

our egocentrism, we must understand, and exercise some control
see basic functions of the human mind: thinking, feeling, wanting.
humans spend most of our time thinking about what we person-
value, we need to question our personal values.

ent, it is important that you think seriously about what you want to
finish in each of your classes and in college in general. If you simply
get by, to do no more than pass your courses, you know the logic
of: You go to class. You find out the minimal requirements of the
fill those requirements with the least effort possible. You get the
on to the next semester. After four years and a certain number
s, you get a degree. Using this kind of thinking, you think of col-
vehicle to get a job. The problem with this "minimalist" strategy
it, you miss the opportunity to develop skills and insights that you
etime. You graduate, but you do not become a lifelong learner.
you look at college as an opportunity to learn how to learn, to de-
l, to seek out new ways to look at things, to expand your knowledge, to
will help you figure out the problems of your life, you must seek to in-
f intellectual skills that will enable you to learn more deeply and more
every one of your courses. With the proper vision of what you are
begin to practice effective thinking in all your classes. And if you strive
un habits of thought and characteristics of mind, such as intellectual
erance, and firmness, you can transform the way you operate in
ing context and situation. You will acquire the tools of good thinking
then will go into each class with powerful questions on the tip of
you will ask these questions whenever possible. You will ask them while
reading, while engaged in writing, while speaking, while listening.
recognize, then, that the content that defines college instruction can
y thorough thinking. You will recognize that when you think poorly
if you learn poorly, and that when you think well while learning, you
if you are serious about acquiring powerful tools for learning, you
itted to developing your ability to think well, to reason your way
of content, to organize content in your mind, to relate it to your
assess it using appropriate standards.
r, you have become subconsciously habituated to rote memorization
pal tool of learning, if your mode of preparing for an exam is to
pieces of content into your head, you may get by temporarily, but
little of what you learned. The result, in the long run, will be poor
poor learning, and poor habits of thought. You will be of little value
who wants to hire people who can systematically pursue important

LEARNING AND SUPERFICIAL MEMORIZATION

ing, and assess their own performance on the job.



EXHIBIT 7.1 Thinking is the key to all content.

A key insight into content—and into thinking—is that all content repre-
sents a distinctive mode of thinking. Math becomes easier as one learns
to think mathematically. Biology becomes easier as one learns to think
biologically. History becomes easier as one learns to think historically. Parenting

THE RELATION OF CONTENT TO THINKING

What are you trying to accomplish in college? Are you committed to developing your
thinking in a deep way? Or are you going to college simply to get a job that requires
a degree? Are you going to college just because your friends are going? Are you after the
social life that college offers? Or are you not sure what your real motivation is? If you had to
complete the following statements, what would you say? My fundamental purpose in going
to college is . . . I am committed to . . . Write out your answer or explain orally.

THINKING DEEPLY ABOUT WHY YOU ARE IN COLLEGE

7.1 Think for Yourself

goals, recognize and analyze significant problems, communicate important mean-
ings, and assess their own performance on the job.