



Philosophical Enquiry for KS2

Brave Boys

Is it braver to fight fearlessly or fearfully, or not to fight at all?

<p>Philosophical Content</p>	<p>Possible Concepts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ETHICS: Bravery, Fear, Cowardice, Duty, Conscience, Peer-Pressure, Condemnation, Camaraderie <p>Example Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was the oldest / middle / youngest brother brave? • Who was the most (or least) brave? • What is bravery? • <i>Must</i> we always be brave? • <i>Can</i> we always be brave? • Can you be brave and fearful? • If you are fearless, are you braver? • If you are not brave are you a coward? • What is your duty? • How do you determine your duty? • Can you neglect your duty and still do good? • Should you do what your duty asks of you? • Should you do what your conscience asks of you? • Should you do what your community, family or friends ask of you? • How do we tell right from wrong?
<p>Philosophical Method</p>	<p>Thinking Moves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PICTURE the scene imaging the boys' thoughts and feelings. WEIGH UP the claims made by their families about bravery and JUSTIFY your conclusions. Be prepared to YIELD if someone else gives a convincing argument. ZOOM OUT to reflect on the whole session and eXEMPLIFY something that helped to change your mind* <p>Facilitation Tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concept Cake, Layered Storytelling, Vote with your Feet, Partner Feedback **
<p>Materials</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photographs of the three boys • If you like, props including hats and conscription letters • Circle of chairs • Passing Pom-pom, flash cards, flip chart / white board, pens
<p>Timings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a longer session, allow at least 90 minutes or split the enquiry over a break.

PREPARATION		20 min
Introductions	Introduce everyone, if necessary.	
Ethos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethos if necessary, briefly establish or reiterate your class expectations. E.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We're always asking questions ○ We share what we really think ○ We care what other people think too ○ We give reasons for our claims ○ We're not scared to disagree ○ We're willing to change our mind ○ We speak one at a time ○ We encourage speakers by listening and looking at them 	
Warm up	<p>Concept Cake: ***</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In groups of 5, make the 'concept cake' Bravery. • Decide what the ingredients of bravery might be, allocating one ingredient for each member of the group giving good reasons for its inclusion. • Then consider quantities of each ingredient. For example, is bravery mostly comprised of courage? Does it have a sprinkling of fear? • Present the cakes back to the group. • Time permitting, give the other groups the opportunity to suggest adding or omitting certain ingredients. 	
STIMULUS		10 min
Presenting Stimulus	<p>Share the following story with the class. If you want, you can enhance the story telling by using photographs of the boys or props such as hats and letters that stand in as their possessions.</p> <p><i>There was once a British family called the Smiths who had three young sons and a daughter. They lived at the time of the Great War, a time when young men were called up to join the army and fight the Germans in France.</i></p> <p><i>One by one, each of the sons received a letter calling them to join the fight in the trenches.</i></p> <p><i>In 1916, Albert the oldest boy received his conscription letter. Reading it, he felt no fear at all. In fact, he set off to war full of excitement.</i></p> <p><i>"Son you are so brave" his father told him. "You are brave, because you go off to war without feeling frightened at all."</i></p> <p><i>In 1917, Bertrand, the middle boy received his conscription letter. Knowing more about life in the trenches than his brother, he felt terrified. He was scared of saying goodbye to his family, scared of being hurt and scared of death. But he felt it was his duty to join his brother and fight for his country, so he set off to war despite his fear.</i></p> <p><i>"Son you are so brave" his mother told him. "You are brave because you go off to war, even though you are frightened."</i></p>	

	<p><i>In 1918, Charlie, the youngest boy received his conscription letter and felt many feelings, since by now there had been fighting for four long years. He felt that the war was dangerous, foolish and wrong. But he knew that if he didn't go to war everyone would think he was a coward. Nevertheless, he chose to stay behind and face the consequences—because he couldn't do something that he believed to be wrong.</i></p> <p><i>His father said “Son, you are a coward, why can't you go to war with bravery like your oldest brother?”</i></p> <p><i>Then his mother said: “Son, you are a coward, why can't you go to war with bravery like your middle brother?”</i></p> <p><i>But his little sister whispered something else: “Brother I think you are brave” but when he asked her why, she was too shy to say.</i></p>	
Thinking time	A minute in silence.	
QUESTION(S)		5 min
Prepared Question	Which, if any, of the boys were brave?	
Detected Question	You may want to build on this initial focused discussion to elicit a question from the students. You could do this by reworking a theme that arises naturally and writing this up for them. Or you may wish to do this more democratically using question-forming procedures. If you so this, allow additional time and consider taking a break once this is done.	
DIALOGUE		40 min
First Words	Begin with a paired discussion of the question, allowing everyone the opportunity to share their initial responses.	
Collecting Ideas	<p>Move on to a facilitated group discussion gathering a range of ideas, which you may want to scribe on the board.</p> <p>Encourage children to notice agreement and disagreement using 'Show of Thumbs'.</p>	
Getting Focused	<p>As the discussion progresses, begin to help the group to identify and exploring key emergent idea(s) in more depth.</p> <p>If necessary, ask the groups to rank the Smith boys from most brave to least brave. They can do this in paired discussion, or you can try 'Vote with your feet'</p> <p>Vote with your Feet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lay out the photographs on the floor. • Ask the group (or a few chosen children) to stand by the photo of the brother they consider the bravest. • They should share their reasons in a huddle with the other children standing nearby them. • Then feedback as a whole group. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow children who have been persuaded by something they have heard to change positions. • Ask any children who move to explain what has persuaded them. 	
Digging Deeper	<p>If necessary, focus the discussion by identify an emergent question, especially one that that deals with more general concerns, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must we <i>always</i> be brave? • Can we always be brave? • Can you be brave and fearful? • If you are fearless, are you braver? • If you are not brave are you a coward? • What is your duty? • How do you determine your duty? • Can you neglect your duty and still do good? 	
Final Words	Return either to the original question or to the emergent question and go around the circle hearing from everyone.	
REFLECTION		15 min
Reflection on the Content	<p>In pairs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the children to ZOOM OUT to reflect on what they thought at the beginning of the discussion and what they think at the end. <p>Feedback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite any child whose partner has changed their mind, to eXEMPLIFY what it was that helped to change their mind. 	
Reflection on the Method	<p>Ask the class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When – if ever – should you YIELD (or change your mind) in philosophy? 	
EXTENSION		10 min
Talking Homework	<p>For the Philosopher Aristotle, being brave was a <i>virtue</i>, a moral habit of good people. Being the opposite (cowardly) was known as a vice. He argued that doing a virtuous action (like going to war) is a necessary part of being virtuous, but not sufficient i.e. not enough on its own. He writes in the Nicomachean Ethics: <i>“...he who stands his ground against things that are terrible and delights in this or at least is not pained is brave, while the man who is pained is a coward.</i> (Ross, W.D (1984) <i>Aristotle: Nicomachean Ethics</i>, Oxford, 1104b)</p> <p>What is bravery (and cowardice): Something you do? Something you are? Or both?</p>	

* This is the metacognitive language of *Thinking Moves A-Z* by **Dialogue Works**. For more info see <https://dialogueworks.co.uk/thinking-moves/> or ask us about our accredited Thinking Moves Training.

** A list of this language for facilitation accompanies these resources <https://www.thinkingspace.org.uk/resources>

*** Concept Cake is an exercise devised by **Jason Buckley**, find more on his excellent website:
<https://www.thephilosophyman.com/free-p4c-resources>. Ask us about our validated Philosophy Circles Training.

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