

The Elements of Critical Thinking

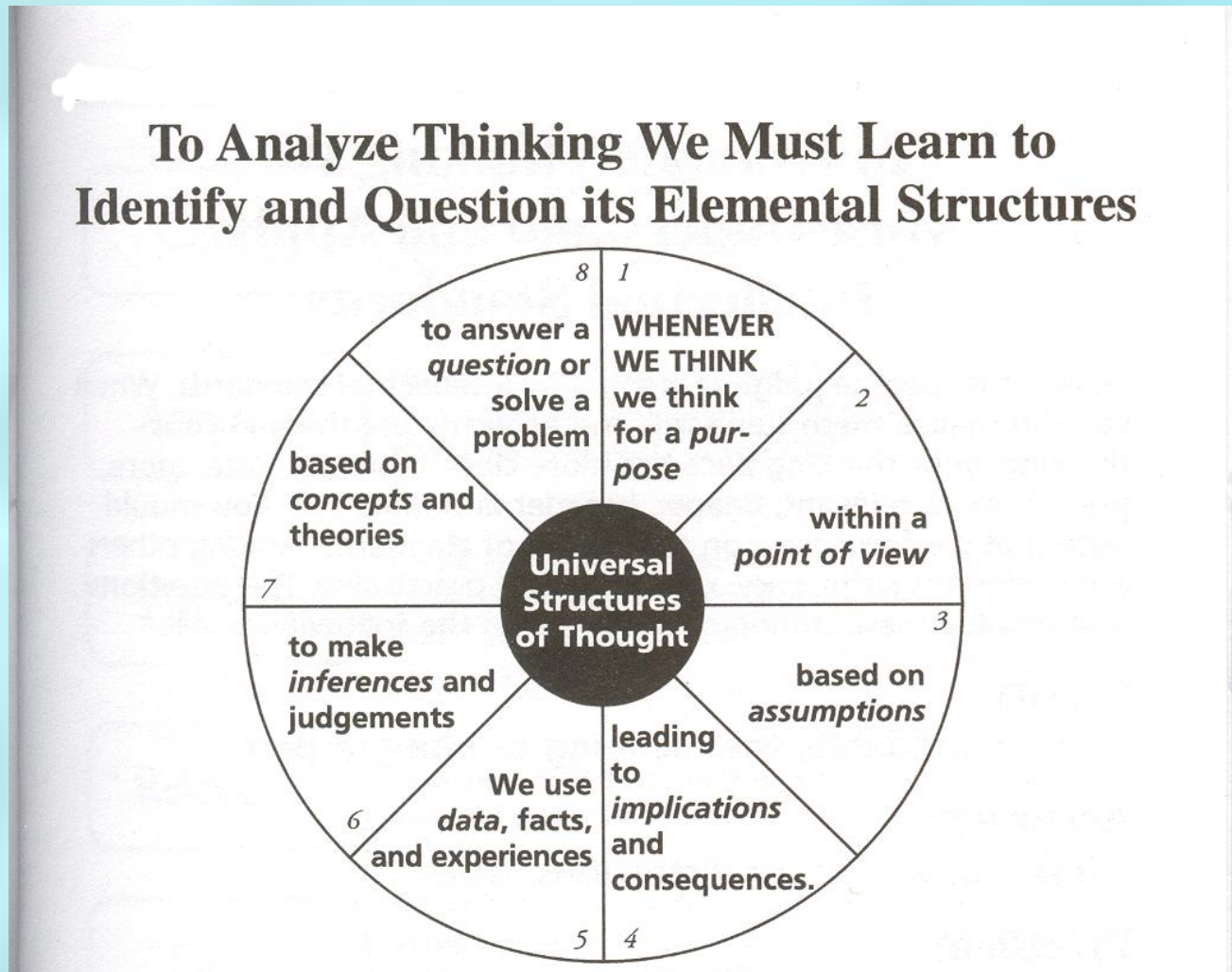
Day 1: Establish a Shared Vocabulary & Learn Techniques



