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CORRECTION:
The following typographical errors occurred in Karin Murris’ article in Thinking Vol. 10, No. 2:
Page 31, 2nd column should be followed by “of which . . . philosophical path” at page 32.
Page 31. The whole 3rd column should be in between pages 32 and 33.
Page 31. The quote in capital letters: substituting “body” for BOX, and not “bottle.”
Page 33. In i: thoughts are not “evacuated” but “excavated.”

ANNOUNCEMENT OF FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS:
This volume is an anthology of selected articles that have appeared in Thinking since its inception.
Ann Margaret Sharp and Laurance Splitter, THE CLASSROOM COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY

Jan Skiba is a poor peasant who lives in the country with his wife, Marianna, their three daughters, and a dog and a cat. The dog, Burek, who has never encountered any other small animal besides the cat, Kot, thinks that he, too, is a cat; and Kot thinks that she is a dog. Of course Burek thinks that he is the kind of cat that barks; and Kot thinks she is the kind of dog that meows.

One day a peddler arrives at the Skibas' hut and lays out his cheap jewelry and kerchiefs for Marianna and the daughters to admire; but it is the peddler's mirror that most interests the Skibas. Since the Skibas don't have enough money to buy the mirror outright, they strike a bargain with the peddler; they will get the mirror in exchange for a monthly payment of five groschen.

At first everyone is pleased to have a mirror. But then they all discover defects in their appearance that they had not known about before. Marianna is bothered by the gap where a front tooth is missing. One daughter finds her nose too snub; another thinks her chin is too long; and the third dislikes her freckles. As for Jan, he frets over his thick lips and buck teeth.

It is the dog and cat, though, who become most upset of all. Burek takes his reflection in the mirror for a menacing beast, the likes of which he has never seen before. And Kot spits angrily at her image, which, of course, spits angrily back. The dog and cat become violent toward their mirror images and then turn their violence on each other. When they draw blood, the Skibas have to separate them and, sadly, tie Burek up outside their hut.

Realizing that the mirror has become a curse, Jan gets the peddler, on his next visit, to take the thing back; he buys slippers and kerchiefs instead. With the departure of the mirror, tranquility returns to the Skiba household. Kot and Burek resume peaceful coexistence, and the daughters, despite their earlier anxieties, all succeed in marrying suitable husbands.

The village priest, upon hearing the story of the disturbing mirror, assures the Skibas that a glass mirror shows only the skin of the body. The real image of a person, he says, is found in a willingness to help family and neighbors. The mirror of those around us, he adds, reveals the very soul of a person.

After reading Isaac Singer's wonderfully wise story to a group of school children, I would want to open the discussion with talk about mirrors. To me, mirrors are likeable, friendly, funny, "awesome," or "cool," except by getting other people to react to us.

I like to be reassured that kids today are just as good at using mirrors to induce metaphysical vertigo as I ever was. But I would also want to explore with the kids in my class the village priest's idea that our effect on the people around us gives us an image of our real selves. We have no way of finding out whether we are likeable, friendly, funny, "awesome," or "cool," except by getting other people to react to us.

Often we become comfortable with the self-image we get from our interactions with others. When we are comfortable with our image, most of us try hard to preserve it. Thus the class "show-off," or the class bully, or the class "cool cat," may work very hard to preserve that image and thereby maintain that identity.

Yet the mirror of family and peer groups can also be as upsetting as the peddler's mirror in the Skiba's hut. It may reveal defects we do not want to recognize. And it may make us as violently competitive as the peddler's mirror made Burek and Kot.

Social mirrors sometimes pose another threat. One of my daughters once told me that each of the various groups to which she belonged reflected a different side of her. In a way she found that diversity of images reassuring. Each group reflected something of her that the others had missed. But she also found the situation troubling. What was she like, really? Was there even any real "her," beneath all these very different images? And how could she find out?
Why Philosophy for Children Now?

David Kennedy

Philosophy for Children appears to be completely new in the history of culture and of education. If this is true, then it is appropriate to ask why. Why Philosophy for Children, here, now, in the late 20th century West? What was missing before now (or what is missing now) which leads us to think philosophy a reasonable thing to do with children? Why didn't Socrates, instead of using that true, then it is appropriate to ask why. What is it that makes Philosophy for Children a feasible idea in this late 20th century global village?

The public rhetoric of Philosophy for Children answers this question simply enough. Dutifully assuming the discourse of the hand that feeds it, it adds the program to the list of socializations that the Enlightened nation state imposes on its citizens through universal, compulsory schooling. First there was Career Counseling, then Sex Education, along with Driver Education, and Health. Now there is Critical Thinking (Philosophy for Children), a form of mental hygiene and problem-solving necessary to the democratic state because the "critical" adult, governed by Reason, makes a good tolerant, humane, Liberal Individual. This might be true, and is certainly good copy for grant proposals. But I want to suggest that, beyond this rationalistic, "enlightened" standard account, Philosophy for Children has a wild, Romantic narrative, which seeks to empower children and thereby transform adulthood as well.

Undoubtedly, there are a number of theoretical contexts within which to frame an explanation for why Philosophy for Children is possible or desirable in our epoch for the first time. Historically, the readiness for Philosophy for Children could be thought of as the flower produced by a system of slowly-maturing structural roots—demographic, economic, social, political, technological, medical, nutritional, etc.—which have, in the last 200 years or so, created middle class childhood as we know it. Without the medical advances which overcame widespread infant and childhood mortality, childhood would have remained a more ephemeral, endangered phenomenon, and thereby less available to adult construction as a time of significant formation for the rest of life. Without the deliberate limitations on family size made possible by birth control, children would be more expendable and less interesting as individuals. The end of agrarian and the rise of industrial and post-industrial economies led to a new status and role for the child in the family and in the nation. Apart from the economy of abundance which the West has developed through technology, children would be needed to work at much earlier ages, and would become adultified earlier. Without the rise of planned national economies and states ruled by bureaucracies, the child would not be seen as a resource to be "tooled up" for the needs of the national system, through universal, compulsory education. And universal education brought about what has been described as "one of the most radical shifts in parent-child relationships in human history," in that it kept children out of full-time work, thus minimizing their economic contribution, while at the same time concentrating parents' upward mobility in their children. Middle class parents began having fewer children, but lavishing the kind of psychological and educational attention on those children that, in earlier times, had been reserved for the children of royalty. And not only the school but the new sciences arising in connection with it began to create rival authorities in the child's life in the figures of educationalist and psychologist, Enlightened "experts" about children, "professionals" who construed them as creatures apart from their parents, and thereby accorded them a new, independent status as separate and equal human beings.

And so forth. That is, each culture, driven by economic, technological, medical, and political forces, "invents" childhood, in images at least made possible by these structured webs of constraints and/or new freedoms, and mediated by what Foucault called "power" issues, in the sense of a "moving substrate of force relations" involved in a constant process of transformation. Philosophy for Child-
ren's child is simply one expression of these forces, an expression not possible in Socrates' Athens, Hume's Scotland, or even Wittgenstein's little Austrian schoolhouse.

Another theoretical context for understanding why Philosophy for Children now, and probably related to the one just sketched, has more to do with the mythological function of childhood within adult culture. By mythology I mean those huge, tacit, guiding assumptions about human nature and social change, which frame a given culture's and a given epoch's discourse about itself. Since the rise, in the early modern period in the West, of the idea of childhood as a separate and significant phase in the life cycle, there has been a debate going on about childhood which is part of a larger conversation about these guiding assumptions. From the Calvinist child of unconditional depravity, to the children of Locke and Rousseau, Wordsworth, Darwin, Freud, Skinner, Montessori, Dewey and Piaget, to the nation state's bureaucratically controlled investment in the future of the labor force, the child, in that he is "father to the man," represents the race's potential for transformation. So each child is a cipher for a theological, philosophical, poetic, scientific, or bureaucratic explanation of, and even "solution" to, a certain cultural-historical situation. The child has become, in the modern West anyway, a figure through whom we attempt to make ourselves understandable to ourselves, and through whom we presume to reinvest ourselves in history.

If we were to characterize the one predominant cultural-historical situation of the modern West, it would be modernization itself—accelerating, even exploding change—and the problematization of tradition that ensues, given the ever-increasing absence of fixed boundaries, and the need to adjust our way of thinking to constant changes in social life. To the extent that images of children and childhood are responses to this situation, they are often conflicting, polarized, or triangular relationships, which share secret correspondences. The child of the Romantics (Wordsworth's "best philosopher" and Emerson's "perpetual Messiah") arose, for example, contemporaneously with the Enlightened bureaucrat's Lockean blank piece of paper, the child as "national resource." Like any good national resource, the Lockean child can be shaped to any new circumstance, whereas the child of the Romantics represents an inner world of essential and unalterable relationship between mind and nature. But in addition to contradicting the empty Lockean child, Wordsworth's child completely turns the tables on the fully sinful Calvinist child, who also carries too much psychological baggage for the modernistic, minimalist Lockean child. Further along, in the 20th century, the conservative Freudian child evokes the Calvinist's, if with a totally different outcome, and the Skinnerian child of technocratic utopias evokes the Lockean blank slate. Both of them are undermined in the self-constructionist principle which is Piaget's child, in whom change is turned into an ontogenetic principle. What better slogan for a world of exploding change than Piaget's—"To understand is to invent!"

Philosophy for Children's child—I will call him or her Lipman's child—unlike Piaget's, already has, not only the logical structures (for Lipman they are already there through language), but the disposition and the motivation to think critically, and thus manage change. As a critical thinker by nature, this child is civilization's best hope in a world where change (in Dewey's terms, "growth"), continual reconstruction of our experience, casting off old ways of thinking, is our only salvation. The child of both Lipman and Dewey reflects the fact that, in a world of exploding technology and future shock, the younger generation assumes a different valence in the life cycle. Since each generation inherits a future which is constantly outdistancing its parents, the child becomes better adapted than the adult. If children will inhabit a world which their parents can only imagine, how can adults prepare them for it? In one sense at least, Deweyan pedagogy is a response to this situation, and Philosophy for Children is classic Deweyan pedagogy, in that it is a process of self-preparation for children which attends to process rather than content, as well as an approach to the self-shaping nature of change through the dialectics of the community of inquiry. Dewey's child is inherently rational and collaborative, and can do the community of inquiry just as well if not better than many adults, who are afraid—or so the mythology goes—of the dialectics of change.

In fact, the Deweyan child is, to the extent that Philosophy for Children is a standard rationality account, its official child. And Philosophy for Children's philosophically pragmatic and analytic discourse—with occasional flirtations with phenomenology—is clearly a standard rationalist account. The "critical" adult which the program produces not only votes better—he or she, governed by good old Aristotelian logic and the good old 5-step scientific method, can smoke out, not only the fallacies and blanishments of demagoguery, but the errors in thinking which lead to bad
government and badly-lived lives. This rational child is backed up by the latest image of the child among cognitive scientists as having a more rudimentary but essentially similar information-processing computer for a mind as the adult. Information-processing theory seems to have resulted in what Flavell calls a new "nondevelopmentalist stance" in the study of child cognition, which "views the child as most interesting and worthy of detailed investigation when that child's behavior seems very similar to the adult's." This child, like the adult, constructs, even with the onset of language, native or commonsense theories about the world in order to make sense of it, and, through a process of cognitive change suspiciously similar to the process of theory change in the history of science, ends up with a universal, if culturally-nuanced, ontological framework. This post-Piagetian child, liberated from egocentrism, animism, pre-causal reasoning, artificialism, etc., and even from stage theory as we know it, and graced with a much earlier, and more inherent rationality, is also much more like an adult in terms of epistemological and ontological convictions.

But the rationalized, Deweyan child does not completely satisfy Philosophy for Children. For Philosophy for Children not only contends that children are just as "critical" as anyone else if given the chance and a little training, but that children are actually, in ways, more philosophical than adults. This is because the sense of wonder is the fundamental impulse of philosophy, and children live in wonder to a greater extent than adults. This child is not so much the little analytic philosopher or pragmatist, as the "best philosopher," the "eye among the blind" (adults) of Wordsworth, and the exemplar of the "freshness of sensation," "naiveté" or absence of the distortions of "will," identified by Coleridge, Schiller, and Schopenhauer with genius. This Romantic child, I would argue, is a tacit image within Philosophy for Children's mythology, an absent presence, embarrassing to the meticulous hygiene of the analytics, or the secular relativism of pragmatists. This child can never be fully appropriated by the skeptical, modernist tradition, but neither will she be dissipated in its harsh, light. She will not go away, not because of sentimentalism, but because she represents a reasonable protest against the rationalism implicit in Deweyan thought.

Romanticism was connected from the beginning with the loss of faith in adult rationality—a loss which has, arguably been increasingly felt ever since the failure of the French Revolution, which was supposed to usher in the age of Enlightenment, and ended in the Terror. For the Romantics, the child represented a form of knowledge beyond what William Blake called the "desert vast without a bound" of positivism, as well as the symbol for a relationship to the world which retains that "natural piety" which was at the center of Wordsworth's thought. Romantic education was concerned to, in Coleridge's words, "carry on the feelings"—by which is implied a form of affective cognition—of childhood into the powers of manhood. So in Romanticism childhood becomes a form of...
life which the adult world no longer considers merely a deficit, a state of being not-adult, but which has value in itself. Hence the notion of a "recovery of childhood" through psychological development, as a result of which the unity and wholeness associated with childhood is recovered on a higher level, after having undergone the separation of adulthood. This recovery is part of what Merleau-Ponty called "the task of our century," the attempt to explore the unity and wholeness associated with adulthood? This recovery is part of what childhood is recovered on a higher level, as a result of which the irrational and integrate it into an expanded reason. This task is the cultural command to the West which is at the heart of Romanticism. The idea of a reason which does not exclude other forms of knowledge, which can "integrate" them, is the task of the late 20th century for the West in particular because of the experience of the dramatic failure of adult (white, male) rationality before holocaust, nuclear proliferation, ecological catastrophe, and what used to be called the "mass man."

The concept of an expanded reason through a recovery of childhood is expressed in Philosophy for Children, not, perhaps, so much in its baldly Hegelian form (for pragmatism, Hegel is overcome in Dewey) as in the more postmodern notion of the child as an excluded voice. On this account, children are reformed as yet another group marginalized and oppressed by a hegemonic, patriarchal middle class culture. As such, they assume, like women and people of color, a prophetic character. So in Philosophy for Children the West, now facing up to its own failed rationalism, turns to children for something we have not heard before. When we do philosophy with children, we listen for an excluded knowledge.

Lipman has referred to childhood as "the forgotten—if not actually repressed—aspect of experience." And Ashis Nandy has suggested that this forgetting or repression of childhood is more than simply an ontogenetic characteristic of human experience, but is rather an historical phenomenon. He calls it the Western "ideology of adulthood," which constructs the child as an "inferior, weak but usable version of the fully productive, fully performing human being [i.e., the adult] who owns the modern world!"

On this account, both Western colonialism and the Western ideology of modernity are connected to "the idea of the adult male as the ultimate in God's creation and as the this-worldly end-state for everyone." This ideal type must repress and forget the child, who is placed "midway between the lower animals and humanity." The implication of this kind of critique is that to "remember" childhood is to accept both the culture of childhood and the child within oneself. When we practice that acceptance, we are attempting, according to Nandy, "to restore wholeness in ruptured human relationships and experiences." The Philosophy for Children movement, in placing itself between adulthood and childhood, is one way of practicing that acceptance. One of its primary assumptions is, as Lipman has pointed out, that "our understanding of what it is to lead a life and to be an adult will... be impoverished to the extent to which it is not informed by and integrated with a similar understanding of what it is to be a child." And Nandy says, "Our most liberating bonds can be with our under-socialized children. And the final test of our skill to live a bicultural or multicultural existence may still be our ability to live with our children in mutuality." So in this sense, Lipman's child is the child reintegrated into adult forms of discourse, for whom we have a new respect.

This combination of Enlightenment and Romantic elements makes the child of Philosophy for Children something of a revolutionary. For if children are inherently rational, and see the world with a freshness of philosophical vision which is often unavailable to adults, and if the community of inquiry is (after Dewey) a virtually self-orchestrating process of transformative change, then the school, which is where the children's community of inquiry operates, becomes the site of a struggle for personal and social transformation. One often catches, within the movement, a sense of implicit expectation, almost like a millenial hope, that Philosophy for Children, if not crushed in the neutralizing mills of the bureaucrats, is the pattern of discourse which will revolutionize education through liberating children to "think for themselves," and thereby become more active participants in their own education. This hope is often expressed negatively, in the fear that, through teaching children to think for themselves, the program only sets children up to be crushed by a society which fears such thinking, and suppresses it wherever it is found. But its implicit positive is, I think, a revolutionary vision for the role of schools in culture, and, by extension, for the adult-child relationship. Lipman has said that Philosophy for Children "paradigmatically represents the education of the future as a form of life that has not
yet been realized and as a kind of praxis. The reform of education must take shared philosophical inquiry in the classroom as an heuristic model. 14

Certainly revolution of one sort or another is in the air. Philosophy for Children, and the image of the child it implies, arise at a time when it is clear even to the staunchest supporters of universal, state-controlled schooling that at least the American school system (which, perhaps not insignificantly, is the one within which the movement originated), has failed to deliver its promises to the 20th century in spite of everyone's best efforts. That this failure is not merely technical is becoming increasingly obvious, even to the technocrats. On the contrary—and this returns us to our theme of the child as cultural pioneer in a world of exploding change—it represents the failure of a bureaucratically controlled system to respond to emergent change and the new world order it is shaping. If schools become communities of inquiry, children, encouraged to be critical, will begin to question, to make collaborative decisions, to be increasingly involved in the process of change themselves. Children will become more serious players in the politics of schools. Thus, returning us to Nandy's concept of "living with our children in mutuality," the transformation of schools into communities of inquiry will lead us towards a situation of increasing dialogue between children and adults. Historically, this represents a dialectical return to the integration of the worlds of children and adults which was interrupted by early modernization, the age grading and separation of children in institutions and in psychological theories. 15

Why, then, Philosophy for Children now? Because children have with the help of vast socio-economic forces, finally escaped their lowly status on the great chain of being, and been invested as individuals and thinkers. Because in a world of future shock, the authority of the young increases. Because it is the moment in the West for the disempowered to speak. Because we have become separated from our children through the ideology of adulthood, which is reified in our institutions, and we are eager to see those institutions become communities of transformation rather than ghettos of indoctrination. Because brutal political repression, genocide, famine in the midst of plenty, ecological degradation, massive weapons proliferation, and the culture of addiction and rampant individualism mock universal education, stunning technological advances, and the welfare state. For Western civilization in moral crisis, childhood is a powerful evocation, both of the potentiality of the human condition before its fall, and of our last hope, through real education, as opposed to mere socialization, for a way out. The school as community of inquiry is understood intuitively as both a training ground and a discourse-model for a world of future shock. Whether this new importance of childhood for a vision of the future represents a subtle configuration of what is commonly referred to as "the disappearance of childhood," or, on the contrary, restores childhood to a proper balance in the life cycle and in the lives of adults, is still unclear, and might never be clear. What seems to be clear is that we are on the edge of some major educational reform, which has at least in part to do with a new image of the child, and that Lipman's child is a definitive exemplar of that image.

