

Raising Critical Thinkers

Advice and Tips

Defining Success
 When we do parent workshops for school districts, a question we almost always ask at the beginning is, "how do you define success?"

No matter where in the country we are or the moment, there are always common threads between the responses. Many responses focus on social-emotional measures: being happy, having healthy relationships, and having a job you enjoy. If responses include career success, they usually include an aspect of work-life balance and making enough money to be comfortable rather than wealthy. Some responses, depending on religious beliefs, will also center on matters of faith.

But the follow-up question is where we find a little more fun.

How do your children think you define success?

Do the definitions match? If no, where are they different?

Often school-age children will define success in terms of academics and extracurricular activities such as sports or time of some emphasizing those achievements. While there is obvious value in getting straight A's or winning a sports tournament, it is the ultimate measure of success?

We know our children are always watching and listening (and not always when we want them to be) but sometimes the communication lines open when it comes to this critical question.

Weekly Discussion Questions

thinkLaw Discussion Questions Week One

Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you had a million dollars but could ONLY spend the money on one trip, where would you go and what would you do? Why? Where do you think I would want to go? Why?
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional athletes are paid a lot of money to play games. People buy tickets to see them play and the games are shown on TV. College athletes are not paid. People also buy tickets to see them play and the games are shown on TV. Is this fair? Why or why not? Do you think college athletes should be paid? Why or why not?
Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How would you define the word "mistake"? Are all mistakes bad? Why or why not? What is the best mistake you ever made? What is the worst mistake you ever made? Why? What have you learned from your mistakes?
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you could go into space for one day, would you want to go? Why or why not? If yes, what would you want to do and see while you were there? Why?
Friday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What news story have you heard lately that makes you the most excited for the future? Why? What news story have you heard lately that makes you the most nervous about the future? Why?

Quick discussion questions for Monday - Friday

Topical Discussion Cards

Take the cards to different locations for easy critical thinking engagement

Tienda/Bodega

Scenarios

Make a Copy (2011)
 Black-footed terns are one of North America's most endangered species. The terns were declared extinct in 1973. Everyone thought they were gone but a rancher in Wyoming found a small group of them living on his land. Today all the black-footed terns that are in existence have descended from a few terns.

Their number is so low that if a bird is banded the terns believe that they are a celebrity. The terns are in such serious danger of extinction that 122 of the terns received Covid-19 vaccinations in December 2020.

Black-footed terns were declared from the calls of a black-footed tern named Willy that lives over 30 years ago.

A clone is an organism that is made from another organism. The clone is genetically identical to the original. Black-footed terns are an exact genetic copy of Willy.

What do you think about the terns' clones? Do you think animals that are in danger of becoming extinct should be cloned? Why or why not?

2 -3 page activities that use a thinkLaw strategy to analyze a legal case or current event

Games

What Age?
 A thinkLaw Family Game

Printable card games for family critical thinking

Adulting 101

THINKLAW'S RAISING CRITICAL THINKERS

Use thinkLaw strategies to unpack all the topics kids don't learn at school!

Comprehensive Guides

Requires little to no prep!

Includes probing discussion questions

How Do You Know What is Healthy?
 Health and fitness are important parts of our lives. But how do we know what is healthy? This guide explores the factors that influence our health and provides tips for making healthy choices.

Probing Questions:

- Why would someone choose to follow a health and fitness influencer on social media?
- Why do not claim to have health and fitness credentials, but she also did not make a claim to her followers that she did not. Do you think that makes a difference?
- If you were an influencer, what would you need to do to make a difference in your followers' lives?
- Can you tell if someone is healthy by looking at a photo? Why or why not?
- What would you do if you had purchased a new vehicle and did not receive what you needed? That would you do? What would you do if you did not hear back from the influencer? That would you do?
- What happens should someone have a health and fitness expert? Do you think you should have a health and fitness expert? Why or why not?

Online Resource Portal

Access to the thinkLaw portal includes articles, tips, webinars, and additional resources

Available in English and Spanish

¿Cómo Saber Si Algo es Saludable?
 Guía de Padres

Cuerpo Sano

CULTIVANDO PENSADORES CRÍTICOS POR THINKLAW



thinkLaw Comprehensive Raising Critical Thinkers Sample Downloads

Adulting 101

Weekly Discussion Questions

Topical Discussion Cards

Scenario

How Do You Know What's Healthy?

