

# Philosophising with Photos

## DESCRIPTION OF STRATEGY

Most philosophical enquiry takes the form of a dialogue: children verbalise their thinking and that thinking is explored by the group through further (verbal) questioning and reasoning. However, pictures, those produced by others and those produced by the children themselves, offer the opportunity to communicate abstract ideas in concrete terms.

Using photographs and photographic equipment in an enquiry session is an excellent way to prepare a group for philosophical discussion or extend their thinking during or after an enquiry. This strategy card explores some of the ways you can philosophise with photos.

## INSTRUCTIONS

### Using photographs as stimulus

You can share famous journalistic or art photographs with children or invite them to look for meaningful pictures on the internet, in books or in their family collections.

Encourage the children to read the photographs with sensitivity to the context, an awareness of people's feelings and the photographer's intention. These photographs can function as enquiry stimuli or as a means by which you can break the ice. In particular, personal photographs brought in from home can be an excellent way to stimulate discussion among a group that is still in the early stages of working together. Self-portraits can also be useful for similar reasons. (See 'For example' section for more ideas.)

### Taking photographs to explore ideas

If you're exploring a concept such as 'hope' 'change' or 'fairness' give children cameras and invite them to take photographs which capture what that concept means to them. Review the photographs as a group attempting

first to guess what concept they represent and then to critique the choice of photos asking why they were chosen and whether they can deepen our understanding of the meaning of particular words.

Another possibility for using cameras might present itself after your group has decided on a philosophical question e.g. 'Why do people do bad things?' Ask your group to go away and take a photograph which they can offer as their 'first thought'. Afterwards as each person shares their photograph, they can explain how it connects to the question. For example a child might take a picture of vandalism near their school and may make the connection that people find it hard to be good when they see bad behaviour around them.

A picture treasure hunt is a really good warm up. Give children fifteen minutes to collect a picture for each of the following concepts: 'Warm', 'Cold', 'Natural', 'Un-natural', 'Sadness', 'Joy', 'Beauty', 'The Past', 'The Future'. Etc.

## PRACTICALITIES

**No. of participants:** 1-30

**Age of participants:** 7+

**Preparation time:** 10-30 minutes to source cameras, stimuli etc.

**Delivery time:** 30 minutes-1.5 hours of photographing followed by uploading, showing/sharing, discussing and reflecting.

**Materials:** Necessary - Digital cameras (minimum 1 between 2), a computer and a projector. Ideally – A decent SLR camera, tripod, basic lights, external flashes, flash diffuser (for portraiture).



# Philosophising with Photos

## EXAMPLES OF STRATEGY IN USE

### Personal pictures

- Bring in a picture that means something to you and talk about it.
- Which of these pictures says something about you? Why?
- How does this picture make you feel? Why?
- If you were to have your portrait taken, how would it look? Why?

### Symbolic pictures

- If you had to give this picture a title what would it be?
- Find a picture that best represents a key concept. E.g. Trust, Failure, Family.
- Give this picture a caption.
- How many themes can you pick out from this picture?

## TIPS/TROUBLESHOOTING

- Pulitzer Prizewinning photographs are often deeply moving and provide rich starting points for philosophical enquiry.
- Photographs from recent news reports are sometimes useful as stimulus.
- Why not give children a collection of concept words and ask them to guess which of their classmates' photographs were taken to represent that concept? Encourage them to give reasons for their guesses and then ask the photographer to explain their reasons.
- Why not have a session on self-portraiture, inviting learners to discuss their photos and what they reveal about who they are and how they see themselves and how they'd like to be seen?

## STRATEGY DEVELOPED AT:

- Darfield-Foulstone School, Barnsley,
- Atlas Primary School, Bradford
- Meynell Primary School, Sheffield
- Brudenell Primary School, Leeds

### Comparing and contrasting pictures

- Make associations, connect pictures suggesting similarities, common themes etc. E.g. This picture is like that picture because it is of a family, because it depicts living things, because the sun is shining etc.
- What do these pictures have in common?
- What differences are important here?

### Imagining with pictures

- Use these pictures to tell a story.
- If the person in this picture could speak, what would they say?
- Imagine if things were not as they seem in this picture.
- What do you think happened before this picture was taken?



# Thinking Diaries

## DESCRIPTION OF STRATEGY

A Thinking Diary is a personal journal used alongside regular group enquiries to develop independent philosophical thinking. It can be used to record interesting philosophical questions, gather first thoughts, map out concepts, cut and stick stimulating photographs or articles.

Children can decorate their diary if they like, they can write, draw, cut and stick in it - it belongs to them and it's not a schoolbook in the conventional sense. The diaries are most effective at producing independent thinking if the young people feel a strong sense of ownership over them and are allowed to decide how best to use them.

## INSTRUCTIONS

- Thinking Diaries should be introduced at the beginning of a philosophy project. Any old book will do but you may decide to give the children a special hardback notebook or let them cover or decorate an exercise book. Sharing a Thinking Diary of your own or one from a previous project is a nice way to show their potential and encourage young people to start using them straight away.
- Give the young people plenty of opportunities to use their diaries. These opportunities might arise during or after philosophical enquiries or at other times.
- You might suggest to your class that they begin their diary by writing about what they hope to achieve during the philosophy project. For example, maybe they hope they'll get better at listening or asking questions or perhaps they want to explore one particular issue in some depth. They can refer back to their aims as the project progresses and reflect on the progress they've made.

- During philosophical enquiries your class can use their Thinking Diaries to gather first thoughts, compose philosophical questions or prepare for last words. After an enquiry children might use their diaries to reflect on the dialogue: What interesting ideas came up? What could the group do better next time?
- At other times the diaries can be taken home, used during wet playtimes or as an extension activity when other tasks have been completed. Children might want to write a response to one of the philosophical questions not chosen by the rest of the group. They might want to cut out and stick pictures, poems or stories that have stimulated philosophical ideas. They might have written conversations with friends or family. Children might want to make notes of philosophical issues that arise out of work in other areas of the curriculum.
- Early on you may need to suggest possible uses to the children but as the project progresses they will begin to take control over when and how best to use their Thinking Diaries.

## PRACTICALITIES

**No. of participants:** 1-30

**Age of participants:** 5+ but most effective with children 7+ who can write confidently. Younger children or those with additional needs can draw in their diaries rather than write.

**Preparation time:** 5-10 minutes to source some books.

**Delivery time:** 5-30 minutes of writing, drawing, cutting and sticking etc.

**Materials:** The books themselves, backing paper, pencils, pens etc.



# Thinking Diaries

## EXAMPLES OF STRATEGY IN USE

### Journal entries

- Some children will want to use their diaries simply to describe the project activity – you can encourage them to use their diaries to extend their thinking beyond this.

### Question tracking

- Children can use their diaries to record all of the questions asked over the course of the project. This can be a nice way to acknowledge the importance of those questions that don't receive the most votes.

### Mind mapping concepts

- If the class asks: 'What is love?' you can give them five minutes to map out the concept of love in their Thinking Diaries.

### Written dialogues

- In pairs, children can use their Thinking Diaries to have written conversations about a question the class has chosen. They might write from their own perspective, or assume a particular position. For example in a written conversation about the question: 'Should we eat meat?' one child could write from the perspective of a vegetarian.

### Stimulus scrapbook

- Your class can use the diaries as scrap books, sticking in photocopies, pictures or photographs of stimuli used throughout the project.

### Glossary of terms

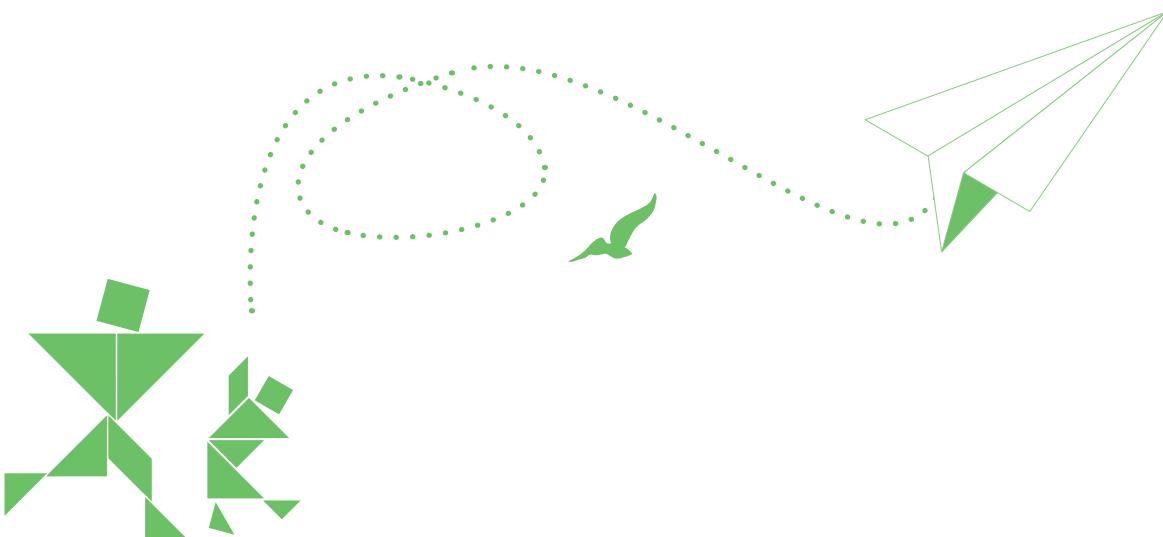
- As children uncover new philosophical concepts or technical terms they might want to compile a glossary at the back of their book.