Each image of the child is a true one. Each uncovers, in response to a specific cultural-historical context, a universal truth. Each reflects a universal aspect of the adult child relationship, and a universal aspect of children's ways of thinking, feeling, and acting. But the child is an emerging truth, a topos of continual discovery for the adult, who inquires into it as into a forgotten country. Lipman's child has begun to philosophize. Now that we recognize this possibility in children, we discover that they actually can do it—in fact they have been doing it without us all along and now we can help them to do it. The danger is in isolating one child as the only child we know or recognize. The child of Philosophy for Children joins a series of children who form the tradition of childhood in the West. We must allow all of the children in that tradition to speak to us—and watch for the child yet to be discovered—if we are to live with our children in mutuality.

ENDNOTES

6. Quoted in Plotz, p.68.
11. Ibid., p.74.
15. For one description of this process, see Philippe Aries, L'Enfant et la vie familiale sous l'ancien regime (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1969).
This paper explores the suggestion that Philosophy for Children and the whole-language approach to reading might both benefit from closer cooperation. It explores some of the common ground between the two approaches and suggests ways that each could learn from the other. The result of a fruitful dialogue between the two programs might lead to more students developing a greater appreciation for literature and better thinking skills.
Philosophy for Children, at least in the United States, appears to have reached a plateau with regard to new program adoptions. This paper explores one possible reason for the lack of recent growth of the program, that is, its isolation from other programs and movements that are "kindred spirits" but which for one reason or another are put off by Philosophy for Children, or, more positively, that Philosophy for Children has not yet reached. While Philosophy for Children has been successful within the thinking skills programs and specifically within the informal logic movement; it has not been accepted within the larger, more teacher-accessible movement of the whole language movement.

One reason often reported by teacher and curriculum specialists for not exploring elementary school philosophy is that they see the Philosophy for Children approach as "another set of basal readers" and therefore a step backwards: a step away from what they are trying to accomplish within their classrooms. They do not want to "go back" to basal readers, no matter who wrote them. Further, they appear reluctant or totally unwilling to explore the possibility that a program which includes what they consider to be basal readers, that is, the novels of the Philosophy for Children approach, can accomplish their main task which is to get kids interested in reading "good literature," and generally interested in participating in a reading culture.

The whole language approach should be a natural ally of Philosophy for Children. It can be seen as an approach to reading which is organized around a "natural" extension of the spoken language into reading and writing. Whole language can be further defined with the teacher. Quiet corners are filled by Philosophy for Children, or, more positively, that Philosophy for Children movement of the program, that is, its growth of the program, that is, its one possible reason for the lack of recent adoptions. This paper explores that Philosophy for Children can be seen as an approach as more of an attitude of the mind than a specific set of guidelines and this mindset helps students and teachers shape the experience of the classroom which they share (Smith, 1986, p. 189). Children in whole language classrooms read and write about what is of interest to them; they read and write several times during the day. Talk, that is, classroom conversation, is essential to the whole language approach. Therefore, children have many opportunities to discuss their reading as well as their writing, with each other and with the teacher. Quiet corners are filled with children's books available for reading. Teachers and children keep journals about their reading and their conversations (Smith, 1986, p. 189).

Supporting the idea that whole-language approach requires a change of heart and head, Howard Gardner in *The Un schooled Mind* (1991), reports that whole-language can work only if the teacher embodies the values of a competent literate adult who appreciates reading and writing in her/his own life. Gardner finds it heartening that classes are filled with students writing and "prewriting" which exemplifies a major change in American education over the past 25 years. Though he does not see a whole-language emphasis as being universally practiced, he argues that it is being used in many places where it was not seen before (Gardner, 1991, p. 211).

It appears that an underlying principle of the whole language program, at least as seen by Smith and Gardner, is that reading is not an isolated school subject but rather a part of the way that children relate to the world; reading is a part of talking and writing—not a separate subject or discipline. Lipman, while not addressing reading *per se*, sees thinking as embedded in discussion, and discussion, reading, and writing are intimately connected. Discussion is important to the improvement of thinking because, contrary to popular opinion, thinking can be made public, and writing and discussion are two important methods of public and therefore, self-correcting thinking. To make his point about the connection of thinking and public discourse, Lipman states the negative case as follows:

Since we often assume that thinking is private and internal, we also view it as something mysterious and baffling. Under these circumstances, people are unable to apply criteria that would enable them to distinguish better thinking from worse thinking because the reality itself is not apparent to them (Lipman et al., 1980, 22).

Lipman's idea, positively stated, is that thinking aloud makes thinking open to correction and particularly open to self-correction. It is this connection, among others, between the public nature of language and thinking as well as the learning within a community of learners who are spread on a continuum of competence which potentially joins whole-language with Philosophy for Children.

**Articulating a Common Ground**

If Philosophy for Children and the whole-language approach to reading are "kindred spirits," why have the two groups not joined forces to further what both groups would consider a better way of teaching children? One answer is that the common ground has not been articulated. To get at that common ground it is important to move beneath the surface of the natural approach to language in the whole language program and natural approach to thinking in Philosophy for Children to see more clearly the connection between the two curriculum approaches.

At this point, it might be helpful to stop and consider more specifically the philosophical nature of Philosophy for Children. Aristotle was right: Philosophy begins in wonder (Lipman, Sharp & Oscanyan, 1980, p. 31). Further, it is a discipline which asks questions of metaphysics, ethics, logic, epistemology, and aesthetics. Questions of metaphysics can be overheard in children's conversations about ghosts and other creatures or events on television (What is real and what is make-believe?). Questions about what is right and what is fair are a part of daily conversation among children. It is not uncommon to hear a child say, "How do you know that?" or "Prove it!" Finally, kids are likely to "fight" about which is the "neater" car or dress—which is, after all, a question of aesthetics.

The fact that children are not always skilled at answering these questions should not discourage us from helping them to think more clearly about these points. Quite the opposite. The point is that children are philosophical in some important ways, that is, they have a sense of wonder about the world, and they ask important philosophical questions. Where they need the help is in developing the skills to think effectively about those issues which interest them.

The whole-language approach makes a similar argument about children and readers. This is, children can "read" the world, and they can articulate that "reading" in spoken sentences. Therefore, language is "natural" to them. What they
need is a chance to write (or prewrite) and read their stories, their "reading" of the world. In this way, they will learn to break the code of reading. Further, if they come to understand that they live in a reading culture, they will extend their skill of reading. Reading is done to understand and to communicate, not as an end in itself (Smith, 1986).

The above discussion helps us to see that the question should not be, "How can we get kids to think philosophically?" or "how do we get kids to read and write?", but rather "how do we get students to think well about philosophical problems?" and "how do we get kids to expand and improve their reading skills?" Philosophy for Children uses philosophical novels, inductive and deductive reasoning activities, and philosophical questions within classroom discussion to help kids think well. The whole language approach uses reading corners, a variety of non-basal reading materials, and student writing (self-published books and journal writing) to improve reading skills and to get children to see reading as a part of who they are and what they do. The whole-language program immerses children as early as possible in the world of texts. Children are encouraged to become meaningful apprentices to competent literate individuals (Gardner, 1991, p. 211).

The meaningful apprentices and the classroom containing a continuum of competence point to the underlying Vygotskian principles of both programs. Both Philosophy for Children and whole-language approaches to reading work because of an implicit or explicit understanding of Vygotsky's ideas about zones of proximal development, the presence of more competent adult and child models of learning, problem-solving and practice, as well as the strategy of assisted instruction.

"For Vygotsky, the contrast between assisted performance and unassisted performance identified the fundamental nexus of development and learning that he called the zone of proximal development" (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988, p. 30 emphasis added). Assisted instruction occurs when a child can complete a task with help from another person or from the environment but not on his/her own. The community of inquiry is a multidimensional, multi-voiced assistance to performance; the community, when it is working at its best, more-or-less intuitively identifies zones of proximal development and implements strategies for assisted instruction (Morehouse, 1989). The community of inquiry is made up of learners who are at different levels at different points of the discussion. Therefore, each child is likely given a number of experiences on different topics and arising out of different experiences to be a more knowledgeable peer (one of the sources of assisted instruction) by modeling, rewarding, giving feedback, direct instruction (e.g., telling), asking questions, or providing cognitive structures for new information and new processes within community of inquiry discussions.

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The community of inquiry is well suited to assist the student who is on the verge of understanding, in other words, a student at a zone of proximal development. The advantage of a discussion with a community of inquiry is that what one student knows about one part of the discussion, for example, a concept or a strategy, can help another student who will in turn be helped by another student in a circle of "assisted instruction." The teacher can also aid this process by modeling and providing cognitive structures in particular.

A similar pedagogy is manifest in the whole-language approach, that is, children tell stories, write them down, and read them aloud to their peers. Further, fellow students and teachers are likely to read each student's stories with a focus on understanding the meaning that the writer is attempting to convey. It is in the process of trying to convey meaning that assisted instruction occurs. In this process, children learn new words, standard spellings, and new forms of pragmatics and syntax.

Perhaps the most compelling connection between the two approaches is their focus on meaning. Children are starved for meaning according to Lipman (1980). Children are seekers of meaning—logical, psychological, and personal. Meaning is gained by exploring relationships: whole-part, means-end, process-product, critical-creative and exposition-narrative (Lipman, 1992). The following quote from Lipman and colleagues could have also been written by any number of advocates of the whole language approach to reading:

"If, on the other hand, it is meaning for which children thirst and have a right to expect from the educational process, then this enlightens us about the legitimate incentives that might be employed in motivating them... Instead of insisting that education is a specific form of experience that only the school can provide, we should say that anything that helps us discover meaning in life is educational, and that schools are educational only insofar as they do facilitate such discovery. (Lipman et al., 1980, p.6).

Exploring Differences

Although the two programs have some important similarities, they also have some significant differences. Two differences stand out as having the potential to keep practitioners of the two approaches from joining forces: (1) the role of the self-reflective text in Philosophy for Children and (2) the almost total self-selection of materials and methods (anything a competent literate adult might do) of the whole-language approach. While these two impediments do not necessarily create insurmountable roadblocks, they do create barriers which need to be first understood and then dismantled if any cooperation is to be established between the two programs.

One of the chief strengths of the Philosophy for Children program is the novels written by Lipman. These novels, while perhaps not essential to initiate a philosophical discussion among elementary-aged students, clearly provide a model for such discussion as well as a beginning point to "mine" the text for leading ideas, that is, ideas which have philosophic content and which are interesting to the children who have read the chapter of the novel together aloud. If teachers committed to the whole-language approach are to examine Philosophy for Children materials, they need to understand what the Lipman novels do within the novels. That is, the novel itself creates a learning community. To restate that point, the creation of meaningful apprentices of skilled thinkers and literate individuals is an essential part of the Lipman novel.

But all the thinking models do not happen in the novel—though important-
stand it in context. If a competent literate adult is the model which we hope children will aspire to become, then it is reasonable to allow competent literate adults to decide how and what to do to develop that competence. I would argue that this is true at least on face value. Further, there is most likely not one good way to think or to read. However, there do appear to be some skills, and some techniques for teaching those skills which might provide a good, if not a better, way of teaching thinking.

The question is how can the whole-language approach come to see the connection between competent adults as models in the classroom and competent thinkers in the novels. The dynamic part of the Philosophy for Children approach is the community of inquiry which finds its beginnings in the novels. These novels therefore are not like the typical basal reader but more like a springboard for discussion. The discussion techniques presented in the novels and developed within classroom communities of inquiry can provide the basis for extending the realm of the competent reader to that of competent thinker if the Philosophy for Children materials and approach are used along with "good" literature within a whole-language approach.

A Modest Proposal
A curriculum . . . is the enterprise for excellence where the line between subject matter and the method grows necessarily indistinct (Jerome Bruner as quoted in Toward a thinking curriculum, 1989).

In what way does the line between subject matter and method grow thin in curriculum? Further, and more directly connected to our concern about making connections between Philosophy for Children and the whole-language movement, how does exploring that thin line help bring these ideas together? Perhaps a further exploration of Vygotsky's theories of learning and development can provide a way to answer both questions.

A curriculum can be seen as a theory of socialization, that is, as a theory for moving children from one level of social and cultural competence to the next level of social and cultural competence. A child develops her higher order thinking abilities by shared activities with adults and competent peers. Vygotsky sees this most evident in problem-solving situations. The child first experiences dynamic problem-solving activities in the presence of others. Over the course of time and with repeated experiences, the child comes to perform these functions independently. "The process of internalization is gradual; first the adult or knowledgeable peer controls and guides the child's activity, but gradually the adult and the child come to share the problem-solving function, with the child taking initiative and the adult correcting and guiding when he/she falters. Finally, the adult cedes control to the child and functions primarily as a supportive and sympathetic audience" (Brown & Ferrara, pp. 281-282 in Wertsch, Ed., 1985).

While this exploration of the socialization process called curriculum has not included any discussion of content, content is implied. One cannot solve problems without content. The problems are the content. One way of looking at content is as a particular set of problems which can be addressed by organizing and applying a set of procedures in order to gain a particular kind of infor-
A fundamental principle of cognitive psychology is that learning requires knowledge. Yet, cognitive research also shows that knowledge cannot be given directly to students. Before knowledge becomes truly generative—knowledge that can be used to interpret new situations, to solve problems, to think and reason, and to learn—students must elaborate and question what they are told, examine the new information in relation to other information, and build new knowledge structures. Educators are thus faced with a central problem: how to help students get started in developing their base of generative knowledge so they can learn easily and independently later on (Resnick & Klopfer, 1989, p. 5 in Resnick & Klopfer, Eds.).

The philosophical novels written by Lipman provide one way of building new knowledge on previous knowledge. Other stories, so-called "good" literature, can also provide that connection between what is already known and what is to be learned. But in order to effectively build a community of inquiry, it takes a particular kind of story—one that is philosophical. Gareth Matthews in his column in *Thinking* regularly points out children's stories which are good literature and that have philosophical content. Recently writing about Dr. Seuss, Matthews states: "...many of his stories are also philosophical. They are philosophical by presenting us readers with a *gedanken* or thought experiment that provokes reflection (Matthews, 1992, p. 1).

The whole-language approach to reading does not, however, have a systematic way of incorporating thinking skills into "good" literature approach to reading, writing, discussing. Even stories that are good literature and have philosophical content do not extend whole-language to philosophic communities of inquiry or provide a vehicle for the improvement of student thinking skills. The whole language approach may provide "food for thought" but it does not provide models either with the literature or within the classroom for the improvement of thinking skills or the development of a community of inquiry.

The teacher's manuals as developed in Philosophy for Children can provide a bridge between a good story with philosophic content and a philosophic discussion. There is a tradition within *Analytic Teaching* beginning with "What is generalizable in the pedagogy of Philosophy for Children," (Morehouse, 1983) and "A bit more on generalizing Philosophy for Children," (Weinstein, 1984) which begins an exploration of the use of non-IAPC material while working toward the same ends as IAPC, that is, the improvement of thinking skills by exploring and creating meaning within a community of inquiry. Ron Reed's *Rebecca*, as well as many stories by Ann Sharp and Per Jespersen, to mention two of the more regular contributors of philosophic stories to *Analytic Teaching*, are a part of this tradition.

What is proposed here, however, is closer to what some Australian participants in the Philosophy for Children movement have been doing—using existing literature and adapting modifying, or using directly, activities which have been developed for and are published in the manuals of IAPC (Glasser, 1992; deHaan & MacColl, 1991; also see Hufines, 1991; Kennedy, in press).

The teacher in Philosophy for Children, and even more so, teachers using a Philosophy for Children approach with non-IAPC materials, must always be aware of the close connection between method and content in the program. Modeling questions is but one important connection between method and content. Asking for reasons is another closely related method for uncovering philosophic meaning in stories. Assisting students in finding meaning is also essential if we are to develop and maintain a philosophic inquiry. Meaning is constructed by the students with the help of the teacher.

An example may help in understanding the importance of letting the students establish meaning. When I first began teaching in Philosophy for Children, I was not aware of this connection. As a result, after several exciting discussions, the class began to lose some student interest. Ron Reed's *Rebecca* is an example of how the students may help move a discussion and shape the nature and quality of the inquiry. In this process of shaping and moving a discussion, the IAPC manuals and similar material is invaluable.

**A Note of Caution**

When children together build a house of blocks, there is a recognition that as the house begins to take shape, it begins to lead a kind of life of its own to which some construction ideas are appropriate and others are inappropriate. Each added block restructures the developing house and slightly alters its demand character. New ideas are thereby evoked, which the house may or may not tolerate. What is important, in any case, is that the children are building in each other's ideas as well as on each other's blocks, and they are together learning to take into account *the creative requiredness of the schemata they themselves create* (Lipman, 1992, p. 90 emphasis added).

Lipman's metaphor provides as essential caution to the current proposal. That is, a curriculum approach—like a house of blocks—begins to take a shape of its own after a short while. It is therefore important to pay close attention to the foundation block of this adaptation of the IAPC materials. As we build on the ideas of Lipman, this community will take a new shape. It is important that this new shape be able to support the same structure, that is, critical and creative thinking within a community of inquiry which struggles to create meaning within a philosophic content. If we can do that, and I think it is possible, we can include more teachers and more students in this exciting quest.

This proposal has important and thought important, and not allowing students to find ideas within the novel which were interesting to them. I was imposing my meaning on the chapter. The teacher's role in a Philosophy for Children discussion is to lead, that is, to aid students in drawing out, ask questions which can lead to organizing themes and getting students to place points in a priority order. This can help "move" the discussion forward. The teacher is not to impose the agenda on the discussion. Rather, the teacher, by modeling, offering positive feedback and appropriate criticism, and by occasionally instructing, can help move a discussion and shape the nature and quality of the inquiry. In this process of shaping and moving a discussion, the IAPC manuals and similar material is invaluable.
unexplored implications for teacher education and the introduction of novice teachers into the Philosophy for Children classroom. Hopefully, these implications can be pursued in later papers and discussions.

