

Activities

Phase 1 Tuning in

Learning outcome SRP 4.5

Inquiry question: What is philosophy?

Activity 1.1 Doing philosophy/Having a yarn

To participate effectively in this module, students will need to engage in substantive conversations about rights and related issues. The practice of philosophy is one method of facilitating these conversations. This lesson provides an introduction to the philosophical method and begins the process of building a classroom community of inquiry.

Ideally, this lesson should immediately precede Activity 2.1 (or any of the other discussion activities presented in Phase 2 of the module), and be conducted on the same day.

Preparation:

- Read *Getting Started with Philosophy (Resource 5)*.
- Ensure dictionaries are available to students during the lesson, or copy definitions of philosophy provided in the *Philosophy is...* resource (*Resource 6*).
- If desired, have chart paper ready to use for table and ground rules. Alternatively, use the chalkboard or a whiteboard.

Procedure:

- Write the inquiry question on the chalkboard.
- Students work in pairs to brainstorm definitions. Encourage students to be creative and write down any ideas they have about what philosophy might be.
- Reconvene group to discuss student responses.
- Share the definition of philosophy with the group (See *Resource 6*) or ask students to use dictionaries to locate a definition and write it on the chalkboard/whiteboard. Explain key words.
- Describe what philosophy is and what it is used for. Focus on philosophy as a means of exploring and clarifying values and beliefs.
- Ask students what problems could arise from talking about beliefs and values. Map these on a table on the chalkboard, a whiteboard or prepared chart paper.
- Ask students what opportunities might arise from talking about beliefs and values. Map these on the same table, for example

Problems	Opportunities
People might argue	Understand others more
Hurt feelings	Learn new things

- Tell the students that today the class will be having a philosophical discussion.

- Ask for their help in developing a set of 'ground rules' to help avoid the problems identified and capitalise on the opportunities. Write the rules on the chalkboard/whiteboard/chart paper, for example:

No put downs.

No interrupting.

Listen when someone else is speaking.

Explain your point of view.

What is said in the circle, stays in the circle.

- Outline the planned format of the discussion. That is, the group will read a story then talk about it.
- Proceed immediately with one of the discussion activities presented in Phase 2. If planning a series of discussions, it is best to start with Activity 2.1.