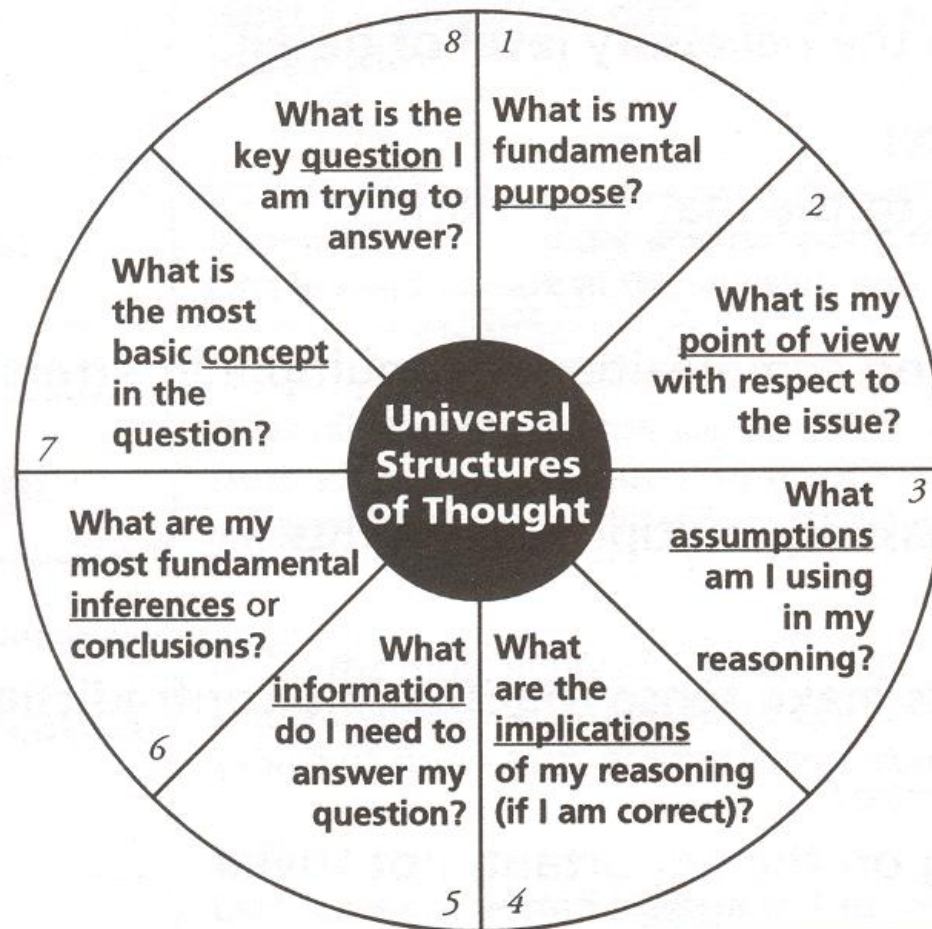
Ch. 2 of *WA* gives you a **toolkit**
to use to make choices about your thinking
process

- **Notice & Focus**—lets you pick out, prioritize, and refine ideas (p. 24)
- **“The Method”**—lets you play with binaries, oppositions, threads that emerge (p. 26)
- The Colbert Question: **“So what?”** (p. 33)
- **“Paraphrase x 3”**: Making the words your own (p. 36)
- **The “Go To” sentence**: The characteristic sentence

Two ways to see the elements (from Richard Paul, Nosich's teacher)