1. *Educational Leadership* (see for example, Volume 42, September 1984) in particular has been supportive of Philosophy for Children as an important thinking skills curriculum (see Nickerson, R., Perkins, D. & Smith, E., 1985 as an example of its general acceptance within the thinking skills movement.)

2. I refer to the Lipman texts as self-reflective to point to the modeling of a community of inquiry as well as the development of informal and formal logic within the stories and to distinguish them from the "literary" text usually chosen by teachers in whole-language programs.

References


Over more than three decades of political independence, African countries have continued to disappoint. With very few exceptions, there is a picture of minus or extremely low growth rates throughout the continent. Populations continue to burgeon and living standards to fall. The effect of climatic misfortunes—chiefly the recurrent drought—has been greatly increased by lack of anticipation and faulty planning. Nearly everywhere, national leadership has relied almost exclusively on attitudes of power politics with little genuine attempt to inspire populations with responsibility, initiative and pride in achievement. In statist societies, corruption is invariably easy, and the income gap between ruling groups and the re-

Philosophy for Children Comes to Africa

Norman Atkinson
remainder of society is usually far greater than in the colonial period.

More worrying still is the resignation and complacency evident among many otherwise highly rational Africans, who cannot see prospects of improvement for some time to come.

It is doubtful if the responsibility for this situation lies wholly or even mainly with African people themselves. Down to the late 1980's, the emphasis of many Western aid programs was undeniably short-term, seeking to neutralize African influence in the power struggle against the Eastern bloc, through the support of established rulers, rather than to encourage and sustain genuine socio-economic development. In these circumstances, democratic and meritocratic processes were extremely difficult to achieve. In more recent years, after the end of the Cold War, a shift in aid policies towards the support of free democratic discussion may help to create an environment in which African communities can make more effective efforts to resolve their difficulties.

One consideration seems paramount in the situation now unfolding: it is necessary that individual members of African communities should be equipped for effective decision-making, through training in critical thought. Lack of capability to think critically, at all social levels, has been a major factor in the failure of many development programs to date.

The definition of critical thought is naturally crucial. To my own education students, I explain it as reasoned analysis leading to honest judgment. In this process there are two elements: the intellectual skills directly associated with reasoning; and certain moral attitudes necessary to ensure that reasoning is used responsibly. Among the moral attitudes are objectivity, fair-mindedness, tolerance and courage. The partnership between rational and moral aspects is the means to responsible decision-making and needs to be fostered at every level of social organization.

How can we achieve this? The circumstances of the 1990's appear to call for a many-sided program to enable Africans to look more critically at their problems. Within such a program by far the greatest impact will almost certainly be made by developing philosophical thought among children in schools.

The justification for Philosophy for Children is twofold. In the longer term we need to produce new generations of more responsible decision-makers, accustomed to working out their own solutions and judgments as a normal part of their experience in school. In the shorter term we can hope to increase influence on community attitudes through awareness and consideration of what goes on in the school curriculum.

Undoubtedly, there are formidable difficulties to overcome. Most immediately important is the need to convince social leaders and educational policymakers of the power and potentialities of critical thought. At first many of them may find it a disturbing concept. Yet it is not difficult to demonstrate that the key to socio-economic progress lies in the nurturing of responsible minds, alert, questioning and ruled by honest conviction. Other problems can be anticipated in the production of teachers who are ready to encourage critical materials to the African environment and culture; and in the resolution of more fundamental questions of curriculum planning, perhaps notably whether Philosophy for Children should be taught only as a distinct subject or (as is more likely to be acceptable in most African systems of education) should influence the curriculum as a whole.

An attempt to confront these difficulties will be made at the first workshop on Philosophy for Children, planned for Harare, Zimbabwe, during January 1993 under the direction of Dr. Ann Sharp. The choice of venue is significant. Zimbabwe's system of education, as laid down by earlier administrators during the colonial period, is unique in Southern Africa in having a full six-year secondary school curriculum, based on the English and Welsh Ordinary and Advanced Level examinations. More recently, the educational system has suffered a substantial decline in quality because of shortages in teachers and learning materials; yet there is in existence a lively tradition of critical thought: by contrast, Zimbabwe's larger neighbor, South Africa, will inherit on the demise of apartheid, an educational system long dominated by a narrow Calvinist perniciousness, which strongly discouraged any form of critical thought. It is of immense consequence to find a basis for a reconstructed curriculum which will develop the skills and attitudes appropriate to a democratic and meritocratic society. In the other English-speaking countries of South Africa—Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland—it is similarly necessary to adapt still-developing educational systems to provide training in effective decision-making.

Using the strategy of the community of inquiry, participants at the workshop will discuss textual issues in the Philosophy for Children learning materials produced by Prof. Matthew Lipman. Particular attention will be given to the ethical and epistemological issues arising from AIDS—currently an area of grave concern to all communities in Africa. If philosophical approaches can be shown to provide young people with a basis for more disciplined and responsible conduct, leading to greater self-protection against AIDS, we will have made considerable progress towards convincing community leaders of the value of critical thought.

Discussions are planned for 15 day period in one of the halls of residence of the University of Zimbabwe in Harare. It is hoped that we will be joined by teachers educators from all the English-speaking countries of Southern Africa as well as some authorities on Philosophy for Children from other parts of Africa.

If there is to be a watchword for this gathering, it probably lies in a re-interpretation of a term already sometimes abused in Africa—self-help.

Protagonists of Philosophy for Children will not be suggesting any specific ideologies or principles. But they will be in a position to demonstrate how the power of effective decision-making can be developed among young people. Matthew Lipman conveys the message in 1990's terms:

The decline of political authoritarianism and coercion creates a vacuum. Education must step into that vacuum with non-authoritarian strategies for combating bias and bigotry. Otherwise we could be faced with the familiar predicament of winning a few battles but losing the war.

Thinking Skills Program in Lithuania

Dorothy Halloran

When I applied to A.P.P.L.E. (American Professional Partnership for Lithuanian Education) for the summer session of 1992, in Vilnius, Lithuania, I had to design my own program for the elementary strand to be accepted by A.P.P.L.E. Since I had been successfully involved in Dr. Matthew Lipman's program, "Philosophy for Children" in fifth grade in Mountain Lakes, N.J. for eight years, I decided to lecture on and model those thinking skills that are part of that program. Never did I dream what an impact this would make.

When the one thousand Lithuanian teachers arrived to meet the seventy American teachers for the two two-week sessions of creative idea sharing, we had no idea how much they hungered for new methods, now that their Marxist books and teacher-student memorization-repetition exercises were discarded. Their enthusiasm to be like American teachers turned to near-anxiety when, on the second day, at the first session, before they had a chance to know me, I told them to sit in a circle. They did not move! They did not respond! They sat in total silence.

Once again I begged them to form a circle assuring them that it was all right and they could trust me to make it all right. And I smiled. Their smiles broke through slowly, though not broadly, as they began to move desks and chairs and began rapid-fire conversations in their native tongue. Lithuanians have a penchant for all speaking at once, but somehow they filter out the important parts of what they should be hearing. It was then that I knew that the second request from me would be that only one person at a time may speak. This, I knew, would also be honored.

Even though I had assured my teacher-students that they did not need desks, only chairs, also no notebooks or pencils, they just shook their heads as they wanted to capture every word. As they copiously took notes, seated in a square instead of a circle, I proceeded with the lesson. Some attempted to read Harry in English, some were assisted by our translator and for some timid souls, I read. This introduction and the reading comprehension moved on to a comfort level and we did begin to get acquainted.

Then the questions in the lessons began. Those that have always motivated my own classes were my choices here. The first of these was, "What is your earliest memory?" Normally the response from my students would be, "going to the beach," "my first day of school," "getting lost in a mall," or "my birthday party," therefore, it never occurred to me until I looked at forty sets of terror-struck eyes, that something here was very different from Mountain Lakes, N.J! Since I began this way, I knew I must continue and assured my class that it would be all right to comment, and again I smiled. The barrage of responses began and left me speechless. Hearing, "I remember running away from home so I wouldn't be sent to Siberia," and "I remember my parents being taken from me when I was three," and "I remember our farmhouse being burned down as we watched from the fields," made me aware that I was dealing with an adult level of tragic realities that I had not heretofore experienced. The silent support from entire audience was, perhaps, the best ice-breaker we could have received. From that point on the interaction of participants was lively, happy and interspersed with strong desires to allow children these teachers taught, to be able to express themselves as the teacher-students had done.

I introduced many types of questioning and particular questions that make the "Philosophy" program so important in getting kids to think logically while giving them opportunities for self-expression. Again, I had forgotten that under communist rules, this method was never allowed to be introduced, therefore it would take trust and smiles to begin implementation of a program designed around thinking skills.

When the class had ended and my plans, handouts and photos were swept away by thankful Lithuanian teachers anxious to try this wonderful method in their own classrooms, I was inundated by college professors, administrators and heads of institutes for information on trainers for this program. Hopefully, in the near future something may be done to get them on the road to educational reforms, but in the meantime, my small contribution to "Philosophy in the Classroom" gave them hope. From that day on I never walked into a classroom where I was to teach, whether it was creative writing, cooperative learning across the grades, or my daughter Kate's teaching of early childhood education, that we didn't find the room set up in a circle-square.
Some Premises:

This paper deals with an experience of Philosophy for Children we carried out in three Italian elementary schools, during 1990-1991. In this experimentation, we tried to relate philosophical activity in a community of inquiry and school thinking education.

The main idea of our research is that philosophizing fosters reasoning skills in children because of its dialogical, dialectical, argumentative nature. And we know that many actual psychological studies confirm the importance of the dialogical dimension in reasoning processes. Moreover, many philosophers now give voice to the epochal crisis in which the rationalistic concept of “strong reason” gives way to a “weak” one: an open, dynamic, culturally determined, functional rather than a metaphysical, discursive and argumentative reason.

If reason is dialogical, dialectical and argumentative in nature, no intellectual activity better than philosophizing could improve this dimension of thinking, developing human reasoning positively and productively. In fact, even if all higher thinking processes involve reasoning skills, not all disciplines foster and develop the same cognitive operations and dispositions in children. Fields of knowledge and reasoning processes are related to each other, for they are “situated”. On the one hand knowledge is always dependent on the quality and modality of thinking; on the other hand thinking processes are never “content-free”; and both, process and content, are related to social and symbolic contexts.

We think that philosophizing with children, transforming the class into a “community of inquiry”, is a fundamental intellectual activity for these reasons: a) the kind of content proposed: the controversial nature of philosophical topics stimulates dialogue, open inquiry and reasonable argumentations. Moreover, philosophical contents as “reality,” “truth,” “justice,” “responsibility,” “beauty” or “goodness” are the fundamental pre-knowledge of every discipline and are determinant concepts in the formation of human personality. b) The kind of reasoning processes fostered: we have already said that philosophizing is a dialogical, dialectical, argumentative thinking. But it is also a metacognitive activity which develops metaknowledge without reasoning. For its meta-dimension, philosophy could affect the global quality of thinking. c) The kind of social interactions developed: the community of inquiry stimulates its members to think together; from a psychological point of view, this “pushes forward” the level of thinking of each person and “scaffolds” his/her cognitive processes. Philosophically, the community of inquiry is important because it helps to create reasonable and responsible men who are able to live in a democracy. From a pedagogical point of view, this modality of interaction completely transforms the learning and instruction dynamics and the roles of teachers and peers in the class.

When we speak of positive and productive relationships between philosophizing and good thinking, we do not mean—at least not directly—the quantitative increments of the basic and
higher-level skills that are usually the aims of elementary school instruction. We mean instead the development of long-term aims such as critical thinking, creativity, metacognition, inquiry disposition, open-mindedness, reasonableness and argumentative reasoning. In a certain sense these processes are the “macro-skills” which make the difference in the quality of thinking and in its development. Probably they can determine the effective use and transfer of both knowledge and cognitive operations. These “macro-skills” are more strictly related to thinking motivation, than the basic and isolated learning skills, that could be also mechanically used.

The constructivist theory of thinking and the Vygotskian socio-cultural approach to learning are the psychopedagogical background of our research. We know that they have important implications for education, especially for the theory of instruction. Constructivism conceives the individual as an active subject in thinking processes and in knowledge construction. This theory looks at the child as a human being "able to" and not "lacking in:" The psychological theory of Vygotsky conceives thinking and learning as social, historical, cultural processes. He underlines the determinative role that environment and social interaction have in cognitive development and in intellectual improvement. In this way instruction has new spaces and roles in education.

Another important support to our hypothesis of research are the post-Piagetian studies. These studies agree with Piaget's idea of learning as an active and dynamic process in which all that is "old" is continuously restructured and balanced with what is "new"; but current research goes further than the Piagetian theory of developmental stages. Many researchers—such as K. Nelson (1978) and S. Carey (1985)—think that cognitive processes of adults and children are essentially homogeneous; they differ from each other only with respect to the amount of knowledge, one's confidence in a specific discipline, one's metacognitive competence and one's metalinguistic mastery.

On the basis of these studies, we can justify the opportunity to philosophize with children from a psycho-pedagogical point of view, in spite of the fact that this intellectual activity is traditionally reserved to "the grown-up"; for numerous reasons:
—common sense conceives philosophy as too difficult and not immediately useful for everyday life;
—pieg's theory of developmental stages, on the basis of which the ability to operate with abstract concepts develops in children in the highest stage, the "hypothetical-deductive" phase, around ten/eleven years old;
—the normal praxis of instruction, in which teaching and learning are separated activities and consequently teacher and learner are frontally opposed. In this situation, dialogue and open discussion are rare and social interaction is poor;
—the teachers' fear of adding new disciplines to the elementary curriculum, already full of aims and knowledge contents.

Our experimentation proves many prejudices deeply rooted in education to be wrong, and shows the strong power of new concepts of teaching, learning and school curriculum.

The Research

We experimented, for the first time in Italy, with the Philosophy for Children Curriculum, with children of seven, eight, and nine years of age, using the novel, Kio and Gus and its manual, Wondering at the World. The ecological content of the novel permits us to propose this activity as an important support on one hand for environmental education, on the other for science education.

We prefer to call this experience "proximate-experimentation" since we did not use control groups, nor quantitative tests for evaluation. We decided to prove the research hypothesis proposing the activity in the spontaneous context of the Italian classes in order to see the first impact of philosophizing on children and teachers. At the end of the experiment, we tried to evaluate the data qualitatively.

We had one philosophy session for one hour a week during an academic year, in which, as the authors of the program suggest, children read a passage of the story and subsequently draw up the agenda for the discussion, under the teacher's guidance. In the agenda each member of the "community of inquiry" may contribute the question or the issue that he/she considers interesting. In that way philosophical discussion always starts from the children's ideas, with strong motivational consequences. Another significant variable for the course and the level of discussion are the philosophical sensibility, metacognitive competence and communicative mediation of the teacher: the results of philosophical activity with children are dependent upon the teacher's ability. For this reason, we trained the teachers for a month before the beginning of the experimentation.

We must as well underline the importance of the community of inquiry as the social context for philosophizing. In fact, in a community of inquiry, the problems, the issues, the hypothesis of solution are constructed, elaborated and shared together. Considering the complexity and rigorousness of philosophical reasoning, the possibility of sharing the weight of thinking with the others and the opportunity to take advantage of other ideas, cognitive styles, skills and competence are very important and indispensable, especially for children. In fact, during philosophical discussion, children can reason at the limits of their personal capability; they can think "forward", in their "zones of proximal development"—as Vygotsky called them—set up by peers and teacher together.

As the end of their first experience we observed that:

a) The philosophical topics that involve abstract and general concepts are very motivating for children who are deeply fascinated and involved by these global and comprehensive ideas. During philosophical discussion, children raise these problems and enrich the corresponding concepts with their own experiences. What is perhaps more important is that the discussion of these topics allows teachers to observe the individual "pre-comprehensions" in children. These and the children's spontaneous theories about the world, in which they connect all new disciplinary contents (the Vygotskian "prehistory of knowledge"), and the children's self-esteem, so influential for learning motivation and metacognition.
of the philosophical activity in class, and not the value of the philosophical activity itself.

We have already discussed the influence that philosophizing has on the quality rather than on the quantity of the thinking process. For this reason we tried to develop some instruments for the qualitative analysis of results. We think that discussion analysis is the right way. We analyzed the philosophical discussions with children using four different methods:

I) analyzing the spontaneous philosophical content emerging;
II) analyzing the argumentative structure of discussions;
III) individuating the peculiar epistemic categories of philosophizing;
IV) differentiating the roles of teachers and peers and their negotiation within the community of inquiry;

I) Analysis of spontaneous philosophical contents: During philosophical discussions, we noted that children raise numerous philosophical questions, of course without awareness of their philosophical dimension. The teacher-guide has the task to underline the relevance of the topics, stimulating reflection about them. The community of inquiry soon learns to recognize what is philosophical and what is not, with its consequences for human life.

It seems to us that philosophical topics are seen by children on the one hand as something "strange", nearly "evanescent" and difficult to determine, and on the other hand as full of meaning and important for each rational person. For these reasons children enjoy themselves in these kinds of discussions in which problems are open to different interpretations and solutions. These discussions stimulate their creativity. At the same time, they perceive the rigorousness of philosophical inquiry, in which any position is rationally and critically controlled. Therefore, during this activity, creative thinking and critical thinking are continuously involved, or better said, they show their isomorphic nature. Briefly, creative productions and critical reasoning are two faces of the same complex process. Philosophizing makes clear that there is no critical thinking without creative insights, and that the best creative developments derive also from critical inquiry.

