

## Research Article

## An Evaluation of the Literary Texts in the 5th Grade Turkish Textbook within the Scope of the Türkiye Century Education Model in Terms of Critical Thinking Skills

### *Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli 5. Sınıf Türkçe Ders Kitabındaki Edebî Metinlerin Eleştirel Düşünme Becerileri Açısından Değerlendirilmesi*

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#### Abstract

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**Purpose:** This study aims to evaluate the literary texts included in the 5th grade Turkish textbook used in the 2024–2025 academic year in terms of their support for critical thinking skills. Critical thinking is a multidimensional cognitive process that involves high-level mental skills such as analysis, interpretation, decision-making, and inquiry. **Method:** The research was conducted using the document analysis method, a qualitative research design. The textbook selected through criterion sampling was examined using an analysis tool developed based on Robert Ennis's theory of critical thinking. **Findings:** The findings revealed that certain dispositions and competencies related to critical thinking were frequently emphasized in the texts. In particular, the competencies of "formulating questions" and "focusing on an issue" were found to be prominently represented, whereas competencies such as "evaluating the credibility of a source" and "using valid sources" were significantly underrepresented. **Conclusion:** The results indicate that literary texts play an important role in fostering critical thinking skills; however, these skills are not equally or comprehensively addressed across all components. In this respect, the

Text-Based Instruction

*study underscores the need to restructure textbooks with a stronger emphasis on critical thinking and aims to contribute to the evaluation and development of instructional materials.*

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**Amaç:** Bu çalışma, 2024–2025 eğitim-öğretim yılında okutulan 5. sınıf Türkçe ders kitabında yer alan edebî metinlerin eleştirel düşünme becerileri açısından değerlendirilmesini amaçlamaktadır. Eleştirel düşünme; analiz yapma, yorumlama, karar verme ve sorgulama gibi üst düzey zihinsel becerileri içeren çok boyutlu bir süreçtir. **Yöntem:** Araştırma, nitel araştırma desenlerinden doküman analizi yöntemiyle yürütülmüş; ölçüt örnekleme yoluyla belirlenen ders kitabı, Robert Ennis'in eleştirel düşünme kuramına dayalı olarak geliştirilen bir analiz aracıyla incelenmiştir. **Bulgular:** Elde edilen bulgulara göre, metinlerde eleştirel düşünmeye özgü bazı yeterlik ve tutumlara sıklıkla yer verildiği gözlenmiştir. Özellikle "soru formüle etme" ve "bir soruya yoğunlaşma" gibi yeterliklerin yoğun biçimde işlendiği, ancak "bir kaynağın geçerliliğini değerlendirme" ve "geçerli kaynak kullanma" gibi yeterliklerin oldukça sınırlı düzeyde temsil edildiği belirlenmiştir. Sonuçlar, edebî metinlerin eleştirel düşünme becerilerini desteklemede önemli bir işlev üstlendiğini, ancak bu becerilerin tüm boyutlarıyla dengeli bir biçimde yansıtılmadığını ortaya koymaktadır. **Sonuç:** Bu yönüyle çalışma, ders kitaplarının eleştirel düşünme temelinde yeniden yapılandırılması gerektiğine dikkat çekmekte ve öğretim materyallerinin değerlendirilmesine katkı sunmaktadır.

## Introduction

In the 21st century, the increasing ease of access to information has made it essential for individuals not only to acquire knowledge but also to develop the ability to question, evaluate, and interpret it. At this point, critical thinking emerges as a multidimensional skill that encompasses higher-order cognitive processes such as analysis, interpretation, decision-making, and inquiry. Facione (2015) defines critical thinking as "a purposeful and self-regulatory process of judgment," while Ennis (1987) considers it as a form of "logical and reflective thinking" that can be acquired through education. Paul and Elder (2008) emphasize that a good critical thinker is someone who can reason logically, interpret abstract ideas, solve problems, and remain open to alternative perspectives. These definitions reveal that critical thinking is not merely a cognitive process but also a multidimensional construct that shapes individuals' thinking habits and values.

In educational systems, fostering critical thinking skills enables students to become not only consumers of knowledge but also individuals who can transform and reproduce it. Developing these skills from early ages contributes not only to academic achievement but also to students' ability to act more consciously in their social relationships in line with democratic values (Facione, 2015; Ennis, 1987). For this reason,

contemporary curricula are structured to integrate critical thinking as a central goal aimed at enhancing students' higher-order cognitive skills.

In line with this objective, the Türkiye Century Education Model (Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli) has introduced a new component titled "Literacies." (MEB, 2024) This component aims to equip students not only with traditional reading and writing skills but also with multidimensional literacies such as digital, media, cultural, financial, visual, and critical literacy (Ministry of National Education, 2024). Critical literacy, in particular, supports students in questioning texts, understanding the author's intent, analyzing implicit meanings, and developing multiple perspectives. This approach renders literary texts in textbooks more functional for students' critical thinking processes.

In this study, "supporting critical thinking in literary texts" is defined as the process of engaging students in questioning assumptions, making inferences about events and characters, developing alternative perspectives, establishing intertextual connections, and critically evaluating the author's intent through the text. In this way, literary texts provide not only an aesthetic reading experience but also a pedagogical environment that fosters the development of critical thinking skills.

A considerable body of research has been conducted on Turkish language education, literary texts, and critical thinking (Avcı & Coşkun, 2022; Başoğlu & Mutlu, 2012; Batur & Soyuçok, 2019; Çağlar & Yılmaz, 2022; Demir & Baş, 2019; Dilekçi & Karatay, 2021, 2022; Elkıran & Kılıçoğlu, 2021; Esemen & Sadioğlu, 2021; İncirkuş & Özçetin, 2021; Mete, 2021; Olukcu & Yıldız, 2022; Özmutlu & Uysal, 2021; Razgatlıoğlu, 2010; Sarıkaya, 2021; Sarıkaya, Yayan & Yamaç, 2023; Sur, 2021; Şen, 2009; Temizkan, 2014). However, much of this research indicates that textbook questions tend to be superficial (İncirkuş & Özçetin, 2021; Sur, 2021) and that the texts employed in textbooks are inadequate in fostering students' critical thinking skills (Başoğlu & Mutlu, 2012; Çağlar & Yılmaz, 2022; Demir & Baş, 2019; Esemen & Sadioğlu, 2021; Olukcu & Yıldız, 2022). Nevertheless, systematic analyses with theoretical depth focusing specifically on how literary texts contribute to the development of critical thinking remain limited.

The purpose of this study is to address this gap by examining the literary texts included in the 5th-grade Turkish textbook prepared within the framework of the Türkiye Century Education Model in terms of critical thinking skills. The study adopts Ennis's (2011) framework of critical thinking dispositions and competencies, while also critically reflecting on its applicability to children's literature. In this regard, the study not only describes the current instructional materials but also provides a theoretical discussion on the contribution of literary genres to the development of critical thinking and the pedagogical functions of text design.

- What is the distribution of critical thinking competencies in the literary texts included in the 5th-grade Turkish textbook within the framework of the Türkiye Century Education Model?

- What is the distribution of critical thinking dispositions in the literary texts included in the 5th-grade Turkish textbook within the framework of the Türkiye Century Education Model?

- How do the critical thinking competencies and dispositions compare across the different literary texts in the 5th-grade Turkish textbook?

Through these questions, the study aims to determine both the pedagogical functionality of the texts and the degree of alignment between the literary content and the Türkiye Century Education Model's goal of educating "competent and virtuous individuals.

