1979

Volume 1, No. 2

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Publisher:
The Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children, a non-profit division of Montclair State College, Upper Montclair, New Jersey, organized in 1974 to encourage and promote philosophical thinking among children.

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THINKING is published four times each year.

Institutional subscription (yearly) . . $18.00
Individual subscription (yearly) . . . $12.00
Student subscription (yearly) . . . . 8.00

Manuscripts and related correspondence should be addressed to the Editor, Thinking, IAPC, Montclair State College, Upper Montclair, N.J. 07043.

Postage paid at Montclair State College, Upper Montclair, New Jersey 07043.
Ozma of Oz, L. Frank Baum

Everybody knows that some children's stories are adventure stories: but not everybody realizes that sometimes the adventure is intellectual. A story of intellectual adventure is a thought experiment (Gedankenexperiment), or perhaps a series of thought experiments, that explores problematic ideas, such as the notions of life, nature, consciousness, mood and temperament.

Frank Baum's Ozma of Oz (mercifully still in print!) is a splendid tale of intellectual adventure. Here are some of its thought experiments.

First, there is the idea of a tree that bears lunch boxes and napkins as "fruit." (p. 27) Each of these boxes contains a ham sandwich, a piece of sponge cake, a pickle, a slice of new cheese and an apple; and each box is marked with the word 'lunch' on its side. Could a lunch box really be a product of nature? If not, why not? Could a mark that appeared naturally on a fruit and that was isomorphic with the English word 'lunch' mean lunch? If so, under what conditions?

Second, there is the idea of a peculiar race of beings called "wheelers" (p. 32ff) that resemble human beings, but have wheels at the ends of their four limbs and move about by rolling on those wheels. The wheel is, of course, one of the simplest of human inventions; but it is an invention — it does not copy nature. Could a wheel be a product of nature? Or is a wheel necessarily (in some appropriate sense of 'necessarily') an artifact?

Third, there is the idea of a mechanical man (called "Tiktok") who is said to think, to speak, to act and to do "everything but live." (p. 43) Tiktok's instructions say where to insert the key to wind up his 'think,' where to insert it to wind up his 'talk' and where to insert it to wind up his action. Might a mechanical (or an electronic!) man be capable of thought? Might one be capable of real speech? At one point Tiktok admits that he is only a machine that "can-not feel sor-row or joy, no mat-ter what hap-pens." (p. 67) Could a being incapable of emotion be nevertheless capable of thought?

Fourth, there is the idea of a princess with thirty alternative heads — each, in its own peculiar way, a model of beauty. (p. 79ff) Each morning this princess, instead of selecting a dress to wear for that day, selects a head. With each head, as the princess seems to know, there goes a characteristic mood and temperament. Could one choose one's mood or temperament for the day? What is the connection between, for example, having red hair and having a fiery disposition? Is it natural? Conventional? Or what? The thought experiments in Ozma of Oz are philosophically rich; so is some of the reasoning. Here, for example, is an intriguing argument from continuity:

"Once," said Dorothy, "I knew a man made out of tin, who was a woodman named Nick Chopper. But he was alive as we are, 'cause he was born a real man and got his tin body a little at a time — first a leg and then a finger and then an ear — for the reason that he had so many accidents with his axe, and cut himself up in a very careless manner." (p. 42)

One could base a whole philosophy course on Ozma of Oz. One can also read it simply for fun — including, of course, philosophical fun.
In March, 1976, the "Philosophy for Children" program was undertaken as an experiment with 127 students of the fifth, sixth and seventh grades of the Madre del Salvador school located in Santa Ana, El Salvador. The program was coordinated by Anna Marie Hartman, a Maryknoll Sister working in that part of Santa Ana. But before the children were exposed to any philosophy, the Salvadorean teachers went through a two-week teacher training workshop. Kenneth Aman, a professor of philosophy at Montclair State College in New Jersey, assisted in this workshop. The following descriptions of the teacher-training workshop and the actual classroom experience have been independently written by Dr. Aman and Sister Anna Marie.

**Philosophy for Children in a Spanish-Speaking Context**

By Kenneth Aman

Taking a program which had been worked out entirely in a North American setting had numerous pitfalls, some obvious, some not so obvious. Even the translators of Harry had to be especially careful. The material they were working with had two difficulties: it was philosophical and it was intended for children. Inevitably, mistakes were made in dealing with each of these subtleties. The danger which loomed largest, though, was that of cultural imperialism, of attempting to bring yet another benefit from North America.

Fortunately, most of the actual teaching of children was to be done by Salvadoreans. And the teacher-training was carried on only in Spanish, handled fluently by Anna Maria. My role was the relatively simple one of organizing in some detail (first by myself, then with her) the specific lessons and activities for each session.

We soon learned to structure the teacher training sessions as much as possible like actual classroom situations. There was nothing wrong about talking about the program, but the teachers themselves truly came to life when we began to do philosophy. So we developed a sequence something like this: exercises or activities, individual reading of Harry, key ideas (claves), philosophical explanations and background. Teachers were exposed to philosophy qua philosophy when they had already twice encountered it in introductory exercises (game-like or involving fantasy) and the reading of particular stories.

**Educational Setting**

El Salvador's system is fairly typical of Latin America. Its core consists of three cycles in the primary school, each having three grades.

After primary school in Santa Ana, one may go on to the Institute and receive his or her bachillerato. One can begin teaching primary school with only the bachillerato; needless to say, many of the teachers are very young.

In the classroom, emphasis is on memorization. Frequently, students have no books at all. The teacher reads or writes; the students memorize or repeat correct answers. Students are seated in rows of chairs which won't move. They are often packed into small rooms, up to sixty-five at a time.

The School Madre del Salvador was an ideal place to try philosophy for children.

The director and all the classroom teachers are now Salvadoreans. Teachers get about 220 colones a month (about $88) from the government. The students come from the area around Madre, a barrio on the east side of Santa Ana. Most of the people there are working class, not the poorest in Santa Ana, but not far from the poorest, either. The school has fine morale, partly as a result of its asking, even demanding, participation on the part of parents. There is now a considerable waiting list of children, whose parents can clearly see the advantages of Madre over the average public school.
Meeting with the teachers in January was much like getting together in the United States just before Labor Day. The school year breaks in late October, and commences again around February 1. (The reason: the need for children to contribute to the crucial coffee harvest.) Yet, even the teachers who were not themselves to teach philosophy to the children, voluntarily attended all the training sessions.

**Teachers' Responses**

I have already mentioned that our first session was a description of philosophy for children. We began by pointing out that philosophy is customarily associated with adults. But this is because it is regarded as a system of abstractions, or is linked with great historical figures known to write in a difficult if not impenetrable style. Philosophy need not be experienced in this manner. At its heart is the asking of “why” questions. Children are notorious for asking just this kind of question. They are also inclined to take great pleasure in the manipulation of concepts and logical forms when this manipulation is seen as play.

Attentive listening gave way to animation when we began to explore the games and exercises designed for the children. In the first class this amounted to playing with sentences, to determine whether they were in fact reversible. (For example: “All monkeys are animals” does not allow us to say, “All animals are monkeys”). In a discussion on the distinction between discovery and invention, they were quick to note the difference between discovery of a place or thing, and the discovery of an idea. Here perhaps their awareness that this was a workshop in philosophy came into play; they were prepared for some critical thinking.

In our second session we combined the technique of brainstorming with the topic of superstition. Here was a theme to which Salvadoreans could relate with great enthusiasm. They were vague about cracks in the sidewalks (which are relatively rare), but they could point to superstitions in almost everything else (including placing a broomstick behind the door to get rid of unwelcome guests). Yet as teachers, they were of two minds about the superstitions of students. They wished to be tolerant, but they also wanted to be scientific. A process in which students freely exhibited their superstitions and which allowed these even to be accepted as a possible value, produced a vague uneasiness in temperaments disposed to fight any evasion of objective reason.

We attempted to translate some “voting” techniques of Harry to activities familiar to the Salvadoreans: carrying water, washing clothes, picking coffee, setting off firecrackers, simply walking (by far the commonest mode of travel for the average Salvadorean). Besides giving the opportunity for some vehement expressions of opinion, this process also clearly established that Salvadoreans...
did not always agree. Picking coffee, drudgery for many, represented something quite pleasant for some.

Not every exercise went smoothly. Like their English-speaking counterparts, the teachers had difficulty standardizing sentences beginning with "only." What logicians wanted to do with these sentences was not intuitively clear to them. They began attacking the exercises in a mechanical manner, exactly what we are trying to avoid.

On the other hand, their reflections on thoughts and the process of thinking were at times provocative, at times amusing, and always interesting. Asked to complete such sentences as "My thoughts sometimes seem to me like...", the Salvadoreans responded with care and imagination. The personalities of the teachers were revealed in somewhat unexpected ways. One teacher who had appeared tough and perhaps a bit rigid offered that her thoughts were like carefully-cut crystal: precious, but brittle and easily shattered. Another, quiet to the point of timidity, suggested that her thoughts seemed like sorbetes — a local expression for ice cream cones.

In our last session, the atmosphere took on a thoughtful, listening air which appears all too frequently in philosophical discussions. The topic was the relationship between thinking and understanding. The teachers easily accepted the text's position that thinking was for understanding. But what is the nature of understanding? The teachers wanted to identify understanding with the comprehension of causes common to science. So they wished to say that we comprender (comprehend) only things: we are able to achieve only the other type of understanding, entender (acquaintance with). But can we not say that artists and authors perhaps come closer to comprehension of human nature than we? A knotty question for the Salvadoreans, one which provoked a lengthy discussion of current Latin American authors.

Having instructors present who would not be teaching formal courses in philosophy proved to have unexpected advantages. They sometimes became the most excited by the philosophical materials; as a result, they vowed to introduce some of these ideas into other courses, such as science. As for Ana and the other two teachers, they have in weekly meetings continued to work out their strategy for filosofía. And this philosopher returned to the United States, excited by new inner-cultural possibilities for his chosen field of study.
Although this trial-run of the program in a Latin American situation was not a professionally executed experiment, i.e., there were no strict control groups, no pre-arranged set period of time, no mutually agreed upon standards of evaluation, — nevertheless, the testing of some of the children prior to the course and again at its culmination, allows some conclusions to be drawn.

This present evaluation is made from the results of the tests as well as from personal observations made while working with the students and with the Salvadorean teacher who collaborated in the experiment.

I. The Educational Situation Under Which the Program was Administered.

Observations regarding the educational set-up where the Program was tried will be of help to understanding the effectiveness of the course, or the lack thereof.

Although labeled as "parochial", the primary-junior-high school in which the experiment was made, is in reality more a public institution than a private one. The teachers are appointed and paid by the government, and the curriculum and schedules are dictated by the Ministry of Education. Extra-curriculum subjects or activities must be fitted into free periods or given in out-of-school hours. This situation greatly curtailed the time allowed for teaching the Program, especially after the school day was changed in August to a single-session schedule, 7:30 to 11:45 a.m., during which the official subjects were to be taught. All other classes, such as English, religious education, handcrafts and, of course, the Philosophy for Children Program, had to be given in non-official time. Some of the children didn't return for the "extras" in the afternoon hours.

II. The Collaboration of School Personnel

Having obtained the permission of the principal to carry out the experiment with the Philosophy for Children Program in the school, a preliminary workshop for the teachers was held under the direction of Dr. Kenneth Aman of the Philosophy Department of Montclair State College. The interest and enthusiastic response from the group was most encouraging, and all expressed the great value they felt the Program could offer to the children's all-around growth.

Originally, the course was to be given to the fifth, and sixth grades with the respective teachers (women) teaching it, and myself working with them and supervising the classes. The seventh grade was added to the experimental group when the principal, eager to try her hand at the Program, offered to teach those students. The sudden appointment, however, of the fifth grade teacher to another school threw the proverbial monkey-wrench into the works. The shifts in personnel and the changes in schedules brought the well-laid plans to naught. The sixth grade teacher continued to give the course to her own class, and I took on both the fifth and the seventh grades. In a sense, this necessary arrangement would be an obstacle to any real evaluation since part of the experiment was to have the Program handled by national teachers under supervision.
An additional disadvantage insofar as personnel was concerned, was the limited time I could devote to the Program. As I was already carrying a full-time work schedule in the parish, the Philosophy for Children course, delightful and beneficial as I found it, had to be fitted into marginal time.

III. Materials Used.

The first six chapters of Harry Stottlemier's Discovery had been translated by faculty members and students of the Language Department of Montclair State College. These were mimeographed here and each student received a copy, chapter by chapter as they were studied. A rough translation of part of the teacher's manual was left with me by Dr. Aman, and we used it for several months until it had to be returned to the Institute as it was the only copy of the translation. From then on, we worked with the original English manual, I myself doing the necessary translation for the Salvadorean teacher.

IV. The Time Element Involved.

From March to August, one 45-minute period a week was devoted to the Philosophy for Children Program in each of the three grades involved. The change of the school horarium left sixth and seventh grades with an average of 40 minutes a week, but fifth grade had two 30-minute periods a week from August to October.

V. Conclusions:

Personally, I am inclined to judge the effectiveness of the Program more by the classroom experiences than by comparing the results of the tests given before and after the course to a number of the students, and this for several reasons. First of all, few, if any, of these youngsters had ever had the experience of taking standardized general ability tests, reading tests, etc., and that very possibly affected the results of testing. Also, the standardized tests available to us are American-formulated tests translated into Spanish by a private university in Guatemala. In many instances, the concepts and/or vocabulary are not common to this area and the students either guessed or left the items blank. Another negative factor regarding the testing was the absence of a professional psychologist to administer and interpret the tests. I had to rely on my own limited personal experience and the instructions given on the test manual.

In spite of these drawbacks, however, I am presenting the conclusions made from the comparison of the scores obtained before and after the Program. Even with the limitations cited, the following indicates an effectiveness beyond my expectations.

In the "Pinter Non-Verbal General Ability Test, Intermediate Form K," there was an average increase in the I.Q. rating of fourteen points (the improvement range was from one to twenty-seven points), which, if I'm not too mistaken in my calculations, is an increase of approximately two and a half years in mental ability. The average improvement in the "Otis Self-Applied Verbal Test, Intermediate Form A" was one of eight points, which I judge to be about a two-year increase in mental ability. Reading skills were also greater as results demonstrated by non-standardized comprehension-vocabulary tests. Imaginative-creative skills similarly showed improvement, as well as did situational judgment, but it would be difficult to calculate the percentage of improvement.

VI. Personal Impressions.

The enthusiasm, interest and real joy of the students, especially of the fifth and sixth graders, during the classes, were a constant stimulus and challenge to both myself and the Salvadorean teacher collaborating in the Program. The children looked forward to the class and would often suggest that additional time be found for more discussions. The youngsters were quick to spot unfamiliar vocabulary and situational differences in the text. What was not common to their cultural and social environment, (for example, the racial discrimination question in Chapter Three), afforded them the opportunity to study modes of behavior, cultural habits and language differences, that they had not been aware of up to that time.

Soon after beginning the course, analogous classroom situations were compared to those in the text. Judgments were questioned and discussed. Group and personal values, such as self-discipline and responsibility, began to be more operative in both school and home circumstances. An almost tangible sense of curiosity developed, and the students' questions became more penetrating and creative. A listening attitude grew in the classroom as the pupils learned to appreciate and evaluate the opinions of their classmates. The sheer joy that effused from them when they discovered they had arrived at a correct conclusion on their own before it was exposed in the text, was recompense enough for any amount of time and effort put into the preparation of the classes on our part. The whole course was a fun time, just as much for us who taught as for the students.

A Salvadorean mother and her oldest daughter.
The many possibilities of correlating the Philosophy for Children Program with other subjects are too numerous to be discussed in this evaluation. A teacher with even a moderate degree of creativity could very effectively liven up units of study in almost any subject, applying the logical and ethical principles the children discuss in the “Harry Stottlemeier” class. The reverse is also true. Material investigated in other classes can be used in discussions and exercises in the Philosophy class. To illustrate: in one of the first classes, we were discussing the meaning of the word “discovery” as compared with “invention.” I remarked that we were celebrating the 100th anniversary of the telephone that month. After a few comments of the students on the topic, I asked them if they considered the telephone as an invention or as a discovery. Most of them immediately claimed it was an invention. One boy, however, replied, “I think it is a product both of discovery and invention. Alexander Graham Bell or other scientists had to discover the properties of the materials he used to invent the telephone.”

Another rewarding experience of the Program was the evident change of behavior in some of the pupils. Problem students seemed to enjoy the challenge of the discussions, and one could almost see them grow in self-esteem when they were praised for some insight they proffered. The very material, ethical and logical, that is the basis of the exercises, caused obvious change and development in the groups.

Recommendations.

1. To assure a continuity in the Program, I would suggest that a presentation and explanation of it be given not only to the personnel of the school or schools to be involved, but primarily to the educational authorities of the district or province, etc. Such a procedure might forestall the appointment of teachers prepared to give the Program to schools not included. Hopefully, it would also cause the course to be given adequate time in the school horarium as well as periods in the day that would not usually be the ones cancelled because of teacher’s meetings, early dismissals, special programs, etc. It might also pave the way for arrangements that would regulate the number of pupils in any one class, or to permit the class to be divided into smaller groups. Obviously, the effectiveness of the Program is reduced when the classes have 42 to 45 children, as was the situation that is evaluated here.

2. Before the initiation of the Program, it would be most desirable to have all the materials on hand, ready to be placed in the hands of the teachers and students. It would not be necessary that there be corrections in either the teachers’ manual or the children’s text to fit the local language and environment, but time should be taken with those who are to give the Program to discover the variants and make the required adjustments before the course begins.

3. If there are going to be serious efforts to promote the Philosophy for Children Program in Latin America, I would strongly suggest that it be done in a well-organized manner. The text and the teachers’ manual should be a standardized translation, carefully screened to avoid purely
North American situations or concepts. Norms of approach; time limits for the experiment; available materials for adequate testing, preferably the same for all Latin America so that comparisons of the effectiveness of the Program could be made in the various countries; mutually agreed standards of evaluation; standardized formats for teachers workshops, would all seem to be necessary before any large scale diffusion of the Program is attempted.

4. Linked with 3, would be the recommendation that some sort of regular communication be established between the person responsible for teaching the Program in any given area, especially if it is at the experimental stage, and the curriculum developers. If the communication is minimal, or totally absent, it could be interpreted as a lack of interest or of on-going support for those who might be promoting the Program at a personal sacrifice of time and/or money, and thus discourage any further collaboration. Even if the Program were officially adopted into the curriculum of any given school system, correspondence would be a stimulus to exchange ideas, opinions and suggestions, or to relate some of the more original or creative classroom responses.

5. The person designated to coordinate and supervise the Program should be free enough from other obligations to be able to devote sufficient time to it. The propagation of the Program depends on its promotion by those who have experienced it and are prepared to publicize its benefits. Time is of great importance for this.

6. It would be a great advantage if the coordinator-supervisor were as well a philosopher, or at least if he or she had someone steeped in philosophy and knowledgeable in pedagogy as an adviser.

7. If possible, I would recommend that informative sessions be held with the parents of the students taking the Program, especially at the beginning of the course. In areas where a general education is not enjoyed by a very high percentage of the population, there is great fear of any innovation. Some foreknowledge, slight as it might be, of what the children are studying would prevent misunderstanding, criticism and fear on the part of the parents, and would make it easier for the students to communicate at home.

8. Lastly, I would urge that great care be used in the selection of the people sent to Latin America to promote the Philosophy for Children Program. They should be educators of sensitivity, well-versed in the culture to which they are sent. In this day when nationalism is strong in Latin America, the “know-it-all” North American is not welcomed with enthusiasm. The Program must be presented delicately, almost humbly, not with an air of superiority as though we had all the answers or were the saviours of the “under-developed” nations. Convinced as I am of the tremendous educational and moral value of this Program, I feel it would be rejected if it were presented as another United States super-product.

Sister Anna Maria Hartman, M.M.
Madre del Salvador Parish
Santa Ana, El Salvador
April 6, 1977

PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN-EVALUATION PROGRAM
Escuela Unificada “Santa Ana”
Santa Ana, El Salvador

* Tests “Otis” Autoaplicados, Intermedio: Forma A - Verbal
* Test “Pintner” de Habilidad General: Intermedio, Forma K - Serie No Verbal
* Test de Lectura ADG - Nivel Intermedio (Reading Test)
Satisfacción Pictórica - Maw and Maw (Picture Satisfaction)
Satisfacción de un Cuento - Maw and Maw (Story Satisfaction)
Inventario de la Situación del Alumno (Pupil Situational Inventory)
Test de Casualidad Social (Social Causality Test)
Similitudes y Usos Alternativos (Similarities and Alternate Use Tests)
Disparates (Absurdities)

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The rest of the tests were translations I made of the material supplied to me by Hope Haas of Rutgers University.
Plutarch on Education

Now the free-born of them, as it were (for perfection in everything is impossible), but philosophy he should honour above all. And it was a clever saying of Bion, the philosopher, that, just as the suitors, not being able to approach Penelope, consorted with her maid-servants, so also do those who are not able to attain to philosophy wear themselves to a shadow over the other kinds of education which have no value. Wherefore it is necessary to make philosophy as it were the head and front of all education.

—Plutarch, *The Education of Children*

How Important are Categories for Children?

I should like to see children learning to receive sharper and more delicate impressions. This they can do by learning sharper and more precise expressions for what they receive. We do our children a cruel disservice by clamoring at them for "self-expression." We encourage them to draw trees not as they see them but as they "feel" about them. God knows, no one wants children to draw with daguerreotype realism, to record with mere pointless accuracy. But why do we badger children into "feeling" about trees, when trees do not exist? Trees do not exist: a silver maple exists, and a quaking aspen exists, and a cypress exists. One lives many years, I think, before one has seen enough of the particular trees that exist to be able to Platonize and have feelings about ideal or abstract trees.

Numbers have their most vital attribute in common: none of them exists. But with things, the fundamental attribute, existence itself, is only to be found in individuals, in particular things. Categories are important utensils of the mind, but they are of the mind only; they summarize life, but they are not the stuff of life. When we are older, we may feel deeply about summaries, but when we are young we should feel deeply about the moments of living, the moments themselves.


Do Children Lack Logic — or Experience?

[Children] try fiercely to disguise the ignorance of affairs that is the peculiar physical affliction of all children. Here is an example from Reik's *Sex in Man and Woman* of the little cruelties to which they are constantly subjected:

I had some fun with a boy four years old, whom I told that a certain tree in his parent's garden bore pieces of chewing gum. I had bought some chewing gum and hand hung the sticks by strings on the lower bough of the tree. The boy climbed up and picked them. He did not doubt that they grew on the tree, nor did he consider that they were wrapped in paper. He willingly accepted my explanation that the sticks of gum, blossoming at different times, had various flavors. In the following year when I reminded him of the chewing-gum tree, he was very ashamed of his previous credulity and said, "Don't mention that."

Some children, in an attempt to fight this constant ridicule of their guillibility — when they see that their painful ignorance is considered "cute" — try to cash in on it, in much the same way that women do. Hoping to elicit that hug and kiss, they purposely take things out of context, but it seldom works the second time, perplexing them: What they don't understand is that the ignorance itself is considered "funny," not its specific manifestations. For most children don't understand the arbitrary adult order of things, inadequately explained even when there is a sound explanation. But, in almost every case given the amount of information the child begins with, his conclusions are perfectly logical.


