

Secrets - and a big important question

by Dr Sue Knight

Topic objectives

In this topic we aim to reinforce students' grasp of the mental act of questioning, to foster students' developing capacity to make logical inferences and to encourage and scaffold students' ethical thinking.

More particularly, in this topic we aim to:

- Engage students in the processes of asking and answering questions;
- Think about why some people might feel reticent about asking questions of others;
- Distinguish inferences which require a degree of guesswork from those that don't;
- Think for themselves about the notion of a secret and
- Support students to think productively and for themselves about whether or not it's okay to tell a friend's secret.

Background to the topic for teachers

As indicated in the 'Background' section of the previous topic, research indicates that supported, collaborative inquiry is one of the most effective means of bringing about understanding. In line with this research, we aim to encourage students to inquire together into ethical issues that matter to them, so that they make progress towards answers. Such an approach depends upon students' willingness to ask questions of each other, even when those questions may not be clearly formulated, to accept help from others and to modify their views in the light of others' comments.

This requires a degree of courage and some children may initially be afraid to expose their thinking to scrutiny from other members of the group. In the current topic we raise this issue openly in the hope that doing so will help students develop their sensitivity to others and confidence in their own thinking that forms the foundation of a fully functioning community of inquiry.

In addition, we focus on the process of making inferences. This process of drawing conclusions from information we already have comes naturally to all of us, but it is a process we engage in with varying degrees of competence. We know that making reliable inferences is a skill that develops steadily from Kindergarten to around Year 6 and that development is enhanced when these skills are taught for explicitly.

Across the Primary Ethics curriculum there are numerous topics focusing on the skills of inference. These topics form a developmental sequence and one that begins at the Kindergarten Stage. In this topic we make a very simple distinction, between drawing a conclusion in such a way that you can be sure that the conclusion is correct and making a 'guess' on the basis of whatever scant knowledge or information you have.

As an example of the first sort of inference, if we know that Mia is in the same class as Max and that Max is in the same class as Isabel, we can confidently draw the conclusion that Mia is in the same class as Isabel. We can say that we know that Mia and Isabel are in the same class. Roughly, we say we know some claim is true when we believe we have sufficient evidence for it.

On the other hand suppose you are taking part in a 'Q and A' game and that, as the host, I ask the question 'What did I eat for breakfast this morning?' You don't know me - or anything about my eating habits, likes and dislikes etc. You will have to guess. And you don't have a lot to go on. But despite this,

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your guess won't be a total stab in the dark. It's more likely than not that I didn't eat ice cream or popcorn. It's much more likely to be in the range of toast, fruit, cereal or eggs. Your background knowledge will guide your response. There is obviously still a great deal of guesswork involved.

Now compare the breakfast example with this one - I hide a coin in one hand and ask you to guess which hand. This time it is a stab in the dark - pure guesswork. It is clear from these examples that we can have more confidence in some of our guesses than others.

This introduction to the making of inferences involves a degree of simplification (including some over-simplification). For a more detailed and comprehensive account, see the 'Background for Teachers' section from the topics 'Inferring or Figuring things out' (Stage 2 – even year - Topic 9) and 'Generalising: Inductive reasoning' (Stage 2 - odd year - Topic 9).

Finally, the topic includes a 'Discussion plan' – a series of logically structured questions designed to scaffold children's thinking as they inquire into the question of whether one child should tell another's secret about a surprise.

Topic Structure and Resources

Aim of lesson	Resources
Lesson 1: Mia's secret Focuses on the courage required to expose their thinking to scrutiny from other members of the group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Image 1: Cat• Image 2: Cat and girl• Image 3: Mia• Image 4: Max• Image 5: Daytime moon• Image 6: Isabel
Lesson 2: Knowing, guessing and being scared that people will think you don't know anything Focuses on the process of drawing conclusions for information we already have, and the distinction between drawing a conclusion in such a way that you can be sure that the conclusion is correct, and making a 'guess' on the basis of whatever scant knowledge or information you have	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Images 3, 4 & 6 from previous lesson• Image 7: Spider• 5 cent coin• Small box containing a few coins (so that when the box is shaken they jingle)
Lesson 3: Mia's secret and Max's big important question This series of logically structured questions is designed to scaffold children's thinking as they inquire into the question of whether one child should tell another's secret.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Images 3, 4 & 6 from previous lesson

