



Open Futures Resources

Raising attainment through bringing learning to life  
More resources at [www.openfutures.com](http://www.openfutures.com)

# The Miller, His Son and the Donkey

Years 1&2

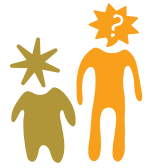
## Stimulus for enquiry

*The Miller, His Son and the Donkey*

## Stimulus details

*First Stories for Thinking*, Robert Fisher,  
Nash Pollock, ISBN: 978-1898255291

**Focus on: Caring Thinking**  
**(Listening with respect)**



Communities of Enquiry  
**SAPERRE**

askit

Lesson **1**

## Preparation

### Favourites

Invite the children to select a favourite picture from a range offered, giving reasons for their choices and listening to others.

## Presentation

### The Miller, His Son and the Donkey

Read the story aloud.

## Thinking time

### Remembering

Allow the children 30 seconds for quiet reflection, then encourage them to re-tell the story.

## Conversation

### Listening to each other

1. Paired talk about a 'puzzlement' - something that 'doesn't quite work' in the story.
2. Each pair then offers a comment to the Community of Philosophical Enquiry for the next stage - 'question-making'.

## Question-making

### From statements

Use children's paired conversations and comments to help inform questions. If it's too difficult to develop questions then use the comments as starters for (dis)agreement.

## Question-airing

### Answer all you can

Ask children to answer all the questions they can and see what is left. If they have to 'make up their minds' about an answer the question is probably a good one for philosophy.

Use the remaining unanswered questions for children to vote with their feet

## Question-choosing

### Vote with feet

Choose areas of the room to represent different questions and invite children to stand by the question they want to discuss.

## First words

### From those who voted for question

You may want to use the prompt 'what do you find interesting about this comment/question'.

## Building

### Big ideas

Ask children which are the 'big ideas' they've talked about so far - introduce them as necessary. By identifying the big ideas you will focus attention on the conceptual elements of the talk so far.

## Last words

### Big ideas in general

Consider 'big ideas' away from the story, in 'real' life, related to the children's lives.

## Hometalk

If you feel it's appropriate you could ask the children to take home the chosen question and talk it through with their family.

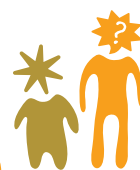
## Questions for Facilitator to reflect on

Preparation and stimulus - how well did it work? List the questions and mark those that needed the children to 'make up their mind'. What were the main areas of enquiry?



# Town Mouse and Country Mouse

Years 1&2



Communities of Enquiry  
SAPERRE

askit

Lesson 2

Open Futures Resources

Raising attainment through bringing learning to life  
More resources at [www.openfutures.com](http://www.openfutures.com)

Stimulus for enquiry

Town Mouse and Country Mouse

Stimulus details

First Stories for Thinking, Robert Fisher,

Nash Pollock, ISBN: 978-1898255291

Focus on: Critical Thinking  
(Question forms)

## Preparation

### Questions

Pass an unusual artefact around the circle. If it could talk, what would you ask it? When questions have been heard focus on what makes a question – things like words, order, tone, facial expression.

## Presentation

### Town Mouse and Country Mouse

Read the story aloud.

## Thinking time

### Big ideas search

Allow the children 30 seconds for quiet reflection, then invite them to focus on the 'big ideas'.

## Conversation

### Listening to each other

1. Paired talk about a 'big idea' in the story.
2. Encourage the children to show care for other people's ideas – practising eye contact and positive gestures.

## Question-making

### After airing 'big ideas'

The children share their ideas for everyone to hear. Then, together as a Community of Philosophical Enquiry, they develop questions from any 'big idea' not just their own. Remind them of the importance of words, order, tone...

## Question-airing

N/a

## Question-choosing

### Sticker vote

Provide the children with three dots each to stick on questions as votes.

## First words

### Intro from the question poser

You may want to use the prompt "tell us a bit about what you were thinking about when you made this question".

## Building

### Agreeing and disagreeing

Children try to agree or disagree with other people's ideas and say why.

## Last words

### What do you think now?

Ask the children to make up their mind for today – what do they think now?

You may want to use a continuum or representative rope on the floor to show who thinks what.

## Hometalk

Invite the children to consider: Town mouse or country mouse? Which would you rather be and why?

