



# THE THOUGHT FIGHT

This poem is about conflict in our minds and the struggle between different ideas. We are encouraging children to think about the nature of thinking itself: how does one mind have two opposite thoughts, and how does it decide between them... and does it have to, or could it carry on believing two contradictory things?

## THE THOUGHT FIGHT

“

A thought fight broke out in my head.  
'I'm right', 'No, I'm right!' both thoughts said.  
Thought One was the one I first believed,  
And it started to cheer, thinking success achieved.

But then Thought Two spoke up, loud and clear,  
Starting to win round my inner ear,  
When again Thought One took up its case,  
And argued its way back into first place.

Thought Two was not a quitter though  
And it too had a second go  
And proved itself mentally resourceful,  
With reasons that were sound and forceful.

They fought as hard as sister and brother,  
Interrupting, contradicting each other.  
I would have thought both thoughts if I could  
Because they both sounded equally good.

Why must I choose!  
Make one win and the other lose?  
The answered: 'There has to be a victory.  
The two of us are contradictory'.

”

### Plan

1. Read the poem to the class.
2. Give them some silent thinking-time to take it in.
3. Read it again and then project in on the board. Ask them if there are any words or phrases that they don't understand. Try to elicit the answers to their questions from other members of the class, but if they are all stumped, explain (no need to explain the author's intentions necessarily, just what the sentences literally mean).

### Task 1:

Give the poem to children to work on in twos/threes. Their task is to work out the story of the poem – what happens first, then after that, and so on. Might be good to think of it in terms of who is winning at each point.

### Task 2:

Get the children to think up what the two thoughts might be. The two thoughts must be contradictory, but have good reasons for them. For example: Thought One: spend your money on sweets, Thought Two: keep your money in case you need it for something important.

### **Task 3:**

Add in the question: what are we using to decide? Or is just what you prefer? As the answers come, listen until they finish, then prompt children to link their ideas to other people's by saying 'Who else said something like that?', 'Is there anyone you agree/disagree with?'. If they do this themselves, praise it, and say that it is one of the skills you are looking for.

### EXTENSION ACTIVITY

In the threes, turn the poem into a one minute play where a person has two thoughts and can't decide which one to believe. Think of the reasons each thought is giving, and make it seem that each thought is in the lead, only for the other one to take over. They have to decide how to end it.