Education through Dialogue

If education is dialogical, it is clear that the role of the teacher is important, whatever the situation. As s/he dialogues with the pupils, s/he must draw their attention to points that are unclear or naive, always looking at them problematically. Why? How? Is it so? What relation is there between the statement you have just made, and that of your companion? Is there any contradiction between them? Why? It can be said once more that such an approach needs time. That often there is "no time to lose," "there is a syllabus to be completed." Once again in the name of time which is not to be wasted, time is wasted. Young people are alienated by the kind of copybook thought that is almost entirely verbally narrated. Moreover, the content of what is narrated must be passively received and then memorized for repetition later. Dialogue does not depend on the content which is to be seen problematically. Everything can be presented problematically.

The role of the educator is not to "fill" the educatee with "knowledge", technical or otherwise. It is rather to attempt to move towards a new way of thinking in both educator and educatee, through the dialogical relationships between both. The flow is in both directions. The best student in physics or mathematics, at school or university, is not one who memorizes formulae but one who is aware of the reason for them. For students, the more simply and didocily they receive the contents with which their teachers "fill" them in the name of knowledge, the less they are able to think and the more they become merely repetitive.

Thinking and Meaning

Knowledge is a necessary ingredient of the thought process; it does not of itself generate thinking, however. Thinking is a distinctive form of behaving and, as such, it has to be learned. It may be learned outside the classroom — if it were not learned in a measure before the child enters school, no one could be taught to improve his thought. The whole purpose of having a classroom is to increase the opportunities for young people to participate in reflective activity. This activity is one in which the person deals with meaning, with ideas. Thinking is, as Boyd H. Bode put it, “the finding and testing of meanings.”

It is never an adjustment to things as they are; it is always an adjustment of things in terms of their promise to bring an idea to fruition. It involves the ability to formulate hypotheses (the finding of meanings), which is something the individual may be said to do naturally, though he may learn through a directed and widened experience to do more effectively. It involves, also, a method of checking out the promise of hypotheses (the testing of meanings). This is specifically a matter of learning; at the natural level the individual does not rise above the trial and error methods so clearly observed in animal experimentation. It is the method by which the individual learns, carrying him beyond the merely repetitive acts by which he may be trained, as animals are. It is, moreover, the essence of a liberal, or liberating, education, since, as John Dewey noted, “to be liberal is all one with being liberating, with effecting a release of human powers.”


On Writing Good

Writing cannot be taught from a textbook or by lecture. To do it well — to do it at all — the teacher must confront a small group of students several times a week. They cannot indulge in bighink because writing demands the actual production of a finite piece of work. In order to make that work intelligible the teacher must set it over it in painful detail alone in his study and then again in the inquisitive presence of each individual student. At this level writing is neither a “skill,” which is simply mindless jargon, nor a form of self-expression. It is the procedure whereby form is given to impulse, and by which consciousness becomes thought.

The various policies that curtail writing do not choose to be aware that it is the fundamental mode of learning. I don't mean by this that written examinations alone indicate intelligence, or that “style” in writing implies some grace of character. Writing is a series of conceptual decisions. Even within fiction it must describe, include, select, compare, define and ascribe, among many rational responsibilities. It moves from evidence, through reasoning, to conclusion. It can do these things in a thousand different ways, indirect as poetry, heavy as the law. But it does after all have to translate feeling and intuition into statement, and that procedure underlies everything in the life of the mind.

There is, of course, a second, and less methodological reason for writing: One never knows what he knows until it is written. This is to say, until the individual engages himself, fights the most primary of intellectual battles, until he argues with his creativity he cannot formulate that creativity. Far from “expressing” the self, what writing does is allow judgment of the self. That is why it is a critical procedure, and why it is so important as a form of free play, to say nothing of imposed educational work.


On Conversation as an Aid to Study

Of all the adjuncts of study, none is so familiar, so available, and, on the whole, so helpful, as Conversation. The authors of Guides to Students, as Isaas Watts, give elaborate rules for carrying on conversation, a good many of them being more moral than intellectual; but an art of conversation would be very difficult to formulate; it would take quite as long an essay as I have devoted to study, and even then would not follow half of the windings of the subject. The only notice of it that my plan requires, is such as I have already bestowed upon Observation: namely, to point out the advantage of combining a certain amount of reading with conversation; a thing that almost everybody does according to their opportunities. To rehearse what we have read to some willing and sympathizing listener, is the best way of impressing the memory and of clearing up difficulties to the understanding. It brings in the teacher's stimulus, which is so high among human motives. It is a wholesome change of attitude; relieving the fatigue of book-study, while adding to its fruitfulness. Even beginners in study are mutually helpful, by exchanging the results of their several book acquisitions; while it is possible to raise conversation to the rank of a high art, both for intellectual improvement and for mutual delection. I cannot say that the ideal is often realized; since two or more must combine to conversation, and it is not often that the mutual action and re-action is perfectly adjusted for the highest effect.

— Alexander Bain, Practical Essays (1877).

The Tasks of Infancy

I commence by challenging the adequacy of some principles by which the subjects for study are often classified in order. By this I mean that these principles can only be accepted as correct if they are so explained as to be explained away. Consider first the criterion of difficulty. It is not true that the easier subjects should precede the harder. On the contrary, some of the hardest must come first because nature so dictates, and because they are essential to life. The first intellectual task which confronts an infant is the acquisition of spoken language. What an appalling task, the correlation of meanings with sounds! It requires an analysis of ideas and an analysis of sounds. We all know that the infant does it, and that the miracle of his achievement is explicable. But so are all miracles, and yet to the wise they remain miracles. All I ask is that with this example staring us in the face we should cease talking nonsense about postponing the harder subjects.

What is the next subject in the education of the infant minds? The acquisition of written language; that is to say, the correlation of sounds with shapes. Great heavens! Have our educationists gone mad? They are setting babbling mites of six years old to tasks which might daunt a sage after lifelong toil. Again, the hardest task in mathematics is the study of the elements of algebra, and yet this stage must precede the comparative simplicity of the differential calculus.

I will not elaborate my point further; I merely restate it in the form, that the postponement of difficulty is no safe clue for the maze of educational practice.

You cannot read Homer before you can read; but many a child, and in ages past many a man, has sailed with Odysseus over the seas of Romance by the help of the spoken word of a mother, or of some wandering bard. The uncritical acceptance of the necessary antecedence of some subjects to others has, in the hands of dull people with a turn for organisation, produced in education the dryness of the Sahara.

The Ethics of Elfland

When the business man rebukes the idealism of his office-boy, it is commonly in some such speech as this: "Ah, yes, when one is young, one has these ideas in the abstract and these castles in the air; but in middle age they all break up like clouds, and one comes down to a belief in practical politics, to using the machinery one has and getting on with the world as it is." Thus, at least, venerable and philanthropic old men now in their honoured graves used to talk to me when I was a boy. But since then I have grown up and have discovered that these philanthropic old men were telling lies. What has really happened is exactly the opposite of what they said would happen. They said that I should lose my ideals and begin to believe in the methods of practical politicians. Now, I have not lost my ideals in the least; my faith in fundamentals is exactly what it always was. What I have lost is my old childlike faith in practical politics. I am still as much concerned as ever about the Battle of Armageddon; but I am not so much concerned about the General Election. As a babe I leapt up on my mother's knee at the mere mention of it. No; the vision is always solid and reliable. The vision is always a fact. It is the reality that is often a fraud. As much as I ever did, more than I ever did, I believe in Liberalism. But there was a rosy time of innocence when I believed in Liberals.

I take this instance of one of the enduring faiths because, having now to trace the roots of my personal speculation, this may be counted, I think as the only positive bias. I was brought up a Liberal, and have always believed in democracy, in the elementary liberal doctrine of a self-governing humanity. If any one finds the phrase vague or threadbare, I can only pause for a moment to explain that the principle of democracy, as I mean it, can be stated in two propositions. The first is this: that all things common to all men are more important than the things peculiar to any man. Ordinary things are more valuable than extraordinary things; nay, they are more extraordinary. Man is something more awful than men; something more strange. The sense of the miracle of humanity itself should be always more vivid to us than any marvels of power, intellect, art or civilization. The mere man on two legs, as such, should be felt as something more heartbreaking than any music and more startling than any caricature. Death is more tragic even than death by starvation. Having a nose is more comic even than having a Norman nose.

This is the first principle of democracy: that the essential things in men are the things they hold in common, not the things they hold separately. And the second principle is merely this: that the political instinct or desire is one of these things which they hold in common. Falling in love is more poetical than dropping into poetry. The democratic contention is that government (helping to rule the tribe) is a thing like falling in love, and not a thing like dropping into poetry. It is not something analogous to playing the church organ, painting on vellum, discovering the North Pole (that insidious habit), looping the loop, being Astronomer Royal, and so on. For these things we do not wish a man to do at all unless he does them well. It is, on the contrary, a thing analogous to writing one's own love-letters or blowing one's own nose. These things we want a man to do for himself, even if he does them badly. I am not here to argue the truth of any of these conceptions; I know that some moderns are asking to have their wives chosen by scientists, and they may soon be asking, for all I know, to have their noses blown by nurses. I merely say that mankind
does recognize these universal human functions, and that democracy classes government among them. In short, the democratic faith is this: that the most terribly important things must be left to ordinary men themselves — the mating of the sexes, the rearing of the young, the laws of the state. This is democracy; and in this I have always believed.

But there is one thing that I have never from my youth been able to understand. I have never been able to understand where people got the idea that democracy was in some way opposed to tradition. It is obvious that tradition is only democracy extended through time. It is trusting to a consensus of common human voices rather than to some isolated or arbitrary record. The man who quotes some German historian against the tradition of the Catholic Church, for instance, is strictly appealing to aristocracy. He is appealing to the superiority of one expert against the awful authority of a mob. It is quite easy to see why a legend is treated, and ought to be treated, more respectfully than a book of history. The legend is generally made by the majority of people in the village, who are sane. The book is generally written by the one man in the village who is mad. Those who urge against tradition that men in the past were ignorant may go and urge it at the Carlton Club, along with the statement that voters in the slums are ignorant. It will not do for us. If we attach great importance to the opinion of ordinary men in great unanimity when we are dealing with daily matters, there is no reason why we should disregard it when we are dealing with history or fable. Tradition may be defined as an extension of the franchise. Tradition means giving votes to the most obscure of, all classes, our ancestors. It is the democracy of the dead. Tradition refuses to submit to the small and arrogant oligarchy of those who merely happen to be walking about. All democrats object to men being disqualified by the accident of birth; tradition objects to their being disqualified by the accident of death. Democracy tells us not to neglect a good man's opinion, even if he is our groom; tradition asks us not to neglect a good man's opinion, even if he is our father. I, at any rate, cannot separate the two ideas of democracy and tradition; it seems evident to me that they are the same idea. We will have the dead at our councils. The ancient Greeks voted by stones; these shall vote by tombstones. It is all quite regular and official, for most tombstones, like most ballot papers, are marked with a cross.

I have first to say, therefore, that if I have had a bias, it was always a bias in favour of democracy, and therefore of tradition. Before we come to any theoretic or logical beginnings I am content to allow for that personal equation; I have always been more inclined to believe the ruck of hard-working people than to believe that special and troublesome literary class to which I belong. I prefer even the fancies and prejudices of the people who see life from the inside to the clearest demonstrations of the people who see life from the outside. I would always trust the old wives' fables against the old maids' facts. As long as wit is mother wit it can be as wild as it pleases.

Now, I have to put together a general position, and I pretend to no training in such things. I propose to do it, therefore, by writing down one after another the three or four fundamental ideas which I have found for myself, pretty much in the way that I found them. Then I shall roughly synthesis them, summing up my personal philosophy or natural religion; then I shall describe my startling discovery that the whole thing has been discovered before. It had been discovered by Christianity. But of these profound persuasions which I have to recount in order, the earliest was concerned with this element of popular tradition. And without the foregoing explanation touching tradition and democracy I could hardly make my mental experience clear. As it is, I do not know whether I can make it clear, but I now propose to try.

My first and last philosophy, that which I believe with unbroken certainty, I learnt in the nursery. I generally learnt it from a nurse; that is, from the solemn and star-appointed priestess at once of democracy and tradition. The things I believe most then, the things I believe most now, are the things called fairy tales. They seem to me to be the entirely reasonable things. They are not fantasies: compared with them other things are fantastic. Compared with them religion and rationalism are both abnormal, though religion is abnormally right and rationalism abnormally wrong.

Fairyland is nothing but the sunny country of common sense. It is not earth that judges heaven, but heaven that judges earth; so for me at least it was not earth that criticised elfland, but elfland that criticised the earth. I knew the magic beanstalk before I had tasted beans; I was sure of the Man in the Moon before I was certain of the moon. This was at one with all popular tradition. Modern minor poets are naturalists, and talk about the bush or the brook; but the singers of the old epics and fables were supernaturals, and talked about the gods of brook and bush. That is what the moderns mean when they say that the ancients did not "appreciate Nature," because they said that Nature was divine. Old nurses do not tell children about the grass, but about the fairies that dance on the grass; and the old Greeks could not see the trees for the dryads.

But I deal here with what ethic and philosophy come from being fed on fairy tales. If I were describing them in detail I could note many noble and healthy principles that arise from them. There is the chivalrous lesson of "Jack the Giant Killer"; that giants should be killed because they are gigantic. It is a manly

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mutiny against pride as such. For the rebel is older than all the kingdoms, and the Jacobite has more tradition than the Jacobite. There is the lesson of "Cinderella," which is the same as that of the Magnificat — exaltavit humiles. There is the great lesson of "Beauty and the Beast"; that a thing must be loved before it is loveable. There is the terrible allegory of the "Sleeping Beauty," which tells how the human creature was blessed with all birthday gifts, yet cursed with death; and how death also may perhaps be softened to a sleep. I am not concerned with any of the separate statutes of elfland, but with the whole spirit of its law, which I learnt before I could speak, and shall retain when I cannot write. I am concerned with a certain way of looking at life, which was created in me by the fairy tales, but has since been meekly ratified by the mere facts.

It might be stated this way. There are certain sequences or developments (cases of one thing following another), which are, in the true sense of the word, reasonable. They are, in the true sense of the word, necessary. Such are mathematical and merely logical sequences. In fairyland (who are the most reasonable of all creatures) admit that reason and that necessity. For instance, if the Ugly Sisters are older than Cinderella, it is (in an iron and awful sense) necessary that Cinderella is younger than the Ugly Sisters. There is no getting out of it. Haeckel may talk as much fatalism about that fact as he pleases: it really must be. If Jack is the son of a miller, a miller is the father of Jack. Cold reason decrees it from her awful throne: and we in fairyland submit. If the three brothers all ride horses, there are six animals and eighteen legs involved: that is true rationalism, and fairyland is full of it. But as I put my head over the hedge of the elves and began to take notice of the natural world, I observed an extraordinary thing. I observed that learned men in spectacles were talking of the actual things that happened — dawn and death an so on — as if they were rational and inevitable. They talked as if the fact that trees bear fruit were just as necessary as the fact that two and one trees make three. But it is not. There is an enormous difference by the test of fairyland; which is the test of the Imagination. You cannot imagine two and one not making three. But you can easily imagine trees not growing fruit; you can imagine them growing golden candles-sticks or tigers hanging on by the tail. These men in spectacles spoke much of a man named Newton, who was hit by an apple, and who discovered a law. But they could not be got to see the distinction between a true law, a law of reason, and the mere fact of apples falling. If the apple hit Newton's nose, Newton's nose hit the apple. That is a true necessity: because we cannot conceive the one occurring without the other. But we can quite well conceive the apple not falling on his nose; we can fancy it flying ardentally through the air to hit some other nose, of which it had a more definite dislike. We have always in our fairy tales kept this sharp distinction between the science of mental relations, in which there really are laws, and the science of physical facts, in which there are no laws, but only weird repetitions. We believe in bodily miracles, but not in mental impossibilities. We believe that a Bean-stalk climbed up to Heaven; but that does not at all confuse our convictions on the philosophical question of how many beans make five.

Here is the peculiar perfection of tone and truth in the nursery tales. The man of science says, "Cut the stalk, and the apple will fall"; but he says it calmly, as if the one idea really led up to the other. The witch in the fairy tale says, "Blow the horn, and the ogre's castle will fall"; but she does not say it as if it were something in which the effect obviously arose out of the cause. Doubtless she has given the advice to many champions, and has seen many castles fall, but she does not lose either her wonder or her reason. She does not muddle her head until it imagines a necessary mental connection between a horn and a falling tower. But the scientific men do muddle their heads, until they imagine a necessary mental connection between an apple leaving the tree and an apple reaching the ground. They do really talk as if they had found not only a set of marvellous facts, but a truth connecting those facts. They do talk as if the connection of two strange things physically connected them philosophically. They feel that because one incomprehensible thing constantly follows another incomprehensible thing the two together somehow make up a comprehensible thing. Two black riddles make a white answer.

In fairyland we avoid the word "law"; but in the land of science they are singularly fond of it. Thus they will call some interesting conjecture about how forgotten folks pronounced the alphabet,
Grimm's Law. But Grimm's Law is far less intellectual than Grimm's Fairy Tales. The tales are, at any rate, certainly tales; while the law is not a law. A law implies that we know the nature of the generalisation and enactment; not merely that we have noticed some of the effects. If there is a law that pick-pockets shall go to prison, it implies that there is an imaginable mental connection between the idea of prison and the idea of picking pockets. And we know what the idea is. We can say why we take liberty from a man who takes liberties. But we cannot say why an egg can turn into a chicken any more than we can say why a bear could turn into a fairy prince. As ideas, the egg and the chicken are further off from each other than the bear and the prince; for no egg in itself suggests a chicken, whereas some princes do suggest bears. Granted, then, that certain transformations do happen, it is essential that we should regard them in the philosophic manner of fairy tales, not in the unphilosophic manner of science and the "Laws of Nature." When we are asked why eggs turn to birds or fruits fall in autumn, we must answer exactly as the fairy godmother would answer if Cinderella asked her why mice turned to horses or her clothes fell from her at twelve o'clock. We must answer that it is magic. It is not a "law," for we do not understand its general formula. It is not a necessity, for though we can count on it happening practically, we have no right to say that it must always happen. It is no argument for an unalterable law (as Huxley fancied) that we count on the ordinary course of things. We do not count on it; we bet on it. We risk the remote possibility of a miracle as we do that of a poisoned pancake or a world-destroying comet. We leave it out of account, not because it is a miracle, and therefore an impossibility, but because it is a miracle, and therefore an exception. All the terms used in the science books, "law," "necessity," "order," "tendency," and so on, are really unintellectual, because they assume an inner synthesis, which we do not possess. The only words that ever satisfy me as describing Nature are the terms used in the fairy books, "charm," "spell," "enchantment." They express the arbitrariness of the fact and its mystery. A tree grows fruit because it is a magic tree. Water runs downhill because it is bewitched. The sun shines because it is bewitched.

I deny altogether that this is fantastic or even mystical. We may have some mysticism later on; but this fairy-tale language about things is simply rational and agnostic. It is the only way I can express in words my clear and definite perception that one thing is quite distinct from another; that there is no logical connection between flying and laying eggs. It is the man who talks about "a law" that he has never seen who is the mystic. Nay, the ordinary scientific man is strictly a sentimentalist. He is a sentimentalist in this essential sense, that he is soaked and swept away by mere associations. He has so often seen birds fly and lay eggs that he feels as if there must be some dreamy, tender connection between the two ideas, whereas there is none. A forlorn lover might be unable to disassociate the moon from lost love; so the materialist is unable to disassociate the moon from the tide. In both cases there is no connection, except that one has seen them together. A sentimentalist might shed tears at the smell of apple-blossom, because, by a dark association of his own, it reminded him of his boyhood. So the materialist professor (though he conceals his tears) is yet a sentimentalist, because, by a dark association of his own, apple-blossoms remind him of apples. But the cool rationalist from fairyland does not see why, in the abstract, the apple tree should not grow crimson tulips; it sometimes does in his country.

This elementary wonder, however, is not a mere fancy derived from the fairy tales; on the contrary, all the fire of the fairy tales is derived from this. Just as we all like love tales because there is an instinct of sex, we all like astonishing tales because they touch the nerve of the ancient instinct of astonishment. This is proved by the fact that when we are very young children we do not need fairy tales: we only need tales. Mere life is interesting enough. A child of seven is excited by being told that Tommy opened a door and saw a dragon. But a child of three is excited by being told that Tommy opened a door. Boys like romantic tales; but babies like realistic tales — because they find them romantic. In fact, a baby is about the only person, I should think, to whom a modern realistic novel could be read without boring him. This proves that even nursery tales only echo an almost pre-natal leap of interest and amazement. These tales say that apples were golden only to refresh the forgotten moment when we found that they were green. They make rivers run with wine only to make us remember, for one wild moment, that they run with water. I have said that this is wholly reasonable and even agnostic. And, indeed, on this point I am all for the higher agnosticism; its better name is Ignorance. We have all read in scientific books, and, indeed, in all romances, the story of the man who has forgotten his name. This man walks about the streets and can see and appreciate everything; only he cannot remember who he is. Well, every man is that man in the story. Every man who has forgotten who he is. One may understand the cosmos, but never the ego; the self is more distant than any star. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God; but thou shalt not know thyself. We are all under the same mental calamity; we have all forgotten our names. We have all forgotten what we really are. All that we call common sense and rationality and practicality and positivism only means that for certain dead levels of our life we forget that we have forgotten. All that we call spirit and art and ecstasy only

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not be described. And the strongest emotion was that life was as precious as it was puzzling. It was an ecstasy because it was an adventure; it was an adventure because it was an opportunity. The goodness of the fairy tale was not affected by the fact that there might be more dragons than princesses; it was good to be in a fairy tale. The test of all happiness is gratitude; and I felt grateful, though I hardly knew to whom. Children are grateful when Santa Claus puts in their stockings gifts of toys or sweets. Could I not be grateful to Santa Claus when he put in my stockings the gift of two miraculous legs? We thank people for birthday presents of cigars and slippers. Can I thank no one for the birthday present of birth?

There were, then, two first feelings, indefensible and indisputable. The world was a shock, but it was not merely shocking; existence was a surprise, but it was a pleasant surprise. In fact, all my first views were exactly uttered in a riddle that stuck in my brain from boyhood. The question was, "What did the first frog say?" And the answer was, "Lord, how you made me jump!" That says succinctly all that I am saying. God made the frog jump; but the frog prefers jumping. But when these things are settled there enters the second great principle of the fairy philosophy.

Any one can see it who will simply read "Grimm's Fairy Tales" or the fine collections of Mr. Andrew Lang. For the pleasure of pedantry I will call it the Doctrine of Conditional Joy. Touchstone talked of much virtue in an "If;" according to elfin ethics all virtue is in an "if." The note of the fairy utterance always is, "You may live in a palace of gold and sapphire, if you do not say the word 'cow';" or "You may live happily with the King's daughter, if you do not show her an onion." The vision always hangs upon a veto. All the dizzy and colossal things conceded depend upon one small thing withheld. All the wild and whirling things that are let loose depend upon one thing that is forbidden. Mr. W.B. Yeats, in his exquisite and piercing elfin poetry, describes the elves as lawless; they plunge in innocent anarchy on the unbridled horses of the air—

"Ride on the crest of the dishevelled tide,
And dance upon the mountains like a flame."

