



## EduTrend Contents

P4C · KNOWLEDGE AND EPISTEMOLOGY · MIDDLE SCHOOL

# Who Should You Believe?

Testimony, experts and trusting others

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

# Who Should You Believe?

Students consider invented questions: Is this mushroom safe to eat? Who won yesterday's match? Is a new game worth buying? For each, they rank possible sources: a friend, a website, an expert, a review and an advert. They create questions and enquire into when we should believe what others tell us and how we judge trustworthy sources.

## Learning outcomes

By the end of the session students can:

- evaluate sources of information;
- explain what makes a source reliable;
- reason about testimony and expertise;
- apply criteria to cases.

**KEY WORDS**

testimony · source · expert ·  
reliable · bias · trust

**CURRICULUM LINKS**

English: evaluating sources.  
Computing: online information.  
Citizenship: media literacy.

**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)

- Question cards
- Source cards
- 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**

Never test whether a real mushroom or plant is safe. The mushroom question is for discussion only.

## 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<br>Stimulus     | Share the question and source cards.                              | <i>"What did you notice?"</i>                              |
| 8–20 min<br>Questions   | Students create questions in pairs and vote on one.               | <i>"Which question is most interesting to talk about?"</i> |
| 20–44 min<br>Enquiry    | Enquire into the chosen question, building on each other's ideas. | <i>"Who should you believe?"</i>                           |
| 44–50 min<br>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 which source you would trust for one question and why.

## ACTIVITY 04 · FACILITATOR NOTES

# The philosophy in brief

Philosophers call knowledge gained from others testimony. Most of what we know comes from it.

Judging testimony means asking about a source's expertise, evidence and possible bias.

## Common ideas to listen for

- “Experts are always right.” They can be wrong but are usually more reliable in their field.
- “Anything online is false.” Some online sources are reliable.
- “You should only believe what you see yourself.” We rely on others all the time.

## Adapting the activity

### Support

Rank three sources.

### Stretch

Create a checklist for judging a source.

WORKSHEET 1

# Our questions

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Write questions the stimulus makes you wonder about.

## Our questions

| Question | Who asked | Votes |
|----------|-----------|-------|
|          |           |       |
|          |           |       |
|          |           |       |
|          |           |       |
|          |           |       |

WORKSHEET 2

# Source ranking

Rank.

## Source ranking

| Question | Best source | Why |
|----------|-------------|-----|
|          |             |     |
|          |             |     |
|          |             |     |

## WORKSHEET 3

# Last words

Before and after.

**Can you know something just because someone told you? Before the enquiry I thought... Now I think... because...**

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## 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

Who Should You Believe? is a sample activity from the EduTrend Contents P4C Knowledge and Epistemology 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](https://edutrend.org).

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