



EduTrend Contents

P4C · BELIEF AND EVIDENCE · PRIMARY

Whispers and Rumours

What happens to a message as it is passed on?

Ages 8–11

Level: Developing

45 minutes

Whole class circle · up
to 30

Activity 02

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

ACTIVITY 02 · AT A GLANCE

Whispers and Rumours

Pupils sit in a circle and pass a whispered sentence around. The last person says it aloud and the class compares it with the original. Then they hear an invented story about a rumour that spreads around a school. Pupils create questions and enquire into when we should believe what we hear.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session pupils can:

- explain how messages change;
- reason about believing others;
- give examples and counter-examples;
- build on others' ideas.

KEY WORDS

rumour · message · believe · check · source · change

CURRICULUM LINKS

English: speaking and listening.
PSHE: kindness and rumours.
Computing: sharing online.

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)

- A whisper sentence card
- Rumour story card
- 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

Use invented sentences and stories. Never pass on rumours about real people.

ACTIVITY 02 · 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
0–8 min Stimulus	Play the whisper game with one sentence.	<i>"What did you notice?"</i>
8–18 min Questions	Pupils create questions in pairs and vote on one.	<i>"Which question is most interesting to talk about?"</i>
18–40 min Enquiry	Enquire into the chosen question, building on each other's ideas.	<i>"Should you believe what you hear?"</i>
40–45 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)

Explain when you should believe what you hear.

ACTIVITY 02 · FACILITATOR NOTES

The philosophy in brief

Messages passed from person to person often change, which is why checking the original source matters.

Rumours can spread quickly because people repeat what they hear without checking.

Common ideas to listen for

- “If lots of people say it, it must be true.” Numbers are not evidence.
- “A rumour is always a lie.” It may be partly true, but it is unchecked.
- “Passing on a rumour is harmless.” It can hurt people.

Adapting the activity

Support

Use a short sentence.

Stretch

Write three questions to ask before believing a rumour.

WORKSHEET 1

Our questions

Name: _____

Class: _____ Date: _____

Write questions the stimulus makes you wonder about.

Our questions

Question	Who asked	Votes

WORKSHEET 2

Check it

Before you believe.

Check it

Question to ask	Why it helps
Who said it first?	
How do they know?	
Is there other evidence?	
Could it be a mistake?	

WORKSHEET 3

Last words

Before and after.

Why do rumours spread? 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	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

Whispers and Rumours is a sample activity from the EduTrend Contents P4C Belief and Evidence programme (primary, level: developing). 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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