

Epistemology Lesson Plan

Learning objectives: Establish group rules/norms, remind them or teach them what philosophy is, base level understanding of what it means to give a reason, give children the space to question what is “real” and “not real” and what they “know” vs. “not know”

Materials: *We Are in a Book*, printouts of optical illusions, paper, crayons

1. Intros

- a. Hello! We are us!
 - i. Go around with name, pronouns, something you know is true
- b. Group Rules
 - i. Raise your hand
 - ii. Wait your turn
 - iii. Be nice, be kind, or be quiet
- c. We do philosophy
 - i. Refresh on what philosophy is. BIG questions with MANY answers!
 - ii. We give reasons for our answers
 1. Model that → Ruth, what’s something you think? I think leaves are pretty. Why? Because I ate cereal for breakfast. That’s not a real reason! Oh, true! Tell me whyyy you think that? I think leaves are pretty because I like the colors, etc.
 2. Giving a reason is saying why!
 3. Kids participate → ask them to say something they think, give a silly reason, and then give a good reason
 - iii. Small recap → in philosophy, we give reasons for why we think what we think. We ask big questions that don’t always have answers, so it’s really important to explain why we think what we think

2. *We Are in a Book* by Mo Willems

- a. Read book
- b. Discussion
 - i. How do they know they’re in a book?
 1. Do most book characters know they’re in a book?
 - ii. Are we in a book? How do you know? Would you know?
 1. How would your life be different if you were in a book?
 2. What kind of book do you think you’d be in?
 - iii. What happens to the characters when the book ends?

1. Do they remember the end of the book when you start it over?

3. Movement break! (Climb a ladder and climb down a ladder)

4. Drawings!

- a. Discuss the difference between believing and knowing
 - i. What's the difference? What makes you know something vs. believe it?
- b. Ask kids to draw something they know is real, and something that might not be real.
- c. Discuss their drawings
 - i. How do you know that the real things are real?
 - ii. You just drew a not real thing, does that mean it isn't real?

5. Movement break! (Draw 3 circles, one little, one medium, one big)

6. Optical illusions

- a. What are different ways that you can know something is true?
 - i. If you see it, if you hear it, if you're told it, etc.
- b. What if what you see isn't true?
- c. Show optical illusions
 - i. How many legs does this elephant have?
 - ii. What do you see? Duck or bunny?
 - iii. Are the lines the same length?
- d. Sometimes we see things that aren't true. Does that mean we can't trust everything we see?
 - i. When can we trust things?
 - ii. Is seeing believing, or is seeing knowing?

7. Movement break! (Touch the sky then touch your toes)

8. What's the difference between believing and knowing?

- a. What's something you know, and what's something you believe?
 - i. Discuss each kid's answer
- b. If you think something and everyone else disagrees, is it true or not true?
 - i. What are some things that if everyone

9. Recap

- a. What is one thing that you changed your mind about today?
- b. What is one thing that confused you?
- c. What was your favorite thing we did?
- d. What is philosophy?
- e. What is an example of giving a reason?