References

Lesson 1

Image 1 – Cat

<http://www.photos-public-domain.com/category/animals/cats/>

Image 2 – Cat and girl

<http://www.mamalisa.com/?t=es&p=1359>

<http://bygosh.com/kids-classics/mother-goose/pussy-cat-and-queen/>

Image 5 – Moon

[http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/9d/Caribbean_skies._Daytime_moon_%286980006572%29.jpg/800px-](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/9d/Caribbean_skies._Daytime_moon_%286980006572%29.jpg/800px-Caribbean_skies._Daytime_moon_%286980006572%29.jpg)

[Caribbean_skies._Daytime_moon_%286980006572%29.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/9d/Caribbean_skies._Daytime_moon_%286980006572%29.jpg) (viewed 1 February, 2015)

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Lesson 1: Mia's secret

For this lesson you will need

- Copies of Images 1 -6
- Access to whiteboard or notebook

More practice with questions

5 minutes

Who can remember the 'Baa Baa Black Sheep' question rhyme? *Jog their memories as necessary.*

We are going to start the lesson with another question rhyme and this time, the rhyme isn't about a sheep - it's about a cat. *Show image 1: Cat*



There is someone else in the rhyme too. *Show image 2: Girl with cat*

This is ... *(give her a name)*

Can anyone guess what the rhyme is?

If necessary, tell the children that it's 'Pussy cat, pussy cat where have you been?'



Can anyone say the rhyme?

If so, ask them to recite it. If not, read it to them.

 Pussy-cat, pussy-cat, where have you been?

I've been to London to visit the Queen!

Pussy-cat, pussy-cat, what did you there?

I frighten'd a little mouse under her chair.

Let's see if you can say it with me this time. *Repeat the rhyme*

 Did [girl's name] ask the cat some questions?

- What did she ask? How many questions?
- Did the cat reply to her questions?
- What did he say?

Let's say it again, and this time this group *divide the class in half, and indicate one half* will be [girl's name]; and this group *indicate the other half* will be the cat. *Say the rhyme aloud and encourage each group to join in for their lines.*

Story: More about Max and Mia

10 minutes

Now I am going to tell you more of the story about Mia and Max.

Show images 3 & 4

Who can remember what Mia and Max were doing were doing in the last part of the story?



We'll start reading from when they went to the park to make sure that everyone remembers what happened there.

📖 Max is at the park with Mia and Oscar, and Mia is looking up at the sky. 'Hey Oscar!' she says, pointing upwards. 'What's that?'

Oscar looks up. Max does too. This is what they see: *Show Image 5 - daytime moon*



'What do you think it is?' says Oscar. 'It's the moon - what else could it be?'

'How come the moon's out in the daytime?' Mia asks. 'And why isn't it bright, like it is at night?'

Oscar says, 'I don't know. But I've seen it in the day lots of times, and it's never bright. That's just the way it is.'

Max is looking up at the sky too. But he's not thinking about the moon. He's thinking about the stars. He thinks to himself, 'We can see the moon, but where are the stars? Why don't we ever see the stars in the daytime? That's what I want to know.'

But he doesn't say his question out loud.

👏 Last week we were trying to think about why Max doesn't ask his question out loud? Can you remember what we said? *Encourage discussion if needed by asking: Does anyone have any other ideas? Give children time to think. Children might struggle with this - if so, don't worry and just move on to the next part of the story.*

Max wants to ask his question out loud, but he just can't. That's because he doesn't want Mia and Oscar to find out that he doesn't know about the stars.

'What if Mia and Oscar already know?' Max thinks. 'Maybe it's a really easy question and everyone in the whole world except me knows why we don't see the stars in the daytime?'

And so Max keeps his question to himself.