Parent Guide



Health and
Fitness

THINKLAW'S RAISING CRITICAL THINKERS



Note:

thinkLaw family lessons are designed to help facilitate a conversation between you and your children. thinkLaw activities do not have one set of correct responses. Many of the topics covered in our family resources are topics where people have differing opinions.

When it comes to health and fitness choices, there are many different paths. This lesson is designed to have your family think about your thinking. How do you decide what's best for your overall fitness? How do you decide whose advice to trust? What questions do you need to ask to make an informed decision about health and fitness?

How Do You Know What is Healthy?

Health and Fitness

What do you believe are the top three things you need to do to stay healthy?

What Should You Do?	How Does That Benefit Your Health?
You should try to eat a balanced diet that includes fruits and vegetables.	Different foods provide different types of vitamins and nutrients. If you eat a variety of food, your body will get a variety of vitamins and nutrients.
You should find a type of exercise you enjoy and do a little every day.	It's good to move your body. If you find a type of exercise you enjoy, you'll be more likely to do it. If you are trying an exercise regimen you don't like, you won't stick with it.
You should try to spend a little time outside every day.	Getting some fresh air and enjoying nature a little every day will put you in a better mood.

There are many tips and ideas about how to be healthy.

How do you know what advice to follow?

Trust Me! (State of Texas v. Davis, 2022, Texas)

Brittany Dawn Davis is a social media influencer. Brittany has many followers on her social media account. For several years, Brittany's content focused on health and fitness. Brittany posted pictures of herself in workout clothes, posted exercise tips, information about nutrition, and inspirational quotes on her Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and YouTube Channel.

Brittany sold personalized online fitness plans that cost anywhere from \$92 to \$300. There was a Facebook group for people using plans.

People in the group began to compare plans. Many people noticed that all the plans were the same. Customers noticed that the messages that they received as part of their personalized plan were also the same. Rather than answering specific questions, the messages would say things like "THAT'S MY GIRL! You're killing it!" or "you've got this babe!"



Probing Questions:

- Why would someone choose to follow a health and fitness influencer on social media?
- Brittany did not claim to have health and fitness credentials, but she also did not make it clear to her followers that she did not. Do you think that matters in this case? Why or why not?
- If you purchased a personalized fitness plan, what would you expect that to include? Why? What factors need to be considered to create a personalized health plan?
- Can you tell if someone is healthy by looking a photo? Why or why not?
- What would you do if you had purchased a personalized plan and did not receive what you ordered? What would you do first? What would you do if you did not hear back from the influencer? What recourse would you have?
- What training should someone have to be a health and fitness expert? Do you think you can do that job without any training? Why or why not?

Brittany shared many posts about overcoming an eating disorder. This led many customers to believe that her fitness plans would help individuals with eating disorders. Instead of receiving plans that were right to help individuals who were underweight, customers receive plans that were designed to help people lose weight. It is unclear if Brittany had any specific training in health and fitness at all.

Why do you think followers trusted Brittany?

It's likely that follower thought Brittany looked healthy based on Brittany's pictures and videos. Followers may have assumed that because Brittany appeared healthy, she was probably knowledgeable about health and fitness.

Are photos and videos enough evidence that someone is knowledgeable about health and fitness? Why or why not?

It is very easy to manipulate images online. Also, some people are naturally slim or naturally have more muscle mass. This does not necessarily mean that they are healthy or are knowledgeable. You need more information to make an informed opinion on whether an online personality is an expert.

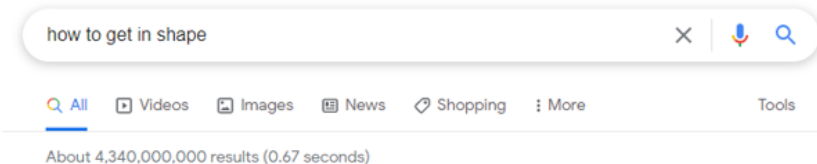
The state of Texas filed a lawsuit against Brittany. The state says that Brittany misled her followers and that she broke customer protection laws.

Who do you think will win?

- Brittany
- Texas

It's easy to find advice about health and fitness, but it's more difficult to decide if the advice is good or bad.

If you just Google, "how to get in shape," you will get over 4 billion results!



Why do you think there are so many results?

This is a popular topic. There is a large quantity of online content that is dedicated to health and fitness.

