

P4C 4 Phase Model

Overview

The **4 Phase Model** incorporates all the steps of the classical 10 step P4C inquiry approach. By grouping the steps into 4 phases, it makes the approach:

- Easier to remember; and
- Allows more flexibility in planning the inquiry.

Teachers should not feel obliged to complete all four phases in a single inquiry. Sometimes it is more effective to concentrate on those phases where you particularly want to build skills, or focus on the content.

You can also spread the four phases across more than one session to avoid rushing parts where the students need more time to explore the theme fully.

The DialogueWorks P4C Skills Builder structures a full year's lesson plans around the four phase model.

Phase 1: Starting

1

Starter Activity/Warm-up Game

A short activity that engages and focuses the children

Community Builder Example

Give a student a soft ball. Everyone else puts their hand out. The student calls another person's name and passes the ball. This continues all round the class until everyone has had the ball once and only once.

Inquiry Builder Example

Ask the students which they would rather have: a magic carpet, as much money as they need, or a glass of water. Get them to move to a position in the room representing their choice. Ask two or three from each group to justify their choice.

2

Stimulus Presentation

Something that contains big ideas or concepts. In the early stages of developing a philosophical class, anything that engages the children can be used: links to the curriculum can be very fruitful

Provocative Stimulus Example



Leads in a predictable direction

Puzzling Stimulus Example



Could lead in any direction

3

Thinking Time

Quite simply, time for private reflection on the stimulus. Silent thought can be challenging and may need to be modelled and developed over time. Writing down or drawing an idea can help to create a pause for thought

To encourage reflection, it's best to allow a minute of silent thinking. You can prompt thinking with questions, such as:

What did you see/hear in the stimulus? What did that make you think about?

You can ask each student for a one word response and write these up on a flip chart as ideas for question forming.

Phase 2: Questioning

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Question Forming

Children share their thoughts on the stimulus in small groups. The objective is to turn these thoughts into open/discussible questions. Each group should try to create one juicy question! The teacher may need to assist some groups to form the questions, but the questions must come from the children.

You can use various tools to help the children form questions:

Question must include one word from the concept board

Question comes out of “I see, I think, I wonder” sequence of ideas

Question uses a question stem provided by the teacher

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Question Airing

Questions are displayed for the whole class to see. Children may want to talk about their question or the teacher may want to help the children reword a question. Links between questions can be explored – very similar questions may be grouped together as a single question.

You may want to explore the questions further so that the students understand them better before voting.:

Ask if anyone would like to have a question explained

Discuss similarities and differences between questions

Use the question quadrant to identify the philosophical questions

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Question Choosing

- Omnivote
- Multivote
- Single vote

This is a popular and important step because it is where the children take control of the direction of the inquiry.

Omnivote: children vote for as many questions as they like, including their own. It makes it unlikely that a question will get no votes.

Multivote: children vote for two or three questions that they like, perhaps including their own.

Single vote: one child, one vote – can be done as an open or blind vote

Phase 3: Discussing

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First Words

The group whose question is voted for explain how they arrived at the question and their thinking behind the question. It is important to be patient at this point, as it may take time for the inquiry to get started.

Straight into a full inquiry
If the group is experienced and well engaged, it saves time to go straight in with the full group. You could start this with a question about who agrees or disagrees with the initial thinking

Start in pairs or threes
If the group is more reticent, it may get things going better if they talk with the children next to them for a minute or two and then tell the full group what they discussed

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Middle Words

The question is opened up for discussion by the class. Children are encouraged to build towards a better understanding of the issue being discussed. The teacher (facilitator) helps to clarify children's thinking while ensuring that the atmosphere is non-threatening. Encourage children to agree/disagree while giving reasons

You should push for depth by requesting reasons, probing for disagreements, testing assumptions and seeking comments that build on what previous speakers have said.
You can pause the inquiry to summarise the discussion and, if necessary, re-focus it in a more promising direction.
You can suggest that each child chooses the next speaker.

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Last Words

Teacher focuses the children by restating the question. Uncontested, each child gives their point of view: this is not a discussion. This is also a chance for children who have not spoken during the inquiry to add their thoughts.

This can be the most interesting part of the inquiry as you hear what the children have taken from the discussion. It is best done by going right round the circle with one short comment from everyone. It's acceptable to let a child pass occasionally, but they should be pushed to speak. Often there won't be a clear consensus from the children, so it's vital that you summarise the different views to give a sense of closure

Phase 4: Finishing

10

Review

Children share their thoughts of the P4C session. Did they like it/dislike it. Why/why not?

The review phase may also suggest a focus for a follow-up inquiry

WWW/EBI

What went well
Even better if

Get the children to come up with one or two examples for each and report back to the full group, or post up with sticky notes on a board

PMI

Plus
Minus
Interesting

Get each child to note one point for each heading and feedback to the group

4Cs Performance

As a group, were we?
Caring thinkers
Collaborative thinkers
Critical thinkers
Creative thinkers
Is there one of the 4Cs that we weren't so strong on today, that we should focus on next time?

What next?

In our next session:
Would we like to go back to one the original questions that we could not discuss this time?
Is there a big idea or new question from today's inquiry that we would like to explore more fully

Then record and display ideas or reflections from the inquiry.

4C Thinking Sheet

Name _____ Class/Date _____

<p>We are caring</p> <p>thinkers when we.....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> think about what's said listen to others carefully imagine how others feel don't interrupt wait our turn 	<p>We are collaborative</p> <p>thinkers when we.....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> talk to each other build on ideas are friendly and helpful share our experiences work together
<p>Today we discussed.....</p> <p>On a thinking sheet....</p>	
<p>In today's session I was a _____</p> <p>thinker because</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	
<p>We are critical</p> <p>thinkers when we.....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ask big questions test our ideas give good reasons look for evidence suggest conclusions 	<p>We are creative</p> <p>thinkers when we.....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> make connections think of new ideas explore possibilities compare things suggest alternatives

www.dialogueworks.org.uk/primary/primary.html

