The Philosophy Foundation
THINKING CHANGES

GOOD IDEA OR BAD IDEA

Starter session for early years based on an idea from Kate Kennedy White, an Australian practitioner of philosophy for children.

Stimulus

Set up a 'good idea' and 'bad idea' pile on the carpet (two white boards one with a smiley face, one with a sad face). Then they can move picture to either one (or in the middle!) to demonstrate their view. Before you present each picture, get children to somehow engage in imagining what each one would be like. I have given examples for a couple.

Boy in dress – good idea or bad idea?

Engage their imaginations – "Imagine someone in a dress walked into the class room now… what would the dress look like? Would it be beautiful? What colour?" collect some quick responses. "The person wearing a dress is a boy."

- ✔ Are dresses for girls?
- ✔ Are trousers for boys?
- ✔ Can you wear whatever you want?
- ✔ Are there boy things and girl things? (ask for examples)

- ✔ Children driving cars – good idea or bad idea?
- ✔ Are cars for adults?
- ✔ If the child is really good at driving, can they drive cars?
- ✔ Can adults play with toys?
- ✔ Are there things that are only for children?
- ✔ Are there things that are only for adults?

Clowns – good idea or bad idea?

- ✔ Is laughing good?
- ✔ If you could laugh all the time or never laugh again?
- ✔ Can you be happy without laughing?

Doing what you are told – good idea or bad idea?

- ✔ If your friend tells you to do something, should you?
- ✔ If your teacher tells you?
- ✔ If you don't like it, should you do what you are told?
- ✔ Should we tell people what to do?

Puddles – good idea or bad idea?

- ✔ Are puddles fun?

- ✔ Is being wet bad?
- ✔ Is being dirty bad?
- ✔ Is it ok to get wet if it's fun?
- ✔ Can you do bad things if they are fun?

Bedtime – good idea or bad idea?

- ✔ What would it be like if we never slept?
- ✔ Is sleeping good?
- ✔ Can you have too much sleep?

Running – good idea or bad idea?

- ✔ Is running good for you?
- ✔ Is running dangerous?
- ✔ If it's fun but you might fall over should you do it?

Cake – good idea or bad idea?

- ✔ Is cake good?
- ✔ Should we have cake every day?
- ✔ If it was cake every day or no cake ever, which would be best?
- ✔

Doing whatever you want – good idea or bad idea?

- ✔ What would you do if you could do whatever you wanted?
- ✔ Should everyone do whatever they want?
- ✔ Is their anyone who shouldn't do whatever they want?

Being told off – good idea or bad idea?

- ✔ Should you tell people off?
- ✔ If people do something wrong, what should happen?

Sunshine every day – good idea or bad idea?

Get chn to mime and join in with 'bright sunny day'. Imagine you are waking up to a bright sunny day. You eat lunch and look out at the bright sunny day. When you go to bed it's still a bright sunny. You wake up in the middle of the night and it's still a bright sunny day!

- ✔ Is sunshine all the time a good idea?

Imagine two worlds and sunshine world and a night-time world

- ✔ What would they be like?
- ✔ Which one would you like to live in?
- ✔ Which one is the happiest?