



# thinking space

## GAMES TO SUPPORT ENQUIRY

### WHAT IS IT?

Philosophical enquiry requires skills and attributes that take time to develop. These games promote turn-taking, speaking and listening, reasoning and reflection. They can be used to introduce, break-up, or conclude a session.

Make up your own rules and adapt them to suit your group...here are just a few to get you started.

### RECIPE

- **No. of participants:** Any
- **Age of participants:** Suitable for any age
- **Preparation time:** None (But you might need 5 minutes to collect objects for 'Simile Prop Box')
- **Delivery time:** 5 minutes each
- **Materials:** None (Except a box of props or objects for 'Simile Prop Box')

## GAMES

### Philosophy Fruit salad

Sitting on chairs in a circle, swap places in response to various philosophical propositions. E.g. Swap places if... "You think that you are a brain, if you think the universe is infinite, if you think capital punishment is right, if you think words have fixed meanings..."

This game familiarises students with philosophical subject matter and promotes questioning.

### Speed Dating

In response to some stimulus, pairs comprised of person A and person B compose philosophical questions. They begin to discuss their question but when three minutes are up, the B's must rotate right, swapping partners and questions. The A's might explain where they got to with their last partner while the B's bring additional considerations to the conversation, some of which might be influenced by their previous conversations.

This game gives students an opportunity explore an issue focussing on depth (if you're in the inner circle thinking about one question) and breadth (if you're in the outer circle thinking about many questions).

## GAMES (cont.)

### Simile Prop Box

Using a word or concept voted for by the group, participants take it in turns to pick a prop or an object from a box and use it as a simile. Any objects will do! E.g. "Fear is like a pair of scissors because it cuts right through you." "Family is like money because you can't survive without it." Etc.

This game promotes creative thinking and the articulation of new ideas.

### Reason Chains

In a circle an appointed leader begins the chain with an event e.g. "Kate went to the police station". The participants around the circle continue the chain by giving an explanatory reason for the event.

E.g. "Kate went to the police station because she crashed her car". The next person gives a reason for that reason, and so on until the group can't go any further. E.g. "Kate crashed her car, because she was driving too fast"; "Kate was driving too fast because she was in a rush"; "Kate was in a rush because she was late for work"; "Kate was late for work because her alarm didn't go off" ...

This game demonstrates the role of reasons in discussion and story-telling.

### You Missed A Bit

To recap or to conclude, ask the group to tell the story of the day / session / piece of stimulus starting from the very beginning. One person starts but 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 exercise builds up a detailed picture of the groups' collective memory, supporting their reflective thinking.

## TIPS

- If the students are struggling to concentrate you could use a focussing game before moving on to the next activity. (See 'Games to Focus' Tool.)

## FIND OUT MORE

- See 'Games To Focus' Tool
- See 'Taking Enquiry Further' Tool
- See 'Thinking In Role' Tool



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