**Shapes as art**

This is the second of 3 sessions exploring ideas about art.

The times given for each part are just a suggestion – you can adapt to suit your group.

**Session 1 What is good art?**

**Session 2 Shapes as art**

**Session 3 Who decides?**

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| **Session 2** | |
| **Description** | Session 2 focuses on the creation of shapes as a way of communicating ideas visually.  Students will explore different ways of creating and thinking about art, beyond painting and drawing. They are encouraged to reflect on the concept of representation of ideas and feelings through abstract shapes in active and creative ways. |
| **Key Question** | Can making shapes be a way of doing art?  This is the central thematic question of the session but treat it as a guide. Your group might well take you in a different direction, but this should be a good place to start. |
| **Session outline** | **Introduction**  What is philosophical inquiry / set expectations. 5 mins  **Part 1**  Making words and ideas into shapes 10-20 mins  **Part 2**  Group discussion 10-15 mins  **Part 3**  Socratic circle 5-10 mins |
| **Resources** | Whiteboard to play powerpoint  Print outs of words  Play dough (optional) |

**Introduction**

Use this introduction to remind students what philosophy is and how you will be doing philosophy together.

Set expectations:

* Three things that I want you to do: Think, talk, listen
* It’s about working out what makes sense - so you’re listening to your groups’ views, and your own ideas, and thinking ‘Does this make sense’?
* Not like maths – there’s no specific answer that we’re looking for.
* We’re exploring ideas together.
* Tell them a little about what respectful dialogue is - listening to others/ no interruption.
* If there is disagreement, then disagree with ideas respectfully using reasons, don’t laugh at people or say they’re stupid.
* This discussion will help with the discussions or Socratic circles at the end of sessions.

### **Philosophical Inquiry**

* *After asking a question, allow students the time and space to reflect on their responses.*
* *First, give them 30 seconds of individual thinking time.*
* *Then, give them 2 minutes to discuss with the person next to them before opening up the discussion to the group.*

**Part 1 Making words and ideas into shapes**

Before the session, prepare strips of paper, each with one of these words on them (or use the print out sheet provided).

Don’t tell them what the words are, and ask they keep them secret.

Sadness,

Love,

Beach,

Sky.

You’ll need 2 words for each student.

Ask students to choose whether to use dough or their body.

You can make your own salt dough with flour, water and salt by [following the recipe here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SsjkkjY59Z0).

Do two rounds, one with ‘sadness’/’love’ and another with ‘beach’/’sky’

Ask students to guess what the others are trying to represent and give their reasons why they thought that.

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**Part 2 Group discussion**

Ask: ‘Were you doing art when you were making shapes?’

After asking a question, allow students time to reflect on their responses.

First, give them 30 seconds of individual thinking time.

Then, give them 2 minutes to discuss with the person next to them before opening up the discussion to the group.

**Nested questions:**

Does art require drawing/painting?

Does art require an object?

**Emergent questions:**

Can acting be art?

Is it art if it’s been designed?

Is art something that is permanent?

Is art something that looks nice?

**Part 3 Socratic circle**

Ask students: Use play dough or your body language to make a shape showing how you think or feel about the discussion.

You can encourage them to discuss their shapes in pairs, small groups or as part of a wider class discussion.

You can ask a few students whether they want to show and explain their shapes, and to say why they chose to do them the way they did.