It is a dreadful thing to say that Mr. W.B. Yeats does not understand fairyland. But I do say it. He is an irascible Irishman, full of intellectual reactions. He is not stupid enough to understand fairyland. Fairies prefer people of the yokel type like myself; people who gape and grin and do as they are told. Mr. Yeats reads into elfland all the righteous insurrection of his own race. But the lawlessness of Ireland is a Christian lawlessness, founded on reason and justice. The Fenian is rebelling against something he understands only too well; but the true citizen of fairyland is obeying something that he does not understand at all. In the fairy tale an incomprehensible happiness rests upon an incomprehensible condition. A box is opened, and all evils fly out. A word is forgotten, and cities perish. A lamp is lit, and love flies away. A flower is plucked, and human lives are forfeited. An apple is eaten, and the hope of God is gone.

This is the tone of fairy tales, and it is certainly not lawlessness or even liberty, though men under a mean modern tyranny may think it liberty by comparison. People out of Portland Goal might think Fleet Street free; but closer study will prove that both fairies and journalists are the slaves of duty. Fairy godmothers seem at least as strict as other godmothers. Cinderella received a coach out of Wonderland and a coachman out of nowhere, but she received a command — which might have come out of Brixton — that she should be back by twelve. Also, she had a glass slipper; and it cannot be a coincidence that glass is so common a substance in folk-lore. This princess lives in a glass castle, that princess on a glass hill; this one sees all things in a mirror; they may all live in glass houses if they will not throw stones. For this thin glitter of glass everywhere is the expression of the fact that the happiness is bright but brittle, like the substance most easily smashed by a housemaid or a cat. And this fairy-tale sentiment also sank into me and became my sentiment towards the whole world. I felt and feel that life itself is as bright as the diamond, but as brittle as the window-pane; and when the heavens were compared to the terrible crystal I can remember a shudder. I was afraid that God would drop the cosmos with a crash.

Remember, however, that to be breakable is not the same as to be perishable. Strike a glass, and it will not endure an instant; simply do not strike it, and it will endure a thousand years. Such, it seemed, was the joy of man, either in elfland or on earth; the happiness depended on not doing something which you could at any moment do and which, very often, it was not obvious why you should not do. Now, the point here is that to me this did not seem unjust. If the miller's third son said to the fairy, "Explain why I must not stand on my head in the fairy palace," the other might fairly reply, "Well, if it comes to that, explain the fairy palace." If Cinderella says, "How is it that I must leave the ball at twelve?" her godmother might answer, "How is it that you are going there till twelve?" If I leave a man in my will ten talking elephants and a hundred winged horses, he cannot complain if the conditions partake of the slight eccentricity of the gift. He must not look a winged horse in the mouth. And it seemed to me that existence was itself so very eccentric a legacy that I could not complain of not understanding the limita-
tions of the vision when I did not understand the vision they limited. The frame was no stranger than the picture. The veto might well be as wild as the vision; it might be as startling as the sun, as elusive as the waters, as fantastic and terrible as the towering trees.

For this reason (we may call it the fairy godmother philosophy) I never could join the young men of my time in feeling what they called the general sentiment of revolt. I should have resisted, let us hope, any rules that were evil, and with these and their definition I shall deal in another chapter. But I did not feel disposed to resist any rule merely because it was mysterious. Estates are sometimes held by foolish forms, the breaking of a stick or the payment of a peppercorn: I was willing to hold the huge estate of earth and heaven by any such feudal fantasy. It could not well be wilder than the fact that I was allowed to hold it at all. At this stage I give only one ethical instance to show my meaning. I could never mix in the common murmur of that rising generation against monogamy, because no restriction on sex seemed so odd and unexpected as sex itself. To be allowed, like Endymion, to make love to the moon and then to complain that Jupiter kept his own moons in a harem seemed to me (bred on fairy tales like Endymion’s) a vulgar anti-climax. Keeping to one woman is a small price for so much as seeing one woman. To complain that I could only be married once was like complaining that I had only been born once. It was incommensurate with the terrible excitement of which one was talking. It showed, not an exaggerated sensibility to sex, but a curious insensitivity to it. A man is a fool who complains that he cannot enter Eden by five gates at once. Polygamy is a lack of the realization of sex; it is like a man plucking five pears in mere absence of mind. The aesthetes touched the last insane limits of language in their eulogy on lovely things. The thistledown made them weep; a burnished beetle brought them to their knees. Yet their emotion never impressed me for an instant, for this reason, that it never occurred to them to pay for their pleasure in any sort of symbolic sacrifice. Men (I felt) might fast forty days for the sake of hearing a blackbird sing. Men might go through fire to find a cowslip. Yet these lovers of beauty could not even keep sober for the blackbird. They would not go through common Christian marriage by way of recompense to the cowslip. Surely one might pay for extraordinary joy in ordin-

ary morals, Oscar Wilde said that sunsets were not valued because we could not pay for sunsets. But Oscar Wilde was wrong: we can pay for sunsets. We can pay for them by not being Oscar Wilde.

Well, I left the fairy tales lying on the floor of the nursery, and I have not found any books so sensible since. I left the nurse guardian of tradition and democracy, and I have not found any modern type so sanely radical or so sanely conservative. But the matter for important comment was here: that when I first went out into the mental atmosphere of the modern world, I found that the modern world was positively opposed on two points to my nurse and to the nursery tales. It has taken me a long time to find out that the modern world is wrong and my nurse was right. The really curious thing was this: that modern thought contradicted this basic creed of my boyhood on its two most essential doctrines. I have explained that the fairy tales founded me in two convictions; first, that this world is a wild and startling place, which might have been quite different, but which is quite delightful; second that before this wildness and delight one may well be modest and submit to the queerest limitations of so queer a kindness. But I found the whole modern world running like a high tide against both my tendernesses; and the shock of that collision created two sudden and spontaneous sentiments, which I have had ever since and which, crude as they were, have since hardened into convictions.

First, I found the whole modern world talking scientific fatalism; saying that everything is as it must always have been, being unfolded without fault from the beginning. The leaf on the tree is green because it could never have been anything else. Now, the fairy-tale philosopher is glad that the leaf is green precisely because it might have been scarlet. He feels as if it had turned green an instant before he looked at it. He is pleased that snow is white on the strictly reasonable ground that it might have been black. Every colour has in it a bold quality as of choice; the red of garden roses is not only decisive but dramatic, like suddenly spilt blood. He feels that something has been done. But the great determinists of the nineteenth century were strongly against this native feeling that something had happened an instant before. In fact, according to them, nothing ever really had happened since the beginning of the world. Nothing ever had happened since existence had happened; and even about the date of that they were not very sure.

The modern world as I found it was solid for modern Calvinism, for the necessity of things being as they are. But when I came to ask them I found they had really no proof of this unavoidable repetition in things except the fact that the things were repeated. Now, the mere repetition made the things to me rather more weird than more rational. It was as if, having seen a curiously shaped nose in the street and dismissed it as an accident, I had then seen six other noses of the same astonishing shape. I should have fancied for a moment that it might be some local secret society. So one elephant having a trunk was odd; but all elephants having trunks looked like a plot. I speak here only of an emotion, and of an emotion at once stubborn and subtle. But the repetition in Nature seemed sometimes to be an excited repetition, like that of an angry schoolmaster saying the same thing over and over again. The grass seemed signalling to me with all its fingers at once; the crowded stars seemed bent upon being understood. The sun would make me see him if he rose a thousand times. The recurrences of the universe rose to the maddening rhythm of an incantation, and I began to see an idea.

All the towering materialism which dominates the modern mind rests ultimately upon one assumption; a false assumption. It is supposed that if a thing goes on repeating itself it is probably dead; a piece of clockwork. People feel that if the universe was personal it would vary; if the sun were alive it would dance. This is a fallacy even in relation to known fact. For the variation in human affairs is generally brought into them, not by life, but by death; by the dying down or breaking off of their strength or desire. A man varies his movements because of some slight element of failure or fatigue. He gets into an omnibus because he is tired of walking; or he walks because he is tired of sitting still. But if his life and joy were so gigantic that he never tired of going to Islington, he might go to Islington as regularly as the Thames goes to Sheerness. The very speed and ecstasy of his life would have the stillness of death. The sun rises every morning. I do not rise every morning; but the variation is due not to my activity, but to my inaction. Now, to put the matter in a popular phrase, it might be true that the sun rises regularly because he never gets tired of rising. His routine might be due, not to a lifelessness, but to a rush of life. The
thing I mean can be seen, for instance, in children, when they find some game or joke that they specially enjoy. A child kicks his legs rhythmically through excess, not absence, of life. Because children have abounding vitality, because they are in spirit fierce and free, therefore they want things repeated and again until he is nearly dead. For unchanged. They always say, "Do it again"; and the grown-up person does it again until he is nearly dead. For grown-up people are not strong enough to exult in monotony. But perhaps God is strong enough to exult in monotony. It is possible that God says every morning, "Do it again" to the sun; and every evening, "Do it again" to the moon. It may not be automatic necessity that makes all daisies alike; it may be that God makes every daisy separately, but has never got tired of making them. It may be that He has the eternal appetite of infancy; for we have sinned and grown old, and our Father is younger than we. The repetition in Nature may not be a mere recurrence; it may be a theatrical encore. Heaven may encore the bird who laid an egg. If the human being conceives and brings forth a human child instead of bringing forth a fish, or a bat, or a griffin, the reason may not be that we are fixed in an animal fate without life or purpose. It may be that our little tragedy has touched the gods, that they admire it from their starry galleries, and that at the end of every human drama man is called again and again before the curtain. Repetition may go on for millions of years, but mere choice, and at any instant it may stop. Man may stand on the earth generation after generation, and yet each birth be his positively last appearance.

This was my first conviction; made by the shock of my childish emotions meeting the modern creed in mid-career. I had always vaguely felt facts to be miracles in the sense that they are wonderful: now I began to think them miracles in the stricter sense that they were willful. I mean that they were, or might be, repeated exercises of some will. In short, I had always believed that the world involved magic; now I thought that perhaps it involved a magician. And this pointed a profound emotion always present and sub-conscious; that this world of ours has some purpose; and if there is a purpose, there is a person. I had always felt life first as a story; and if there is a story there is a story-teller.

But modern thought also hit my second human tradition. It went against the fairy feeling about strict limits and conditions. The one thing it loved to talk about was expansion and largeness. Herbert Spencer would have been greatly annoyed if any one had called him an imperialist, and therefore it is highly regrettable that nobody did. But he was an imperialist of the lowest type. He popularized this contemptible notion that the size of the solar system ought to overawe the spiritual dogma of man. Why should a man surrender his dignity to the solar system any more than a whale? If mere size proves that man is not the image of God, then a whale may be the image of God; a somewhat formless image; what one might call an impressionist portrait. It is quite futile to argue that man is small compared to the cosmos; for man was always small compared to the nearest tree. But Herbert Spencer, in his headlong imperialism, would insist that we had in some way been conquered and annexed by the astronomical universe. He spoke about men and their ideals exactly as the most insolent Unionist talks about the Irish and their ideals. He turned mankind into a small nationality. And his evil influence can be seen even in the most spirited and honourable of later scientific authors; notably in the early romances of Mr. H.G. Wells. Many materialists have in an exaggerated way represented the earth as wicked. But Mr. Wells and his school made the heavens wicked. We should lift up our eyes to the stars from whence would come our ruin.

But the expansion of which I speak was much more evil than all this. I have remarked that the materialist, like the madman, is in prison; in the prison of one thought. These people seemed to think it singularly inspiring to keep on saying that the prison was very large. The size of this scientific universe gave one no novelty, no relief. The cosmos went on for ever, but not in its wildest constellation could there be anything really interesting; anything, for instance, such as forgiveness or free will. The grandeur or infinity of the secret of its cosmos added nothing to it. It was like telling a prisoner in Reading gaol that he would be glad to hear that the gaol now covered half the country. The warder would have nothing to show the man except more and more long corridors of stone lit by ghastly lights and empty of all that is human. So these expanders of the universe had nothing to show us except more and more infinite corridors of space lit by ghastly suns and empty of all that is divine.

In fairyland there had been a real law; a law that could be broken, for the definition of a law is something that can be broken. But the machinery of this cosmic prison was something that could not be broken; for we ourselves were only a part of its machinery. We were either unable to do things or we were destined to do them. The idea of the mystical condition quite disappeared; one can neither have the firmness of keeping laws nor the fun of breaking them. The largeness of this universe had nothing of that freshness and airy outbreak which we have praised in the universe of the poet. This modern universe is literally an empire; that is, it was vast, but it is not free. One went into larger and larger window-less rooms, rooms big with Babylonian perspective; but one never found the smallest window or a whisper of outer air.

"The only words that ever satisfy me as describing Nature are the terms used in the fairy books, "charm," "spell," "enchantment." They express the arbitrariness of the fact and its mystery."
“Thus I have said that stories of magic alone can express my sense that life is not only a pleasure but a kind of eccentric privilege.”

Their infernal parallels seemed to expand with distance; but for me all good things come to a point, swords for instance. So finding the boast of the big cosmos so unsatisfactory to my emotions I began to argue about it a little; and I soon found that the whole attitude was even shallower than could have been expected. According to these people the cosmos was one thing since it had one unbroken rule. Only (they would say) while it is one thing it is also the only thing there is. Why, then, should one worry particularly to feel that the sun is no provision of halfpence; but I felt about the golden sun and the silver moon as a schoolboy feels if he has one sovereign and one shilling.

These subconscious convictions are best hit off by the colour and tone of certain tales. Thus I have said that stories of magic alone can express my sense that life is not only a pleasure but a kind of eccentric privilege. I may express this other feeling of cosmic cosiness by allusion to another book always read in boyhood, “Robinson Crusoe,” which I read about this time, and which owes its eternal vivacity to the fact that it celebrates the poetry of limits, nay, even the wild romance of prudence. Crusoe is a man on a small rock with a few comforts just snatched from the sea: the best thing in the book is simply the list of things saved from the wreck. The greatest of poems is an inventory. Every kitchen tool becomes ideal because Crusoe might have dropped it in the sea. It is a good exercise, in empty or ugly hours of the day, to look at anything, the coal-scuttle or the book-case, and think how happy one could be to have brought it out of the sinking ship on to the solitary island. But it is a better exercise still to remember how all things have had this hair-breadth escape; everything has been saved from a wreck. Every man has had one horrible adventure: as a hidden untimely birth he had not been, as infants that never see the light. Men spoke much in my boyhood of restricted or purpose beautiful in its old design, in spite of its defects, such as dragons. But I really felt (the fancy may seem foolish) as if all the order and number of things were the romantic remnant of Crusoe’s ship. That there are two sexes and one sun, was like the fact that there were two guns and one axe. It was poignantly urgent that none should be lost; but somehow, it was rather fun that none could be added. The trees and the planets seemed like things saved from the wreck: and when I saw the Matterhorn I was glad that it had not been overlooked in the confusion. I felt economical about the stars as if they were sapphires (they are called so in Milton’s Eden); I hoarded the hills. For the universe is a single jewel, and while it is a natural cant to talk of a jewel as peerless and priceless, of this jewel it is literally true. This cosmos is indeed without peer and without price: for there cannot be another one.

Thus ends, in unavoidable inadequacy, the attempt to utter the unutterable things. These are my ultimate attitudes towards life; the soils for the seeds of doctrine. These in some dark way I thought before I could write, and felt before I could think: that we may proceed more easily afterwards, I will roughly recapitulate them now. I felt in my bones; first, that this world does not explain itself. It may be a miracle with a supernatural explanation; it may be a conjuring trick, with a natural explanation. But the explanation of the conjuring trick, if it is to satisfy me, will have to be better than the natural explanations I have heard. The thing is magic, true or false. Second, I came to feel as if magic must have a meaning, and meaning must have some one to mean it. There was something personal in the world, as in a work of art; whatever it meant it meant violently. Third, I thought this purpose beautiful in its old design, in spite of its defects, such as dragons. Fourth, that the proper form of thanks to it is some form of humility and restraint: we should thank God for beer and Burgundy by not drinking too much of them. We owed, also, an obedience to whatever made us. And last, and strangest, there had come into my mind a vague and vast impression that in some way all good was a remnant to be stored and held sacred out of some primordial ruin. Man had saved his good as Crusoe saved his goods: he had saved them from a wreck. All this I felt and the age gave me no encouragement to feel it. And all this time I had not even thought of Christian theology.
An opportunity to study the procedures of teaching children philosophy has been announced by the IAPC. Two 14-day, residential workshops will be held at the New Jersey School of Conservation, Branchville, N.J., (July 5-18, and July 19-August 1). Participants will earn 6 graduate credits in philosophy for children from Montclair State College. (Applicants should possess a bachelor’s degree). Total cost for each two-week session, inclusive of room, board, books and college fees is $500.

Ergo Films (P.O. Box 3420, Los Angeles, CA 90028) advises that they are delighted with the reception that has been accorded their filmstrip kit, THINKING ABOUT THINKING. The kit, which consists of five filmstrips illustrated with artworks rather than photographs, deals with the elements of formal logic, and is especially suitable for grades 5 and 6. Ergo reports that the filmstrips are being used in teacher-training workshops as well as in classrooms, and are particularly appropriate for general introductions to logic as well as for quick and effective review of the essentials of logic towards the end of a philosophy for children program.

Zip-Zap, a children’s story aimed at encouraging children’s philosophical thinking, has been written by Lillian Molnar. Both the book and an accompanying instructional manual can be purchased from the author (Mole’s Knoll South, Clementon, N.J. 08821).

Teachers interested in dealing with some of the philosophical issues involved in civic education may wish to investigate the Law in a Free Society curriculum. The project is an offshoot of the State Bar of California, and is now moving towards completion of a K-12 curriculum based on eight law-related concepts considered fundamental to an understanding of social and political life: authority, privacy, justice, responsibility, participation, diversity, property and freedom. These concepts form the basis for both the teacher-training materials and the classroom multimedia instructional materials, which include color filmstrips, student books, casebooks, curriculum guides and lesson plans. Information may be obtained by writing Law in a Free Society, Suite 600, 606 Wilshire Boulevard, Santa Monica, CA 90401.

A pilot program in philosophy for children is operating in the sixth grade of the Grant Line Elementary School, New Albany, Indiana. Supervisors of the project are Prof. Curtis H. Peters, Department of Philosophy, and Dr. Edward Quinn, Division of Education, both of Indiana University Southeast. A report from Prof. Peters and Quinn is expected later this year, and will be published in THINKING.

Year-long, on-site teacher-training services are now possible for school districts interested in enabling their teachers to acquire the skills necessary for encouraging children to think philosophically. In some instances, graduate credits are available at an additional cost. Inquiries should be addressed to the IAPC.

Maumee Valley Country Day School in Toledo, Ohio, has introduced Philosophy for Children into its Lower School (K-8) curriculum.

Larry Frase, Ed. D., Assistant Superintendent for Educational Services of the Flowing Wells School District, in Tucson, Arizona, reports that the P,C program in the Flowing Wells School District is proving highly satisfactory. The program is being used with gifted and talented students, and is taught by four full-time teachers on staff.
• Among the awareness courses in philosophy for children being given on the college level this semester are those by Sr. Maureen L. Egan, at the College of Our Lady of the Elms, Chicopee, Massachusetts, Prof. Martin Tamny, Department of Philosophy, College of the City of New York, George Dalin at the National Institute for Education, Chicago, Frederick S. Oscanyan at Berea College in Kentucky, and Dr. Eric Hoffman at State University of New York at Fredonia. Among those scheduled for the fall semester is a course by Prof. Jonathan Adler, Brooklyn College.

• Psychologists are beginning to pay attention to what children say — to themselves and to one another — about their drawings. *ETS Developments* (Spring 1979) reports that research is proceeding at the ETS Center for Child Care Research into children's cognitive development as reflected in what children comment on their own artistic activities. The researchers, Rodney Cocking and Carol Copple, have so far found that "as children become more reflective about their drawings — both in planning and execution — they also become more eager to judge the quality of their own drawings, often making humorous comments about their inability to show what they've intended." It is perhaps an indication of the researchers' insight that they are able to note the ability of the children to be humorous about themselves as well as their capacity for aesthetic judgment. The children are aged 3½ to 5.

• *Project for a Model School of Education.* In an article in the April 1979 issue of Change, a journal devoted to higher education, Alexis Greene discusses a proposal being developed in New Jersey that calls for "an experimental school of education, a four-year program that would train teachers in the techniques of Philosophy for Children and would serve as a model for future schools of education."

  "As it is now pictured, the 164-credit curriculum would include 65 credits in subject area courses; 27 credits of pedagogy; practical classroom experience; 24 credits of electives; and 48 credits of Philosophical Sequences — courses such as Philosophical Thinking Skills for Children, Scientific Thinking Skills for Children, and Value Thinking Skills for Children. At the end of four years, a student would receive a master's degree and be certified as an elementary school teacher.

  "The proposal comes at a propitious time, when New Jersey is re-evaluating its certification of teacher-training programs and is apparently trying to endorse graduate programs that offer practical classroom experience and a rigorous curriculum. Edward Hollander, New Jersey's Chancellor of Higher Education, reports that at the moment in New Jersey it is possible for a teacher to receive his or her certificate on the basis of a clerical examination of transcripts, without ever having been in a classroom. 'We have relatively pedestrian programs with minimum requirements,' says Hollander. With regard to the Philosophy for Children proposal, he says, 'I support it as an interesting approach worth exploring'."

• Ronald F. Reed, Ph.D. in philosophy, has been appointed Assistant Professor in the Department of Education at Texas Wesleyan College. Reed will specialize in the Philosophy for Children Program that is being instituted in and by Texas Wesleyan. His duties will include training teachers and future teachers how to teach philosophy for children. He will do this at the College and in the Fort Worth School System. Funding for the teacher training in the Fort Worth School System comes from a generous grant made by a private citizen. Reed, who
"I take it therefore to be a scientific task to which education should set itself, that of making the subject-matter of its instruction the material of personal intercourse between pupils and instructors, and between the children themselves."

This article by George Herbert Mead was originally published in *Science*, in 1910, under the title of "The Psychology of Social Consciousness Implied In Instruction." One finds in it a number of the major themes which were so significantly developed in other works by Mead, such as *Mind, Self and Society*, or *Movements of Thought in the Nineteenth Century*. For here, as elsewhere, Mead stresses that reflective thinking in the individual is an internalization of linguistic behavior in society. Human conversation, discussion, dialogue—these are the matrix of thought and reasoning. When we speak to others, we also listen to ourselves the way those others might listen to us: we adopt their attitudes towards our own verbal expressions. By taking into ourselves the possible attitudes of others towards our own symbolic expressions, by introject or internalize the entire community of persons with whom we communicate. This internalized forum therefore replicates in thought the social community of symbolic behavior or discourse.

Thus Mead had worked out—a generation before Vygotsky—an explicit theory of thinking as internalized speech. And he likewise recognized, as this essay demonstrates, that the learning process can be significantly enhanced through enlisting children's social impulses in the formation of cooperative classroom communities. Indeed, if internalized communication among children translates into thought, what reason is there not to conclude that a classroom community of inquiry, when internalized, will result in children whose thinking adopts the methods and procedures of inquiry?

There are those who look upon the child entering school as if it were “the barbarian at the gates.” Such offspring, it is contended, are most certainly in need of socialization. Whether or not they can eventually become educated is a moot point. Mead had little patience with such prophecies of disaster. Every human infant, he insisted, brings into the world powerful social tendencies which impel that child to participate in a community. It is by living with others and anticipating their responses to what we do that we become individuals or selves. Indeed, we cannot become selves without living in some social or communal fashion, just as we cannot think without participating in the social institution of linguistic communication.

