



EduTrend Contents

P4C · BELIEF AND EVIDENCE · PRIMARY

The Mystery Footprints

Clues and evidence in a classroom mystery

Ages 5–7

Level: Foundation

30 minutes

Whole class circle · up
to 30

Activity 01

Inside: activity at a glance · step-by-step session plan · facilitator notes · 3 pupil worksheets · assessment checklist

ACTIVITY 01 · AT A GLANCE

The Mystery Footprints

Children arrive to find paper footprints, a few crumbs and a feather on the floor. They look at each clue and suggest who might have visited: a bird, a giant, a teddy or the caretaker. They say which clues help most. Then they create questions and vote on one, such as “How can clues help us know what happened?”

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session pupils can:

- notice and describe clues;
- link clues to ideas;
- give a reason;
- listen to others.

KEY WORDS

clue · evidence · guess · think · sure
· happen

CURRICULUM LINKS

Science: observation. English: mystery stories. Maths: measuring footprints.

1**STIMULUS**

Share something to think about

2**THINK**

Quiet thinking time

3**QUESTION**

Create and choose a question

4**ENQUIRE**

Reason together

5**BUILD**

Agree, disagree, add

6**REFLECT**

Last words

Materials (per class)

- Paper footprints
- A feather
- Crumbs or other safe clues
- Question and thinking-move cards
- Worksheets 1, 2 and 3

Before the session

- Read the stimulus and note possible concepts.
- Prepare question and thinking-move cards.
- Set out a circle so everyone can see each other.
- Print the worksheets.

SAFETY

Everyone may pass. Discuss ideas, not people, and use the story or invented examples rather than personal situations.

ACTIVITY 01 · SESSION PLAN

Step by step

Stay neutral: ask for reasons, examples and counter-examples rather than giving your own view.

Time	What happens	Say or ask
0–5 min Stimulus	Set out paper footprints, crumbs and a feather.	<i>“What did you notice?”</i>
5–12 min Questions	Pupils create questions in pairs and vote on one.	<i>“Which question is most interesting to talk about?”</i>
12–26 min Enquiry	Enquire into the chosen question, building on each other’s ideas.	<i>“How can clues help us know what happened?”</i>
26–30 min Last words	Each person says one last thought or passes.	<i>“Has your thinking changed?”</i>

CHALLENGE CARD (print or copy onto the board)

Say who you think visited and which clue tells you.

ACTIVITY 01 · FACILITATOR NOTES

The philosophy in brief

Evidence is anything that gives us a reason to believe something.

Young children can learn that some clues fit several explanations, so we need more than one clue.

Common ideas to listen for

- “One clue proves everything.” More clues help.
- “The most exciting idea is the right one.” Evidence decides.
- “Clues can’t trick us.” Clues can mislead.

Adapting the activity

Support

Use two clues.

Stretch

Ask: what clue need would change your mind?

WORKSHEET 1

Clue detective

Name: _____

Class: _____ Date: _____

Draw each clue.

Clue detective

Clue	What it tells us

WORKSHEET 2

Thinking moves

Use these in the enquiry.

Thinking moves

Thinking move	My example
I agree with... because...	
I disagree with... because...	
An example is...	
A counter-example is...	
Building on what... said...	

WORKSHEET 3

Last words

Before and after.

**Can clues ever trick us? Before the enquiry I thought... Now I think...
because...**

FOR THE TEACHER

Assessment checklist

Use during the session. One sheet covers up to eight pupils; copy as needed.

Pupil	Describes clues	Gives a reason	Listens to others

Suggested codes: W = working towards · E = expected · G = greater depth

ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

The Mystery Footprints is a sample activity from the EduTrend Contents P4C Belief and Evidence programme (primary, level: foundation). Every activity in the programme follows the same format: a practical challenge, a clear session plan, facilitator notes and ready-to-print worksheets, so that teachers, club leaders and parents can run it without extra preparation.

Full 15-, 20- and 32-week programmes are available from EduStore at edutrend.org.

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