



# IS IT FAIR?

By Steve Hoggins

This is inspired Morag and Berys Gaut's book, *Philosophy for Young Children* (<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Philosophy-Young-Children-Berys-Gaut/dp/0415619742>). It also draws from 'who gets what and why?' by Anja Steinbauer in *The Philosophy Shop* (/the-philosophy-shop).

## Resources

- ✓ 3 Puppets
- ✓ Scissors
- ✓ Circle of thin card or paper plate

## Themes

This story can be a continuation of the Help & Deserving session.

## STIMULUS

Tell the following story with 3 puppets (I have used bear, penguin and monkey).

“

*Bear is hungry, in fact she is absolutely starving. So she decides to pack some food for a picnic. She wants to eat a delicious pizza/cake/pie*

”

## Teaching point - Mime

Try asking children to actively respond with the story: if you use the word hungry, get them all to rub their tummies. Describe and get them to copy actions, like *she knocks on the door*.

“

*So Bear packs her pizza and goes to knock on Penguin's door (mime) "Penguin, are you up? I am hungry. In fact, I am absolutely starving! Let's go for a picnic, I have packed some food, a huge pizza!"*

*"Where shall we go?", asks Penguin.*

”

Give the children a chance to suggest places that they could go I think the last one I chose was Africa.

## Teaching point - Story building

Most stories have substitutable parts. In this story the food must be round but the place they go could be anywhere. Allow the class to offer suggestions and build them into the story. Try the following:

- ✓ Where do they go?
- ✓ How do they get there?
- ✓ What is the bear's name?
- ✓ What do they eat? (As long as you choose a circular food from their suggestions)

- ✓ What does the pizza smell of?

Mime or sing their journey to Africa and then place the puppets on the floor in front of you and present the pizza (a circle of paper).

“

*Bear and Penguin finally arrive in Africa and they are very hungry after their long journey in fact they are... STARVING!*

*Bear unpacks the pizza and as she brings it out a delicious smell wafts gently to their noses.*

*To the class now. Smell that pizza! Doesn't it smell delicious! Right, whom shall we give it to?*

”

### **Task question: Who should we give the pizza too?**

*Who ever they suggest always ask them why and get them to give a reason. Fairly quickly the children will spot that you have thrown them a false dichotomy (it's not an either/or case, the puppets could share it) and will say things like, 'they need to share it' or 'let Penguin have a bit and then let Bear have a bit'. Then you offer to cut the cake. Ask the child where they think it should be cut. They will usually show you with their hand if they can't explain.*

Then you use the scissors to cut down the line they indicated. Offer them the two bits of pie

### **Task question: Can you give them (the pieces of the pizza) to Penguin and Bear?**

#### **Nested Questions:**

- ✓ Is that right?
- ✓ Would anyone like to change it?

At this point you aren't going to get much discussion, as it seems straightforwardly obvious that the pie should be split down the middle and given to the bears. This is when you want to introduce the 'tricky' bit. Which is the most important part, as if it isn't they don't have to think very hard. And they really won't reflect on whether their own reasons are any good unless they are challenged. The following is a list of all the 'tricky' things you could add to the story. Try to choose ones that have already arisen in the discussion. For example, if they have said they should make it fair

#### **Challenges:**

- ✓ Monkey arrives. Monkey hasn't got any cake. What should they do now?
- ✓ Penguin claims she is much bigger and hungrier than the others so she should get more. Is that right?
- ✓ It is Bear's birthday today, she says that she should get more, should she?
- ✓ Penguin made the cake. Should he get more?
- ✓ Monkey gave Penguin the money to buy it. Should we give it all to monkey?
- ✓ Bear doesn't actually want any cake so gives her share to monkey.

There is no need to introduce all of these. Besides they won't be able to retain that much of the narrative.

#### **Key questions to ask**

- ✓ Can you give the pizza out?
- ✓ Do you want to cut it again?
- ✓ Is that fair?
- ✓ Can you make it fair?
- ✓ What is fair?
- ✓ Is it fair if...?