

## Cheese with holes

*This working method can be used at the start, during or at the end of a theme /working with a societal issue. It can serve as a first exploration or as a guiding tool during the whole of your teaching unit. During this activity students will practice sharing their thinking, practice managing ambiguity, develop their curiosity, and listening actively. In addition to this principle, this activity supports Learning Through Dialogue and Interaction, Learning Through Thinking and Learning Through Reflection and Evaluation.*

### Expected outcome(s) – students will:

- ✓ Be able to share their thinking.
- ✓ Be able to tolerate ambiguity.
- ✓ Be able to ask questions demonstrating their curiosity.
- ✓ Be able to demonstrate active listening behaviours.
- ✓ Be able to break down a whole into parts.

### Timing

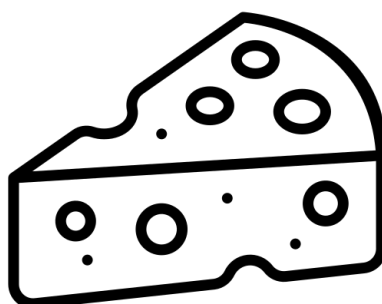
The minimum amount of time you should plan for this method is **45** minutes.

### Material

- Big paper /poster
- Scissors
- 2 pencils/markers in different colours

### Prepare yourself

1. Take a big piece of paper or a poster.
2. Write down the topic/societal issue you're going to work with at the top of your poster.
3. Draw a big piece of cheese over the whole of your poster.
4. Don't draw any holes yet.



## Step-by-step

### 1. Input

Introduce the societal issue. E.g., by showing a picture, reading a poem or a story, walking around in the neighbourhood and letting them observe something e.g., let them take pictures of things that are related to drought of the soil, waste, poverty, ...

### 2. Exploration

Ask the students what they already know about the topic and write that down on the cheese. Make sure you use key words or small sentences. And provide enough blank space in between the different key words. You need space to make holes afterwards.

You can also choose to first let the students write down their thoughts on sticky notes individually or in small groups. Then go over their input, let them explain when necessary, and summarize their input on the cheese.

Ask the students what questions they have concerning the topic.  
What would they like to know about the topic that is not yet on the cheese?  
Write down those questions/unknown sub-issues in another colour.

Again, you can choose to let the students write down their thoughts on sticky notes individually or in small groups. Then go over their input, let them explain when necessary, and summarize their input on the cheese.

- If the question or sub issue is a big or important one, you draw a big circle around it. If it's a minor question or sub issue you make a small circle.

Cut out the circles. You have a piece of cheese with holes now.

### 3. Choose + Next steps!

Collect the circles. Make an overview of the topics that can/need to be addressed by putting all the small circles together on the board and all the big ones in another group. Now there are several options:

#### Option A

- You tackle the big circles in lessons that are yet to come and find/give an answer for the small circles in between lessons or at the beginning or end of the day.
- Hang the cheese on the wall, with the circles next to it. Did you find an answer to one of the circles? Then fill the hole with the circle.

### Option B

- Let the students find connections between the different circles (big and small). That way you can make clusters.
- You decide together with the students what you will work further on. (You can use the working method 'the pyramid' in this module for that).
- Ask students how they think they can find out more about these circles. Write down their answers or let them write down ideas for each circle on (digital) sticky notes individually or in small groups.

#### You can use this for future lessons:

- ❑ For the small circles: you can divide them in small groups. Each group tries to find an answer to one of the small circles by using one or more of the given ideas (you can select one or more in their place or let them choose themselves).
  - ❑ For the big circles: work on one circle at a time. Use other working methods that are in module 'learning through interaction and dialogue', 'learning through thinking', and 'learning through structured processes' to explore and investigate the issue further.
- Hang the cheese on the wall, with the circles next to it. Did you find an answer to one of the circles? Then fill the hole with the circle.

### 4. Reflection

- ✓ What did I ask you to do?
- ✓ How was it to think about what you know and what you're curious about concerning this topic?
- ✓ Why would it be useful to do this?
- ✓ How was it to choose one or more circles?
- ✓ Why would it be useful to do this?

### 5. Bring it home

- Let the children choose one of the small circles. Have them ask their parents what they know about the topic on the circle.
- The next day they report, in class, or you ask them to write their findings down on paper or online or make a short video, drawing, ....