

Talking Tokens

Use natural materials to facilitate debate

12+

Beliefs and Values



This is an effective method of facilitating discussions outdoors and debating in this manner can support curricular experiences in **Literacy, Religious and Moral Studies, Social Studies or Health and Wellbeing**. Pitching the debate outdoors can: help with the clarity of critical thinking; take some heat out of potential arguments and encourage the participants to relax and gain the confidence to contribute.

Pupils may wish to elaborate upon their talking tokens creating something more personalised and re-useable. These tokens can then also be used to express the spectrum of opinion in a group on certain issues. Invite each member to place their token along an outdoor agree/disagree continuum perhaps positioned between two trees or similar. The tokens can also be used for casting votes with various discrete options.

Equipment

- Loose parts in the environment
- A round gathering space

Activity

1. Every participant leaves the gathering area to select a handheld natural object which will become their 'talking token.'
2. Once everybody re-groups, pose a thought-provoking and open-ended question.
3. Each person can only speak when they place their token in the centre of the circle.
4. Individuals can respond to the question with a statement, another question or by saying: "I agree with that idea because..." or "I disagree with that idea because..."
5. Discourage the use of names or attributing opinions to any individual as the aim is to depersonalise the debate by the participants reacting to the ideas in the circle and not the people who put them forwards.
6. As pupils gain more confidence in this practice they may want to have more than one talking token each.



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