



STUFF

The Philosophy

This session goes very well with 'Get Stuffed: Fun With Metaphysics' in *The If Machine*. Get Stuffed should be run after this one. This may also take a couple of sessions to complete. The aim of this session is to get them to consider whether there is one kind of thing or stuff, or many kinds of thing or stuff. Begin by setting the following question:

Task Question 0

- ✓ How many kinds of thing are there in the room?

[You could preamble this with a discussion on the following Task Question]:

Task Question 1

- ✓ What is the difference between a 'thing' and a 'kind of thing'? (Optional)

If you don't want to do TQ 0 then provide an example before beginning TQ 1. For example, I may say: 'I don't want you to list everything in the room, but to list only the kinds of thing there are in the room. So, instead of having a chair, a table, and a cupboard... what kind of thing do you think these are?' After they have discussed it, write the word 'furniture' up. They should then be able to continue with the activity. At each stage, when they add a new kind of thing, keep asking whether it should go in one of the other categories already on the board. This helps them to get the idea of the task and to keep them focussed. Someone may say a word like 'objects' or 'things'. They may also notice themselves that all other kinds of thing on the board should be put into 'objects' or 'things'. P

Nested Questions

- ✓ Is everything a 'thing' / 'object'? (Use the term they introduce, if they do)
- ✓ Are people 'things' / 'objects'?
- ✓ Is there anything that is not an 'object' of 'thing'?
- ✓ If you need to then you can introduce a second task:

Task Question 2

- ✓ Can you think of a category that everything else comes under?

Extension Activity: 10 Things

Ask the children to list 10 things that they know are there but that they cannot see. Explain that this means something they cannot see even if they look at it, so that does not include 'books in a cupboard', for example. Here's a sample list taken from sessions:

- ✓ Air
- ✓ Bacteria
- ✓ Heat
- ✓ CO2
- ✓ God
- ✓ Thoughts

I have had some wonderful enquiries emerge from this task. For example: TQ: Is CO2 the same as air? TQ: Is Jesus, God and The Holy Ghost one thing or three things?