Philosophy for Children (P4C)

PATHWAYS

Enhancing the Curriculum and School Life through critical thinking, speaking and listening skills

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I've never heard of P4C

I know what P4C is

I use P4C regularly
I've never heard of P4C

P4C is...

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What is P4C - Philosophy for Children?

Philosophy for Children, or P4C for short, is a teaching method based on:

- Group enquiry (working together in a community of enquiry to understand difficult issues/concepts);
- Reflection (thinking about discussions and possibly changing attitudes/actions as a result);
- Developing skills (critical and creative thinking, communication skills and working with others).

P4C was devised in the late 1960s by Professor Matthew Lipman. As a professor of Philosophy at Montclair University, New Jersey he was perturbed by his undergraduates' lack of critical thinking skills. Moreover, he believed that the social and political turmoil that characterised this period in US history was a consequence of people's inability to think rationally and reasonably. Lipman concluded that children need to be introduced to philosophical thinking early on their development and thus Philosophy for Children was conceived as an educational programme for 6 to 16 year olds.

Originally based on texts written by Lipman himself, to encourage philosophical thinking, P4C has now grown into an approach to education, employing a diverse range of resources – pictures books, news, film and TV, music, poetry, the list goes on - as stimuli to encourage children and young people to ask and discuss philosophical questions together.
P4C is based on the principle that children should be given the opportunity to ask and openly discuss questions which are of relevance and importance to them. Regular engagement in the process of formulating and discussing these questions as part of a community of enquiry develops thinking and communication skills, as well as helping pupils towards a better understanding of the topics they discuss. In addition, taking part regularly in a community of enquiry can help foster an inclusive, supportive and co-operative ethos within a class or even throughout a whole school.

Although it is both welcome and necessary that different opinions are expressed in a philosophical enquiry, this is done in a supportive, non-confrontational way, where the aim is to explore together, as a community, issues arising from a question and to try to draw some conclusions. In this way, P4C helps children to listen to, take account of, and respectfully but critically challenge other points of view. They learn to formulate reasoned arguments and to articulate their opinions to others.

P4C is distinctively different from other dialogical pedagogies. For instance, it differs from debating because participants are encouraged to be open to the prospect of changing their minds as a discussion develops and are not required to take up opposing sides; and although the set up resembles circle time, the emphasis on enquiry, questioning and critical analysis means that P4C is a very different approach.
P4C at Foundation Phase and in Primary Education

A growing number of infant, primary schools and nurseries use P4C on a regular basis. P4C covers many PSE curriculum objectives and the skills developed enhance learning potential and in school life in general.

In order for learners to really benefit from P4C, it is ideal to facilitate it regularly with them. From age 5+, an hour a week is an ideal allocation of time. This may seem like a tall order, with an already jam-packed curriculum to deliver, but P4C can very effectively be used to enhance the delivery of the existing curriculum. Learners in the Foundation Phase can be introduced to P4C for shorter sessions and in small focus groups. These children can benefit a great deal and begin to develop skills for philosophical enquiry through discreet thinking games designed to develop listening, thinking and speaking skills. It is also a useful way for younger children to explore differences between questions and statements.

P4C sessions can be delivered at the start of a particular module of work or as a plenary session at the end. A session could also be done at an appropriate point during a unit of work. Conversely, P4C can also be practised as a discrete subject, in its own right, with an emphasis on skills development. The ‘Next Steps’ apple below will take you through the process of preparing and planning for P4C in the Foundation Phase and for Key Stages 1 and 2.

Image Source:
www.gettyimages.co.uk
P4C in Secondary School

P4C is becoming more widespread in secondary education as a growing number of schools recognise the benefits for students (and staff). Using P4C is also one way of enabling learners to develop the skills to think critically and laterally, to link ideas and concepts and make informed decisions. Such skills are essential for students to be able to effectively access the Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC) framework.

Much research into the impact of P4C has found that it improves pupils’ attitudes and performance, both in general reasoning and in curriculum tests. It equips students with skills that they can apply across curriculum areas and there is an increased chance that students will show improved speaking and listening skills when working in groups. There also appears to be an increased likelihood that they will listen well to inputs of others, reflect on the learning process and be prepared to raise questions between themselves.

In order for learners to really benefit from P4C, it is ideal to facilitate it regularly with them. An hour once a week / fortnight is an ideal allocation of time for P4C and schools manage this in varying ways. For example, some use P4C within RE and Literacy, although P4C is a useful pedagogy for all subjects.

Sessions can be delivered at the start of a particular module of work or at the end. A P4C session could also be facilitated at an appropriate point during a unit of work. However, if all staff are trained, one consideration should be to ensure that students then don’t have P4C overload – where it is being used too much across many subjects. One of the most effective strategies used by some secondary schools is to collapse the timetable every fortnight. All students remain in their tutor groups for the first hour of the day and participate in a P4C session facilitated by form tutors. In this context, P4C is practised as a discrete subject, in its own right, with an emphasis on skills development.
P4C and Subject Areas of the Curriculum

Although it is perhaps easiest to envisage how P4C can enrich PSE programmes, English and Humanities subjects, learners can reap the benefits of P4C in a diverse range of subject areas.

Using P4C to deliver different subjects adds variety to the curriculum in Wales and helps children to think in new, challenging and unfamiliar ways; this can greatly enhance their engagement and understanding of what they are being taught. Below are some web links to sites relating to P4C and specific subject areas and links to the curriculum in Wales.

