



THE FIRST SESSION EY

By Steve Hoggins

Don't launch straight into philosophy in your first session. Establish some rules, habits and permissions first. This first session will also give you a chance to see where the children are, so you can tailor your next sessions to their needs.

Resources

A ball

Any picture book

Introduction game

Sit the children in a circle. You start by saying a child's name and passing them the ball. Get them to say your name and pass it back. Repeat this with all the children, ensuring they say your name before passing. This task is to get them used to using the talk ball and taking turns.

Move swiftly into the second part of the game, give the ball to a child and ask them to say someone else's name and pass/roll it to them (Who are you going to pass it to?) If they forget to say the name gently ask them to try again. Make sure to encourage them to pass to people who haven't had a go. This activity is to get them used to addressing each other, not just the teacher.

I usually play this game at the beginning of every session.

Practice session

Next read them a picture book. Choose one you think they will like/engage with. Read the first couple of pages and pause, placing the book so everyone can see. Get the ball out and ask if anyone wants to say something. Encourage hands up/showing me you're ready and then pass the ball to someone. Let them say whatever they want about the book, you may want to point to the pictures to prompt them. This process is to get them used to stopping and speaking or thinking about something in the middle of a story. Occasionally ask, 'Why?' and prompt them with 'Because...' to start them using the language of reasoning.

Game

Finally, I would finish with a fun game. Play something like Stop, Jump, Clap, Go! or any other games from the Philosophy Foundation Website:
<https://www.philosophy-foundation.org/games-for-thinking> (<https://www.philosophy-foundation.org/games-for-thinking>)