

WHEN IS AN APPLE NOT AN APPLE?

USING PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN

Philosophy for Children uses the Community of Enquiry approach to learning, which is concerned with a group of students engaging together in a self-critical (reflective) practice of asking questions, testing ideas and arriving at conclusions so that the whole group may gain a more comprehensive, deeper and longer-lasting understanding of the subject. Lessons tend to be with the students asking relevant questions that are then unpicked and researched. The teachers, meanwhile, mediates the learning, rather than instructs – in a sense, ‘drawing out’ the understanding from the students rather than ‘putting in’ information. Challenge and rigour are key components of the approach. (www.jnpartnership.co.uk)

WHEN IS AN APPLE NOT AN APPLE? ACTIVITY

1. Children are given statements and asked to choose any that they think would be important when describing themselves to other people.

The statements may include:

- What I look like
- Where I live
- What I do in my spare time
- Who I play with
- My ideas about the world
- The clothes I wear
- My hairstyle
- Good things I have done
- Bad things I have done
- Where my family comes from
- My beliefs and values

In pairs or groups children discuss which statements are felt to be the most important

2. When is an apple not an apple?

Show the children an apple and discuss what it is that makes it an apple.



Then peel it – is it still an apple?

Cut it into quarters-is it still an apple?

Take out the core etc ...

Do you get consensus on when it is still an apple?!

3. What makes a person?

You can discuss what makes a person ,as you discussed the apple and then consider what you can take away and still be a person, e.g. glasses, hair , interests (there will not necessarily be an agreement on this!)

4. Return to the statements in 1) and consider whether, if you changed any of those aspects of yourself, would you still be you?

5. Reflect on the thinking process- what have we learned?

6. Record the value you think is most important to you onto the netbooks. The linking class will be doing the same so that next lesson we can see what we think is at the core of a person.

This session is taken from the book "Another Spanner in the Works", written by Eleanor Knowles and Wendy Ridley from the Cumbria Development Education Centre