

## Five Guidelines For Thinking Philosophically

1. The first guideline: **be respectful** of what everyone says. Even if you disagree with what someone says, you need to present your disagreement in a way that does not make fun of or disparage the person you disagree with. In philosophy discussions, disagreement plays an important role, for it helps each of us refine our beliefs. So disagreement is good... as long as it is done respectfully.
2. The second guideline: **think carefully** about the question that has been asked, figure out what you think and why you think it, and when you are called on, explain your views clearly and succinctly. When you philosophize, what you think is important, but **why** you think it, even more so.
3. The third guideline: **listen!** It's harder to listen carefully to what others have to say than you might think, especially if you want to say something. But as a philosopher, you have to listen carefully to what everyone else says. *Otherwise, you can't have a useful conversation with them.*
4. The fourth guideline: figure out whether you **agree or disagree** with what has been said and **WHY**. In philosophy, it's **essential to make up** your mind about what people say and to support your beliefs with good, philosophical **reasons**.
5. The final guideline: **have fun**. If you follow all of the guidelines, you'll find yourself taking part in one of the most fun things possible – a rollicking philosophy discussion about an issue you really care about. So make sure you enjoy yourself even while you think really hard!