The topics that the children preferred in our experimentation were classic
b) Philosophical issues are particularly adaptable for discussion for they are naturally controversial; the positions adopted by the participants are never exclusive and every solution proposed is always precarious and provisional. This does not mean that all opinions are good, but rather that all theories could be questioned and, if reasonable and sufficiently justified, respected too.

c) The "community of inquiry" is the ideal context for furthering democratic behaviors and for opening up to different points of view. In the community of inquiry, all members must be responsible for their thinking. Each idea must be not only "reasonable," but also "practicable." In this way, children learn to discover the existential meaning of the theories and to see the relations between the dimension of thinking and that of acting, between saying and doing, with important moral consequences.

d) The disadvantaged children, who usually have the worse academic performances, found the opportunity for personal expression in the community of inquiry. In fact, in philosophical discussions, the explanation-examination analogy is broken and superficial factual knowledge gives way to reflection and to contribution from each member. It is very important, of course, that the discussion is not reduced to an episodical series of anecdotes, without a clear line of reasoning. This depends on the teacher, who has to preserve the philosophical level of dialogue, analyzing the depth and correctness of reasoning, the pertinency of intervention and the adequacy of given argumentations.

e) It seems to us that the philosophical novel is the right starting point for stimulating children to discussion. The philosophical novel is very motivating for pupils and has both the advantage of the novel format and the provocative character of philosophical topics. The children have to draw up the agenda for the discussion, so that no problem is imposed by the teacher.

f) We note that the role of the teacher radically changes in the community of inquiry. The teacher is no longer an "information-authority," but he/she becomes a methodological expert; the teacher is not a transmitter of data, but rather an expert in procedures. The teacher turns into a monitor of cognitive processes, into a facilitator of communication between minds. The teacher's role is very near to that in the Socratic method, in which each interlocutor is also a co-inquirer.

g) The metacognitive nature of philosophical inquiry improves this kind of consciousness, awareness and competence in children.

h) Philosophical inquiry privileges the argumentative and "informal" aspects of reasoning, which are consequently strengthened. This activity, moreover, fosters in children the capacity of elaborating macro-world-interpretations and of deducing their theoretical and practical consequences.

These considerations suggested to us some instruments of analysis for evaluating the data. In particular we analyzed the transcriptions of children's discussions in which, in our opinion, it is possible to determine the most relevant qualitative indicators of the cognitive progress of the group. We use this kind of evaluation not for isolating the individual intellectual performances and development, but for pointing out the dynamics that philosophizing brings about in the community as a whole.

The problem of evaluation is a controversial matter and one of the most crucial points in the Philosophy for Children experimentation. In the United States, the IAPC curriculum, implemented in many schools, has been evaluated using different kinds of tests. Some tests measure the improvement in reading comprehension, writing, arithmetic and other traditional academic performances. There is also a specific test, the New Jersey Reasoning Test, created for the Philosophy for Children Program, in which children are tested on reasoning skills. Even though the latter test is more adequate than the others, the problematic fact is that it is always a test, a quantitative instrument of evaluation that measures the academic projections.
issues in philosophical tradition: the mind-body problem, the problem of other minds, the proofs of God's existence, the different meanings of truth, the difference between reality and appearance, the value of authority, and so on. This is not the place for presenting the transcriptions of children's discussion about these themes, but we can attest that existence, the different meanings of truth, the transcriptions of children's discussion many times children proposed solutions about these themes, but we can attest that existence, the different meanings of truth, the transcriptions of children's discussion many times children proposed solutions. But what is more important is not the mere originality of the children's opinions, or their acknowledgement from tradition, but the philosophical sensibility and dispositions fostered by reflecting together on these fundamental topics in this rational way.

II) Analysis of the argumentative structure of philosophical discussions. During philosophical discussion, we can see the informal reasoning skills of children at work. Usually, these skills are attributed only to adults, but they are put into action also with children when they look for reasons, advance justifications, try to explain something, oppose rebuttals, propose solutions, and so on. Many times these skills are spontaneously used by children during quarrels. The community of inquiry transforms the quarrels into dialogues in which the different positions are critically evaluated and rationally analyzed with the others. In that way, the argumentative passages are made explicit and then internalized by the community. In agreement with Toulmin, we think that the reasoning space is essentially a public, interpersonal and social space and therefore dialogical. And if the reasonableness of an idea consists in its possibility of being sustained in a convincing, correct, and adequate argument, analogously the behaviors are reasonable to the extent in which they are discursive, if we can defend them in shared argumentation.

We analyzed the most significant discussions using the elements of argumentation identified by Toulmin:

- **claims**: the starting point of reasoning;
- **grounds**: the basis that makes a claim credible and acceptable;
- **warrants**: what attests and justifies the force of the grounds for a claim;
- **backings**: the general field of knowledge in which the warrants are included;
- **modal qualifiers**: they determine the degree of certainty or probability of an argumentation (e.g., all, some, perhaps, sometimes, etc.);
- **possible rebuttals**: all arguments, even correct ones, are dependent on the context and on the circumstances assumed. It is always possible to find some valid confutations.

In our analysis, we found that philosophical discussion not only constantly provokes the participants to express reasons for what they affirm, but also leads the argumentations towards the highest level, that is, towards the individuation of the backings of the claims, the reference “weltanschauungen”. Philosophical argumentations lead the participants to inquire about the meaning, the legality, the authority, the power that improves the beliefs in the backings. Usually, during this kind of discussion, the participants try to make explicit the implications, the consequences, the eventual contradictions of each position, thinking about the theoretical status and the practical use of an idea.

Therefore, we can justify that in a good philosophical discussion, there are numerous turns of discourse concerning the backings and the possible rebuttals of every position. We noted also that the modal qualifiers play an important role because they determine the truth-value of a claim.

III) Analysis of epistemic categories. In this kind of analysis, we tried to individuate the “strong sequences” present in the philosophical discussions with children, keeping in mind that each field of knowledge has its peculiar structure. Pontecorvo suggests that it is possible to analyze scientific discussions through the categories of “Development”/“not-development” and of “pertinency” of the argumentations. In this case, we look at reasoning as a compact body analyzable through the explicit thinking of a single person. This proposal could be interesting for the analysis of philosophical discussions: in a community of inquiry the ideas are discussed in an “agora” where the important thing is not the color, the authority, the power of the persons, but rather the utility and relevance of their ideas for the progress of inquiry. But the categories of “development/not-development” are less definite in philosophical discussions, where the solution of a problem is not known before, than in discussion about scientific topics. The development in a philosophical argumentation is given by its intrinsic process and not by an extrinsic aim.

As mentioned above, each field of research is characterized by the categories of conceptual organization and of procedural orientation that it uses. We can determine the epistemological modalities which are proper to the different disciplinary spheres both through their execution/action procedures, and their reasoning procedures.

In analyzing philosophical discussions, we use the same categories proposed by Pontecorvo for the field of natural science; adding three new categories that are, in our opinion, more peculiar to philosophy. The first kind of epistemic categories are:

- **L** = Definitions, denominations, linguistic interventions, etc.
- **D** = Dates, facts, observations, documents, proofs, etc.
- **R** = Relations, observations, metaphors, models, etc.
- **M** = Metacognitive and methodological considerations.
- **G** = General laws, empirical or rhetorical generalizations.
- **V** = Selection of significant variables or exclusion of less important ones.
- **C** = Recognition of referring contexts or decontextualization.
- **E** = Personal experiences, anecdotes, evidence present in episodic memory.

The epistemological categories specific to philosophizing are:

- **I** = Global and comprehensive interpretations (Weltanschauungen) about the meaning of facts, situations, behaviors, decisions, values, etc.
- **CS** = Consequences, with recognition of possibilities, implications, contradictions, fallacies of reasoning, argumentations as the *reductio ad absurdum*, etc.
- **VL** = Evaluations.

To better understand this kind of analysis, consider this example, in which we show an application of the second type of analysis (Toulmin's elements) as well:
1) Ale: Only after death we could have some proofs!

2) Fab: When we are dead, sure we'll have all the proofs!

3) Ros: Why only after death can you have all the proofs?

4) Fab: Well, if my soul goes to Paradise, it means that God exists, and in that moment I'll stop believing in God and I'll know

5) Ale: Also if I'm in Purgatory or in Hell, it means that God exists... If not, He doesn't...

6) Man.: Ale, so you need to believe in the soul, too... Do you (...)

9) Ale: If I find myself in Hell, or in Heaven or in Purgatory, it means that the soul exists and God too. If nothing exists... If we don't exist any more... nothing... Then it means that there's nothing at all!

10) Fab: But perhaps you will know when you are dead, and perhaps you will not know about God... If your body dies but the soul lives therefore you can know it. But if the soul doesn't exist? so, you can't know anything; it's as if you didn't exist...

11) Ins: Only if you will be there, you will know it...

12) Fab: Yes! If when we die the soul is a false thing, you'll know really nothing about God.

IV. Analysis of roles of teachers and peers in the community of inquiry. This analysis helps us in underlining the kind of roles that teachers and peers play in the community of inquiry. In the community of inquiry, we have circular communication between teachers and learners, against the frontal opposition typical of traditional classes. But we have a transformation also in peer relations; in fact, in a community of inquiry, the competition among classmates changes into an intellectual collaboration with other learners. These new dynamics create new roles in the classroom. In fact, the explanation-examination duality, in which the teacher is the authority and the judge, gives way to the teacher's attempt to become a mediator of discussion, in which the questioning starts from a real problem of the community.

The respect granted each position transforms the teacher from the point of view of his/her contribution in terms of contents of discussion, into an ordinary member of the community. But with respect to the reasoning processes his/her role is privileged because he/she is the expert able to orient the discussion forward. The teacher keeps the communicative circle open, maintains the high philosophical level of argumentation, and works intentionally in children's "zones of proximal development."

The teacher's disciplinary interventions and those of a discursive and informative nature, decrease with the increasing of the activity and productivity of the community of inquiry. When this happens, the typical roles of the teachers become:

—Facilitator of communication, helping the circulation and comprehension of ideas.

—Provoker, stimulates the participants to deepen their own positions, also through opposition which offers new cues for discussion.

—Modulator of the various phases of inquiry. The teacher fosters the circulation of ideas and the cohesion of the discourse, leading the reasoning process towards the most productive directions. This doesn't mean that the teacher smooths and softens the conflicts, nor that he/she resolves the problems at hand with answers and information not assimilable and integrated.

—Monitor; he/she controls the correctness and the congruence of reasoning and underlines the possible fallacies of argumentations.

—Supporter of the cognitive operations involved in the thinking process. This is essentially the function of 'scaffolding'—as Bruner metaphorically called—so important for intellectual development.

We define these roles as "teachers' roles," but this doesn't mean that the other members of the community of inquiry, in our case the children, are not able to assume these roles, learning new expertise in both reasoning and social interactions. This could happen when the children consciously acquire the necessary competences, mainly metacognitive ones. If this metacognitive awareness is lacking, the negotiation of these roles with children remains casual, not intentional, and the importance of being facilitators, modulators or monitors of the reasoning process is not completely internalized by children.

In conclusion, we note that the relevance of the teacher's roles is inversely proportionate to the quantity of interventions he/she makes during discussion. In fact, we substantially agree with Pontecorvo when she affirms that "to speak of class discussion it is necessary that the frequency of teacher's interventions are less than 30% of the total." With the progress of class discussion, we must also have a change in the quality of the teacher's contributions, so that while the conversational disciplinary and informational interventions decrease, those of a cognitive nature increase.
Regarding the elements of children's discourse, the philosophical discussion tends to increase the elaborated interventions both of agreement or of disagreement and to diminish the "minimum-replies"; which are simple assertions or oppositions without reasonable justification. We note that, during philosophical discussions, each member is provoked by the others to advance reasons for what he/she said. In the argumentative process, children have the opportunity to show and apply their cognitive styles to inquiry. Some children tend spontaneously to raise problems and to put questions, others tend to make metacognitive observations and procedural and methodological remarks. But there are children that contribute to the discussion with personal anecdotes, and others with encyclopaedic information. These latter are those who tend to give conclusive explanations to the problems. It is interesting to underline that while in the normal class situations these children have the best performance, in philosophical discussions, where progress is not shown by arriving at a conclusion, others could also successfully find space for expression, with strong implications for thinking motivation. Moreover, there are children who play in discussion the role of "skeptic"; this role is very important in philosophical discussions and very near to the Socratic method which is adopted by teachers. These kinds of interventions usually precede phases of development and progress in inquiry. We noted that with time and experience the community better understands the methodological utility of these "spontaneous skeptics", and learns to take advantage of their remarks and oppositions.

As with the teachers' roles analysis, it seems to us that good philosophical discussion fosters metacognitive, methodological, skeptical and socratic exchanges among members of the community with a sensible reduction of encyclopaedic and anecdotal contributions.

Conclusions

The four kinds of analysis we proposed above need, of course, to be better investigated and proven. Nevertheless, we think that they represent a possible way for qualitative evaluation of the effects of this activity on children. On the other hand, with philosophizing, we mark the quality of thinking.

Notes

4. Ibid.
Skills-Grouping as a Teaching Approach to the "Philosophy for Children" Program

Peter G. Woolcock

1. INTRODUCTION

In this paper I wish to introduce the idea of skills-grouping as a teaching approach in the Philosophy for Children program and to show how it would work in an actual lesson.

At the start of a set of Philosophy for Children lessons, the children standardly read an extract from one of the novels in the program, then ask a number of questions about matters that have puzzled or interested them in the story. These questions perform three vital roles in the Philosophy for Children program. First, they provide an opportunity to discuss matters of interest to the children where the issues are open-ended and there is a genuine need to work together as a community of inquiry. Secondly, discussing these questions enables the children to practice such general thinking skills as giving reasons, offering counter-examples, et cetera. Thirdly, the questions provide the teacher with a diagnostic tool for identifying gaps in the children's thinking skills which he or she can remediate through the use of relevant exercises.

My purpose in this paper is to provide a method to maximize the benefit gained from the third of these roles. In essence, it involves scrutinizing each question to determine which thinking skills will be of most assistance to the child who asked it, then grouping together those questions that embody the same thinking skills. The teacher then deals with the questions a group at a time, with the group containing the most straightforward or simple thinking skill being dealt with first, and the remaining groups dealt with in order of increasing difficulty.

To illustrate the method, I will analyze an actual lesson given by a student teacher and how I would have developed it using the skills-grouping approach.
2. FIRST LESSON
Miss A has a class of Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 students. The Reception and Year 1 spend ¾ of an hour each Wednesday in a library lesson, leaving her the eight Year 2 students with whom to do Philosophy for Children. (Year 2 children in South Australia are mostly seven-year-olds.) She was introducing them to the Philosophy for Children program, beginning with the Introduction (1 ½ pages) to Kio & Gus. The eight students consisted of four girls, namely, Bridgette, Vanessa, Julia and Natalie and four boys, namely, Adham, Aidan, Brett and Daniel. Of these, Bridgette is very bright and extrovert, while Vanessa has reading difficulties and is very quiet. Adham comes from a Lebanese family and English is not his parents’ first language. The school itself is located in an area which is essentially working class, although with middle class suburbs.

The first lesson began, as usual, with the children reading the story around a sentence or so at a time. Miss A did not offer any introduction to the program other than to tell the children they were going to read a story and discuss it. I had suggested she might like to stimulate their interest in the lesson by talking about holidays they remembered, or perhaps by discussing the notion of ‘wondering’ getting them to talk about the things they had wondered about. In my view this would have given them a framework within which to understand that this kind of reading lesson had a special purpose. She decided, however, that it was best to plunge directly into the story and the follow-up activities. The extract read by the children is given below:

I met Gus. Hold on—Gus wants to say something.
Kio! You didn’t tell about how it's our story, and how you’re going to tell it for a while, then I'm going to tell it for a while!
I'm going to tell how I play Roger, Kio's cat, and how I make believe I'm a firefly or a mole or a bat. Have you ever wondered what it's like to be a bat?
I can't help wondering what it must be like to be Leviathan. Or to be Kio's grandfather.
I even wonder if anyone has ever wondered what it would be like to understand everything, I know I wouldn’t like it. What would there be left to wonder about?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION</th>
<th>ASKER</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. L21, p2</td>
<td>Who is Kio’s cat?</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. L28, p2</td>
<td>What is wondering?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. L6, p1</td>
<td>What is a whale?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. L10, p1</td>
<td>What is a haunted house?</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. L15, p1</td>
<td>Who’s Gus?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. L18, p1</td>
<td>Who’s Kio?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. L9, p 1</td>
<td>What is a Leviathan?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. L22, p2</td>
<td>Who is firefly? (sic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. L10, p1</td>
<td>Where is the haunted house?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. L5, p1</td>
<td>How long is the whale?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. L1, p1</td>
<td>How long was summer?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. L1, p1</td>
<td>When was last summer?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. L5, p1</td>
<td>Where was the farm?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. L11, p1</td>
<td>What makes things scary?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. L11, p1</td>
<td>Who lived in the haunted house?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. L10, p1</td>
<td>Who made the haunted house?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. L19, p1</td>
<td>What’s he going to tell?</td>
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</table>

As I was an observer I did not intervene in the question-gathering session but there were a number of points where I would like to have tightened the procedure up. Firstly, I would have tried to get the class to appreciate that the questions had to be genuine puzzles, that is, the child must be ignorant of the answer or uncertain of it. I mentioned this to Miss A afterwards as something that would need to be emphasized next time. However, I did comment that her sample question, which the children would clearly expect her to know the answer to, did have the virtue of getting questions asked, even if these were ones that often just imitated her example. Also, I would have liked here to have clarified Natalie’s question, ‘Who is firefly?’ What exactly did Natalie mean? Did she really know what a firefly was, but was just following the pattern set by ‘What is a whale?’ ‘What is a haunted house?’ etc., while getting her grammar wrong, or did she thing that firefly was the name of a character in the story? In other words, I think it would have been useful to get the children to ‘own’ their questions, be responsible for them in the sense that they acknowledge they don’t know the answer, and that they can make what they mean clear, and that they can explain what in the story lead them to ask the question, that is, why they were puzzled. Nonetheless, it may well be the case in the first few lessons that it is more

The children read the story somewhat haltingly, except for Bridgette who rattled confidently through her section, and for Vanessa and Adham who were reluctant to read and were allowed to opt out. Miss A then suggested that there might be questions they wished to ask about the story. Bridgette volunteered to be scribe. Miss A offered an example question of her own, namely, ‘What is a whale?’, demonstrating how the question came from line 6 on page 1. Bridgette duly recorded all this on butcher’s paper in black felt pen. As a result, the children asked the questions listed below. Children were later asked to nominate which question they would like to discuss.
important to get them asking questions at all than to stress the correct way of asking questions.

3. PLANNING THE SECOND LESSON

Prior to the second lesson, I had gone through the children's questions with Miss A in order to relate them to the Discussion Plans and Exercises in the manual. My particular purpose was to try to get her to recognize what thinking skills were associated with each of the questions.

I will discuss the questions in the order of level of difficulty of the thinking skills involved—from the most simple thinking skill to the most difficult one. It would seem appropriate to deal with questions in the class in this order, too. The term, 'thinking skill' here is meant to indicate something the children can get better at. It is assumed that the teacher's aim is to see the children get better at this kind of task. A skill, then, is to be contrasted with 'content,' when the aim is to get them to know more of it.

