

# Guidance for leaders on running discussions with young people



Start with a short game! This helps young people get in the right mindset for their discussion.

Set clear rules for discussion, There are some examples:

- Talking rule: only their person holding their talking stick can speak
- Listening rule: everyone is listening to their person holding their stick
- Hands up rule: hands up if you have something to say
- Respect rule: respect what other people are saying

## How to make the conversation more philosophical

Ask your Scouts what they think and why?

- Philosophy starts with reasons - not what people believe, but with why they believe that
- Children are very good at making statements (eg 'I think Alex is a good Scout'), but they do not always give their reasons ('I think Alex is a good Scout because they always keep their Scout's Promise').
- So, asking 'can you say why?' or 'why do you think that?' will help them express their reasons.

Ask their Scout to think about what another child has said

- A philosophical discussion gets going when people respond to (agree or disagree) with other people's reasons.
- You can ask children 'what do you think about what X said' or 'do you agree or disagree with X'

Do not share your own opinion during their discussion

- It is important that your Scouts have their freedom to express and explore their own opinions without worrying if an adult agrees or disagrees with them, so try not to say what you think about any of their questions you are asking - you are only

There as a guide.

- If you try to repeat an argument or reason that a Scout has said, always double check with them if that is what they meant. You can say 'correct me if I am wrong' or 'is this what you meant?'

If you must bring in an opinion that isn't coming from a Scout in your group, then pretend it comes from another person, preferably a Scout, that you have spoken to. You can say 'when I had this discussion at the Scout Reunion, someone said 'x' or 'when I was talking with my nephew, they thought y...'