### **Methodology**

This study employs the document analysis method, which is one of the qualitative research designs. Document analysis involves a systematic and in-depth examination of written materials to identify, interpret, and analyze meaningful patterns within textual data (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021). Through this method, the study aims to determine how critical thinking competencies and dispositions are reflected in the literary texts included in the 5th Grade Turkish Textbook published by the Turkish Ministry of National Education.

### **Research Design**

This study employed the document analysis method, one of the qualitative research techniques. Document analysis is a data collection method based on the systematic examination of existing written materials (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021). Through this method, the aim is to obtain in-depth information by directly analyzing written sources that represent the phenomenon under investigation.

The data source of the study consists of literary texts included in the 5th grade Turkish textbook published by the Turkish Ministry of National Education. These texts were analyzed in terms of critical thinking competencies and dispositions. A structured analytical framework based on specific themes was utilized during the analysis process. Expressions, questions, prompts, and content within the texts were evaluated within this framework.

### **Material Analyzed in the Study**

This research focuses on the textbook titled *5. sınıf Türkçe ders kitabı* (Cin vd., 2024), published by MEB Publications and introduced in the 2024–2025 academic year. The textbook was selected through criterion sampling, one of the purposive sampling techniques. According to Yıldırım and Şimşek (2021), criterion sampling is based on the principle of studying all cases that meet a predefined set of criteria. The criteria for selecting this material are as follows:

- (1) The textbook is newly introduced in the 2024–2025 academic year,
- (2) It was prepared in alignment with the revised Türkiye Century Education Model Turkish Curriculum,
- (3) It is currently in official use in schools.

### ***Data Collection***

To systematically reveal the reflections of critical thinking skills in written texts, a data collection tool was developed based on Robert Ennis’s theoretical framework. Ennis (1985, as cited in Şenşekerci & Bilgin, 2008) defines critical thinking as “reasonable and reflective thinking focused on deciding what to believe or do.” This definition treats critical thinking not only as a cognitive competency but also as a dispositional attitude, emphasizing justification, judgment, and systematic reasoning in decision-making processes (Norris & Ennis, 1989; as cited in Şenşekerci & Bilgin, 2008).

The data collection instrument was structured by drawing on Ennis’s (1987) list of critical thinking competencies and dispositions. It consists of two main dimensions:

- (1) Critical Thinking Competencies
- (2) Critical Thinking Dispositions

These two dimensions encompass a total of 26 themes. Each theme corresponds to observable cognitive actions or intellectual tendencies within the texts. The "competency" dimension focuses on skills related to structuring, analyzing, inferring, and evaluating thought processes, while the "disposition" dimension pertains to the mental attitudes and orientations that shape how individuals think.

Each theme was designed to be matched with cognitive or affective patterns found in the analyzed texts. During the data collection process, direct expressions in the texts were coded according to these themes, and explanatory justifications were provided for each theme. The coding process was carried out using deductive (descriptive) analysis techniques.

The validity and reliability of the instrument were ensured through expert review; based on expert feedback, the criteria and theme definitions were revised. A pilot implementation was also conducted, and the instrument was refined for clarity and usability based on the results. As a result, both content validity and the practical adaptability of the tool to qualitative studies were enhanced. The systematic nature of the tool enables comparative analyses in text examination and makes critical thinking themes more visible during the analysis process.

### ***Validity and Reliability***

In qualitative research, terms such as credibility, accuracy of results, and researcher competence are more appropriate than the classical validity and reliability terminology used in quantitative studies (Krefting, 1991, as cited in Başkale, 2016). To ensure the credibility (internal validity) of this study, expert review was employed. As recommended by Başkale (2016), researchers consulted experts familiar with the research topic and qualitative methodologies to assess the study from multiple perspectives.

To ensure transferability (external validity), the study employed criterion sampling from among purposive sampling strategies. Transferability refers to how the findings may be generalized and conveyed to broader contexts (Başkale, 2016). In addition, independent researchers conducted the qualitative analysis process separately and compared results to assess inter-rater consistency.

In this study, which analyzes the “5. sınıf Türkçe ders kitabı” (Cin vd., 2024) in terms of critical thinking skills, document analysis was the principal method. To increase the validity and reliability of this method, strategies aligned with qualitative research conventions were adopted. Each phase of the research process was analyzed in detail, and the data were processed systematically. Documents were evaluated according to predetermined objective criteria to ensure the confirmability of the findings (Özkan, 2023). For dependability, multiple researchers independently examined the same materials, and inter-coder agreement was reached. Furthermore, representative textual evidence matching each theme was included in the analysis tables. The triangulation of data also strengthened the trustworthiness of the findings (Özkan, 2023).

### ***Data Analysis***

The data obtained in this study were analyzed using the descriptive analysis technique, one of the qualitative data analysis methods. Descriptive analysis involves summarizing and interpreting the data systematically based on pre-determined themes (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021). Accordingly, the literary texts in the 5th grade Turkish textbook were examined based on the components of critical thinking competencies and dispositions.

In this study, Ennis’s framework of critical thinking dispositions and competencies was adopted. Operational definitions for each theme were adapted in line with the aims of the research. For example, “making correct inferences” was defined as evaluating the possible outcomes of events in the text, while “open-mindedness” was defined as recognizing alternative perspectives. The unit of analysis was determined at the sentence level, with each sentence treated as an independent unit of coding. When more than one theme appeared within a single sentence, each was coded separately. In the findings section, tables were presented in a more concise manner, and interpretative comments were added after each table to explain the pedagogical implications of the identified themes

## Findings

The findings obtained in the study should be presented in accordance with the research objectives and/or hypotheses. Relevant tables, figures, charts, or diagrams may be used to present the findings.

### Tables and Figures

This section presents the findings related to the first sub-problem of the study: *“What is the distribution of critical thinking competencies in the literary texts included in the 5th Grade Turkish Textbook?”*

**Table 1.** Analysis of the Text *“Topsuz Basketbol Oyunu”* in Terms of Critical Thinking Competencies

| Themes                                      | Frequency (f) |
|---|---------------|
| Focusing on a Question                      | 3             |
| Analyzing Arguments                         | 2             |
| Formulating and Solving Questions           | 2             |
| Evaluating the Credibility of a Source      | 1             |
| Observing and Examining Observation Reports | 1             |
| Drawing and Assessing Conclusions           | 2             |

As shown in Table 1, the text includes the following critical thinking competencies: focusing on a question (f = 3), analyzing arguments (f = 2), formulating and solving questions (f = 2), evaluating the credibility of a source (f = 1), examining observation reports (f = 1), and drawing and assessing conclusions (f = 2).

Below are sample sentences from the text that reflect these themes:

- *“I wonder what I can do?”* (p. 26)
- *“They couldn’t just end the game because the ball popped at the most exciting moment of the match.”* (p. 26)
- *“A basketball match without a ball? What do you mean?”* (p. 27)
- *“We can really own the things that come out of our bag. What could be easier than that?”* (p. 27)
- *“Moni started to doubt: ‘Did Mete really step on the ball?’”* (p. 28)
- *“Imagine that—interplanetary travel... Playing is such a wonderful thing!”* (p. 28)

**Table 2.** Analysis of the Text “Öğretmen Sevinci” in Terms of Critical Thinking Competencies

| Themes                                      | Frequency (f) |
|---|---------------|
| Focusing on a Question                      | 2             |
| Analyzing Arguments                         | 1             |
| Formulating and Solving Questions           | 2             |
| Evaluating the Credibility of a Source      | 1             |
| Observing and Examining Observation Reports | 1             |
| Drawing and Assessing Conclusions           | 2             |

As shown in Table 2, the text contains the following critical thinking competencies: focusing on a question (f = 2), analyzing arguments (f = 1), formulating and solving questions (f = 2), evaluating the credibility of a source (f = 1), observing and examining observation reports (f = 1), and drawing and assessing conclusions (f = 2).

