



## A G.A.T.E.WAYS JOURNEY

For gifted Year 3 and 4 children with a

love of learning and thinking to

**'Oh The Thinks You Can Think ..**

**A PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNEY WITH DR SEUSS'**

**G.A.T.E.WAYS** is an independent organization offering challenging and enriching activities and experiences to develop and extend highly able children. This *JOURNEY* for both girls and boys will run over four sessions. Does your mind buzz with questions? Do you think the same as others? What is thinking? Is thinking the same as schlopping or snuffing or zonging? To find out more, join our community of inquiry and embark on a mind-bending and challenging philosophical journey as we delve into the thinking treasure of Dr. Seuss' books, thought, imagination and reality. Be prepared to give reasons for your opinions and thinking! Each session students will be exposed to philosophical skills, which will include the skills of inquiry, logical reasoning, creativity and dialogue. They will wonder, develop questions, appreciate the different opinions of others, develop language to describe specific thinking processes, provide reasons for their discussions and conclusions and use Dr. Seuss's poetic format to express their ideas in writing. The students will base their wonderings around Dr. Seuss' books "Oh the thinks you can think" and "Oh the places you'll go".

**Requirements: Bring** Writing paper (an exercise book would be ideal); coloured pencils or textas; a favourite Dr Seuss book would be welcome too. Also bring a small photo of yourself to session 1 as well as a stamped, self-addressed DL envelope for return of your report and a snack each week (no nuts please)

### **Session 1 - Oh the thinks you can think?**

Do you like to think? Do you like to question? Does your imagination run wild? If yes – join us on this wonderful thinking journey with Dr Seuss and his books. We'll begin with some enjoyable games, which will introduce you to the concept of a community of inquiry where you will think things that you have never thought before. You will share your opinions, and expand your thinking by 'adding on to' what the other person says (supporting a point of view) or disagreeing with that point of view, giving reasons for your opinions, and changing your mind if that is appropriate. You will read the Dr. Seuss book 'Oh the thinks you can think!' and think about questions such as 'what is thinking and is thinking the same as imagination?'. You will be introduced to some characters from Dr. Seuss's book such as Kitty O' Sullivan Krauss in her big balloon swimming pool and discuss whether Kitty is 'real or unreal' and if her swimming pool is 'real or unreal'. You will soar as you make connections between new ideas, create your own questions and really listen to others and what they say.

### **Session 2 - Oh the colours you can see?**

Have you ever wondered about colours? What are they? To answer these questions on our journey of philosophical inquiry, we will delve into the world of colour. To define the idea of 'colour' we will discuss questions such as 'What is red?' Is it something inside a red apple or in a red glove as in Dr. Seuss's pictures? Are colours real or are they only in our minds? When you and a friend look at the red gloves on the "snuffs" are you seeing the same red as your friend? Do males and females observe colour the same way? Does everything in the world have a colour? Are your thoughts and dreams in colour? These discussions on colour will help you create new knowledge, think about your thinking and produce a combined definition for colour.

You will also be introduced to the 'question quadrant', which divides questions into two main categories – closed and open questions. We will read, 'I can read with my eyes shut', laugh at the ideas, create questions and categorise questions such as, 'what should you do about owls on noses?' making us more aware of the difference between philosophical and other questions.

### **Session 3 - Oh the things you can learn**

'What can you do with your head full of brains and you shoes full of feet?' - Oh the things you can learn as our journey continues. You will read 'Oh, the places you'll go' and discuss the many possibilities that you can achieve because according to Dr. Seuss anything is possible 'once you have brains in your head and feet in your shoes, you can steer yourself in any direction you choose'. How do we know if something is possible? To understand 'what is possible?' we will discuss the ideas of possibility and what happens in our mind? We will wrestle with questions such as 'What kinds of things can be in your mind?' 'Are the things in your mind made of anything?' and 'if the ideas are in our mind are they possible?'

In the second half of the session we will celebrate Dr. Seuss' work by listening to some poems by Andrew Day and we'll have fun dancing to 'The best of Dr. Seuss' music, which includes 'The thinks we can think'. We will discuss rhyming words and how Dr. Seuss used them when writing his books. In groups of four you will brainstorm a topic for a joint poem or song. You will use wonderful words from Dr. Seuss' books like 'prickle-ly perch' and 'unslumping' or make up your own words to help you write your songs and poems to share with your family.

#### **Session 4 - Oh the things we have learnt.**

Would you like to find out what happens in Diffendoofer School 'where Miss Bobble teaches listening, Miss Wobble teaches smelling, Miss Fribble teaches laughing and Miss Quibble teaches yelling?' Will the creative students of Diffendoofer School be sent off to Flobbertown School (where the students never sing and learn in the same way) if they do not pass the test? We will read 'Hooray for Diffendoofer Day' to find out the answers and in our community of inquiry we will discuss 'what is a school?' and 'what is learning?' so that you can write a poem about the kind of school that you would like. We will round up the session by showing what you have learnt over the last few weeks. In groups you will create a play, hold a community of inquiry, compose a song or poem or draw a picture to describe Philosophy and Dr. Seuss.

#### **Homework Requirements & Reporting.**

Children will be evaluated on their participation in the community of inquiry, providing reasons for their arguments and reflecting on their thinking. They will also be evaluated on their written activities, creative responses and listening skills.

Work between classes will be optional and may involve participating in a community of inquiry with the family and completing a task started in class.

#### **About the presenter.**

Sharon Leibowitz is an experienced teacher and philosopher working in the field of Gifted Education. She loves participating in discussions around ideas and using thinking treasure such as art, science and children's literature. She particularly enjoys the task of designing engaging philosophical discussions for students, and always marvels at the quality of discussion that even students as early as five years old can engage in.