If no free documents are available online for your specific subject area, we have directed you to P4C.com. Resources at P4C.com are available for an annual subscription fee from £50.

Links to free stimuli for P4C, relevant to a wide range of subject areas and age groups are available in this guide. Click on ‘Stimuli’. This page is always under development as we continue to build a bank of resources for different subject areas. If you have anything you’d like to share and have published in the next, updated version of PATHWAYS, please email markcharman@wcia.org.uk
P4C and the Curriculum in Wales

The Philosophy for Children is above all, versatile. It is with this spirit that teachers and students can enter into philosophical enquiry and have the creative licence and freedom to adapt, develop and remain open minded in their thinking. Below, we have been able to identify the many ways in which P4C can support the curriculum in Wales:
P4C and ESDGC

The 7 themes of ESDGC can be aptly explored in P4C sessions, through which children develop critical, creative, caring and collaborative thinking skills.

With specific reference to Theme 3 (Choices and Decisions), the P4C method allows children to ask the questions that are important to them and to decide, through a democratic process, the agenda of their learning.

In P4C enquiries, children learn to listen to, respect and critically evaluate the views of others and to reflect on their own opinions and beliefs. P4C helps children to appreciate how their actions can affect the world around them.

You may also find the following useful:

www.arthistoryarchive.com
Many iconic images from the history of art, many of which are relevant to themes of ESDGC (includes photography and sculpture).

*The Guardian* newspaper centre spreads are excellent stimuli for discussion - large and usually really colourful and thought-provoking images, typically of landscapes and cultural events/festivals.

www.amnesty.org.uk
Amnesty International – a great website for human rights and issues around cultural diversity

www.miniature-earth.com
If the world was a village of 100 people analogy.

www.globaldimension.org.uk
This organisation describes itself as ‘A guide to books, films, posters and web resources which support global, intercultural and environmental understanding for all age groups and subjects.’
Preparing and Planning for P4C

• Whether at Foundation Stage, primary, secondary or FE, in planning and preparation terms and compared to other pedagogies, P4C is low prep, high impact and the opportunity to engage with students without all the paperwork. Key to the success of your session will be the role that teacher takes on as facilitator.

• You’ll also find it useful to gather some basic resources to hand:

Plain paper & felt-tip pens (or mini whiteboards);

Your warm up activity and/or stimulus for enquiry – if you’re new to this, we can point you in the right direction initially, so you’ll just need to make your choice and have this ready for the session.

• The learning area should be arranged so that pupils can sit in a circle, with an open space in the middle, the teacher (facilitator) and any additional adults should also sit in the circle with the pupils.

• For foundation stage pupils, set aside a maximum of 20 minutes.

• For children in primary and older, set aside an hour (ideally an hour and a 15 minutes).
The Structure of a P4C session: the 10 Steps

Typically (but not always) a P4C session will consist of 10 distinct ‘steps’, which are summarised below. As you become more familiar with the practise of P4C, you may of course adapt or vary the stages of enquiries and/or extend these stages over more than one session to suit the needs of your classes. Following the 10 steps will help you to plan ahead effectively.

At Foundation Phase, start with step 1 and extend to further steps as the learners develop confidence.

1. Getting Set (preparation: stilling or warm-up activity, establish or remind of rules)
2. Presentation of stimulus (engaging, thought-provoking)
3. Thinking time (‘reflect and connect’, ‘think, pair, share’)
4. Question-Making (groups of 3-5 make 6-10 questions)
5. Question-Airing (display and discuss questions)
6. Question-Choosing (common interest/voting)
7. First Thoughts (often the group whose question is chosen will explain how they arrived at it)
8. Building (‘digging deeper’, encouraging understanding)
9. Last Thoughts (sharing final words, uncontested)
10. Review (what went well, even better if... – www.ebi)
Helpful Questions that can be asked by the Facilitator

By asking these sorts of ‘Socratic’ questions during the session, your students will develop their own ideas more thoroughly and will learn to challenge others with similar questions.

Questions that seek clarification

- Can you explain that...?
- What do you mean by that...?
- Can you give me an example...?
- How does that help...?
- Does anyone have a question...?

Questions that probe reasons and evidence

- Why do you think that...?
- How do we know that...?
- What are your reasons...?
- Do you have evidence...?
- Can you give me an example / counter example...?

Questions that explore alternative views

- Can you put it another way...?
- Is there another point of view...?
- What if someone were to suggest that...?
- What would someone who disagreed with you say...?
- What is the difference between those views / ideas...?

Questions that test implications and consequences

- What follows (or can we work out from) what you say...?
- Does it agree with what was said earlier...?
- What would be the consequences of that...?
- Is there a general rule for that...?
- How could you test to see if it was true...?