## TIPS/TROUBLESHOOTING

- While you may encourage young people to make regular use of their Thinking Diaries most teachers choose not to set compulsory tasks. Some teachers won't mark the journals and others ensure that they don't read them without the child's permission.
- Thinking Diaries can be a useful way to encourage parents to participate in philosophical dialogues. Children can take their philosophical questions home to their families and make notes on some of their new ideas to share back at school.

## STRATEGY DEVELOPED AT:

- Meynell Primary School, Sheffield



# The Question Machine

## DESCRIPTION OF STRATEGY

The Question Machine is a strategy that promotes questioning skills. It helps people to understand the breadth of questions that can be asked and encourages creative questioning.

## INSTRUCTIONS

- Ask the group how many question words they can think of e.g. What, Who, Why, Will.
- If you feel they have missed any important ones add them to the list.
- Make a spinner with those words around the edge.
- Give the group a theme e.g. 'holidays', and ask them to spin the spinner and then think of questions around the theme, starting with the question word selected. So if the selected word was 'When' you might ask 'When is the best time to go on holiday?' (You will soon find out if they understand how to use question words and may need to play this for a few sessions until they grasp the basic concept of questioning.)
- Ask the group for words relating to your topic or stimulus e.g. sand, ice cream, suitcase, aeroplane.
- Collect egg boxes, or similar junk material, until you have enough hollows for each word. Write the words on stickers and place one in each hollow.
- Spin the spinner to get a question word then throw a small ball into the boxes to get a topic word.
- Think of a question which combines both question word and topic word. E.g. 'Where does sand come from?'
- Write down all the questions which they think of without praising some above others. Offer help if needed to express their questions grammatically. Aim to create at least a dozen questions.

## PRACTICALITIES

**No. of participants:** 10-30

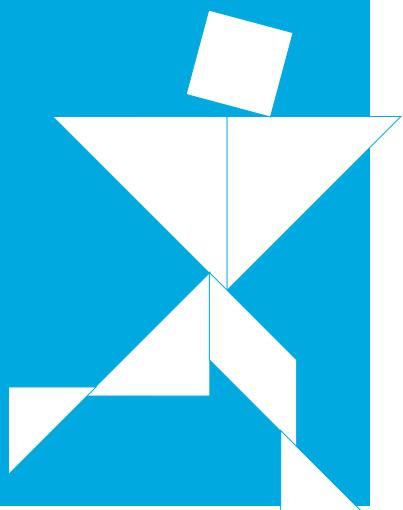
**Age of participants:** 5+

**Preparation time:** 20 minutes. Craft materials for making the machine. May require materials to support sorting the questions.

**Delivery time:** 4 sessions 30-45 mins.

**Materials:** Spinner, junk or egg boxes, small ball. Continuum line or stickers for sorting questions.

- Sort the questions. You can choose which criteria you sort by as suits your group for example:
  - Easy to answer or hard to answer.
  - Has only one answer or has many answers.
  - You could find out the answer/you would have to imagine the answer.
  - The answer would be one word or we would use many words to answer.
  - We would be interested to know the answer or not interested to know it.
- Questions can be sorted in a number of ways such as placing on a continuum line, voting, discussion, marking with stickers, showing with open or closed hands how many words an answer is. Expect and encourage debate whilst sorting the questions.
- From the results of this the group should be able to decide which questions to answer in which ways. Questions which satisfy a number of criteria at the same time might lead into P4C, particularly those that are simultaneously hard to answer, have many answers, might be answered with many words, require imagination and are interesting to the children. E.g. 'Is it wrong to travel by aeroplane?'
- Once the group becomes used to sorting these random questions they will be far more able to form questions suitable for P4C, research and creative activities without using the machine.



# The Question Machine

## EXAMPLES OF STRATEGY IN USE

The Question Machine is useful for generating interesting non philosophical questions too

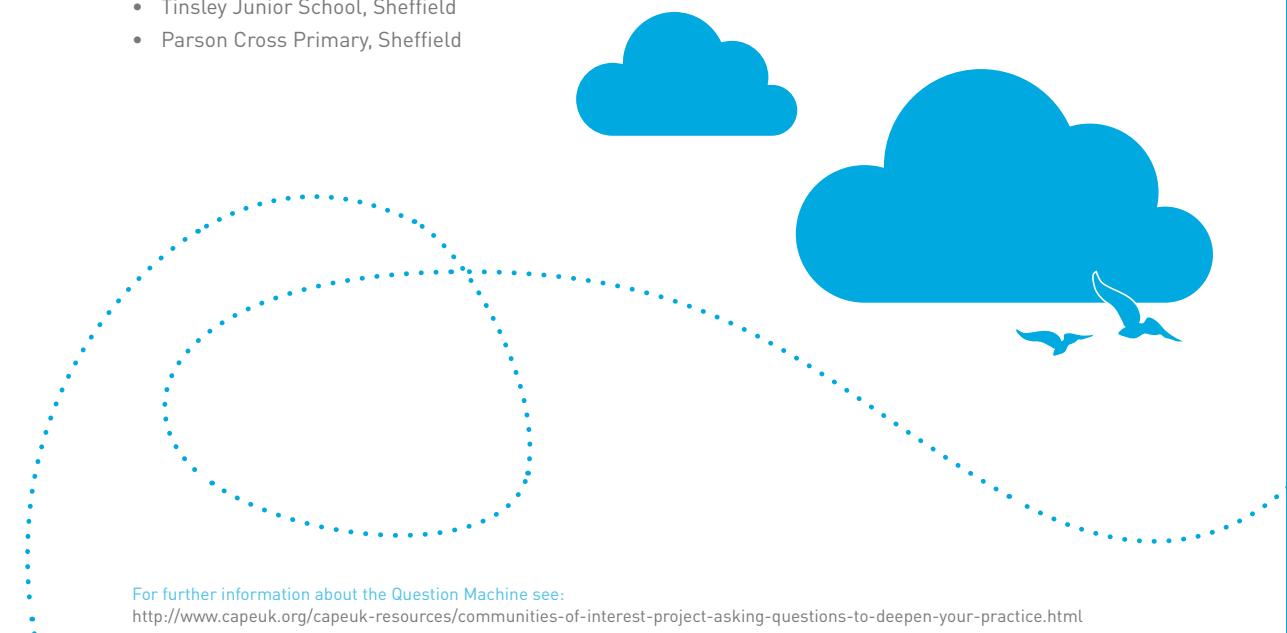
- A question where children agree they would be interested to know the answer and they could find it out would be a good starting point for some factual research.
- Questions that have many answers and require you to use your imagination would be a good starting point for creative activities like creative writing, sculpture or poetry.

## TIPS/TROUBLESHOOTING

- Most groups come up with 15 – 20 question words. If they realize they can have negatives they get many more e.g. "shouldn't" but it is much harder to make a question with shouldn't, than with should.
- There are many ways of adapting the question machine. A third section could be added so that the questions had to contain three words. It could be a verb or an emotion or anything that suits your theme.
- The machine can be made in other ways such as pulling a word from a bag, spinning a coin on a tray with words on or using indices and a dice on a chart or, if feeling adventurous, write words on balls and throw them into the group!

## STRATEGY DEVELOPED AT:

- Tinsley Junior School, Sheffield
- Parson Cross Primary, Sheffield



For further information about the Question Machine see:

<http://www.capecuk.org/capecuk-resources/communities-of-interest-project-asking-questions-to-deepen-your-practice.html>

# Enquiry with Movement

## DESCRIPTION OF STRATEGY

The following activities combine movement with elements of P4C. These activities are especially appropriate if you have a particularly energetic or restless group. They can also be extremely useful if you feel that a group or a particular session needs 'shaking up' as they allow participants to break out of traditional classroom P4C structures.

We've found that carrying out these movement activities can enable groups to focus better, consider others in their group more, and increase confidence in putting forward a personal point of view. Using movement activities has also ensured that a range of learning styles are catered for, as physically experiencing something can prompt responses and conclusions from those that learn kinaesthetically. The activities can help group cohesion and allow them time to tune into each other, and develop a sense of leadership and collaboration.

