



Boasting

Today we have some scenarios to share with you.

We'll be doing lots of thinking in question time, and we'll be hearing from other children, too.

Are you comfortable? Let's get started with some questions.



Have you ever been talking to someone who is boasting about something?

How did it make you feel?

Did you boast back?

Or did you do or say something else? If so, what?

To help us think about this, let's look at some scenarios. The first one is about a group of friends at school.

Yesterday Mahita's class had a really hard spelling test. Mahita is very good at spelling, but she doesn't know why. Even if she has only seen a word once, she doesn't forget how it's spelt. Mahita likes reading and knows lots of words from reading so many books. She remembers all sorts of other things too - facts about history and science.

Now the teacher is giving back the marked spelling tests. Mahita gets full marks, as usual.

At lunch time, Mahita is chatting to Intan and Noah. Intan says, 'That test must have been really hard. I did a lot worse than I usually do. I guess I need to spend more time on my homework. You're so lucky Mahita. You just have to look at a word and you remember it.'

Mahita responded, 'Yeah but look how long it's taking me to improve at basketball. You're way better than I am.'

Intan looked surprised and said, 'Don't you think the test was hard? Some of those words - I didn't even know what they meant!'

'Come on Intan,' said Mahita, 'You just need to read a bit more, that's all. Just swap an hour of TV for an hour of reading - then you'll be fine.'

Noah, who had been pretending not to listen, now joined in. 'Well, I don't think it was that hard, Intan. I got full marks! And that means I came top! No one can do better than that!'

No one responds to Noah, and then Intan turns and slips away, just as Ashley comes running up.

Mahita calls out to Ashley, 'Hey Ashley, how'd you go in the spelling test?'

'Good' replied Ashley, 'I studied so hard for that test - I got all the words right – first time ever!'

Mahita gives him a big smile and says, 'That's brilliant.'

And then the bell rings to go back inside.



Do you think anyone in this story was boasting?

Let's listen to what other children have said. We'll start with Intan. Remember Intan did worse than she normally did, and she said, 'That test must have been really hard.'



Do you think that is boasting, and if so, what makes it boasting?



Lior: No, that's not boasting, because she wasn't saying how good she was.

Edward: Well... she was sort of saying that. It was like she was saying, 'If I didn't do well, the test must have been really hard.'

Okay. Well, now let's think about Noah. Remember he said: 'I got full marks! And that means I came top! No one can do better than that!'



Do you think that is boasting? Why do you think that?



Harriet: Yeh, Noah is boasting because he says, "No one can do better than me." He wants everyone to know that he is the best. It would be okay if he just thought it, but it is boasting if you say it out loud.

Eva: And he doesn't care if it makes other people feel sad.



Okay,...so if Noah was boasting, is there anything wrong with that? Can you explain why you think that?



Zeke: Well, I think it would have made Intan feel sad – when he said '...the test wasn't that hard, Intan'.

Hmmm...It would make Intan feel sad...



What do you think? Was Noah boasting, and if he was, is there anything wrong with that?

How about Ashley? Remember Ashley said: 'I studied so hard for that test - I got all the words right - first time ever!'



Do you think that is boasting? What reasons do you have for your answer?



Charlotte: Yes, that's boasting because he tells everyone how well he did - he says it out loud.

Lior: That's not boasting, that's just being proud of yourself.

Eliza: Well, Noah was proud of himself too - he got full marks, and you said that was boasting.

Zeke: Yes, but Noah said he was better than everyone else - that's why that is boasting. But Ashley didn't say that - so I don't think that does count as boasting.

Allright. And now let's think about Mahita. Remember that Mahita told Intan that Intan was way better at basketball than her, and then when Intan said the test must have been really hard, she said: 'Come on Intan, you just need to read a bit more, that's all. Just swap an hour of TV for an hour of reading - then you'll be fine.'



*Was that boasting?
What do you think?*



Charlotte: I think she is boasting, because she says: 'Oh Intan, you should be more like me. I know lots of things, and I'm good at spelling, because I read a lot'.

Noah: No, she was just trying to help Intan by telling her what might help. That isn't boasting.

Eva: Well, we don't really know why Mahita said that to Intan. If she was just trying to help, then it wasn't boasting, but if she was trying make it sound like she was better, then it is boasting.

There are lots of different ideas there for us to think about what counts as boasting. Thank you to all those children who shared their thoughts.



How would you decide what counts as boasting?

To help us to think about this question more deeply, let's hear another scenario...

Shiloh's twin, Lumi, is really good at tennis - and everyone in the class knows it. That's because Shiloh tells them. Shiloh tells them how hard Lumi practices, and how many matches Lumi wins. Shiloh brings articles to school about Lumi and photos from the local newspaper and shows them to everyone.

Some of the kids in Shiloh's class play tennis too and Shiloh often stays behind after school and watches them practice. This afternoon they're focusing on their serves. It's hard - they have to throw the ball up, hit it over the net and land it in just the right place on the other side of the court. Max isn't very good at it but tries hard. After 20 minutes everyone is worn out, and they stop for a drink.

'Phew, that was hard!' Max says. 'I need lots more practice. I just can't seem to get the ball in the right place.'

'Me too,' says Rayne. 'I keep hitting it into the net. I think I'm getting better though. You are too, Max.'

'You should see Lumi serve,' says Shiloh. 'Lumi almost never hits the net. She hits the ball so hard and still almost always gets the ball in the right place! The coach says Lumi is better than all the other kids her age - and lots of the older kids too.'

Let's have a think about some questions now.



In the scenario, Rayne says, 'I think I'm getting better.'

Is that boasting? Why do you think that?

And Shiloh says, 'The coach says Lumi is better than all the other kids her age'.

How do you think this made Max and Rayne feel?

Is Shiloh boasting when she says this?

Does it count as boasting if you are talking about how good someone_else is?

Does it depend on what you want other people to think about you?

And if someone is boasting, what, if anything, is wrong with that?

We heard some really interesting ideas today! Thank you for joining us. You might like to keep thinking about what counts as boasting, and whether it is wrong to boast. Have a talk to your family and friends about what they think, too.

Photo credit: Photo by [Ben Mullins](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Thank you to our wonderful actors Charlotte, Edward, Eliza, Eva, Harriet, Lior, Noah and Zeke who helped us to hear different points of view. While sometimes these points of view might have reflected their own opinions, at other times they were asked to express an opposing view in order to help us think more deeply about the topic.