

# Public Speaking and Debate 2

Holistic vs Analytical

# Holistic vs Analytical Thinking: Thinking Mode Quiz

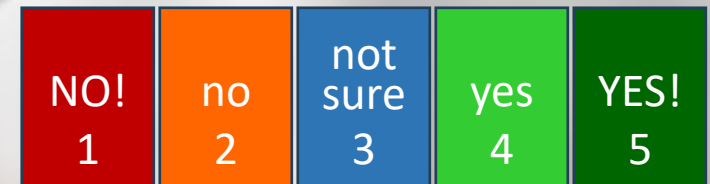
**Holistic** and **analytical** thinking are two **different ways to approach situations and problems**. Which type of thinking people deploy is partly a result of their character, but it is also very dependent on their culture and the values of the society they live in.

Before learning about these two ‘thinking modes’ and their cultural implications, let’s find out what kind of thinker you are!

The following slides have **16 questions**.

Answer each question by assigning a number of points:

- 1 point if you totally disagree.
- 2 points if you mostly disagree.
- 3 points if you are not sure or have no opinion.
- 4 points if you mostly agree.
- 5 points if you totally agree.



1: **4**

**There are no good or bad answers!! It depends on your character, and any outcome is just indicative of that, not good or bad.**

The questions are in two columns (left or right) and each column has its own total. Don't worry about the ‘maths’, I will explain as we go through the questions.

Take a piece of paper and draw the following lines:

| Q     | A-Left | A-Right | Q      | A-Left | A-Right |
|-------|--------|---------|--------|--------|---------|
| 1     |        |         | 9      |        |         |
| 2     |        |         | 10     |        |         |
| 3     |        |         | 11     |        |         |
| 4     |        |         | 12     |        |         |
| 5     |        |         | 13     |        |         |
| 6     |        |         | 14     |        |         |
| 7     |        |         | 15     |        |         |
| 8     |        |         | 16     |        |         |
| L1-8: |        | R1-8:   | L9-16: |        | R9-16:  |

# Thinking Mode Quiz

|          |         |                  |          |           |
|----------|---------|------------------|----------|-----------|
| NO!<br>1 | no<br>2 | not<br>sure<br>3 | yes<br>4 | YES!<br>5 |
|----------|---------|------------------|----------|-----------|

1. You must first consider a system as a whole to be able to understand its parts.
2. People act mostly independent of each other.
3. Everything that happens is the result of the choices and behaviour of individual people.
4. It makes more sense to study things in their natural environment rather than on their own.
5. In a painting, the background is just as important as the main object.
6. Relationships between people are more important than the individual people themselves.
7. Each individual person is responsible for his or her own actions.
8. Something can be both ugly and beautiful at the same time.

| L        | R         |
|----------|-----------|
| 1:       |           |
|          | 2:        |
|          | 3:        |
| 4:       |           |
| 5:       |           |
| 6:       |           |
|          | 7:        |
| 8:       |           |
| Left 1-8 | Right 1-8 |

**Total score 1-8:**

# Thinking Mode Quiz

|          |         |                  |          |           |
|----------|---------|------------------|----------|-----------|
| NO!<br>1 | no<br>2 | not<br>sure<br>3 | yes<br>4 | YES!<br>5 |
|----------|---------|------------------|----------|-----------|

9. People should be able to do what they want, independent of what society expects from them.

L R

9:

10. People can have different ideas about what is the right thing to do in a certain situation.

10:

11. Two ideas that seem to oppose each other can each yield something valuable.

11:

12. It is better to reach a compromise than to argue your point of view.

12:

13. An honest person can be expected to stay honest in the future.

13:

14. A person's true nature may naturally evolve, but it doesn't change dramatically over time.

14:

15. It is useful to make future projections based on the current situation.

15:

16. Human history is best described as slow and predictable progress.

16:

**Total score 9-16:**

Left 9-16

Right 9-16

# Thinking Mode Quiz

Add up the scores from Left (1-8) and Left (9-16).

Add up the scores from Right (1-8) and Right (9-16).

Calculate the final score as:

$$\text{Final score} = \text{Left} - \text{Right}$$

The score should be between -35 and 35.

What does the score mean?

