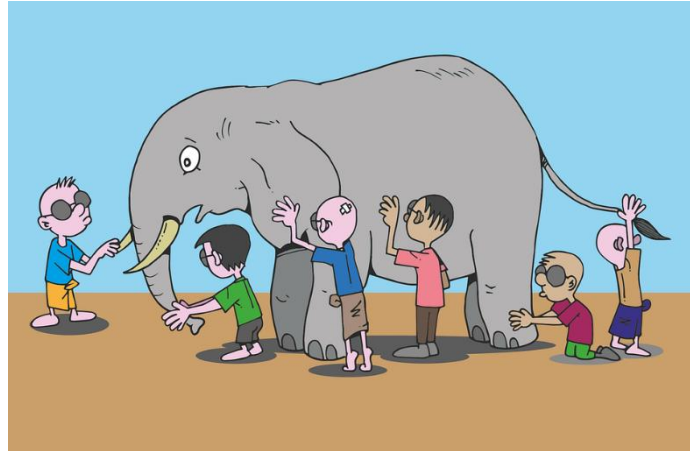


## The blind men and the elephant



<https://www.pixabay.com>

AGE	5 – 6 years
VALUE	Diversity
MATERIALS	Cardboard elephant, different materials as elements of the elephant the blind men touch, glue or tape to attach the elements to the elephant
DURATION	30 to 45 minutes
GROUP SIZE	variable
OBJECTIVES	Recognizing that different perspectives of the same thing exist Acknowledging that different perspectives don't mean that they are right or wrong but show a different aspect of the same thing Developing language skills through role-play.
METHODOLOGY	storytelling, role-play
AUTHOR	Jana Goldberg



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### Disclaimer

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



## STEP BY STEP IMPLEMENTATION

### Step 1

The facilitator prepares the elements of the elephant for the story (trunk, leg, tail etc) from different materials and cuts out or paints an elephant.

### Step 2

The facilitator tells the story showing the different parts of the elephant and attaching them to the elephant. At the end the whole elephant with different elements is visible.

### Step 3

The facilitator explains the moral of the story.

### Step 4

The facilitator tells the story again, this time kids can take over the roles of the blind men.

### **The six blind men and the elephant**

Once upon a time lived 6 men who could not see. They were good friends but they did sometimes argue about who was the smartest. „It's me, I'm the cleverest.“ No no, I think you'll find it's me. I'm the smartest one here.“ „No, you're both wrong, It's definitely me!“ On day a friendly elephant passed by them. It was the first time the six men had ever come across an elephant before and had no idea what it was. The men politely asked if they could touch the elephant so they could understand what he looks like. The elephant agreed and the men carefully felt him. Unknowingly they each touched a different part. The first man held his hands against the elephant's body. „Wow, this elephant is huge! He is smooth, strong and solid. Just like a wall.“ he said. The second man had grabbed hold of the elephant's trunk. „no you are wrong. This elephant is long and thin, it must be like a snake.“ The third man was holding one of the elephant's tusks. „What are you talking about? This elephant is sharp like a spear.“ „I think you'll find this elephant is actually like a tree.“ Said the fourth man leaning against the elephant's foot. „No no no, this elephant is like a giant fan!“ said the fifth man as he gently held the elephant's ear. „You are all wrong. This elephant is nothing but a piece of rope!“ shouted the sixth man as he clutched the elephant's tail. The men continued to argue. They were getting angrier and noisier by the second („He is like a wall!“ No, no like a snake....“) The elephant had to step in....(Elephant noise) „Please stop fighting!“ called the elephant. „How can you be so certain that you are right“ Each of you only touched one part of me. Perhaps if you listened to each other you might be able to work it out together.“ Upon hearing the elephant's words the men felt ashamed. But then....they decided to work together. They spoke carefully and calmly. They listened... And after a short while, and much discussion, they were all able to understand exactly what the elephant looked like. . And that's probably how it is: Each of us has our own truths because we perceive individually. And that's good! But we should always remain open to the perceptions and "truths" of others.

Video of the story in English <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0qs5cg7fZBc>



## CRITICAL ASSESSMENT

OBSERVED BEHAVIOR	YES	NO	COMENTS
Children realise that different perspectives of the same thing can exist next to each other.			
Children acknowledge that different perspectives complement each other instead of excluding each other.			
Children have taken active part in the role-play			
Children understand that it is ok to have different views.			

*Star Trek was an attempt to say that humanity will reach maturity and wisdom on the day that it begins not just to tolerate, but take a special delight in differences in ideas and differences in life forms. [...] If we cannot learn to actually enjoy those small differences, to take a positive delight in those small differences between our own kind here on this planet, then we do not deserve to go out into space and meet the diversity that is almost certainly out there.*

*- Gene Roddenberry*



### Self-care Hints for Childcare professionals and teachers:

Start the class off with a ritual. The first couple minutes of a new class can be the most intimidating. Begin the classes with 60 seconds of good news. Students report birthdays, good news in the neighborhood, funny anecdotes... Besides marinating everyone in warm connections, the spotlight is on students, not you.