Below are selected example sentences from the text that correspond to these themes:

- “Is it enough? Maybe I need to do more.” (p. 52)
- “Last year, all the children were happy—will they be again this time?” (p. 53)
- “How can I make these kites more fun?” (p. 52)
- “Are the materials I have sturdy enough?” (p. 52)
- “I designed the kites thinking about their effect on children.” (p. 52)
- “When the sky was filled with colors, seeing their happiness made everything worthwhile.” (p. 54)

**Table 3.** Analysis of the Text “Gazi Mustafa Kemal ve Sığirtmaç Mustafa” in Terms of Critical Thinking Competencies

| Themes                                      | Frequency (f) |
|---|---------------|
| Focusing on a Question                      | 3             |
| Analyzing Arguments                         | 2             |
| Formulating and Solving Questions           | 2             |
| Evaluating the Credibility of a Source      | 1             |
| Observing and Examining Observation Reports | 2             |
| Drawing and Assessing Conclusions           | 2             |

As seen in Table 3, the text includes the following critical thinking competencies: focusing on a question (f = 3), analyzing arguments (f = 2), formulating and solving questions (f = 2), evaluating the credibility of a source (f = 1), observing and examining observation reports (f = 2), and drawing and assessing conclusions (f = 2).

Below are sample sentences from the text illustrating these themes:

- “Gazi asked, ‘What is your name?’ to learn the child’s identity.” (p. 101)
- “He asked, ‘If you earn three liras, how much would you make in a year?’” (p. 102)

- *“By asking, ‘Do you know Gazi Mustafa Kemal?’, he assessed the child’s knowledge.”* (p. 101)
- *“After gathering the child’s information, Gazi decided to investigate his family and background.”* (p. 103)
- *“He noticed the child might have malaria by observing his swollen stomach and fatigue.”* (p. 101)
- *“Gazi planned and implemented all the necessary steps for the child’s education.”* (p. 103)

**Table 4.** Analysis of the Text “Atatürk ve Çiftlik” in Terms of Critical Thinking Competencies

| Themes                                      | Frequency (f) |
|---|---------------|
| Focusing on a Question                      | 3             |
| Analyzing Arguments                         | 2             |
| Formulating and Solving Questions           | 2             |
| Evaluating the Credibility of a Source      | 1             |
| Observing and Examining Observation Reports | 2             |
| Drawing and Assessing Conclusions           | 3             |

As shown in Table 4, the text reflects the following critical thinking competencies: focusing on a question (f = 3), analyzing arguments (f = 2), formulating and solving questions (f = 2), evaluating the credibility of a source (f = 1), observing and examining observation reports (f = 2), and drawing and assessing conclusions (f = 3).

Sample sentences that illustrate these themes include:

- *“He repeatedly asked, ‘Why was such a piece of land chosen to establish a farm?’”* (p. 121)
- *“He analyzed the experts’ arguments that agriculture would not be possible there.”* (p. 121)
- *“While explaining the reason for the location, he asked, ‘If we don’t rehabilitate it, who will?’”* (p. 121)
- *“He reviewed foreign expert reports and formed his own decision.”* (p. 121)
- *“He personally observed that the land was unsuitable for agriculture.”* (p. 121)
- *“He achieved great success by implementing modern farming methods on the farm.”* (p. 121)

**Table 5.** Analysis of the Text “Her Yüreğe Nakış Gerek” in Terms of Critical Thinking Competencies

| Themes                                      | Frequency (f) |
|---|---------------|
| Focusing on a Question                      | 3             |
| Analyzing Arguments                         | 2             |
| Formulating and Solving Questions           | 2             |
| Evaluating the Credibility of a Source      | 1             |
| Observing and Examining Observation Reports | 1             |
| Drawing and Assessing Conclusions           | 2             |

As seen in Table 5, the text includes the following critical thinking competencies: focusing on a question (f = 3), analyzing arguments (f = 2), formulating and solving questions (f = 2), evaluating the credibility of a source (f = 1), observing and examining observation reports (f = 1), and drawing and assessing conclusions (f = 2).

Below are sample sentences from the text corresponding to these themes:

- “Ayşenur asked, ‘Like what, Grandpa?’ to better understand the topic.” (p. 152)
- “Her grandfather explained love and compassion by describing society through examples.” (p. 152)
- “Ayşenur asked, ‘Will these buds grow and bloom?’ to explore a possible situation.” (p. 152)
- “Her grandfather explained that love is the greatest virtue through his own experiences.” (p. 152)
- “He observed Ayşenur’s embroidery process and provided guidance.” (p. 152)
- “He said, ‘These buds will bloom,’ evaluating Ayşenur’s efforts.” (p. 152)

**Table 6.** Analysis of the Text “Dilek Kuşu” in Terms of Critical Thinking Competencies

| Themes                                      | Frequency (f) |
|---|---------------|
| Focusing on a Question                      | 3             |
| Analyzing Arguments                         | 2             |
| Formulating and Solving Questions           | 2             |
| Evaluating the Credibility of a Source      | 1             |
| Observing and Examining Observation Reports | 1             |
| Drawing and Assessing Conclusions           | 2             |

As seen in Table 6, the text includes the following critical thinking competencies: focusing on a question (f = 3), analyzing arguments (f = 2), formulating and solving questions (f = 2), evaluating the credibility of a source (f = 1), observing and examining observation reports (f = 1), and drawing and assessing conclusions (f = 2).

Sample sentences illustrating these themes include:

- “The woman questioned why her wishes did not make her happy.” (p. 182)

- *“The wish bird’s explanations about how desires can hinder happiness were taken into consideration.”* (p. 182)
- *“Then they asked, ‘What is it that will truly make us happy?’”* (p. 182)
- *“They acted based on the experiences shared by the wish bird.”* (p. 182)
- *“The bird observed the changes in the couple’s life and offered a new suggestion.”* (p. 182)
- *“In the end, they regained their happiness when they returned to their former lives.”* (p. 182)

**Table 7.** Analysis of the Text “Ev” in Terms of Critical Thinking Competencies

| Themes                                      | Frequency (f) |
|---|---------------|
| Focusing on a Question                      | 3             |
| Analyzing Arguments                         | 2             |
| Formulating and Solving Questions           | 2             |
| Evaluating the Credibility of a Source      | 1             |
| Observing and Examining Observation Reports | 1             |
| Drawing and Assessing Conclusions           | 2             |

As shown in Table 7, the text includes the following critical thinking competencies: focusing on a question (f = 3), analyzing arguments (f = 2), formulating and solving questions (f = 2), evaluating the credibility of a source (f = 1), observing and examining observation reports (f = 1), and drawing and assessing conclusions (f = 2).