- If your score is  $> 0$ , you are a **holistic** thinker.
- If your score is  $< 0$ , you are an **analytical** thinker.
- The higher the number, the more you are on 'your' side.

If you are close to 0, your thinking mode is balanced. If your number is high, you have special qualities in representing either the big picture or detail side of thinking.

# Holistic vs Analytical Thinking



# Holistic vs Analytical Thinking

**Holistic thinking** is about finding harmony within complexity, where each part plays a unique role in creating a **balanced and vibrant whole**, whether it's in nature, the human body, city planning, or any interconnected system. Much like a gardener creating a perfectly balanced landscape.



**Analytical thinking** is about finding specific details and facts, no matter how minuscule, to acquire a profound understanding of a problem, so as to be able to connect the dots, **identify patterns and unveil hidden solutions** within what was observed. Much like a detective solving a crime mystery.



# Holistic vs Analytical Thinking

**Holistic thinkers first consider how parts of a system work together, rather than considering each part in isolation.**

**For example, when looking at a wooded area, holistic thinkers would first think about the forest as a whole instead of the individual trees, and consider it as a balanced ecosystem. Only afterwards would they consider how the individual trees contribute to the system as a whole.**

**Analytical thinkers, on the other hand, first consider what the parts of a system are like in isolation, and only then consider how they could work together as a system.**

**In the example of a forest, they would first look at the individual trees and analyse what types of trees there are. Only after that would they step back and see what kind of forest these trees constitute.**

# Holistic vs Analytical Thinking

While analytical and holistic thinking may seem like opposing forces, team that has members from both thinking modes has many advantages.

## **Better problem-solving**

Holistic thinkers focus on the bigger picture, creativity, and empathy, which helps to understand human behaviour, and complex societal issues.

Analytical thinking excels in precision and systematic problem-solving in fields like mathematics and science.

## **Innovation**

Analytical thinkers provide a structured foundation for innovation, which holistic thinkers can transform into innovations.

## **Adaptability**

Flexibility to switch between analytical and holistic thinking modes allows a team to adapt to the approach that best suits a particular task.

## **Better decision-making**

Holistic thinkers tend to focus first on long-term consequences (strategy), whereas analytical thinkers tend to focus on immediate pros and cons (tactics). Teams including both can make well-rounded decisions that align with both short-term tactics and long-term strategies.

# Holistic vs Analytical Thinking: Audience

**Analytical**



**Holistic**

East-Asian and Western cultures are very different with respect to exactly this aspect of psychology: **East-Asian** cultures are predominantly **holistic** in nature and **Western** cultures are predominantly **analytical**. This is reflected in the way they are governed, the way businesses work, the way people approach problems, and the way society functions.

If you need to persuade someone, you need to consider what thinking mode is best to appeal to their emotions. How does this affect your public speaking?

- For **holistic** audiences, **big picture arguments** work best.
- For **analytical** audiences, causal chains comprised of **deductions based on detailed input** work best.

# Holistic vs Analytical Thinking: Your role

**Debating** requires **analysing your opponent's arguments** (which relies primarily on analytical thinking) but also on **creating powerful arguments** (which relies primarily on holistic thinking)

In your debating team, it is wise to assign roles according to your members' strengths and work together to complement each other instead of fighting.

## Holistic thinkers:

- Tend to **excel at writing position statements and summaries.**
- **Need help** with getting down to the details from which they should start reasoning so as to improve the **credibility** and **logic** of their arguments.

## Analytical thinkers

- Tend to **excel at picking out flaws** in the opponent's arguments and **asking difficult questions** that attack particular details of the opponent's remarks.
- **Need help** with putting the details of their attack into the perspective of the **big picture** so as to increase the conflict's emotional impact.

## Balanced thinkers

- Tend to excel at **asking questions** and using the answer to immediately attack.
- Can facilitate **communication** between team members.

# Summary

- Use **big picture arguments** to persuade holistic audiences, and **detailed deductions** based on **reliable data** to persuade analytical audiences.
- If you are a predominantly **holistic** thinker, take the lead on delivering your team's **position statement** and/or **summary**.
- If you are a predominantly **analytical** thinker, take the lead on **asking questions** and delivering your team's **rebuttal** statement.
- If you are a **balanced** thinker, take the lead on **answering questions** and facilitating **team communication**.