



SORITES PARADOX

Props:

- ✓ Philosophy Elephant
- ✓ Duplo

Introduce Philosophy Elephant. Then introduce the story "...and today it is a story about Philosophy Elephant."

Tell this story about Philosophy Elephant and a heap of Duplo.

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Philosophy Elephant loves to play but Philosophy Elephant loves to play even more with his friends. Today Philosophy Elephant's friend Philosophy Dog is coming around to play and Philosophy Elephant is very excited. He decides that they are going to play with his Duplo. So he goes to his toybag and gets his duplo out of the bag putting it neatly onto the carpet.

While he was taking the duplo out of the toybag Philosophy Elephant began to think. I like the green pieces the best and I want to build a lovely green tower. I shall keep the green pieces for myself. So Philosophy Elephant began to make two heaps of Duplo.

”

At this point in the story act out the puppet taking the pieces out of the bag and placing all of the green ones into a heap.

“

Once he had finished Philosophy Elephant had just enough time to make sure there were no green pieces that he had missed before the doorbell rang. DING DONG... It was Philosophy Dog.

‘Hello Philosophy Dog I am so glad you are here. Would you like to play Duplo?’

‘Would !!’

Philosophy Elephant showed Philosophy Dog the two heaps of Duplo and pointed to the heap with lots of different colours. ‘I thought we could build towers together. That is your heap there.’

‘What heap? I do not see a heap? Do you children?’

”

Task Question: Why did Philosophy Dog say that?

After the story; get the children to identify the heap of duplo on the floor. "Lift your fingers high in the air and point to the heap of duplo." Ask the children: what is a *heap* of duplo?

Then, pick one child and ask them to remove one piece from the heap. Ask them, is it still a heap? Where is the heap? How many pieces of duplo make a heap? If I removed another piece of duplo would it still be a heap? What is it now? Why do you think it is/isn't a heap? Do you know that it is a heap? Who thinks something else?

Repeat the process with the next child. Do not ask all of the questions at once but spread it out among the children making sure that everyone has a turn.

When all the children have had a go (there should only be one piece of duplo left now. Or if there isn't remove all of the duplo apart from one piece) and ask everybody to raise their pointing fingers high into the sky and point to the heap of duplo.

EXTENSION ACITIVITY:

Start with one piece of duplo and ask the children to point to the single piece of duplo. Then ask one child to add one piece of duplo to the middle. Does this make a heap? Why, why not? (And again around with each child in turn. By redoing the session in reverse teases the children because inductively you have the opposite paradox – never creating a heap no matter how many pieces of duplo.)

AFTERTHOUGHT:

Sit with the children and play with the duplo and ask each child to construct their own tower. Then you can use the same questions while they are playing to challenge when their tower is a tower. Take photos and add to scrapbook.