



## Philosophical Enquiry for KS2

### Possible Present

If it's given, is it a gift?

<p><b>Philosophical Content</b></p>	<p><b>Possible Concepts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ETHICS: To Give and to Receive, Possession and Ownership (via Gifting, Buying, Stealing, Making etc.) Intention, Regret, Gratitude, Appreciation, Disappointment, Value, Worth, Desire, Wellbeing</li> <li>• METAPHYSICS: Becoming and Being a Present: the significance of Use, Purpose, Intention, Emotion, Connection, Consequences, Provenance.</li> </ul> <p><b>Example Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is a present?</li> <li>• What are presents for? What purpose or function do they have?</li> <li>• When does something start being a present? (When it is made, wrapped up, handed over or enjoyed?)</li> <li>• When does something stop being a present? (When it is destroyed, lost, unappreciated, given away?)</li> <li>• Can <i>anything</i> be a present?</li> <li>• Can you think of an example of something that wouldn't (or couldn't) be a present?</li> <li>• Must a present be something you can see, hear, smell, touch or taste?</li> <li>• Must a present be given intentionally (on purpose)?</li> <li>• Must a present be appreciated by the recipient?</li> <li>• Are expensive presents better than inexpensive presents?</li> <li>• Are thoughtful presents better than thoughtless presents?</li> <li>• Are surprise presents better than those you ask for (or desire)?</li> <li>• Are presents that you can see, hear, smell, touch or taste, better than those you can't?</li> <li>• Can you give something that you don't own?</li> <li>• If you receive something, is it yours?</li> <li>• If you receive a stolen gift, is it yours?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Philosophical Method</b></p>	<p><b>Thinking Moves</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the debate exercise, MAINTAIN a position then NEGATE it, WEIGH UP examples and GROUP them, Look BACK at the enquiry and eXEMPLIFY concepts explored and skills used.*</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitation Tools</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exemplify, Rank and Order, Considering Cases, Question Detection**</li> </ul>
<p><b>Materials</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A wrapped present, and several scenarios printed out</li> <li>• Circle of chairs</li> <li>• Passing Pom-pom, flash cards, flip chart / white board, pens</li> </ul>

<b>PREPARATION</b>		<b>10 min</b>
<b>Introductions</b>	Introduce everyone, if necessary.	
<b>Ethos</b>	Where needed, recap enquiry rules and conventions, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We're curious, we ask lots of questions</li> <li>• We're confident, we share what we really think</li> <li>• We're collaborative, we value what other people think too</li> <li>• We're critical, we give reasons for our claims</li> <li>• We're creative, we think up new examples</li> <li>• We're brave, we're not scared to disagree</li> <li>• We're flexible, we sometimes change our mind</li> <li>• We're fair, we speak one at a time</li> <li>• We're caring, we encourage speakers by listening and looking at them</li> </ul>	
<b>Warm up</b>	<p><b>Exemplify</b> Working in pairs, invite the group to think of an example of the perfect present. Collect a range of examples on pieces of card.</p> <p><b>Rank / Order</b> Group the pairs together in fours and ask them to rank the examples on the board from most perfect to least perfect present. Feedback the rankings with some reasons.</p>	
<b>STIMULUS</b>		<b>5 min</b>
<b>Presentation</b>	Share the 'Present' (an empty box in wrapping paper, tied with a bow) asking: <b>Is this a present?</b>  The children may want to pass it round. Some may notice that it feels light or doesn't have a name tag. Let them speculate on these details.	
<b>Thinking time</b>	A minute in silence.	
<b>Sharing time</b>	Encourage the group to share their initial answer first in pairs.	
<b>QUESTION</b>		<b>1 min</b>
<b>Initial Question</b>	The initial question to write on the board is this: <b>Is this a present?</b>  As the discussion develops, new philosophical questions may emerge. Where they do, write them up. They may be useful when you come to dig deeper later in the dialogue.	
<b>DIALOGUE</b>		<b>35 min</b>
<b>First Words</b>	<p><b>Head to Head ***</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Split the group into pairs</li> <li>• Ask them to designate themselves A or B</li> <li>• Present the 'Present'</li> <li>• As argue that it is a present and Bs argue that it is not</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After two minutes reverse it</li> <li>• After two more minutes invite some students to recreate their debate for the rest of the class</li> </ul>	
<b>Collecting Ideas</b>	Begin the whole-group discussion dialogue by collecting responses from as many children as possible. You may want to map the responses on the board. If the discussion takes off organically, that's great. Otherwise try the next exercise.	
<b>Considering Cases</b>	<p>Extend the dialogue by introducing some of these follow-up questions based on a series of scenarios that gradually become more challenging. There's no need to introduce all of them, and probably better to introduce some that build on ideas that naturally emerge. As the discussion moves forward, rather than throwing in more and more examples, ask the group of they can think of their own borderline cases!</p> <p>Write the follow up question on the board replacing the latter part each time you deal with a new example, so that everyone can keep up.</p> <p><b>Is it a present if...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• someone gives something they bought for you?</li> <li>• someone gives something they bought for someone else?</li> <li>• someone gives something they made?</li> <li>• someone gives something made by someone else?</li> <li>• someone gives something they found?</li> <li>• someone gives something they stole?</li> <li>• someone gives something given as a gift to them?</li> <li>• someone gives something by accident?</li> <li>• someone gives something in secret?</li> <li>• someone regrets giving it?</li> <li>• the recipient doesn't like it?</li> <li>• the recipient never receives it?</li> <li>• the recipient gives it back?</li> <li>• the recipient gives it away?</li> <li>• the recipient loses it?</li> <li>• the recipient is ungrateful?</li> <li>• the recipient doesn't give anything in return?</li> </ul>	
<b>Digging Deeper</b>	Once the group gets the hang of dealing with new cases, encourage them to think of their own. If necessary, give them some time in small groups for this.	
<b>Final Words</b>	<p><b>What is a present?</b></p> <p>Moving away from the specific scenarios, ask the group to consider this broader question. Alternatively, you might include a question that has emerged from the previous discussion e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are presents for?</li> <li>• Can anything be a present?</li> <li>• Can you give something that you don't own?</li> <li>• If you receive something, is it yours?</li> </ul> <p>Go around the circle listening to as many students as possible, prioritising those who have had less opportunity to speak.</p>	