Questions about the question / discussion

- Do you have a question about that...?
- What kind of question is it...?
- How does what was said / the question help us...?
- Where have we got to / who can summarise so far...?
- Are we any closer to answering the question / problem...?
Planning Proformas

Over the page are annotated planning proformas for different age groups. You will need to think about your choice of stimulus for the session. Also consider whether your starter activity requires any resources. All plans are available in editable Word format at the CEWC website.
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<tr>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Learning Objectives</th>
<th>Resources</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 mins</td>
<td>GETTING SET</td>
<td>Introduce / Reminder of the 'Conventions' / Ground rules of P4C. E.g.:</td>
<td>Activate prior skills, knowledge and understanding</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Take turns to speak</td>
<td>Learn and/or reinforce the conventions / ground rules and language of philosophical enquiry.</td>
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<td>- Try to address the group and aim to make contributions that help</td>
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<td>7-9 mins</td>
<td>WARM-UP</td>
<td>A short game to establish mindsets for philosophical enquiry. E.g.:</td>
<td>Experiment &amp; go beyond the conventional in thinking</td>
<td>Warm-up resources (as applicable)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- 'Would you rather'</td>
<td>Think logically &amp; see patterns</td>
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<td>- 'Odd One out'</td>
<td>Consider theories and identify possible problems</td>
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<td>- 'Concept line'</td>
<td>Generate and develop ideas</td>
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<td>- 'Philosophers Fruit Salad'</td>
<td>Think about cause and effect and make inferences</td>
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<td>- 'The Stand up Game'</td>
<td>Generate and develop ideas</td>
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<tr>
<td>1-4 mins</td>
<td>STIMULUS</td>
<td>A stimulus to spark thinking. E.g.:</td>
<td>Consider information and ideas</td>
<td>Stimulus</td>
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<td>- A topical, international news report</td>
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<td>- A short video clip - E.g. YouTube search 'Time of my life rotates'</td>
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<td>- A story / poem for thinking - E.g. written by Robert Fisher</td>
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<td>- An excerpt / image of a character - from shared class text</td>
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<td>- Instrumental music - E.g. Cavallini Rusticana by William Orbit</td>
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<td>- An object - E.g. a blank sheet of paper / aaccolade / a broken pen</td>
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<td>- A piece of artwork E.g. by Banksy 'Follow your dreams connected'</td>
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<td>1 min</td>
<td>INDEPENDENT THINKING TIME</td>
<td>Allow around a minute for pupils to reflect and gather their thoughts</td>
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<td>2 mins</td>
<td>FIRST WORDS</td>
<td>Pupils given time to share their first thoughts about the stimulus</td>
<td>Communicate ideas and emotions in pairs / threes / small groups.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 mins</td>
<td>QUESTION-MAKING</td>
<td>Pupils craft philosophical / open ended questions</td>
<td>Develop information and ideas and form and ask philosophical questions</td>
<td>Pens &amp; plain paper</td>
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<td>Pupils can craft their question around the first thoughts they had in response to the stimulus - working in the same pairs / groups.</td>
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<td>5 mins</td>
<td>QUESTION-AIRING</td>
<td>Questions presented - E.g. using one of the following systems:</td>
<td>Present questions to the community</td>
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<td>- The question authors read them aloud, then present them on the floor</td>
<td>Identify links and connections</td>
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<td>- You- as the facilitator - read them aloud and offences them to the wall</td>
<td>Organise ideas and information</td>
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<td>- One child reads all the question aloud and another arranges them</td>
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<td>Also invite community / authors to identify links between questions</td>
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<td>NB - if in doubt of the philosophical nature of any question(s), it is worth probing or question authors to make sure that the questions and their implications are understood - and then, as a community, consider any questions are not 'philosophical' - and write - omit these if necessary.</td>
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<td>3 mins</td>
<td>QUESTION-CHOOSING (democratic vote)</td>
<td>Pupils vote for question to discuss - using a democratic system E.g.:</td>
<td>Use an appropriate voting system to choose one question.</td>
<td>Counters (optional)</td>
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<td>- One person, one vote.</td>
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<td>- Multi-vote: everyone given several counters to vote with as they like</td>
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<td>- Convo-vote - for as many questions as you like</td>
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<td>- Transferable Vote</td>
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<td>4 mins</td>
<td>FIRST THOUGHTS</td>
<td>Author(s) of the chosen question open the enquiry</td>
<td>Give reasons for asking questions.</td>
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<td>Why did the question author(s) craft their particular question?</td>
<td>Respond to what has been presented / read</td>
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<td>What do they think - in response to the question?</td>
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<td>What do others think and why?</td>
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<td>20-30 mins</td>
<td>BUILDING</td>
<td>Honking on key idea(s) &amp; asking questions around these E.g.:</td>
<td>Experiment &amp; go beyond the conventional in thinking</td>
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<td>- Why do you think that?</td>
<td>Think logically &amp; see patterns</td>
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<td>- How do you know that?</td>
<td>Consider theories and identify possible problems</td>
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<td>- Tell us more</td>
<td>Generate and develop ideas</td>
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<td>- Is there another point of view / alternative perspective?</td>
<td>Think about cause and effect and make inferences</td>
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<td>- What can we work out from what you say?</td>
<td>Generate and develop ideas</td>
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<td>- Can you give us an example (to support your theory)?</td>
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<td>- What’s the difference between those ideas?</td>
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<td>- Do you have a question about that?</td>
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<td>9-15 mins</td>
<td>LAST THOUGHTS</td>
<td>Every pupil given the opportunity to share their final thoughts</td>
<td>Value unexpected outcomes To form opinions and make decisions</td>
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<td>If this is not always possible, consider groups/pairings/recording final thoughts on paper.</td>
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## Philosophy for Children (P4C) Session Plan

(Mapped against ‘Skills Framework for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales’)