Max thinks that his question is a really easy one. He thinks that everyone except him knows why the stars don't come out in the day. Talk to the person next to you and tell them if you think Max is right, and explain to them why you think that.

👏 Now who would like to tell us what they thought?

If students give good reasons, like 'I don't know, so Max isn't the only one that doesn't know', provide positive feedback along the lines of 'That's a really good reason'.

If students do not respond with something like the suggestion above, ask them:

- *'Do you know why the stars don't come out in the day? Put your hand up if you do. Now put your hand up if you don't know.'*

There are some people here who don't know why the stars don't come out in the day. So is Max the only person in the world who doesn't know?'

Let's continue with the story.

📖 Max and Mia and Oscar had a great time at the park. They played on the slide and the swings and then played tip until they were tired. On the way home, Mia's dad stopped at an ice cream shop.

There were 20 different kinds of ice cream and you could see them all displayed in a big fridge. There were lots of different colours, even one which was like a rainbow. Mia took ages to make up her mind and Max had to help her.

👏 Guess what flavour she chose? *Let a couple of children guess.*

It was chocolate! A big scoop of chocolate ice cream in a great big cone. Guess what? At the

very bottom of the cone was a piece of real chocolate!

'How did they get the chocolate in there?' Mia wondered. She looked down at her t-shirt to see that it was covered with chocolate ice cream. 'Why does ice cream melt like that?' she asked. Max smiled. He couldn't answer Mia's question.

Mia and her dad took Max home and that's when he remembered his other question; his big important question. He has thought and thought about it but he hasn't found an answer.

He knows his big book on Space won't help him. His books on animals won't either. He can't think of a single book or DVD that might help him answer his big important question. The thing is Max has to find an answer! He just has to - otherwise something awful will happen.

It's all because of Mia. Yesterday, Mia told Max a secret. She whispered it to him at recess time and she said 'Don't tell anyone, especially not Isabel!'

👉 Do you remember Isabel? *Show image 6: Isabel*

👉 Can you guess what Mia's secret is? *Take a few guesses*

👉 Would you like a clue? It has to do with Mia's birthday. *If they have guessed that Mia is going to have a party, tell students that they've made a good guess.*



Discussion: Birthday parties

15 minutes

1. How old will Mia be on her birthday? How do you know? *If students can't remember, remind them: we know Mia is five and so on her next birthday she will be six.*
2. What sort of party do you think Mia is going to have? Can you guess?
3. Will it be a party where everyone dresses up? If so, what do you think they'll dress up as?
4. Where do you think the party will be? At Mia's house or somewhere else?
5. Will there be games? If so what games do you think they'll play?
6. Will there be a birthday cake? What sort of cake do you think it will be?
7. Who do you think Mia is going to ask to her party?
8. There's a boy in Mia's class called Leo. Leo is not one of Mia's friends but a while ago Leo had a birthday party and he invited Mia. Do you think Mia will ask Leo to her party?
9. Mia has lots of friends – she has counted them all and she has eight friends and two best friends – that's Max and Isabel. If Mia asked every one of her eight friends and Max and Isabel, how many children would she have at her party? Can you work it out using your fingers?
10. Do you think Mia will ask all her friends to her party?
11. What would happen if her dad said, 'Mia, you can only have 8 children at your party'?
12. What do you think Mia would do? How would she work out who to ask and who not to ask?
13. Two of her friends would have to miss out. Do you think the children who missed out would stay friends with Mia?

End the lesson

Next week we'll be playing a game and talking some more about Max and Mia.

Lesson 2: Knowing, guessing and being scared that people will think you don't know anything

For this lesson you will need

- Images 3: Mia, 4: Max and 6: Isabel (from previous lesson)
- A whiteboard, if available, or a piece of paper and a pencil
- A five cent coin
- Small box containing a few coins (so that when the box is shaken they jingle)
- Image 7: spider

Thinking about knowing and guessing

3 minutes

Last lesson we asked lots of questions about Mia's birthday. Do you remember?

👏 One of our questions was 'How old is Mia going to be on her birthday'? Who remembers that question? Hands up.