4. THE SKILL OF DATA-COMPREHENSION

There are four questions all of which indicate a need on the part of those who asked them to develop their skills in data-comprehension. These are the questions:

1. Who is Kio's cat?
2. Who is Roger?
11. Where is the haunted house?
19. What's he going to tell?

The answer to each of these questions is directly present in the text. Gus says, 'I'm going to tell how I play Roger, Kio's cat, and how I make believe I'm a firefly or a mole or a bat' (p2). The answer to Questions 1 and 2 therefore, appear to be easily settled by reference to the passage just quoted. Admittedly, it is possible that Bridgette and Brett read 'Roger, Kio's cat' as two separate items in a list but, if so, this can be clarified by closer examination and discussion of the text.

Of course, it may well be the case that Bridgette knew perfectly well who is Kio's cat and merely offered this question to accommodate the teacher. However, situations will arise in which a child genuinely does not comprehend the text, so there is a need to develop this capacity, to provide the child with skills that enable him or her to do so.

Brett's question arises from 'Kio! You didn't tell about how it's our story, and how you're going to tell it for a while, then I'm going to tell it for a while!' (p1) Brett, here is presumably puzzled by what the 'it' is here that Gus and Kio are going to tell... What we appear to have here, as in the case of Question 1 and 2 is a deficiency in the skill of data-comprehension.

It may be the case, however, that Brett wants to know what happened in the haunted house, or with the whale, etc. If so, then this invites discussion of what I call 'sufficient data' and 'data-location' when I discuss the next three questions.

Likewise, reference to the sentence, 'Oh yes, it was also the summer of the haunted house by the lake' (p1) should answer the question, 'Where is the haunted house?' It may be the case, however, that Julia knows quite well that it is by the lake but what she wants to know is what country the lake is in, or some such. If that is the case, then it is best to defer discussion of this question until the next group, which focusses on a different set of thinking skills.

By discussing these four questions with the children first, we have started with the questions that involve the simplest thinking skill. Moreover, as they all involve the same thinking skill, discussing them together enables this particular skill to be consolidated. This kind of approach, however, is only possible if the teacher has been able to identify which thinking skill the question most appropriately exercises. To get the maximum benefit for the children's thinking out of the program, then, the teacher must be able to do this kind of analysis on the questions the children have asked and then structure the follow-up lessons accordingly.

An appropriate strategy for developing this skill is to return to the relevant passage, that is, the one where the phrase, 'Kio's cat,' occurs, say, get the relevant child (Bridgette in this case) to read it aloud, and see if the puzzle remains. In this instance, it almost certainly won't. The skill one wants the children to develop here is to be able to recognize that this kind of problem, eg, 'Who is Kio's cat?' are all questions where the answer is most likely to be found by a return to the data, in this case, the text. The aim is to get them to appreciate that this kind of issue is best resolved by reading the story with closer attention, focusing in more detail on the passage which raised the question in the first place. This is a useful piece of learning about how to be a better reader. One can even build up a class list of the thinking skills strategies, of which 'Look more closely at what you have read' could be the first. To do this, however, we need to have a clear idea of what counts as a 'thinking skill strategy', that is, a strategy for making one's thinking more skillful, for making it a better kind of thinking, one that is more likely to achieve its purpose. It is desirable, therefore, to clarify this idea of a 'thinking skill strategy' before we go on to look at how the other questions that the children asked could be used to develop their thinking skills.

5. WHAT IS A THINKING SKILL?

In one obvious sense, a thinking skill is any skill that makes you think better. What, however, counts as 'thinking better?' This all depends on what the purpose of the thinking is. Thinking has many purposes but the one we will mainly be concerned with is the purpose of 'problem-solving'. Reading the Philosophy for Children stories throws up problems or puzzles, preferably ones to which we do not know the answer. The program then teaches children skills that will help them solve those problems. Sometimes solving the problem will amount to finding the answer. At other times it will amount to showing that some proposed answers cannot be right even if a number of alternatives still remain viable. In the process, certain strategies for solving problems will be developed and will be found to have general application across a wide range of problems. Being able to use these strategies appropriately will improve the child's ability to solve problems, and, thereby his or her thinking skill. In the case of the question, 'Who is Kio's cat?' we get better at solving problems if we look more closely at the data that generated the problem in the first place. In fact, if we look more closely at the data that to start with, we may not generate the problem at all.

The Philosophy for Children program
is also a cooperative thinking skills program. It aims to get children helping each other to solve problems so, in addition to individual strategies for solving problems, it also introduces children to group strategies, to ways of interacting with each other effectively to sort out an issue. This, then, is the notion of thinking skill I will be using in later discussion.

6. THE SKILLS OF PROBLEM CLARIFICATION, IGNORANCE RECOGNITION AND DATA-LOCATION

There are nine questions in particular that indicate that children need to strengthen the skills which I will call 'problem clarification', 'ignorance recognition' and 'data-location', which I will explain more fully below. These questions are:

5. Who's Gus?
6. Who's Kio?
9. Who is Kio's Grandpa?
12. How long is the whale?
13. How long was summer?
14. When was last summer?
15. Where was the farm?
17. Who lived in the haunted house?
18. Who made the haunted house?

As a typical example, take the question, 'Who is Kio's Grandpa?'

Firstly, it invites Vanessa to clarify exactly what she is after. Does she want to know Grandpa's name, or some more information about him, or what? We have here the problem of 'insufficient precision'. We get better at solving problems if we get clearer about what the problem is, so we want the children to develop the skill of recognizing when they need to clarify the question if they are to get a clear answer, that is the skill of problem clarification.

Secondly, the question, 'Who is Kio's Grandpa?' invites the children to see if there is sufficient data available with which to answer the question. We get better at solving problems if we appreciate when more data is needed to arrive at a solution, what could be called, 'the data insufficiency problem'. This exercises the skill of recognizing when our ignorance is the main obstacle to answering the question, that is, the skill of ignorance recognition.

Thirdly, the question invites the children to suggest where we might get data required to answer the question, that is, the 'data-location problem'. We get better at solving problems if we know where to go to get the necessary data. In this case, the data we need is probably to be found later in the text, so we cannot answer the question until we have read further. Moreover, if the data is not in the text, then we'll never be able to answer the question unless there is sufficient data in the text to enable us to make some deductions or reasonable inferences.

Using this approach, we could expect the following kind of dialogue:

Teacher: Natalie wanted to know who Gus is. What clues have we been given in the story that might help us?
Daniel: Gus makes believe a lot, so perhaps Gus is a child.
Teacher: What's your reason for thinking that?
Daniel: Well, kids make believe a lot more than grown-ups do.

Teacher: What do other people think? Who thinks Daniel is right?
(Lots of hands go up) Who agrees with his reason? (Again, lots of hands go up) Yes, Julia.
Julia: Gus could be a boy because Gus is a boy's name.

Teacher: What do other people think?
Vanessa: Not everyone who has a boy's name is a boy. I knew a girl once called Sam.

Aidan: I know a girl called Billie.
Teacher: Anyone else know a girl with a boy's name? (Lots of hands go up) So, is Gus a boy or a girl?
Aidan: We don't really know.
Teacher: Who agrees? (Most children put up their hands) How can we find out?
Bridgette: We have to read more of the story.
Teacher: What do other people think? (No one offers any other suggestions) It looks like this question is just the same as Vanessa's question about who is Kio's Grandpa? Why? Vanessa?

Vanessa: Because we have to wait until we have read more of the story to find the answer.

As this dialogue makes clear, any discussion will provide opportunities for practicing many different thinking skills. The teacher, for example, could have utilized Daniel's generalization to practice inferences, or Vanessa's reply to Julia to practice counter-examples. However, the teacher has already identified Question 8 and 16 respectively as providing opportunities for practicing these skills, so she can retain her original grouping and use this for questions to practice ignorance recognition and, where appropriate, data-location. It might in fact be useful to keep a list of questions that the class thinks will be answered later in the book and come back to them when the appropriate passage is discussed.
7. COMMENT

All of the nine questions listed at the beginning of Section 6 provide the children with the opportunity to develop their skills in dealing with the problems of insufficient precision, data-insufficiency and data-location. So, while it appears as if nine quite different questions have been posed and discussed, as far as the thinking skills aspect of the program is concerned there really have been just three important learning elements involved. Moreover, it should be noted that the learning directly connects to what the children need, or what some of them need, because the indicators that the children are deficient in the skills related to insufficient precision, data-insufficiency and data-location have been provided by the children's own questions. The questions, in fact, are an on-going diagnostic tool for the teacher, springing directly from the children's thinking capacities.

8. THE SKILLS OF INFERENCE-DRAWING AND RELEVANCE-RECOGNITION

The question, 'What is Leviathan?' (Question 8) at first looks as if it involves only the skill of data-comprehension because the text does say, 'Grandpa's wonderful whale, named Leviathan.' As a result, when we ask Natalie to re-read the passage that suggested the question to her, she is likely to realize that Leviathan is a whale. Nonetheless she may have meant, 'Why is "Leviathan" an appropriate name for a whale?' or some such. If so, then this provides the teacher with the opportunity to help the children develop their thinking skills in making inferences. We could ask the children for suggestions as to why Grandpa might have called the whale 'Leviathan.' The teacher could introduce the word 'inference' although with Year 2 students the notion of a 'clever guess' might be more appropriate. The clever guess is a 'guess' because we have insufficient data to be sure of the answer but it is 'clever' because there is some data there that makes some answers much more likely than others. For example, the children might suggest that 'Leviathan' is another name for 'whale' or that there once was a famous whale so Grandpa named his whale after it. Of course, some children will suggest wildly irrelevant reasons, ones that are not warranted by anything in the story. Adham, for example, does this in Lesson 2. The teacher, then, has an opportunity to develop their skill in 'relevance-recognition' in seeing that the fact that Adham once had a dog called Leviathan is a fact that the author of the story is unlikely to know and therefore he is unlikely to have had Grandpa name the whale 'Leviathan' because he knew Adham's dog. Nonetheless, Adham's suggestion could be used in a way that makes Adham feel valued by getting the class to see the link between the name 'Leviathan' and size, the assumption being that Adham's dog was huge.

Once 'relevant' answers have been identified, there is then an opportunity for more practice in the skill of suggesting plausible data-locations. If 'Leviathan' is a word meaning 'whale,' how can we find that out? This discussion should reinforce the notion that dictionaries are the appropriate place to check word meanings. The class could then look up 'Leviathan' in their dictionaries. This would confirm that the clever guess was, in fact, a very good guess in that it proposes a meaning for the word 'Leviathan' very close to the dictionary meaning.

At this point, the teacher could utilize the exercise in the manual on pages 18-23 about stating, suggesting and inferring.

9. THE SKILLS OF MEANING CLARIFICATION, GENERALIZING AND COUNTER-EXAMPLING

The most sophisticated of the questions asked by the children is probably, 'What makes things scary?' (Question 16).
What skill development potential does it contain? Well, there is the assumption that we can pin down what it is that makes things scary. Many people find many different things scary but, the question suggests, all scary things have something in common. The question then, could be used to develop children's ability to hypothesize about necessary and sufficient conditions, and to test their hypotheses by the postulation of counter-examples. For example, one child might suggest that what makes something scary is its appearance, while another child might indicate that this might not be true by giving an example of something that is horrible to look at but which is friendly. This set of skills could be called 'meaning-clarification.' This kind of activity is also getting their hypotheses by the postulation of counter-examples. For example, one child might indicate that this might not be true by giving an example of something that is horrible to look at but which is friendly. This set of skills could be called 'meaning-clarification.' This kind of activity is also getting their hypotheses by the postulation of counter-examples.

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The children could be given the opportunity to show that they know the distinction between 'wondering,' 'remembering,' 'believing,' 'suspecting,' etc., which is practiced in the Discussion Plan for Leading Idea 3; 'Mental Acts' (14). This would not involve the full apparatus of meaning-clarification, where we are seeking the necessary conditions for each word. This would be a very time-consuming task with children this age, and of dubious benefit. Instead, we could get them to see that there are lots of different things we can do with our minds.

However, Leading Idea 7, which is entitled, 'Wondering' is designed to give the children practice in wondering, and this may be more appropriate. Perhaps after they've done lots of wondering, it might be useful to see if they can find anything common to what they've been doing but it may be best to leave this to Chapter 5 Episode 1 where it is dealt with specifically. Nonetheless, it would still be valuable now to get them to do some wondering because this will give added meaning to the material in Chapter 5.

11. THE SECOND LESSON

So far, all I have done is indicate the kind of anticipation the teacher can make as to what sorts of thinking skills seem to be involved in the questions the children have asked. This means that the teacher is well-prepared to develop a particular skill should it seem necessary. Of course, it may well be the case that the discussion shows the children have a perfectly adequate grasp of the skill, whereupon the teacher needs not practice that one. However, there are sure to be weaknesses revealed in the discussion that warrant follow-up. Also, of course, the discussion may go off in unexpected directions. Even so, the preparation the teacher has done is likely to cover this new direction, as far as the generalized thinking skills are concerned.

The second lesson, in fact, turned out to be a consolidation lesson in which the children fixed the details of the story in their minds and tried to clarify who the various characters were. The first problem discussed was the need to practice 'relevance-recognition' as the children were offering answers to questions that were not drawing on the data in the story. Adham, for example, thought that Gus might be a snail because he once saw a snail on television called 'Gus.' The exercises for Leading Ideas 'Who's Talking' (p9) and 'What is Kio's Story About?' (p11) would have been useful clarifiers here. This led onto the notion of 'guesses' and 'clever guesses,' and created just the right developmental situation to spend the third lesson on 'stating, suggesting and inferring.'

12. CONCLUSION

My aim in this paper has not been to give a blow-by-blow account of a lesson, but to show how a teacher can get most value out of a Philosophy for Children lesson if he or she prepares for the lesson by identifying what are the likely thinking skills that will arise from the questions the children ask. One can then look closely at the Discussion Plans and exercises to see which would be the appropriate follow-up, depending on which thinking skills the children need to practice.

As a final comment, it is worth looking closely at the Discussion Plans and Exercises to see what their essential point is, and in what order it is best to present them to the children. The essential purpose, for example, of the exercise, 'Who's Talking?' is to practice making inferences ('clever guesses') and this has a side-benefit in the development of 'relevance-recognition,' as does exercise 'What is Kio's Story About?' (p11).

When moving onto the more explicit discussion of inferring, etc., as covered by Leading Idea 3, 'Stating, Suggesting, Inferring,' it is probably best to get the children clear on what 'stating' is by doing the exercise on 'Stating,' p. 20, then 'Suggesting,' p. 21, then the 'Inferring' exercise on pages 22 and 23, before returning to the exercise on p. 19 which covers all three.

NOTES


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**REPORT ON A PILOT PROJECT TO CREATE INTEREST IN PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN WITHIN WESTERN NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA**

**INTRODUCTION**

Interest in the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children (IAPC) program Philosophy for Children is not new within Australia. A number of years ago, Dr. Laurance Splitter, a former Rhodes Scholar, introduced the material to schools within the greater Sydney region. Impetus was given to the idea of formally teaching philosophy in schools by the establishment of the “Centre of Philosophy for Children” in July 1988 under the auspices of the AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH. Dr. Splitter was appointed Director. The following year, the Centre arranged, with financial assistance from the Federal Government, a national workshop to promote the program in Australian schools. Participants included philosophers, teacher educators with a background in philosophy and educational administrators. The workshop was conducted by Professors Ann Sharp and Ron Reed, in conjunction with Laurance Splitter and various associates. During 1990, Philosophy for Children Associations were established in Victoria, New South Wales and Western Australia (including South Australia, whose association was set up several years earlier). Last year, the Victorian Association hosted the First National Conference on “Philosophy for Children and the Teaching of Thinking.” The conference was held at the University of Melbourne with over one hundred and fifty people taking part. The keynote address was provided by Professor Matthew Lipman.

Although it would not be accurate to report that extensive use is made of IAPC materials in Australian schools, it is valid to assert that a growing number of both government and non-government schools are attempting to utilize the program. My interest in Philosophy for Children was aroused when I attended the aforementioned national workshop in 1988. As a consequence, I resolved to promote the idea within the university and the region.
Devising a Suitable Pilot Project

Charles Sturt University is located in Bathurst. The city, apart from the distinction of being the oldest inland town in Australia, is noted for its educational facilities. The headquarters for the Western Region of the New South Wales Department of School Education is located in Bathurst. The western region covers one-third of the state. To my knowledge, no attempts had been made to introduce IAPC materials to schools in the region.

After discussing the material with interested colleagues, my teacher education students, and carrying out some lessons on a rather ad hoc basis, I decided the best way to promote Philosophy for Children would be to conduct a pilot project. I envisaged a project which would gain maximum publicity for the IAPC program, enthusing teachers and generally arousing school, departmental and community interest in the idea of philosophy as a school subject. During 1991, the university agreed to my taking six months staff development leave to investigate and promote the teaching of Philosophy for Children in schools, in addition to pursuing other academic projects.

I determined that I would spend the third term (July-September) visiting a variety of schools, teaching and supervising lessons in Philosophy for Children using materials from the IAPC program. Formal objectives of the project were to:

1. Provide a representative sample of primary school children within the region with experiences in “Philosophy for Children.”
2. Introduce a group of experienced teachers within the region to materials concerned with Philosophy for Children, and the program’s potential for their teaching.
3. Provide officers of the Department of School Education with the views of experienced teachers towards the material and its applicability to children in their schools.

I sought and obtained permission from the Regional Director-General of School Education to select schools for the project. The seven schools chosen were located in small rural communities, a rural service township and three regional centers. Middle class urban, working class urban (including a small proportion of Aboriginal children) and rural environments were thus represented in the sample. Additionally, pupils selected for an “Alternative Education” program for academically advanced children participated in the project. Fourteen teachers were directly involved in lessons which catered for approximately 300 children. Some fifty teachers and educational administrators were informed of the project through sessions at a university inservice course, while an additional number of teachers attended lessons at some of the schools to observe children’s reactions to the lessons. Altogether over one hundred educators learned directly of the project through lectures, staff seminars and school lessons I presented.

Method

Three novels and accompanying manuals were chosen for the study: Elfie (KYr 2 classes), Pixie (Yrs 3-5 classes), and Harry Stottlemeyer’s Discovery (Yr 6). As schools selected for the study did not have ready access to IAPC materials, arrangements were made for the university library to obtain manuals and sufficient novels to allow pupils to share copies between them. Lessons were initially allocated thirty minutes, with two periods planned for each week. Lessons were for whole class groups (the average number of pupils was about twenty three).