Sample sentences from the text that reflect these themes are presented below:

- *“So, what caused these houses to turn into mere ‘four walls’?”* (p. 69)
- *“TV series showed us grand and magnificent homes. We thought beauty was there.”* (p. 69)
- *“Think about your dream house—do you really find happiness in it?”* (p. 69)
- *“I questioned the notion of happiness offered by television dramas.”* (p. 69)
- *“Every Sunday I fill my cookie box, and the smell spreads through the kitchen.”* (p. 69)
- *“In the end, I feel happiness when the children run in to grab the cookies.”* (p. 69)

**Table 8.** Analysis of the Text “Tatlı Günler” in Terms of Critical Thinking Competencies

| Themes                                      | Frequency (f) |
|---|---------------|
| Focusing on a Question                      | 3             |
| Analyzing Arguments                         | 2             |
| Formulating and Solving Questions           | 2             |
| Evaluating the Credibility of a Source      | 1             |
| Observing and Examining Observation Reports | 1             |
| Drawing and Assessing Conclusions           | 2             |

As shown in Table 8, the text includes the following critical thinking competencies: focusing on a question ( $f = 3$ ), analyzing arguments ( $f = 2$ ), formulating and solving questions ( $f = 2$ ), evaluating the credibility of a source ( $f = 1$ ), observing and examining observation reports ( $f = 1$ ), and drawing and assessing conclusions ( $f = 2$ ).

Below are sample sentences from the text corresponding to these themes:

- “My father used to ask, ‘Why do you feel this way?’” (p. 81)
- “He would criticize the bad characters in the stories and help us draw lessons.” (p. 81)
- “My father asked, ‘Who do you think is right in this story?’” (p. 81)
- “We would compare the events in the stories with real-life situations.” (p. 81)
- “My sister Hatice carefully observed everything my mother said.” (p. 81)
- “At the end of each story, my father would discuss its message with us.” (p. 81)

**Table 9.** Analysis of the Text “Haydi Doğa Yürüyüşüne!” in Terms of Critical Thinking Competencies

| Themes                                      | Frequency (f) |
|---|---------------|
| Focusing on a Question                      | 3             |
| Analyzing Arguments                         | 2             |
| Formulating and Solving Questions           | 2             |
| Evaluating the Credibility of a Source      | 1             |
| Observing and Examining Observation Reports | 2             |
| Drawing and Assessing Conclusions           | 2             |

As indicated in Table 9, the text reflects the following critical thinking competencies: focusing on a question ( $f = 3$ ), analyzing arguments ( $f = 2$ ), formulating and solving questions ( $f = 2$ ), evaluating the credibility of a source ( $f = 1$ ), observing and examining observation reports ( $f = 2$ ), and drawing and assessing conclusions ( $f = 2$ ).

Examples from the text that correspond to these themes include:

- “Where can nature walks be done, and how should one prepare?” (p. 114)
- “You should use a walking stick to maintain your balance during a hike.” (p. 115)
- “Is walking in nature enough for a healthy life?” (p. 114)

- “You might also carry a booklet about the local plants and animals.” (p. 115)
- “You will notice how many things can be observed in nature during a walk.” (p. 115)
- “Planning your route in advance ensures a safe hiking experience.” (p. 115)

**Table 10.** Analysis of the Text “Ne Olacak Bu Yemek Sorunu?” in Terms of Critical Thinking Competencies

| Themes                                      | Frequency (f) |
|---|---------------|
| Focusing on a Question                      | 3             |
| Analyzing Arguments                         | 2             |
| Formulating and Solving Questions           | 2             |
| Evaluating the Credibility of a Source      | 1             |
| Observing and Examining Observation Reports | 2             |
| Drawing and Assessing Conclusions           | 2             |

As shown in Table 10, the text involves the following critical thinking competencies: focusing on a question ( $f = 3$ ), analyzing arguments ( $f = 2$ ), formulating and solving questions ( $f = 2$ ), evaluating the credibility of a source ( $f = 1$ ), observing and examining observation reports ( $f = 2$ ), and drawing and assessing conclusions ( $f = 2$ ).

The following sentences from the text illustrate these themes:

- “Why are the foods I love unhealthy, and the ones I dislike healthy?” (p. 129)
- “Our teacher explained why certain meals are considered healthy.” (p. 129)
- “I asked, ‘Where did these dishes come from, and who made them?’” (p. 130)
- “I researched the background of the meals in books and on the internet.” (p. 130)
- “While tasting the dishes I disliked, I observed the satisfaction on my mother’s face.” (p. 129)
- “In the end, learning the story behind the meals made me less prejudiced.” (p. 130)

**Table 11.** Analysis of the Text “Topsuz Basketbol Oyunu” in Terms of Critical Thinking Dispositions

| Dispositions  | Frequency (f) |
|---|---------------|
| Questioning the Clear Presentation of a Problem       | 3             |
| Tendency to Investigate Causes of Facts               | 2             |
| Tendency to Gather Information for Good Understanding | 2             |
| Using Credible Sources                                | 1             |
| Considering the General Context                       | 2             |
| Maintaining Focus on the Main Issue                   | 2             |
| Questioning the Initial Thought                       | 1             |
| Examining Alternative Perspectives                    | 2             |
| Clear Expression of Thought                           | 5             |

As shown in Table 11, the text includes the following critical thinking dispositions: questioning the clear presentation of a problem ( $f = 3$ ), tendency to investigate causes of

facts (f = 2), tendency to gather information for good understanding (f = 2), using credible sources (f = 1), considering the general context (f = 2), maintaining focus on the main issue (f = 2), questioning the initial thought (f = 1), examining alternative perspectives (f = 2), and clear expression of thought (f = 5).

The sample expressions from the text reflecting these themes are as follows:

- *“They couldn’t end the game just because the ball popped at the most exciting moment. They needed to find a way to continue the game.”* (p. 26)
- *“Everyone playing was very upset. ‘If only it hadn’t popped,’ they said.”* (p. 26)
- *“We can have anything we imagine. We can ride a rocket and go to space.”* (p. 27)
- *“We can truly own the things that come out of our bags. What could be easier than that?”* (p. 27)
- *“They dribbled the ball. They passed to each other. They scored a stylish point.”* (p. 27)
- *“The best part of playing was pretending it was all real.”* (p. 28)
- *“At one point, Moni wondered, ‘Did Mete really step on the ball?’”* (p. 28)
- *“He could have pulled a basketball out of his bag. What could be easier than that?”* (p. 27)
- *“We can play basketball without a ball,” said Moni. “We don’t need a ball to play.”* (p. 27)

**Table 12.** Analysis of the Text “Öğretmen Sevinci” in Terms of Critical Thinking Dispositions

| Dispositions  | Frequency (f) |
|---|---------------|
| Questioning the Clear Presentation of a Problem       | 3             |
| Tendency to Investigate Causes of Facts               | 2             |
| Tendency to Gather Information for Good Understanding | 2             |
| Using Credible Sources                                | 1             |
| Considering the General Context                       | 2             |
| Maintaining Focus on the Main Issue                   | 3             |
| Questioning the Initial Thought                       | 1             |
| Examining Alternative Perspectives                    | 2             |
| Clear Expression of Thought                           | 4             |

As shown in Table 12, the text includes the following critical thinking dispositions: questioning the clear presentation of a problem (f = 3), tendency to investigate causes of facts (f = 2), tendency to gather information for good understanding (f = 2), using credible sources (f = 1), considering the general context (f = 2), maintaining focus on the main issue (f = 3), questioning the initial thought (f = 1), examining alternative perspectives (f = 2), and clear expression of thought (f = 4).