👏 Can you remember what our answer was? *[Six]*

👏 Was that a guess or did we know that Mia was six? *[We knew]*

If students say they guessed: What made us think she would be six? How did we work it out?

If students say they knew, ask: How did we know that Mia would be six? How did we work it out?

👏 Another question we asked was 'What sort of birthday cake will she have?' What did we say about that?

👏 Did we know what sort of birthday cake she was going to have? Or did we guess? *[We guessed.]*

👏 Do you remember Leo? Leo is in Mia's class and a while ago he asked Mia to his birthday party. We wondered whether Mia will invite Leo to her party. What did we say?

👏 Did we know Mia was/wasn't going to ask Leo to her party? Or did we guess? *[We guessed.]*

Game: Do you know or did you guess?

17 minutes

Sometimes when we're asked a question, we guess the answer and we can't be sure that our answer is right. Other times we know the answer and we are sure that our answer is right. Now we're going to play a question game. This one is called 'Know or Guess'.

This is how the game works. I'm going to ask some questions. You will need to put your hand up if you want to answer – you might be sure you know the answer, or you might just guess. That's OK too. Then I'm going to ask you is it a guess or do you know? Let's have a practice. Here's the first question:

What did I have for breakfast this morning? Remember you have to answer. You can't just say 'I don't know.' Everyone think to yourself. *Choose someone to tell you what they were thinking and ask: Did you guess or do you know?*

If it was a guess: Why did you guess 'toast/Weetbix/eggs'? Why didn't you guess 'popcorn'?

As a follow up question you could ask:

- *Does anyone here have popcorn for breakfast?*
- *What does everyone else think - was [respondents name]'s answer a good guess?*

Now let's begin our game.

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After each question ask 'Did you guess or do you know?', and then ask the follow-up questions according to their answer. Keep the pace moving – this game is not meant to take all lesson. If every child has had a turn, there is no need to ask all the questions.

1. How do you write the number 10? Write your answer on the board / on this piece of paper.

After child has had a go, ask: Did you guess or did you know?

If they said they knew: How do you know?

If it was a guess: Why did you guess that?

2. Has Max had his 6th birthday yet?

Did you guess or did you know?

Know: How do you know?

Guess: Why did you guess that?

3. *Hide a 5 cent piece in one hand.* I've got a five- cent coin in one hand. Which hand do you think it is? Come up and point to the hand you think is holding the 5 cents.

Did you guess or did you know?

Know: How do you know?

Guess: Why did you guess this hand?

Reveal the coin.

4. Does anything live on the moon?

Did you guess or did you know?

Know: How do you know?

Guess: Why did you answer 'yes/no' rather than 'no/yes'?

5. What number comes just before '10'?

Did you guess or did you know?

Know: How do you know?

Guess: Why did you guess that?

6. How many legs does a spider have?

Did you guess or did you know?

Know: How do you know?



Guess: Presumably students will guess in the range 2-10. Why didn't you say '20'? ' Reply with something like: 'That was a good guess - you got pretty close'. Show Image 7 – spider, and together with the students, count the number of legs.

7. *Pick a child to answer this one. [Name], if you put one foot after another, like this (demonstrate by taking a couple of steps heel to toe), how many steps will you take to walk across the circle from your spot to (name a child sitting on the other side of the circle)? You can stand up and walk across the circle, with one foot after the other, before you answer, if you like.*

Did you guess or did you know?

Know: How do you know?

Guess: Why did you guess that?

8. Do you remember Oscar? He is Mia's older brother. Is Oscar younger or older than Max?

Did you guess or did you know?

Know: How do you know? [The story told us that Oscar is eight and Mia is six and that Max is about the same age as Mia.]

Guess: Does anyone think they know the answer? How do you know?

9. Are giraffes taller than elephants?

Did you guess or did you know?

Know: How do you know?

Guess: Why did you guess giraffe/elephant? If they guessed right, you could say: 'So that was just a lucky guess?'

10. What's in this box? Rattle the coins in the small box you brought along.

Did you guess or did you know?

Know: How do you know?