Before the project commenced all schools were visited and orientation courses held with the teachers, none of whom were familiar with the material. I arranged to visit schools once a week for lessons, with teachers agreeing to provide follow-up lessons during the week. Time was also set aside for me to discuss the material and format for future lessons with teachers. In order to disseminate information about the project and IAPC, as well as providing a forum for discussion, I prepared weekly newsletters which were given to participating teachers and sent to a range of other interested persons. At the conclusion of the project, evaluations were carried out by teachers, pupils, several departmental officers and myself.

Evaluation

From my own teaching point of view, the project was a success. Initially, as an itinerant not knowing the children personally, I found it helpful to preface lessons with a variety of games and other ploys to establish the rapport required for optimum development of “communities of inquiry”. As the weeks progressed, however, children and teachers became increasingly comfortable with the concept. Indeed, a diary I maintained during the term indicates that, overall, pupil participation in lessons exceeded my expectations. With respect to the material, I developed some reservations about the novel Elfie, especially when one followed the procedure of reading around the class. The vocabulary presented difficulty for some readers and the storyline occasionally seemed to lack fluency, suggesting adult authors may have been more concerned with getting across philosophical ideas than advancing a story. Admittedly, the impression may be superficial, as only the first two chapters were covered in depth. The activities and exercises contain good ideas and practical suggestions. Pixie and Harry proved easier to deal with as each novel presents credible characters with interesting things to say. Teachers perhaps need to bear in mind that the novels are readings for discussion rather than books for easy reading.

Teacher’s Evaluations

Towards the conclusion of the term, all teachers taking part in the project were provided with a questionnaire requesting information about their reactions to the work. They were asked to (1) comment on the materials used—novel and manual, (2) their pupils’ responses, (3) their opinions regarding the potential of Philosophy for Children in their class (and school) curriculum, (4) their personal impressions of the material, (5) their attitudes towards future use of the program, and (6) to include any other relevant comments.

Teachers’ observations relating to both the materials used in the project and pupil reactions were informative and perceptive. Most comments were consistent with my own views concerning the material and its potential for Australian children. The overwhelming reaction was
one of solid approval and endorsement of Philosophy for Children:

- I like the idea of teaching philosophy with children and this is a way of being introduced to it.
- Even in this limited time, I have seen the children's thinking skills blossom. Some children have amazed me with their "thoughts."
- As someone who knew nothing much about the program at the outset, I am now a "convert."
- I enjoy giving the lessons and feel I gain as much experience as the children.
- I'm thoroughly enjoying the scheme and can see immediate advantages to our own classroom.
- I think the level of thinking it evokes from children is surprising—showing that they are capable of deeper thought than is usually asked of them.
- Since the program itself is quite structured, it leads you through each stage so that you are never "stuck" for a starting point.

More specifically, teachers' assessments of observations of pupil participation brought forth a number of interesting points:

- (ELFIE) I have noticed vast differences in the children's level and quality of participation as the program progressed. Children became more spontaneous and aware.
- (ELFIE) Many responses were impulsive and did not lead anywhere. Sometimes it was difficult to develop the discussion. I'm not sure whether it was the age of the children or whether their discussion skills would have improved with further practice.
- (ELFIE) Short bursts seem to have worked best—perhaps ten minutes would be long enough for quality participation in a discussion activity.
- (PIXIE) Children's responses seemed to become clearer after some practice—once they became accustomed to the levels of thinking expected of them.
- (PIXIE) Some were more able to "key" into the philosophical debate than others in the group.
- (PIXIE) Children came up with some interesting responses—some expected and some surprising. All children seemed willing to respond to discussions—since there was no emphasis on reading ability even poor readers joined in.

(HARRY) As children became familiar with the main character they acquired his inquisitive disposition. This provided the right framework for our discussions.

Most teachers commented on their pupil's appreciation of the "freedom" philosophical discussion promoted:

The children partook earnestly in all group work; there awaved a sense of freedom from ridicule and "wrongness"; the children each and everyone felt comfortable and at ease with the material.

I found this work fascinating and enriching for me as a teacher. The principle of sharing one's own thoughts so openly is readily accepted by children and leads to great new territories for general class work.

A number of teachers included observations concerning children who were often reluctant to join in class discussions or had learning difficulties:

- (ELFIE) Some children who are normally difficult to draw into discussions began to contribute. I have been pleasantly surprised at the enthusiasm and depth of their participation—it's certainly made a difference to the way they look at things—more accepting of differing opinion—more willing to hypothesize and think laterally.
- (PIXIE) I was really impressed at the way the "slow learners" in this class joined in the discussions and thinking process.

Incorporated in the language curriculum it can only be a positive experience for teachers as well as children.

Although a word of warning was provided:

- Many of the activities could be accommodated into a language program. However, to do this, they would have to be taken out of sequence and not really used in conjunction with the novel.

There were frequent references to the enhancement of skills in inquiry and reasoning:

- It cannot help but aid the development of the child's powers of reasoning, logic and inquiry.
- The children have further developed their reasoning and logic skills; their questioning skills have been sharpened and their "unashamed" attempt to answer enquiries has enhanced their own personal development in self-confidence and self-esteem.

leading to the view that philosophy for children might best be conceived not so much a domain of study but rather an across-the-curriculum activity

- (I) have no problem in blending it across the curriculum—speaking and listening, literature, problem-solving, etc., etc.

So many of the activities lend themselves to be integrated into many subject areas, eg, writing, drama, art, etc.

I can see no trouble in using the philosophy work in a general across-the-curriculum enrichment capacity—it relates to reading, language, science, visual arts, written expression, etc.
Several teachers commented on the applicability of the program for work with gifted children

Gifted children, particularly, seem to enjoy the mind-stretching aspects of the program.

If personnel were available I think it could work very well as a special program for gifted children.

The view was also expressed that Philosophy for Children should not be restricted to a particular "band" of pupils

I think it important that groups be non-streamed.

but perhaps it is preferable to confine discussions to smaller groups than a whole class, where possible

This initial work was done with 27 children in a discussion situation. I wonder if half that number would be more suitable?

All teachers expressed a desire to continue with the IAPC program

I'd like to see the program used in our school from year two up.

Impressions so far are positive and I see a need for the program in all schools.

The need for individual schools to finance materials for their own programs was seen as a possible difficulty

Money for the materials could be a problem. Finance could limit the scope of purchases.

while some teachers expressed the view that schools may find it easier to commit scarce resources to a local production

An Australian version would help.

I would prefer an Australianized version of the material.

[An Australian version of Harry Stahlmeier's Discovery was published in 1992—Ed.]

If schools were to invest in the materials, care would have to be taken that teachers were committed to a continuing program of Philosophy for Children

I would like to use it on a personal basis but feel the danger in that teachers who have not been sufficiently familiarized with the program may not realize its potential and not use it—i.e., if the school bought the program it could well become a "white elephant" fairly quickly.

as observation that leads to matters relating to introductory courses, in-service work and support structures for teachers engaging in the program

I'm eager to learn more of "Philosophy for Children" as I feel I'm not fully prepared or experienced in the program.

I feel more in-service development would provide me with a better understanding and comprehension of the approach.

Workshops would doubtless be very helpful.

I felt the need for more guidance than that provided by the guidelines.

I would firstly like to trial the program further. I feel that time was limited and I didn't really have the opportunity to participate more effectively.

Instructional development would help make me able to successfully support other colleagues who would be interested in teaching P4C.

I would need a strong support system both within the school and from professional advisors outside the school.

The theme of in-service work and the need for careful consideration of teachers was raised in various contexts

Staff involved should be monitored and training courses carried out otherwise it could do more harm than good.

Some teachers would have a problem with some of the points in the leading of a philosophical discussion—see it as a "loss of control" or "teacher standing"

and teaching style may influence success

As I'm using the material with both my own and another class, I can make comparisons. My class is more used to a "democratic" style of teaching where they are allowed a high degree of spontaneity. Children in the other class are fairly "regimented" and they seem to have found it harder to adapt to the concepts and style of thinking involved.

Significantly, Philosophy for Children can help promote teaching skills

I have tried to be more aware of the points made in "leading a philosophical discussion,"* and endeavored to use them in other classroom discussions as well.

Once a teacher has mastered the skills of questioning themselves the activities in the manual could lead to many innovative programs in their classrooms.

*All participating teachers were provided with a copy of Mark Weinstein's article, "Leading a Philosophical Discussion", Analytic Teaching Vol. 6, No. 2—Ed.

Philosophy presents a very interesting evaluative environment for the teacher!

(in assessing pupils, etc.).

Teachers were provided with an opportunity to make other comments they considered relevant to the study. A number of observations made related to problems teachers had structuring class discussions, along with their "on the spot" assessments and predictions of where discussions were apparently heading. Often teacher responses in this regard demonstrated the serious and frank appraisals they were making of their own lessons while, at the same time, demonstrating their awareness that Philosophy for Children can contribute positively to teacher development.

I worry about my own questioning techniques! Sometimes not only did I feel that I'd lost the track but the children did, too. I couldn't figure out what exactly I was trying to achieve. I felt lots of sessions were left up in the air—there was no conclusion.

I have tried to be more aware of the points made in "leading a philosophical discussion" and endeavored to use them in other classroom discussions as well.

P4C can help teachers develop their questioning skills, etc.

Once a teacher has mastered the skills of questioning themselves, the activities in the manual could lead to many innovative programs in their classrooms.

Philosophy presents a very interesting evaluative environment for the teacher!

(in assessing pupils, etc.)

Nevertheless, there are real problems
when it comes to evaluating what has occurred and knowing when a discussion has reached a reasonable termination point, given the likely time constraints placed on the work.

TIME was the main problem. This is a very time-consuming exercise if it is to be done properly and one is to give it its rightful due.

How much school time should be allocated to the program, and when is enough - enough?

It appears obvious that teacher evaluation of a student's ability level is highly questionable once philosophy is introduced to a class.

I am still unsure and hazy as to the attainment of the end result, not knowing by what means I'm to achieve this goal.

In the editorial to one of my newsletters, I commented

Although one uses the IAPC material as the basis for one's lessons, it is quite hazardous to predict the twists and turns conversations may take. Sometimes I find difficulty determining the extent to which I should direct discussion, as opposed to "letting it flow." My usual technique is to introduce what I consider "key" questions as openings arise. I am aware, however, that in doing so I may possibly cut off pertinent contributions. Perhaps it is hard, as an adult, to subdue leadership urges. In such circumstances, careful lesson evaluation probably provides the best guide for future planning, although tension between "free expression" and structured discussion is likely to occur from time to time.

In summary, difficulties and criticisms raised from the teachers' points of view, related to: Americanisms—a comparatively minor problem, but consistent with an appeal for material with a local flavor; problems over the start-stop nature of maintaining a story line; logistical difficulties in finding a niche for the material in an already overcrowded curriculum; practical problems regarding availability of texts and manuals; occasional difficulties maintaining stimulating discussions with large groups; and observations concerning the need for committed teachers, adequately prepared and supported in their teaching of philosophy.

Of these issues, the last mentioned was most often raised. If philosophy is to be taught effectively in schools, teachers must feel confident about their ability to teach the subject. This must entail thorough grounding in the IAPC program before attempting work in schools. Additionally, the program should be introduced in schools where there is a general interest in its operation. Inservice work should be available, and teachers should have access to persons with expertise in philosophy and a knowledge of philosophy for children.

Children's Responses to Philosophy for Children

In view of the restricted nature of the pilot program, limited emphasis was placed on pupil evaluation of the material and the activities. Nevertheless, it was considered appropriate to elicit some feedback from the pupils.

As far as Elfie was concerned, evaluation consisted of oral responses to questions about the material and reactions to various discussions. Oral responses and raised hands overwhelmingly supported the lessons. A small sample of written responses were, however, collected from volunteers.

In their written responses, pupils working Elfie and Pixie were asked to outline what they most remembered about the principal character, the discussions, and state whether or not they would like such discussions to continue, preferably giving reasons for their answers. Pupils were also provided with a space to ask any questions they wished about the enterprise. Representative responses to the pupil questionnaires are recorded below.

In their written responses to Elfie, pupils remembered

she was a yoyo—she was shy—she thought she was a dummy—she thinks she doesn't know anything—she thinks questions are important.

Discussions were worthwhile

'cause they're fun and funny. I like thinking about those things—because they help us to think about our mind—because they are very interesting and fun to listen to and you learn from them.

Only one pupil had a question

Why did you tell the story about Elfie?

(Gary)

Middle school pupils had little difficulty recalling information about Pixie

She thinks about a lot of things—Sometimes she's a bit cheeky—I remember that some of her sentences were very confusing—Pixie is always asking questions and wondering about things—She likes to argue with people but she is a nice girl—Well, Pixie was a sort of person you would call weird.

They also found it easy to recall various questions raised and matters discussed

If you make up a fib it is an excuse or the other way around? Do you think all them time? Does everything have a story? What can and can't happen? How can we tell what is true? And do you think all the time? We talked about what is real, and what only seems to be real. I remember how we learned to think in a different way. I learned how one word in a sentence can make a lot of difference to what you mean. I remember that everyone had a different opinion on a mythical thing such as a mushroom with legs, everyone had a different answer.

Responses to the question—Would you like to have more discussions like these?

Why?—were, with few exceptions, positive

Yes, because they make you think hard, and they make you understand more about the story—Sometimes, sometimes they get a bit boring but they are fun—Not really, because it confuses me sometimes and yes because it's interesting—Yes, I would like to have more discussions like these because they are educational and most of all they're fun—I liked them very much because sometimes my imagination goes wandering, too, and I like that—Yes, because we can all tell each other things and we can tell everyone our thoughts—We can talk and discuss things—Yes, because I never really do have discussions like that—Yes, because they help you understand about life.

With regard to Harry—How would you describe Harry?—responses generally reflected the character

I would describe Harry as someone who didn't pay much attention in class, but when he discovered something,
Accounts of Harry's discoveries were accurate

His discoveries were: reversal of sentences, how they would and wouldn't work.

Did you think Harry's discoveries are useful? Why?

Yes, because you might not make so many mistakes—Yes, because they can be used to solve problems—Yes, you can make "big mouths" think about things before they say anything.

Pupils were asked what they liked about the discussions

They were confusing and made us think before we could say anything about it—I liked it how everyone took part and you got your turn—I liked the discussions because you could talk about things and make your own discoveries—The things I liked about the discussions were that everyone got to say what they thought. They also made me think more deeply about the things we discussed—You get to argue with everyone else—Things we said stretched our minds.

while very few took the opportunity to respond negatively—Were there things you did not like about the discussions?

You're waiting for your turn and people butt in (interrupt).

Finally, pupils were asked whether they would like the program to continue

Yes, it would make people think more before saying things—No, because we are not getting our work done in class—Yes, because it was fun and better than classwork.

The table below records Yes/No responses to questions concerning the future of philosophy discussions. In a few cases, responses were equivocal.

It was pleasing to note the high acceptance of the IAPC program amongst a sample of participating children. Clear-


<table>
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<tr>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>52</td>
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<td>HARRY</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
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*Decisions as to which classes completed the questionnaire were arbitrary, depending on availability. The questionnaire was given without introductory remarks, other than to the effect: "Here is a short questionnaire, would you please respond to it as you see fit?

The fourth objective concerned the need for networks whereby teachers might be inducted into the IAPC program. Teachers who wish to engage in Philosophy for Children must establish a commitment to the enterprise. Commitment in this case goes beyond mere goodwill. Teachers need to be conversant with the whole program and have had prior experience with the materials before embarking on classroom teaching. Furthermore, there must be regular opportunities for teachers using the material to discuss their teaching with others involved, as well as having access to persons well versed in philosophy and the materials.

Finally, it is not possible to adopt the program unless schools, or the Department of School Education, are prepared to commit resources to it. Access to children's novels and teachers' manuals cannot be successfully maintained through ad hoc arrangements. Once the will is there to engage in Philosophy for Children, the project demonstrates the enthusiasm IAPC materials generate in teachers and pupils, and the contribution the program can make towards enhancing the quality of critical thinking in Australian schools.

Report from North America...

Traditional instruction is based on the assumption that learning is a process in which the teacher is the giver of information and the student is the recipient. This type of instruction resulted in a curriculum divided into subject areas in which instruction was skills-based and characterized by drill and practice. By contrast, cognitive designs are based on the assumption that learning is a process internal to the learner and successful learning is best achieved in a rich learning environment which involves authentic tasks, provides opportunities to collaborate, and requires students to use the information acquired. These ideas on learning which come from cognitive research are the same ideas good teachers have discovered and practiced in their classroom. Wider application of these ideas can be expected as increasingly, good teachers are becoming research-based.

Approaches within cognitive instruction that are derived from instructional materials and classrooms which are based on cognitive research can be divided into three categories. These three categories may be summarized as follows: (1) Situated Cognition—approaches which locate learning in authentic, cognitive tasks within rich learning environments, (2) Strategy Instruction—approaches which use an adjunct course or separated instruction to emphasize the development and integration of a repertoire of cognitive and metacognitive strategies, and (3) A Dual Agenda—approaches used in content courses which emphasize content and strategy instruction. These designs are further elaborated in Jones (1990). In reviewing the actual instructional methods used in each of these categories, it is helpful to use the following seven critical variables as a basis for comparison (cf. Brown Campione, & Day, 1981; Weinstein and Mayer, 1986):

1. The goals and metaphors that drive learning and instruction;
2. the learner—characteristics, responsibilities, and values of the learner;
3. the teacher—characteristics, responsibilities, and values of the teacher;
4. the tasks (activities and products) that ultimately define the nature and level of achievement;
5. principles of sequencing—guidelines for making decisions about what, how, and when students will learn;
6. principles of assessment—guidelines for making decisions about what to assess, how to assess it, when to assess it, and who should assess it;
7. context—the characteristics of the classroom that support learning.

While these three instructional designs are markedly different, they share some significant characteristics in common. These are: (1) the view that successful learning is dependent upon processes internal to the individual which recognizes the importance of the link between learning and the individual's total environment; (2) the shift away from learning low-level basic skills and isolated facts (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985); (3) an emphasis on constructing meaning and self-regulated learning; and (4) an emphasis on depth, rather than breadth (Jones 1990). The differences in the designs are based in the way each defines the seven critical variables. The following paragraphs examine each design in terms of these variables.

Situated Cognition—The major goal of this design is to provide a rich learning environment in which students are able to spend extended periods of time engaged in authentic tasks just as experts and researchers work (Broun, Vye, Kinzer, & Risko 1990). Examples of materials using this approach are: Lipman's (1985) Philosophy for Children, which provides children with the opportunity to question, explore, and reflect upon their own thought processes to develop good thinking skills; the whole language approach developed by Goodman (1986) and others (Bergeron 1990, Goodman, Bird & Goodman 1991); and others such as ICS (Interactive Communications & Simulations) (Goodman, in preparation) which involve stimulating real-world conflicts and situations.

