



**Topic:** Mental health  
**Year group/s:** 6-7  
**Subject:** PSHE

**NC link/s:**

KS2	KS3 – Key processes	
<b>Developing good relationships and respecting the differences between people.</b>	<b>Critical reflection</b>	<b>Develop relationships</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try to see things from another person's perspective</li> <li>• Recognise and challenge stereotypes</li> <li>• Recognise that differences between people can arise from disability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflect on their own values</li> <li>• Reflect on their own feelings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication skills</li> <li>• Value differences</li> <li>• Challenge prejudice</li> </ul>

**Time:** 1 hour

**Resources:** Whiteboard with internet access, pencils and paper, talking stick

**Learning outcomes:** At the end of this lesson pupils should be able to:

- Start to appreciate what it might be like living with a mental illness
- Understand that people with mental health problems can be fully-functioning members of society
- Understand that different people see the world in different ways

**Prerequisites:** It would be helpful but not essential for pupils to have already completed the *Out of Sight, Out of Mind?* history lesson.

Time	Details	Resources
5 minutes	Explain that as a class you are about to undertake a philosophical enquiry about mental health. Ask pupils to shout out the nasty words that people sometimes use to describe people with mental health problems. Ask them how it made them feel to shout those words out? How would it feel to have those words shouted at them?	
(Optional) 5 minutes	(Optional) If you haven't done the history lesson, show the second video (Grafton Ward and the Padded Cell – 1.35 minutes) on the page of videos about Hill End (see right). It is made by two former patients at Hill End psychiatric hospital, Di and John. Ask your pupils if this changes their attitude towards people who are managing mental illness.	Whiteboard with internet access. <a href="http://www.stalbansoutofsightoutofmind.org.uk/page_id__77_path__0p2p21p.aspx">http://www.stalbansoutofsightoutofmind.org.uk/page_id__77_path__0p2p21p.aspx</a>
5 minutes	Explain what an open question is. Ask pupils to work in groups of three to write down open questions about mental illness.	Pencils and small slips of paper
10 minutes	Get each group to read out their question/s. Ask the	

	<p>class to decide whether the question is open or closed (i.e. does it have a clear answer or does it allow discussion?).</p> <p>Out of the open questions, ask the class to decide which are philosophical questions (i.e. thinking about really big ideas where people have to think hard about what they believe).</p>	
5 minutes	<p>Out of the philosophical questions that have been identified, ask pupils to vote for the one they would most like to discuss.</p> <p>(Have a back-up question if pupils have not written a philosophical question. Here are some example questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How should we treat people with a mental illness?</li> <li>• Can you be happy if you have a mental illness?</li> <li>• Is my way of seeing the world the same as your way of seeing the world?)</li> </ul>	
20 minutes	<p>Start a philosophical enquiry.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get the class sitting in a circle.</li> <li>• Give the class two minutes to decide what they</li> </ul>	Talking stick

	<p>think about the question they have chosen.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Either choose or ask for a volunteer to start the discussion. Give them the talking stick.</li><li>• Have the class pass the talking stick round the circle once to give everyone the chance to say something (but not everyone has to).</li><li>• Once everyone has had the chance to speak, then have people put their hands up to speak next and pass the talking stick across the circle.</li><li>• Ask facilitating questions such as: Can anyone build on this idea? Does anyone have any alternative ideas? Can you explain what you mean? Have you got any evidence for that?</li><li>• When the discussion seems to be coming to a natural end or when your times is up, pass the stick around the class one more time to allow everyone to state what their thinking is now.</li></ul>	
10 minutes	<p>Round up by saying that the class have just been philosophers. Explain that all the questions they had were valid</p>	

	but only some were philosophical questions. Give answers to the closed questions or ask the class to research the answers as homework.	
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## Notes

This lesson plan uses the Philosophy for Children framework to explore pupil's understanding and emotional response to mental health issues. This framework gives each pupil a chance to speak and develop their thoughts without being interrupted and facilitates respectful listening and discussion. The use of the talking stick makes it clear who is allowed to speak. It also promotes awareness of the distinction between open and closed questioning. More information on Philosophy for Children can be found on the Society for Advancing Philosophical Enquiry and Reflection in Education (SAPERRE) website, [www.sapere.org.uk](http://www.sapere.org.uk). They also run courses in Philosophy for Children.

You can run this framework again several times as you do the other lesson plans from the *Out of Sight, Out of Mind?* website. Pupils' ability to think through issues and articulate them increases by practising the philosophical enquiry regularly.

The process may bring up difficult emotions for some pupils who have encountered mental illness and it is important to manage their engagement appropriately and perhaps provide some follow-up support.