## INSTRUCTIONS

The following activities can be used in various ways, for instance; as the opening stimulus for an enquiry, or for a break out activity during philosophical discussions.

### **Leading the Blind:**

- Split the group into pairs. One child stands in front of the other and closes their eyes. The person behind places their hands on the other's shoulders and is now responsible for guiding their partner and ensuring their safety. All pairs move around the space in any direction, with the guiding person using alterations in pressure on their partners shoulders to indicate which direction they should move in and give a squeeze if they need to stop.
- Swap roles.
- Once pairs have had experience of both roles allow them to discuss how they felt in each situation - when in a position of responsibility or vulnerability. Feed back experiences to the whole group.

### **Forming Letters:**

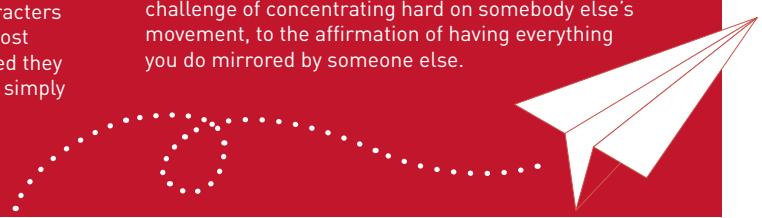
- A whole group activity useful for focusing and exploring ideas of leadership, character and cooperation. Explain that you are going to hold up a letter card for them to see, and as a whole group they must work to physically form the shape of that letter as though you (the leader) had drawn it on the floor. For example, if the letter O was on the card, the group would need to sit in a circle. They must do all this as quickly as possible and without making noise!
- This activity is great for finding different characters within a group (some children will find it almost impossible to keep quiet and will be frustrated they cannot tell others what to do, whereas some simply decide where they want to sit and stick to it).

- Once the group believes they have made the letter shape as best they can, you can score their efforts and discuss any points for improvement.
- This activity can also be done with a designated leader that everyone must listen to. The group can then analyse which method (with or without a leader) was most successful and why.

### **Mirroring:**

This is a very simple activity that can help the cohesion of a group and allow them time to tune into each other. It is also a great activity for affirming that any contribution is valued, or when discussing issues surrounding leading and following.

- Split the group into pairs and ask them to face their partner, standing a couple of paces apart.
- One partner is the movement leader and the other is their mirror image, following their movements as accurately as they can.
- They should begin slowly and with simple movements developing complexity as they go.
- The aim of this activity is for it to become difficult for an onlooker to tell who is leading and who is mirroring as the pair have become so in tune with one another.
- In a similar way to 'Leading the Blind', once both people have tried each role you can facilitate a discussion about how each role felt from the challenge of concentrating hard on somebody else's movement, to the affirmation of having everything you do mirrored by someone else.



# Enquiry with Movement

## PRACTICALITIES:

**No. of participants:** 4-30

**Age of participants:** Y2 upwards but it will vary slightly between activities.

**Preparation time:** 0-30 minutes. This will depend on whether you are using the activity as a simple shake up or intend to use it as the stimulus for further philosophical enquiry.

**Delivery time:** Each activity can be done quickly as a 5-10 minute shake up or they can be used for more lengthy explorations between 30 minutes-1 hour.

**Materials:** Letter cards, music can be used to accompany any of the activities if desired.

## EXAMPLES OF STRATEGY IN USE:

### Leading the Blind:

- This activity has an obvious link to the themes of leadership, trust and vulnerability.

### Forming Letters:

- Carry out the activity in the usual way as described above. Then alter it so that one child in the group becomes the leader. This is the only person allowed to speak and make decisions regarding how the letter should be

formed. The group is told that even if they think the leader is wrong they must move where they are told to.

### Mirroring:

- This can be used to help a group think about some of the many ways they communicate without words.

## TIPS/TROUBLESHOOTING:

### Leading the Blind:

- Aim for the activity to take place with as little noise as possible.
- Ensure that participants are clear that they should only walk, as some in the group will have a tendency to jog/run.

### Forming Letters:

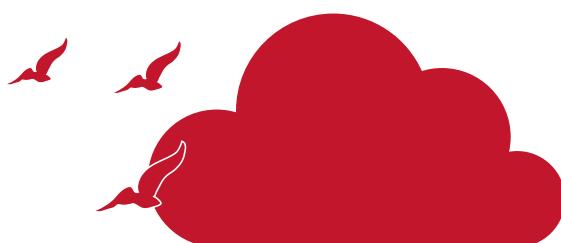
- The group can be timed each time they attempt a letter so that they have something to
- It's best to start with an easy letter e.g. T or L but usually groups can progress onto M and K before too long.

### Mirroring:

- Encourage shy children by highlighting that any movement ideas are valued and that it can be a very simple movement e.g. waving, pointing, nodding etc.
- Model the activity first if possible so that participants understand what is expected.

## STRATEGY DEVELOPED AT:

- Tinsley Junior School Sheffield



# POGO – Philosophy on the go

## DESCRIPTION OF STRATEGY

POGO is a cross between a formal philosophical enquiry and a graffiti wall. The formal stages of a P4C session all take place informally and by writing on a wall. It is intended to complement more formal enquiries and help to embed the philosophical enquiry process. POGO is a way of bouncing ideas off each other.

## INSTRUCTIONS

- Cover an area of wall with plain paper. Provide a stimulus, a picture works well placed in the middle of the paper. Write up these instructions. We are going to try doing a philosophy session in a very different way. What questions do you think of when you look at this? Please write any questions on the wall here. Provide pens. Initially you will need to talk to people and explain what POGO is all about.
- When you feel a reasonable number of people have contributed change the instructions to; It is time for a vote on the questions. Please put a tick by any of these questions which you wish to explore more as a group.
- Once you feel most people have voted remove the paper from the wall. Put up clean paper and write the chosen question in the middle with these instructions; What do you think? Write your first thoughts about this in the middle of the paper by the question. If you would like to build on someone else's ideas, agree or disagree, write your comments near

theirs and draw a line to show the link. As the enquiry grows be prepared to put up more paper around the edge to allow more ideas.

- When you feel everyone has had adequate opportunity to express their opinions, (or you run out of wall space) remove everything from the wall. Put up fresh paper and instructions. Last Words. What have we found out? What do we do about it? Where do we go from here? Please write your last words anywhere on this sheet of paper.
- Finally put up fresh paper and the instructions. What did you think about doing POGO – Philosophy on the go? What was good about it? If we did it again what could we do to make it better? Then use the feedback to plan your next POGO enquiry...

Once the process is understood by your group they can run it themselves.

## PRACTICALITIES

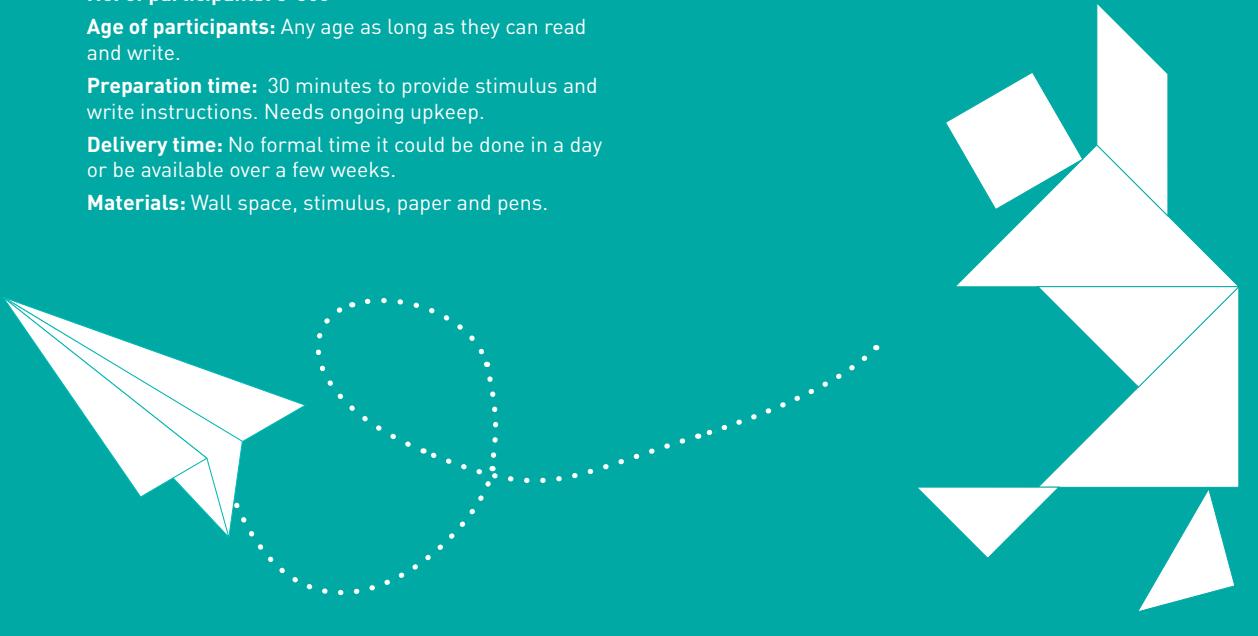
**No. of participants:** 3-300

**Age of participants:** Any age as long as they can read and write.

**Preparation time:** 30 minutes to provide stimulus and write instructions. Needs ongoing upkeep.

**Delivery time:** No formal time it could be done in a day or be available over a few weeks.

**Materials:** Wall space, stimulus, paper and pens.



# POGO – Philosophy on the go

## EXAMPLES OF STRATEGY IN USE

When used in a staff room, as soon as some people wrote up questions other people started to write answers and I was able to see very quickly that the group had far less understanding of the P4C process than we had thought. This enabled us to plan more training for the group. As people become more used to POGO you need to provide far less instruction.