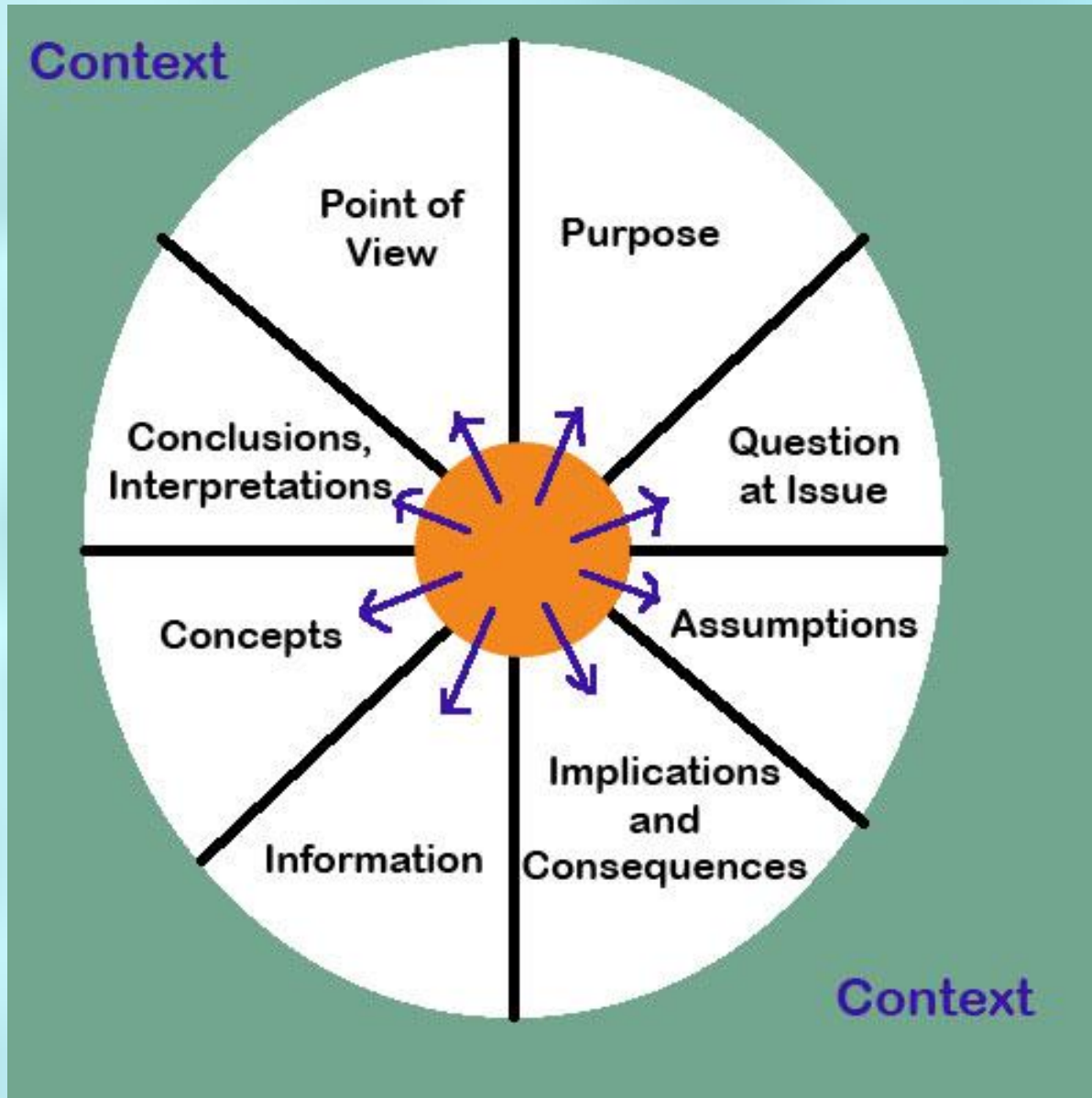


Or, from your point of view:



Be aware: When we understand the structures of thought, we ask important questions implied by these structures.

Nosich's Circle of Elements



Nosich focuses not on the writing that comes out
but on the thinking that leads to it

