

# What is philosophy? How do people make moral decisions?

## (Intention) What we intend to cover in our learning: (Topic web of concepts here)

### Engage

Session 1 and 2: Look at the word 'philosophy' and translate it from Greek to English (or other languages spoken in your setting) to see that it means 'love of wisdom'. Discuss the difference between knowledge and wisdom; eg, I know a tomato is a fruit, but I'm wise enough not to put it in a fruit salad. Ask the children questions about where knowledge comes from. How can they be sure it's 'true'?

### Enquire and Explore

Session 3: Bring out a box with a question mark on it. Ask the children what could be in there and how they might find out. Separate these ways of finding out into two categories empirical (physically observable) and theoretical (not reliant on physical evidence). The children may say they could open the box and see, or weigh the box (empirical) or they may have a theory about what a teacher might put in a box (theoretical). You may want to use the categories 'Knowing' and 'Believing' instead. Can they prove their ideas? Is the concept of 'belief' actually relevant in this instance?

Session 4: Using a question like How do I know how to behave? Ask the children to write down their ideas. Split these ideas into the two categories. What are the facts when it comes to behaviour? How do they make decisions about how to behave? If they bring up reasons that come from religion put them to one side to discuss later.

Session 5: Introduce the idea of a Philosophical Question: How do I make moral decisions? Talk about what they have already said and introduce the idea of the new commandment of Jesus from John 13:34-35 'Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another'. What would this mean in practise? Explore this idea as a basis for moral decisions. Does acting with love always lead to a good outcome? You may even want to talk about good intentions versus good outcomes.

### Evaluate

Session 6: Explore the idea of morality coming from lessons learned in your own life or from history, look at the Humanist approach to morality to explore morality without the presence of a supernatural being. Look at Hedonism and or Utilitarianism and how it might be employed to make moral decisions.

### Express

Session 7: Explore the class/school rules and trace their origins, within a faith school these may be more overtly religious in origin. Discuss whether these rules would be arrived at with or without religion.

### **(Implementation) Key words I will use and need to know:**

Humanism	Morality	Philosophy	Theoretical
Logical	Belief	Knowing	Moral
Wisdom	Behaviour	Rules	Questions

### **(Implementation) Key information we will learn:**

- ✓ Difference between knowledge, belief and opinion.
- ✓ The complex nature of concepts such as truth, reality, happiness, identity, hope, justice.
- ✓ The nature of a philosophical question.
- ✓ Awareness of variant perspectives about whether some things can be proven.
- ✓ The influence on moral decision making of factors such as experience, family, history, culture or community (including religious communities).
- ✓ Utilitarianism or Hedonism as a way of making moral decisions.

### **(Implementation) Things to do and find out at home:**

Find out what philosophy is by watching this video: <https://youtu.be/pZcDe5fHlv8>

Explore ethical dilemmas by watching this video: <https://youtu.be/zPsoFhUDLuU>

Explore identity and what it means by watching this video:  
<https://youtu.be/eRzRAh2M2Ao>

Talk to your mum or dad about some of the 100 philosophical questions for children at the end of this knowledge organiser.

## (Implementation) Some key information you can find more out about:

- ✓ Difference between knowledge, belief and opinion, you can watch a short video about this <https://youtu.be/1Ngkj2Lx-Ks>
- ✓ The complex nature of concepts such as truth, reality, happiness, identity, hope, justice – google these phrases, look them up in a dictionary and find out what each one really means.
- ✓ The nature of a philosophical question, watch this video to get children thinking about questions <https://youtu.be/q4kFHoJdLx4>
- ✓ Utilitarianism explained for children can be accessed here: <https://youtu.be/93bCouvAVbQ>
- ✓ Hedonism explained for children can be accessed here: <https://youtu.be/UBKrTh1Jb98>

## (Impact) What we will aim to do at the end of our learning:

By the end of our learning we will

- ✓ Talk about the difference between knowing and believing.
- ✓ Decide if a reason or argument based on a religion or belief makes sense to them and is expressed clearly, analyse arguments and how they work.
- ✓ Recognise that it is difficult to define 'right', 'wrong', 'good' and 'bad'.

## (Impact) The RE Age Related Expectations we will cover and be assessed against:

### Philosophy

	Year 3	Year 4
<b>A. The Nature of knowledge, meaning and existence</b>	Talk about the difference between knowing and believing.	Begin to use philosophical vocabulary when discussing issues relating to truth, reality and knowledge.
<b>B. How and whether things make sense</b>	Decide if a reason or argument based on a religion or belief makes sense to them and is expressed clearly.	Begin to weigh up whether different reasons and arguments are expressed coherently when studying religion and belief
<b>C. Issues of right and wrong, good and bad</b>	Recognise that it is difficult to define 'right', 'wrong', 'good' and 'bad'.	Describe a range of answers to ethical and moral questions, showing awareness of the diversity of opinion and why there are differences.