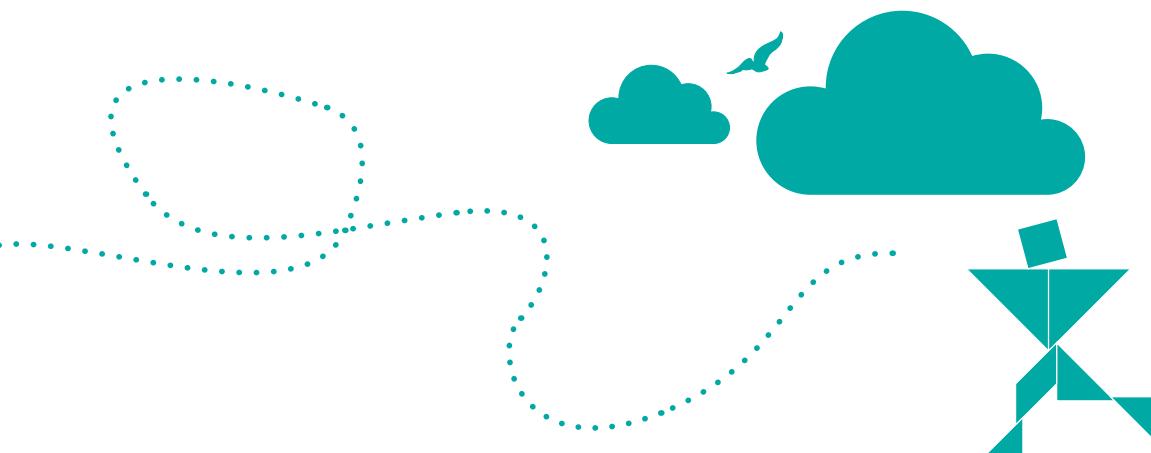
POGO is a way of doing P4C with more than one conversation happening at the same time. Starting with a photo of the Tinsley Towers being blown up we voted for the question, "Why is it all about money?" We explored whether or not money makes you happy; how we are motivated by money and the role of politics in promoting a fairer society.

## TIPS/TROUBLESHOOTING

- POGO depends on people wanting to participate so works best with a well-motivated group.
- Reminders to contribute help.
- You are far more likely to get negative comments than in a normal P4C session. Think of this as a positive that people feel freer to comment when they can be anonymous. You are likely to find you do not need to intervene, other members of the group will respond to the negative comments and they will stretch each other's thinking.
- POGO could be placed on the wall where pupils queue for lunch.
- Knowing how long to keep each section on the wall can be difficult. If in doubt it is probably time to move it on or it becomes stale.
- Encourage visitors to contribute. It doesn't matter that they will not be part of the whole enquiry; an outside influence can move the group on.
- Make sure staff understand it is for them too, not just the pupils. The evening cleaner may write something up which stimulates the discussion the next day.
- Show POGO to the parents and encourage them to contribute. It is hard for them to grasp formal P4C but they can watch POGO as it develops and understand the process.
- Pens are essential. Tie them to the wall on long bits of string if they keep disappearing. It won't work without them.

## STRATEGY DEVELOPED AT:

- Tinsley Junior School, Sheffield



# The Goldfish Bowl

## DESCRIPTION OF STRATEGY

The Goldfish Bowl is a strategy for reflecting on group discussion, particularly useful for improving the quality of philosophical enquiry. During this activity a philosophical enquiry is observed by members of the group who each focus on different aspects of 'good' dialogue.

This exercise helps a group discover the features of a successful philosophical enquiry so that they can reflect on their progress and set their own goals for further improvement.

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. A group of young people is split in half forming two circles:
  - an inner circle whose members will conduct a philosophical dialogue.
  - an outer circle who will observe their discussion and report back.
  - it is helpful to run this activity with two facilitators, one to support each group.
2. The young people observing will each be responsible for reporting on specific features of the dialogue:
  - quality of interaction.
  - the kind of language used.
  - the contributions of various individuals.
  - the strategies and approaches which worked or did not work.
  - the particular arguments developed and rejected.
3. There are a number of ways these observation criteria can be selected.
  - For example, in a short or one-off session the facilitator might produce a set of observation criteria in advance of the session and simply distribute these amongst the observers.
  - In a longer session or with a group you are working with over a longer period of time it may be preferable to let the participants decide on their own criteria. To facilitate this process you might:
    - have a short class discussion during which the group proposes various criteria
    - take a more systematic approach, having a dedicated philosophical enquiry in the preceding lesson on a question such as 'What is a good enquiry?'
4. The inner circle (goldfish bowl) dialogue begins. The dialogue can take the same form as a typical P4C session but you might find that due to time constraints it's a good idea to have decided on an enquiry question in advance so that the discussion itself can begin immediately. The observers make notes as the discussion takes its course but they do not contribute in any way.
5. Reflection: once the discussion has drawn to a close the outer circle report back on their findings. Then, as a group, the young people reflect on the implications of the findings for next time. For example, if someone in the group is talking more than everyone in the group is this a bad thing? Does s/he need to speak less, or should the others contribute more? Should the group introduce a system so that everyone can speak three times but no more? Etc.
6. Swap and go through the process a second time so that everyone has a turn at both roles. The findings of the new outer group will then feed into the overall picture that the whole group is forming of how a good discussion works.

## PRACTICALITIES

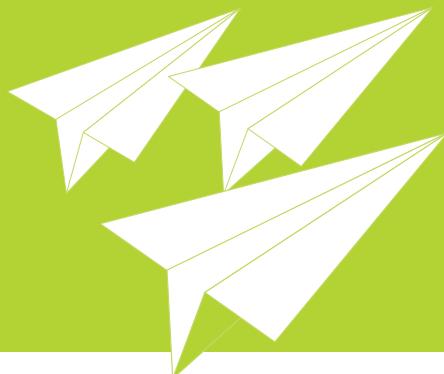
**No. of participants:** 10-30

**Age of participants:** Any.

**Preparation time:** 0-30 minutes which might include preparing a topic for the inner group to discuss; deciding on criteria for the outer group to observe and producing cards with the criteria written on them to distribute to the group.

**Delivery time:** 30-90 minutes.

**Materials:** Cards containing criteria for analysis; two circles of chairs; pens and paper.



# The Goldfish Bowl

## EXAMPLES OF STRATEGY IN USE

### Possible observation questions/instructions:

#### Group Interaction:

- How many girls and how many boys speak?
- Make a note of ways people show they are listening.

#### Individual Contributions

- Which students spoke for the longest time without interruptions?
- Which members try to include others?

#### Language:

- Make a note of any words used that cause confusion.
- What language do participants use to build on what has already been said?

## TIPS/TROUBLESHOOTING

- Check that participants in the outer circle fully understand what their card is asking them to look for before you begin.
- Film the participants taking part in a discussion and then later on watch the recording as a 'Goldfish Bowl' activity.
- The features of a good dialogue discussed by the participants at the end of the activity can be put onto cards for future Goldfish Bowl exercises. This method can then be used to regularly review and update progress in developing good dialogue.

## STRATEGY DEVELOPED AT:

- Meynell Primary School, Sheffield
- Darfield-Foulstone High School, Barnsley
- Chaucer Business and Enterprise College, Sheffield



# Reflecting Through Film

## DESCRIPTION OF STRATEGY

Thinking about thinking is an essential philosophical skill. Using film footage from the classroom is an excellent way to help children and adults develop this skill. The most straightforward way to use film in philosophical enquiry is to film your sessions using simple user-friendly technology (flip cams/mobile phones/tablet computers), upload and watch the footage back as a reflection activity in class.

This strategy card considers this approach and a variety of other creative ways you can use film footage to reflect.