The sample expressions from the text are as follows:

- *“Will it be enough for all the neighborhood children? Last year I made eight, but a few were left out.”* (p. 52)
- *“Why am I this tired? Maybe I’m getting old.”* (p. 52)
- *“I’m trying to shape them in ways that children will like.”* (p. 52)
- *“I have enough materials; I can make a few more kites.”* (p. 52)
- *“The sky will be filled with colors.”* (p. 53)
- *“I live alone, but all the kids in this neighborhood are my grandchildren.”* (p. 53)
- *“If the kites are not enough again this time, I’ll make more.”* (p. 52)
- *“Can one kite be bigger than the other?”* (p. 54)
- *“Come on, kids! Your teacher grandpa is here! The kites have arrived!”* (p. 54)

**Table 13.** Analysis of the Text “Gazi Mustafa Kemal ve Sığırtmaç Mustafa” in Terms of Critical Thinking Dispositions

| Dispositions  | Frequency (f) |
|---|---------------|
| Questioning the Clear Presentation of a Problem       | 3             |
| Tendency to Investigate Causes of Facts               | 2             |
| Tendency to Gather Information for Good Understanding | 2             |
| Using Credible Sources                                | 1             |
| Considering the General Context                       | 2             |
| Maintaining Focus on the Main Issue                   | 3             |
| Questioning the Initial Thought                       | 1             |
| Examining Alternative Perspectives                    | 2             |
| Clear Expression of Thought                           | 4             |

As illustrated in Table 13, the text includes various critical thinking dispositions: questioning the clear presentation of a problem (f = 3), investigating the causes of facts (f = 2), gathering information for better understanding (f = 2), using credible sources (f = 1), considering the general context (f = 2), maintaining focus on the main issue (f = 3), questioning initial thoughts (f = 1), examining alternative perspectives (f = 2), and clearly expressing thoughts (f = 4).

The following sample expressions from the text demonstrate these themes:

- *“When they lost the way to the farm, they said, ‘Let’s try a different path.’”* (p. 100)
- *“Mustafa’s fatigue was due to malaria.”* (p. 100)
- *“Gazi looked carefully at the boy’s swollen stomach and suspected illness.”* (p. 101)

- *“Gazi wanted to gather information about the child’s earnings and life.”* (p. 103)
- *“Considering the illness, Gazi ordered medical treatment.”* (p. 103)
- *“Mustafa Kemal ensured the child’s future by sending him to school.”* (p. 103)
- *“The boy’s pride and strength made him hesitant to accept help.”* (p. 102)
- *“Gazi asked, ‘Could the fee for showing the way be that much?’ trying to understand Mustafa’s reasoning.”* (p. 102)
- *“He directly asked, ‘What is your name?’ to learn about the child’s identity.”* (p. 101)

**Table 14.** Analysis of the Text *“Atatürk ve Çiftlik”* in Terms of Critical Thinking Dispositions

| Dispositions  | Frequency (f) |
|---|---------------|
| Questioning the Clear Presentation of a Problem       | 3             |
| Tendency to Investigate Causes of Facts               | 2             |
| Tendency to Gather Information for Good Understanding | 2             |
| Using Credible Sources                                | 1             |
| Considering the General Context                       | 2             |
| Maintaining Focus on the Main Issue                   | 3             |
| Questioning the Initial Thought                       | 1             |
| Examining Alternative Perspectives                    | 2             |
| Clear Expression of Thought                           | 4             |

As shown in Table 14, the text demonstrates the following critical thinking dispositions: questioning the clear presentation of a problem ( $f = 3$ ), investigating the causes of facts ( $f = 2$ ), gathering information ( $f = 2$ ), using credible sources ( $f = 1$ ), considering the general context ( $f = 2$ ), maintaining focus ( $f = 3$ ), questioning initial thoughts ( $f = 1$ ), examining other perspectives ( $f = 2$ ), and expressing ideas clearly ( $f = 4$ ).

Sample sentences reflecting these dispositions include:

- *“If we don’t rehabilitate this land, who will?”* (p. 121)
- *“Atatürk consulted agricultural experts to obtain the worst soil report possible.”* (p. 121)
- *“He also considered the opinions of foreign experts about the farm land.”* (p. 121)
- *“Reports showed that the land was unsuitable for agriculture.”* (p. 121)
- *“He chose a place where not even trees could grow to establish the farm.”* (p. 121)
- *“Atatürk immediately ordered agricultural experts to begin the work.”* (p. 121)
- *“He aimed to rehabilitate poor soil and make it productive.”* (p. 121)
- *“Some experts claimed farming was not possible on this land.”* (p. 121)

- *“He openly stated his view: ‘Eyes that don’t see green are deprived of aesthetic pleasure.’” (p. 120)*

**Table 15.** Analysis of the Text *“Her Yüreğe Nakış Gerek”* in Terms of Critical Thinking Dispositions

| Dispositions  | Frequency (f) |
|---|---------------|
| Questioning the Clear Presentation of a Problem       | 2             |
| Tendency to Investigate Causes of Facts               | 2             |
| Tendency to Gather Information for Good Understanding | 1             |
| Using Credible Sources                                | 1             |
| Considering the General Context                       | 2             |
| Maintaining Focus on the Main Issue                   | 3             |
| Questioning the Initial Thought                       | 1             |
| Examining Alternative Perspectives                    | 2             |
| Clear Expression of Thought                           | 4             |

As shown in Table 15, the following critical thinking dispositions were identified: questioning the clear presentation of a problem (f = 2), investigating the causes of facts (f = 2), gathering information (f = 1), using credible sources (f = 1), considering the general context (f = 2), maintaining focus on the main issue (f = 3), questioning the initial thought (f = 1), examining different perspectives (f = 2), and clear expression of thought (f = 4).

Below are sample expressions reflecting these dispositions:

- *“While embroidering, Ayşenur asked, ‘Will these buds bloom?’” (p. 152)*
- *“She asked her grandfather, ‘Like what, Grandpa?’ seeking more information.” (p. 152)*
- *“Her grandfather provided detailed explanations about the emotions people need.” (p. 152)*
- *“He presented concrete examples that described society.” (p. 152)*
- *“He emphasized that society needs noble values.” (p. 152)*
- *“The importance of instilling positive feelings in one’s heart during embroidery was continuously emphasized.” (p. 152)*
- *“Ayşenur patiently waited for the rosebud to bloom.” (p. 152)*
- *“Her grandfather added another perspective by saying, ‘We must even love animals, my girl.’” (p. 152)*
- *“He stated clearly, ‘Every child should embroider these feelings into their heart.’” (p. 152)*

**Table 16.** Analysis of the Text “Dilek Kuşu” in Terms of Critical Thinking Dispositions

| Dispositions  | Frequency (f) |
|---|---------------|
| Questioning the Clear Presentation of a Problem       | 2             |
| Tendency to Investigate Causes of Facts               | 2             |
| Tendency to Gather Information for Good Understanding | 1             |
| Using Credible Sources                                | 1             |
| Considering the General Context                       | 2             |
| Maintaining Focus on the Main Issue                   | 3             |
| Questioning the Initial Thought                       | 1             |
| Examining Alternative Perspectives                    | 2             |
| Clear Expression of Thought                           | 4             |

As seen in Table 16, the text contains various critical thinking dispositions: questioning the clear presentation of a problem ( $f = 2$ ), investigating causes of facts ( $f = 2$ ), gathering information ( $f = 1$ ), using credible sources ( $f = 1$ ), considering the general context ( $f = 2$ ), maintaining focus on the main issue ( $f = 3$ ), questioning initial assumptions ( $f = 1$ ), examining other perspectives ( $f = 2$ ), and expressing thoughts clearly ( $f = 4$ ).

