



Matthew Syed

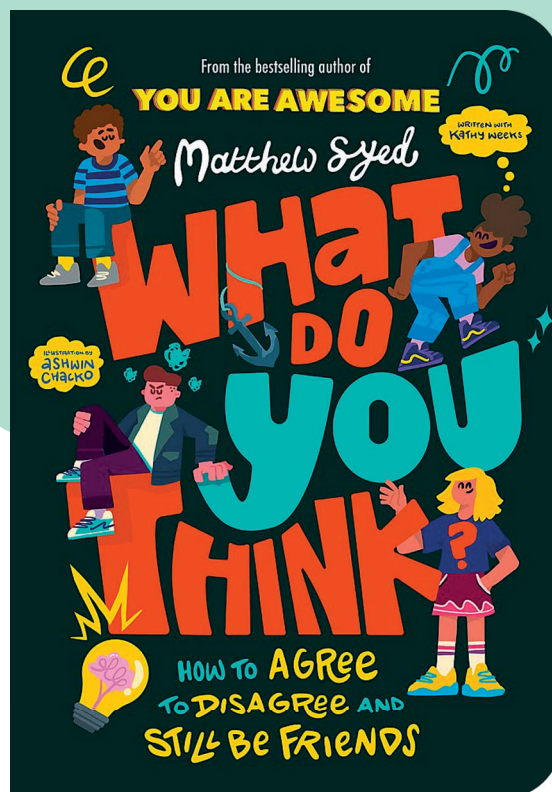
Illustrated by
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ISBN: 978-1526364937
160PP, £9.99

TEACHER NOTES

Before Reading

- Look at the front cover of the book, work together and try and write the blurb for the book.
- Focus on the title 'What Do YOU Think?' Work in pairs or small groups and predict ten key words you think you will see in the book based on your understanding of the title.



While Reading

ONGOING ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

- Give a new title to each chapter based on your own understanding of it. Share and discuss your ideas in class. This will also help you remember the contents of each chapter.
- Discuss your favourite part from each chapter.
- Make a classroom hashtag wall. At the end of each chapter, work together and come up with hashtag words and phrases that summarise the content of the chapter.
- Study Skills – make a note of unfamiliar words, work together at the end of a session to talk about the meaning of the words, consider:
 - synonyms
 - antonyms
 - the word in context – how many ways can you use the word?

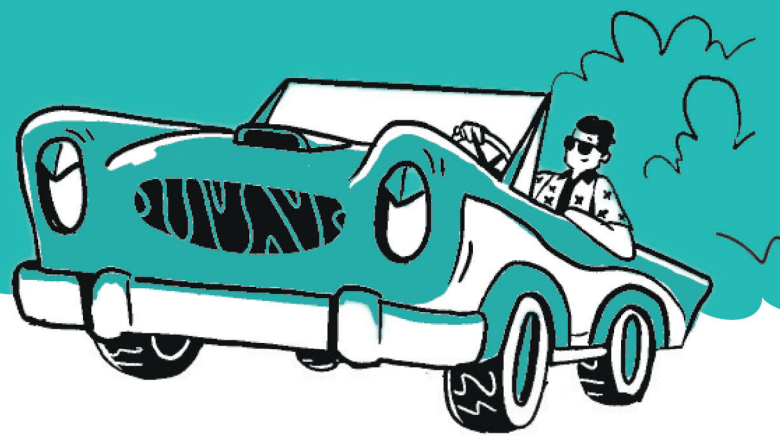


Read the chapters in order, and ask students to tackle the following questions

CHAPTER 1: ARE YOU A JUMPER?

- What advice can you give to Mr Phelan about forming incorrect opinions?
- Assumptions: What definition can you give to the word 'assumption'? Discuss why assumptions can be dangerous.

- Mr Phelan was called Decisive Derek and Doofus Derek, why did his name change from positive to negative? What adjective with the same letter as your first name can you put in front of your name to describe your character?
- Make a list of the pros and cons of both slow thinking and fast thinking.
- Can you reflect and consider a mistake you made with fast thinking and how slow thinking could have resolved the issue?



CHAPTER 2: BAD INFLUENCE

- Do you buy sweets on impulse? How many games have you bought with your pocket money that you've used once and never again?
- Explain why slow thinking is useful to avoid impulse purchases.
- How many times have you bought something because you were influenced by someone? Discuss and share your experiences together.
- Think critically! What questions can you ask yourself before buying a £55 hot dog? Make a list of questions in pairs or small groups.
- What are 'sneaky tricks'?

- Time to debate: work in two groups, one groups is really happy to spend £55 on a hot dog and the second group isn't. Make a list of the reasons why you should and shouldn't spend £55 on a hot dog. Try and convince the other team with your answers.
- Explain the phrase 'my dad fell hook, line and anchor'.
- Critical thinking task: what are the pros and cons of anchoring? Consider anchoring from the business point-of-view and from the consumers'.

ANCHOR ALERT!

Are you seeing 99p everywhere you go? Well, that is no surprise. When you see a price of £5.99 in a shop, they are using an anchor to try and influence you into hoping you'll think it isn't really much more than £5. A bargain! It isn't really but it works, and items priced at 99p or £5.99 sell more than if they were priced at £1 or £6.