## INSTRUCTIONS

### Feel Good Clips

- A great way to start the session is to show the group a montage of clips which focus on the positive: working well together, finding something out or laughing at something funny.
- A collection of clips like these will jog their memory of the activity/day/session that you're going to be analysing and will motivate the session ahead.

### You Missed A Bit

- One way to compare a group's recollection of a session with the reality captured on film is to attempt this activity. The objective of 'You missed a bit' is to recount the story of the activity/day/session in the right order, without omitting any important details.
- One person starts at the beginning and every time someone thinks they've missed a bit they interrupt with 'You missed a bit...' and take up the telling of the story including the extra piece of information.
- This builds up a detailed picture of the groups' collective memory of the learning experience.
- This account can then be compared with the footage: Often the two are very different!

### Thought Tracking

- Show the students the clips you have picked out of particularly significant or interesting moments from a session/day.
- Freeze the clip at different moments and ask

## PRACTICALITIES

**No. of participants:** 1+

**Age of participants:** Suitable for any age.

**Preparation time:** The time needed to review the footage to pick out the best clips.

**Delivery time:** 10 minutes-1 hour.

**Materials:** Footage of learners participating in a philosophical enquiry or other stimulating activity.

students to explore what the people in the clip were thinking, feeling or learning at that moment.

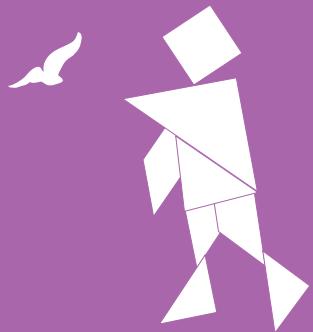
- This deeper level of reflection not only explores the experiences of other learners (including the teacher) but also encourages reflection on how people might feel if the circumstances had been otherwise, for example if the teacher hadn't been listening, if the room hadn't been so hot, if the class had been given more information etc.

### Great Learning

- If you can pick out some 'Eureka' moments or moments when learning could have happened but didn't, then ask the students to discuss what learning was happening and why it happened. What triggered it? Who learned what? How? What else could they have learned? How can we encourage more moments like that?

### Goldfish Bowl

- Ask the students to use the 'Goldfish Bowl' technique to analyse the footage. (See 'Goldfish Bowl' strategy card).
- By concentrating on one or two elements each they can then analyse the discussion as a group in a way that it is impossible to do when taking part in a discussion.
- This can then be used to build up a picture of what makes a rich discussion and the learning can then be applied when taking part in future enquiries.



# Reflecting Through Film

## EXAMPLES OF STRATEGY IN USE

This strategy has worked particularly well with disengaged learners and can be especially effective in illustrating ways in which improved behaviour can enhance learning for everyone.

Although some teenagers feel extremely self-conscious seeing themselves on film once they have got over this it often boosts confidence when they see themselves making a good point or being praised by another student or a teacher on screen. It is important to pick out key moments for every student in the class to help facilitate this.

Projects which have used a professional film-maker to support this process have made impressive progress. An experienced film-maker is attentive to the interesting incidents within a lesson and can edit the footage to its full potential. Working with a film maker the students taking part can then have a go at the editing process themselves, making a film which captures moments they felt were particularly significant.

## TIPS/TROUBLESHOOTING

- Do try and show a few feel good clips before the reflection session begins in earnest; it helps the students get over the initial squeamishness of seeing themselves on film.
- When analysing the video clips pay attention to the teachers' thoughts and feelings as well as the students. This can improve a classes' empathy towards their teachers.
- If you have the capacity, why not let your students edit the footage themselves, pulling out key moments for analysis?

## STRATEGY DEVELOPED AT:

- Darfield-Foulstone High School, Barnsley



# Idea Generation

## DESCRIPTION OF STRATEGY

A brainstorm is an exercise to stimulate thought association. People often think that truly creative people just 'have' great ideas and that creativity cannot be learned or taught. This strategy outlines four different structured approaches to idea generation. Each of these strategies use thought association to quickly unlock new ways of thinking around a topic and to help prove that anyone can be creative and have big, bold and new ideas.

## INSTRUCTIONS

Before you begin, clearly identify what you want to generate ideas about. Is it to answer a philosophical question or to explore an interesting concept? Allocate a set time and set group of people to the problem. This group can be any size; all you need is for someone to write down everything everyone says. You can try allocating a different member of the group as Scribe each time to break up those natural roles of leader. It's very important not to edit the ideas until afterwards – the initial 'thought-shower' should capture everything (however wild or wonderful) – which will also build confidence in all participants and encourage the quieter members of the group to speak up.

**Basic** - A basic brainstorm involves putting the topic or question in the middle of a piece of paper and writing down everything the group can think of around that topic or question. The next step is to take one of these thoughts or solutions and explore it as a group to see how it could be applied to the question.

**Opposite Worlds Technique** - Think of all of the things that would be exactly opposite to your first responses to the question. This can help clarify what you really think, but it's more exciting to then explore some of these opposites. E.g. If you're talking about vegetarianism what if we started out with the assumption that human beings had never eaten animals? Or what if we assume that it is right to kill?

**Related Worlds Technique** - Find a world that is related to your philosophical problem or idea and brainstorm around that. E.g. If your enquiry was about the ethics

of running a school you might ask: What if a school was run like an army barracks? What if it was run like a Buddhist temple? Take some of the elements of this world and turn them into an answer or idea instead. You'll find that you're looking at the problem in a fresh, but still related, way.

**Random Technique** - Brainstorm around a completely random item e.g. fairgrounds and then apply the results of that brainstorm to your question or concept e.g. funerals. Force yourself to make the connection or come up with some ideas incorporating these seemingly unrelated ideas. (For example, perhaps going to a funeral is like going to a fairground in that you feel disorientated at both.) You can also try treating your problem as if it were something else. Using a bank of stimulus e.g. film titles, celebrities' faces, news headlines; ask the group what your philosophical problem or concept would be like if it were endorsed by that celebrity, or had caused that headline.

**Idea Smash Technique** - Take two random topics and conduct two separate brainstorms around each of them. Now take one element from each of these brainstorms and smash them together to come up with some new ideas that address your problem. You need to repeat this multiple times and not mind about the answers that are ludicrous. In fact, encourage them! The more creative the group gets the more likely they are to eventually come up with a clever and unique solution or idea.

## PRACTICALITIES

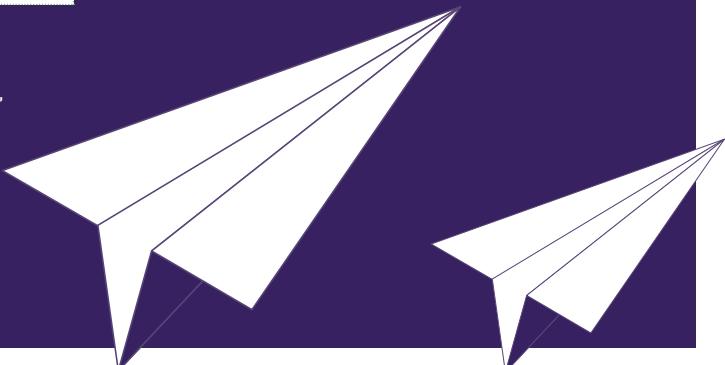
**No. of participants:** 2-10 per group, ideally 3-5

**Age of participants:** Suitable for any age.

**Preparation time:** 0-30 minutes to gather stimulus, longer for in-depth stimulus.

**Delivery time:** 10 minutes-1 hour.

**Materials:** Paper/whiteboard and pens.



# Idea Generation

## EXAMPLES OF STRATEGY IN USE

Using creative techniques to help stimulate ideas can be useful for encouraging learners to take a new approach to a problem or to ask them to think in completely new ways about it. Every time a person looks at something in a new way they are shaking up set patterns of thought and making new connections between parts of their brain. This will make them a more creative and unique thinker when they next approach any problem.

### Opposite Worlds Method during a philosophical enquiry about religion –

What would the world be like if we were certain that God existed? What would the world be like if we found out that God was an Evil Genius? What if we found out that prayer definitely worked?

### Related Worlds Method during philosophical enquiry about punishment –

What are the key elements of a holiday camp or a hospital? What if a prison was run more like a holiday camp or a hospital?

### Random Method during a philosophical enquiry about media ethics –

'Winnie the Pooh' meets 'the Murdoch Scandal': What would Winnie The Pooh say if Tigger had been eavesdropping on other people's conversations? Is it wrong if the residents of One Hundred Acre Wood only receive their information about the outside world from Christopher Robin and no one else? Should the Press Complaints Commission have an independent 'Owl' figure to oversee and advise them?

### Idea Smash Method can be used to provoke unusual questions during a philosophical enquiry.

E.g On memory – Conduct a brainstorm around e.g. 'My favourite Teddy Bear' and a separate one around e.g. 'Taking a trip to France'. Apply some of the new thoughts you have had to your original problem about whether my memories make me 'Me': Am I the same person who went on holiday if I can remember the French words but not remember when I said them? What if I can remember all the toys in my bed but not my family?