## Questions for Facilitator to reflect on

- Did children use the language of (dis) agreement?
- Did they begin to try to find reasons?
- Could they accept people disagreeing with them without getting upset?

## Question forms

- Order of words.
- Question words.
- Intonation.
- Facial expression and gesture.

Could the children apply any of these?

## Concepts formed

- Add to class list.
- Record unexplored concepts for further/future enquiry.

What worked?

What needs work?



Open Futures Resources  
 Raising attainment through bringing learning to life  
 More resources at [www.openfutures.com](http://www.openfutures.com)

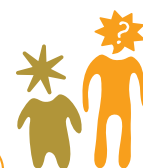
# In the Attic

Years 1&2

**Stimulus for enquiry**  
*In the Attic*

**Stimulus details**  
*In the Attic*, Oram & Kitamura,  
 ISBN: 978-184270-3588

**Focus on: Creative Thinking**  
**(Suggesting examples)**



Communities of Enquiry  
**SAPERE**

askit

Lesson 3

## Preparation

### Character sorts

Use toy characters of varying types and ask the children to sort them into categories such as scary/not scary, kind/unkind. Can the children think of characters from stories that fit into the same groups?

## Presentation

### Read story aloud

Make plenty of time for each illustration to be seen and considered - at least 10 seconds viewing of each picture.

## Conversation

### Review the story / pictures

Allow the children time to talk about the pictures (and text) and look for puzzlements.

## Thinking time

### Individual thinking time

Allow the children 30 seconds to a minute for quiet reflection.

## Question-making

### In twos or threes

Ask the children to work in pairs or threes. Each group should come up with one question. Remind them to focus on open questions about puzzling features or ideas.

## Question-aring

### Linking / making connections

- Display questions on paper on the floor (colours help).
- Children make links/connections between the questions.
- Children identify a 'linking word' for each connection.

## Question-choosing

### Omnivote

Each child can vote for as many questions as they think are good for discussion (hands up is easiest, eyes closed helps minimise selection on basis of a person's popularity).

## First words

### In pairs or threes

The children discuss first thoughts in pairs or threes and a main thought is fed back to the group.

## Building

### On each other's ideas

- Use the first thoughts to stimulate (dis)agreement and supporting reasons.
- Search for other possibilities.
- Try to find examples that help us understand better.

## Last words

### New ideas

- The children discuss other people's thoughts that made them think differently.
- They give examples that were helpful.

## Children's Review...

Review the enquiry together, asking:

- How did we get to where we got to? (content and process)
- Did examples help us understand better?
- Did we get better at suggesting other ideas? (breadth)

## Follow up...

Create your own fantasy place, such as a garden, island, castle, tent, cave and a 'way to get there' that uses your imagination.

## Questions for Facilitator to reflect on

Which concept(s) did the children explore?  
 What were the main areas of enquiry?  
 What worked?  
 What needs work?



# The Gruffalo

Years 1&2

## Stimulus for enquiry

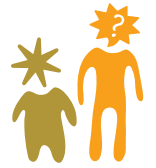
*The Gruffalo*

## Stimulus details

*The Gruffalo*, Julia Donaldson,

ISBN: 978-0333710937

## Focus on: Collaborative Thinking (Exploring understandings)



Communities of Enquiry  
**SAPERE**

askit

## Lesson 4

### Open Futures Resources

Raising attainment through bringing learning to life  
More resources at [www.openfutures.com](http://www.openfutures.com)

### Preparation

#### Being scary, being cunning

Role play being a scary monster, in the woods looking for food. Then change and become a scared monster, who wants its mummy. Focus on body language and facial expressions. The children feedback their observations.

### Presentation

#### Read first half of story (until Gruffalo appears)

The second half could form the stimulus for your next enquiry – where the children predict the end of the story, then read it and question the ideas from the second half.

### Conversation

#### Using pictures on whiteboard

Ask the children to compare the pictures of the mouse and the fox, mouse and the owl, and mouse and the snake – looking for understanding.

### Thinking time

#### Group thinking in threes / fours

Then take thinking time with the children working in groups of three or four. If they need a prompt they could focus on the mouse and the Gruffalo illustration.

### Question-making

#### Group questions

Ask each group to come up with two questions, a first and a reserve. They should use the reserve if first is offered by another group.

