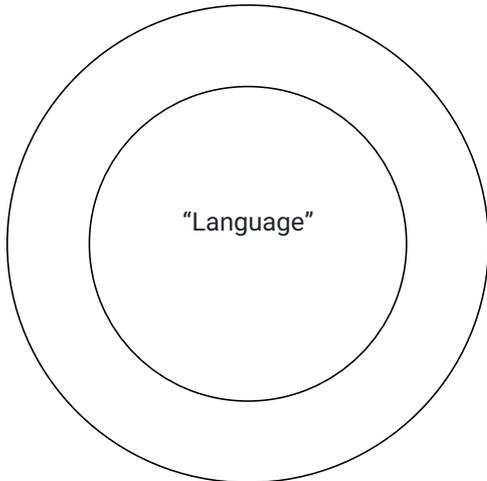


M4 Exercise “Exploring the concept of language”

Starting the activity "Target"¹

Target is a tool that your students can use, when they are uncertain about the nature of some concept



- Draw two circles on the board and write “language” in the middle of the inner circle.
- Ask the students to think of as many words as they can associate with the target concept “language”.
- Don’t reject any offering and write each word on the board as it comes up.
- Then divide the class into pairs and give each pair a blank sheet with two concentric circles (of course you can ask the children to draw circles for themselves). They should write “language” in the inner circle.
- Now the students should try to go through the list of words on the board and they must decide where the words belong: Do they belong to the concept of “language” or do they think they definitely do not belong to the concept.
- Now they have to write the words in the inner or outer circle.
- Now the students have to give reasons for why they put the word in the inner or outer circle or put them to the outside.

Discussion

- The discussion should identify and evaluate reasons for retaining the words in that group or moving them in the center, or to the outside. Reasons can include examples, counter-examples and definitions.
- Plenary session to briefly summarize the outcomes in the groups
- Which questions did the different groups focus on and what did the pairs work together? What did the students think about “language”? What interested them in the discussion?
- What was the value of the discussion/ dialogue?
- Did anyone bring good reasons?
- Did anyone ask questions?
- Did anyone bring concrete examples?
- Did they bring counter-examples?

¹ Target is adapted from Matthew Lipman and Ann Margaret Sharp, *Wondering at the World: Instructional Manual to Accompany Kio and Gus*. Montclair, New Jersey: Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children with University Press of America 1986.



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