## TIPS/TROUBLESHOOTING

- A useful way to make sure that everyone in the group continues to contribute is to apply the "Yes, and..." rule. Never say "No" to an idea - just keep asking for more.
- Be unrealistic and ambitious at first. Once you start to hone in on firm answers it's much easier to rein something in than to try and make it more ambitious.
- Be confident and say whatever comes to mind; people will rarely have thought of the same idea as you, however obvious it might seem to you.
- These techniques can also be used for planning sessions or developing imaginative or unusual stimulus.

## STRATEGY DEVELOPED AT:

- Darfield-Foulstone High School, Barnsley



# Enquiry Journeys

## DESCRIPTION OF STRATEGY

A community of enquiry approach needn't begin and end sitting in a circle; an enquiry project that takes place within a real or imagined journey can give enquiry context, making it feel more purposeful and pacey. A journey, whether real or imagined can embody the intellectual journey of a philosophical enquiry, making young people's progress clear to them.

## INSTRUCTIONS

### 1. Introductory premise:

- An enquiry journey begins with a clear objective or destination which must be arrived at - in part - by the exploration of philosophical questions.
- An enquiry journey takes place over time, is driven by real or imaginary action, the participants have an opportunity to affect what happens next.
- In the end, the journey should be resolved in some satisfying way.

### 2. Implementation:

- Decide on a clear purpose for the journey.
  - Are you looking for something or someone?
  - Is there something in particular you want to find out?
- Decide on a destination.
  - Is there a particular place that could breathe life into this enquiry? A park, museum, local countryside or a gallery etc.
  - Or is there a place you could only visit in your imagination? Another country, outer space, back in time?
- Decide what will happen on this journey.
  - To give the project pace it needs to be punctuated by events. If it's a real journey perhaps the class discovers that they're not going on the trip they thought they were, instead they're going somewhere else.

## PRACTICALITIES

**No. of participants:** 1-30

**Age of participants:** 7+ Imaginary journeys are particularly suitable for primary school children while older children are better able to cope with self-directed informal philosophical discussions that take place during outings.

**Preparation time:** 30 minutes-several hours involving sketching out the narrative of the journey: What is the premise? How does it begin? How does it end?

**Delivery time:** 60 minutes-several weeks or months delivered in sessions of an hour or so.

**Materials:** Dependent on the activities chosen.

- During an imaginary enquiry journey, an expedition to Antarctica might be threatened by shipwreck.
- Can you give the young people choices and opportunities to affect the real or imaginary action?
- Consider when the philosophical dialogue will happen on your journey.
  - Long coach journeys as well as walking, hiking, orienteering or treasure hunts offer opportunities to talk more informally about philosophical questions.
- How will the story end?
  - On the trip or afterwards?
  - Perhaps the children will meet someone who can bring the issues to life; perhaps their parents will come into school for an assembly about their journey.
  - Maybe the young people will plan an enquiry journey for next year's class.



# Enquiry Journeys

## EXAMPLES OF STRATEGY IN USE

### Literal journeys

To explore the concepts of naturalness/unnaturalness you might take your class on a nature walk asking them before you set out: 'What is natural?' On the walk you may encounter some things - both planned and unplanned - that challenge your notion of what it is to be natural. For example, is a tree natural? What if it is planted for decoration in a garden? What if its wood has been used to make something new? Is a park bench natural, for example? What about a car, like the bench, a car has been made; people seem to invent things quite "naturally". What about driving? Is it more natural to walk or to drive? Why? How will your journey end? At the Botanical Gardens or the city gallery? Perhaps the children could speak to a gardener, sculptor, engineer or vicar; someone with an interesting perspective on what it is to be 'natural'.

### Imaginary journeys

With younger children you might set up a project as an imaginary journey. The journey might begin with a letter from NASA telling the children they've been chosen to be the first children to go into space.

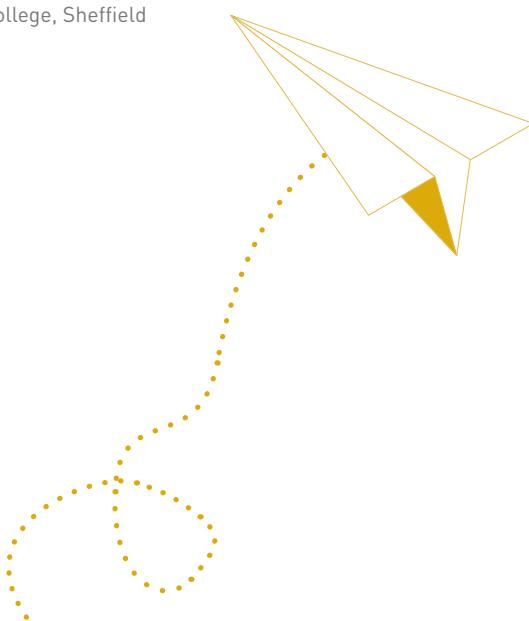
Over a period of weeks the children might prepare for this journey asking questions like 'what do we really need to survive?' and 'why do human beings explore? Once they've blasted off you can throw a spanner in the works; perhaps they get lost or they run out of supplies.

## TIPS/TROUBLESHOOTING

- An Enquiry Journey might involve using your imagination, however it is not a 'dramatic enquiry' (See 'Dramatic Enquiry' strategy card). The children set out on their journey as themselves not in role as someone else.
- Think creatively about destinations. You could visit a supermarket, a graveyard, the park, a train station, a synagogue, a farm, an exhibition or a stately home – the list is endless.
- How about a surprise destination? (The parents can be in on it, but keep your children in the dark!)

## STRATEGY DEVELOPED AT:

- Tinsley Junior School Sheffield
- Meynell primary School, Sheffield
- Chaucer Business and Enterprise College, Sheffield



# Dramatic Enquiry

## DESCRIPTION OF STRATEGY

Dramatic Enquiry is a fusion of P4C (Philosophy for Children) and Drama-in-Learning that has been designed to develop creative, transferable thinking skills in learners. It's enjoyable, it's challenging, it's puzzling, it's difficult, it's frustrating, it's fascinating and it provides all of the tools for making thinking visible.

Seeing a problem from more than one perspective is crucial to philosophical thinking, but it's not always easy to achieve. Drama naturally encourages learners to see in new ways.

## INSTRUCTIONS

Philosophical thinking in role involves bringing to life a dilemma, puzzle or problem within an imagined scenario. The role-play can be loosely structured around an enquiry framework allowing learners to engage with big ideas critically and creatively.

The facilitator identifies an issue, dilemma, puzzle or scenario they'd like their students to explore. You might find philosophical thought experiments particularly useful starting points. (See 'Find out more' section.)

You'll probably find that a successful Dramatic Enquiry requires the support of an experienced practitioner at first. But once you've been inducted, those with facilitation experience in both drama and philosophy might find the following ingredients will help you experiment:

- **Assuming a role:** The learners are invited to take on roles. You might go about this by giving them some element of costume or prop, engaging them in conversation or asking them to take an oath or to keep a promise.
- **Imparting key information:** A character or characters introduce key information; presenting the participants with the central dilemma. If possible introduce information via a performer (which could be you, a colleague or a recording of an actor).

## PRACTICALITIES

**No. of participants:** 4-30

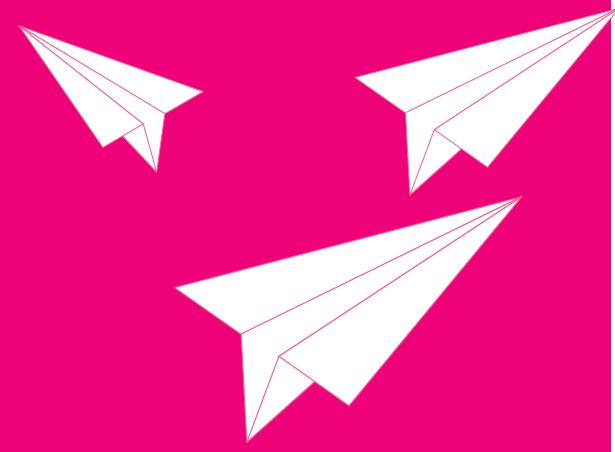
**Age of participants:** A carefully constructed scenario can be tailored for any age.

**Preparation time:** 30 minutes for a basic scenario, several hours or even days for a large scale dramatic enquiry which might make use of script, props, set, lighting, sound etc.

**Delivery time:** 30-120 minutes.

**Materials:** You can run an enquiry in role with no materials at all, but a loose script, props, costume and production elements enrich the activity.

