

Philosophers' Fruit Salad – Traditional and Playful Questions

You can argue backwards and forwards about how important knowledge of traditional philosophy is to doing P4C. Whether you think it is or it isn't, traditional philosophy is still jolly interesting, so the first column of questions are grouped within the headings you might encounter in a philosophy degree.

Humorous questions are also a good way to shake off the rest of the day. I'm sure there's a deep link somewhere between philosophy and play, so playful questions help prepare the mind for philosophy. You can also use these as quick-fire questions to which people call out instant answers, followed by reasons.

Ethics

Are some people born evil?
If you are born evil, can you help it?
Can it sometimes be right to kill someone?
Can it sometimes be right to kill a child?
Is abortion as bad as killing a child?
Is killing someone worse than letting them die?

Cosmology

Does everything have a cause?
Did time have a beginning?
Is the future longer than the past?

Political philosophy

Is it fair to expect the rich to pay for the rich?
Is it fair to expect the poor to work for the rich?
Would the world be fairer if all jobs paid the same?

Philosophy of religion

Are things good because God says they are?
Could God change his mind about what was good?
Did God make himself?

Epistemology (study of knowledge)

Would 2+2 still be four if nobody could count?
Is there anything you can know 100% for certain?
If you know something, does that mean it is true?

Philosophy of science

Can science tell you if something is true?
Can science tell you if something is false?
Can you prove the sun will rise tomorrow?

Nuts

If a tree falls in a forest and nobody is there, does it make a sound?
If a squirrel falls from a tree, should you pick him up?
If a tree falls on a squirrel, is it bad luck?
If a tree falls on you while you are picking up the squirrel, is it a tragedy?

Who's better?

Are dogs better than cats?
Are dolphins better than sharks?
Are cats better than dolphins?
Are sharks better than dogs?
Are boys better than girls?
Are children better than adults?

Pigs

Can a pig be happy?
Is eating a happy pig worse than making a pig unhappy?
Is it better to an unhappy pig than a happy pig?
Is being an unhappy person better than being a happy pig?
If we found out pigs could talk, should we stop eating them?
If a pig asked you to eat it, should you?

Splitting up children who distract one another

Does your first name start with....?
Have you stayed sat down so far?
Do you want to stay where you are sitting?