REFLECTION		10 min
Reflection on the Content	Ask the group to identify one concept (besides present) that they think they've explored in this session giving an example of when they explored it.	
Reflection on the Method	Ask the group to identify one skill they think they used in this session giving an example of when they used it.	

EXTENSION		60 min
RESEARCH	<p><b>History's Strangest Presents</b> Working independently with access to the internet and/or the library, ask the children to research one of the following strange presents from history. There is some context provided below, but you may want to give them only title to go on.</p> <p>They should return to the group able to give a brief summary of their research.</p> <p><b>The Statue of Liberty:</b> A gift from France in 1885 to honour the U.S. after the Civil War - 22 years in the making.  <i>- If a lot of time and effort goes into a gift, does that make it a better present?</i>  <i>- Are gifts given between individuals, or can a nation give a gift to a nation?</i></p> <p><b>A White Elephant:</b> A gift from King Manuel of Portugal to Pope Leo X in 1514. The Pope adored it so much, he commissioned Raphael to paint its portrait.  <i>- Should we give animals as presents?</i>  <i>- Are the best presents those that the recipient really loves?</i></p> <p><b>Tangier and Bombay:</b> When 10-year-old Charles II of England was betrothed to the infant Catherine of Braganza in 1640, the dowry he received included the North African town of Tangier and what was then Bombay.  <i>- Can places (and their people) be given as gifts?</i>  <i>- Is there anything you can't gift to children?</i></p> <p><b>The Trojan Horse:</b> According to legend, Greece ended the Trojan War by gifting wooden horse to the Trojans that, unbeknown to them, was full of fighters who attacked them at nightfall.  <i>- Can you give a gift with bad intentions?</i></p> <p><b>Fire from the Gods:</b> In mythology, Prometheus created humans out of clay and gave them the gift of fire, which he stole fire from the hearth of Zeus.  <i>- Can knowledge be a gift?</i>  <i>- Can stolen goods be given as presents?</i></p>	

<b>QUESTION FORMING</b>	Working in pairs with a child who researched the same topic, they should then try and compose a philosophical question about their example. Some possible examples are included above.	
<b>WRITTEN DIALOGUE</b>	They can then work together on a written dialogue in which they both address their question taking turns to write their responses.	
<b>DIALOGUE PERFORMANCE</b>	When the dialogues are completed, they can be performed by the pairs, to the rest of the class.	

\* 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.

\*\*\* This activity comes from Jason Buckley and is one of many taught on his Philosophy Circles course. For more info see <https://www.thephilosophyman.com/free-p4c-resources> or ask us about our accredited Philosophy Circles Training.

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