

# WHAT DO WE KNOW?

## BUILDING ON CHILDREN'S KNOWLEDGE

### - STARTING AN ENQUIRY

#### Learning objectives

- to generate their own questions;
- to share their knowledge with the rest of the class;
- to work co-operatively;
- to develop confidence in presenting their work.



#### How?

- ◆ Set up small groups and appoint a scribe. You may choose the scribe or the children could choose the scribe or they could take it in turns.
- ◆ Give each group a sheet of paper ask them to divide it into two sections headed 'What we know' and 'What we'd like to know'.
- ◆ In the left hand column they should write what they already know about the theme and in the right hand column they should write down what they'd like to find out about.
- ◆ The scribe must aim to record ideas from every child if possible.
- ◆ The groups could present this information to the rest of the class.
- ◆ Some of the questions raised will be answered by other members of the class.
- ◆ Other questions will require the children to use research skills. You could discuss sources of information with the children.

*Example:*

#### Plants and living things

I wanted my year 2 class to think about plants as part of a topic on living things. I wanted to find out what the children already knew, so I could pitch the work at an appropriate level. I acted as scribe for a whole class session. They knew plants needed water, sun and soil. They wanted to know: how does the seed help them to grow? Why do some flowers grow different colours? Can insects help plants grow?

*Children enquiring into climate change added two additional columns which were completed later: What they had learned, and how.*

#### *Example: Our local community*

As part of an RE topic in Y6, I wanted the children to consider their local community. They worked in mixed ability groups. We discussed the term 'community' and I asked them to think in terms of people as well as buildings. The children thought of many positive things about their community: *'The community is very helpful', 'I know that the community is friendly'*. They raised some interesting questions, eg *'Is there a synagogue nearby?'* They presented their group work to the rest of the class. The other children listened attentively. This work led naturally on to making a journey round the local area to look at signs of faith.

Know	Want to know	Learnt	How
That climate change affects everyone	What sort of affects it might have	It does not affect everyone the same way: eg, it can lead to floods in some places and drought in others	From books and the internet, by talking with other children in the class