**For Years 1-3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class/group:</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timing</strong></td>
<td><strong>Activity</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 2 mins | GETTING SET (establish / review rules) | Introduce / Reminder of the ‘Conventions / Ground rules of P4C’. E.g.:  
- Take turns to speak  
- Try to address the group and aim to make contributions that help  
- Give reasons for what you say  
- Aim to be responsive listeners  
- There are no right or wrong contributions (though some more helpful)  
- Use language of ‘I agree’ / ‘I disagree’ / ‘I’d like to build on that’ | Activate prior skills, knowledge and understanding Learn and/or reinforce the conventions / ground rules and language of philosophical enquiry. | Warm-up resources (as applicable) |
| 7 mins | WARM-UP (This is optional and need not be included in every session) | A short game to establish mindset for philosophical enquiry. E.g.:  
- ‘Would you rather’  
- ‘Odd One Out’  
- ‘The Change Game’  
- ‘Philosophers Fruit Salad’  
- ‘Sorting Game’ | Experiment & go beyond the conventional in thinking Think logically & see patterns Consider theories and identify possible problems Generate and develop ideas Think about cause and effect and make inferences Generate and develop ideas | |
| 1-4 mins | STIMULUS (Reveal to the community) | A stimulus to spark thinking. E.g.:  
- A story / picture from a story – e.g. by Anthony Browne  
- A short video clip – E.g. from YouTube, such as ‘Dangle’  
- A story / poem for thinking – E.g. written by Robert Fisher  
- An excerpt / image of a character from shared class text  
- Instrumental music – E.g. Cavalletto Rustica by William Orbit  
- An object – E.g. a blank sheet of paper / a candle / a broken pen  
- A piece of artwork E.g. by Salvador Dali ‘The Persistence of Memory’ | Consider information and ideas | Stimulus |
| 1 min | INDEPENDENT THINKING TIME | Allow around a minute for pupils to reflect and gather their thoughts | | |
| 2 mins | FIRST WORDS | Pupils given time to share their 1st thoughts about the stimulus. They could do this in pairs / threes / small groups. | Communicate ideas and emotions in pairs / threes. | |
| 5 mins | QUESTION-MAKING | Facilitator writes – on whiteboard – pupils’ ‘philosophical / open ended questions’ – writing pupils names / initials next to them if more than one child asks the same question facilitator writes both names / initials after question (n.b. not all children will ask a question) | Develop information and ideas and form and ask philosophical questions | Whiteboard & pen |
| 3 mins | QUESTION-REVIEW | Facilitator reads all questions aloud and community identify links Facilitator shows links between questions visually using pen – or, if using interactive whiteboard, by highlighting with colours. | Present questions to the community Identify links and connections Communicate information Organise ideas and information | |
| 3 mins | QUESTION-CHOOSING (democratic vote) | Facilitator re-reads questions aloud and pupils vote for question to discuss – using a democratic system E.g.:  
- One person, one vote.  
- Omnivote – vote as many questions as you like  
- Blind vote | Use an appropriate voting system to choose one question. | |
| 3 mins | FIRST THOUGHTS | Author(s) of the chosen question open the enquiry  
Why did the question author(s) craft their particular question?  
What do they think – in response to the question?  
What do others think and why? | Give reasons for asking questions  
Respond to what has been presented / read | |
| 15 mins | BUILDING | Honing in on key ideas & asking questions around these E.g.:  
- Why do you think that?  
- How do you know that?  
- Tell us more.  
- Is there another point of view / an alternative perspective?  
- What can we work out from what you say?  
- Can you give us an example (to support your theory)?  
- What’s the difference between these ideas?  
- Do you have a question about that? | Experiment & go beyond the conventional in thinking Think logically & see patterns Consider theories and identify possible problems Generate and develop ideas Think about cause and effect and make inferences Generate and develop ideas | |
| 9-15 mins | LAST THOUGHTS | Every pupil given the opportunity to share their final thoughts. If this is not always possible, consider groups / pairings / recording final thoughts on paper / etc. | Value unexpected outcomes To form opinions and make decisions | |
# Session a

**Developing community, in small groups of 6 children, using short thinking games**

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<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Learning Objectives</th>
<th>Resources</th>
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</table>
| 2 mins   | GETTING SET (establish / review rules) | Introduce the “Conventions / Ground rules of P4C. E.g.:  
- Take turns to speak - whoever has the talking object (e.g. teddy)  
- We ask questions  
- We listen to each other  
- We sit in a circle | Activate prior skills, knowledge and understanding  
Learn and/or reinforce the conventions / ground rules of philosophical enquiry. | Warm-up resources (as applicable) |
| 5-10 mins| THINKING GAME             | A short game to develop skills for philosophical enquiry. E.g.:  
- “Would you rather”  
- “Odd one out”  
- “Sorting Game”  
- “The Change Game”  
- “Questions to a...”  
- “Concept Line” | Experiment & go beyond the conventional in thinking  
Think logically & see patterns  
Consider theories and identify possible problems  
Generate and develop ideas  
Prepare for philosophical enquiry |                               |
| 5 mins   | LAST THOUGHTS             | Every pupil given the opportunity to share some final words  
Passing the teddy around, each child has an opportunity to share a final thought about the activity - with the group. They can choose to pass (and practice saying “pass” if they do). | Value unexpected outcomes  
Form opinions and make decisions |                               |
### Session b
Introducing a stimulus and developing questions in small groups of 6 children

