

Teaching Epistemology Lesson Plan

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Total Time: 30 minutes

Ages: 6 - 8 years old

Materials:

- *Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak
- Drawing supplies

Goal: To engage students in thinking about epistemology. Discuss knowledge, reality, and dreams by reading the book *Where the Wild Things Are*.

Review of Last Lesson (5 minutes):

- Do you remember from last time? What is philosophy? What does a philosopher do?
 - Philosophy as Big Questions:
 - Demonstrating the difference between questions like “What color is my shirt?” and “What is color?”
 - Discuss how different people have different opinions and answers to questions
 - Using language like “I agree because...”, “I disagree because...”

Activity: Warm-Up for Thinking About Epistemology (10 minutes):

- After discussion of what students think the difference between knowing and believing is, each draw then discuss:
 - Something you believe and something you know.

Book: *Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak (10 minutes)

This book is about a boy named Max who misbehaves and gets sent to his room without supper. All of a sudden, a forest grows in Max’s room, and Max finds a private boat and sails in and out of days and weeks to where the wild things are. Max meets giant monsters who live there and they all play and misbehave together. Max eventually decides he must have some sort of order, and that he must return to his home where his mother loves him best of all. When Max gets home after sailing in and out of days and weeks and into a year, he finds a steaming bowl of food left for him by his mother.

Discussion of Book: (10 minutes)

- Max experiences the forest and monsters as if they are real. Does this mean the forest and monsters are real?
- How do you know if something is real or imagined?
- Is your imagination real if your brain is making it?
- Do you ever think your dreams are real?
- How do you know whether or not you are dreaming right now?

Conclusion (if time, 3 minutes):

“What did you learn today?”

“What are some of the big questions we talked about?”