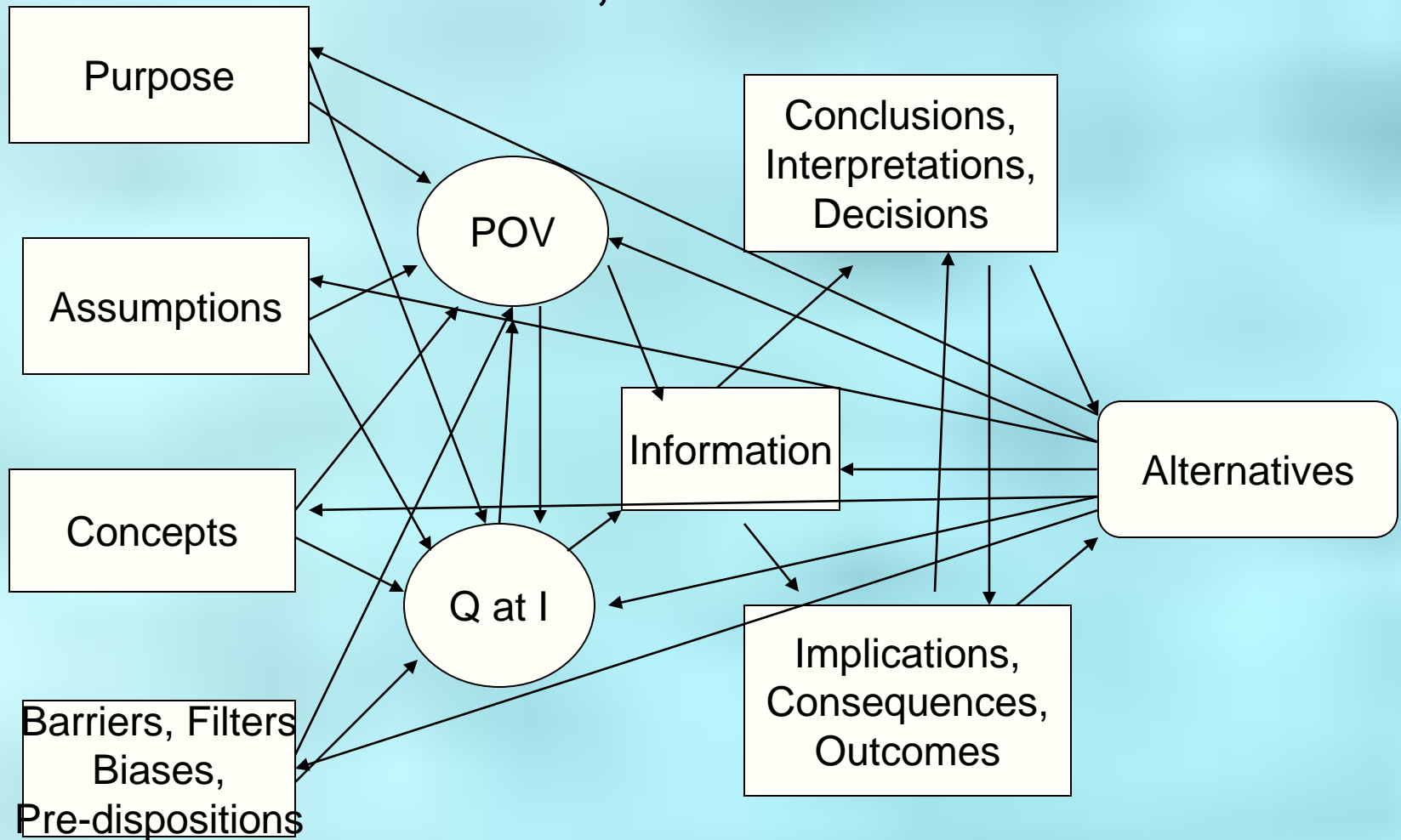
- Purpose: Nosich p. 50
- Question at Issue (q at i): p. 51
- Assumptions: p. 52
- Implications, Consequences, Outcomes: p. 53
- Information: p. 55
- Concepts: p. 56
- Conclusions, Interpretations, Decisions: p. 57
- Point of View (p.o.v.): p. 59
- Alternatives: p. 61
- Context: p. 62

Additional Terms You May Use

- Reasons/Reasoning—describes the process of thinking
- Claims (theses based on your assumptions that you try to prove)
- Arguments (pitches made with theses and support)
- Hypotheses (assumptions based on evidence & testing that you prove or disprove)

Most of these terms are involved with what we call a **deductive or thesis-driven** way of thinking—one that attempts to **eliminate** possibilities. Initially, we're going to avoid them.