Sample statements from the text that illustrate these themes include:

- “When the wish bird asked what we wanted, we began to consider what we truly needed.” (p. 181)
- “The woman questioned her emotions by asking, ‘Why am I not happy?’” (p. 182)
- “They listened carefully to what the wish bird had to say.” (p. 182)
- “The bird asked, ‘Is it a need or a desire?’” (p. 182)
- “We noticed that our wishes satisfied our desires rather than our needs.” (p. 182)
- “The woman noticed the loneliness within the palace and remembered the past.” (p. 182)
- “She patiently waited for the outcome of her wishes.” (p. 182)
- “The wish bird offered a perspective focused on appreciating happiness.” (p. 182)
- “They said, ‘Bring us back to the happy days of the past.’” (p. 182)

**Table 17.** Analysis of the Text “Ev” in Terms of Critical Thinking Dispositions

| Dispositions  | Frequency (f) |
|---|---------------|
| Questioning the Clear Presentation of a Problem       | 3             |
| Tendency to Investigate Causes of Facts               | 2             |
| Tendency to Gather Information for Good Understanding | 2             |
| Using Credible Sources                                | 1             |
| Considering the General Context                       | 2             |
| Maintaining Focus on the Main Issue                   | 3             |
| Questioning the Initial Thought                       | 1             |
| Examining Alternative Perspectives                    | 2             |
| Clear Expression of Thought                           | 4             |

As shown in Table 17, the following dispositions were identified: questioning the clear presentation of a problem (f = 3), investigating causes of facts (f = 2), gathering information (f = 2), using credible sources (f = 1), considering the general context (f = 2), maintaining focus (f = 3), questioning initial thoughts (f = 1), examining different perspectives (f = 2), and clearly expressing ideas (f = 4).

Sample sentences that reflect these themes include:

- *“So, what turned these homes into ‘four walls’? The places we once clung to, when did they become places we fled from?”* (p. 69)
- *“Who did this? It’s hard to say, but the answer is: We did.”* (p. 69)
- *“I imagined the cookie tin as a symbol of happiness.”* (p. 68)
- *“TV shows showed us large, majestic homes.”* (p. 69)
- *“I love my house not because it’s ‘ultra-luxurious’ as in real estate ads, but because it’s my home.”* (p. 69)
- *“Every Sunday, I bake cookies—heart-shaped ones—and fill our tin.”* (p. 69)
- *“Am I happy? Thank goodness. Do cookies play a role in this? I’m not sure.”* (p. 69)
- *“If your begonias and geraniums aren’t blooming, it’s because you didn’t plant them.”* (p. 69)
- *“Home is a word that must be filled with meaning. We’ve only perceived it as a physical space.”* (p. 69)

**Table 18.** Analysis of the Text “Tatlı Günler” in Terms of Critical Thinking Dispositions

| Dispositions  | Frequency (f) |
|---|---------------|
| Questioning the Clear Presentation of a Problem       | 2             |
| Tendency to Investigate Causes of Facts               | 2             |
| Tendency to Gather Information for Good Understanding | 1             |
| Using Credible Sources                                | 1             |
| Considering the General Context                       | 2             |
| Maintaining Focus on the Main Issue                   | 3             |
| Questioning the Initial Thought                       | 1             |
| Examining Alternative Perspectives                    | 2             |
| Clear Expression of Thought                           | 4             |

As shown in Table 18, the text demonstrates the following critical thinking dispositions: questioning the clear presentation of a problem (f = 2), investigating causes of facts (f = 2), gathering information (f = 1), using credible sources (f = 1), considering the general context (f = 2), maintaining focus (f = 3), questioning initial thoughts (f = 1), examining alternative perspectives (f = 2), and clearly expressing ideas (f = 4).

Sample expressions that reflect these themes include:

- *“Our village is nestled at the foot of a snowy, misty mountain.”* (p. 80)
- *“I used to wonder why my father was so tired.”* (p. 81)
- *“My mother would always listen to the troubles of our poor neighbors.”* (p. 81)
- *“I listened to my father’s stories and tried to understand what happened in the past.”* (p. 81)
- *“There was happiness in our home, but our financial means were limited.”* (p. 81)
- *“When we read books together, everyone in the room listened with great interest.”* (p. 81)
- *“My father always endured to the end while reading.”* (p. 81)
- *“His stories took us all on different imaginative journeys.”* (p. 81)
- *“My mother said, ‘We must not let the poor go hungry.’”* (p. 81)

**Table 19.** *The Analysis of the Text “Let’s Go for a Nature Walk!” in Terms of Attitudes Specific to Critical Thinking*

| Themes   | Frequency (f) |
|--|---------------|
| Doubt in Clearly Presenting a Problem              | 3             |
| Tendency to Investigate the Causes of Facts        | 2             |
| Tendency to Gather Information to Be Well-Informed | 2             |
| Using Valid Sources                                | 1             |
| Considering the General Situation                  | 2             |
| Maintaining Focus on the Main Issue                | 3             |
| Doubt in Maintaining the Initial Thought           | 1             |
| Examining Presented Different Perspectives         | 2             |
| Expressing a Thought Clearly                       | 4             |

When Table 19 is examined, it is observed that the themes of doubt in clearly presenting a problem (f=3), tendency to investigate the causes of facts (f=2), tendency to gather information to be well-informed (f=2), using valid sources (f=1), considering the general situation (f=2), maintaining focus on the main issue (f=3), doubt in maintaining the initial thought (f=1), examining presented different perspectives (f=2), and expressing a thought clearly (f=4) are included in the text.

***Sample Sentences Related to the Themes:***

- *“What should be paid attention to during the walk? All are in this article.”* (p. 114)
- *“Why is it so important to choose the right shoes for a nature walk?”* (p. 115)
- *“Determining the walking route in advance makes it easier to choose clothes and equipment.”* (p. 115)

- “You can also carry a booklet about the plants and animals in the region.” (p. 115)
- “For a long walk, the most important thing is choosing the right shoes.” (p. 115)
- “Enough drinking water and nutritious foods should be taken throughout the walk.” (p. 115)
- “If we don't prepare according to the weather conditions, we may have problems.” (p. 115)
- “A nature walk is not only exercise but also an opportunity for observation.” (p. 114)
- “One must leave the city to go for a nature walk.” (p. 114)

**Table 20.** *Analysis of the Text What's Going to Happen to This Food Problem? in Terms of Dispositions Specific to Critical Thinking*

| Dispositions                                       | Frequency (f) |
|--|---------------|
| Doubt About Clearly Presenting a Problem           | 3             |
| Tendency to Investigate the Causes of Facts        | 2             |
| Tendency to Gather Information to Be Well-Informed | 2             |
| Using Reliable Sources                             | 1             |
| Considering the Overall Situation                  | 2             |
| Maintaining Focus on the Main Issue                | 3             |
| Doubt About Preserving the Initial Thought         | 1             |
| Examining Different Perspectives                   | 2             |
| Clear Expression of Thought                        | 4             |