### Question-asking

#### Group clarification

Each group offers their question and a spokesperson explains the question to clarify their meaning.

### Question-choosing

#### 3 / 2 / 1

Each child has a 3, a 2 and a 1 vote for the 'best' three questions – stand up = 3 votes, 2 hands up for 2 votes and 1 hand for 1.

### First words

#### Focus on understandings

Search for possibilities.

### Building

#### On each other's meanings

Focus on building from other people's ideas.

### Last words

#### Strong / less strong possibilities

Take three or four main themes/possible understanding from the discussion. Ask children to stand on a concept line (with a scale going from strong to weak). Where does each theme fit?

### Follow up

#### Concept lines

Offer a selection of statements true, probably true, may be true, probably not true, definitely not true. Give children the chance to change their mind after hearing from other people.

### Questions for Facilitator to reflect on

#### Exploring understandings

- Did children explore?
- How much did you have to prompt?
- How can you encourage them to take on the task of exploring understanding?
- Did the children listen to each other?
- Were they able to build on ideas from others?
- Note down example(s).
- Establish/reinforce emphasis through collaborative games.

#### Concepts formed

- Add to class list.
- Record unexplored concepts for further/future enquiry.

What were the main areas of enquiry?



## Open Futures Resources

Raising attainment through bringing learning to life  
More resources at [www.openfutures.com](http://www.openfutures.com)

# Old keys

Years 1&2

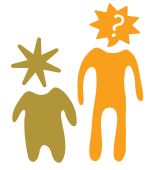
## Stimulus for enquiry

Old keys

## Stimulus details

Any bunch of old keys you can find to use

**Focus on: Caring Thinking  
(Looking from different angles)**



Communities of Enquiry  
**SAPERRE**

askit

**Lesson 5**

## Preparation

### Observation game

The children stand in pairs, opposite their partner. Ask them to think about the details of their partner's appearance. One of them turns around and their partner changes something about their appearance. They turn back and try to identify this change.

## Presentation

### Bunch of old keys

Pass around a bunch of old keys and invite the children to make observations. These can be physical and conceptual, making links between stories/characters and keys, the task/purpose of keys etc.

## Thinking time / Conversation

### Favourite idea / link so far

Allow the children some individual thinking time before working in pairs. Then ask them to move into groups of four with each partner presenting the other's ideas - encouraging them to see things from another perspective.

## Question-making

### From groups of four

Invite the children to make links, and then to identify the most interesting, using it as the basis for a question.

## Question-aring

### Celebration

Each question is celebrated by someone outside the questioners group – showing care for other people's questions.

## Question-choosing

### Single transferable vote

Those who voted for the less popular questions can re-vote to clarify the outcome/tie-break.

## First words

### Focus on looking from different angles

The whole group make observations on the question.

## Building

### Sharing ideas about themes / concepts

Themes and concepts can be listed and mapped for building – picture maps help.

Once between three and six concepts/themes are available break into small groups. Explore one concept or theme per group and then feed back to the full enquiry to broaden/deepen talk.

## Last words

### Key ideas map

Recap on the visual/concept map of the discussion.

## Follow up

### Maps illustrating own thoughts

In the children's thinking books/journals invite them to draw pictures of their own ideas – developing a strand such as keys and property, places/buildings, happiness, futures, learning.

## Questions for Facilitator to reflect on

### Looking (from different angles / for detail)

- Did children see/look for other angles?
- What was your best prompt?
- Was the small group work helpful in enriching the talk?
- Were children caring towards each other in their listening?
- Did they care about the question?
- Were they looking from other angles?
- Note down example(s)

### Concepts formed

- Add to class list.
- Record unexplored concepts for further/future enquiry.



Open Futures Resources

Raising attainment through bringing learning to life  
More resources at [www.openfutures.com](http://www.openfutures.com)

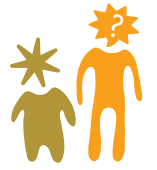
# Birthday party at Aysh farm

**Stimulus for enquiry**  
Birthday party at Aysh farm

**Stimulus details**  
Photo from Talking Pictures, Imaginative Minds,  
ISBN: 978-1904806004

**Focus on: Critical Thinking**  
([Dis]agreeing about evidence)

Years 1&2



Communities of Enquiry  
**SAPERRE**

askit

Lesson 6

## Preparation

### Connections / distinctions

Use a selection of pictures/art cards and lay them out in pairs – some with connections, others without, some with possible/tenuous connections. Invite the children to (dis)agree on these with reasons.