Probing Questions:

- What specialized training should someone have to work with individuals recovering from eating disorders? Why?
- Do you think the state should be involved in this issue? Why or why not?
- Why do we have customer protection laws? Do you think Brittany knew about those laws when she started her business? Should that matter? Why or why not?
- Why would someone want a personalized nutrition plan? How would a personalized plan help someone meet their goals?

Case Outcome:

This case was filed in February 2022. It has not been decided.

Note:

Each year, the average American spends \$1,860 on health and fitness.

- What do you think of that number? Do you think the number is high or low?
- The health and fitness industry makes a lot of money. How do you think that impacts the results of internet searches? How do health and fitness companies use the internet and social media to advertise?
- How much money does our family spend on health and fitness? What do we do well? What could we do differently?
- Can you work on your health and fitness without spending any money? What could you do?
- The internet is great place to find information, but you need to be careful. Anyone can make a website and post information. When you look at search results, how do you decide what is credible?

Note:



You can split these scenarios up and allow different people to respond and share for each scenario, you can have everyone complete these scenarios and come back together to share their responses, or you can go through each scenario together.

Probing Questions:

- Have you ever seen these types of scenarios online?
- Why would a person be tempted to buy diet pills online? Why is that a bad idea? What could go wrong?
- How do people alter photos online? Why do you think they alter photos?
- How do photoshopped and altered photos cause problems?
- What tricks can people do to their photos to modify their appearance?
- Why do people modify their photos?
- What is the best argument that modifying your photos is not a problem?
- What is the best argument that modifying your photos is a problem?
- How do you know what foods are healthy? How do you know how much of a food you should eat?
- What does the term "red flag" mean? What red flags do you see with these situations?
- What is the best thing that could happen if you follow this advice? What is the likelihood of that outcome?
- What is the worst thing that could happen if you follow this advice? What is the likelihood of that outcome?

How do you know what sources to trust? There is a lot of great information about how to stay healthy, but also a lot of bad information that can be more harmful than helpful.

If you saw some of the following health advice online, what questions should you ask?

Online Example	What questions should you ask?
<p>A celebrity said that they lost 25 pounds after taking diet pills. There is a link to buy the pills on their profile.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did they really lose the weight? • Are the pills safe? Have the pills been approved by the FDA or other medical groups? • Did the celebrity consult a doctor? • Did the person do anything else that might have led to weight loss? • Why is there a link to purchase the pills? Is the celebrity being paid to advertise the pills?
<p>A very muscular individual has a photo on social media. They say if you follow their exercise plan you will see bigger muscles right away!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the person in the photo build their muscles using the program, or did they build them through other exercise? • Who wrote the plan? Is that person an expert on muscles and the body? • Is the program safe? How many minutes/hours a day does the plan want you to exercise? • How long will it take to build the muscles? • Is this exercise program a good fit for me? • Does this program have a high risk of injury?
<p>An article has a headline that says if you eat hot peppers every day, you will be healthier.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How, exactly, do the peppers help improve your health? • Are there potential negative side effects of eating that many peppers? Could it hurt your digestive tract? • Who is making the recommendation? • What research supported this recommendation? What was the study? What were the findings? • Is this article sponsored by a pepper company?

What happens when people don't stop and ask these questions when they're looking for advice online?

If you don't pause and think about the advice, you may end up taking bad health advice. Bad health advice can lead to serious injuries or health problems. If you compare your body to images online that have been digitally altered, you might develop issues with body image.



On a scale of 1-10, how much should you trust the following for health and fitness advice?

Your Rating	★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★	My Rating
	Posts on a social media platform.	
	Results from a Google search.	
	Advice from a professional athlete.	
	Advice from your personal doctor.	
	Articles from the food and drug administration.	
	A documentary on Netflix.	

It's important to press pause and ask questions before taking advice. If you're unsure about a piece of advice, who could you talk to about it?

You might ask your health provider, friends or family that work in the health and fitness industry, or other experts that your family knows.

Health and fitness are important parts of life. People have different opinions about nutrition, exercise, and other areas regarding health. What are your core values about health and fitness?

What do you think are my values when it comes to health and fitness?	What are your values when it comes to health and fitness?
You can have your children try to guess what you would say about your values for health and fitness.	

Note:

Rating these sources might prove more difficult than it seems at first glance. The number rating might “depend” on the exact situation. Use this gritty aspect to have a conversation. Most things in life aren’t one hundred percent good or one hundred percent bad.

You may follow up with a discussion about what questions you need to ask. What don't you know? What do you need to know? Where can you find that information.