When Table 20 is examined, it is seen that the text includes the following critical thinking dispositions: doubt about clearly presenting a problem (f=3), tendency to investigate the causes of facts (f=2), tendency to gather information to be well-informed (f=2), using reliable sources (f=1), considering the overall situation (f=2), maintaining focus on the main issue (f=3), doubt about preserving the initial thought (f=1), examining different perspectives (f=2), and clear expression of thought (f=4). Example sentences related to these dispositions are presented below:

- “Ugh, it’s meal time again! There’s nothing I like on the table.” (p. 128)
- “Why is spinach even healthy? They keep saying it has vitamins and iron.” (p. 129)
- “We were asked to research the story behind the meals for our performance project.” (p. 130)
- “Our teacher said we should ask around and read books about it.” (p. 130)
- “Our teacher said, ‘Without nutrition, we cannot sustain our lives.’” (p. 129)
- “I made a list and started researching the foods I like and dislike.” (p. 130)

- “Even though my mother tries to explain the benefits of food, I’m not always convinced.” (p. 129)
- “Our teacher said, ‘You might change your opinion once you learn its origin.’” (p. 130)
- “I don’t hate food, but I don’t always love it either.” (p. 128)

This section presents the findings related to the first sub-problem of the study: “What is the comparative distribution of the literary texts in the 5th Grade Turkish Textbook in terms of critical thinking dispositions and skills?”

**Table 21.** Comparative Distribution of Critical Thinking Skills in Literary Texts from the 5th Grade Turkish Textbook

| Critical Thinking Skills                    | Topsuz Basketbol Oyunu | Öğretmen Sevinci | Gazi Mustafa Kemal ve Sığırtmaç Mustafa | Atatürk ve Çiftlik | Her Yüreğe Nakış Gerek | Dilek Kuşu | Ev | Tatlı Günler | Haydi Doğa Yürüyüşüne! | Ne Olacak Bu Yemek Sorunu? |
|---|------------------------|------------------|---|--------------------|------------------------|------------|----|--------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Focusing on a Question                      | 2                      | 3                | 3                                       | 3                  | 2                      | 2          | 3  | 2            | 3                      | 3                          |
| Analyzing Arguments                         | 3                      | 2                | 2                                       | 3                  | 2                      | 2          | 3  | 2            | 2                      | 2                          |
| Formulating and Solving Questions           | 4                      | 3                | 4                                       | 4                  | 3                      | 3          | 3  | 3            | 4                      | 4                          |
| Evaluating the Validity of a Source         | 1                      | 1                | 1                                       | 1                  | 1                      | 1          | 1  | 1            | 1                      | 1                          |
| Observing and Examining Observation Reports | 2                      | 2                | 2                                       | 2                  | 1                      | 1          | 2  | 1            | 2                      | 2                          |
| Preparing and Evaluating Conclusions        | 2                      | 2                | 2                                       | 2                  | 2                      | 2          | 2  | 2            | 2                      | 2                          |

When Table 21 is examined, it is observed that the critical thinking skills identified in the texts include Focusing on a Question ( $f = 2-3$ ), Analyzing Arguments ( $f = 2-3$ ), Formulating and Solving Questions ( $f = 3-4$ ), Evaluating the Validity of a Source ( $f = 1$ ), Observing and Examining Observation Reports ( $f = 1-2$ ), and Preparing and Evaluating Conclusions ( $f = 2$ ).

The distribution of these skills across the texts appears to be generally balanced. However, it is noteworthy that the skill Evaluating the Validity of a Source is consistently addressed at a low level ( $f = 1$ ) in all texts. Among the more prominent skills, Formulating and Solving Questions is particularly emphasized in the texts “*Let’s Go for a Nature Walk!*”

and “What’s the Problem with This Food?” where it appears at a high frequency (f = 4). Similarly, the skills Focusing on a Question and Analyzing Arguments are typically covered at moderate to high levels (f = 2–3).

In contrast, the skill **Observing and Examining Observation Reports** is less frequently addressed in certain texts such as “Embroidery for Every Heart,” “The Wish Bird,” and “Sweet Days.” This indicates that critical thinking skills are handled with differing emphases depending on the individual text, reflecting varied instructional priorities.

**Table 22.** Comparison of Literary Texts in the 5th Grade Turkish Textbook in Terms of Critical Thinking Attitudes

| Attitudes Specific to Critical Thinking                 | Basketball Without a Ball | The Teacher’s Joy | Gazi Mustafa Kemal and Shepherd Mustafa | Atatürk and the Farm | Every Heart Needs Embroidery | The Wish Bird | Home | Sweet Days | Let’s Go for a Nature Walk! | What Will Happen to This Food Problem? |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------|---|----------------------|------------------------------|---------------|------|------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Doubt in Clearly Presenting a Problem                   | 3                         | 3                 | 3                                       | 3                    | 2                            | 2             | 3    | 2          | 3                           | 3                                      |
| Tendency to Investigate the Causes of Facts             | 2                         | 2                 | 2                                       | 2                    | 2                            | 2             | 2    | 2          | 2                           | 2                                      |
| Tendency to Gather Information for Better Understanding | 2                         | 2                 | 2                                       | 2                    | 1                            | 1             | 2    | 1          | 2                           | 2                                      |
| Using Valid Sources                                     | 1                         | 1                 | 1                                       | 1                    | 1                            | 1             | 1    | 1          | 1                           | 1                                      |
| Considering the Overall Context                         | 2                         | 2                 | 2                                       | 2                    | 2                            | 2             | 2    | 2          | 2                           | 2                                      |
| Maintaining Focus on the Main Topic                     | 2                         | 3                 | 3                                       | 3                    | 3                            | 3             | 3    | 3          | 3                           | 3                                      |

When Table 22 is examined, it is observed that the literary texts include several attitudes specific to critical thinking, such as questioning the clarity of a problem presentation (f = 2–3), investigating the causes of facts (f = 2), collecting information for better understanding (f = 1–2), considering the general situation (f = 2), and maintaining focus on the main topic (f = 2–3). Overall, these attitudes display a relatively consistent distribution across the texts. However, the attitude of using valid sources is represented at a consistently low level (f = 1) in all texts, indicating a systematic limitation rather than a text-specific variation. This finding suggests that although the texts encourage questioning, inquiry, and focus, they provide limited opportunities for students to engage with source-based evaluation and evidence-oriented reasoning.

Among the prominent attitudes, *questioning the clarity of a problem presentation* and *maintaining focus on the main topic* are frequently emphasized with higher frequencies (f=3) in some texts. On the other hand, *tendency to collect information for better understanding* appears less frequently (f=1) in texts such as *Her Yüreğe Nakış Gerek*, *Dilek Kuşu*, and *Tatlı Günler*, lagging behind other attitudes. This situation indicates that the emphasis on critical thinking attitudes varies across texts, with certain attitudes being prioritized more than others

## Discussion

The findings of this study largely align with the general tendencies in the literature concerning the extent to which literary texts in Turkish textbooks support critical thinking skills. Temizkan (2014), in his evaluation of textbooks within the framework of the 2005 Turkish language curriculum, demonstrated that textbooks were inadequate in fostering higher-order cognitive skills such as critical thinking. Similarly, Sur (2021), in her analysis of narrative texts in Turkish textbooks, emphasized that these texts were largely limited to superficial reading activities and did not sufficiently enable students to engage in critical inquiry. More recently, Sarıkaya vd. (2023) examined the activities included in Turkish textbooks for grades 5–8 in terms of higher-order thinking skills and concluded that the activities were predominantly concentrated at the levels of recall and comprehension, while they were limited in activating processes such as evaluation and creative thinking. The findings of the present study corroborate these results, showing that competencies such as making inferences, being open to multiple perspectives, and recognizing contradictions were represented at a rather limited level in the textbook.