Strategy Instruction—The goal of this design is to assist students in developing a repertoire of both general skills and strategies that apply across content areas and specific skills and strategies that apply to particular content areas. Adjunct study skills courses emphasizing skills such as elaboration (using prior knowledge to explain linkages among parts of information), note taking, creating analogies and metaphors, and assessment are examples of applications of this design (e.g., Weinstein & Mayer, 1986; Weinstein and Underwood, 1985). Other researchers have used graphic organizers for summarizing and taking notes in applications of this design (e.g., Holly & Dansereau, 1984; see also O'Neil, 1978; Weinstein, Goetz, & Alexander, 1988; Wade, Trathen, & Shraw, 1990). Extensive research also indicates that low achievers can benefit greatly from the teaching of skills explicitly in the content of study skills courses or programs (e.g., Neisser 1986, Weinstein, Goetz, & Alexander, 1988).

Dual Agenda—The goal of this design is to teach the student to construct meaning within the context of a content area. Thus, a major feature of this design is that it begins and ends with content objectives. There is a smooth movement through the process of learning from text, problem-solving, or decision-making.
Skills and strategies are presented holistically, resulting in the integration of teaching, reading, writing, and thinking in the process of learning. This design emphasizes self-regulated learning to include the use of appropriate strategies and the ability to initiate and sustain reflection and reasoning within subject areas.

Reciprocal teaching, where the student and teacher are involved in collaboration and dialogue (Brown, Palincsar, & Purcell, 1986; Palincsar, 1986), is an example of an instructional approach using the dual agenda design. Others include programs developed by Perkins (1986; Perkins, Tishman, Mirman-Owen, Wilson, & Goodrich, in Preparation); problem-solving mathematics programs (e.g., Peterson, 1987; Schoenfeld, 1988; Silver and Marshall, 1990), and Breakthroughs developed by Jones & Tinzmann (1990); and dimensions of thinking (Marzano, et al., 1988).

All three of these designs recognize the necessity of student development of a repertoire of skills and strategies for successful learning. Their major difference is in their views of the degree to which cognitive and metacognitive strategies can be taught independently of content. Even in the area of skills instruction, there has been a blurring of the differences as proponents of situated cognition recognize the importance of skills instruction and the proponents of strategic instruction recognize the importance of complex tasks and the need to teach transfer skills.

As cognitive science research continues, modifications and refinements can be expected as researchers identify those methods of implementing these designs that prove to be the most effective in meeting student needs. However, the results of this research will not make a substantial impact on education unless it is given wider dissemination among teachers and administrators. Both of these groups must be convinced of the advantages of the practical applications of these designs in their contextual environment and encouraged to take full advantage of available materials and support.

References


Catherine Young Silva

As this issue goes to press, word has reached us of the death of Catherine Young Silva, Director of the Brazilian Center for Philosophy for Children and President of the International Council for Philosophical Inquiry with Children. No one has worked harder or dedicated themselves more whole-heartedly to make it possible for children to do philosophy than Catherine. It was thanks to her efforts that the Brazilian movement now is so widespread and has such momentum. She also helped to shape ICPIC into the influential and responsible association it has become.

We shall all miss her soft-spoken, wise counsel, as we shall miss the warmth and radiance of her friendship.

Proceedings of the 1973 Conference on Pre-College Philosophy

One of the self-imposed responsibilities of Thinking has been to enlarge and clarify the historical record regarding the development of elementary and secondary school philosophy. The selection that follows is a contribution to that record.

In 1973, there was some public familiarity with secondary school philosophy, but none at all with elementary school philosophy. (I had published Harry Stottlemeyer's Discovery in a small off-print version involving about 300 copies in 1970, but in 1973, its first official publication was still a year away.) It seemed to me that a conference was needed to raise public consciousness about the possibility of teaching middle-school, junior high school and secondary school students philosophy, and I discovered that there were quite a few educators who agreed, although what they had in mind was often just philosophy in the last year or two of high school.

At the time there was a Center for High School Philosophy at the University of Massachusetts. It had stemmed from a similar organization in the Midwest run by Prof. Hugo Thompson, but when it came East, it was administered first by Prof. Robert Wellman, of U. Mass, and then by Paul Bosley. They encouraged me to proceed with the idea of a conference at Montclair State College, and I received even more encouragement from Prof. Patrick Schievella, a doughty pioneer in the area of pre-college philosophy, and at the time the founder of the "National Council for Critical Analysis," which has never received its due for its contribution to the development of the critical thinking movement.

This account of the 1973 conference is taken from Pat Schievella's Journal of Critical Analysis, Vol. IV, No. 3, October 1972. (Although dated before the conference, it actually appeared afterwards, in 1974.) The account in the Journal shows that there were two keynote speakers, the first being Prof. James McClellan, of the State University of New York at Albany. Jim spoke on the topic "Pre-College Philosophy: An Educational Paradox." The other was Prof. Amitai Etzioni of Columbia University. His topic was "The Social Impact—Education Without Philosophy." After the keynote addresses, the conference broke up into six concurrent sessions. There were generally half-a-dozen panelists in each session, and these made brief presentations, then fielded questions from the audience. Our account of what happened in these sessions is derived from the reports of the anonymous "recorders" who were present. These reports are as follows:

M.L.
I. PRE-COLLEGE PHILOSOPHY: WHY TEACH IT?
Panel Members: Moderator: Prof. Pasquale S. Schievella, Jersey City State College; Ms. Marilyn Andur, Memorial Junior School, Whippany, N.J.; Prof. Lynne Belafie, Staten Island Community College; Mr. Michael Brady, Solebury School, New Hope, Pa., Prof. Clyde Evans, U. of Mass.; Prof. Marx Wartofsky, Boston U.

1. Professor Schievella opened the panel discussion with a brief paper summarizing his findings based on 12 years of teaching philosophy on the pre-college level. In discussion he cited the main tasks as overcoming aversion to the concept and to the term "philosophy." Rote-learning, which dominates pre-college education, is made possible by the authoritarian image of a teacher who dispenses "truth" and "knowledge" to students unprepared to question the "facts" Hence, philosophy should be introduced into the pre-college curriculum because it provides the opportunity to analyze such concepts as language (its varied and multiple uses), truth (as often opposed to the teacher's claims), and knowledge (as opposed to dispensed "facts"). These three concepts constitute the sub-structure through which all other philosophical issues and all the subject matter of other academic disciplines can be relevantly pursued. Since philosophy (an unacceptable and suspect term on the pre-college level) should aim at instilling logical, critical, and analytical attitudes and skills, it might be expedient to refer to such a course of study as "CRITICAL ANALYSIS" rather than "philosophy."

2. The study of philosophy amounts to learning how to read, i.e., learning how to analyze a text in such a way as to identify his basic assumptions and hidden presuppositions. Viewed in this way, philosophy clearly has a place in the pre-college curriculum.

3. Professor Belafie took the position that foreclosure of identity is the adolescent's self-destructive method of avoiding the anxiety-textured growth then uniquely available. Important intellectual and moral doubts are referred for solution to the dogmatic slogans of peer groups or political parties rather than private decision. Equally irrational is the alternative posture of cynical skepticism. Thoughtfulness remains a stranger to both perspectives.

Philosophy provides a third alternative whenever a professor presents conflicting metaphysical or ethical queries with interest and sympathy. In this action it is uniquely illustrated that although truth is no absolute, skepticism is not therefore inevitable.

People have the right, and the necessity, to practice and trust intellectual struggle before entering into careers or college whose demands divert painful recognition of the inauthenticity of previous adolescent "solutions" to life's ambiguities.

4. But if philosophy can sometimes help students in the throes of an identity crisis, it can also bring on identity crises—it can be disruptive and disturbing to students who have not previously been exposed to the radical questioning of the assumptions guiding their lives. In fact, the criterion according to which we can judge whether philosophy is being properly taught is its capacity to challenge students in this way. Of course, it would be foolish to emphasize this disturbing aspect of philosophy in trying to introduce it to pre-college curricula.

5. If philosophy should be introduced to pre-college curricula, care should be taken that it should not be a hidden indoctrination into a particular social or political viewpoint. Emphasis on philosophy as liberation suggests a sensitivity-training atmosphere in the classroom—an atmosphere incompatible with the objective, reasoned inquiry philosophy should be.

6. If philosophy should be introduced to pre-college curricula, philosophers should avoid assuming that their own motivations in pursuing philosophical inquiry are the sort of motivations likely to be found among pre-college students. This error was made in the teaching of the natural sciences in the last decade. In developing philosophy courses at the pre-college level, a careful study should be made of the interests and perspective of the students to whom philosophy should be tailored to the needs and capacities of the students and not programmed from above by professional philosophers.

II. PRE-COLLEGE PHILOSOPHY: WHO SHOULD TEACH IT?
Panel Members: Moderator: Prof. Joseph Margolis, Temple U; Prof. Jerome Eckstein, SUNY Albany; Prof. Patrick Hill, SUNY Stony Brook; Mr. Leslie Marx, John Dewey High School, Brooklyn, NY; Prof. Robert G. Olson, LIU; Prof. Don Harward, U. of Delaware.

The panelists' initial response covered a wide range. At the two extremes were Professors Hill and Harward. Hill argued that the logical candidates for teaching pre-college philosophy were those already teaching in the high schools who possessed certain qualities of thoughtfulness, interest and sensitivity; Professor Harward insisted on graduate studies in philosophy before teaching. Professor Olsen, on the other hand, questioned whether anyone would be allowed to teach philosophy in the revolutionary manner alluded to in the keynote address.

From this initial diversity, both sides of the discussion made significant concessions to the effect that the moderator, Professor Margolis, proclaimed a kind of consensus. This unity was one felt by observers as well as panelists. Prof. Jerome Eckstein felt we could agree that there are at least two potential pools from which we can draw future high school teachers of philosophy. They are:

a. those already teaching in the high schools, who in addition have an interest in philosophy and a willingness to develop that interest.

b. those now taking graduate studies in philosophy, who have a specific interest in and sensitivity to the high school age group. All agreed that it would be premature to determine the exact mix to be drawn from these two sources.

Several telling points were made on the way to these conclusions. For example, Professor Lipman made the observation that philosophy has proven especially suited to inner-city programs, where the question of meaning is agonizing and real.

III. PRE-COLLEGE PHILOSOPHY: HOW SHOULD IT BE TAUGHT?
Panel Members: Moderator: Dr. Howard Storm, Superintendent of Schools, Leonia, NJ; Prof. Stefan
Baumrin, CUNY; Prof. Terrell Bynum, SUNY Albany; Mr. Malcolm Goodman, Fieldston School, NYC; Prof. Karsten Struhl, LIU; Prof. Peter Caws, Hunter College, NY.

PROF STEFAN BAUMRIN:
1. Ideal age for beginning study of philosophy is adolescence (14-17+).
2. All non-professional college curricula should move to high school.
3. Stress on permanent intellectual value, not collation of data. Thus, based on philosophical classics. Recommended readings for high school: Plato (Crito, Phaedo, Republic); Descartes' Meditations; Hume's Dialogue on Natural Religion; Mill On Liberty; Russell's Problems of Philosophy.
4. During second year of high school rigorous treatment of logic and ethics.
5. Senior year reserved for synthesis.
6. Method: Socratic, but slow. Not informative but formative. (a) Each argument must evolve for each student. (b) Grading and exams should be philosophical. No objective exams. Reading, drafting of questions, essays. Grades: honors, pass, fail.
7. Teacher: must be a philosopher.

DISCUSSION
1. Are we out to create jobs for philosophers?
2. Question of priorities: should not logic be taught first? Isn't the aim to teach to think? Why the recommended material rather than logic? Resp: Logic should be done at grade school level; logic is taught in math. Qu.: Is logic really being taught?
3. Question: Isn't such a reading list too "special"? Broaden the target area. Such books are not good for students who can't read. Resp: Inability to read does not interfere with ability to think.

PROF TERRELL BYNUM:
3. Emphasize philosophy as tool for humans to understand and to interact.
4. Importance of logic (not formal): fallacies, ambiguities, etc.
5. Teacher: whoever can do it well. Philosophers just might be able to be taught to do it well.
7. Use of media very important (examples given).

DISCUSSION:
1. Importance of starting where students are at. Plato may be too much out of it.
2. Readings are not as important as how they are used.
3. Class size? No one answer. Different activities.
5. Keep distinction of philosophy as science and as art. The science is for the philosophers.

PROF KARSTEN STRUHL:
1. Philosophy (which is for everyone) must be understood as a way of understanding one's life situation into which one is thrown so that one will not only adjust but may combat and perhaps change the situation.
2. Recognize that students come to school molded by society and institutions. Schools tend to become instruments for reinforcement of the existing socialization process.
3. Philosophy can be done well prior to college and should be seen as a subversive activity.
4. Brameld's views on ways of teaching were reviewed and applied to philosophy. Essentialism (classic texts); Perennialism (eternal truths); Critical Thinking (progressivism) (tends to elevate method over ends). Struhl: "Negative commitment!"
5. How do this? Demystify authorities. Teach philosophy in terms of substantive issues (avoid formal issues).

IV. HOW CAN THE SCHOOLS FACILITATE PRE-COLLEGE PHILOSOPHY?

The panel on facilitating pre-college philosophy was introduced by Mr. Berman, Humanities Consultant to the New Jersey Department of Education. Mr. Berman opened the workshop by asking everyone in the room to write down his own questions relating to the topic. Next, he suggested that we discuss such questions with our neighbors, then place any questions of general interest before the group as a whole. The questions asked were such as: "Doesn't the English curriculum offer a natural place for introducing philosophy in the high school?" "Is it necessary to bring people trained specifically as philosophers to teach philosophy in the high school?" "How can I as an elementary school teacher get training in philosophy?" "Will there be future programs like the one sponsored last summer by the Rockefeller Foundation?
for training high school teachers in philosophy?" "Can pre-high school students really get "into" or anything "out of" philosophy?" and "What is it that pre-college teachers would like for their students to get out of the study of philosophy?"

After these questions had been voiced, Mr. Berman turned the discussion over to the panel. The first panelist began with a quasi-historical review of the role of philosophy curricula in education. After he had been speaking for about five minutes, one member of the audience called out "Point of Order!" and suggested that members of the audience might prefer discussing the questions they had compiled to hearing another lecture on philosophy and education. This suggestion was greeted enthusiastically by others in the audience, and suggested that members of the audience might prefer discussing the questions they had compiled to hearing another lecture on philosophy and education. This suggestion was greeted enthusiastically by others in the audience, and the discussion swung around to those questions which had been raised at the outset of the workshop.

The discussion which followed was animated, and many views and doubts were traded among the participants. Mrs. Carle B. Kaufmann, NOVA Coordinator distributed copies of a report describing the approach used by the Tatnall School in introducing a philosophy program in its curriculum. This report is available by writing to her at The Tatnall School, 1501 Barley Mill Road, Wilmington, DE 19817.

When the workshop broke up at 5:00, there was a feeling among a number of the participants that the discussion had been a useful one: it was helpful to learn of the experiences that others had had in instituting pre-college philosophy instruction, people were interested to discover what views they shared with others, and some were encouraged that at least a beginning had been made in investigating questions of common concern.

V. HOW CAN COLLEGES FACILITATE PRE-COLLEGE PHILOSOPHY?
Panel Members: Moderator: Prof. George Brantl, Montclair State College; Prof. William Alston, Douglass College, Rutgers U; Prof. Paul Bosley, U of Mass; Prof. Patrick Hill, SUNY Stony Brook; Ms. Adele Stern, Vice-principal for Curriculum, Paramus H.S., NJ.

MS. ADELE STERN:
1. Philosophy is taught in high schools and can be (English; Social Studies).
2. Colleges should get "aggressive" (a) speakers at high schools, (b) consultants, (c) sponsor lecture bureaus, (d) mini-courses. (f) assist in curriculum preparation for state department bibliography. (f) avoid isolation from the schools. (g) encourage double majoring in certification students.

PROF. PAT HILL:
1. Stonybrook has M.A. in Philosophical Perspectives which affords teachers opportunity to develop in this area. Basic elements: History of Philosophy; development of reading-text skills; Contemporary; moral and social issues.

DISCUSSION:
1. Questions concerning certification procedures arose. Situation varies. California and Illinois have certification in philosophy.

PROF. WILLIAM ALSTON:
1. Summer workshops could be worked out for pre-college teachers.
3. At M.A. level, avoid overly specialized seminars. Get to the fundamental issues grasped fundamentally.

PROF. PAUL BOSLEY:
1. Review of data from the Center for High School Philosophy. Description of the Chicago project.
2. Variety of approaches in high school: Humanities, American Lit or separate courses.
3. Philosophy should be integrative.
4. Description of Summer Institute in high school philosophy at Amherst (5 philosophers, 50 high school teachers, 5 workshops: Mechanics of Critical Thinking; Moral and Political: Psychology; Descartes and Modern Science; Technology and Culture). In-depth work on philosophy in relation to high school. No texts were used.
5. In-service teacher training program.
6. Local cooperative programs between college and high school.
7. Philosophers should get first-hand exposure to the classroom.

DISCUSSION:
1. Who can most capably teach pre-college philosophy?
2. How can philosophers "get into" the high schools?
3. Senior elective vs. general component: perhaps it is not those who choose electives who most need philosophy but those who are not going on.
4. Problems of certification were discussed.

VI. ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS POSED BY PRE-COLLEGE PHILOSOPHY
Panel Members: Moderator: Prof. Gerald Myers, CUNY; Mr. Frank Fiorito, Pres., NJ State Federation of Teachers; Mr. Marcoantonio Lacatena, Vice-Pres. NJ State Federation of Teachers; Dr. Ward Sinclair, Director of Certification, NJ Dept. of Education.

Much of the discussion by the panelists was devoted to the question of certification. At present New Jersey has a two step process for the introduction of philosophy courses. Once the course is approved by the Department of Education, it may be taught by any certified teacher. The local administrators may pick the person best qualified to teach the course. Some doubts were expressed concerning this procedure and one panelist suggested that there might be a temptation to pick the coach if he happened to need a course.

A member of the audience suggested that mere academic certification of a teacher might not be enough and that administrators should seek for persons of high moral character. This latter requirement was necessary because of the peculiar nature of philosophy.

Another member of the audience objected to current procedures on the ground that they require a person interested in teaching philosophy to get certified in some other field and to take courses in education and then if he has some time left over to study some philosophy.

