

Mindy Duggan and David Whittingham
Professor Susan Russinoff
PHIL-92-3 Philosophy for Children
Thursday October 27, 2022

Egg-pistemology

Subject of Discussion: Epistemology

Age Range: 4-6

Total Time: 45 minutes

Materials: plastic eggs, coins, rocks, erasers, paper, paper clip, binder clip, bottle cap, leaf, *An Extraordinary Egg*

Learning Objectives:

- Children will be able to think about knowledge and truth
- Children will be able to think about the proof required for knowledge
- Children will be able to think about how truth and knowledge are constructed by others/social groups
- Children will test what they know and how they know it

Introduction (5-10 mins) (Mindy)

- Introduce names, ages, pronouns
- Finish the sentence: "I know..."
- Finish the sentence: "I believe..."
 - Teachers write down their answers so you remember for the concluding discussion
- Intro to Lesson Questions:
 - How do you know things/ learn things? How do know who to believe?
 - If your sibling or friend tells you one thing and your parent tells you another thing, who do you trust? How do you know they are telling the truth or whether they are lying?
 - Have you ever changed your mind about something you know or believe? What made you change your mind?

Reading: *An Extraordinary Egg* (5-10 mins) (David)

Book Discussion: (5-10 mins) (David & Mindy)

- Proof of knowledge
 - When asked how she knew that the egg was a chicken egg, Marilyn said "There are some things you just know." Do you agree with this statement?
 - Does all knowledge require proof?
 - If not, what things do you know that don't require proof?
 - If someone you trust tells you something, is that enough proof?
- Social epistemology/social construction of truth

- If everyone agrees that an alligator is a chicken, does it become true?
- If all the frogs use the word “chicken” to describe green lizards with long snouts that hatch from an egg, is that okay?

~ movement break: slow motion egg hatching (3-5 mins) ~

Activity: Part 1– What’s in the Eggs? (5-10 mins) (Mindy)

- Before the lesson, fill 4 plastic eggs with different materials. For this lesson we will be using:
 - Rock
 - Coin
 - Eraser
 - Paper
- Tape the eggs closed so that the kids cannot pull the eggs apart and see what is inside
- During the lesson, allow the children to shake the eggs to try and figure out what is inside (do not allow them to actually see what is in each egg)
- Discussion Questions:
 - What do you think is in the egg? How do you know that?
 - Can we ever really know what is inside the eggs without opening them?
 - If we all agree on what is inside an egg, can we say for sure that is in the egg?
 - Is there anything we just cannot know about the thing inside the egg?
 - Can we know the COLOR of the thing inside the egg?

If Time Allows... Activity: Part 2– Let’s Test our Guesses (5-10 mins– time dependent) (David)

- What if we put things inside the eggs and shook them to compare what they sound like? Can we know then that something is for sure in the egg?
 - Bring in open eggs and things for the children to put in the eggs to shake to compare to the eggs that are taped closed
 - Example items to bring: coins, rocks, erasers, paper, paper clip, binder clip, bottle cap, leaf
 - Which items do you think are in the eggs?

Activity: Part 3 - Opening the Eggs (Mindy and David)

- Open the eggs to reveal the items inside
- Were we right? Even if we were right, did we *know* what was in the egg?

Conclusion (5-10 mins) (David)

- Think back to the beginning– do you still think you know for sure what you said at the beginning?
- Allow them to share something they now think they know?