

Metaphysics Lesson Plan

Metaphysics: the branch of philosophy that deals with the first principles of things, including abstract concepts such as being, knowing, substance, cause, identity, time, and space.

- Metaphysics makes you question the assumptions you put into objects and how these assumptions may restrict your usage of these objects.

Total time: 40 minutes

Age: 4-5 years old

Materials:

- The Important Book
- Pictures of a spoon and a chair
- Objects that *could* be chairs
- Objects that *could* be spoons
- Chair made out of spoons/ a spoon?

Goals: Engage young children in a philosophical discussion about questioning, wonder, and metaphysics. By introducing them to *The Important Book*, and providing supplemental exercises, children will be prompted to question and uncover the nature of “things”.

Introduction (5 minutes):

- Introduce ourselves and ask everyone to say their name and favorite animal!
- What is Philosophy? What does it mean to wonder? What is the importance of asking questions?
 - Philosophy is all about asking some of the really basic, complicated questions in life.
 - Even figuring out what philosophy is is a philosophical question!
 - Philosophy is all about trying to understand a question better, and trying to see things from a different perspective, even if you don't get a final answer.
- Setting the groundwork for having philosophical discussions:
 - Listen when others are talking!
 - Don't talk over each other!
 - Any question you have is a good question!
 - Give reasons! “I agree because.../I disagree because...”

Book (5 minutes):

- Read *The Important Book*

Activity (20 minutes):

Spoon (coupled with book)

- Start off questioning what a spoon is and what is important about it (book says “you eat with it”).

- What if you can't eat with a spoon? Use a picture of a spoon to show how it is still a spoon, but you are unable to eat with it.
- Options: ladle, picture of spoon, spork, tea spoon, jp licks taster spoon,

Chair (sit on everything!!!)

- What is a chair? **What is important about a chair?** What is the MOST important thing about a chair? Is it that you can sit in it?
- "Sit" on all material ideas: bean bag, drawing of a chair, table, pillow, ground, small chair, throne, toilet, hammock,

You (coupled with river activity)

- What is the most important thing about you? Is it a physical trait? Is it a personality trait?
- Use the river to divide the class on yes and no to a question about themselves, and ask a couple kids why they have picked each side. (have one of us jump in if they all agree on a side).
- Explain to kids that they can change their minds
 - What if you took off your shoe?
 - What if you changed your hair color?
 - What is everyone's favorite ____? What if you didn't like that anymore?
 - What if you had a different family?
 - What if your memories changed?
 - What if you switched bodies with someone else?
- What is the most important thing that makes you, you? Are there multiple important things?

Debrief (Time remaining):

- What did you like?
- What did you not like?
- What's a cool idea you got from this conversation?

Class notes:

- What characteristics persist despite changing
- How behavior changes overtime, does it make who you are change? What persists throughout this time? What changes?
- Introducing philosophical questions
 - Starts with more tangible ones
 - Then letting them know that there are some questions with no right answer (ex: whos your friend, what is friendship)
- Goal: get kids to understand difference b/w accidental and essential properties
- Ask them first does anyone know what philosophy is?