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<th>Timing</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Learning Objectives</th>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2 mins | GETTING SET (establish / review rules) | Introduce the ‘Conventions / Ground rules of P4C’ E.g.:  
- Take turns to speak- whoever has the talking object (teddy)  
- We ask questions  
- We listen to each other  
- We sit in a circle | Activate prior skills, knowledge and understanding. Learn and/or reinforce the conventions/ground rules of philosophical enquiry. |          |
| 1-4 mins | STIMULUS (Reveal to the community) | A stimulus to spark thinking. E.g.:  
- An object - E.g. a candle  
- A story / picture from a story - E.g. by Anthony Browne  
- A short video clip - E.g. from YouTube such as ‘Gaza’  
- A piece of artwork E.g. by Salvador Dalí ‘The Persistence of Memory’  
- Instrumental music E.g. Cavaliers/Parlour by William Orbit | Consider information and ideas | Stimulus |
| 1 min | INDEPENDENT THINKING TIME | Allow around a minute for pupil to reflect and gather their thoughts |          |          |
| 2 mins | FIRST WORDS | Pupils given time to share their first thoughts about the stimulus. They could do this in pairs / threes | Communicate ideas and emotions in pairs/threes |          |
| 4 mins | QUESTION-MAKING & AIRING | Pupils develop philosophical / open ended questions. Pupils craft their question around the first thoughts they had in response to the stimulus.  
Invite children to identify links between questions | Develop information and ideas and form and ask philosophical questions | Pens & plain paper |
| 3 mins | QUESTION-CHOOSING | Each pupil votes for 1 question. Keep the question chosen by the group for the next session (C) | Use an appropriate voting system to choose one question |          |
# Philosophy for Children (P4C) Session Plan

(Mapped against ‘Skills Framework for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales’)

Class/group: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

## Session c

**Developing a community of enquiry in small groups of 6 children**

(Return to the session with the question chosen by the community in session 2 and the stimulus for reference)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Learning Objectives</th>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2 mins | GETTING SET (establish / review rules) | Introduce the ‘Conventions / Ground rules of P4C’. E.g.:  
- Take turns to speak whoever has the speaking object (e.g., teddy)  
- We ask questions  
- We listen to each other  
- We sit in a circle | Activate prior skills, knowledge and understanding. Learn and/or reinforce the conventions / ground rules of philosophical enquiry. |           |
| 2 mins | FIRST THOUGHTS        | Author(s) of the chosen question open the enquiry  
Why did the question author craft their particular question?  
What do they think – in response to the question?  
What do others think and why? | Give reasons for asking questions.  
Respond to what has been presented / read |           |
| 8 mins | BUILDING              | Honing in on key issue(s) & asking questions around these E.g.:  
- Why do you think that?  
- How do you know that?  
- Tell me more  
- Is there another point of view / an alternative perspective?  
- What can we work out from what you say?  
- Can you give us an example (to support your theory)?  
- What’s the difference between those ideas?  
- Do you have a question about that? | Experiment & go beyond the conventional thinking.  
Think logically & see patterns  
Consider theories and identify possible problems  
Generate and develop ideas  
Think about cause and effect and make inferences  
Generate and develop ideas |           |
| 3 mins | LAST THOUGHTS         | Every pupil given the opportunity to share some final words  
Passing the object around, each child has an opportunity to share a final thought about the activity - with the group. They can choose to pass (and practice saying “pass” if they do). | Value unexpected outcomes  
To form opinions and make decisions |           |
Developing philosophical questions

As with any area of learning, there can be some aspects of P4C that initially require some extra attention. For those new to P4C, it might be helpful to spend some time exploring and understanding different types of questions.

A useful tool for helping learners to understand different question types is the Question Quadrant, developed by Phil Cam. Having generated their own questions in response to a stimulus, you could invite members of the community to identify where, in the quadrant, where their questions might best fit. Which questions might be most appropriate / effective for a philosophical enquiry?

The question quadrant could be used with children aged 8+.

Source: http://sustainedsuccess.blogspot.com/2009/03/creating-questions.html
Developing philosophical questions

Another activity which also helps learners to consider the types of questions they ask is to spend 30 minutes working in small groups, within a carousel. Prior to the activity, set up six stations with a sheet of A3 paper at each station with the instructions written at the top of them as below. The students work round the carousel providing examples of questions. Afterwards, come together as a class and decide which questions might work well within a philosophical enquiry, and why.
Assessment For Learning (AFL)

One system for keeping a track record of the progress students make in P4C is to provide them all with a **P4C Thinking Journal** – or a shared, whole class journal (an A3 plain leaf exercise book). This can be somewhere for keeping reflections and developing questions; the more freedom you allow students with this, the more creative they tend to be, some enjoying the sense of opportunity to express themselves in this way, and to explore boundaries.

Another way of monitoring progress whilst incorporating assessment for learning might be to invite learners to complete the AFL sheets on the next two pages.
How Am I Doing?
My Questioning Skills

Being able to ask the right sort of questions can really help us to learn - questioning is a really important skill, which we practise all the time in P4C. This sheet has been is to help you to think about how your questioning skills are developing in P4C sessions. Think carefully about your responses and be really honest!

