



EduTrend Contents

P4C · FALLACIES AND TRICKY THINKING · HIGH SCHOOL

Biases in Our Own Thinking

Confirmation bias, anchoring and how to think more fairly

Ages 15–18

Level: Advanced

60 minutes

Circle and pairs · up to
30

Activity 05

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

ACTIVITY 05 · AT A GLANCE

Biases in Our Own Thinking

Students try short tasks: estimating a number after seeing a random high or low number (anchoring), and choosing which evidence to check for a rule (a version of a famous selection task). They discuss results, learn about confirmation bias and anchoring from research on heuristics and biases, and enquire into whether we can ever fully escape bias and what habits help.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session students can:

- experience common biases;
- explain confirmation bias and anchoring;
- link biases to fallacies;
- design debiasing habits.

KEY WORDS

bias · confirmation · anchoring · heuristic · evidence · fairness

CURRICULUM LINKS

Psychology: cognition. Maths: estimation. Citizenship: fair judgement.

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)

- Task cards
- Anonymous response slips
- 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 05 · 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
0–10 min Stimulus	Run the anchoring and evidence-checking tasks.	<i>“What did you notice?”</i>
10–22 min Questions	Students create questions in pairs and vote on one.	<i>“Which question is most interesting to talk about?”</i>
22–52 min Enquiry	Enquire into the chosen question, building on each other’s ideas.	<i>“Can we ever fully escape bias?”</i>
52–60 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)

Propose three habits that reduce bias and test one on a real decision.

ACTIVITY 05 · FACILITATOR NOTES

The philosophy in brief

Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman's 1974 paper "Judgment under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases" described anchoring and other shortcuts.

Confirmation bias is the tendency to look for and favour evidence that fits what we already believe.

Common ideas to listen for

- "Clever people aren't biased." Everyone is.
- "Knowing about bias removes it." Habits and checks help more.
- "Bias is always bad." Shortcuts are often useful.

Adapting the activity

Support

Run one task.

Stretch

Design a class experiment on a bias.

WORKSHEET 1

Bias tasks

Name: _____

Class: _____ Date: _____

Record.

Bias tasks

Task	Result	Bias shown

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.

What habits help us think more fairly? Before the enquiry I thought... Now I think... because...

FOR THE TEACHER

Assessment checklist

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

Student	Asks a philosophical question	Gives reasons and examples	Listens and builds on others

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

ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

Biases in Our Own Thinking is a sample activity from the EduTrend Contents P4C Fallacies and Tricky Thinking programme (high school, level: advanced). 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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