper

No rational argument will have a rational effect on a man who does not want to adopt a rational attitude. - Karl Popper

Good tests kill flawed theories; we remain alive to guess again. - Karl Popper

Problems are to the mind what exercise is to the muscles; they toughen and make strong. - Norman Vincent Peale

If everyone is thinking alike, then somebody isn't thinking. - George Smith Patton

Science is built up of facts, as a house is built of stones; but an accumulation of facts is no more a science than a heap of stones is a house. - Henri Poincaré

Where observation is concerned, chance favours only the prepared mind. - Louis Pasteur

The artist is a receptacle for emotions that come from all over the place: from the sky, from the earth, from a scrap of paper, from a passing shape, from a spider's web. - Pablo Picasso

Thinking is like loving or dying. Each of us must do it for himself. - Josiah Royce

Not to be absolutely certain is, I think, one of the essential things in rationality. - Bertrand Russell

To acquire immunity to eloquence is of the utmost importance to the citizens of a democracy. - Bertrand Russell

To understand the actual world as it is, not as we should wish it to be, is the beginning of wisdom. - Bertrand Russell

The most essential characteristic of scientific technique is that it proceeds from experiment, not from tradition. - Bertrand Russell

Every man, wherever he goes, is encompassed by a cloud of comforting convictions, which move with him like flies on a summer day. - Bertrand Russell

We have, in fact, two kinds of morality side by side; one which we preach but do not practice, and another which we practice but seldom preach. - Bertrand Russell

We all have a tendency to think that the world must conform to our prejudices. The opposite view involves some effort of thought, and most people would die sooner than think – in fact they do so. - Bertrand Russell

The great majority of men and women, in ordinary times, pass through life without ever contemplating or criticising, as a whole, either their own conditions or those of the world at large. - Bertrand Russell

Without effort and change, human life cannot remain good. It is not a finished Utopia that we ought to desire, but a world where imagination and hope are alive and active. - Bertrand Russell

Even when all the experts agree, they may well be mistaken. - Bertrand Russell

Good reasons must, of force, give place to better. - William Shakespeare

The unexamined life is not worth living. - Socrates

False words are not only evil in themselves, but they infect the soul with evil. - Socrates

The advantage of the incomprehensible is that it never loses its freshness. - Paul Valery

Strengthen the female mind by enlarging it, and there will be an end to blind obedience. - Mary Wollstonecraft

The appetites will rule if the mind is vacant. - Mary Wollstonecraft

I must be allowed to add some explanatory remarks to bring the subject home to reason—to that sluggish reason, which supinely takes opinions on trust, and obstinately supports them to spare itself the labour of thinking. - Mary Wollstonecraft

Some women govern their husbands without degrading themselves, because intellect will always govern. - Mary Wollstonecraft

The mind will ever be unstable that has only prejudices to rest on. - Mary Wollstonecraft

And last but not least, let us not forget this quote from the Greek philosopher Diogenes the Cynics:

One original thought is worth a thousand mindless quotations.