Tick one box for each statement, to show how confident you feel about your questioning skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I understand what is meant by a ‘philosophical’ question.</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In P4C sessions I can work well with others to come up with questions that are interesting for the class to discuss.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can come up with questions, which are interesting to discuss on my own.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Since I started doing P4C, I have learned a lot about different types of questions.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4C has made me better at understanding questions when doing class work or in tests</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4C is helping me to be better at asking questions at school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other things I would like to say about how my questioning skills have developed in P4C:

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________
In today's P4C enquiry we looked at ____________________________________________
(stimulus)

The question that I/our group came up with was:
__________________________________________________________________________

We came up with this question because
__________________________________________________________________________

I/we thought that this was a good philosophical question because
__________________________________________________________________________

The main question we discussed was:

__________________________________________________________________________

Did you think this was a good question to ask, based on the stimulus?  YES ☐  NO ☐
Give reason(s) for your answer ________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

Did you think that this was a philosophical question?  YES ☐  NO ☐
Give reason(s) for your answer ________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

What did you learn from discussing this question?
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

Do you think that doing P4C is helping you to ask better questions?  YES ☐  NO ☐
Give reason(s) for your answer ________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
Training and Continuing Professional Development

In the UK, SAPERE is perhaps the organisation best known for P4C. It co-ordinates a three-level professional training programme to maintain high standards. CEWC works closely with SAPERE and provides a number of services in this area:

- **Training for teachers**, including Level 1 P4C courses accredited by SAPERE

**CEWC offers a special introductory package for schools, at a one-off cost of £1,150 (plus expenses), that includes:**

- 2-day Level 1 course, at your school / workplace – for all staff
- 2 Level 1 course handbooks from SAPERE
- 2 classroom demonstrations with teachers observing
- **Affiliate Membership** of CEWC-Cymru for 1 year
- Classroom demonstrations of P4C with any age group
- **Thinking Citizens**, a basic resource for linking P4C with Personal and Social Education (PSE).

The approach CEWC takes is to combine P4C with requirements of the curriculum in Wales such as Thinking Skills, PSE and ESDGC.

Click here for further information or contact our Philosophy for Children dedicated Project Officer, Mark Charman directly for further information:

**E-mail**  
markcharman@wcia.org.uk

**Telephone**  
029 2022 8549
Further Continuing Professional Development

If you, like many others, use P4C regularly and have developed an interest in taking it further in your own professional practice, you might, beyond further P4C training, consider what it is about philosophy that interests you. A way of thinking about this might be to see if you can identify what branch(es) of philosophy are under discussion in P4C enquiries and which of these you find the most interesting. See the chart below.

Also, Nigel Warburton’s book *A Little History of Philosophy* is great for further reading about philosophy. It’s a clear, concise history of philosophy printed in 40 page-turning, bite-size chapters (each chapter, about 3-4 pages).

---

**Five branches of philosophy**

| Metaphysics | Study of existence | TYPICAL QUESTIONS… | What is real?  
What’s the origin of the universe?  
What’s the purpose of life?  
Does God exist?  
Is there such a thing as free will?  |
|---|---|---|---|
| Epistemology | Study of knowledge | What do we know?  
How/why do we know we know?  
How do we acquire knowledge?  |
| Ethics | Study of values and actions | What should I do?  
Are some things always right or wrong?  
Should all of us share the same values?  
Should we treat humans differently to other animals?  |
| Political | Study of society and governance | What actions are permissible?  
How should society be governed?  
What are our duties to the government or to society?  
How should justice work?  
Which economic system is best?  |
| Aesthetics | Study of art | What is beautiful?  
What is art?  
What should art be like?  |
Whole School Development

In a community of enquiry, focus is given to caring and collaborative thinking - so when P4C is embedded into whole school practice, the benefits become clear. Studies show that when used regularly, approaches such as P4C provide learners with an intellectual boost that is equal on average to half a year’s worth of extra schooling (source: EPPI). Pupils’ attitude towards self and others also tends to change and some even talk about being more equipped to solve disputes in the playground.

Three initial steps to take:

1. If an initiative to facilitate P4C across the school is either driven or fully backed by the headteacher, it will most likely be a success. This is because, for P4C to really become part of a whole school ethos, all teachers should ideally facilitate it on a regular basis. To ensure that this happens in a consistent way, P4C should be factored in to teaching timetables. If all teaching staff know that they are required to do this, it will happen.

   In secondary schools, an effective strategy undertaken by a growing number of schools is to collapse the timetable for the first period on a set day, every fortnight. So, for example, on every other Tuesday morning all pupils stay in their tutor groups and experience P4C with their form tutor. This is an especially effective way of providing pastoral support in a useful and structured way in secondary education.
Whole School Development

2) Some teachers may need to be trained in using P4C and others may require further training. The most recognised pathway is for staff to undertake the SAPERE accredited Level 1 P4C training course.

CEWC-Cymru offers a special introductory package for schools, at a one-off cost of £1,150 (plus expenses), that includes:

- 2-day Level 1 course, at your school / workplace – **for all staff**
- 2 Level 1 course handbooks from SAPERE
- 2 classroom demonstrations with teachers observing
- **Affiliate Membership** of CEWC-Cymru for 1 year

Contact the CEWC-Cymru dedicated P4C Project Officer directly for further information and bookings: markcharman@wcia.org.uk
029 2022 8549

3) Establish a box of stimuli for P4C and keep this somewhere central (such as the staff room) so that it can be accessed by all. The benefit of basing this in the staff room means that everyone can *add* to it. So, if a staff member reads an interesting article in *Metro* on the way into work and thinks that it has the potential to be an effective stimulus for enquiry, they can easily add to it the resource box. Whilst in the staff room, there is also opportunity to sit down and take time to choose stimuli, and perhaps canvass the opinions of others.
P4C Community in Wales

The P4C community in Wales continues to expand and thrive. There are several networks of ‘P4Cers’. Some meet up in person to share handy tips, insights and resources. Others connect via email and LinkedIn, and PIPs (Philosophy in Pubs) is a more recent initiative for facilitators who enjoy participating in adult philosophical enquiries.