## Supplementary Ideas:

Philosophy for Children <https://p4c.com> has some excellent resources to support this unit. You can access the following:

'It's just a matter of opinion' - <https://p4c.com/its-just-a-matter-of-opinion-2/>

The "How True was My Answer?" Game - <https://p4c.com/future-truth/>

RULES AND VIRTUES <https://p4c.com/rules-and-virtues/>

Thinking Circles <https://p4c.com/thinking-circles-2/>

Believing and doubting game <https://p4c.com/use-the-believing-and-doubting-game-2/>

## 100 Philosophical Questions to explore with children:

1. Where do you think the soul comes from?
2. Do you think our soul dies when the body does?
3. Do you believe that humans evolved from apes?
4. Which do you think really came first – the chicken or the egg?
5. What do you think love really is?
6. Do you think love is a feeling we feel or actions we do to others?
7. Do you believe that some or all humans have extra-sensory powers or abilities such as claircognizance, telepathy, or mind control?
8. Do you believe that God can speak to some people?
9. Have you ever had any paranormal or strange experiences that you just can't explain?
10. Do you think that humans become more spiritually evolved over generations?
11. Do you believe in life after death or reincarnation, and why?
12. Where do you see the human race in 100 years time?
13. Do you think there are other living beings elsewhere in the universe?
14. What do you think consciousness is?
15. What do you think happens after we die?
16. What do you think is the purpose of humans here on Earth?
17. Do you believe in God?
18. Do you think humans treat animals properly or need to improve?
19. What do you think is the number one environmental issue today, and why?
20. What do you think is the number one societal issue today, and why?
21. How do you think humans should improve the world within the next five years?
22. What do you think makes a friendship?
23. Do you think relationships are important or not, and why?
24. Do you think that there is an ultimate truth, or do you think the truth is different for everyone?
25. How many years do you think it will take for humans to stop waging war on each other?
26. Do you think dairy and eggs are more ethical to eat than meat, and why?
27. What is your vision of the ideal society or city?
28. Which are some of your favorite philosophers, if you have any?
29. Are there any philosophical theories you like or believe in? If so, what are they?
30. Do you think it's necessary for evil and good to coexist in life?
31. What do you think kindness is?
32. What do you think will be some major environmental and ethical issues in 100 years' time?
33. Do you believe that kids need two parents?
34. What do you think the human body is made of on an invisible level?
35. How long do you think it takes for a person to become wise or enlightened?
36. Do you think wisdom and enlightenment get acquired through age, experience, or study?
37. What do you think our life would be like if [animals](#) were the dominant species?
38. Do you think there are alternate universes?
39. Do you believe there is a spiritual realm that we can't see?
40. Do you believe in heaven and hell?
41. Do you think there are other dimensions beyond this that we can't see, touch, taste, smell, or hear?
42. Do you think the world would be more peaceful if kids ruled it?
43. What do you think dreams are really about?
44. Do you think all humans see colors the same?
45. Do you think it's possible to learn how to levitate, become invisible, or run at light speed?
46. Do you believe some humans have secret superpowers?
47. What do you think intuition is, and where do you think it comes from?
48. Do you think that God can speak to us through the five senses, like feelings, intuition, miracles, and more, not just in words?
49. Do you think it's more important to be spiritual or do practical things to change the world in a good way?
50. What do you think astrology is about?
51. Do you believe in [astrology](#)?
52. Do you think it's right that humans shouldn't be allowed to travel to countries in the world just because they were born in another country they never chose to be born in?

53. Do you think that people should have the right to own a piece of land or have to buy it?
54. Do you think it's fair that some people pass down wealth to their children over multiple generations?
55. How long do you think it takes to become mature?
56. At what age do you think children become adults?
57. Do you believe that the chaos and problems present in the world today are necessary to occupy us, give us purpose, and help us to evolve?
58. Do you think some other animals or creatures walked the Earth that we don't know about?
59. Do you think it's important to be honest at all times or ok to lie sometimes?
60. Do you think it's still wrong to do something if no one will notice or see you do it?
61. What do you think is the worst thing one person could do to another, and why?
62. What do you think is the worst thing humans can do to animals, plants, and the environment, and why?
63. Do you think all or most of the currently endangered or at-risk species of animals will be extinct in 100 years time?
64. Do you think the world or life as we know it will end one day? If so, how long from now?
65. Do you think there is a purpose to life? If so, what do you think it is?
66. Do you think humans will figure out how to transfer our souls and consciousness into robots in order to live forever?
67. What do you think is the most important thing in life – to be happy, successful, or to help others?
68. Do you talk to God?
69. Which virtue do you think is the most important to possess – kindness, honesty, or something else?
70. Do you think robots can experience consciousness, emotions, or morality?
71. Do you think ants and spiders experience emotional pain?
72. Do you think animals are less intelligent just because they don't talk in our language?
73. Do you think animals could evolve to speak our language and live amongst us as equals one day?
74. Do you think animals experience love?
75. Do you think that matter is pulled together by an invisible force?
76. Do you think time travel is possible?
77. Do you think that there are time travelers living amongst us?
78. If aliens do exist, what do you think they look like?
79. Do you think animals really understand what we are saying but just choose to keep quiet?
80. Do you believe in fairies, ghosts, or spirits?
81. Do you think that someone can be lucky?
82. Do you think there are people who can shapeshift into animals?
83. If animals could talk, what do you think they'd say?
84. If plants could talk, what do you think they'd say?
85. If the mountains could talk, what do you think they'd say?
86. Do you believe that your life is fated or based on your individual choices?
87. Do you think responsibility is important? If so, why?
88. Can freedom be a bad thing if used without morality, responsibility, thought, or care?
89. If we make money out of paper, does it not then technically grow on trees?
90. Do you think humans will make enough medical advances in this century to be able to live much longer in the future?
91. What would your idea of heaven be?
92. Do you think it's more important to conform or to live in a society where each person is respected for their individual beliefs and choices?
93. Do you think people can learn to live in peace with one another? If so, how?
94. Do you think that being tolerant of others' beliefs is critical to world peace?
95. Do you think people should be less greedy and self-absorbed?
96. Do you think that time had a beginning or will have an end?
97. What do you think life would be like if the average person lived to be 200 years old?
98. Do you think everyone has an equal right to live in a safe and peaceful area, have clean food and water, and be able to get a good job and an education?
99. Do you think everyone gets an equal chance to live in a safe and peaceful area, have clean food and water, and be able to get a good job and an education?
100. Do you think people should have to pay for basic needs such as food, water, education and shelter?