Mead is well aware that many educators are prepared to deny his charges, and to insist that the social impulses of the child are being fully utilized in the classroom. But Mead contends that this is so only in a manipulative sense: the child's school life is not genuinely social—it is only school discipline (with its pains and pleasures of academic competition) that is social. The rewards are presently social, but not the life of learning, or the process of inquiry. When a community of inquiry has been established in the classroom, the social impulses of the child become the ground of the learning process.

We are only beginning to recognize the educational importance of what Mead was urging upon us three-quarters of a century ago: if we want to encourage individuals to reflect, then we must have disciplined dialogue in the classroom. If we want individuals who can think for themselves, then the classroom must be converted into a community of inquiry where, following Socrates, one must follow the argument where it leads.
"So far as education is concerned, the child does not become social by learning. He must be social in order to learn."

I have been asked to present the social situation in the school as the subject of a possible scientific study and control. The same situation among primitive people is scientifically studied by the sociologist (folk-psychologist). He notes two methods in the process of primitive education. The first is generally described as that of play and imitation. The impulses of the children find their expression in play, and play describes the attitude of the child's consciousness. Imitation defines the form of unconscious social control exercised by the community over the expression of childish impulse.

In the long ceremonies of initiation education assumed a more conscious and almost deliberate form. The boy was inducted into the clan mysteries, into the mythology and social procedure of the community, under an emotional tension which was skillfully aroused and maintained. He was subjected to tests of endurance which were calculated not only to fulfill this purpose, but also to identify the ends and interests of the individual with those of the social group. These more general purposes of the initiatory ceremonies were also at times cunningly adapted to enhance the authority of the medicine man or the control over food and women by the older men in the community.

Whatever opinion one may hold of the interpretation which folk-psychology and anthropology have given of this early phase of education, no one would deny, I imagine, the possibility of studying the education of the savage child scientifically, nor that this would be a psychological study. Imitation, play, emotional tensions favoring the acquirement of clan myths and cults, and the formation of clan judgments of evaluation, these must be all interpreted and formulated by some form of psychology. The particular form which has dealt with these phenomena and processes is social psychology. The important features of the situation would be found not in the structure of the idea to be assimilated considered as material of instruction for any child, nor in the lines of association which would guarantee their abiding in consciousness. They would be found in the impulse of the children expressed in play, in the tendency of the children to put themselves in the place of the men and women of the group, i.e., to imitate them in the emotions which consciousness of themselves in their relationship to others evoke, and in the import for the boy which the ideas and cults would have when surcharged with such emotions.

If we turn to our system of education we find that the materials of the curriculum have been presented as percepts capable of being assimilated by the nature of their content to other contents in consciousness, and the manner has been indicated in which this material can be most favorably prepared for such assimilation. This type of psychological treatment of material and the lesson is recognized at once as Herbartian. It is an associational type of psychology. Its critics add that it is intellectualistic. In any case it is not a social psychology, for the child is not primarily considered as a self among other selves, but as an Apperceptionsmasse. The child's relations to the other members of the group, to which he belongs, have no immediate bearing on the material nor on the learning of it. The banishment from the traditional school work of play and of any adult activities in which the child could have a part as a child, i.e., the banishment of processes in which the child can be conscious of himself in relation to others, means that the process of learning has as little social content as possible.

An explanation of the different attitudes in the training of the child in the primitive and in the modern civilized communities is found, in part, in the division of labor between the school on the one side, and the home and the shop or the farm on the other. The business of storing the mind with ideas, both material and methods, has been assigned to the school. The task of organizing and socializing the self to which these materials and methods belong is left to the home and the industry or profession, to the playground, the street and society in general. A great deal of modern educational literature turns upon the fallacy of this division of labor. The earlier vogue of manual training and the domestic arts before the frank recognition of their relation to industrial training took place, was due in no small part to the attempt to introduce those interests of the child's into the field of his instruction which gathers about a socially constituted self, to admit the child's personality as a whole into the school.

I think we should be prepared to admit the implication of this educational movement — that however abstract the material is which is presented and however abstracted its ultimate use is from the immediate activities of the child, the situation implied in instruction and in the psychology of that instruction is a social situation; that it is impossible to fully interpret or control the process of instruction without recognizing the child as a self and viewing his conscious processes from the point of view of their relation in his consciousness to his self, among other selves.

In the first place, back of all instruction lies the relation of the child to the teacher and about it lie the relations of the child to the other children in the schoolroom and on the playground. It is, however, of interest to note that so far as the material of instruction is concerned an ideal situation has been conceived to be one in which the personality of the teacher disappears as completely as possible behind the process of learning. In the actual process of instruction the emphasis upon the relation of pupil and teacher in the consciousness of the child has been felt to be unfortunate. In like manner the instinctive social relations between the children in school hours is repressed. In the process of memorizing and reciting a lesson, or working out a problem in arithmetic a vivid consciousness of the personality of the teacher in his relationship to that of the child would imply either that the teacher was obliged to exercise discipline to carry on the process of instruction, and this must in the nature of the case constitute friction and division of attention, or else that the child's interest is distracted from the subject-matter of the lesson, to something in which the personality of the
teacher and pupil might find some other content; for even a teacher’s approval and a child’s delight therein has no essential relation to the mere subject-matter of arithmetic or English. It certainly has no such relationship as that implied in apprenticeship, in the boy’s helping on the farm or the girl’s helping in the housekeeping, has no such relationship as that of members of an athletic team to each other. In these latter instances, the vivid consciousness of the self of the child and of his master, of the parents whom he helps and of the associates with whom he plays is part of the child’s consciousness of what he is doing, and his consciousness of these personal relationships involves no division of attention. Now it had been a part of the fallacy of an intellectualistic pedagogy that a divided attention was necessary to insure application of attention — that the rewards, and especially the punishments, of the school hung before the child’s mind to catch the attention that was wandering from the task, and through their associations with the the child — is not his own problem — the recognition of himself as facing a task and a taskmaster is no part of the solution of the problem. But a difficulty which the child feels and brings to his parent or teacher for solution is helped on toward interpretation by the consciousness of the child’s relation to his pastors and masters. Just insofar as the subject-matter of instruction can be brought into the form of problems arising in the experience of the child — just so far will the relation of the child to the instructor become a part of the natural solution of the problem — actual success of a teacher depends in large measure upon this capacity to state the subject-matter of instruction in terms of the experience of the children. The recognition of the value of industrial and vocational training comes back at once to this, that what the child has to learn is what he wants to acquire, to become the man. Under these conditions instruction takes on frankly the form of conversation, as much sought by the pupil as the instructor.

about such marketing and shopping and building as never were on sea or land, that one sees that the social form of instruction is a form only for the writer of the arithmetic. When further we consider how utterly inadequate the teaching force of our public schools is to transform this matter into concrete experience of the children or even into their own experience, the hopelessness of the situation is overwhelming. Ostwald has written a textbook of chemistry for the secondary school which has done what every textbook should do. It is not only that the material shows real respect for the intelligence of the student, but it is so organized that the development of the subject-matter is in reality the action and reaction of one mind upon another mind. The dictum of the Platonic Socrates, that one must follow the argument where it leads in the dialogue, should be the motto of the writer of textbooks.

It has been indicated already that language being essentially in its nature thinking with the child is rendered con-

schoolwork to bring it back to the task. This involves a continual vibration of attention on the part of the average child between the task and the sanctions of school discipline. It is only the psychology of school discipline that is social. The pains and penalties, the pleasures of success in competition, of favorable mention of all sorts implies vivid self-consciousness. It is evident that advantage would follow from making the consciousness of self or selves which is the life of the child’s play — on its competition or cooperation — have as essential a place in instruction. To use Professor Dewey’s phrase, instruction should be an interchange of experience in which the child brings his experience to be interpreted by the experience of the parent or teacher. This recognizes that education is interchange of ideas, is conversation — belongs to a universe of discourse. If the lesson is simply set for

I take it therefore to be a scientific task to which education should set itself that of making the subject-matter of its instruction the material of personal intercourse between pupils and instructors, and between the children themselves. The conversation of concrete individuals must be substituted for the pale abstractions of thought.

To a large extent our school organization reserves the use of the personal relation between teacher and taught for the negative side, for the prohibitions. The lack of interest in the personal content of the lesson is in fact startling when one considers that it is the personal form in which the instruction should be given. The best illustration of this lack of interest we find in the problems which disgrace our arithmetics. They are supposed matters of converse, but their content is so bare, their abstractions so raggedly covered with the form of questions

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Traditional practice makes use of the self-consciousness of the child in its least effective form. The material of the lesson is not identified with the impulses of the child. The attention is not due to the organization of impulses to outgoing activity. The organization of typical school attention is that of a school self, expressing subordination to school authority and identity of conduct with that of all the other children in the room. It is largely inhibitive — a consciousness of what one must not do, but the inhibitions do not arise out of the consciousness of what one is doing. It is the nature of school attention to abstract from the content of any specific task. The child must give attention first and then undertake any task which is assigned to him, while normal attention is essentially selective and depends for its inhibitions upon the specific act.

Now consciousness of self should follow upon that of attention, and consists in a reference of the act, which attention has mediated, to the social self. It brings about a conscious organization of this particular act with the individual as the whole — makes it his act, and can only be effectively accomplished when the attention is an actual organization of impulses seeking expression. The separation between the self, implied in typical school attention, and the content of the school tasks, makes such an organization difficult if not impossible.

In a word attention is a process of organization of consciousness. It results in the reinforcement and inhibitions of perceptions and ideas. It is always a part of an act and involves the relation of that act to the whole field of consciousness. This relation to the whole field of consciousness finds its expression in consciousness of self. But the consciousness of self depends primarily upon social relations. The self arises in consciousness pari passu with the recognition and definition of other selves. It is therefore unfruitful if not impossible to attempt to scientifically control the attention of children in their formal education, unless they are regarded as social beings in dealing with the very material of instruction. It is this essentially social character of attention which gives its peculiar grip to vocational training. From the psychological point of view, not only the method and material but also the means of holding the pupils' attention must be socialized.

Finally a word may be added with reference to the evaluations — the emotional reactions — which our education should call forth. There is no phase of our public school training that is so defective as this. The school undertakes to acquaint the child with the ideas and methods which he is to use as a man. Shut up in the history, the geography, the language and the number of our curricula should be the values that the country, and its human institutions, have; that beauty has in nature and art; and the values involved in the control over nature and social conditions.

The child in entering into his heritage of ideas and methods should have the emotional response which he has in a primitive community when he has been initiated into the mysteries and the social code of the group of which he has become a citizen. We have a few remainders of this emotional response, in the confirmation or conversion and entrance into the church, in the initiation into the fraternity, and in the passage from apprenticeship into the union. But the complexities of our social life, and the abstract intellectual character of the ideas which society uses have made it increasingly difficult to identify the attainment of the equipment of a man with the meaning of manhood and citizenship.

Conventional ceremonies at the end of the period of education will never accomplish this. And we have to further recognize that our education extends for many far beyond the adolescent period to which this emotional response naturally belongs. What our schools can give must be given through the social consciousness of the child as that consciousness develops. It is only as the child recognizes a social import in what he is learning and doing that moral education can be given.

I have sought to indicate that the process of schooling in its barest form cannot be successfully studied by a scientific psychology unless that psychology is social, i.e., unless it recognizes that the processes of acquiring knowledge, of giving attention, of evaluating in emotional terms must be studied in their relation to selves in a social consciousness. So far as education is concerned, the child does not become social by learning. He must be social in order to learn.

The Diary of Adam and Eve

Monday. This new creature with the long hair is a good deal in the way. It is always hanging around and following me about. I don't like this; I am not used to company. I wish it would stay with the other animals... Cloudy to-day, wind in the east; think we shall have rain... We? Where did I get that word? — I remember now — the new creature uses it.

Tuesday. Been examining the great waterfall. It is the finest thing on the estate, I think. The new creature calls it Niagara Falls — why, I am sure I do not know. Says it looks like Niagara Falls. That is not a reason, it is mere waywardness and imbecility. I get no chance to name anything myself. The new creature names everything that come along, before I can get in a protest. And always that same pretext is offered — it was superfluous, then. The world evidently raised me in its respect; and indeed it is a large, good world and will bear repetition. It says it is not an It, it is a This. This is probably doubtful...

Tuesday. She has littered the whole estate with execrable names and offensive signs:

THIS WAY TO THE WHIRLPOOL
THIS WAY TO GOAT ISLAND
CAVE OF THE WINDS THIS WAY

She says this park would make a tidy summer resort if there was any custom for it. Summer resort — another invention of hers — just words, without any meaning. What is a summer resort? But it is best not to ask her, she has such a way to explain.

Friday. She has taken to beseeching me to stop going over the Falls. What harm does it do? Says it makes her shudder. I wonder why; I have always done it — always liked the plunge, and coolness. I supposed it was what the Falls were for. They have no other use that I can see, and they must have been made for something. She says they were only made for scenery — like the rhinoceros and the mastodon.

I went over the Falls in a barrel — not satisfactory to her. Went over in a tub — still not satisfactory. Swam the Whirlpool and the Rapids in a fig-leaf suit. It got much damaged. Hence, tedious complaints about my extravagance. I am too much hampered here. What I need is change of scene.

Saturday. I escaped last Tuesday night, and traveled two days, and built me another shelter in a secluded place, and obliterated my tracks as well as I could, but she hunted me out by means of a beast which she has tamed and calls a wolf, and came making that pitiful noise again, and shedding that water out of the places she looks with. I was obliged to return with her, but will presently emigrate again when occasion offers. She engages herself in many foolish things among others, to study out why the animals called lions and tigers live on grass and flowers, when, as she says, the sort of teeth they wear would indicate that they were intended to eat each other. This is foolish, because to do that would be to kill each other, and that would introduce what, as I understand it, is called "death"; and death, as I have been told, has not yet entered the Park. Which is a pity, on some accounts.

Sunday. Pulled through.

Monday. I believe I see what the week is for: it is to give time to rest up from the weariness of Sunday. It seems a good idea... She has been climbing that tree again. Clodded her out of it. She said nobody was looking. Seems to consider that a sufficient justification for chancing any dangerous thing. Told her that.

The word justification moved her — and envy, too, I thought. It is a good word.

Tuesday. She told me she was made out of a rib taken from my body. This is at least doubtful, if nor more than that. I have not missed any rib,... She is in much trouble about the buzzard; says grass does not agree with it; is afraid she can't raise it; thinks it was intended to live on decayed flesh. The buzzard must get along the best it can with what is provided. We cannot overturn the whole scheme to accommodate the buzzard.

Saturday. She fell in the pond yesterday when she was looking at herself in it, which she is always doing. She nearly strangled, and said it was most uncomfortable. This made her sorry for the creatures which live in there, which she calls fish, for she continues to fasten names on to things that don't need them and don't come when they are called by them, which is a matter of no consequence to her, she is such a numb-skull, anyway; so she got a lot of them out and brought them in last night and put them in my bed to keep warm, but I have noticed them now and then all day and I don't see that they are any happier there than they were before; only quieter. When night comes I shall throw them outdoors. I will not sleep with them again, for I find them clammy and unpleasant to lie among when a person hasn't anything on.

Mark Twain

GHOSTS AND ETERNITY

"What do people generally say?" muttered Svidrigailov, as though speaking to himself, looking aside and bowing his head: 'They say, 'You are ill, so what appears to you is only unreal fantasy.' But that's not strictly logical. I agree that ghosts only appear to the sick, but that only proves that they are unable to appear except to the sick, not that they don't exist."

"Nothing of the sort," Raskolnikov insisted irritably.

"No? You don't think so?" Svidrigailov went on, looking at him deliberately. "But what do you say to this argument (help me with it): ghosts are as it were shreds and fragments of other worlds, the beginning of them. A man in health has, of course, no reason to see them, because he is above all a man of this earth and is bound for the sake of completeness and order to live only in this life. But as soon as one is ill, as soon as the normal earthly order of the organism is broken, one begins to realise the possibility of another world; and the more seriously ill one is, the closer becomes one's contact with that other world, so that as soon as the man dies he steps straight into that world. I thought of that long ago. If you believe in a future life, you could believe in that, too."

"I don't believe in a future life," said Raskolnikov.

Svidrigailov sat lost in thought.

"And what if there are only spiders there, or something of that sort," he said suddenly.

'He is a madman,' thought Raskolnikov. "We always imagine eternity as something beyond our conception, something vast, vast! But why must it be vast? Instead of all that, what if it's one little room, like a bathhouse in the country, black and grimy and spiders in every corner, and that's all eternity is? I sometimes fancy it like that."

"Can it be you can imagine nothing juster and more comforting than that?" Raskolnikov cried, with a feeling of anguish.

'Juster? And how can we tell, perhaps that is just, and do you know it's what I would certainly have made it," answered Svidrigailov, with a vague smile.

Fedor Dostoevsky, Crime and Punishment Part Four.
The successful conclusion of an educational experiment generally results in efforts to assess responsibility for "what went right." To what extent is credit due the pedagogy, and to what extent is credit due the program? To the extent that the pedagogy is deemed responsible, further questions ensue: Was the pedagogy theoretically compatible with the program? Was the pedagogy employed and practiced consistent with its own theoretical assumptions? Is it possible that teacher-trainers can proceed pragmatically by selecting out from a pedagogy theoretically alien to the program being taught certain practices which were compatible on a practical level so as to produce successful post-test performance? These are questions that inevitably arise in the light of the ascription, by Prof. Pines and Johnson, of responsibility for the success of their results to their use of competency-based training techniques. Their article points up the patience and perseverance that In-service teacher-training generally requires, the gradualness by which change can be brought about, the need for the willing cooperation of all concerned. But many additional studies will be needed before generalizations can be made with any degree of assurance with regard to the degree of responsibility to be assigned to the implementation of the theories of Bloom, Carkhuff, et al., and the degree to be assigned to the lively philosophical discussions engaged in by teachers and pupils alike, as described in the article.

The Competency-Based Training of Pre-College Philosophy Teachers

Stephen M. Johnson
and Robert A. Pines.
search literature which were particularly suited to the P C program, and other essentially methodological skills specifically tied to the logical and philosophical content of the novels. The former were (d) clarity, (e) variability, (f) enthusiasm, (g) task-orientation, (h) teacher indirectness, (i) the use of structuring comments, (j) the use of higher-order questions, and (k) probing. The latter, which presupposed subject-matter knowledge, were (l) maintaining relevance, (m) answering, (n) listening, and (o) the teacher as model, and were suggested in both the manuals and Philosophy in the Classroom (Lipman, Sharp & Oscanyan, 1977). Obviously, considerable overlap existed between these two categories. Placement in one as opposed to the other was discretionary.

Taken collectively, the teaching variables suggest a role which permeates the classroom behavior of the pre-college philosophy teacher (Sabirin & Allen, 1968) and accords with pervasive notions about learning and living in P C. The teacher should be concerned; a facilitator or provocateur; the creator of a nurturant climate for, and process of, philosophical inquiry. Perhaps most importantly, he or she must be a moral and intellectual model for students.

Having identified teacher role characteristics, we clearly needed to operationalize each for training purposes. Because we wished to stress observable performance, we borrowed significantly, but not exclusively, from established competency-based training procedures and materials. Some examples may be illustrative.

As noted, one of the prerequisites for instruction in the Philosophy for Children program is respect for children and their opinions. This characteristic, like its companion prerequisites, bears directly upon human relations in the classroom, and by extension, upon the affective climate created. The research psychologist Robert Carkhuff has developed a model for human relations training in the classroom which identifies eight dimensions of healthy "helping" relationships, of which "perceiving and responding with respect" is one. Carkhuff provides a four-point scale for rating each in practice. This was the model (presented most comprehensively in Gazda, et al., 1973) we adapted for use with the Newark teachers.

We designed their training to foster both the ability to identify and discriminate among the four scale levels of teacher respect and to demonstrate a minimally acceptable degree of respect for students in simulated and real classroom settings. We met with the group of teachers for two hours each week, supplementing this with several classroom visits to each per year. Role-playing and video-taped classroom observations were the principal means we used to observe and self-observe, practice and assess performance. All the teachers were able to demonstrably achieve the required (third) criterion level, although some were surprised by how much guided and attentive effort it took.

Skill in questioning is also tactically central to success with P C and can further illustrate the application of CBTE as it derives from one explicit conception of the teaching role. The teacher must knowingly question. Ideas, reasons, assumptions and conclusions must be effectively elicited.

Therefore, using Classroom Teaching Skills: A handbook (Cooper et al., 1977), we trained the teachers to: (a) know the distinction between lower- and higher-order questions as they reflect the content of Harry Stottlemeyer's Discovery and Lisa; (b) perform specified high-order questioning tasks related to the novels; and (c) demonstrate the consequences of their teaching with students as reflected in commensurately divergent thought. The cognitive domain of Bloom's "Taxonomy of Educational Objectives" operationally defined the level of both teacher question and student response. The teachers were deliberately trained to increase the mean one-second "wait-time" which teachers routinely demonstrate before re-asking or rephrasing questions. With much time and effort, our teachers acquired this new habit, thus increasing the frequency and quality of student participation in discussion. Information sessions, peer teaching, and taped classroom performance were all helpful in learning this particular skill. Again, all of the teachers eventually demonstrated minimally acceptable levels of performance — although again, some were shocked at how long it took to learn and strengthen their new habits.

This same feature — habits taking longer to change and new skills taking longer to learn than we anticipated, recurred in the parts of our program that were not strictly competency-based. Training the teachers to teach the philosophical material of the novels would be, we anticipated, simply a matter of holding our own regular philosophical discussions with them (modelling), giving them the basics of Aristotelian logic (by a few sessions of direct instruction), and then providing opportunities for practice. We soon found, however, that it was not that easy.

All of our teachers agreed that the most "fun" of our sessions together were those in which we, all of us, explored the ideas and possibilities raised by the children's novels. The philosophically rich Harry and Lisa do accomplish what they were meant to — lead the interested child to immature but genuinely philosophical thoughtfulness, and reawaken in thoughtful adult teachers the enthusiasm of youthful discovery. While we used the splendid sixth chapter of Philosophy in the Classroom theoretically to distinguish philosophical discussion from lively bull-session, it was our own lively and lengthy philosophical discussions that translated this theoretical ideal into a reality recognizable enough to serve our participant-teachers as model for their own classrooms.

Though we managed far fewer of these lengthy discussions among ourselves than we had intended, such modelling was indeed enough for that third of our teachers who turned out to be the "best" at teaching the philosophical materials in their classrooms. Differing in style, grade-level, and subject specialty, these were the teachers who were confident enough in themselves easily to enjoy open-ended exploration and to deal "eyes-level" with their children. Since they had been dealing this way before our program, and already enjoyed the marked respect and trust of their children, these teachers needed only the materials of the novels and the modelling of our shared philosophical discussions to do full justice to P C's philosophical intentions and fully tap the latent enthusiasm of their students.

With the rest of our teachers, however, no amount of mere modelling would have been enough. That is, given only modelling of the philosophical content and direct instruction of the logical material, a second third of our teachers would have effectively used P C merely (!) to raise the level and interest of their reading classes and to improve the logical and mathematical reasoning of their students. The remaining third, given only the materials and after-school modelling, might not have enhanced their students' classroom experience at all (however many individual students may have been privately "turned on" by Harry and Lisa.)