A Philosophy Cafe also takes place every month in the capital, and Cardiff Metropolitan University P4C trainer Jo Bowers has also established some effective networks for P4C teachers in the area. A newly established Welsh speaking P4C network is also in development. To find out more about the P4C community and networks in Wales, contact CEWC-Cymru’s Philosophy for Children Project Officer, Mark Charman, direct on:

markcharman@wcia.org.uk
029 2022 8549

Image Source: www.gettyimages.co.uk
Community News

The best way of staying in touch with developments on the UK P4C scene and for details about forthcoming conferences is via the SAPERE website: www.sapere.org.uk

For news about P4C in other European countries, go to http://sophia.eu.org/

To receive the **CEWC Weekly P4C Bulletin** for schools in Wales, email the word ‘bulletin’ to markcharman@wcia.org.uk
### P4C Starter Activities

Here are some ideas for starters to engage your pupils right from the start of the lesson and that require little or no planning!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Tips, extensions and adaptations</th>
<th>Age Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The sitting-down game</td>
<td>Participants must sit down in a random order 1 at a time, in silence and without gesturing. If two or more people sit down at the same time, the process must start again</td>
<td>Non-verbal communication, patience and turn-taking, reading the body language of others, becoming aware of others, working as a team to succeed</td>
<td>Limit to 3 ‘tries’ and if it fails, re-try in future lessons. If successful, see if it can be done quicker.</td>
<td>Any</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Woolly Thinking     | Participants sit in a circle. The first person says something about themselves (e.g. I collect teddy bears). Anyone who shares this in common raises their hand and, holding on to the end of the wool, the speaker chooses one of the people with their hand up to pass the ball of wool to. This person says a fact about themselves and the process is repeated. Stop when everyone has taken a turn. The wool across the circle will show visually the connections between the participants. | Community of Enquiry building, sharing                                                   | Vary this activity by making each statement start in a particular way, e.g.:  
"I believe that..."  
"I would like to live..."  
"If I had one wish, it would be..."  
Be prepared for a very tangled ball of wool! | Any        |
| Odd One Out         | Choose three things that have some features in common as a focus. Participants must say which one they think is the odd one out and give one reason for their choice. The reason must not have been given before. | Listening skills, creativity (especially for the last few to offer their thoughts), evaluation and analysis | Good triplets to choose for odd ones out:  
Apple/orange/banana  
Rabbit/squirrel/mouse  
Crocodile/snake/frog  
Always use pictures (or objects) if you can, especially for younger children.  
Extend this activity to ‘hot spot’ one or some of the group to test how much they remember, e.g. John what did Jane say was the odd one out and for what reason?  
Instead of ‘Odd One Out’ use the same three (or perhaps even more) things with a different focus, e.g. ‘Which would you rather be?’ ‘Which would you most like to be your best friend?’ | 6+         |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Creative Thinking, Listening, Encouraging Participation in Whole Group Discussion.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Word Association</td>
<td>Facilitator begins by saying a ‘random’ starter word and each person in turn says the first word that comes into his/her head, from the word that has just been said by the previous participants.</td>
<td>Extend the activity by going around the circle a second time, inviting the participants to explain the connection they made. Hotspot a pupil and challenge them to remember as many of the words said as possible (perhaps requiring him/her to remember who had said the words). Go around the circle again and construct a narrative out of the words, as a class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word Wall</td>
<td>Prepare a board of random words with the same number of words as there are children in the class (see attached word wall for example). Every participant should contribute 1 sentence only each, including 1 word from the word wall to construct a narrative with a beginning, middle and end, as a class.</td>
<td>Use pictures instead of, or to illustrate, words for EAL, less able or younger children. If you don’t have time to prepare a word (or picture) wall every participant can be invited to write one word on a sticky note, which they will then have to try to incorporate into the narrative. The words or pictures you choose can be linked to the stimulus for the lesson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair/Unfair Or Agree/disagree line – vote with your feet.</td>
<td>Read out statements and invite participants to take their place been the poles of really fair – really unfair or really agree – really disagree, dependent on their opinion on the statement you have just read.</td>
<td>Evaluation, reasoning, communication Younger children respond better to the fair/unfair line. With foundation phase, adapt the activity perhaps by showing a picture and have a ‘beautiful – ugly line, or a ‘baddy – goody’ line. Any – if adapted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goodies and Baddies line or Venn</td>
<td>Place several different character toys in front of the class (or give the task to groups of 3-5 children). Use string or rope to make a line with two poles: goody and baddy. Alternatively, use two large hoops to create a Venn diagram. Goodies Baddies The centre section could be ‘not sure’ or ‘sometimes good and sometimes bad’ or ‘neither’. Invite the children to place the toys on the line or in the Venn and to negotiate the positions of each toy together, with reasons, until all the toys have a place on the line.</td>
<td>Evaluation, reasoning, communication Make sure some of the toys are sufficiently ambiguous to insight some debate. If toys are unavailable, some well-chosen images could be used. Older children/teenagers could place statement or images under categories of right – wrong, good – evil, important – unimportant, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking a Line for a Walk</td>
<td>Use the whiteboard or flipchart. Every participant is invited to draw a line, connected to the last person’s line, until a picture is constructed. This must be done in silence.</td>
<td>Creative thinking, collaboration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Image Source: www.gettyimages.co.uk
P4C Stimuli

One of the wonderfully creative aspects of preparing for P4C, and facilitating it, can be the choice of stimulus that you decide to use. There are many books published now that include stimuli created specifically for P4C. Also, a growing number of websites offer resources for P4C online. Some of these require a subscription. Further details can be found on our links page.

