



EduTrend Contents

P4C · POWER AND LEADERSHIP · MIDDLE SCHOOL

The Ring of Invisibility

Power, temptation and the Ring of Gyges

Ages 12–14

Level: Intermediate

50 minutes

Circle and small groups
· up to 30

Activity 04

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

ACTIVITY 04 · AT A GLANCE

The Ring of Invisibility

Students hear the story of the Ring of Gyges from Plato's Republic. A shepherd finds a ring that makes him invisible. He uses its power to take over the kingdom. In the Republic, Glaucon argues that anyone with such a ring would act unjustly. Students discuss what they would do and create questions, enquiring into whether power corrupts and why people act well.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session students can:

- explain the Ring of Gyges argument;
- reason about power and temptation;
- evaluate reasons for acting well;
- build a justified view.

KEY WORDS

power · temptation · justice · Plato
· Gyges · character

CURRICULUM LINKS

English: myths and legends. PSHE: honesty. History: abuse of power.

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)

- Ring of Gyges 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

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

ACTIVITY 04 · 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	Tell the Ring of Gyges story.	<i>"What did you notice?"</i>
8–20 min Questions	Students create questions in pairs and vote on one.	<i>"Which question is most interesting to talk about?"</i>
20–44 min Enquiry	Enquire into the chosen question, building on each other's ideas.	<i>"Would you stay good if no one could see you?"</i>
44–50 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)

Argue whether power always corrupts.

ACTIVITY 04 · FACILITATOR NOTES

The philosophy in brief

The Ring of Gyges appears in Book II of Plato's Republic, where Glaucon challenges Socrates.

Socrates replies across the Republic that justice is good for the soul, not just a way of avoiding punishment.

Common ideas to listen for

- "Everyone would misuse the ring." Many say they would not.
- "Good behaviour is only fear of being caught." Character matters too.
- "The story is only about invisibility." It is about power.

Adapting the activity

Support

Discuss what the shepherd did.

Stretch

Write how a good person might use the ring.

WORKSHEET 1

Our questions

Name: _____

Class: _____ Date: _____

Write questions the stimulus makes you wonder about.

Our questions

Question	Who asked	Votes

WORKSHEET 2

With the ring

Think.

With the ring

Character	What they would do	Why
The shepherd		
A good person		
Me		

WORKSHEET 3

Last words

Before and after.

Does power always corrupt? 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

The Ring of Invisibility is a sample activity from the EduTrend Contents P4C Power and Leadership programme (middle school, level: intermediate). 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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