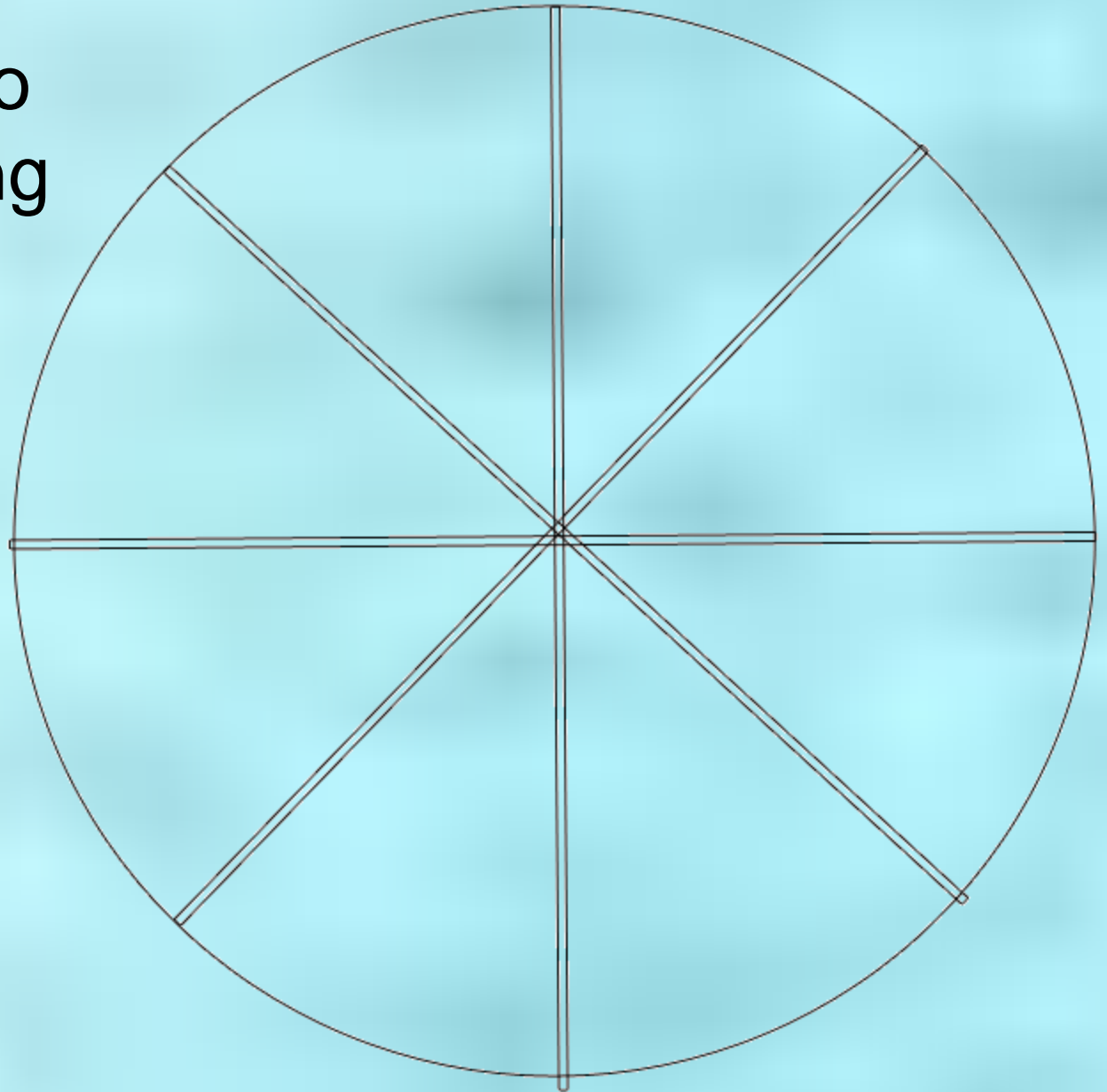
Thinking critically is messy, non-linear, and recursive



Going around the circle

- Can start on **any** slice
- Gets easier as you repeat it
- Often shows you which areas will be most productive to work with (not always the ones where the answers come most easily!)
- Generates lots of raw material to draft from—gives you luxury of selecting the best

What does
'safety' mean to
you?—prewriting
for paper 1



To master these elements...

- Practice, practice, practice till this starts to feel comfortable to you.
- Try exercises 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 in your thinking notebooks
- Practice the tools on reading for other subjects
- If there's an element you have trouble with, do the corresponding exercise at chapter's end in your thinking notebook.
- Look at p. 76 as a self-test.