

Class 2: Epistemology Lesson Plan

Materials:

- Horton Hears a Who
- Paper and markers
- Printed optical illusions

Goals:

- Investigate the differences between knowing and believing
- Investigate the different ways we can come to know things: through observation, through learning from others, etc.
- Model and encourage reason-giving

Timeframe (minutes):

Time	Activity
0 - 10 min	Introduction
10 - 40 min	Horton Hears a Who
Extra time activity	Optical Illusions

Activities:

A. Introduction: 10 min

- a. Introduce ourselves (name, pronouns, one thing you're good at) - everyone
- b. Introduce philosophy contract from last week
 - i. Important rules:
 1. Raise your hand to talk (quiet hand)
 2. Ask before touching
 3. Respectful disagreement
 4. Any other rules we want to add? Any rules we want to take away?
 - ii. Reminder of what philosophy is:
 1. Asking big questions with lots of right answers
- c. Epistemological Ice Breaker: What's something you know without having seen it for yourself? How do you know it?
 - i. Annika: I know the Earth is round. I know other countries exist even though I've never been to them.

- ii. Daisy: I know my mom is at work right now. I know that because she told me.
 - d. Stretch Break: Stand on one foot and try to reach down and touch the ground without falling. Do it on the other foot. Reach as high as you can in the sky and hold it.
- B. Horton Hears a Who : 30 min
- a. Pass out paper and markers. Tell students if they want something to do while we read, they can take notes on the story by drawing pictures, but they will get a chance to draw a picture in response in a few minutes.
 - b. Read Pages 1 - 10:
 - i. Why does Horton think that there is something on the speck of dust?
 - ii. Does Horton *know* there's something on the speck of dust or does he just believe it? Is there a difference?
 - 1. If students decide Horton only *believes* there is something on the speck, then what would he need to know it?
 - iii. Do you agree with Horton? Why do you believe/not believe Horton?
 - 1. Opportunity for Daisy and Annika to model reason-giving
 - c. Read page 11 - 18
 - i. Do you still believe Horton? Why doesn't the kangaroo?
 - 1. Opportunity for Daisy and Annika to model reason-giving
 - ii. Has anyone ever asked you to believe something and you didn't? Why didn't you believe them? Could they have done something to make you believe them?
 - d. Read page 19-34
 - i. That was mean of the kangaroo! **Draw** how you feel when someone doesn't believe you
 - ii. Is there anything that you have known to be true and had people not believe you? What did you do?
 - iii. Stretch break: Everyone picks one stretch that we will do for thirty seconds
 - e. Read page 35-45
 - i. If the kangaroo doesn't agree with Horton about the speck of dust, does that mean Horton is wrong?
 - ii. Do you think if more animals could hear the Whos then the kangaroo would believe they were there? How many animals would it take? Is there a certain type of animal that would be more/less believable than Horton?
 - iii. Do you ever believe something just because a lot of people tell you it's true?
 - f. Finish book

- i. Why did the kangaroo get so angry when Horton believed something he didn't? Have you ever been angry when someone believes something that you don't?
- ii. What finally convinced the kangaroo that the Who's were there? Are you surprised that the kangaroo changed her opinion after she heard the Who's?
- iii. Have you ever given someone proof that something is true and had them not believe you? Has anyone ever given you proof and then you didn't believe them?
- iv. Draw how this story made you feel!
- v. Stretch break: Choose your favorite stretch

C. Optical Illusion

- a. Reminder about asking to touch things rule
- b. Attached: Rabbit/duck, Old/young woman, Squares/circles, Long/short line
 - i. Rabbit/duck, old/young woman, squares/circles
 1. What do you see in the picture? Do you *know* that's what's in the picture? Can you see the picture the other way?
 2. Who's right about what's in the picture? Can multiple people be right at once?
 - a. If multiple people can be right at once, does that mean they know what's in the picture, or they just believe it?
 - ii. Long/short line
 1. Which line is longer? How do you know?
 2. Show that lines are the same length
 3. If you said you knew something, and then ended up being wrong about it, would you still say you knew it in the beginning?

D. Closing questions:

- a. Is there a difference between knowing and believing? What's the difference?
- b. Can you be wrong about something you believe? What about something you know?
- c. Ask for feedback - see if there were parts of the lesson they liked/didn't like.