## Presentation

### Photo

List (aloud or recorded on a board/chart) observations with evidence – from the photo.

## Thinking time

### Comparing with own experience

Allow the children time for quiet reflection.

## Conversation

### Comparing evidence in photo / experience

Provide time for paired talk with a random partner.

## Question-making

### In pairs from evidence / experience

Use compare/contrast to inform questions.

## Question-aising

### Finding the concept

Each question is reviewed for the 'big ideas'/themes 'underneath the question' (Annotating questions helps facilitation.)

## Question-choosing

### Simple blind vote

One person one vote. In the event of a tie all vote again between the most popular questions.

## First words

### Evidence pool

Children identify relevant evidence from the picture/ experience to help with the question.

## Building

### Making progress

Focus on (dis)agreeing using evidence, fact, or experience to support argument.

## Last words

### Individual thoughts in thinking books

Children can draw/ illustrate their own ideas.

## Follow up / Hometalk

Facilitator and/or children identify a theme/concept from the discussion for further consideration as Hometalk. Hometalk then informs the next enquiry.

## Questions for Facilitator to reflect on

How were children in (dis)agreeing about facts/evidence?

- Identifying facts.
- Using facts to support ideas/arguments.
- (dis)agreeing using facts/evidence.
- Were children able to be critical?
- Could they be critical of the point/opinion but not the person?

## Concepts formed

- Add to class list.
- Record unexplored concepts for further/future enquiry.



Open Futures Resources

Raising attainment through bringing learning to life  
More resources at [www.openfutures.com](http://www.openfutures.com)

# I'd Rather Be

Years 1&2

## Stimulus for enquiry

*I'd Rather Be*

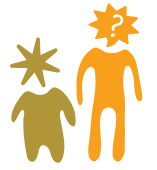
## Stimulus details

*First Poems for Thinking*,

Robert Fisher, Nash Pollock, ISBN: 978-1898255307

## Focus on: Creative Thinking

(Connecting ideas with experience)



Communities of Enquiry  
SAPERRE

askit

Lesson 7

## Preparation

### Would you rather? Either/or choices

Present the children with several choices of 'would you rather?' Ask them to offer reasons for their choices.

## Presentation

### Read aloud

Read the poem aloud twice to the children. Then give them a line each/in pairs (spoken or written) to say in order, so they perform the poem. The aim is to get the children engaging with the ideas and listening to each other speaking the lines in their own voices.

## Conversation

### Directed first thoughts

Do they agree with the poem's positive reasons? Focus on reasons to share in small groups – this can inform questions, and will probably lead to some talk about choices.

## Thinking time

### Individual

Quiet reflection will lead towards questions.

## Question-making

### Two questions per small group

Encourage children to think 'wider' in their small groups. How does the poet make us think about choosing? Are there other ways of doing it? How do these things affect your questions?

## Question-asking

### Please, provoke, puzzle

Which things informed your question – something that pleased you/made you smile, something that made you think differently or something that was a problem? Children offer their questions with one of the Ps as most relevant to the making of their question. You might group the questions under the headings. Which appealed most?

## Question-choosing

### Top half selection, then 2nd vote

Children have a single vote – perhaps as a vote with your feet, then using half the questions with the most votes, everyone votes again between these.

## First words

### Carousel / rotation

Children stand in two concentric circles opposite a partner. They talk for 45 seconds on first ideas, then move to the next partner. Repeat this three times.

## Building

### Choices and their implication

The building of this enquiry could be informed by

- either/or choices;
- references and reasons for these;
- the need for justification using reasons;
- ranking or ordering, importance;
- why things are important.

Also, widening the enquiry, how do children's own personal preferences affect other people? Invite the children to make links between their ideas and experience. Encourage them to speak to each other and offer reasons to support their assertions. A list or visual representation may be helpful to illustrate an example.

## Last words

### Review

Children revisit the enquiry through its main themes and draw ideas/thoughts together. What do they think now? What still needs work?

## Follow up

Good for me, good for others. Draw up a list of choices – ask the children to help decide which one goes in which column and why? Encourage them to think beyond their own preferences to the effects of these on others.