We’ve identified a range of stimuli for you to access now, though, for free!
Short Videos as Stimuli for P4C

Short films / videos often make really engaging stimuli and there’s a lot out there, however, it’s often by word of mouth that we stumble across a something really powerful. We’ve compiled a list of super, short video stimuli and suggested areas of the curriculum they link with. We’ve also considered age appropriateness of the videos. Not every school / establishment has access to YouTube, so we’ve identified more than one link for you to access these powerful pieces of film.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stimulus</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Curriculum Links</th>
<th>YouTube Link</th>
<th>Other Link</th>
<th>Age suitability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Pig of Happiness by Edward Monkton</strong></td>
<td>Animation</td>
<td>Happiness Sharing Love Greed Community Selfishness Difference</td>
<td>PSE</td>
<td><a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uoiIYlw8M4">www.youtube.com/watch?v=uoiIYlw8M4</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.edwardmonkton.com/player/">www.edwardmonkton.com/player/</a></td>
<td>FoundationStage +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A self portrait</strong></td>
<td>An exploration of self, beliefs and time. The description explains how the film was made (useful if using within ICT)</td>
<td>Perception Life Death Afterlife Difference Self</td>
<td>PSE</td>
<td><a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ncOAIpr3n0">www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ncOAIpr3n0</a></td>
<td><a href="http://metacafe.tubeve.be.com/watch/yt-8ncOAIpr3n0/jeg_g_r_en_tur_a_self_p_ortrait_by_lasse_gjertsen/">http://metacafe.tubeve.be.com/watch/yt-8ncOAIpr3n0/jeg_g_r_en_tur_a_self_p_ortrait_by_lasse_gjertsen/</a></td>
<td>KS3+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulus</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Themes</td>
<td>Curriculum Links</td>
<td>YouTube Link</td>
<td>Other Link</td>
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</tr>
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<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dangle</td>
<td>Is it a actions vs consequences story - or just the tale of one man’s misguided actions? You decide!</td>
<td>Loneliness Consequences Community Power God</td>
<td>Geography PSE ICT RE Science</td>
<td><a href="www.youtube.com/watch?v=kzRD59r2j2A">www.youtube.com/watch?v=kzRD59r2j2A</a></td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>KS1+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balinese Monkey Chant – from the film ‘Baraka’</td>
<td>Performed by a circle of 150 or more performers wearing checked cloth around their waists, percussively chanting &quot;cak&quot; and throwing up their arms, depicts a battle from the Ramayana where the monkey-like Vanara helped Prince Rama fight the evil King Ravana</td>
<td>Leadership Community Following Praise</td>
<td>Geography Citizenship RE Music Dance</td>
<td><a href="www.youtube.com/watch?v=nAUoa9pmokA">www.youtube.com/watch?v=nAUoa9pmokA</a></td>
<td><a href="www.upvideo.pl/video.aspx?sr=1&amp;vid=wybaqTjPDUy5QWV7Geplag">www.upvideo.pl/video.aspx?sr=1&amp;vid=wybaqTjPDUy5QWV7Geplag</a></td>
<td>Foundation Stage +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planet Earth</td>
<td>Wonderfully presented short video showcasing the natural beauty of planet Earth</td>
<td>Beauty Pollution Nature Mankind</td>
<td>Geography Science PSE Citizenship</td>
<td><a href="www.youtube.com/watch?v=8jP8CC2rKj4">www.youtube.com/watch?v=8jP8CC2rKj4</a></td>
<td><a href="http://vimeo.com/2050305">http://vimeo.com/2050305</a></td>
<td>Foundation Stage +</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Images as Stimuli for P4C

The ‘creative process’ of finding an images to use as a stimulus for enquiry can be particularly liberating as it’s very, very easy to get started, due to the fact you could use absolutely any image. Try a few out and you’ll get a feel for what works really well. Many picture books have superb illustrations that also work on their own, such as the image below, taken from Colin Thompson’s book *How to Live Forever*.

Source: [www.colinthompson.com/page27.htm](http://www.colinthompson.com/page27.htm)
Source: http://jannikeviveka.wordpress.com/page/2/
Kazimir Malevich: Black square on a White Field
Books as Stimuli for P4C

There are a wide range of children’s books that work well as stimuli for philosophical enquiry. We’ve listed some of these below. Many of these books may already be available in your place of work. Some of these books also work effectively at secondary level. Extracts from shared class texts also work well and P4C provides learners with opportunities to really interrogate a text and empathise with characters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>ISBN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I Wish I Were Big</td>
<td>Bowman, Peter</td>
<td>Aspirations</td>
<td>0-09-969271-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Browne, Anthony</td>
<td>Changes</td>
<td>Family</td>
<td></td>
<td>0-7445-5428-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Browne, Anthony</td>
<td>Gorilla</td>
<td>Friendship / parents</td>
<td></td>
<td>0-7445-9997-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Browne, Anthony</td>
<td>The Shape Game</td>
<td>Art</td>
<td></td>
<td>0-552-54696-8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Image Source: www.gettyimages.co.uk
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>ISBN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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