

## ABSTRACT

### A DIALOGUE WITH CRITICAL THINKING: CREATING A THEORETICALLY BASED DEFINITION TO AFFECT CHANGE IN THE COMPOSITION CLASSROOM

Critical thinking has been a popular subject of discussion in education for years. However, when examining and interacting with past critical thinking scholarship, two problems consistently emerge—namely, a lack of definition and failure to identify theoretical roots. Without definition or theoretical grounding, critical thinking cannot be ensured to work towards desired outcomes. But, by drawing on scholars within postmodern thought, Cultural Studies, and Critical Theory, critical thinking can be defined as an ongoing activity of integrating into and dialoguing within various cultural contexts with the ability to affect individual and cultural change. What results is a theoretically based conception of critical thinking as a powerful means of affecting individual and social change that can be used to shape the composition classroom.

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