Dr. Ward Sinclair, Director of the Bureau of Teacher Education and Academic Credentials, noted that there were no national standards for the certification of philosophy teachers. He also noted that in New Jersey it took only six months to develop a certification program in Military Science. For the pur-
poses of this report he supplied the following steps leading to New Teaching Certificates in New Jersey:

All proposals for new teaching certificates in New Jersey must be presented to and approved by the State Board of Examiners. When the Board receives such a proposal, it looks for three basic things. FIRST: there has to be a demonstrated need for the certificate.

Such questions as, how many schools employ teachers needing this certificate? In the area of certificates for teaching philosophy in the schools of New Jersey, how many schools would have full time positions for philosophy teachers? Should this certificate only be an endorsement on an existing certificate?

SECOND, there is the problem of what the college programs should be that would prepare teachers of philosophy. The Board of Examiners would want assurances from each of the professional organizations which would be concerned with this teaching field that it is supportive of the teacher preparation program that would be devised.

THIRD, there would have to be a study made of New Jersey teacher preparing institutions to determine whether or not they would be capable of instituting a program which the professional organizations deem essential. It is obvious that there would be no need to develop a program which would be impossible for colleges to implement.

After these major conditions are met, the Board would hold a hearing at which interested parties would present their viewpoints and then the Board of Examiners would make a recommendation to the State Board of Education who has the final power to approve or disapprove. At this time, there does not appear to be a sufficient need for the creation of a certificate for philosophy teachers in New Jersey.

Panelist Gerald Myers recounted the experience we had at CUNY. The main thing he had learned was that there was resistance at every level to the project of sending graduate students into the secondary schools to teach courses in philosophy. The result of his experience was that the only way philosophy can be introduced is to find secondary school teachers who are interested and to work with them on joint courses.

No doubt, many of the topics that were under discussion at the 1973 conference were posed prematurely. Even today, almost 20 years later, we have not yet reached a level of public awareness of elementary school philosophy to enable us to confront some of these issues head-on. Nevertheless, as Philosophy for Children reaches other shores and emerges in other cultures, there will be a need in those places for public conferences in which at least some of the topics we discussed can be reflected upon and deliberated upon in those diverse contexts. Those who will participate in such conferences can perhaps learn from our experience as to what might work and what might not.

—Matthew Lipman
CHILDREN AROUND THE WORLD

DRAWINGS BY CHARLES G. WIEDER

Charles G. Wieder, assistant professor of Art at Southern Connecticut State University, is a writer on art and education, and the author of Fear and Force Versus Education (Branden Press: Mass.). Formerly affiliated with the University of Kansas, Appalachian State University, Ohio State University, and Florida State University, his work has appeared in Art Education, J. of Aesthetic Ed., Studies in Art Ed., Visual Arts Research, Art Teacher and Holistic Ed. In a previous life he was a K through grade 8 art teacher in New York. "Central to all my writing," he has remarked, "is a concern for student individuality and educational choice for students, parents and teacher."
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Benjamin, David, "Philosophy in High School: What Does It All Mean?", 8(4), 1990, 43-44.
Huey-Ing, Cheu, "Who is Older?", 8(4), 1990, 45.
Lipman, Matthew, "Philosophy is Also for the Young—At Least Possibly", 9(3), 1991, 27.
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Oscanyan, Frederick S. and Walter, Monica, “Pushing Thoughts With Claire”, 8(4), 1990, 46-47.

This is a gem of a book—bright, compact, solid, valuable. It is about figurative language: metaphor, mainly, but also irony, similes, hyperbole, rhetorical questions. In this review I concentrate on the main features of Fogelin's theory, neglecting his critique of others, and his brief, though interesting, applications to literature, especially poetry.

Fogelin's main goal is to defend the comparative theory of metaphor: metaphors are elliptical similes. To say that, "Alex is a snake," is but a briefer way of saying that "Alex is like a snake." The comparative view has not only the authority of Aristotle behind it, but also everyone's high school English teacher. Consequently, the view hardly seems in need of defense. Nevertheless, in the last, roughly 40 years of writing on metaphor in philosophy, the comparative view is the favorite whipping boy. Fogelin's criticism of these attacks is not, however, what is most original in his work. That is to be found in three features of his defense of the comparative view: first, an important reformulation of the comparative view; second, his adoption of a psychologically realistic account of similarity; and third, Fogelin's good use of Grice's ideas about meaning.

The reformulation of the elegantly simple comparativist view of metaphor in Ch. 3 involves the following two theses: I. The literal meaning of a metaphor of the form 'A is a B' is the same as the literal meaning of the counterpart simile of the form 'A is like a B.'

II. The figurative meaning of a metaphor of the form 'A is a B' is the same as the figurative meaning of the counterpart of the form 'A is like a B.'

Thus, "Juliet is the sun," has the literal meaning "Juliet is like the sun," and its figurative meaning is the figurative meaning of "Juliet is like the sun," also. Thesis II expresses Fogelin's crucial reformulation of the comparative view, which he believes is that "part of the traditional view that is most often misunderstood." (p.30) (See especially Ch.4 "Standard Criticisms of Comparativism") The standard criticisms assume that the figurative meaning of the metaphor is the literal meaning of the counterpart simile.

Getting the comparativist view right allows Fogelin to meet two constraints on an account of metaphor: First, the same metaphorical utterance can be false literally, though true metaphorically. As we will see more clearly below, the variability sought in this constraint is met because the truth or falsity of an utterance may shift with changes in context. In particular, the context proper to metaphorical usage will suggest a different dimension of comparison than when taken literally. Second, since words have their meanings regardless of what speakers mean by those words, in metaphors words do not shift their meaning. The sentence "He's a fine friend," said of someone who just insulted me, is literally false, but metaphorically (ironically) true. And it just means what it says—that he is a fine friend. Of course, what I mean by uttering that sentence is to be ironical—he is a disloyal friend.

An important objection to the comparative view, nicely answered by the psychological theory of similarity which Fogelin invokes, is simply presented: Metaphors are directional, while similes are not. From 'Juliet is the sun' it does not follow—even "metaphorically"—that "The sun is Juliet." However from "Joe is like Bill" it does follow that "Bill is like Joe." So metaphors cannot be similes—literal, figurative, or otherwise.

Fogelin's response is to claim that the latter inference also does not go through. Similes are not symmetrical—"A is like B" does not imply that "B is like A." Having something in common is not enough for similarity. It is natural to say "Marcia's moods are like the weather," but not the reverse; or "whales are like fish," but not the reverse; or "Richard is like a hungry dog" but not the reverse. Fogelin derives his thesis about similarity from a well-known article by Amos Tversky, "Features of Similarity," (Psychological Review84 (1977) 327-52). In a sentence of the form "a is like b," where a is a subject, and b a reference, Tversky comments, "We tend to select the more salient stimulus, or the prototype, as a referent, and the less salient stimulus, or variant, as a subject. . . . We say 'an ellipse is like a circle,' not 'a circle is like an ellipse,' and we say, 'North Korea is like Red China,' rather than 'Red China is like North Korea'" (p.64 in Fogelin from p.328 in Tversky).

The third ingredient in Fogelin's account involves Grice's two rich, incredibly fecund ideas about language: first, linguistic meaning rests upon mutually recognized intentions; and second, more pertinently and less controversially, in normal conversation there are a set of presumptions in force which are applied by hearers to what is said to generate more of what the speakers mean by their words. Thus, if I respond to your question as to where Julie is with the assertion, "Julie is either in the kitchen or the
gym,” I implicate that I do not know which, even though I have not asserted or logically implied that I do not know which. Why is this? Because if I did know where she was, then it would have been more informative to say, “Julie is in the kitchen.” Since I didn’t say so, and you presume I am being cooperative in my response, it must be because I don’t know it. So you conclude that I do not know which. (The Gricean distinctions between what is said and what is implicated, or what the sentence means and what it suggests, seems to me of enormous value for the teaching of reading and writing.) A simple test to show that I suggested but did not logically imply this conclusion is Grice’s cancellation test. There is no contradiction in the following: “Julie is either in the kitchen or the gym, and though I know which, I am not going to tell you.”

Notice that the implicature is one that the speaker intends for me to draw. The audience is an active participant in the understanding of the speaker’s meaning. Fogelin maintains that in metaphor as in irony, “the respondent becomes involved in the cognitive task of making sense out of the remark in a way that best preserves the integrity of the conversational exchange.” Making the respondent “active in the comprehension of a metaphor helps to explain some of its rhetorical force” (p.71).

What mainly activates the speaker’s interpretive powers with respect to metaphors is, in general, their blatant falsity. When someone in normal conversation says that, “You are the cream in my coffee,” to use Grice’s example, an audience recognizes its blatant falsity, leading them to want to figure out what the speaker meant (intended) by those words. For a cooperative speaker is expected not only to be informative, but also to be truthful. As a good rough guide to a Gricean interpretation of the assertion that, “You are the cream in my coffee;” we can say the following: Audiences are puzzled by why a cooperative speaker would say something so blatantly false. So they need an account of why the speaker said that. Given the information in the context mutually known to speaker and audience, audiences infer that the speaker really meant by those words that you add some special good to my everyday life as the best explanation of why the speaker said what he did. Given that as the speaker’s meaning there is no violation of Grice’s maxims.

The truth in metaphor lies in the straightforward, though figurative, truth of the simile that is the (speaker’s) metaphorical meaning. It is in Ch.6 “A Theory of Figurative Comparisons,” that we learn of the value and evaluation of similarity judgments. A is similar to B holds when “A has a sufficiently large number of B’s salient features” (p.78). (Notice that since B’s salient features need not be A’s, the relationship is not symmetrical. The salient feature of Fogelin’s book is that it is a philosophical text on figurative language, which is not a salient feature of a “gem” that I (metaphorically) compared it to in the opening sentence. Salience—and thereby similarity judgments—is highly context dependent: What is salient in comparisons to the fox is, in some contexts, being a dangerous predator, while in others it is being wily and sly, in others, graceful. Similarity claims are especially informative in pointing audiences to otherwise unnoticed saliences, which may be easier to discern than to articulate as specific properties. (p. 79).

With figurative similarity judgments, the respondent is called upon to do more work. Take, “You [said to Dan Quayle] are no John Kennedy.” The comparison being denied cannot just be between Quayle and the salient features of Kennedy. For many of their salient features are not the ones that we want to draw comparison with—e.g., being a politician, being male.

On its very surface, the remark is self-evidently true: Of course, Quayle is not Kennedy. The blatancy of the violation of Gricean expectations (in this case informativeness, not truthfulness), encourages the respondent to understand the salient feature of the object of comparison (Quayle) differently. He must shape or correct it, so as to render salient features which would make the speaker’s contribution consonant with the Gricean maxims. (That allows that the end result may fail. Said of Robert Kennedy, during his bid for nomination, the analogous remark raised debate) The salient features of Kennedy that the speaker claims (indirectly) are not true of Quayle, include, presumably, being an admirable leader, courageous, and intelligent. These are what then become salient, so as to accommodate the speaker’s remark. The truth or falsity of figurative, like literal, comparisons (and hence, metaphors), “depend upon canons of similarity determined by the context” (p.91).

Fogelin’s view captures both the interpretational problem of understanding metaphors, and also its power to illuminate, through the large possibilities for exploration opened up by comparisons. Lately, on this latter count of illumination, recent publicity for metaphors have been bloated. Fogelin nicely brings matters down-to-earth:

... the vast majority of metaphors are routine and uninteresting. Many metaphors are lame, misleading, overblown, inaccurate, et cetera. ... Euphemisms are typically couched in metaphors. Metaphors can be evasions—including poetic evasions. There are occasions when the poet must reject them and Trace the gold sun about the whitened sky Without evasion by a single metaphor. Look at it in its essential barrenness And say this, this is the centre that I seek.

Wallace Stevens, *Credences of Summer*

It is important, then, to calm down about metaphors. Some are good; some are bad. Some are illuminating; some are obscuring. For the most part, they are routine. Furthermore, with differences of emphasis, they all work in the same way: they present a comparison with a transparent incongruity (oddness) that admits of resolution. (p. 98-99).

I found two typos: pages 82 & 83.

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1. All references to *Figuratively Speaking.*
Definition and Function of a University

Of the three verbs, to be, to do, and to know, the great majority of young men unhesitatingly regard the second as expressing the ultimate purpose and end of life. This is, as a matter of course, the idea of the practical man, who knows what he wants, and does not desire to want anything else. The average trustee of an American college will think it a commendable thing for a professor to employ all the time he can possibly save in making money; but if he devotes much energy to any purely theoretical research, the trustees will look upon him askance, as a barely respectable squanderer of his opportunities. In England, this notion takes a turn that is more familiar guise. Thus, Dr. Karl Pearson, in the introduction to his Grammar of Science, deliberately lays down the principle that no end whatever is to be made of it. That is all very well, when properly understood. I do not intend to recant it. But the question arises, what is the ultimate application; at that time I seem to have been inclined to subordinate the conception to the act, knowing to doing. Subsequent experience of life has taught me that the only thing that is really desirable without a reason for being so, is to render ideas and things reasonable. One cannot well demand a reason for reasonableness itself. Logical analysis shows that reasonableness consists in association, assimilation, generalization, the bringing of items together into an organic whole—which are so many ways of regarding what is essentially the same thing. In the emotional sphere this tendency towards union appears as Love; so that the Law of Love and the Law of Reason are quite at one.

There was a simple fellow who, in a benighted age and land, wandered about uttering appreciations of the elements of human life which have made an extraordinary impression upon most of us. Of all his sayings there is none whose truth has been brought home to me more strongly by what I have been able to detect in successful men and women that this: Whoever makes his own welfare his object will simply ruin it utterly.

American education, for the most part, is directed to no other object than the welfare of individual scholars; and thereby incites them to pursue that object exclusively. A great university bears upon its seal the remark of its founder: “I wish to found an institution where any man can learn anything.” It was a noble idea; and it would be mean to pick flaws in it—especially as he did not say what ulterior purpose he might have in view. But the university which parades this casual remark as its motto seems to proclaim to its students that their individual well-being is its only aim. Our scientific schools distribute circulars which dwell chiefly upon the handsome incomes their alumni are making, thereby calling up such images as a handsomely laid table with a pair of Havre de Grace ducks and a bottle of Château Margaux. What comes of such a conception of education and of life, for surely the purpose of education is not different from the purpose of life? The result is that, notwithstanding all the devices and tricks of the American teachers’ art, it may be doubted whether any teaching ever anywhere did less to make happy men and women. At any rate, the spiritual meagerness of the typical American school-book is extreme. The great mediaeval universities, the modern German universities, the new science colleges of England, which did, and do, great things for their students personally, were never in the least founded for their students’ individual advantage, but, on the contrary, because of the expectation that the truths that would be brought to light in such institutions would benefit the state. This end was, and is, so constantly in view that the scholars are led to regard their own lives as having a purpose beyond themselves.

Yet even this is a low view of learning and science. No reader of this Journal (Science) is likely to be content with the statement that the searching out of the ideas that govern the universe has no other value than that it helps human animals to swarm and feed. He will rather insist that the only thing that makes the human race worth perpetuating is that thereby rational ideas may be developed, and the rationalization of things furthered.

—Charles Peirce, Collected Papers.

Reflections
childhood . . . education . . . philosophy . . .

On explaining “water” to children

Suppose we wish to explain to a child what the word “water” means. How do we in fact go about it? We can exclude the direct reference myths that we do this by an initial baptism—by showing a child a glass of water and saying: “This is water” or by telling a child that what we now call “water” in the twentieth century is H₂O.

The notions of explaining, understanding, and meaning are connected elements in an ongoing instructional process designed to promote communication between human beings. Meanings play a crucial role in this process. They are links that tie the chain of communication together. They allow thoughts to be encoded in sentences and transmitted to others; they allow the thoughts of others to be understood. In teaching an infant its native language, including what words mean, we do not begin with definitions, ostensive or otherwise. We train children to obey commands and to follow orders, such as “Don’t spill the water!”, “Bring me a glass of water!”, “There is too much water in the glass!” and so on.

As Wittgenstein writes:

Children do not learn that books exist, that armchairs exist, etc. etc., — they learn to fetch books, sit in armchairs, etc.

These kinds of training procedures initiate a child into a community united by common linguistic practices. Their effect is to provide modes of explanation that are not totally explicit but which through a cumulative, developmental process eventually endow a child with the understanding of what words mean.

The outcome of the process is that the young child in an effort to communicate his thoughts to others, and to understand theirs, learns to use the word “water” in a way which is consonant with community practice. The child learns, that is, to apply the word to a liquid having certain phenomenological properties; and beyond that, to use the word in a variety of other ways, as an active verb, for instance.

This learning process extends through time. At first a child may only understand “water” to mean a fluid that is tasteless and colorless. Later, he may learn that this fluid which is colorless in a glass takes on a bluish hue in thick layers, that mud and salts dissolve in it, and yet that the word “water” is still applied to it. He may also discover that when sufficiently cold, it is transformed into a different substance which he is taught to call “ice.”

How should one describe these supplemental pieces of information? Are they additions to the meaning of “water”? Let us not try to decide the matter here. What is clear is that such additional pieces of information allow for fuller communication between the child and others. The important point is that at this level of education, all the components of the meaning of a word like “water” that a child grasps are phenomenological, i.e., they consist of such concepts as being liquid, being fluid, being transparent, being odorless. Meaning thus arises as a function of what the child observes and experiences. And what he observes are the gross properties of water. As his educational process proceeds, he may eventually come to learn (though not by seeing) that water is composed of H₂O. Shall we say, as Putnam and Kripke insist, that the child only knows what “water” means at the very end of this process—i.e., when he learns that water is composed of H₂O? Why should we? We do not and we should not.

If Putnam and Kripke were right, no native speakers of English before 1800 could have known what “water” meant. But if so, they could not have communicated with one another; they could not have sensibly given or obeyed such commands as “Don’t spill the water!” and “Bring me a glass of water!” But since they did communicate with one another in saying these things, and without knowing anything about the molecular structure of water, it follows that they did know what “water” meant, and accordingly that the theory advanced by Putnam and Kripke is mistaken.

These early training procedures do not make use of the techniques of direct reference. They do not rely upon ostensive definitions and they do not initially teach a child that water is composed of H₂O. Instead, they teach a child what “water” means by reference to what the child observes, viz., to the phenomenological features of water.

The direct reference doctrine cannot account for the development process I have described, or for the role that the phenomenological features of water play in determining the meaning of “water,” or for the historical fact that early speakers of English in using the word “water” obviously communicated with one another. These thus comprise decisive reasons for rejecting it.
