



EduTrend Contents

P4C · CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS · PRIMARY

Is It a Game?

Placing activities along a concept line to explore fuzzy edges

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

Is It a Game?

Pupils receive activity cards: football, chess, hide and seek, solitaire, a video game, skipping alone, a quiz, playing pretend, homework. They place each along a line from “definitely a game” to “definitely not a game” and explain. The philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein used games as an example of a concept with no single shared feature. The enquiry asks what, if anything, all games have in common.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session pupils can:

- place examples on a concept line;
- identify features of a concept;
- find borderline cases;
- reason about definitions.

KEY WORDS

concept · game · feature ·
borderline · rule · fun

CURRICULUM LINKS

PE: types of games. English: word meaning. Maths: classifying.

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)

- Concept line
- Activity 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

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

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	Lay out the concept line and activity cards.	<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>"What do all games have in common?"</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 where one tricky activity belongs on the line and why.

ACTIVITY 02 · FACILITATOR NOTES

The philosophy in brief

Ludwig Wittgenstein discussed the concept of a game in his Philosophical Investigations (1953).

Concept lines show that many ideas have clear cases and unclear edges.

Common ideas to listen for

- “Every game has winners.” Pretend play has none.
- “If it is fun, it is a game.” Some fun things are not games.
- “Unclear edges mean a word is useless.” We still use it well.

Adapting the activity

Support

Use five cards.

Stretch

Try to write one feature all games share.

WORKSHEET 1

Game features

Name: _____

Class: _____ Date: _____

For each activity.

Game features

Activity	Rules?	Winner?	Fun?	Game?

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.

**Does a word need one meaning to be useful? 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

Is It a Game? is a sample activity from the EduTrend Contents P4C Concepts and Definitions 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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