So it was that, with two-thirds of our teachers, teaching the philosophical materials of Harry and Lisa would have proved impossible without the very slow
change of classroom habits effected by our relentless use of and practice with competency-based exercises, peer-teaching, and classroom observations. After sufficient practice with competency-based materials and peer-teaching in our seminars, they were ready to be subjected to videotaping of their actual classroom performances. The teachers’ viewing of these tapes, shared with their peers in our seminars, drove them to their strongest efforts to change their classroom habits and deal effectively with the philosophical materials. This motivation was guided by our increasingly critical (but always specific and constructive) comments during later classroom observations. In this way only did these less-apt teachers’ overall performances generally improve. Eventually, most became capable of holding (at least occasionally) genuine philosophical discussions of the materials in Harry and Lisa.

Competence in teaching the logical materials of the program was much more easily and predictably produced. The content and skills are those of the basics of Aristotelian logic; the basic materials are the exercises in P,C’s teacher’s manuals, supplemented by any introductory college text or simply with homemade mimeograph explanations and further exercises. We made and used our own supplementary materials. The surprise here (again) was how long it took for our teachers to feel really secure with the logical materials and content of Harry and Lisa. The novels’ logical materials are as limited as they are vital. But, as we learned, they won’t be well taught at all — or even heartily attempted — unless and until the classroom teachers are completely secure with them, i.e., confident that they can deal effectively and comfortably with whatever logical contingency or example their children may raise.

So it was that we ended up having to devote a major portion of every week’s seminar to direct instruction and repetition and practice of the basic logical materials. This proved not only to be a matter of boredom or discontent, but to be a great relief and even fun for the teachers. We found it impossible to too basic with logic, impossible to practice it too much, and impossible to lead the teachers to real felt security in the logic without extensive use of Venn diagrams. From all our teachers (including the "best"), then, we learned: to assume nothing logically; to practice the logical materials every week; and to use the Venn diagrams without fear of overuse. Most of the teachers used the Venn diagrams in their own classrooms as well. Most were marvelously inventive in making the diagrams into enjoyable drill games with the children, and all were delighted with the results (including the children’s enthusiasm). Meanwhile, all of the teachers were re assured by their own competence with the Venn diagrams.

Thus it was that competency-based instruction in our training program was complimented by the modeling of philosophical discussion and direct instruction, and constant practice of basic logical materials. In the process, we were taught by our teachers — and all of us together were taught by our teachers’ children — how dynamically fresh and richly exciting both logical thinking and expansive philosophical exploration can be. As the children’s excited creativity taught all of us, so did our teacher’s own modeling, in their classrooms, show us how very varied and creative are the ways in which the possibilities of preschool philosophy can be realized with grade-school children.

Similar mutual stimulation and enrichment occurred between the two of us. Our philosopher’s amateur enthusiasm gave extra life and down-to-earthness to our educator’s competency-based exercises, while our educator’s extra-disciplinary depth brought fresh insights and practical clarity to our philosophical discussions and logical exercises. This interplay made all the materials much more fun for both of us and far more lively, comfortable, and accessible to our teacher trainees.

The results of the New Jersey validation study were encouraging (Pompton Lakes, New Jersey Board of Education, 1978). In Newark, significant improvement was attained by the experimental group reflecting each of the major programmatic objectives. Significance was also achieved in basic skill performance (reading and mathematics) as a result of exposure to the P,C program — a noteworthy outcome given current clarifications for accountability in that sphere. Moreover, qualitative evidence was obtained which indicated that the teachers of the experimental group in Newark had developed more positive expectations for student performance. It is, of course, quite probable that that result translates into an improved interpersonal classroom climate and the likelihood that students can better meet such teacher expectations (Good & Brophy, 1973).

These results, of course, cannot be interpreted as validating our teacher-training program at Newark. The study was not designed for that purpose. The study did, however, incorporate some of the critical design elements which have been proposed to assess the effectiveness of competency-based teacher-education programs (Turner, 1972). At a less ambitious level of assessment, the positive judgments we made about teacher competence on the basis of their ongoing observable behavior did provide supportive “...evidence about the efficacy of the teacher education program [p.5].”

REFERENCES


Kierkegaard on Childhood

Kierkegaard wrote these reflections on childhood in 1837. Perhaps they are not so much about childhood itself as about the mistaken ways in which we tend to judge that period of life. Kierkegaard Indicts two common judgments of childhood as being fundamentally incorrect:

1. There is the view that earlier stages are of importance only because they condition later ones. The best thing to do, then, is to pass through such stages just as quickly as possible, since they have no intrinsic value. Childhood is such a phase. For parents it is a tiresome period, dedicated mainly to looking after the child's well-being. One must amuse children to while away the time, telling them empty tales over and over again. Those who write these pointless stories thereby encourage children to be passive and docile. Such literature for children — Kierkegaard scoffs at it as "poetic rinsewater" — is incapable of prodding children to inquire, or to think for themselves.

2. The other mistaken view is that taken by adults whose primary aim is to impart "useful knowledge" to children. Their stories aim to help children learn other languages, or the geography of far-away countries, or how to read music. And when they do tell children stories, they invariably add, "but you realize, it was only a fairy tale."

Kierkegaard's own position is that childhood is rich in values uniquely its own. Yet it is a period in which children are dependent upon teachers for intellectual and emotional nourishment. These teachers should have mastered the Socratic mode of questioning, and should have reproduced the quality of childhood experience in themselves. They must know what the life of childhood requires, as well as how and when to give it. Further, they must know how to encourage children to think about things that matter to them. And they must be capable of arousing in children the desire to ask, rather than fending off reasonable questions with "Are you going to let me finish this tale or not?"

One must spend time preparing to tell children stories, Kierkegaard suggests, by going to the trouble of finding out what the children are studying in school, what they're thinking about outside of school, and then by selecting stories that bear on these experiences. The aim should be to nourish children's inquisitiveness, sense of wonder, and desire for understanding, as well as to bring something poetic into their everyday existence. If we fail to motivate children to learn, or if we present them with nothing but dry, fragmented factual knowledge unrelated to their everyday existence, we deprive them of access to standards by which the presence or absence of meaning in life may be judged, and we deny them the experiences which could make their lives meaningful.


If after reading the essay someone were to say that I do indeed speak of the art of storytelling but in the entire essay seem rather to rant against it, I would now wholly agree, inasmuch as I have spoken only against misuse, and I would also point out that I have used the expression storytelling in a more comprehensive sense involving everything with which one occupies a child's mind outside of formal schooling, not all of which can accurately be called play, and in-which, of course, storytelling does play a major role.

That so many people are engaged in telling stories to children is a natural consequence of the fact that there are a great number of children and that children have a deeply rooted desire to hear stories, and yet there are very few people who have talent for storytelling. As a result much harm is done. There are two recommended ways of telling stories to children, but between these two there is a multiplicity of wrong ways.

First, there is the way which children's nurses (and other who may be so categorized) unconsciously follow. They open up a whole world of fantasy to the child, and the fact that they are sincerely convinced of the truth of their stories' must instill a salutary tranquility in the child, no matter how fantastic the content itself may be. Only when the child himself detects that the teller does not believe stories are the stories damaging — yet not because of the content itself but because of the untruth in regard to the teller — because of the mistrust and suspicionness which the child gradually develops.

The second way can be followed only by someone who in perfect clarity has reproduced the life of childhood, who knows what this life requires, who 'knows what is good for it and now from this vantage point offers children intellectual-emotional nourishment which is beneficial for them, who knows how to be a child; whereas the nursemaids basically are children. (Fortunately, children are able to derive good from both ways, and following the second way certainly does not exclude appreciation of the first. On the other hand, the semi-educated usually eliminate the process of development valued by one who has a mature view of life.)

The preparation is not elaborate. The husband comes home from the busy office, puts on his slippers, gets his pipe, kisses mother on the cheek and says, "Well, my dear," (this is to accustom the children to affectionate behavior) — and now we see a scene common to most children's books — "Uncle Frank," who tells the stories which the children have eagerly anticipated all day, and little Fritz and Mary coming on the run, clapping their hands: "Uncle Frank² is going to tell stories!" The mother
clusters the children around her, with the smallest in her arms, and says, "Listen nicely, now, to what your dear uncle is telling!"

As for the procedure for the storytelling, for our storytellers — all general pursuits on behalf of children outside of formal instruction, and this, too, as much as possible, should be Socratic. One should arouse in children a desire to ask, instead of fending off a reasonable question, which perhaps goes beyond Uncle Frank’s general information or in some other way inconveniences him, with the words: "Stupid child! Can’t he keep still while I am telling the story?" To prevent more serious scenes, the mother assures that "he will not do it any more." The whole point is to bring the poetic into touch with their lives in every way, to exercise a power of enchantment, to let a glimpse appear at the most unexpected moment and then vanish. One should not schedule the poetic for certain hours and certain days. Children do not jump around such a person like loutish calves with dangling legs and clap their hands because they are going to hear a story. Him they approach in an open, free, confident way, entrust themselves to him, initiate him into many little secrets, tell him about their play, and he knows how to join in, also knows how to give the game a more serious side. The children never distress him or pester him, for they have too much respect and esteem for him.

He knows what they are doing in school. He does not do their homework with them but quietly inquires about their lessons, masters them, not in order to quiz them, not to take a particular part and dramatize it for them, not to give them an opportunity to show off if there are others around — but rather to let a glimpse suddenly leap forth, to connect it in a special way to what usually occupies them, yet entirely en passant, so that the child’s soul is electrified and feels, as it were, the omnipresence of something poetic, which is indeed precious to him but which he nevertheless dares not approach too closely. In this way an intellectual-emotional mobility is constantly nurtured, a continuing attentiveness to what they hear and see, an attentiveness which otherwise has to be produced by external means, for example, by having the children come from a dimly lighted room into a brightly lighted room, where "Uncle Frank" is sitting, by wearying them the whole day by talking about "how wonderful" it is to hear Uncle Frank tell stories — etc.

I remember an example of how in such a life everything becomes engendering, how everything the children read in the classics became reflected; when they read of ostracism, they introduced it at once into their play, etc.

And now those children’s books for "well-behaved, industrious, obedient, lovable, innocent, unspoiled" children — consequently by presenting them with a copy one says to them that they are such, since otherwise it would be a misunderstanding to give them the book.

However, even though clarity prevails, a certain sentimentality can easily intrude if one forgets that adulthood has what childhood promised. We are inclined, however, to think that it promised a lot more, especially when dealing with exceptionally alert children, and so we intervene alarmingly in their lives (anxiety can actually stem from this cause and not always from trivial complaining.) Those daily assurances, "You are happy now, but wait until you are older— then the troubles will come," etc., have a harmful effect, inasmuch as they strike at the roots of the child and instill a peculiar anxiety as to how long he can continue to be happy (and in this way they are already unhappy). If this continuous Jeremiacad makes no impression, it naturally has the same harmful effect as all other misplaced chatter.

This indefiniteness [in the Socratic approach] might seem to militate against a certain very proper demand for rigor and clear limitation; this should rather be represented in the schoolroom in the personality of the teacher (here we are concerned with free time). He who in childhood has never been under the gospel but only under law never becomes free — maybe this is wrong, but there is something noble in it; whereas the more the law is propounded, the more minor mischief germinates, and nothing is more capable of producing enervation. The eye has a power to call forth sprouts of the good and to crush the evil — but misinterpreted rigor and discipline, a daughter of indolence, almost permits one generation to take revenge upon the next for the thrashing it received itself and for the mishandling it has suffered — by treating the next generation in like manner.

When one is a child and has not toys, one is well provided for, because then imagination takes over. I still remember with amazedment my childhood top, the only toy I had — what acquaintance was as interesting as this one? Yet it did not belong wholly to me. It had, so to say, its official duties as an actual top, and only then in its leisure did it become my diversion. In our day there are complaints that an official holds too many offices, but this one encompassed all.

But then shouldn’t one tell stories? Certainly, mythology and good fairy stories are what the child needs. Or the child is allowed to read them himself and tell them and is then Socratically corrected (gradually correcting by questioning in such a manner that the child is by no means set straight under the coercion of a tutor but seems rather to be correcting others — and anyone who otherwise understands how to handle children will certainly not be in danger of encouraging arrogance). But above all let this be impromptu, not at a set time and place; children should experience early in life that happiness is a fortunate constellation which one should enjoy with gratitude but also know how to discontinue in good time; and above all one should not forget the point of the story. (A mistake I can only touch upon here, although it comes up again later, is this: continually and almost all day long to tell trashy, empty stories and thereby manufacture these readers of novels who devour a volume a day, one after the other, without any specific impression.) Furthermore, one evokes a certain self-activity (drawing and the like) because of the story, told in various ways, becomes related to a child’s familiar environment.

Now comes the question: what significance does childhood really have? Is it a stage with significance only be-
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because it conditions, in a way, the following stages — or does it have independent value? Some have expanded the latter position to the point where they assume childhood to be fundamentally the highest level attainable by human beings and that everything beyond it is progressive degeneration. The first position has had the practical result that people try to make time pass by — and if children could be shut up in the dark and force-fed on an accelerated schedule like chickens, everything would certainly be organized to this end. Another consequence has been this "tiresome time of childhood" primarily for caring for children's physical well-being. In this view the supreme rule of upbringing runs something like this: "The child who does not clean up his plate gets no dessert." — (How frequently children's lives, particularly girls', are embittered by hearing continually that they are good for nothing, etc.)

The mistaken ways come about because one passes beyond the nursemaid's position but does not go the whole way and thus remains stationary at the halfway point.

Those who have gone beyond the stage of spontaneity, instead of now in their mature years assimilating childhood transfigured, as would be natural, decay into "being children" (compare fountain-of-youth), those overgrown puppies who are so innocent and naive, who would give anything if their beards never grew enough to require a shave so that they could remain downy, bare-necked youths, who have become children again to such a degree that they talk as children, use all the childish expressions, and who would like ultimately to get all of us to talk as children and write as children talk — a caricature which will surely come to be as soon as the opposite, that children want to be grown-ups, which is common now, has been outlived. It is a tragic-comic sight to see these gangly, childish jumping-jacks leaping around the floor and riding the hobby-horse with the sweet little ones and to hear their dull stories about "innocent and happy childhood." (Compare their behavior with that of adolescent girls who want to be grown-up: they parody one another.)

Their stories "for children and childlike souls" — poetic rinse-water! If this error is found most often among youth, there is also a similar mistaken way among adults who "descend" to children out of the conviction that childhood in itself is so empty and devoid of content that they wish, as it were, to breathe fullness into it. Basically both points of view must presuppose the emptiness of childhood, for otherwise the former would not permit itself to undertake anything so loathsome, something a sound nature would immediately censure, and the other would not undertake to breathe the spirit of life into it.

After a story has been told, it is important not to destroy the entire impression by ending with a "But do you understand, don't you, that it was only a fairy tale?" This sort of thing reappears later in people who have absolutely no sense for the poetic and consequently spoil the impression of every anecdote, etc., by probing its factual truth.

Fundamentally everyone is born to rule. This is best seen in children. Today I saw a little girl in her nurse's arms. They met some acquaintances of the child's family. The nurse held a flower in her hand, and now every body, each and all, very submissively had to smell the flower and say, "Achoo!" This was repeated several times. If the nurse wanted to skip someone, the little girl noticed it at once and gave her to understand that she had to do everything exactly right. And then the little female sovereign bestowed with a smile her highest favor upon the one who sneezed exactly right.

Then the nurse wanted her to walk, but she leaned out a bit from the nurse's arms, dropped her head coyly, and rewarded the nurse with a kiss from beneath — affectedly, and yet with a childlikeness. Storytelling has assumed a fantastic and lopsided tendency. It has been considered unreasonable and damaging later to overstock the child's imagination with such stories. On the other hand, it has been considered quite all right to tell something to while away the time and amuse the children. Since it was merely for diversion and they did not want to spend time in preparation, they started those interminable silly tales about the dog and the cat, etc., telling them with the most horrible monotony. The children, once they are spoiled, continually demand more and more editions of the same, always returning to the stereotype with one or more important alterations (for example, that once it was a red dog, then a black one.)

In the meantime this view was discovered to be wrong, since, indeed, the time could be utilized better, could be used for something better even in the form of jest and play. Two procedures evolved from this — either educate the children morally, as it is called, or impart some useful knowledge. The consequence of the second path I shall touch upon slightly. There came as if by magic a plague of natural history, not textbooks but reading books and all kinds of picture books to impart to the children the vocabularies of modern languages, and "Uncle Frank" told of his travels in Africa and designated the plants and animals by their scientific names, and parents and others asked: "What is nose in French?" etc. Or one taught them to pick out a simple piece on the piano. (If one really wishes by such things to keep children from being embarrassed by being conspicuous, then on the other hand one really ought not make children eager to be conspicuous.)

Out of all this there developed a completely atomized knowledge which did not enter into a deeper relationship to children and their existence [Existents], which was not appropriated in an intellectual-emotional way, and which was thus deprived of any possible standard. As a result people fell into the presumption that they were great natural scientists and linguists. If only details are decisive, it is naturally quite incidental how many or how few are required for mastery. Out of this arises seductive opportunism — and the busy Martha's who forget the one thing needful. Of such atomized knowledge it is not true that what is assimilated in youth is never forgotten in old age...
"Nursery-tales" — this expression implies just as much about the mode of telling the tales as it does about the content.

Unfortunately there is a reason for its always being an uncle who appears as the central figure, for the parents' activity is usually limited to making their appearance on the monthly day-of-reckoning as chief administrators or presenters of prizes for noble deeds — in both cases with the precise and punctual conscience of a book-keeper. If, then, there were any uncles, there would undoubtedly be plenty for them to do.

We ourselves ought to learn from children, from their marvelous creativity, which — unlike certain self-important tutors — we ought to allow to prevail, remembering Christ's words when he was twelve years old, "Did you not know that I must be about my father's business?" — (If I believe I have read something similar in one of Mynster's sermons.) It is better not to be quick with the prosaic switch, as was the schoolteacher in Alfarne, because children have deep feelings — and in this way one avoids, among other things, (Q divine nemesis!) falling 1400 yards down beneath the earth and becoming — a ninny.

Children are not deeply interested in Greek mythology, at least not in that which in more mature years is regarded as the most magnificent (yet Hercules, possibly — N.B. extraordinary deeds). Many begin this so early, while the children are still very small, that occasionally it occurs to such a child to do as the baby Abraham St. Clara tells about, who saw the miserableness of the world so vividly at the time of birth that it ran back into its mother's womb again. — Is this a way to strengthen a child for life? Does this not enervate the child's whole life by depriving it of enthusiasm's perpetuum-mobile?

* This is rooted in the haste of the times, which basically misunderstands every age because it believes that each age-level exists merely for the sake of the next.

* Once in a while such people accidentally remember a more fanciful story from their childhood, but they tell it in order to answer the question which comes up as soon as they are finished — "Are there mermaids like that?" — with a "No, mermaids are just something people imagine." In the fairy tale then so meaninglessly that one must immediately destroy the story and its impression, that one must promptly break the glittering soap bubble in order to show that all its glory was nothing more than soapy water? Children crave fairy stories, and this alone is sufficient proof of their value. — Now the question arises — to what extent should the storyteller himself believe those stories? If the storyteller himself believes the stories, then I do not think the question will arise for the children as to whether or not it is true. The story should simultaneously exercise such an overwhelming and tranquilizing effect that it never occurs to the children. Not to tell children such exciting imaginative stories and tales leaves an unfilled space for anxiety which, when not moderated by such stories, returns again all the stronger (compare Tieck, Die Verlobung; Dresden: 1823; pp. 63-65). Compare also the artless simple story in Nordisk Kjæmpehistorier, ed. Ravn; Copenhagen: 1827 (N.B. naturally the story is not by Ravn, especially the end, p. 9; "Can it be that someone who hears these stories will find that the mighty events and great deeds of the sagas do not square with his experience and for that reason will minimize them" — right: hinc ilia lacrymæ!

British Journal of Education Studies

Executive Editor: MARGARET B. SUTHERLAND

Volume XXVII, Number 1 February 1979

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What arguments are there for introducing philosophy in the schools? What arguments, in particular, for introducing metaphysics and epistemology — and their servant, logic? It is for these that the case needs making, for ethics is already represented in the curriculum by moral education programmes. Peter Mullen, in his book Beginning Philosophy (Edward Arnold 1.50) is "sure that everyone, and particularly students of secondary school age, can successfully be introduced to philosophical method." Trying out "so called 'philosophical questions' with students of average ability" in a secondary school, he was "astonished to find that the questions and puzzles which have been the subject matter of academic philosophy for centuries were of immediate fascination to the students." I do not see why he was astonished. Childhood is a time of unusually direct, penetrating and wide-ranging curiosity; children from an early age are naturally concerned with some of the central metaphysical and epistemological questions of philosophy. What is time? What is mind? What is dreaming? Did everything have a beginning? Why does the universe — anything — exist at all? Does space go on for ever?
Such questions, the problem of free will and determinism, or the problem of knowledge — of how we can be certain of anything, and of when it is reasonable to believe something — would, if well presented, stimulate the most animated discussion in the classroom. Philosophy, writes Matthew Lipman in his book, Philosophy In The Classroom (New Jersey: IAPC) is the "lost dimension in education", uniquely valuable for the "cultivation of natural wonder".

If such cultivation is the goal, the primary aim of philosophy lessons should not be to inculcate currently received right answers to such questions as those given above. It should be rather to promote that quite special argumentative persistence and imaginative agility in speculation that philosophical problems are so particularly apt to call for. Clearly, the benefits of increased speculative inventiveness and conceptual sophistication claimed for philosophy would spread to all other subjects.

On this point, it is worth comparing attitudes to the teaching of philosophy in schools in France, where it has been compulsory, almost uninterruptedly, since the beginning of the nineteenth century, and in America, where Mathew Lipman and others have recently set up an "Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children" (IAPC).

In France, pupils could until recently expect to have between four and ten philosophy lessons a week in their final year, depending on their other specializations. (One of the objectives of the Haby reform programme, currently being implemented, is to phase out the compulsion of philosophy, while retaining it as a major option). Among other things, a French schoolchild can expect to study such authors as Descartes in some detail; to acquire a picture of how the great pair of opposed positions, realism and idealism, and rationalism and empiricism, shift and intersect in the work of Locke and Leibniz, Berkeley and Hume, Kant and Hegel, and indeed in our cultural tradition as a whole; and to debate the questions listed above. Marx and Freud are also studied in philosophy classes.

Philosophy is extremely popular among French schoolchildren. If the French err in their approach, it is perhaps in attaching too much importance to philosophy, "le couronnement des sciences"; or rather, in according it too much prestige as the glamorous ruling queen of the sciences, rather than treating it as just one subject among others. Yet it is justly seen as a centrally important part of a liberal education. It has no such comparable standing in Britain now.

Eleven and twelve-year-old American children who studied Mathew Lipman's "philosophical novel" Harry Stottlemeier's Discovery (New Jersey: IAPC) (Harry Stottlemeier/Aristotle) were found by IQ tests to have a mental age as regards general reasoning ability which was 27 months in advance of their peers of equal age and otherwise equal education. Of course, what IQ tests test are just the kind of abilities that would be improved by the logic course that the book — "in which children are found discovering some of the more general principles of human reasoning and inference" — provides among other things. But such results are nonetheless striking.