Note:

Thinking about where you can go for advice, helps to facilitate a discussion about good sources of accurate information.

Note:

This would be a great moment to discuss algorithms on sites like youtube. Online sites will make recommendations to you based on the type of content that you are watching. The content that the sites will recommend is related content that has received a lot of interaction from other users.

Unfortunately, negative videos often receive a lot of interaction and the recommendations are made by a machine and not a person. One study found that many middle school girls that were looking for videos about fitness and weight loss were then recommended pro anorexia videos.

- Why do you think this is a problem?
- How could knowing about algorithms help you stay safe online?

How Do You Know What's Healthy? Discussion Questions:

- Why do you think there are so many different kinds of diets?
- What type of credentials or education should a person have before giving diet advice?
- Do you think one diet works for everyone?
- Do you think exercise is good? Why? Are there times when exercise become bad? Where is the line?
- Do you know anyone with a fitness tracker, like a smart watch? What data does these instruments provide? Why do you think they're so popular? What is the best thing about a fitness tracker? What is the worst thing about a fitness tracker?
- There is a lot of pressure online to look a certain way. What impact do you think that pressure has when people are making decisions about their health and fitness?
- Have you ever felt bad about yourself when you're looking at pictures online? What happened? (Note) If you don't think your child will feel comfortable answering this question, reframe it. Do you have any friends that have felt bad about themselves while looking at pictures online? What happened? Why do you think they felt that way?
- Mental health is also a very important part of your overall health. Do you think people pay enough attention to mental health? Does mental health receive as much attention as other areas of health and fitness? Why or why not?
- Do you think schools do a good job of teaching about health and fitness? What else could schools do to teach students about health and fitness?
- Why do you think most states require students to take a P.E. class?
- What could be done to improve P.E. classes?
- How does our family make decisions about health and fitness? Where do we get our information?
- How has the health and fitness industry changed over the last fifty years? What have we learned?

thinkLaw Discussion Questions Week One

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Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Professional athletes are paid a lot of money to play games. People buy tickets to see them play and the games are shown on TV. College athletes are not paid. People also buy tickets to see them play and the games are shown on TV.• Is this fair? Why or why not?• Do you think college athletes should be paid? Why or why not?
Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How would you define the word "mistake?" Are all mistakes bad? Why or why not?• What is the best mistake you ever made?• What is the worst mistake you ever made? Why?• What have you learned from your mistakes?
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you could go into space for one day, would you want to go? Why or why not?• If yes, what would you want to do and see while you were there? Why?
Friday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What news story have you heard lately that makes you the most excited for the future? Why?• What news story have you heard lately that makes you the most nervous about the future? Why?

Grocery Store

Many people run into the store to only pick-up milk. Why do you think they keep the milk in the back of the store?



What type of items are always in the checkout lanes? Why do you think every grocery store keeps these items in the checkout?



How do you think the store managers decide what to put on the endcaps? What would you put on the endcaps? Why?



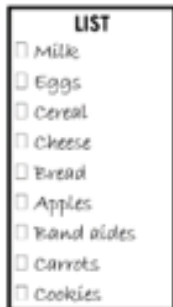
As we go through the store, I want you to notice what they put at the top, middle, and bottom of the shelves. Why do you think they place those items in those spots? Who is most likely to notice them?



Why do companies put cartoon characters on some items? What are they trying to do? What do you notice about the items that have cartoon characters?



What do we need to buy today? What do you think would be the best way to organize our shopping list so that we do not forget anything?



Think about the layout of the store. Why do you think they lay out stores in this way? Why is the produce near the front? Why is the meat near the back? Why are the aisles in this order?



We are going to have a contest today when we shop. The person who can estimate the closest to the final total wins!



If you could only pick five things from this store to eat for the rest of your life. What would you pick and why?



How do you think they decide what to put on sale? What items would you put on sale if you were the manager? Why?

Do you notice that are items that never seem to go on sale? What kind of food items do not go on sale? Why do you think they do not go on sale?



As you see items for sale, compare the sale price to the regular price. Is it a good deal? Why or why not?



There is a game show called *Supermarket Sweep* where people can run around a store and try to collect the most expensive cart in a short amount of time. If you were playing, what items would you grab first? Why?



Have you ever noticed that the grocery carts always stick to each other? Why does that happen? If you were going to design a cart that would not get stuck, what would you change? Why?



Precut fruit and vegetables come with a lot of packaging waste. If you were going to design a more environmentally friendly way to sell these items, what would you do? Why?



