**Brain or body?**

This is the third of 4 sessions exploring ideas about identity and portraiture.

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

**Session 1 What is a portrait?**

**Session 2 Does a portrait need a face?**

**Session 3 Brain or body?**

**Session 4 A portrait of Scotland**

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| **Session 3** | |
| **Description** | Session 3 explores the differences, if any, between the ‘brain’ and ‘the self’ inspired by a ‘body swap’ brain experiment. The inspiration for this session comes from 2 portrait images that feature the brain. |
| **Key Question** | **Brain or body? What makes you, YOU?**  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** | **Part 1 Compare two images of the brain**  Watch the video that compares the 2 images 10-20 mins  **Part 2**  Storytelling and reflection 20-30 mins  **Part 3**  Group discussion 10 mins |
| **Resources** | White board to play powerpoint  Paper and pen for writing stories |

**Introduction**

Use this introduction to remind the group 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 Compare 2 images of the brain**

Watch this video to introduce the first task and the 2 artworks to be discussed. (1 minute 19 seconds) [What makes you, You? – YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clwPy91kBwQ)

Give your students time to look at the 2 images.

Ask them ‘Are these images of people? If so, who?’ Give them time to think about the question, and allow them to discuss in pairs for two minutes before asking the whole class. Give them time to think about the question and allow them to discuss in pairs for two minutes before asking the whole class.

**Possible nested questions:**

Is a person their brain?

Is the image about the photographer?

Are photos of brains portraits?

Are photos of hands portraits?

**Possible emergent questions:**

What can we tell from someone’s hands?

Does the colour of a picture tell us something?

Is a brain an object?

Ask them to justify their opinions.

**Part 2 Storytelling and reflection**

1. Either

a. Ask students to engage in a creative writing exercise

Or

b. verbally tell their partner a story. Each student takes a turn.

2. Ask your students to write/tell a story where:

• Imagine we are living in a time where we have the technology to make this possible. There is a company called Brain Swap LTD. OR imagine they have magic powers and can swap bodies with someone else.

• Tell a story about two people who want to swap brains.

• What are their names?

• Why do they want to swap brains? (for example: one person is clever, and the other person is sporty and they would like to be more like each other)

• What happens after they swap their brains?

3. Ask your students as a brief whole class: ‘who thinks their characters achieved their goals?’. Take a few responses.

4. Ask your students: ‘Are your characters now where their brains are, or where their bodies are?’ Allow them to talk in pairs for 2 minutes before having a whole class discussion.

**Part 3 Group discussion**

Do you think your character achieved their goals?

What makes you, YOU? Your brain, your body or something else?