Guess: Why did you guess that? You could respond with: 'That's a good guess. You were right!' or 'You were close - does anyone else want to have a guess?'

11. What is healthier- a glass of milk or a bottle of Coca Cola?

Did you guess or did you know?

Know: How do you know?

Guess: Why did you guess that?

12. Are there any clouds in the sky today?

Did you guess or did you know?

Know: How do you know?

Guess (presumably where children can't see out a window): Why did you guess 'yes/no?'

13. What is [a student's name] favourite game?

Did you guess or did you know?

Know: How do you know?

Guess: Why did you guess that?

Then ask [student] 'Is that right'? If they guessed right, you can say 'That it was a good guess.'

14. What colour is Mia's hair?

Did you guess or did you know?

Know (if the image is in colour): How do you know?

Guess: Why didn't you say 'purple'?

If the student guessed, ask the other students whether anyone thinks s/he knows the answer and then, how they know.

15. What country does Mia live in?

Did you guess or did you know?

Know: How do you know?

Guess: Why did you guess (it will almost certainly be) Australia? Responses might include: Everyone in the story is speaking English; we have parks and wildlife parks and ice cream shops. You can respond here by asking whether other (English speaking) countries have those things too.

Remembering the story

10 minutes

Let's continue with the story about Max and Mia. Do you remember that last lesson, as well as talking about Mia's birthday, we learned something about Max?

-  Do you remember Max asked a question about the stars?
-  Who can remember his question?' [*Why don't we ever see the stars in the daytime?*]
-  Did he ask his question out loud?

If students can't answer/give the wrong answer to this question, re-read these lines:

Max is looking up at the sky too. But he's not thinking about the moon. He's thinking about the stars. He thinks to himself, 'We can see the moon, but where are the stars? Why don't we ever see the stars in the daytime? That's what I want to know.'

Max doesn't say his question out loud.

-  Why didn't Max ask his question out loud? Can anyone remember?

If students can't answer/give the wrong answer to this question, re-read these lines:

Max wants to ask his question out loud, but he just can't. That's because he doesn't want Mia or Oscar to find out that he doesn't know about the stars.

'What if Mia and Oscar already know?' Max thinks, 'Maybe it's a really easy question and everyone in the whole world except me knows why we don't see the stars in the daytime?'

Max keeps his question to himself.

- 👉 Have you ever felt like Max? Have you ever wanted to ask a question out loud but didn't because you were worried that other people would find out that you didn't know the answer?
Take 2 or 3 responses.

Let's see if you can remember the rest of the story. Remember that Mia and Max and Oscar had a great time at the park?

- 👉 Can you remember what games they played?
- 👉 And where they went on the way home?
- 👉 And what the ice creams were like?
- 👉 What's your favourite kind of ice cream?
- 👉 Mia and her dad took Max home and that's when he remembered something. Can you remember what it was?

Now we'll read that last bit of the story again

📖 Mia and her dad took Max home. That's when he remembered his other question; his big important question. He has thought and thought about it but he hasn't found an answer. He knows his big book on Space won't help him. His books on animals won't either. He can't think of a single book or DVD that might help him answer his big important question. The thing is Max has to find an answer. He just has to - otherwise something awful will happen.

It's all because of Mia. Yesterday, Mia told Max a secret. She whispered it to him at recess time and she said, 'Don't tell anyone- especially not Isabel!'

Isabel is Mia's other best friend, equal to Max.

Show images 3, 4 & 6 of Mia, Max & Isabel.

- 👉 Who can remember what Mia's secret was about?

I wonder what Max's question is about? Can anyone guess?



Mia

Max

Isabel

End the lesson

Next week we'll find out. Maybe you can think about these questions a bit during the week - about Mia's secret and what Max's big important question might be.

Lesson 3: Mia's secret and Max's big important question.

For this lesson you will need

- Images 3: Mia, 4: Max and 6: Isabel (from previous lesson)
- Image 8: 'There was an old woman tossed up in a basket'

More practice with questions

5 minutes

Today we are going to start with a question rhyme and after that we're all going to find out about Mia's secret and Max's big, important question.