Nevertheless, this research does not merely provide a confirmatory contribution to the existing literature; it expands the discussion theoretically in three significant ways. First, the findings clearly revealed that literary genres differ in their potential to foster critical thinking. Narrative texts, through characters and plot structures, provide opportunities for students to establish cause–effect relationships and make inferences. Poetry, on the other hand, with its multiplicity of meanings, density of imagery, and ambiguities, enables students to generate alternative interpretations, question assumptions, and develop multiple perspectives. Biographical and memoir texts contribute to activating students' prior knowledge, fostering evaluations within historical and social contexts, and avoiding premature judgments. This result strengthens the point highlighted in the studies of Dilekçi and Karatay (2021), which demonstrated that literary genres are directly related to higher-order thinking skills and that each genre supports different cognitive processes. Accordingly, the genre-based analysis of this study provides a theoretical dimension that has been largely absent in the existing literature.

Second, current research in the field has shown that the pedagogical function of textbook texts is shaped not only by the choice of content but also by the design of end-of-text questions and activities. Previous studies by İncirkuş and Özçetin (2021) and Olukcu and Yıldız (2022) revealed that textbook questions were predominantly factual

and single-answer oriented, which limited their ability to foster critical thinking. Likewise, the study by Demir and Baş (2019) emphasized that the questions in textbooks were insufficient in activating students' higher-order thinking processes. The findings of this study confirm these results by demonstrating that even within the same textbook, some texts were supported with open-ended questions that encouraged multiple interpretations, while others were restricted to superficial recall questions. Therefore, the design of the text, particularly the type of questions included, plays a decisive role in making critical thinking visible.

Third, this study develops a critical reflection on the research tool employed. The framework of critical thinking dispositions and competencies developed by Ennis (2011), while providing a systematic structure, is not equally applicable in the context of children's literature. While themes such as making inferences, recognizing contradictions, and suspending judgment were easily observable in literary texts, themes such as the use of quantitative evidence were represented only to a limited extent in texts intended for children. Sur's (2021) findings similarly indicated that certain indicators of critical thinking were more salient in textbooks, whereas others were neglected due to contextual constraints. This suggests that while Ennis's framework offers a strong analytical map, it cannot fully capture all dimensions unless supplemented with micro-indicators specific to children's literature. Future research should therefore seek to develop hybrid models that combine Ennis's framework with criteria tailored to children's and young adult literature, thereby providing more sensitive and functional analyses.

Another contribution of this study to the literature is the visibility it provides regarding the relational differences between literary genres and critical thinking skills. Avcı and Coşkun (2022), as well as Esemen and Sadioğlu (2021), revealed that texts in Turkish textbooks were largely limited to the function of transmitting information and lacked activities that would prompt students to discuss alternative perspectives. However, in the present study, genre differences were directly analyzed, and it was demonstrated that poetry has the potential to foster skills such as recognizing ambiguities through multiplicity of meaning, whereas narrative texts have the potential to strengthen students' ability to establish cause-effect relationships. In this respect, the study stands out as one of the few that explicitly theorizes the connection between literary genres and critical thinking.

Taken together, the comparative analysis of these findings with the existing literature points to three key conclusions. Critical thinking skills are only partially supported in Turkish textbooks, and this support remains limited and superficial—a finding consistent with Temizkan (2014), Sur (2021), and Sarıkaya vd. (2023). Literary genres activate different dimensions of critical thinking, a finding that aligns with the conclusions of Dilekçi and Karatay (2021, 2022), and underscores the need for textbooks to be enriched with genre diversity and genre-specific activities. The design of texts and the contextual suitability of the analytical framework employed are decisive in making

critical thinking visible, directly corresponding to the points emphasized by İncirkuş and Özçetin (2021), Olukcu and Yıldız (2022), and Demir and Baş (2019).

In conclusion, while this research confirms the issue of superficiality frequently highlighted in the literature, it also proposes new theoretical insights through genre-based differences and question design. For curriculum developers, the implication is that critical thinking should be concretized not only in general objectives but also in genre-specific learning outcomes. For textbook authors, the implication is that rather than relying on single-answer, recall-oriented questions, activities should include tasks that support justification, counter-argumentation, and the development of alternative perspectives. For teachers, the implication is the active use of classroom strategies that encourage multiple viewpoints during text discussions, such as perspective shifting, intertextual comparison, and keeping justification journals.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

This research aimed to analyze the contribution of literary texts in the 5th-grade Turkish language textbook, developed under the Century of Türkiye Education Model, to the cultivation of students' critical thinking skills. The findings indicate that while the majority of the texts include fundamental-level competencies and dispositions—such as posing and analyzing questions, focusing on a problem, evaluating arguments, and preparing conclusions—they generally lack representations of higher-order cognitive structures.

Attitudinal components such as expressing thoughts openly, sustaining attention on core ideas, and considering the overall situation were frequently identified, indicating that students are guided toward articulating their thoughts, engaging in multifaceted evaluations, and establishing cognitive-textual interaction.

However, deeper analysis reveals a limited presence of advanced critical thinking skills, such as evaluating the credibility of a source, utilizing valid sources, analyzing observational reports, and making evidence-based decisions. This absence may hinder students from becoming individuals who not only consume information but also critically assess, compare, and support their thinking with objective data.

The study also revealed inconsistencies in textual coherence and structural integrity. While some texts richly incorporate a variety of critical thinking elements, others address these structures in only a superficial and limited manner. This inconsistency suggests that the textbook lacks a holistic instructional design and instead adopts a fragmented, text-based approach. Nevertheless, the fundamental philosophy of the Century of Türkiye Education Model views thinking not merely as a cognitive activity, but as a value-based, multidimensional, and socially contextualized process. Thus, textbook materials should not merely initiate thinking but should be designed to systematize it through reasoning based on comparison and evidence.

In conclusion, while the literary texts in the 5th-grade Turkish textbook effectively support the development of certain basic critical thinking skills, they fail to provide a balanced and coherent representation of these skills across all dimensions. Consequently, there is a need to redesign the textbook content with a focus on critical thinking, adopting a holistic approach to text selection, instructional activities, and question design. In doing so, the textbooks can contribute to cultivating individuals who, in line with the goals of the Century of Türkiye Education Model, are not only knowledgeable but also thoughtful, inquisitive, and capable of making value-based judgments.

### ***Ethical Approval***

No data was collected from human participants in this study. The research was based solely on the analysis of publicly available instructional materials (5th Grade Turkish Textbook) using the document analysis method. Therefore, the study does not require ethics committee approval. Throughout the research process, all principles of academic integrity and publication ethics—such as honesty, transparency, proper citation, and avoidance of plagiarism—were strictly followed.

### ***Author Contributions***

**Hulusi GEÇGEL:** Theoretical Background, Methodology, Results and Discussion, Data Collection.

**Fatih KANA:** Conceptualisation, Theoretical Background, Methodology, Data Collection.

**Arda KÖROĞLU:** Methodology, Data Collection, Data Analysis, Review and Editing.

### ***Conflict of Interest***

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

### ***Plagiarism Checks***

Turnitin

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### ***Artificial Intelligence Usage Statement***

*Artificial intelligence tools were used only for language editing and technical assistance during the preparation of the manuscript. All academic content and interpretations belong to the authors.*

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