- **Taking stock:** Ask the students: 'What do we know?' 'What do we need to know?'
- **Dealing with questions:** The students might hot seat the character who imparted the information. They respond by answering the factual questions, leaving the philosophical questions for the learners to explore.
- **Exploring the issue:** The learners can then use dramatic devices such as tableaux, thought tracking, flash back, or forum theatre, to explore their central philosophical question.
- **Subversion / Challenge:** Move the drama forward by introducing a twist via a new character. The actor facilitator may bring fresh information or they could present a different side of the argument.
- **Decision time:** The need to make a decision brings the enquiry to a head; maybe there is an impending natural disaster, perhaps the press are waiting for comments etc. These decisions can then form the basis of out-of-role discussion.
- **Reflection:** What did your character decide an why? What would you have done? How does your view compare with the view of your character?



# Dramatic Enquiry

## EXAMPLES OF STRATEGY IN USE

### The Happiness Machine:

The learners are famous scientist gathered together at Professor Nozick's secret laboratory for an important scientific announcement. At last, the Professor introduces himself and reveals his new invention: The Happiness Machine - a device which promises to irradiate world suffering.

Will you be the first to try it out? It's a simple procedure, the device plugs directly into your brain, the Professor flicks a switch and bingo the illusion of happiness! The only catch is this: once you plug in, there's no going back. A lifetime of happiness could be yours. To plug in or not to plug in, that is the question...

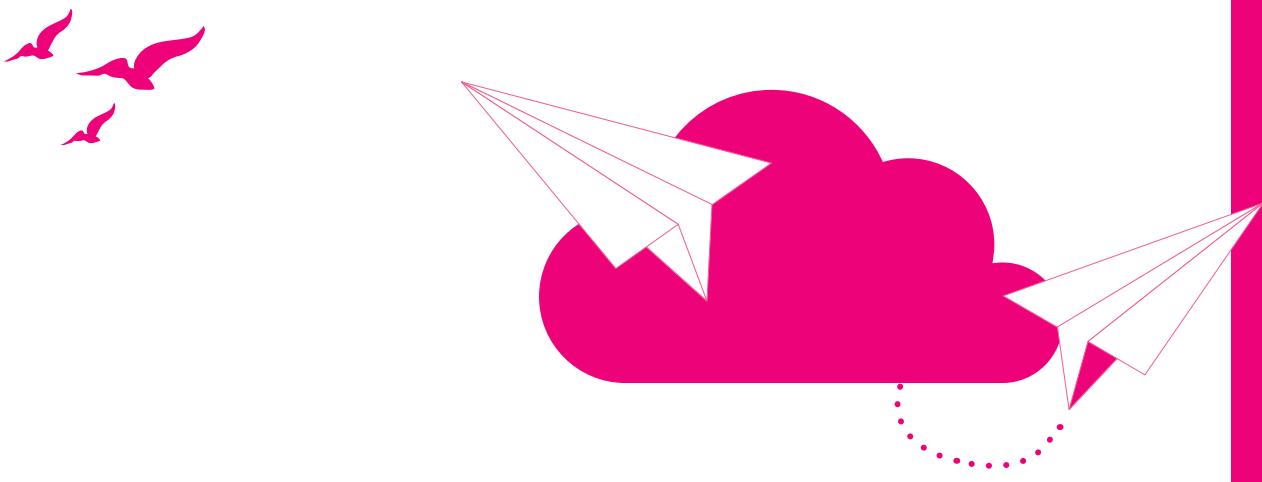
## TIPS/TROUBLESHOOTING

- This can be a time consuming activity to plan but once you devise a good scenario it can be used and improved year on year. A good enquiry in role can be used to introduce key issues in History, Science and RS. It's also useful for English Speaking and Listening assessments or role plays in Modern Foreign Languages.
- If you want to run an enquiry in role on your own, use costume and props to allow you to play different parts.
- A voice recording, mock newspaper article, answer phone message or video performance can all work as dramatic stimuli if you don't feel confident performing yourself.

## STRATEGY DEVELOPED AT:

The Dramatic Enquiry is the result of work in many schools throughout the UK, in Yorkshire it has been further developed at:

- Tinsley Junior School, Sheffield
- Atlas Primary School, Bradford
- Priory School and Sports College, Barnsley
- Darfield-Foulstone School, Barnsley
- Meynell Primary School Sheffield
- Chaucer Business and Enterprise College, Sheffield
- Brudenell Primary School, Leeds



# Philosophy meets Forest Schools

## DESCRIPTION OF STRATEGY

Like P4C, Forest Schools is a rich pedagogy that consciously generates positive social and emotional outcomes for children and young people. Forest Schools achieves these outcomes through regular child-led experiences in a woodland setting; experiences that might involve using tools, cooking over fires and exploring the natural environment. Naturally, an extended period of induction is needed for those new to Forest Schools. For this reason this strategy card does not attempt to introduce the approach itself. Instead we hope to suggest some of the ways this approach, once digested, can be combined with philosophy for children to offer young people enquiry-based learning that is rooted in positive outdoor experiences. People may also find inspiration for exploring P4C in natural environments outside of the context of Forest Schools.

## INSTRUCTIONS

Here are several ways these two approaches can work together:

### (1) A Forest Schools experience as a stimulus for philosophical enquiry

In a longer session (2 hours+) an hour of child-led activity in the woods can function as the stimulus for an hour of philosophical enquiry, either in the woods, around a fire, or back in the classroom. Stimulus activities might include shelter building, exploring the living and non-living elements of the environment, investigating our survival needs.

### (2) Philosophical questioning as part of the facilitation of a Forest Schools session

The questions employed by a facilitator of philosophical enquiry can be a useful tool for Forest Schools practitioners. (See 'Facilitation Questions' sections). These can be used spontaneously or as a structured part of a session. For example you might encourage

children to express preferences and make judgements by asking: "Which is the best material for burning and why?" or "Should we try kindling or stones?". You can encourage children to justify their views by asking for reasons e.g. "Why do you think that?" or "What evidence is there for believing this?". You might invite them to identify and make connections by asking "Are sticks and logs linked? How?". Or you could explore implications by asking: "What might happen if...".

### (3) A philosophical enquiry as a strategy for facilitating the reflection part of a Forest Schools session

Reflection is a key component of Forest Schools work and a philosophical enquiry-style reflection is one way to facilitate this part of a session. Reflection time is used for children to note their high points, acknowledge their contribution to sessions or reflect on their achievements. This could be approached with a philosophical enquiry.

## PRACTICALITIES

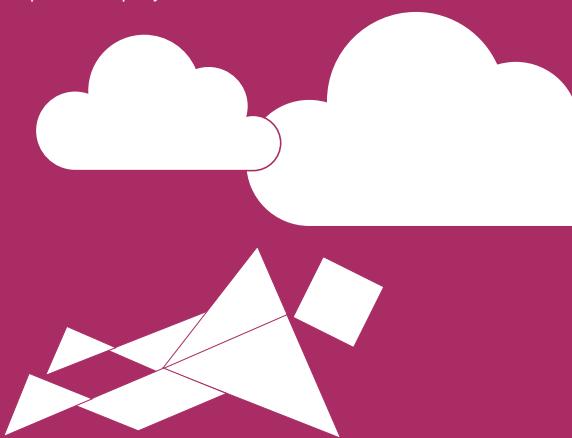
**No. of participants:** 5-15

**Age of participants:** 4+

**Preparation time:** Varied depending on activities chosen and resources naturally occurring in the environment.

**Delivery time:** 2 hours, ideally as part of repeated sessions taking pace over several weeks or months.

**Materials:** Dependent on the activities chosen.



# Enquiry Journeys

## EXAMPLES OF STRATEGY IN USE

### Forest School activity as a stimulus: Exploring the concept of 'home'.

The session could begin with the creation of the characters that will need homes made for them. This may be done through the addition of eyes (either stickers or googly eyes) to something that is found in the environment; a stone, a stick, a leaf etc. This adds a layer of personality to an inanimate object and encourages care and taking responsibility for it, including making it a home. Alternatively a note could be planted where the group will find it. The letter could ask for help from imaginary creatures (boggarts, fairies etc) to repair their village.

In the second part of the sessions the miniature shelters provide the stimulus. In pairs participants share 'concept words' that capture their thoughts and feelings about the meaning and significance of the creations. Words like 'Safety' 'Family' and 'Happiness.'