This rhyme is a very silly one and you might not know it. It's about cobwebs.

Now you'll need to listen very carefully. Show me how you look when you are listening carefully.

Make sure they are all paying attention.

This rhyme is called 'There was an old woman tossed up in a basket'. Does anyone know it?

 There was an old woman tossed up in a basket,
Seventeen times as high as the moon.
And where she was going, I just had to ask her,
For in her hand she carried a broom.

"Old woman, old woman, old woman," said I,
"Where are you going to up so high?"
"To sweep the cobwebs off the sky!"
"Shall I go with you?" "Well, you can try! "

 Did someone ask the old woman some questions?

 What was the first question? *Students should be able to get this, but you might need to read the second verse of the rhyme again.*

Let's recite it together. *Repeat poem. It doesn't matter if the students can't recite it all.*

 Did the old woman answer the question?

 What did she say? *You might need to re-read this.* Let's say it together

 Did the man ask the old woman another question? Can you remember, or do you want me to read the verse again? Let's say it together.

 Did the old woman answer the question? What did she say? *Re-read if necessary and then ask students to recite the answers together.*

Divide the class into two groups.

I am going to read the whole rhyme again. I'd like this group- *indicate* - to be the woman and this group - *indicate* - to be the man. I'll read the first verse and if you can remember it, I'd like you to join in. And when we get to your part in the second verse, you say just your part. *Go through the whole rhyme with the students joining in with the second verse if they can.*

Story: Mia and Max (continued)

10 minutes

Now, at last, we are going to find out about Max's big, important question and Mia's secret.

Remember that Max has a big important question and he can't work out the answer, however hard and however long he thinks. But he has to find an answer- he just has to. Otherwise something awful will happen.

It's all because of Mia. Yesterday, Mia told Max a secret. She whispered it to him at recess time. Let's see what happens next.

 Mia's secret was about her birthday party. She said - *use a whispery voice* - 'We're going to the wildlife park! You know, the one Isabel keeps talking about - with the giraffes and elephants and lions! They're not shut up in cages like at the zoo. I really want to see them - and so does Isabel.'

'So do I', whispered Max.

Here's Isabel. Isabel and Max are Mia's equal best friends.

Display image of Mia, Max and Isabel.



Mia

Max

Isabel

Mia whispered, 'Dad is going to take us to the wildlife park for my birthday - just you and me and Isabel and Oscar!' Then Mia said, 'Don't tell anyone, especially not Isabel. I want it to be a surprise.'

'Okay' Max whispered back.

 Can you whisper? If you can, say 'yes' in a whisper.

Do you think you could whisper 'Don't tell anyone, especially not Isabel'? Now try it. Now whisper, 'Okay'.

Now everyone needs a partner, so that you can whisper to each other. I want you to show everyone how we look when we whisper. *Count pairs off around the circle and choose one student in each pair to be Mia and one to be Max.*

All the people who are being Mia, can you whisper: 'Don't tell anyone, especially not Isabel' Now all the people who are being Max, can you whisper back, 'Okay'.

Now let's swap roles. The other person is Mia this time. *Let children whisper again.*

After recess they had art. Max painted a giraffe standing in some long grass. 'This is what the wildlife park will look like', he thought to himself. He couldn't wait to see it. He thought about how excited Isabel would be when she found out they were going.

At lunchtime, Isabel ran up to Max. 'I saw Mia whispering to you at recess', she said sounding very cross, 'Did Mia tell you a secret?'

 Can you say that in a cross voice? Did Mia tell you a secret?

Can you make a cross face? Show us.

Now we want a cross face and cross voice *model this*: Did Mia tell you a secret?

What do you think Max is going to say?

Can you pretend to be Max? You will have to use your imagination. What will you say when Isabel asks you: *use a cross voice*, 'Did Mia tell you a secret?'

Max looked around. Mia was out in the corridor, getting her lunchbox. 'Yes,' he said quietly, 'Mia did tell me a secret.'