Throughout the book, the children "apply their discoveries to conversations about education, what is 'right' and 'wrong', the origin of the world, the nature of the mind, children's rights, differences between reasons and causes ..."and so on. Another book, Lisa, has since been prepared for 13 and 14-year-olds, and more are in preparation. The Americans are apt to emphasize philosophy's value as an aid to practical efficiency, correct and consistent analysis of situations, and effectiveness in concise and appropriate decision-making. Yet this pragmatic emphasis on rationality as power is tempered by a different and concurrent aim, already noted — the "cultivation of natural wonder."

I believe that there is a strong case to be made for introducing philosophy in schools; but both teachers and textbooks are lacking. One problem with currently available teaching resources — unemployed philosophy graduates — is that because philosophy is at present only taught in universities, graduates would feel demeaned by teaching in schools; whereas in France, nearly all philosophy graduates who wish to become academics begin by teaching in schools.

As for textbooks, their authors must, like song-writers, find a 'hook' when presenting a problem; it must be made to catch in the pupil's mind. There is a difficult path to be picked between maximum clarity and the spoon-feeding likely to provide the "philosophy is pointless" reaction. Peter Mullen's Beginning Philosophy sets out elementary lesson-sized problems, sometimes lacking in imagination, but with well-chosen questions at the end of each section. Some of Open University Problems of Philosophy course books would do very well for fifth and sixth forms. Most major topics (Time, Space, Cause, Free Will, Perception) have a book to themselves.

The current scholastic and science-fictional debate on "Personal Identity" seems ideally fit for the classroom. The International Baccaulaurate Theory of Knowledge course is thought to be of unequal quality, and sometimes much too ambitious: Wittgenstein's Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus, reserved at some universities for third-year students, is among the texts recommended for study. What Philosophy Does (Open Books, 2.95) by Richard Lindley, Roger Fellows, and Graham Macdonald (specifically aimed at students in the sixth form wondering whether to read philosophy at university) has an outstanding chapter on philosophy of science, and might also serve as a basis for preparing a sixth-form course.

A textbook prepared especially for schools might be best arranged as a series of short classical statements of philosophical problems and positions by the great philosophers. Schoolteachers with philosophical training have had particular success in the classroom when taking a short passage — Descartes' doubt, Locke on primary and secondary qualities, Berkeley or Idealism — as a precise focus for discussion.

It is difficult to know how much philosophy teaching is presently going on in British schools. The ILEA were unable to provide any information at all. There is certainly very little; there should be a great deal more.

"The Americans are apt to emphasize philosophy's value as an aid to practical efficiency, correct and consistent analysis of situations, and effectiveness in concise and pragmatic decision-making."
Philosophy and the Middle-School Student

Louis I. Katzner

The hallway was not very different from what I remembered it to be. It was wide and shiny with cases of books and other paraphernalia lining the walls. On the other side of the glass doors through which light flooded the hallway I could see classes in session. Some had students sitting quietly at their desks while in others everyone was scurrying about.

I hadn't felt like this in a long time. My stomach churned with the alternate forces of anticipation and concern. Was I walking into something I couldn't handle? How would the youngsters I would be teaching respond? Would I be able to relate to them? Communicate with them? I kept wondering about how and why I had gotten myself into this situation.

It all began a year or so ago when I read about Harry Stottlemeier’s Discovery in a popular news magazine. Philosophy for children — an intriguing idea indeed. But could it be pulled off? My very first reading of Harry convinced me that it had been. Philosophical ideas were presented in a context and vernacular that youngsters can readily relate to. The next time my son asked me what that stuff is I teach I said, “Read Harry Stottlemeier’s Discovery and you will find out what philosophy is.” But it didn’t work. After two chapters he was bored to death and put the book down for good.

What went wrong? Maybe it can’t be done after all. My son is bright and inquisitive. If he cannot be interested in philosophy, perhaps it is because philosophy is not for the young. On the other hand, just plopping a book in someone’s lap and saying, “Read!” is not much of an introduction to anything. There is no reinforcement; no opportunity to share one’s reactions and ideas with others. I concluded that my son’s experience had not been much of a test of the viability of philosophy for children.

My interest in Harry continued to increase and broaden. After attending a couple of workshops sponsored by the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children, I became especially interested in the curricular problems that philosophy for children posed on the college level: What kind of curriculum is necessary to prepare people to teach philosophy to children? I had long been concerned with the lack of philosophy background that most elementary and secondary teachers bring to their profession. Perhaps Harry could serve as a stimulus for renewed interest in philosophy on the college level.

Thus I began devoting my energies to developing courses and programs in philosophy for students in Bowling Green State University College of Education. But before I got very far I realized I had a problem. Practically everyone I spoke to began with questions about my credentials: Had I ever taught at the elementary or secondary level? No! Had I ever taught philosophy for children? No! From such an ignominious start, there was no place to go but downhill. It became clear that my efforts would be totally frustrated unless I acquired some hands-on experience.

I began my quest for this experience by sharing Harry Stottlemeier’s Discovery with the Director of Instruction of the Bowling Green City Schools. His interest was piqued enough that he agreed to bring the material, along with my offer to teach Harry, to the principals of the city’s elementary schools. Within a month I had met and worked out plans with the two sixth grade teachers at one of the schools. I would meet with each of the sixth grade classes twice a week for 45 minutes over a ten-week period (this latter constraint was imposed by my schedule, not theirs). They would watch, participate whenever they desired and, if they liked what went on, use Harry themselves the following year.

I would not realize until later (when I compared notes with others and tried to arouse interest in philosophy in other school systems) how fortuitous were the circumstances which led to this arrangement. To find a Director of Instruction, a Principal, and two teachers who (1) believed that studying philosophy could be worthwhile for children, (2) were willing to set aside 1.5 hours in an already overcrowded week for its study and (3) would entrust the teaching to someone who had no elementary or secondary school teaching experience was a stroke of good fortune, indeed.

Suddenly I was at the end of the hall. There was nothing else to do, so I walked into the classroom. Frances (the teacher) was there, and so were most of the youngsters. They were sitting at their desks doing their own things — some chatting, some doodling, and some seeming to do nothing. When I walked in, the level of conversation seemed to increase, and I had the distinct feeling that I was being given the once-over.
Well, the students weren't ogres. They were bright and inquisitive youngsters. Sure we had our moments. I most vividly remember the first time (it was about our sixth meeting) either of the teachers dared leave me alone with their class. Apparently Frances had decided that I had things sufficiently well in hand that she could, when necessary, leave the room to take care of other things. Unfortunately she chose a particularly antsy day. The youngsters were having a hard time getting into what we were doing. As soon as she left, the decibel level of the undercurrent rose noticeably, and by the time she returned we were on the verge of an all-out spitball war. There were other times as well when the class was not fully attentive. But these were the exception rather than the rule. For the most part, the youngsters were very interested in the things we did. And it is a good thing they were, for I had little idea of what to do when things got out of hand.

We spent the first class just getting to know each other. I tried very hard to learn their names (they were delighted when I missed one and insisted that I put the proper name with the right face), and to reveal to them the kind of person I am. It was very important that we think of each other as individuals, so that we would listen with care to what each other was saying.

Future classes would be spent engaging in a variety of activities. Sometimes we just discussed some of the issues and ideas introduced in Harry. Other times we engaged in an activity such as role-playing or making up skits. Still other times we did logic or other kinds of exercises. It seemed to me that the best way to keep the youngster's interest and enthusiasm was to vary the routine as much as possible. And the Instructional Manual to Accompany Harry Stottlemeyer's Discovery served as an excellent, continuing and stimulating aid in this regard.

When the first day's classes were finally over, I felt both exhausted and exhilarated. The day's tension had taken its toll, but I had survived. And my worst fears were allayed. Yet I could hardly anticipate the kinds of reactions that lay ahead. The students thoroughly enjoyed the class. This became clear both through their participation in and cooperation with what we were doing and their requests to have more philosophy time. They also learned some logic in spite of the fact that our limited time frame resulted in a de-emphasis of the formal logic in Harry. But to this day (approximately a year and a half later), the youngsters I run into in the class invariably try to trick me with a sentence that either does or does not remain true when reversed.

And finally, the youngsters got the opportunity to discuss many things that I could tell they had wondered about, but never had the opportunity to discuss: Can animals think? Do we have free will? Are thoughts real? And so on. Every youngster in each class had a genuine interest in at least some of these issues.

The two regular teachers also were extremely pleased and enthusiastic. They sometimes bowed to the insistance of the youngsters and would continue a discussion I had started into the next class period. Also, in spite of the fact that we lost about seven days to snow that winter, they never even suggested that perhaps philosophy should be discontinued so that they could have more time to catch up in English, math and social studies. And finally, they decided to use Harry Stottlemeyer's Discovery themselves the following year. Indeed, one of my greatest thrills would be to return the next year, and, after being introduced as Harry's father, watch Frances and Mike teach their own philosophy course.

But most importantly, little could I anticipate how I would change because of this experience. First I earned the credentials I was concerned with. I could speak with people in the College of Education from a position of mutual respect, and was successful in introducing course work aimed at preparing people to teach philosophy for children. Second, I thoroughly enjoyed the experience, and I liked the time I spent with the youngsters. I was refreshed by their inquisitiveness and their relatively uninhibited ways — a remarkable change of pace from the college students I had been teaching for so many years. And finally, I greatly appreciated the challenge the experience presented. I had to present the material and structure the activities in a way that sixth graders could relate to. And I also had to listen carefully to what they were saying. I found that they are capable of understanding and expressing very interesting and sophisticated ideas.

This, of course, is the challenge that faces all teachers. But it is especially acute with children. Because they are a captive audience and wear their discontent on their sleeves so to speak, one cannot afford to lose them. College students will either stop coming, go to sleep, or do some homework. Not sixth graders! You had better deliver. This realization both increased my respect for those who teach at the elementary and secondary levels and made me a better teacher. As a result of my experience with the youngsters I work harder at making my college classes interesting and listen more carefully to what my students are saying.

And what about my son; the one who put Harry down after only two chapters of boredom? Fortunately, he had the opportunity to spend approximately 10 weeks studying Harry when he got to Junior High. And given an environment in which he could discuss Harry with a teacher and his peers, he would come home bubbling with enthusiasm each night. In fact, during his journey with Harry, Lisa and their friends, we spent many a dinner hour talking philosophy.

Most vivid in my mind is the evening he came home overflowing with the distinction between invention and discovery (they had been discussing why the book is called Harry Stottlemeyer's Discovery rather than Harry Stottlemeyer's Invention). We spent over two hours at the dinner table with the four children, my wife and myself each giving his/her view of the distinction, and then grappling with hard cases thrown up by the others. It was a real delight and it was a full six months before the youngest child (she was 8 at the time) stopped pleading with us to continue discussing the invention/discovery distinction at table.
Frances Brent

I am Lou Katzner’s Frances of the preceding article. Mike Campbell and I are the “Dynamic Duo” that attempts to lead the sixth grade students of Conneaut Elementary upward and onward, into the exhilarating atmosphere and uncertain footing of philosophical speculation and discipline.

During Harry’s time (Harry Stottlemier’s Discovery is “philosophy time”), there are raging discussions among the children about identity and self. Mike and I are the referees. With a bow to Shakespeare and Gertrude Stein, our sixth graders are off and running: Are you you if you lose a leg? Would you be you if your name were Herman instead of Tom? Would you be you if you’d been raised by different parents? A calm discussion period it is not, with hands waving, bodies bouncing, faces reddening. Amazingly they are listening to each other. There are plenty of opinions; the few repetitions are of the “I agree with...” kind.

Later the children settle down with their journals and list the things that make them them. Another day they write “I’m me” poems. There is no problem in settling to either task. They set about writing poems with great dispatch and much eagerness to share. Fifty-five out of fifty-six hand in their poems, ...the fifty-sixth, well, he wrote one, but it was private. So be it. Anyone who has worked with sixth graders knows the eagerness and willingness described are not easy to achieve. (Poetry writing without a protest with sixth graders knows the eagerness and willingness described are not easy to achieve."

Mike and I stayed in the classroom (except when pressured by dire emergen-
cies that beset elementary school children) not to protect Lou, as he thought, but to protect the youngsters. Our fears, like his, were groundless. An equally powerful reason for staying was to be learners ourselves. For an elementary teacher I have a fairly strong background in philosophy. (four courses at UC Berkeley), but that was twenty years ago. I know how much I don’t know. Mike and I are brave, but bravery implies fear, and we were a mass of insecurities. Before we launched into anything we wanted to get all the knowledge and help we could get.

We had another reason for remaining in the room with Lou and the kids. The program would fail to deliver if it began and ended when our pet philosopher walked in and out the door. We wanted the questions raised, the techniques explored, the problems unresolved, the speculations voiced, the excitement felt, to become a part of the entire curriculum. We had to know what was going on so we could exploit opportunities during math, social studies, science, grammar, reading and writing. The natural tie to philosophy turned up daily and we had real basic we feel is philosophy, love of wisdom, that honors the human capacity to create, wonder, question and experiment. What better basic for all the “BASICS” than, as Harry would say, “thinking about thinking?”

Last year we were on our own with just one visit from Lou, and Wednesday afternoon was Harry’s time. We put both classes in one room. Mike came in with hat, umbrella and dark glasses and WAS the grown up Harry. When he wore out, and the sessions were exhausting — even the kids went home dragging — I would pick up the discussion and we would bounce ideas and questions back and forth and try to keep peace. Interestingly enough, many a shrinking violet among the children turned into a tiger lily, and some of the academic “stars” faded, bothered by the lack of final, absolute answers.

An incident demonstrated to us how much Harry had become part of the curriculum. At grade-card time we asked the youngsters to give themselves a grade and a progress report in each subject. The report card does not list philosophy. With no adult prompting all but four students included it on their self-evaluation papers.

Some comments from our eleven year old thinkers:

“First I wish you’d tell us what is real.”

“Get so confused sometimes with Harry.”

“It’s not my favorite subject, but it’s fun.”

“This is fine but confusing. Sometimes I want to answer a question badly, but I’m afraid it will be a dumb answer.”

“I love Harry.”

“I really like it. It’s my favorite subject. I like thinking about things like that.” (This from a shrinking violet who turned tiger during philosophy).

“In Harry I would like to get in the action more.”

“I’m starting to understand Harry.”

Of course, as responsible teachers, we used all the school books provided, and followed all the curriculum guides and finished all the units prescribed for our grade level, but Harry was the basis from which we worked and planned. Excitement makes for efficient learning. My point, of course, is that there is time for philosophy, if you want to find it.

We monitor standardized tests very carefully, checking results against both national and local norms. The results were reassuring. It would be interesting to find a matching sample within the system, to see if Harry has had a measurable impact. It’s not idle curiosity, it is a matter of public policy.
On The Role Of Logic In Education

Now although a man needs not the theory of a method in order to apply it as it has been applied already, yet in order to adapt to his own science the method of another with which he is less familiar, and to properly modify it so as to suit it to its new use, an acquaintance with the principles upon which it depends will be of the greatest benefit. For that sort of work a man needs to be more than a specialist; he needs such a general training of his mind and such knowledge as shall show him how to make his powers most effective in a new direction. That knowledge is logic.

In short, if my view is a true one, a young man wants a physical education and an aesthetic education, an education in the ways of the world and a moral education, and with all these logic has nothing in particular to do; but so far as he wants an intellectual education, it is precisely logic that he wants; and whether it be in one lecture-room or another, his ultimate purpose is to improve his logical power and his knowledge of methods.


Leibniz on the Role of Logic in Education

In 1714, just a year before his death, Leibniz wrote Nicolas Remond of his early interest in philosophy:

"I discovered Aristotle as a lad, and even the Scholastics did not repel me; even now I do not regret this. But then Plato too, and Plotinus, gave me some satisfaction, not to mention other ancient thinkers whom I consulted later. After having finished the trivial schools, I fell upon the moderns, and I recall walking in a grove on the outskirts of Leipzig called the Rosental, at the age of fifteen, and deliberating whether to preserve substantial forms or not. Mechanism finally generally too crude for the more advanced sciences. Yet when it comes to important matters, he argues, where the danger of error is extremely great, "we do well to analyze matters most industriously and reduce everything to the simplest and most easily grasped inferences," just as we accept small change in bunches, but would prefer to count diamonds on our fingers. Logic gives our reasonings form, and form is Important: "we can change a ball of twine into a Gordian knot by trying to unwind it in a disorderly way."

Knowledge of logic is of value to young people learning to reason, Leibniz goes on to say, just as knowledge of perspective is of value to artists. People like Gabriel Wagner find logic superficial and unconvincing because "no one takes the form or the orderly process seriously but uses it only for the amusement of youth or rather, hardly tries to use it at all." The fault lies not with logic, but with the failure of logicians to demonstrate its applicability to life situations: "when a logician gives a rule without an example, it is like trying to learn to duel with mere verbal instructions." It is clear that Leibniz's contentions as to the educational value of logic have lost little of their relevance, particularly in the light of present-day efforts to organize the curriculum. The focus of a liberal education is so well stated by Leibniz that this essay is reprinted in this journal to show the importance which philosophers gave to logic and to the contribution such training can make to the development of the mind.
...as soon as I began to learn logic, I was greatly stirred by the classification and order which I perceived in its principles. I came at once to notice that there must be something great in it, as far as a lad of thirteen could notice such a thing...
Samuel Taylor Coleridge

In 1797, Coleridge began writing a sequence of autobiographical letters to his friend, Thomas Poole. What follows is an excerpt from his letter of October 16, 1797, in which he is talking of himself at the age of eight:

I read every book that came in my way without distinction; and my father was fond of me, and used to take me on his knee and hold long conversations with me. I remember that at eight years old I walked with him one winter evening from a farmer's house a mile from Ottery, and he told me the names of the stars and how Jupiter was a thousand times larger than our world, and that the other twinkling stars were suns that had worlds rolling round them; and when I came home he showed me how the ed round. I heard him with a profound delight and admiration: but without the least mixture of wonder or incredulity. For from my early reading of fairy tales and genii, etc., etc., my mind had been habituated to the Vast, and I never regarded my senses in any way as the criteria of my belief. I regulated all my creeds by my conceptions, not by my sight, even at that age. Should children be permitted to read romances, and relations of giants and magicians and genii? I know all that has been said against it; but I have formed my faith in the affirmative. I know no other way of giving the mind a love of the Great and the Whole. Those who have been led to the same truths step by step, through the constant testimony of their senses, seem to me to want a sense which I possess. They contemplate nothing but parts, and all parts are necessarily little. And the verse to them is but a mass of little things. It is true, that the mind may become credulous and prone to superstition by the former method; but are not the experimentalists credulous even to madness in believing any absurdity, rather than believe the grandest truths, if they have not the testimony of their own senses in their favour? I have known some who have been rationally educated, as it is styled. They were marked by a microscopic acuteness, but when they looked at great things, all became a blank and they saw nothing, and denied (very logically) that anything could be seen, and uniformly put the negation of a power for the possession of a power, and called the want of imagination judgment and the never being moved to capture philosophy!

Marie Jeanne Philpon, Madame Roland

Madame Roland was born in 1754, and at the age of eleven entered the Maison des Dames de la Congregation, in Paris. After two years, she reports, "a change came o'er the spirit of her dream," and instead of Fenelon and Bossuet she came to prefer the encyclopedists of the day, especially those whose philosophical ethics tended to be naturalistic and stoical. But it was not until she was nineteen that she read Rousseau, which seemed to her a revelation. In 1793 she was arrested and imprisoned, although it is said that there was "no tangible accusation" of wrongdoing. She spent the period of her imprisonment in study, and in the composition of her political memoirs, a brief portion of which is reprinted here. After five months she was condemned by the Revolutionary Tribunal and guillotined.

Here is Madame Roland describing her reading at the age of nine, and still finding merit in the time she devoted, at that early age, to the philosophy of education:

Plutarch seemed to be exactly the intellectual food that suited me. I shall never forget the Lent of 1763, at which time I was nine years of age, when I carried it to church instead of the exercises of Holy Week. It is from that period that I may date the impressions and ideas which rendered me a republican, without my dreaming of ever becoming one. "Telemachus," and "Jerusalem Delivered," interfered a little with the current of these majestic thoughts. The tender Fenelon moved my heart, and Tasso fired my imagination. Sometimes I read aloud at my mother's request, of which I was by no means fond, as it diverted me from that close attention which constituted my delight, and obliged me to proceed with less rapidity. But would have plucked out my tongue rather than have read in that manner the episodes of the Island of Calypso, and a number of passages in Tasso. My respiration quickened, a sudden glow over-spread my countenance, and an agitation followed, which my faltering voice would have betrayed. With Telemachus I
was Eucharis, and Herminia with Tancred. Completely transformed into those heroines, I thought not as yet of being something myself with some other personage. None of my reflections came home to me. I looked around me for nothing. I was the very characters themselves, and saw only the objects which existed on their account. It was a kind of waking dream, that led to nothing more substantial.

I recollect, however, having seen with considerable emotion a young painter of the name of Taboral, who came occasionally to my father’s house. He was about twenty, his voice was soft, his features languishing, and he blushed like a girl. When I heard him in the workshop, I had always a crayon or something else to seek; but as the sight of him embarrassed no less than it pleased me, I ran out again more speedily than I entered, with a palpitation of my heart and a trembling of my limbs that I hastened to conceal in my little closet. I can readily believe, that, with such a disposition, assisted by leisure and a certain kind of company, both my imagination and my person might have been greatly affected.

Edmund Gosse

Edmund Gosse (1849-1928) was a well-known British critic who helped introduce Ibsen to the English public, and did much to revive interest in John Donne, Sir Thomas Browne and Henry Fielding. His Father and Son was intended to be a document “of educational and religious conditions which have passed away and will never return.” It is not merely autobiography, therefore, but “a study of the development of moral and educational ideas during the progress of infancy.”

In the course of this, my sixth year, there happened a series of minute and soundless incidents which, elementary as they may seem when told, were second in real importance to none in my mental history. The recollection of them confirms me in the opinion that certain leading features in each human soul are inherent to it, and cannot be accounted for by suggestion or training. In my own case, I was most carefully withdrawn, like Princess Blanchefleur in her marble fortress, from every outside influence whatever, yet to me the instinctive life came as unexpectedly as her lover came to her in the basket of roses. What came to me was the consciousness of self, as a force and as a companion, and it came as the result of one or two shocks, which I will relate.

In consequence of hearing so much about an Omniscient God, a being of supernatural wisdom and penetration who was always with us, who made, in fact, a fourth in our company, I had come to think of Him, not without awe, but with absolute confidence.
of me. I sat there, turned to stone within, but outwardly sympathetic and with unchecked appetite.

We attribute, I believe, too many moral ideas to little children. It is obvious that in this tremendous juncture I ought to have been urged forward by good instincts, or held back by naughty ones. But I am sure that the fear which I experienced for a short time, and which so unexpectedly melted away, was a purely physical one. It had nothing to do with the motions of a contrite heart. As purely physical one. it had nothing to do with the destruction of the fountain, I was sorry about that, for my own sake, since I admired the skipping water extremely and so surprisingly - deceived my own breast.

In the first place, the theory that my Father was omniscient or infallible was now dead and buried. He probably knew very little; in this case he had not known a fact of such importance that if you did not know that, it could hardly matter what you knew. My Father, as a deity, as a natural force of immense prestige, fell in my eyes to a human level. In future, his statements about things in general need not be accepted implicitly. But of all the thoughts which rushed upon me and which led me, with an almost unwise alacrity, to seek solace in the back-garden, were not moral at all, they were intellectual. I was not ashamed of having successfully - and so surprisingly - deceived my parents by my crafty silence; I looked upon that as a providential escape, and dismissed all further thought of it. I had other things to think of.