## Questions for Facilitator to reflect on

Were children

- connecting their own thoughts with other people's?
- bringing own experience to the enquiry in relevant ways? If so, think of examples.

Were the children's ideas creative in terms of the connections/syntheses they made?

How did the children use their experience in creative ways? How could you have developed/encouraged this (more) during the enquiry?



Open Futures Resources  
Raising attainment through bringing learning to life  
More resources at [www.openfutures.com](http://www.openfutures.com)

# A Boy's Head

Years 1&2

## Stimulus for enquiry

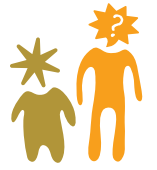
*A Boy's Head*

## Stimulus details

*Poems for Thinking,*

Robert Fisher, Nash Pollock, ISBN: 978-1898255154

**Focus on: Collaborative Thinking  
(Agreeing [about what])**



Communities of Enquiry  
**SAPERRE**

askit

Lesson 8

## Preparation

### My ideal toy

"My ideal toy (animal, vehicle, place,) would be a...", "I agree because.... But mine would be/have a ..." The next speaker begins again "My ideal toy would be a..." This is a round game where children agree with previous speaker about one aspect of the choice, but can add another feature/characteristic to develop it. Play in pairs then reverse roles for another category.

## Presentation

### Read aloud

Read the poem aloud to children twice, with requests for children to ask about meaning/phrases that need explaining. Encourage children to see the metaphor – looking beneath the surface meaning.

## Thinking time and conversation

### Talking / thinking through together

Ask the children to think about what is there and what is implied (that inside a girl's head there might be..., that all boys are the same? that girls don't have the same thoughts as boys?)

## Question-making / airing

### Show process

Children show the process by which they arrived at their question. Children offer individual questions and everyone collaborates to create new questions based on individual ones – then they select the two most interesting ones for each group.

This shows that collaborating to improve each other's questions helps develop question ideas and allows children to see other people's questions as potentially more interesting

## Question-choosing

### Multi-vote

Each child has four cubes or counters to place on the questions, in any combination.

Children turn around – five to eight children vote at a time You might ask strong characters to vote last if they tend to dominate decisions.

## First words

### Leading ideas

Children try to identify leading ideas to follow during the rest of the enquiry.

## Building

### Heads, brains, minds

Heads, brains, minds, thoughts, ideas, stereotypes, gender roles, always/sometimes, being 'trimmed', imagination, difference, all might arise as concepts.

A collaboration may be relevant where children agree on features of their concept – definite and possible elements or a concept collision is mapped, where say brains and minds are overlapped.

Ask what are the common features, which are not so?

## Last words

### Re-visit original question

Can we answer it? Can we show our answers physically – ie stand up if you think this/that/don't know. This encourages children to make a decision for themselves, knowing that it is a provisional one. If children can offer strong arguments, others might change their minds – options can be offered and changes made.

## Follow up

Changing your mind – good reasons for changing it, poor reasons. Highlighting the possibility of a change of opinion based on some consideration.

## Questions for Facilitator to reflect on

Were children

- Listening well enough to be able to agree – how did you facilitate this listening?
- Were agreements made about categories/ concept collisions?
- What evidence was there that children collaborated on question making?
- Can you find (an) example(s) of children building new/ improved ideas from what they've heard?





## Open Futures Resources

Raising attainment through bringing learning to life  
More resources at [www.openfutures.com](http://www.openfutures.com)

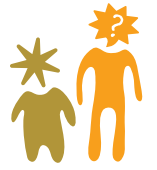
# The Carnival of the Animals

**Stimulus for enquiry**  
*The Carnival of the Animals*

**Stimulus details**  
The Carnival of the Animals CD, Saint-Saens

**Focus on: Critical Thinking**  
**(Distinguishing things/events)**

Years 1&2



Communities of Enquiry  
**SAPERRE**

askit

Lesson **9**

## Preparation

### Q&A Rhythms

First clap a rhythm to the children, then ask them to repeat it back. Make it increasingly difficult. Then ask a 'musical question' in rhythm, and ask someone to 'answer the rhythm question' using a clapped rhythm. Split into pairs and ask them to each try questioning and answering in rhythm.

