

## Enhancing Critical Thinking: Tip #2

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#### WHEN PRESENTING NEW INFORMATION, ASK QUESTIONS THAT WILL HELP ACTIVATE PRIOR KNOWLEDGE.

- *What do you already know about that?*
- *What can you say about that?*
- *Is there another way to view this?*
- *What ideas do you have about that?*
- *Might anyone else see it differently?*
- *What has been your experience?*

*Scenario: The teacher activates students' prior knowledge of the physical and mental effects on workers and teens of eating or skipping breakfast.*

T: Which is the most important meal of the day?

Ann: Breakfast.

T: **What do you already know about** the importance of breakfast?

Ann: I know breakfast is important because we go without food for a long time.

Sam: I know it's called "breakfast" because when we eat, we "break" our fast.

T: That's right. And how long do we usually fast or go without any food? Give me a specific number.

Tom: 6, 8 or even 12 hours, depending on how long we sleep in.

T: That's true. **And what has been your experience** at work or at school when you have skipped breakfast for that day?

Sam: I usually find it very difficult to concentrate. My stomach growls and all I can think about is food.

Tom: I get annoyed easily and am short-tempered. I guess it's because my blood sugar level is low.

T: **Might anyone else see it differently?**

Ann: I noticed I make more mistakes at work when I don't have time for breakfast. However, when I do have breakfast, I am more alert.... and friendly.

Tom: That's true! I am more pleasant to be around when I am not hungry.

T: **Is there another way to view** these experiences you've just shared?

Sam: I noticed that our experiences are all negative when we have skipped breakfast.

T: And how about when you eat breakfast?

Ann: Our experiences are positive.

T: Let's now read a short passage and see what research studies say about the effects of skipping breakfast compared to those of eating breakfast. Using your graphic organizer, list these different effects.

### Reading Passage:

Some workers skip breakfast and try to make up for it by eating a big lunch. Studies show that workers who do this lose as much efficiency at work as people who've missed a whole night's sleep. Workers who eat a high-protein breakfast and a light lunch, on the other hand, tend to be energetic and efficient throughout the day. Furthermore, a separate study proved that teens who eat breakfast do far better in school than their classmates who don't.