The garret was a fairy place. It was a low lean-to, lighted from the roof. It was wholly unfurnished, except for two ob­jects, an ancient hat-box and a still more ancient skin-trunk. The hat-box puzzled me extremely, till one day, asking my Father what it was, I got a distracted answer which led me to believe that it was itself a sort of hat, and I made a laborious but repeated effort to wear it. The skin-trunk was absolutely empty, but the inside of the lid of it was lined with sheets of what I now know to have been a sensational novel. It was, of course, a fragment, but I read it, kneeling on the bare floor, with indescribable rapture. It will be recollected that the idea of fiction, of a deliberately invented story, was done, I had hours and hours of complete solitude, in my Father’s study, in the back-garden, above all in the garret.

The preoccupation of my parents was spoiling me more and more upon my own resources. But what are the resources of a solitary child of six? I was never inclined to make friends with servants, nor did our successive maids proffer, so far as I recollect, any advances. Perhaps, with my ‘dedication’ and my grown-up ways, I was never a sensational novel. I continued to have no companions, or even acquaintances of my own age. I am unable to recollect exchanging two words with another child till after my Father’s death.

The abundant energy which my Mother now threw into her public work did not affect the quietude of our private life. We had some visitors in the daytime, people who came to consult one parent or the other. But they never stayed to a meal, and we never returned their visits. I do not quite know how it was that neither of my parents took me into any of the sights of London, although I am sure it was a question of principle with them. Notwithstanding all our study of natural history, I was never introduced to live wild beasts at the Zoo, nor to dead ones at the British Museum. I can understand better why we never visited a picture-gallery or a concert-room. So far as I can recollect, the only time I was ever taken to any place of entertainment was when my Father and I paid a visit, long anticipated, to the Great Globe in Leicester Square. This was a huge structure, the interior of which one ascended by means of a spiral staircase. It was a poor affair; that was concave in it which should have been convex, and my imagination was deeply affronted. I could invent a far better Great Globe than that in my mind’s eye in the garret.

Being so restricted, then, and yet so active, my mind took refuge in an infantile species of natural magic. This contended with the definite ideas of religion which my parents were continuing, with too mechanical a persistency, to force into my nature, and it ran parallel with them. I formed strange superstitions, which I can only render intelligible by

"But of all the thoughts which rushed upon my savage and undeveloped little brain at this crisis, the most curious was that I had found a companion and a confidant in myself."
naming some concrete examples. I persuaded myself that, if I could only discover the proper words to say or the proper passes to make, I could induce the gorgeous birds and butterflies in my Father's illustrated manuals to come to life, and fly out of the book, leaving holes behind them. I believed that, when, at the Chapel, we sang, drearily and slowly, loud hymns of experience and humiliation, I could boom forth with a sound equal to that of dozens of singers, if I could only hit upon the formula. During morning and evening prayers, which were extremely lengthy and fatiguing, I fancied that two selves could flit up, and sit clinging to the cornice, and look down on my other self and the rest of us, if I could only find the key. I laboured for hours in search of these formulas, thinking to compass my ends by means absolutely irrational. For example, I was convinced that if I could only count consecutive numbers long enough, without losing one, I should suddenly, on reaching some far-distant figure, find myself in possession of the great secret. I feel quite sure that nothing external suggested these ideas of magic, and I think it probable that they approached the ideas of savages at a very early state of development.

All this ferment of mind was entirely unobserved by my parents. But when I formed the belief that it was necessary, for the success of my practical magic, that I should hurt myself, and when, as a matter of fact, I began, in extreme secrecy, to run pins into my flesh and bang my joints with books, no one will be surprised to hear that my Mother's attention was drawn to the fact that I was looking 'delicate'. The notice nowadays universally given to the hygienic rules of life was rare fifty years ago and among deeply religious people, in particular, fatalistic views of disease prevailed. If any one was ill, it showed that 'the Lord's hand was extended in chastisement', and much prayer was poured forth in order that it might be explained to the sufferer, or to his relations, in what he or they had sinned. People would, for instance, go on living over a cess-pool, working much prayer was poured forth in order that if one part of me gave way, and could not resist the other part in some extraordinary sense seemed standing aloof, much impressed. I was alone with my Father when this crisis suddenly occurred, and I was interested to see that he was greatly alarmed. It was a very long time since we had spent a day out of London, and I said, on being coaxed back to calmness, that I wanted 'to go in to the country'. Like the dying Falstaff, I, babbled of green fields. My Father, after a little reflection, proposed to take me to Primrose Hill. I had never heard of the place, and names have always appealed directly to my imagination. I was in the highest degree delighted, and could hardly restrain my impatience. As soon as possible we set forth westward, my hand in my Father's, with the liveliest anticipations. I expected to see a mountain absolutely carpeted with primroses, a terrestrial galaxy like that which covered the hill that led up to Montgomery Castle in Donne's poem. But at length, as we walked from the Chalk Farm direction, a miserable acclivity stole into view — surrounded, even in those days, on most sides by houses, with its grass worn to the buff by millions of boots, and resembling what I meant by 'the country' about as much as Poplar resembles Paradise. We sat down on a bench at its inglorious summit, whereupon I burst into tears, and in a heart-rending whisper sobbed, 'Oh! Pappa, let us go home!'

This was the lachrymose epoch in a career not otherwise given to weeping, for I must tell one more tale of tears.

About this time, — the autumn of 1855, — my parents were disturbed more than once in the twilight, after I had been put to bed, by shrieks from my crib. They would rush up to my side, and find me in great distress, but would be unable to discover the cause of it. The fact was that I was half beside myself with ghostly fears, increased and pointed by the fact that there had been some daring burglaries on our street. Our servant-maid, who slept at the top of the house, had seen, or thought she saw, upon a moonlight night, the figure of a crouching man, silhouetted against the sky, slip down from the roof and leap into her room. She screamed, and he fled away. Moreover, as if this were not enough for my tender nerves, there had been committed a horrid murder, at a baker's shop just round the corner in the Caledonian Road, to which murder: actually was given to us by the fact that my Mother had been 'just thinking' of going there with her 'last packet of spilikins."

But what made me scream over nights was that when my Mother had tucked me up in bed and had heard me say my prayer, and had prayed aloud on her knees at my side, and had stolen downstairs, noises immediately began in the room. There was a rustling of clothes, and a slapping of hands, and a gurgling, and a snifling, and a trotting. These horrible muffled sounds would go on, and die away, and be resumed; I would pray very fervently to God to save me from my enemies; and sometimes I would go to sleep. But on other occasions, my faith and fortitude alike gave way, and I screamed, 'Mama! Mama!' Then would my parents come bounding up the stairs, and comfort me, and kiss me, and assure me it was nothing. And nothing it was while they were there, but no sooner had they gone than the ghostly riot recommenced. It was at last discovered by my Mother that the whole mischief was due to a card of framed texts, fastened by one nail to the wall; this did nothing when the bedroom door was shut, but when it was left open (in order that my parents might hear me call), the card began to gallop in the draught, and made the most intolerable noises.

...my Mother was much baffled by the logic of my argument.

Several things tended at this time to alienate my conscience from the line which my Father had so rigidly traced for it. The question of the efficacy of prayer, which has puzzled wiser heads than mine was, began to trouble me. It was insisted on in our household that if anything was desired, you should not, as my Mother said, 'lose any time in seeking for it, but ask God to guide you to it'. In many junctures of life this is precisely what, in sober fact, they did. I will not dwell here on their theories, which my Mother put forth, with unflinching directness, in her published writings. But I found that a difference was made between my privileges in this matter and theirs, and this led to many discussions. My parents said: 'Whatever you need, tell Him and He will grant it, if it is His will.' Very well; I had need of a large painted humming-top which I had seen in a shop-window in the Caledonian Road. Accordingly, I introduced a supplication for this object into my evening prayer, carefully adding the words: 'If it is Thy will.' This, I recollect, placed my Mother in a dilemma, and she consulted my Father. Taken, I suppose, at a disadvantage, my Father told me I must not pray
for 'things like that'. To which I answered by another query, 'Why?' And I added that he said we ought to pray for things we needed, and that I needed the humming-top a great deal more than I did the conversion of the heathen or the restitution of Jerusalem to the Jews, two objects of my nightly supplication which left me very cold.

I have reason to believe, looking back upon this scene, conducted by candle-light in the front parlour, that my Father was much baffled by the logic of my argument. She had gone so far as to say publicly that no 'things or circumstances are too insignificant to bring before the God of the whole earth'. I persisted that this covered the case of the humming-top, which was extremely significant to me. I noticed that she held aloof from the discussion, which was carried on with some show of annoyance by my Mother. He had never gone quite so far as she did in regard to this question of praying for material things. I am not sure that she was convinced that I ought to have been checked; but he could not help seeing that it reduced their favourite theory to an absurdity for a small child to exercise the privilege. He ceased to argue, and told me preemminently that it was not right for me to pray for things like humming-tops, and that I must do it no more. His authority, of course, was paramount, and I yielded; but my faith in the efficacy of prayer was a good deal shaken. The fatal suspicion had crossed my mind that the reason why I was not to pray for the top was because it was too expensive for my parents to buy, that being the usual excuse for not getting this I wished for.

It was about the date of my sixth birthday that I did something very naughty, some act of direct disobedience, for which my Father, after a solemn sermon, chastised me, sacrificially, by giving me several cuts with a cane. This action was justified, as everything he did was justified, by reference to Scripture — 'Spare the rod and spoil the child'. I suppose that there are some children, of a sullen and lymphatic temperament, who are smartened up and made more wide-awake by a whipping. It is largely a matter of convention, the exercise being endured (I am told) with pride by the infants of our aristocracy, but not tolerated by the lower classes. I am afraid that I proved my inherent vulgarity by being made, not contrite or humble, but furiously angry by this caning. I cannot account for the flame of rage which it awakened in my bosom. My dear, excellent Father had beaten me, not very severely, without ill-temper, and with the most genuine desire to improve me. But he was not well-advised especially so far as the 'dedication to the Lord's service' was concerned. This same 'dedication' had ministered to my vanity, and there are some natures which are not improved by being humiliated. I have to confess with shame that I went about the house for some days with a murderous hatred of my Father locked within my bosom. He did not suspect that the chastisement had not been wholly efficacious, and he bore me no malice; so that after a while, I forgot and thus forgave him. But I do not regard physical punishment as a wise element in the education of proud and sensitive children.

My theological misdeeds culminated, however, in an act so puerile and preposterous that I should not venture to record it if it did not throw some glimmering of light on the subject which I have proposed to myself in writing these pages. My mind continued to dwell on the mysterious question of prayer. It puzzled me greatly to know why, if we were God's children, and if he was watching over us by night and day, we might not supplicate for toys and sweets and smart clothes as well as for the conversion of the heathen. Just at this juncture, we had a special service at the Room, at which our attention was particularly called to what we always spoke of as 'the field of missionary labour'. The East was represented among 'the saints' by an excellent Irish peer, who had, in his early youth, converted and married a lady of colour; this Asiatic shared in our Sunday morning meetings, and was an object of helpless terror to me; I shrank from her amiable caresses, and vaguely identified her with a personage much spoken of in our family circle, the 'Personal Devil'.

All these matters drew my thoughts to the subject of idolatry, which was severely censured at the missionary meeting. I cross-examined my Father very closely as to the nature of this sin, and pinned him down to the categorical statement that idolatry consisted in praying to any one or anything but God himself. Wood and stone, in the words of the hymn, were peculiarly liable to be bowed down to by the heathen in their blindness. I pressed my Father further on this subject, and he assured me that God would be very angry, and would signify His anger if anyone, in a Christian country, bowed down to wood and stone. I cannot recall why I was so pertinacious on this subject, but I remember that my Father became a little restive under my cross-examination. I determined, however, to test the matter for myself, and one morning, when both my parents were safely out of the house, I prepared for the great act of heresy. I was in the morning-room on the ground-floor, where, with much labour, I hoisted a small chair on to the table close to the window. My heart was now beating as if it would leap out of my side, but I pursued my experiment. I knelt down on the carpet in front of the table and looking up I said my daily prayer in a loud voice, only substituting the address 'O Chair' for the habitual one.

"...If I could only find the key. I laboured for hours in search of these formulas, thinking to compass my ends by means absolutely irrational..."

Having carried this act of idolatry safely through, I waited to see what would happen. It was a fine day, and I gazed up at the slip of white sky above the houses opposite, and I expected something to appear in it. God would certainly exhibit his anger in some terrible form, and would chastise my impious and wilful action. I was very much alarmed, but still more excited; I breathed the high, sharp air of defiance. But nothing happened; there was not a cloud in the sky, not an unusual sound in the street. Presently I was quite sure that nothing would happen. I had committed idolatry, flagrantly and deliberately, and God did not care.

The result of this ridiculous act was not to make me question the existence and power of God; those were forces which I did not dream of ignoring. But what it did was to lessen still further my confidence in my Father's knowledge of the Divine mind. My Father had said, positively, that if I worshipped a thing made of wood, God would manifest his anger. I had then worshipped a chair, made (or partly made) of wood, and God had made no sign whatever. My father, therefore, was not really acquainted with the Divine practice in cases of idolatry. And with that, dismissing the subject, I dived again into the unplumbed depths of the Penny Cyclopaedia.

"...philosophy may even be defined as the general theory of education."

—John Dewey
Some Educational Presuppositions of $P_4C$

Matthew Lipman & Ann Margaret Sharp

Recent interest in the educational possibilities of philosophy as an elementary school subject suggests that attention should be given to what this curious innovation must presuppose. Exploration of such presuppositions might in turn throw light on the always murky connections between education and philosophy.

In the past, discussions about philosophy for young people have assumed that the students would be no younger than of secondary school age. The prospect of encouraging philosophical reflection among elementary school children was literally unthinkable.

Such discussions have further tended to assume that the difficulties hitherto experienced in presenting philosophy to young people lay in the inherent complexity of the subject, to say nothing of an abstractness which made it much too dreary and forbidding for children. Consequently, efforts to introduce philosophy to young people were limited to seeking ways of making the subject simpler and more palatable. But of course one can go only so far in that direction, and so it was assumed that one should concentrate upon providing philosophical enrichment to the concluding secondary school years of some of the brighter students.

These presuppositions were of course part and parcel of an older theory of education, for which the learning process consisted in nothing more than the transmission of the contents of human knowledge from the old to the young, much as a parent bird might drop bits of food into the yawning mouths of its offspring. The alternative theory of education — that more or less taken for granted by proponents of philosophy for children — has it that the educational process must generate thinking activities among those so taught. Accordingly, it is presumed that as the proper teaching of history generates historical thinking and the proper teaching of mathematics generates mathematical thinking, so the proper teaching of philosophy must generate philosophical thinking, regardless of the age of the students. It is characteristic of this approach to assume that philosophical thinking involves a manifest facility in manipulating philosophical concepts so as to be able to take them apart and put them together in new ways.

Those who contend that philosophy for children is capable of encouraging philosophical thinking generally express assurance that virtually all children have both the interest and the ability to engage in such activity. Our traditional reluctance to discuss matters philosophical with children is the product of our reliance upon an archaic theory of education. Having observed few children eager to browse through Kant or even to peruse the livelier passages of Aristotle, having met with little success in our efforts to convey directly the impact and urgency of the greatest happiness principle, we have been led to draw the irresistible inference that there is an unbridgeable chasm between the disciplin

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Underlying the newer approach is the notion that there are ways of engaging children in philosophical activities long before they are competent to read anything in the traditional philosophical repertoire. The paradoxes of appearance and reality, permanence and change, unity and diversity, are enchanting to them from early childhood, perhaps a decade or two before they are prepared to tackle Heraclitus or Parmenides. Like the pre-Socratics, children tend to be terse. But in the animated classroom dialogues in which children love to participate, such economies of phrasing add a welcome sparkle to the discussion. Children for whom the formal presentations of philosophy are anathema may find hints of the same ideas enthrancing when embedded in the vehicle of a child-

ren's story. Young people who find the writing of a philosophical essay unthinkable can be induced to express philosophical notions in verse form with little apparent reluctance.

If one educational premise that philosophy for children takes for granted is that there is a clear distinction between thinking about a subject and thinking in a subject, another such premise is that there is a distinction, although one that is not so easily demarcated, between thinking and thinking for oneself. Since the latter is an instance of the former, it is subject no less than the former to appraisal in terms of logical criteria. But if one of the things thinking in its broader sense entails is figuring out what follows from premises, then thinking for oneself involves inferring what follows from one's own premises. Thinking for oneself implies the intensified focus upon the child's own interests and point of view which is a prerequisite for presenting philosophy to children in an appealing fashion. It enables one to work out one's own beliefs and discover good reasons for their justification; to figure out what follows from one's own assumptions; to hammer out in one's mind one's own perspective on the world; and to be clear about one's own values, one's own distinctive ways of interpreting one's experience. Philosophy for children does not assume that thinking for oneself, because it is thinking that is relevantly applied, needs any greater emphasis than one would give to encouraging children to acquire more general sorts of reasoning skills. But certainly, in the case of children, it does not require any lesser emphasis.

"...shared inquiry comes to be seen as the positive counterpart of thinking for oneself."

Philosophy for children can be expected to flourish in a heterogeneous classroom where students speak out of a variety of life styles and experiences, where different beliefs as to what is important are explicit, and where a plurality of thinking styles, rather than being deprecated, is considered inherently worthwhile. The slow thinker with the sound argument is accorded no less respect in the philosophy classroom than children who present their views quickly and articulately. The child who arrives at beliefs analytically is respected neither more nor less than the child who arrives at beliefs intuitively and speculatively, although for certain purposes — such as the justification of beliefs — one intellectual style may be preferable to another. Thus the variety of thinking styles in the classroom, coupled with a variety of backgrounds, values and life experiences, can contribute significantly to the creation of a community of inquiry. Furthermore, shared inquiry comes to be seen as the positive counterpart of thinking for oneself. When widely different approaches to problems are openly accepted, then invidious competition diminishes and the inputs from the different participants are welcomed.

One of the greatest obstacles to the practice of philosophy by children is the formidable terminology of the tradition. To engage in philosophical activity as a college undergraduate or graduate student is to learn to operate with a technical vocabulary sanctioned by 2500 years of usage. The prestige and power of that vocabulary are quite overwhelming. They certainly suffice to intimidate any child happening to venture between the covers of a philosophy book. For this very reason, philosophy for children requires the by-passing of that vocabulary. As nearly as possible, philosophical thinking among children should be encouraged to take place in the terms and concepts of the ordinary language with which children are comfortable.

"...as nearly as possible, philosophical thinking among children should be encouraged to take place in the terms and concepts of the ordinary language with which children are comfortable."
to work with ideas and to cherish them for their own sake is to be educationally irresponsible.

Among those who emphasize the instrumental function of philosophy, there are some who contend that philosophy for children can result in enhanced academic achievement in a wide range of disciplines. Whether or not this contention is correct is dependent upon suitable educational experimentation and measurement. Such research in the humanities has seemed to many people inappropriate. Thus it has been argued, in some instances very properly, that humanistic studies should not be compelled to justify themselves by virtue of empirical evidence that they promote academic improvement. Literature, for example, should not have to justify itself by showing that its study results in better grades in social science or mathematics.

A small number of those who believe philosophy is the study of thinking and reasoning, of the nature of the mind, of the principles and methods of inquiry, whose acquisition represents an instrument into the open environment. Certain conditions are prerequisite: the readiness to reason, mutual respect (of children towards one another, and of children and teachers towards one another), and an absence of indoctrination. Since these conditions are intrinsic to philosophy itself, part of its very nature, as it were, it is not surprising that the classroom should become a community of inquiry whenever it serves as an arena for the effective encouragement of children’s philosophical reflection.

This is not to say that philosophy for children entails an equalizing of the status of teacher and students. In the normal course of philosophical inquiry, such as in a classroom dialogue, the teacher may be presumed to possess authority with regard to the techniques and procedures by which such inquiry is to be prosecuted. It is the teacher’s responsibility to assure that proper procedures are being followed. But with respect to the give-and-take of philosophical discussion, the teacher must be open to the variety of views implicit among the students. The students must be urged by the teacher to make such views explicit, and to seek out their foundations and implications. What the teacher must certainly abstain from is any effort to abort the children's thinking before they have had a chance to see where their own ideas might lead. Manipulation of the discussion so as to bring the children to adopt the teacher’s personal convictions is likewise reprehensible.

That children should be encouraged to think for themselves and that teachers should be open to a variety of viewpoints may strike some educators as mischievously abetting a reflective relativism even more deleterious and subversive than a mindless relativism. Under the banner of ‘pluralism’, it may be contended, the convergence of views is precluded, agreement and assent are ruled out, and intellectual diversity becomes the order of the day. But this ignores the presupposition of the practice of philosophy, which would convert them into effective teachers of philosophy in the elementary school classroom. It is rather that existing teacher-training programs completely fail to prepare the teacher for this responsibility. For example, teachers are

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"When children are encouraged to think philosophically, the classroom is converted into a community of inquiry. Such a community is committed to the procedures of inquiry, to responsible search techniques which presuppose an openness to evidence and to reason. It is assumed that these procedures of the community, when internalized, become the reflective habits of the individual."

The construction of a community of inquiry is a more substantial achievement than the mere contrivance of an open environment. Certain conditions are prerequisites: the readiness to reason, mutual respect (of children
themselves are worthless when it comes a matter of preparing the teacher to encourage children to think philosophically. A college-level course in philosophy does not equip the teacher to translate the concepts and terminology of philosophy into a presentation which children will understand. Unless teachers are trained by means of identical instructional approaches as those which they will be expected to utilize in their own classrooms, their preparation will be a failure. If teachers are expected to conduct dialogues, then they must be provided with opportunities to engage in philosophical dialogues themselves and exposed to models who know how to facilitate discussions in a philosophical manner. If teachers are expected to elicit questioning behavior on the part of their students, then they must be taught by educators who themselves model such behavior in the teacher-training sessions. If teachers are expected to teach children how to reason, then they must be given practice in reasoning such as they will expect of their students. And needless to say, teachers in training must be encouraged to respect the procedures of inquiry if they are to induce their students to care about such procedures.

It is likewise evident that for effective classroom teaching, the basic curriculum in which the teachers themselves are trained should not be substantially different from the curriculum material they will employ in the elementary school. This is not to say that teachers are not be trained in greater depth than the children. Nuances and complexities of logic and philosophy can be explored more fully with the teacher, although in most situations these are not likely to come up explicitly in the classroom. But if the teacher is not familiarized in the training process with those materials, whatever they are, which will be used to encourage philosophical thinking among children, then again the problem of translation is placed wholly upon the shoulders of the teacher, and it is a burden no teacher should be asked to support.

It would be very difficult to construct a philosophy program for children without a moral education component, since questions of value are so frequently encountered in other aspects of philosophy and are of such importance to children. On the other hand, if it is to be included, it would be difficult to define it otherwise than as ethical inquiry. Students must not only be encouraged to express their beliefs as to what they consider important, but to discuss and analyze them, considering the reasons for and against holding them, until they can arrive at reflective value judgments which are more firmly founded and defensible than their original preferences may have been. Such inquiry necessarily will involve students in examining the criteria employed in favoring one value over another, and can even lead to children's investigating the criteria by which criteria themselves are selected. Giving children practice in determining the grounds on which some reasons are to be preferred over other reasons in justifying moral beliefs, training them to recognize inconsistencies in argument and getting them to see the relationships between theory and practice are likely to be of considerably more value than exposing children to the traditional schools of ethics which are taught in courses for adults.