Isabel looked upset - really upset. She said, 'Why didn't Mia tell me her secret? It's not fair! I'm her best friend too - equal to you! You know I am! If Mia won't tell me the secret, you have to tell me.' What do you think Max will do? Do you think he will tell Isabel the secret?

Use procedural questions to facilitate a discussion around the following question:

1. What would you do if you were Max?

Encourage and broaden discussion with the following questions, if needed:

- *Do you think you might tell Isabel the secret but tell her not to tell anyone?*
- *If they say yes, ask:*
 - o *Do you think Isabel would keep the secret?*
 - o *What might happen if she didn't?*

After each response, ask whether anyone would say anything different and why.

Let's go back to the story and see what Max does.

 Max didn't know what to do. But he had to say something. So he said to Isabel, 'I can't. I can't tell you Mia's secret.'

'Why not?' Isabel asked. Now she sounded cross again. 'Because,' Max said, 'Mia told me not to tell anyone'. 'Even me?' asked Isabel.

'Even you.' said Max.

Isabel looked as though she might cry and she walked away so quickly she was almost running. 'Wait! Isabel! Wait!' Max called out. Isabel just kept on walking.

 How do you look when you are about to cry? Can you show us?

Now Max felt upset. 'Maybe I should tell Isabel the secret,' he thought, 'but I told Mia I wouldn't. If I tell Isabel then I'll spoil Mia's surprise.'

Max didn't know what do. He still doesn't. He keeps asking himself, 'Should I tell Isabel Mia's secret?'

That is his big important question.

2. What do you think Max should do? Do you think he should tell Isabel Mia's secret? *Take responses. After each response ask questions along the lines of 'Why do you think that?', 'Who agrees with [name]?', 'Who disagrees?' and 'Are you agreeing/disagreeing with [name]?'*

Discussion: Secrets

15 minutes

Let's think some more about Max's question: Should he tell Isabel Mia's secret or not?

1. When Mia told her secret to Max, was Mia trying to hurt Isabel's feelings?
2. Mia's secret was a safe secret and it wasn't meant to hurt anyone. Can we say that it was a good secret?
3. Have you ever told one of your friends a secret - a good secret? A good secret is one where

no- one is meant to get hurt and it's safe. Put your hand up if you've ever told a good secret to one of your friends.

4. When you told your friend your secret, did you think your friend would keep your secret? Or did you think your friend would tell someone else?
5. Is that what happened?
6. If your friend tells your secret to someone else, is it still a secret? What if the person your friend told, told someone else. Is it still a secret then?
7. When Mia told Max her secret, did she want him to keep the secret to himself and not tell anyone else at all - even Isabel? How do you know?

Now try to imagine this: You've told your friend your secret and you've said not to tell anyone. And then your friend tells your secret to someone else. How does that make you feel? Maybe that's actually happened to you. But if not, try to imagine how you'd feel. Hands up.

8. If your friend told your secret to someone else, would you stay friends? *Encourage them to give reasons for their answers, even if they are finding it hard. Remind them that you will give them time to think and encourage children to help each other.*
9. Is it okay to tell a friend's secret? Remember, we're talking about good secrets here - secrets that are safe and don't mean to hurt anyone. *Make sure you ask students for their reasons and ask some follow up questions like 'Does anyone agree/disagree?', 'Does anyone want to add anything to/comment on what x has said?'.*
10. Now imagine that you find out that your best friend has a good secret and that she's told it to another friend but not to you. How does that make you feel?
11. Would you ask her other friend to tell you the secret?
12. Do you think her other friend should tell you? *Make sure you encourage children to give their reasons.*
13. Isabel is Mia's equal best friend. She knows Mia has a secret and that Mia has told it to Max. Isabel is very upset and asks Max to tell her Mia's secret. Do you think Max should do that? *Make sure you ask students for their reasons and ask some follow up questions like, 'Does anyone agree/disagree?' 'Does anyone want to add anything to/comment on what X has said?' Can anyone help Y with his/her thinking?*

End the lesson

You might like to keep thinking about these kinds of secrets and perhaps talk to your family about some of the questions you have all been talking about in ethics classes.

~~~END OF TOPIC~~~

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