

Stephen Lawrence Day Philosophy Session: EYFS and KS1 “Same and Different”

<p>Key Stage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EYFS and KS1 upwards <p>Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Similarity and difference <p>Purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thinking about similarity and difference <p>Curriculum links:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSHE, conceptual understanding, categorisation 	<p>SLD Assembly Links:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenging racism and discrimination <p>Core aim:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To engage children in a focused activity around “same and different” to think about difference and similarity. <p>Outcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children will be enabled to recognise and embrace that, in different ways, we are all both the same and different.
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Philosophy for Children

Philosophy for children is designed to explore central concepts and ideas around a topic or theme (usually through a question) and to encourage the children, where possible, to critically engage with each other by inviting them to respond to each other, as well as the question.

A useful basic mechanism for philosophy is to:

- a) find out what pupils think (usually in answer to the question) and why they think it (“opening up”); and
- b) find out what they think about what each other have said (e.g. do they agree or disagree?), and why they think that (“opening up”).

From here, teachers are encouraged to “open up”, firstly, the children’s answers (e.g. “can you say why you think it is X?”), and then to develop the conversation more broadly to engage children in further thinking and talking, clarifying and articulating reasons for their views.

(See “opening up strategies” in Teacher Facilitation Pack for how to do this).

Further preparation:

- Teacher Facilitation Pack, which describes how to facilitate enquiries and how to use Task Questions and Nested Questions.
- Use the “Kokey Hokey” method as described in the Teacher Facilitation Pack

Class set up

- Have the class seated in a talk circle (or “horseshoe”) so that they can all see and talk to each other.
- Write the starter question below up and allow them a minute or two of talk time in pairs or small groups.
- Hold up a talk ball (or similar object) to indicate that a whole group discussion will commence.
- Be aware of the nested questions (see below) as you work through the lesson plan and use them to help guide your facilitation (also see Teacher Facilitation Pack). Don’t feel the need to ask these questions explicitly to the class; certainly, don’t ask them one after the other.

The Session

Starter Question: “Do you like to look/be different to your friends, or do you like to look/be the same as your friends?”

You may want to begin with “be” or “look”- you decide which, based on your group. This is a grammatically closed question (very good for this age), so listen for a response (e.g. “the same”) and remember to open it up (e.g. “Why?”). If they can answer why, you may need to open-up further. To get to the ethical dilemma, try asking the following two follow-up questions:

- “Is it better to be the same/different as your friends?” (Then open-up)
- “Does it matter if you are the same/different to your friends?” (Then open-up)

If they cannot answer these questions, that’s fine, but if they can, then all the better. It will be more likely with reception children.

Teddy Bears and developing critical, inner voices

At The Philosophy Foundation, we have found that children of this age find it difficult to critically engage with one another (if you ask them whether they agree/disagree with each other, they don’t often have much to say). However, we have found that they *can* sometimes represent alternative views through Teddy Bears/puppets/toys:

- Have a toy bear/toy ready and hold it to your ear, then say, for example if they have all said the same thing, “Teddy says that he likes to be different/same. Can anyone listen to him/her to find out *why* he thinks it’s better to be different/same?”
- Hold the toy to a child’s ear.
- Ask them again to say why the toy thinks what it thinks.
- Then, if they can provide a reason, ask them if they agree with the toy.
- If they are able to say “yes” or “no” to this, then ask them if they can say why they disagree with the toy.

Stimulus 1

Get two objects. Any objects.

Task Question 1:

- Are these objects the same or different?

Follow-up question:

- In what way/how are they the same/different?

Continue this exercise with as many objects as you like.

- You could also encourage discussion of similarities and differences with dolls, of different genders/size/hair-types and colours, and/or children.

Stimulus 2

- Get several objects that are different, but which have something in common, such as colour.
- Then ask Task Question 1 again (above).

Stimulus 3

- Provide the children with two categories (e.g. “red things” and “blue things”, or “red things” and “not red things”).
- Ask them to sort some objects into the categories you’ve provided.
- Once the objects have been categorised, point to one group of things (e.g. the red things) and ask Task Question 1

Return to Starter question(s)

- Do you like to look, or be different to your friends or do you like to look, or be the same as your friends?

Nested Questions:

- How are your friends the same as you?
- How are your friends different to you?
- Is it better to play with people who are the same as you?
- Is it better to play with people who are different to you?

Extension activity: "We are *all* the same and different"

- Children can be encouraged to work in pairs to find out things about each other that are the same or different, for example hold up palm-to-palm (we all have 5 fingers); look at each other (same: 2 eyes, nose, 2 ears etc) (different: hair colour, heights, etc).

Ending the Session

- Philosophy sessions should have an openness or continuing-ness about them.
- Say something positive about the fact that pupils/ students have shared their ideas and comments, but, ideally, the discussions in philosophy should be left as "live" discussions; something they may continue to think about after the session.
- Concluding may signal that the thinking should end with the end of the session.

Further philosophy for children resources: www.philosophy-foundation.org