"...the key concepts of ethics can no more be grasped by children without the assistance of philosophical interpretation than they can be grasped at the adult level..."

We have said that philosophy without ethics cannot readily be taught. Conversely, the supposition that moral education can be taught without exposing the child to other branches of philosophy is even more dubious. Ethical inquiry necessarily involves logical considerations such as the concept of a person or a community, aesthetic considerations such as part-whole relationships, as well as a whole range of epistemological considerations. Children, to all of whom the playing of games comes very easily, can be helped in a philosophical classroom to see the similarities and differences between the ways rules function in a game and the ways they are supposed to apply to moral conduct. Children's moral imagination may be fired by tales of saints and heroes, but if we are going to expect them to engage in moral conduct in a reflective and responsible fashion they are going to have to have some degree of philosophical understanding as to what sainthood and heroism are about. In short, the key concepts of ethics can no more be grasped by the child without the assistance of philosophical interpretation than they can be grasped at the adult level.

Our discussion concerning the presuppositions of philosophy for children has made no mention of the types of social settings that would be a prerequisite to the success of the program in elementary schools, as contrasted with those types that might dispose it to failure. Those who are venturesome enough to initiate such a program would do well to acquaint themselves in advance with the values and expectations of the community in which the program is being introduced. Philosophy presupposes a commitment to open inquiry, and such inquiry might or might not be welcome in certain areas. It can be contended, of course, that this is a good reason to expect the spread of philosophy for children to be extremely limited. But this is largely a matter of timing in educational innovation. A district with strong conventional values might not be the best place to initiate a program whose supporters cannot show a solid record of improved academic performance. On the other hand, once one can demonstrate the academic benefits from the program and can allay parental fears that philosophy will aggravate parent-child tensions or undermine parental values, the problem of introduction of such a program into elementary schools becomes much less formidable. Let the case of the hard-nosed administrator or parent be admitted: if philosophy for children is not good education, it has no place in the schools. The burden of proof is then shifted to the program itself to demonstrate the differences it can make in the students to whom it is taught.

"Thus one justification for teaching logic, other than to compel children to think rigorously themselves, is that it enables them to compel their opponents to think rigorously as well."

In this brief note I wish to call attention to three (amongst many) things which seem to me prerequisite for anything seriously to be described as teaching or learning philosophy — that is, in any even moderately institutionalised way: for instance, in schools, or any other place in which educators have to form a coherent policy. They are conceptual rather than empirical prerequisites: that is, a full and adequate logical analysis of some such phrase as 'a coherent educational policy for the learning/teaching of philosophy in schools' would, I think, be seen to entail these prerequisites. I shall not, however, attempt such a full explanation (a very long job), but rely rather on the reader's own conceptual competence.

The issues are worth raising, because (in my experience at least) not only are these three features not generally seen as necessary, but also (a) their necessity is not commonly discussed in any clear and overt way, and — worse — (b) done on the (perhaps unconscious) assumption that they are not necessary at all. If I am anywhere near right, that means that at least a great deal of time is being wasted, and that we are perhaps persuaded that people are learning philosophy when they are not.

1. Agreement about what philosophy is — No serious person of course thinks that the word 'philosophy' must, by some natural law, stand for some one enterprise. Nevertheless, if we are going to set philosophy before pupils as something to learn, we at least — and, presumably, they too at a pretty early stage — must have a fairly clear understanding of some one enterprise, or more than one, with the title 'philosophy'. By a 'clear understanding' I mean at least that we must be able to identify the discipline or form of thought: distinguish it from other types of thinking: state the criteria of success that govern it, in particular the type of truth and evidence peculiar to it. Unless all this penetrates into the mind of the pupil (presumably having first been in our minds), it is hard — I think impossible — to see how he could pursue the subject in any serious way. How could he tell whether he was doing it well or badly, getting things right or making mistakes? How could he know when he was philosophising as opposed to, say, moralising or stating facts or freely associating or talking in his sleep or anything else? The pupil may not be able to state the nature of philosophy with articulate exactness, any more than he can do this with mathematics or science or history: but we expect at least the tacit understanding of what kind of thinking and reasoning is supposed to go on that we find in these other fields. In particular, we expect the pupil to show that he knows (however tacitly) what sort of remarks are relevant to this particular form of enquiry.

Having said that, I find that I mind more about this as a general principle than about what enterprise we agree to attach to 'philosophy' as a title. However, if the principle be accepted, I find it hard to see any other sui generis enterprise with its own particular standards of evidence and type of truth except that which deals with what one might broadly call conceptual or logical enquiry. If philosophers are not to be moralists, empirical scientists, historians, spinners of myths, poets or anything else that is already catered for in other forms of thought, then (so far as I can see) they have to take on the peculiar job of showing how concepts are interconnected, what can intelligibly be said and what cannot, what is necessarily or logically true and what false. The rules and standards for this enquiry, fairly widely prac-
tised for some time in many countries and going back to Socrates, should not need elaboration here. Nor should it need to be said that the connections of this enquiry with formal logic, if they exist at all, are tenuous: very few of our concepts fit naturally into formal logic and most of the tangles we get into with them are not immediately to be solved by formal means. If we must choose contemporary or near-contemporary folk-heroes for this, one might mention Ayer, or Austin, or Wittgenstein or Hare: but Socrates is a better example, if only because no one can accuse him of being an ‘Oxford linguistic analyst’ (whatever that is). Socrates was simply trying to get clear what we mean and imply when we say certain things. Just how great a practical importance this has can also be seen in that example: we have merely to read Plato.

2. Acceptance of authorities — This prerequisite, largely neglected because unfashionable (‘undemocratic’?), is probably a logical corollary of the first. In being clear about what counts as successful engagement in any enterprise, we would also be clear about who are amongst those most successful, whether in the present or the past. Any serious student will wish to seek these out, try to learn from their success, and in some degree imitate them: not of course slavishly, and not accepting what they say as necessarily right, but appreciating that they wield the discipline better than he does. Without this sort of opportunity, it is hard to see how — in practice — a student could learn: any more than he could learn science without being brought up against the experiments and thinking of those who already think as effective scientists. He would have nothing to hang on to or look up to or take as even an illustration of what his own thinking ought to be.

Educationalists have been fearful of reducing disciplines to slavish copying (‘Take down the following six points from Professor X about free will and reproduce them in your next essay’); and in this state of terror have tended to slacken or abolish not only any serious kind of examinations or formal assessment, but also any solid belief in the existence of authority (in this broad sense), or of-expertise. Of course philosophy is not like learning one’s tables: but it is like something, something which has standards and experts and mistakes and getting it right, and can be examined (or, if ‘examine’ is terrifying, let us say ‘assessed’ or ‘verified’ or ‘checked up on’). (Indeed, it is part of the concept of being a serious teacher and learner that one wants such check-ups: how otherwise would one know how well one was doing?)

Particularly with new curricular subjects, introduced when this fashion or loss of nerve is at a high level, educators tend under the banner of such terms as ‘liberal’, ‘democratic’, or even (alas) ‘thinking for oneself’ to renounce any attempt to make the child confront excellence and measure himself against it. The assumption is that if we pay enough attention to the child, he will somehow find himself developing powers of serious philosophical thought out of a morass of discussion, ‘stimulating encounters’, controversial issues, public problems, ‘critical thinking’ and so forth. The alternative tactic of making the child pay attention to the discipline, philosophy, as something external to himself, rather difficult but also absorbing, something which is not there just to be tackled on to his own particular interests and prejudices, but is a rather stern taskmaster — this alternative is rarely even considered. No doubt some element of both is required. But a glance at almost any of the more recent materials (‘kits’ or ‘packs’: textbooks are regarded as hopelessly old-fashioned) will show, I think, how heavily the pendulum has swung in the former direction.

3. Respect for natural language — If ‘philosophy’ is at least to include, if not wholly consist of, getting clear about what we mean and imply, it seems necessary that the student must have some competence in a natural language, and some respect for it, before we can even get going. This sounds easy: in fact there are comparatively few people (and at times their number seems to be diminishing) of whom it is true. Philosophers may be (properly) contemptuous of the almost unbelievable rubbish and nonsense, for which ‘jargon’ is too kind a word, which appear in psychology, the social sciences, political theory and elsewhere: but the fact is that this linguistic practice has infected natural language — particularly perhaps English — to a remarkable degree. Even ‘ordinary conversations’, to which one might have in the past reliably referred in order to give some content to the idea of ‘what we would normally mean by...’ are now often intolerable high-minded and jargonized.

In this respect children are, perhaps, comparatively uncorrupted. But of course they suffer from, because they imitate, the linguistic practice of their elders; and I am not at all clear that much attempt is made to improve this in any respect which would help their philosophising. The fashion, again, is for something other than precision and clarity: for ‘open-endedness’, or ‘creative writing’, or whatever, rather than for the kind of training that was achieved, if only per accidens. By the close study of classical texts in Latin and Greek, the exact if not imaginative rendering of English passages into those languages, and (one might say) the classical tradition in general, now replaced by a Rousseau-esque romanticism. Of course it is right to emphasise linguistic poverty, lack of vocabulary and restricted powers of self-expression. But the kind of imagination, as well as the kind of precision, that philosophy needs is not, on the whole, nurtured by a romantic tradition.

These points may suggest (perhaps particularly the last) that philosophy is only suitable for a few children of high intelligence and motivation, prepared to accept authority and able to be trained in some severe preparatory discipline such as the classics — in fact (the angry reader may suppose) for those very few individuals who may go to private schools, enter elitist universities, and perhaps eventually become philosophy dons. That is not my view: but it is worth pointing out that it is not very far from Plato’s, though with mathematics in place of classics. Certainly there is no reason to believe that philosophy is easy. But (1) no subject or discipline, if seriously studied, is easy anyway (least of all enterprises like ‘creative writing’, whose vagueness is hardly grounds for any relaxation of standards), and some pupils will reach their limits before others do: and (2) as Plato also saw, the difficulties of philosophy may be as much temperamental as strictly intellectual (if that is the right way to make a distinction: I mean, it is not so much a matter of high I.Q. as of patience, seriousness, desire for clarity and other moral virtues). I see no reason why all children should not be introduced to philosophy and encouraged to make as much progress in it as they can: and I also believe, incidentally, that a universal programme for philosophy is much more plausible if ‘philosophy’ is taken more or less in the sense described earlier — that is, as the study of the meanings of words and the implications of concepts. Anything much more vague or high-minded — general discussions about ‘society’, for instance — would result in a general floundering.
"...I see no reason why all children should not be introduced to philosophy and encouraged to make as much progress in it as they can..."

Perhaps I might add, since I have been in the business for some years, that there is a fairly exact parallel with another new area, that of moral education. Here too (1) we need first to agree what is to count as 'moral education' or 'being educated in morality': many things could be done under this heading which would be boring or disastrous or opposed to each other. We also need (2) the idea, however cautiously worked out, that some people are or could be better at morality — more competent moral thinkers or even agents — than others: that it is not a free-for-all, but that there is such a thing as authority and expertise in this area as in any other. Even (3), the need to take language seriously, is far from unimportant, and there is such a thing as philosophers and experts in this area as in any other. Even (3), the need to take language seriously, is far from unimportant. Indeed, it is far from clear what the rules are.

To take yet another parallel, we (in the U.K.) have for some decades been floundering in the realm of religious education ('R.E.'). Most of us no longer have confidence in selling a particular creed: but what are we to do instead? Well, many different things are done, and the number of conferences, books, governmental suggestions, etc. about it is very considerable. But we have failed to answer — because we have failed even seriously to address — the question "What demarcates the sphere of religion, and what counts as performing well or badly in that sphere?" Consequently we give the children no idea of just what they are supposed to be educated in; and the school practice in R.E. is often a rag-bag of activities, some of which have little or no connection of any kind with religion. Similar points could be made about political education, now becoming fashionable in some quarters.

None of this means that I am at all unsympathetic to any — well, almost any — attempt to do something under these various headings. If the political or cultural situation is such that we do not have the clear agreement we need, no doubt some less clearly-based enterprise will at least keep the topic alive: and no doubt some of the things done under the heading will be of value. At least, one might say, the title is on the map: and perhaps greater clarity will follow later. Apart from the laudable and (comparatively) large-scale enterprises on the American continent, there are pockets of initiative elsewhere: the A Level philosophy papers in the university of Hong Kong, for instance, which I have had the privilege of moderating, seem to me a shining example of clarity. Less clear (because of political pluralism and uncertainty about what to do with 'philosophy') but also commendable are the 'Theory of Knowledge' papers in the International Baccalaureate, in which students are encouraged to reflect philosophically on various departments of knowledge and on subjects they study at the same time. There are, I am sure, many other examples.

However, I do not think we should deceive ourselves. The progress of any subject (think of science at the time of Galileo) depends essentially on methodological clarity. Unless and until we have a clear idea of how to do the subject, we inevitably spend much time in simply beating the air, creating an impression of activity and progress when we may simply be in a muddle. Time spent in decreasing this muddle is time well spent: better spent, perhaps, than in generating more activity. In philosophy particularly, it seems essential that teachers (as well as students) should be clear: and if means, if my repetition is not too boring, that they should be clear not so much about pedagogic techniques or about materials or techniques, but about the aims and the methodology.
In the summer of 1977 I was asked to set up an educational day camp program at the Sweeney Police Athletic League center on Snyder Avenue in Brooklyn, New York. I set up a philosophy for children program for 40 boys and girls of varied abilities between the ages of 8 and 14. The children were taught philosophy for one hour every morning, and in the afternoon they engaged in recreational activities.

In addition to my duties as director of the educational program I taught a group of children philosophy during their lunch hour. This was an enrichment group that was entirely optional. The children in this group were of very diverse abilities but they had in common a strong desire to learn. Since these children were already reading Harry Stottlemeyer's Discovery In the morning, I used Lisa for this lunch hour class. What follows is a transcript of a tape from one of our class meetings:

Miriam Minkowitz

**Discussion of Rights at Police Athletic League**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Miriam</th>
<th>—You like vegetables?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wayne</td>
<td>—Vegetables are wholesome for you. But my mother forces me to eat meat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miriam</td>
<td>—Your mother forces you. Why do you suppose she does that?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne</td>
<td>—She says that I am a little boy and I have to do whatever she says.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miriam</td>
<td>—She says that since you are a little boy you have to listen to what she says?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne</td>
<td>—But when I grow up I can eat whatever I please.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne</td>
<td>—When you grow up you can eat whatever you please? You don't like to eat animals?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>—That's right.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne</td>
<td>—Does anybody else feel that way?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynn</td>
<td>—Not me!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miriam</td>
<td>—You don't feel that way?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynn</td>
<td>—No! I like to eat chicken.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miriam</td>
<td>—You like to eat chicken?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynn</td>
<td>—Yeah! — it tastes good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carole</td>
<td>—It's good for you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlton</td>
<td>—I eat pigeon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynn</td>
<td>—Oooh! You eat pigeon?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Chorus)</td>
<td>—Oooh!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miriam</td>
<td>—What's &quot;oooh&quot; about pigeon soup that's not &quot;oooh&quot; about chicken soup?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynn</td>
<td>—Chicken soup is better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlton</td>
<td>—Have you ever tried pigeon soup? Some people think things are no good before they've even tried it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miriam</td>
<td>—Most of you here eat meat, is that correct?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Chorus)</td>
<td>—Right!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlton</td>
<td>—I eat some meat but not other meat.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the taping session was over and the children had gone to join the rest of our special education group on the trip scheduled for that day, I leaned back in my chair and played back the tape. This is what I heard —

**Miriam**
- Who loves animals?

**(Chorus)**
- I do! I do!

**Miriam**
- What do you think of the kids in the story we are reading who tease Lisa, saying, "Lisa eats dead chicken"?

**(giggles and laughs)**

**Miriam**
- Well, you sure ain't gonna eat it alive! You can't eat it if it's alive!

**Wayne**
- You can't eat it if it's alive. Now in the first chapter of the book Lisa mentions that she loves to eat meat. You heard her mention too, that she loves animals. Is there any contradiction there?

**Carole**
- She says, "If I love animals, how could I eat them?"  

**Miriam**
- Now what do you think about that?

**Carole**
- I love animals . . .

**Miriam**
- You love animals.

**Carole**
- (Huh-huh.

**Miriam**
- You say you love animals. Do you eat meat?

**Carole**
- Sure.

**Miriam**
- You don't think there is a contradiction between loving animals and eating meat?

**Carole**
- Nope.

**Miriam**
- How many of you ever thought about that?

**Wayne**
- I like animals and I don't like to eat meat. I like vegetables (the word on the tape sounded like "vegy-tables" in Wayne's West Indian lilt).
Miriam — Why?
Carlton — Because it tastes better.

Miriam — Let's see. Except for Wayne, all of you like to eat meat. That's one, two, three, four, five, six of you who like to eat meat. And yet all of you say you love animals. How can that be? Is there any contradiction between loving animals and eating them?

Kimberly — No!
Miriam — No?

Betty — Maybe people eat animals because they are afraid if they don't the animals will eat them!

Wayne — But some animals help people! People should eat harmful animals!

Miriam — People should eat harmful animals but they should not eat helpful animals?

Wayne — Yes.
Miriam — Do any of you think there is a contradiction between loving animals and eating them?

Robert — Yes.

Lynn — No.

Betty — Animals are supposed to be eaten.

Miriam — Do you think animals were meant to be used by people? Is that why there are animals?

(Chorus) — No!

Wayne — If I were an animal I would not want to be eaten up.

Carole — I guess if you think about it, it is a sad thing. But still, we do eat animals.

Miriam — Lisa says in the book — "If I loved animals I would not eat them." Do you think that's a true statement?

Lynn — I love pork chops!

Betty — That's right! I eat animals because I love them! Yum yum! Pork chops!


Miriam — Carole do you love animals?

Carole — Yes.

Miriam — Yet you eat them?

Carole — Yes.
Miriam — Is there a contradiction?

Carole — I don't know.

Kimberly — There's no contradiction. You love certain animals, and those you don't eat, like your pets. Other animals you do eat.

Miriam — Do any of you eat dogs?

(Chorus) — No!

Miriam — Why not?

Robert — That's a nasty thought.

Kimberly — People don't eat dogs. They're pets.

Miriam — You eat some animals but you don't eat pets?

Carlton — Some people eat dogs.

(Chorus) — Ugh!

Miriam — Carlton is pointing out that some people eat dogs.

Kimberly — But we don't. Maybe Chinese people do because maybe they don't keep dogs for pets.

Miriam — So you eat animals but you would not eat pets. Which animals would you eat?

Kimberly — Animals you are supposed to eat! Lambs and cows and chickens.

Carole — Animals that we raise special for eating, maybe.

Miriam — What about hunting? Should we eat animals that we hunt for?

Carlton — Sure. Mother Nature makes all kinds of animals. Some of them were meant to be hunted and eaten by others. I mean...oh well... .

Miriam — Please go on. I am very interested in what you are saying.

Carlton — I love nature. I love to see the birds and the butterflies. And I am sad when I see some animals eat other animals. But I know that it is Mother Nature's way.

Miriam — Is it Mother Nature's way that some animals prey on and eat other animals?

Carlton — Yes.

Miriam — And it makes you sad, but you accept it because it is Mother Nature's way?

Carlton — Yes.

Robert — I don't think we should hurt animals because animals have a right to live like people do.

Miriam — Animals have a right to live like we do?

Robert — Animals should not be killed for fun.

Kimberly — Who kills them for fun?

Robert — We don't have to hunt. We can go to the A&P to buy our meat. People who hunt are making a sport of killing God's creatures.

Miriam — How many of you agree with Robert that animals should not be killed just for fun?

(Chorus) — Mel Right!

Miriam — What about this — Should animals be killed to provide food for human beings?

Wayne — No! People do not need to eat animals.

Lynn — Yes they do! People need protein.

Wayne — What about vegetarians?

Lynn — But suppose I don't want to be a vegetarian? Suppose I like to eat animals?

Wayne — Suppose some people wanted to eat other people?

(Chorus) — Ugh!!

Carole — A person is more than flesh and bone. A person is holy and spiritual.

Wayne — Maybe animals are spiritual, too.

Miriam — Maybe animals are spiritual like people?

(Chorus) — No!

Lynn — That's silly.

Wayne — Can they not feel hurt as we do?

Miriam — How many of you think animals can feel hurt like we do?

(Chorus) — Me!

Miriam — So do you think animals ought to be treated like humans?

(Chorus) — Yes! No!

Miriam — How many of you think that animals have rights?

Kimberly — They have some rights.

Miriam — What rights?

Robert — To raise their children.

Betty — To be free.

Wayne — They have the right to eat what they please.

Kimberly — Animals have the right to kill things that they need to eat.

Miriam — That's very interesting. Animals have the right to kill things that they need to eat. Do you think animals have the right to kill humans to eat?

Carlton — Crocodiles do.

Miriam — Yes, but is that their "right"?

(Chorus) — Yes! No!

Carole — God made human beings to rule the earth.

Wayne — Yes, but animals are God's creatures, too.

Miriam — Animals are God's creatures too. Is there any difference between animals and humans?

Carole — Animals are wild.

Betty — Some people are wild, too! Some people behave just like animals!

Kimberly — During the blackout (Kimberly was referring to the blackout of July 13, 1977 along the Eastern part of the United States) the people in my neighborhood behaved just like animals! It was disgusting!
—Some people behave like animals.

—And some animals behave like people. Some animals are very kind. Once I had a dog who was so gentle...

—People are civilized. Some may act like animals, but they are supposed to be civilized. Animals are supposed to be wild.

—What’s so great about being civilized? Maybe it’s better to be wild. People couldn’t survive in the jungle, and animals can.

—Tarzan can!

—Tarzan isn’t a real person!

—Yes he is! I see him on T.V.!

—But he isn’t real, man. He is only a character!

—Yeah, and you’re some character, too!

—What is the difference between Tarzan and Wayne?

—Tarzan, he’s bigger than Wayne, he’s got these muscles...

—Any other difference?

—Tarzan’s white.

—I think there’s another difference.

—Tarzan’s a grown-up.

—Tarzan’s just a character in a story!

—Tarzan is just a character in a story, and Wayne is a real, live boy.

—That’s right. There’s an actor who plays Tarzan...

—Well, an actor is a real person...

—But he’s only playing a part, making believe, you fool!

—There is no real Tarzan. There is only an actor playing a part.

—But he is a real person. He is a real actor.

—What is the difference between a real actor and a real Tarzan?

—A real actor is a person who gets paid for making believe he is somebody else. A real Tarzan would be somebody who was actually doing all those things the actor is pretending to do.

—Wasn’t there ever a real Tarzan?

—I don’t know. But I do know that he is a character in a story.

—Like Harry Stottlemeier. (The major character in the philosophical text we were using).

—How are Tarzan and Harry Stottlemeier alike?

—Both are figments of the imagination.

There the tape ended. I sat back, recalling the session with a mixture of pleasure and pain. I had made a great many errors. I should have stayed on each topic longer than I did. I should have tied together some of the loose ends. We had gone far afield in deed. We had raised many more questions and philosophical problems than I had intended. But there was a great deal of pleasure, too — pleasure at the responsiveness of the children to this new method of thinking. I was most especially pleased when I thought of Carleton Pope, the little boy who had given such a cogent and coherent argument for the theory of nature ecology, the same little boy who, at the age of 11½ could not read a word!
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