

REFERENCE LIST

Foundational Research on the Role of Critical Thinking in Student Success



Preparing students for success after graduation means going beyond content knowledge to develop the skills employers value most—critical thinking, problem solving, and effective communication. At the Council for Aid to Education (CAE), we're committed to helping institutions measure and strengthen these essential skills.

Below, you'll find a thoughtfully selected collection of research that highlights why developing critical thinking is vital for real-world readiness and offers evidence-based perspectives to inform policy, strategy, and instructional innovation.

How to Use These Resources

Whether you're shaping policy, leading academic strategy, or exploring new ways to drive student outcomes, these resources offer valuable guidance to inform your work. Use them to:

- Understand how strong critical thinking skills support workforce readiness
- Explore effective ways to measure students' critical thinking skills
- Guide strategic planning and enhance academic programs to improve student success

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To learn more about CAE’s research into the impact of critical thinking instruction on students’ outcomes, and our [Critical Thinking Skills Program](#), visit cae.org.