So, you might be thinking, **WHO** are Bust or Trust? Well, we're the super-popular kids' mystery podcast - that's who! Filled with fun facts and silly jokes, our podcast encourages young listeners to put their thinking hats on and decide whether they're going to trust a myth, or bust it!

What do we do?

Bust or Trust is dedicated to helping children learn how to think critically. Following myth ***buster*** Athena and myth ***truster*** Tiernan, as they ask tough questions, tackle popular mysteries and examine fantastical legends!

At Bust or Trust we teach kids how to:

- Think in grey.
- Evaluate testimonies.
- Look for personal bias.
- Weigh the evidence.
- Research independently.

All while learning how to debate in a playful and productive way! Each podcast episode is left open for the Chief Detectives to decide whether the investigation is a bust or a trust!

Bust or Trust in class!

So, how do we fit into the curriculum? Well, it has been proven that critical thinking is a fundamental skill that allows children to navigate the world with confidence. In a society saturated with information, it's vital to equip young people with tools to separate fact from fiction.

By encouraging children to think critically, we empower them to form their own opinions while also equipping them problem-solving skills and the courage to get creative. These skills are not only useful in the classroom, but are transferable to day-to-day life as well!

Through our handy worksheets, now everyone has the chance to be a Chief Detective!

How to find us...

You can find Bust or Trust on Spotify, Apple, Audible, Podbean, Podtail and Google Podcasts - alternatively just scan the QR Code!

ARE YOU A MYTH BUSTER OR MYTH TRUSTER?

In this worksheet, you'll find a curated set of discussion strategies aimed at guiding your students through a thoughtful exploration of what they've just heard on the **Bust or Trust - A Kids' Mystery** podcast. These strategies are designed to promote active participation, critical discussion, and respectful dialogue among students.

Happy facilitating!

GROUND RULES

Before starting any discussion about the podcast, it's helpful to set out some ground rules. You might want to include others, but here are at least two to begin with:

One Person Rule: Only one person talking at a time. You may want to use a ball or soft toy to indicate who is speaking at any given time.

The Respect Rule: People are allowed to say what they think and to disagree with others, as long as they do so respectfully.

THE DISCUSSION

Start the discussion by asking the following question to the class:

Task Question: Are you a Myth Buster or a Myth Truster?

First, give students 2 or 3 minutes to discuss this in pairs. This allows everyone to have some thinking time before sharing ideas with the group and helps to build engagement. Then facilitate a whole-class discussion.

While it is useful to stick to the task question for much of the discussion to maintain focus, you may want to ask some of these follow-up questions when it feels natural and appropriate to do so:

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS:

1. What was the most convincing piece of evidence, and why?
2. What was the least convincing, and why?
3. Was there enough evidence to believe the myth, or do we need more?
4. Were there any gaps or unanswered questions in the evidence?
5. Do you think any of the witnesses were biased?

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HOW TO FACILITATE THE DISCUSSION

Here are some tips for how to facilitate a thoughtful, productive, and dynamic discussion about ‘Bust or Trust?’ in class.

Start with the Task Question: since it is so clear and easy to answer, it is helpful to ask, ‘Are you a Myth Buster or Myth Truster?’ as your initial question to students.

Open up students’ responses: once students have answered if they are a Myth Buster or Myth Truster, open up their answers!

If they haven’t given a reason, ask: **‘Can you say why?’**
If they haven’t said much, ask: **‘Can you say more?’**
If they have spoken in general terms, ask, **‘Can you give an example?’**
If they have used a word without defining it, ask, **‘What do you mean by x?**
(e.g. What do you mean by proof?)

Stay neutral: as a teacher you have a powerful influence over your students so try to avoid imposing your own thoughts on the discussion so they can think for themselves.

Connect ideas: If one student’s idea sharply contrasts with another, or appears related, ask them what they think about it.

Look for dissenting voices: when a lot of students agree about something, the discussion often dries up. Aim to give priority to different perspectives to give students more to think about.

Maximise silent engagement: Ask students to place their thumbs up if they are Myth Trusters, and thumbs down if they are Myth Busters. Then select some students to share why they are a Buster or Truster. This gets everyone involved even if they aren’t speaking and allows students to see the range of views in the class.