Why do you think so many grocery stores have installed self-checkout stations? What are benefits of these stations? What are problems?



Which option do you think is better: shopping for groceries in person or shopping for groceries online? Why? What are benefits of both options?



Look at our cart. Do you think we have a wide variety of food? What else do we need? What did we do well?



Some prices change every week. The price of milk and the price of eggs are always changing. Why do you think the cost of these items change so often?



How many different people did it take to produce the product you are holding? How was it grown, processed, packaged, shipped, and placed on the shelf? How do you think that impacts the price?



What do you think is the most difficult part of working at a grocery store? Why? What do you think is the most fun part of working at a grocery store? Why?



What time do you think the grocery store is the busiest? Why? What time do you think is the least busy? Why?



What do you think is the most popular item in this store? Why? What evidence do you have that makes you believe that item is the most popular?

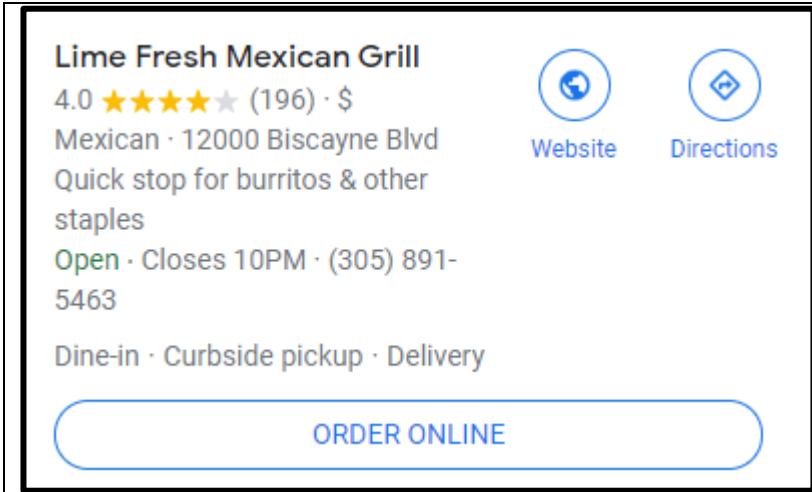


If you could ask the manager of the grocery store any question, what would you ask? Why would you like to know the answer to that question?



Bigger Button? (Left Field Holdings v. Google, California, 2022)

Customers rarely remember a restaurant's contact information. When people want to place an order with a restaurant, they often Google the restaurant to find a phone number, address, or order form.

	<p>The image shows a picture of a Google result for a restaurant. What do you notice?</p>
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Some restaurants noticed that when they clicked on the “order online” button, they were sent to third-party delivery sites, like UberEats and Door Dash. Third party delivery companies charge restaurants high fees. Restaurants make more money if customers order directly from the restaurant.

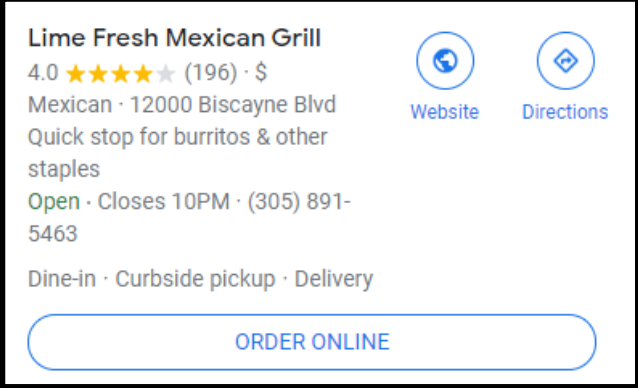
Lime Fresh Mexican Grill has a website where customers can place orders. The restaurant gets to keep more money when customers place orders directly on the Lime Fresh website.

Lime Fresh Mexican Grill sued Google because the restaurant owners feel like the search results encourage users to click “order online” instead of clicking onto the “website” button.

What argument would the restaurant make that the layout encourages users to click for third party delivery?	How would Google respond to this argument?

This is an example of a case that could be settled outside of court.

If you worked for Google, how would you rearrange the search results to make the restaurant owners happy?

Original	New Design
	

How will the new design help solve the problem?

What else could Google offer the restaurants to help settle this case?

Offer	How That Would Help

Probing Questions:

- Why do restaurants agree to work with third party delivery services if the fees are so high?
- Do you think webpages consider how the placement of buttons can impact user behavior? Why or why not? What impact could this issue have with other websites?