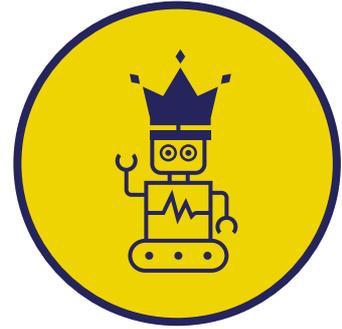


KING MURDAS #2

THE LARGEST KING IN THE WORLD



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This is the second of three sessions inspired by the fairy tales of Stanisław Lem, a world renowned Polish author, from his collection of short stories: *Fables for Robots* (1964). These sessions follow a robot-king called Murdas.

Keywords: infinity, finiteness, universe, border, Lucretius, Javelin argument

Stimuli: Continuation of the fairy tale from the first session (remind the children of previous events in the story).

The king's curiosity was unbearable and, although Murdas was terribly afraid, he asked the machine for a fortune-telling. It turned out to be terrible: full of conspiracy, blood and death. The king was so scared of being overthrown that he decided to kill all his relatives. The official period of mourning was short-lived and the restless Murdas continued to search for relatives who might have survived. He was still afraid of conspiracies. "I need to feel more confident," thought the king. "I will enlarge myself". The king's constructors worked hard on the project and soon Murdas filled the entire castle and then the entire kingdom. He was everywhere. He was so big that there was hardly any room left for his subjects. Only the most faithful servants stayed with him, dusting parts of their master from time to time.

Warm-up questions:

How big would the king would have to be, to become the largest thing in the world?
If he filled the entire universe, would he be the same as the universe itself?

Task question:

Is the universe infinite?

Questions to take you further:

How could we find out if the world is infinite?
If we had come to the end of the world, would we be able to see what is beyond its end?
Is it possible to divide something indefinitely?
Is it possible to minimize something infinitely?
How much would we have to make something smaller to make it disappear?