Allow for Talk Time: You may want to occasionally allow students to discuss what they have heard, or a new question that has come up, in pairs or short groups rather than having a whole-class discussion the whole time. These breaks tend to refocus students and enable more students to talk and think about the issue at any given time.

HOW TO THINK LIKE A CHIEF DETECTIVE

In today's information-rich environment, it's vital to equip young people with tools to separate fact from fiction. This worksheet expands on the podcast **'Bust or Trust - A Kids' Mystery podcast'** by empowering listeners to adopt the mindset of 'chief detectives', helping them to better analyse evidence, seek different perspectives, and reach their own conclusions.

Here are **five exercises** you can do with your students that aid clearer thinking and deeper investigating:

CHIEF DETECTIVE SKILL 1: THINKING IN GREY

Say: We tend to think that believing in something is like choosing between saying 'yes' or 'no'. But guess what? It's not that simple! Belief is sometimes more like a spectrum- some things we believe we are very confident about, and others we are much less sure on. It's not just black or white, sometimes there are shades of grey. So instead of asking yourself 'Do I believe this?'- where the answer is just yes or no- ask 'How confident am I that this is true?' Imagine a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means 'I definitely don't believe it' and 10 means 'I'm totally convinced', what number are you, and why? **Do:** Make a line in the classroom to represent a spectrum from 1 to 10 (you could have two sheets of A4 with numbers written on them at opposite ends of the room). Ask students to stand in the line according to how much they believe in the 'myth'. Then ask students why they are standing in that position. Why are they so sure/not confident? Engage them in discussion with others.

Ask: 'Is belief always a spectrum, or is it sometimes just a choice between yes, or no?' This invites them to critically engage with this idea further.

THIS DEVELOPS:

1. **Understanding of Probability:** By placing themselves on a spectrum, children engage with the concept of probability in a practical and tangible way. They also learn how to measure belief based on their level of confidence, which is a fundamental aspect of mathematical thinking.

2. **Decision-Making:** Evaluating beliefs on a spectrum helps children develop decision-making skills. They become more aware of the factors influencing their beliefs and can make more informed decisions by considering the level of evidence and uncertainty involved.

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CHIEF DETECTIVE SKILL 2: EVALUATING TESTIMONY

Say: Most of the time we think people are either telling the truth or lying, right? But there is actually a third option!

Suppose that you're sure that you saw your friend at the park last week, standing across the lake from you, so you confidently tell someone else that they were there. However, imagine that same friend later shows you a photo from that day showing that they were away on holiday. This means that you weren't telling the truth about your friend being at the park, but you also weren't lying either. You just made a mistake.

So, when we're trying to figure out if someone is telling the truth we need to consider three possibilities: either they're telling the truth, they're lying, or they're honestly mistaken. So, which one do you think is the most likely?

Do: Select a witness from the podcast. Ask students to put their thumbs up if they think they're telling the truth, thumbs down if they're lying, and place their thumbs to the side if they think they are honestly mistaken. Then ask others why people have placed their thumb in that position and discuss the different responses as a group.

THIS DEVELOPS:

1. **Analytical skills:** This helps students to assess witness testimony by examining both the credibility and reliability of the source.

2. **Empathy:** The exercise also promotes empathy by encouraging students to consider the perspective of the witness and understand how their background beliefs or perceptions may influence their testimony.

CHIEF DETECTIVE SKILL 3: CHECKING FOR PERSONAL BIAS

Say: Imagine you have a favourite singer, called Lily. You think Lily is the most amazing singer ever because her songs make you happy, and you love going to her concerts. Then, one day, you hear a rumour that Lily might not be as kind as everyone thinks. You hear that she was rude to a fan and didn't treat her bandmates well.

Now, because you admire Lily so much and really want to believe she is a great person, you might ignore the rumour. You might think, "Oh, maybe she was having a bad day," or "Maybe there's more to the story that I don't know." Even if there's evidence that makes you question Lily's kindness, you might still believe in her.

This is called 'bias' or 'motivated reasoning'- it's when what we want to believe influences what we do believe, even when there is important evidence against it. We all do this sometimes, so we ought to check if our feelings are tricking us into seeing things a certain way and think carefully before we decide what to believe.