Children are listening to be able to repeat, then progressing to creating a response which would fit with the rhythm question. As usual, nothing is wrong, but some will sound better than others – can the children work out why?

## Presentation

### Elephant and Swan

Listen to the Elephant. Once they've listened to it a second time they should move like the animal it suggests to them. Now listen to the Swan and repeat the process. Don't give the title – just ask the children to listen to the music and imagine the animal the composer was describing and move like it.

## Conversation

### What made us move?

What was it about music 1 and music 2 that made us move in those ways?

Which animals could/could not be described by music 1 and music 2? Structured examination of the music, listing responses in columns on the board.

List the animals and focus on reasons for inclusion/exclusion.

## Thinking time

### Quiet reflection

## Question-making

### From the music

Try forming questions after this initial exercise (they might ask about the animals, the music, how music makes us think or feel, what music is for, why we move to music, but they might ask about what the music makes them feel or associations it has or none of these).

Children are more likely to find this easy than adults. Try not to be anxious. Use the prompts if necessary

## Question-asking

### Look for distinct question groups

Focus on single or linked questions that are different from others.

## Question-choosing

### Omnivote or blind vote

Each child can vote for as many questions as they think are good for discussion (hands up is easiest, eyes closed helps minimise selection on basis of a person's popularity).

## First words

### From the group that asked the question

Look for the background to the question.

## Building

### Music and reactions

The children may be thinking about the music or their reaction(s) to it. Criteria for their suggestions may be appropriate. Young children are often more free with their questions, so encourage them to identify concepts relevant to their question.

Abstract concepts often surface from music enquiries. However, children sometimes get more from the first more directed activity. This might be linked to building the enquiry.

## Last words

### Drawing

Draw the animal(s) you think are best described by the music. Visual last words which may extend into follow up – ie sketch then becoming a collage – if so, have music playing during the art work.

## Questions for Facilitator to reflect on

This focus skill may need specific follow up – using pictures and artefacts to sort according to criteria – which things cannot go into which categories?

- How did you encourage children to use reasons?
- How did you support their distinctions?



Open Futures Resources

Raising attainment through bringing learning to life  
More resources at [www.openfutures.com](http://www.openfutures.com)

# Morning

## Non-standard enquiry

Years 1&2

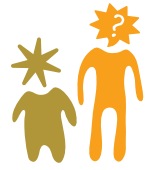
Stimulus for enquiry

Morning

Stimulus details

Morning CD, Edvard Grieg

Focus on: **Creative Thinking**  
(Sorting into general categories)



Communities of Enquiry  
**SAPERRE**

askit

Lesson **10**

### Preparation

#### Sorting / categorising using art cards / pictures

Children identify categories and sort cards accordingly.  
Negotiation will be necessary.

### Presentation

#### Listen to Morning

Listen again with art cards and/or pictures present.  
Individually, children decide which picture most suits the music and why. Children are making associations with the music and pictures – make sure there is a good range of possibilities for choice.

### Conversation

#### Justifications

They give justifications for their own choices, and develop strategies for persuading others – in threes and fours.

### Thinking time

#### What they've heard

Focus on what they've heard from others – categories and reasons.

### Airing Ideas

Children air their thoughts with reasons to justify choices.  
All children get to suggest a picture that most fits.  
Non chosen pictures are removed from consideration.

### Persuading

#### Equivalent to building in conventional enquiry

Children take it in turns to persuade other children that their choice is strongest.  
Listen for good reasons and compelling arguments.

### Decision-making

#### Voting

Children then vote for three most appropriate pictures – keeping reasons in mind. They have three single votes each. This narrows down possibilities.

### Last words

#### Vote with feet

Ask the children to move to the picture they've been persuaded is the best fit for the music.

### Review

Children review their choices and think about the most compelling arguments they heard. Review also the pictures that were eliminated initially – why didn't they fit?

How many children changed their minds? Were they happy to do so?

### Questions for Facilitator to reflect on

Did the activity work?

How did it feel without the children asking a question?

Were categories made explicit?

Which pictures were eliminated immediately and did they need to be reviewed later?

What categories did they use?

Were the children able to make the creative links between music and pictures necessary?

What prompts helped most?

What else might have helped?

Try similar activities with abstract art and poems.

Ask the children to draw or collage the music and then enquire after the artwork is complete.