CHAPTER 3: FAKE NEWS, MY FRIEND

- Debate it out: should there be more control over social media to stop 'fake news'? Make a list of pros and cons to support your argument.
- Questions to ask yourself before believing fake news:
 - Is it from a reliable source?
 - Is it based on research?
 - How many more questions can you add here?

Make a class list of further questions and put them on the wall in the classroom as a reminder to be cautious and to be a good critical thinker.



CHAPTER 4: WHY DO WE ARGUE?

- The author says on page 73, 'There are some meaty topics to cover'. Explain the meaning of 'meaty topics'.
- Read the contents of the speech bubble from the book below:

- Come up with an argument in response to the speech bubble.
- Critical thinking task: consider what you can do to help a local charity. Make a list of all the options and share your ideas with your classmates.

WHAT? I'M NOT GIVING OUT FOOD TO A BUNCH OF SCROUNGERS. ARE YOU SERIOUSLY TELLING ME THAT PEOPLE CAN'T EVEN AFFORD A PACKET OF SPAGHETTI? WHY DON'T THEY JUST SELL ONE OF THEIR CARS SO THEY DON'T HAVE TO TAKE FOOD OFF OTHER PEOPLE?

CHAPTER 5: SHALL WE AGREE TO DISAGREE?

● Debate time: look at the situations from the book, work in a pair or small group and come up with a list of bullet points for each of the topics below. Use the bullet points to help you form your arguments in each case.

- You should be Prime Minister
- Convince your mum and dad to buy you a new phone
- Encourage your brother to share his stash of sweets with you



Looking at an argument from the opposite point of view can be massively helpful. It makes you think about the holes and weaknesses in your own views. If you know in advance what the other side might throw at you, then you can be prepped and ready to make your argument stronger. Or it might even mean you change your mind completely.



- Now revisit your arguments for the situations above. Reconsider your argument and look at it from a different perspective. Has this made your argument stronger? Or have you changed your mind?
- There is a great example of looking at things from two perspectives in chapter 5. Warren Buffet, a businessman, hires two advisors, one to tell him all the positive points of a plan and one to tell him all the negative points.
Task: come up with an idea for a new product.

E.g. a new app for a mobile phone, a new type of chocolate bar, a new gadget.

- Present your idea in pairs or small groups to the rest of the class. Your classmates need to voice their opinions on your new idea. They need to look at your idea from two perspectives, the positive and the negative.

CHAPTER 6: WHEN ROWS GO WRONG

- Look at the comments from Carlos and work together to come up with a reply for Carlos.



YOU DO REALISE ALL THIS CLIMATE NONSENSE IS JUST PART OF THE EARTH'S NATURAL CYCLE, DON'T YOU? WE'VE BEEN COOLING DOWN AND HEATING RIGHT UP FOR MILLIONS OF YEARS NOW. WHEN THE DINOSAURS WERE AROUND, THERE WERE PALM TREES GROWING NEAR THE SOUTH POLE IT WAS SO HOT. IT'S SO MUCH COOLER NOW I DON'T KNOW WHAT WE'RE WORRIED ABOUT. WE'RE ACTUALLY IN BETWEEN ICE AGES AT THE MOMENT.

- Show your understanding of an echo chamber, write a short definition of what it is.
- Be a critical thinker – don't be Carlos! What advice can you give to people when they are reading articles online? Make a list and share with your classmates.

CHAPTER 7: THE BATTLE OF IDEAS

- Explain why Matthew admires his mum.
- Why is it a good idea to think like a scientist? Make a list of your ideas. Share and discuss together as a class.

- Poster Presentation Task: make a poster summarising key points from chapter 7. Share your poster with all your ideas. Compare your posters, do any of the points make you rethink about what you understood or what you agree with?

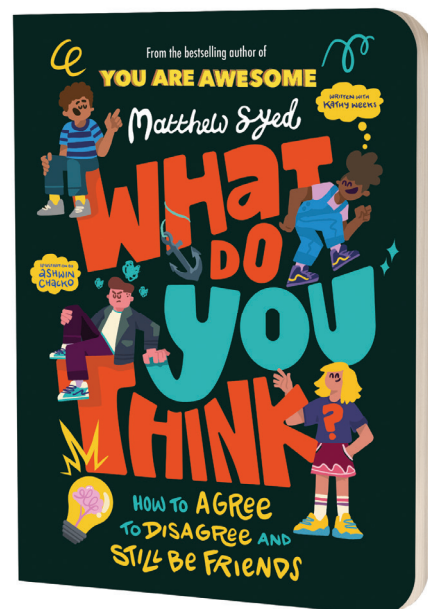


After Reading

- Create your own front cover, title and blurb based on everything you have understood from the book. Share your ideas together as a class.
- Write a letter to the author of the book, make reference to the parts of the book you really enjoyed.
- Imagine you have the opportunity to interview the author, Matthew Syed. Think of four questions you would like him to answer.
- There are a lot of funny examples in the book, what was your favourite funny example? Share your ideas together as a class.
- Book review: write a short summary detailing your thoughts on the book.
- Think about your own family members, who is the fast thinker and who is the slow thinker? Can you think of some examples like the author did in the book?

- Conflict of choice: would you rather? Look at the questions below, work together and justify your reasons for each answer:

- Would you rather study English or Maths?
- Would you rather study or play sport?
- Would you rather spend time with your friends or go on social media?
- Would you rather wear a school uniform or wear your own clothes?



HOW TO AGREE
TO DISAGREE AND
STILL BE FRIENDS