Do: Ask the students, 'What do you **want** to believe about the myth? Would you rather it was true or not?' Now think carefully, do you think this influences what you **do** believe? Give children some reflection time to consider this.

N.B. Children- just like adults - may be reluctant to admit to motivated reasoning to others so it may be better to offer time for reflection instead of having a public discussion.

THIS DEVELOPS:

1. **Self-Reflection:** Discussing motivated reasoning and bias encourages children to reflect on their own beliefs and biases, promoting self-awareness and introspection.

CHIEF DETECTIVE SKILL 4: WEIGHING THE EVIDENCE

Say: Imagine you're solving a mystery. You find clues along the way, like footprints or fingerprints. These clues are all pieces of evidence. But not all evidence is created equal! There are two key things to look at:

1. **Quantity of Evidence:** This is how much evidence we have. Sometimes, one strong piece of evidence is enough to believe something. But other times, we need lots of different pieces of evidence to be sure. Imagine building a tower out of blocks. One block might not be enough to make a tall tower, but if you have lots of blocks stacked together, your tower will be strong and sturdy!

2. **Quality of Evidence:** This is how reliable or trustworthy the evidence is. For example, if you find a fingerprints on a weapon, that's pretty strong evidence of a crime because it's clear and direct. But if you just hear a rumour from a friend of a friend, it’s not as strong because it's not based on something you can see or touch.

Both the quantity and quality of evidence help us to figure out whether we should believe in something. However, it’s worth saying that if the evidence is of a very poor quality, then it might be that **no** amount of it can ever be enough. For example, if you have hundreds of broken blocks, they will never form a sturdy tower!

Do: Ask the students: ‘Do you think there is a lot of evidence for the myth, or not so much? And do you think the evidence we have is of good quality, or not?’ Facilitate a discussion with the class.

THIS DEVELOPS:

1. **Critical Thinking:** Students learn to assess both the quality and quantity of evidence required to support a claim, understanding that sometimes a single strong piece is sufficient while other times multiple weaker pieces are needed. They also learn to distinguish between reliable, direct evidence and less trustworthy sources like rumours or hearsay.

CHIEF DETECTIVE SKILL 5: INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

Say: Now you've listened to the podcast, and considered the evidence, it's time for you to do some more research of your own! Search the Internet for articles, videos, and podcasts that support or challenge the myth. Take notes of what you find so you can show it to others!

Give them these guidelines beforehand:

1. **Cross-Check Information:** Encourage students to cross-check the information they find against other sources. If different sources corroborate the same information, they're more likely to be reliable. If there are conflicting views, they should investigate further to determine the most accurate information.

2.Use Reliable Sources: Emphasize the importance of using reliable sources for their research. Encourage them to prioritize sources like reputable websites (e.g., government websites, educational institutions) and books from established publishers. Remind them to be cautious of information from personal blogs, forums, or social media if it appears to show bias or motivated reasoning.

3.Be Critical: Teach students to approach information critically. They should question the credibility of the sources, evaluate the evidence presented, and consider any potential biases or agendas behind the information. Encourage them to ask questions such as: Who created this content? What evidence supports their claims? How much evidence is there, and is it of good quality?

Do: Give students the opportunity to present some of their findings to the class. They can choose a format for their presentation, such as a verbal presentation or a poster. Encourage them to explain their reasoning and the strength of the evidence they gathered.

THIS DEVELOPS:

1. **Research Skills:** The exercise involves conducting research using various sources, including the Internet, books, articles, and other media. Students learn how to search for relevant information, cross-check sources, and select reliable sources to support their arguments. They also practice note taking and organization skills throughout the research process.

2. **Information Literacy:** By navigating different types of sources and media, students can develop information literacy skills. They learn to distinguish between credible and unreliable sources, understand different formats of information (e.g., articles, videos, podcasts), and recognize potential biases or agendas in the information they encounter.

3. **Communication Skills:** Presenting their findings to the class encourages students to communicate effectively. They learn to articulate their arguments clearly and support their claims with evidence. Aiming for a combination of verbal presentations, posters, or multimedia presentations also allow students to practice different communication formats.

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