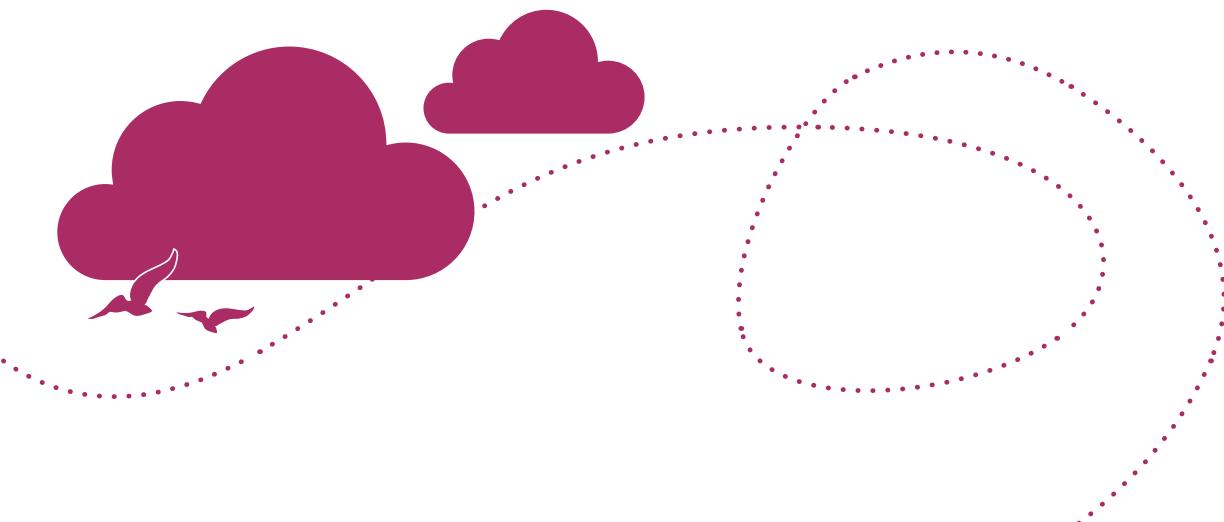
The words are collected and used by the group to compose philosophical questions, one of which would become the focus of an enquiry. Questions can be written on luggage labels and tied to the structures themselves.

## TIPS/TROUBLESHOOTING

- When looking for natural environments for stimulation look for richness and complexity in the number and variety of resources available. This will allow the participants to keep extending their own learning and investigations.
- Photograph the Forest School activity capturing moments of creative and critical thinking, challenge, achievement, collaboration etc. These pictures document the children's progress and can also be used as personal and collective stimuli for continuation work back at school.
- Forest Schools emphasises the importance of children leading their own learning experiences. Occasionally this freedom might be in tension with the more structured approach of P4C. Where this happens give the young people space to experience first. Philosophical dialogue can always take place afterwards as part of the reflection.

## STRATEGY DEVELOPED AT:

- Brudenell Primary School, Leeds



# Philosophy Champions

## DESCRIPTION OF STRATEGY

To embed philosophical enquiry in school by giving a selection of children, acting as Philosophy Champions, the responsibility to facilitate their own and others' enquiries. Children who become Philosophy Champions will develop a deep and nuanced understanding of philosophical enquiry and can help contribute to the capacity for sustained independent and enthusiastic enquiry at all levels.

## INSTRUCTIONS

### Choosing a candidate:

- Identify a number of candidates for the role of Philosophy Champion: ideally a range of children with different attitudes and attributes who have previously had a positive experience of philosophical enquiry themselves. A broad mix of children will present younger children with more realistic role models.
- Choice is important – the role will involve additional input and responsibility – a Philosophy Champion needs to be self-motivated and willing.
- Philosophy Champions tend to be older than the children they work with. This will help the young facilitators establish order and respect in their sessions.

## PRACTICALITIES

**No. of participants:** 1-15 children in training, no more than 4 facilitators per enquiry.

**Age of participants:** 9+

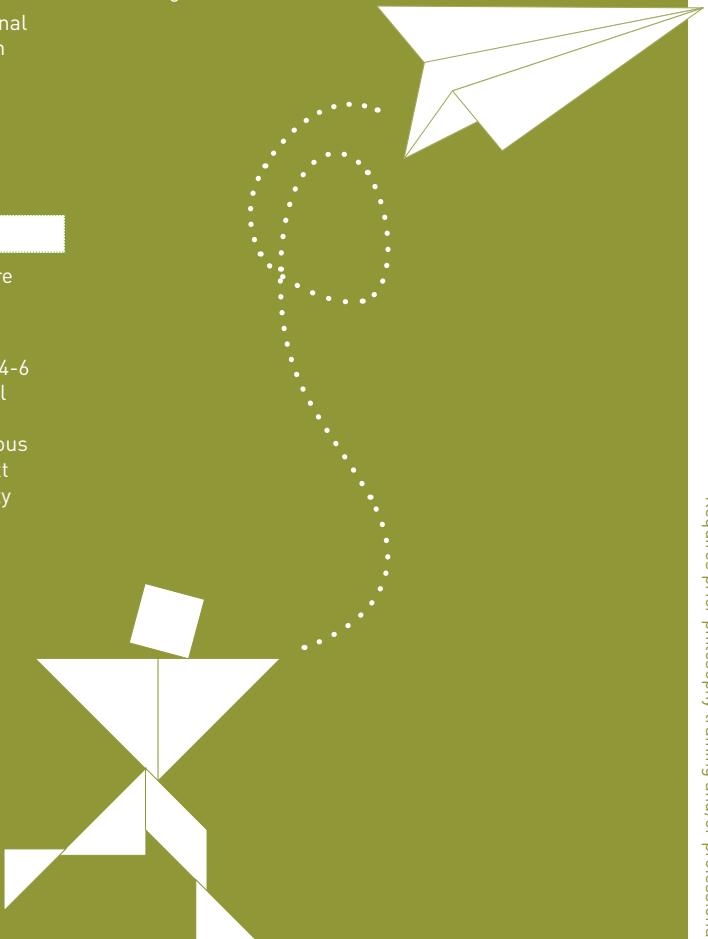
**Training/Preparation time:** Before each of the first 4-6 enquiries the Champions deliver, spread over several weeks or months, they will need a one hour session with their trainer, to include reflection on their previous delivery, skills training and planning time for the next delivery. The trainer takes less and less responsibility as the weeks pass.

**Delivery time:** Approximately 60 minutes plus 15 minutes preparation and reflection time.

**Materials:** Circle of chairs, paper, pens, stimulus.

### Training:

- Philosophy Champions will need to undertake a period of training in P4C under the guidance of an experienced facilitator. See below for advice and ideas. If the staff feel they lack sufficient confidence or experience, external practitioners with relevant experience could be brought in to help deliver the training.



# Philosophy Champions

## EXAMPLES OF STRATEGY IN USE

### Key features of facilitator training -

- **Experiencing philosophical enquiry**

Ideally Philosophy Champions will have a year or so experience of regular philosophical enquiry before attempting to facilitate enquiries for other children.

- **Analysing learning experiences**

The markers of a successful enquiry can be drawn from the facilitator's own experience of learning. Philosophy Champions might photograph or draw key moments in a particular enquiry where learning is intense, fun, challenging or lacking in momentum. The Philosophy Champions can draw on these experiences when evaluating enquiries they have facilitated.

- **Sharing key P4C concepts and vocabulary**

By sharing key ideas that guide your own facilitation you can help the young facilitators gain a far deeper understanding of the enquiry process. Introduce them to the importance of challenge in an enquiry, of finding themselves in the pit of confusion and struggling to get out. Share some of the difficulties you might face as a facilitator; for example when someone dominates the discussion what strategies are available to counteract this?

- **Using enquiry lesson plans**

Use a methodological approach to lesson planning, breaking the task down into manageable parts using enquiry lesson plans. You might decide to concentrate on one step at a time for example, focusing for an hour on choosing stimulus or facilitating dialogue.

- **Taking responsibility for facilitating different 'steps'**

Consider inviting different children to take responsibility for each step of the enquiry. Remind them that lesson planning also involves preparing the resources, allocating groups, distributing equipment, scribing, tidying up etc. Develop the children's awareness that someone needs to take responsibility for each of these tasks.

- **Letting the Philosophy Champions make mistakes**

Learning from mistakes is often a far more meaningful experience than being told what can go wrong. Capitalise on the learning through reflective practice.

- **Reflecting on how things went**

Make time for group reflection a priority. Structure the reflective discussion using worksheets of discussion prompts and make sure the children can identify room for improvement by setting clear objectives for next time.

## TIPS/TROUBLESHOOTING

- Sometimes you might find the dynamics between Y5 and Y6 more troublesome than those between Y6 and Y3 or Y1. Sometimes a greater age difference makes things easier for young facilitators; they might feel less self conscious with younger children.
- A cascade model can be a useful way of smoothing the transition from primary school to secondary school. Philosophy Champions in Y7 can visit children in Y6 at local feeder schools, introducing them to P4C.
- If you're working with Y11 or Sixth Form why not get an accredited SAPERE practitioner to run training for staff and students?

## STRATEGY DEVELOPED AT:

- Tinsley Junior School, Sheffield
- Darfield-Foulstone High School, Barnsley
- Priory School and Sports College (a version of this, not explicitly philosophical)

