

# Philosophyman Days

## INSET

The balance of the day depends on how you are timetabling philosophy and whether the school has any previous experience of P4C. These are the different elements I blend together to suit your circumstances. I've ordered them from the easiest wins to the most demanding.

Help Me Find My Voice – Seven practical principles to get more children talking in class, overcoming the different barriers children face to participating. Especially relevant to schools facing disadvantage.

Thinkers' Games – Lively activities that make thinking physical, underpinned by a shared structure that broadens participation, adds energy and promotes independence from the teacher. Especially relevant to schools wanting to develop independent learning.

Philosophy Circles – A simplified model of P4C designed to be easier for teachers to adopt successfully after brief training. Suitable as the overall theme of the day for schools seeking to run regular weekly sessions after a single day's training. Focuses on three key principles:

- Get Physical - starter activities that build engagement and prepare for independent thinking.
- Find a Fork in the Road – engaging ways to reach a question where each answer is credible and careful, invested discussion is needed to work out which way to go
- Be the Moon, not the Sun – how to wean children from dependence on the teacher stepping outside the circle, saying less and getting them to think more

P4C Enquiry Demonstration – experiencing the full ten-stage model of traditional P4C, including question generation. Suitable for schools committing to traditional P4C, aspiring to a Level 1 course, or seeking to refresh their existing P4C practice or help new staff who arrived since whole school training.

The Philosophic Topic Processor – how to explore the topics and texts you are already studying to find the concepts and questions they offer for philosophizing. Suitable for schools that are reluctant to have a stand-alone session, but want to improve discussion and questioning across the curriculum, and for established P4C schools seeking to infuse the whole curriculum with philosophy.

## Pupil and Staff Combo Days

In INSET, there's always a slight element of, "It worked with us – but will it work with the kids?"

So it can be very effective as either an introduction or a refresher to combine the observation of demonstration sessions and assemblies with training. This also has the advantage of allowing you to use any normal school day plus your regular meeting, or perhaps some twilight time, giving greater flexibility and making it more likely that I am available. Days can combine INSET, pupil workshops, assemblies and planning time with your p4C lead.

Pupil workshops – typically a school will fit four or five of these into a day, it's best if I work with existing classes in their own spaces. You can let me know what topics they are doing and I might create something specific. Get as many staff covered to observe as possible, and ensure the class teacher is there and not distracted by marking etc. It's a waste of your money to get me in to do PPA cover.

Assemblies – for Combo Days, an assembly with a large group can provide a shared point of reference for all staff. I'll usually either focus on question generating from a story stimulus, or do a philosophy in role adventure (such a Pirate Quest) to model some of the techniques we'll explore in the twilight.

### Costs (same for INSET or Combo Days)

£1250+VAT for peak days (Mondays, Fridays and the popular days at the start of September and January)  
£1000+ VAT for other days

For a SAPERE accredited Level 1 course, a minimum of two days is required. SAPERE fees extra.

I do also keep up to ten days each year for pupil-only events at the reduced cost of £750 + VAT.

Twilight or half-day sessions are £800 + VAT.

### What's included

A full day of training or combination of pupil workshops, assemblies training and planning with your P4C Lead  
Copies of Pocket P4C and Thinkers' Games for up to 30 staff.

3 DVDs: Introduction to P4C, Thinkers' Stories and a P4C Enquiry with Facilitator Commentary.

The Works – an indexed compendium of resources for installation on your school network.

## FAQs

### *How many people can you train?*

I've worked with up to 600 at a time before, so for conferences etc. large audiences are no problem. For an individual school or a cluster, consider keeping it down to 30 or below because beyond that you lose some of the realism of demonstrating how it would work with a class-sized group. Beyond 30 participants, the extra books needed are £4 per person, and it's £100+VAT per extra school for the other resources.

### *What's the schedule?*

For INSET, I generally arrive at 8.30 for a 9.00 start. Break 10.40 for 20 minutes, lunch 12.30 for 45 minutes, finish at 3.15. It's all flexible. I don't generally give out a schedule that says when we'll be doing which session, as it's more organic than that and I sometimes do things in a different order in response to questions arising from the group.

For Combo Days, I can do up to 6 hours of workshops, assemblies and INSET in any combination, plus a bit of time planning with your P4C lead. If your combo day includes a twilight, 5.15 is the latest I would recommend running to.

### *Where should the INSET/workshops take place?*

Not in a hall if it can possibly be avoided. The acoustics are wrong and high ceilings inhibit dialogue. Moving furniture to clear a large classroom is better. The exception is a large group of more than 30, in which case we can use a hall and I'll bring a voice amplifier to help me run the day at a higher level of energy.

## A bit about me

I was a gifted child rather disaffected with schooling (though not with my teachers), so I left to teach myself at A Level before reading philosophy at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. After a variety of peculiar enterprises, including making garden trellis, selling fireworks and a condom vending machine round, I became a secondary English teacher. I really learned my craft at Sutton Grammar school, where I continue to run DofE Expeditions and other camping and caving trips through my outdoor education company, Outspark.

I rediscovered P4C in 2009, and quickly did every course on offer, becoming a SAPERE trainer and launching The Philosophyman in 2011. I have trained thousands of teachers and worked with thousands of pupils in this exciting, joyful pedagogy, and have developed my own lively take on it which I share through my minibooks, Pocket P4C and Thinkers' Games and through the bulletin I send out most weeks, which now has almost 14,000 subscribers worldwide.

As well as outdoor education, I also have a longstanding interest in gifted education, and am taking over the work of Julian Whybra MBE at GIFT through a new partnership. GIFT has been running day and residential courses for gifted children for over thirty years, so it's a real privilege to be taking on such a tradition.

When I'm not philosophizing, outdoor educating, or GIFTing, I enjoy hillwalking, caving and most of all theatrical improv, with The Paper Planes musical improve group in Cambridge and my own troupe, Fireflies, in London. I live on a narrowboat on Midsummer Common, Cambridge, which is great in the summer and builds character in the winter.

### *What do you need us to provide?*

A room with interactive white board, or at least projector and sound.

A set of mini-white boards and pens, enough for one each.

A dozen sheets of flip-chart or large sugar paper and six or more marker pens.

A jug of water and two glasses.

Tea. You can never have too much tea.

Let me know if you are providing lunch, and especially if it's a "bring and share" so I can bring something.

### *What about SAPERE Level 1?*

SAPERE, the charity that promotes P4C in the UK, provides accreditation for Level 1 courses, for which I am a trainer. These require two INSET days, or an INSET day and two combo days mixing twilights with staff observing me, and on the last day, me observing staff. There is an additional £50 per person charge for accreditation, capped at £700 per course. To claim their Level 1 Certificate, participants must attend all three days and also submit brief details of six enquiries they have held with children.

### *How do I book?*

Email me with some possible dates, and I'll then reserve one for you while you confirm. Then I'll send out an invoice which should be paid before the day (unless it's a short-notice booking, in which case within a few weeks of the day is fine).

Any outstanding questions, email

[Jason@thephilosophyman.com](mailto:Jason@thephilosophyman.com) or ring me on 07843 555355