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Critical & Creative Thinking:

the Australasian Journal of Philosophy for Children
Vol 5 No 1 March 1997

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Critical & Creative Thinking *5 (1) March 1997*

The Australasian Journal of Philosophy for Children
and
The Federation of Australian Philosophy for Children Associations (FAPCA)

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GIL BURGH

Aim and scope

To provide a vehicle for the communication of ideas and a forum for discussion and debate of issues concerning the practice of philosophical inquiry with children.

To foster continuing development of the theory and practice of engaging children in philosophical inquiry;

more specifically:-

(1) to promote better teaching and curric ular design for the development of critical and creative thinking amongst children through increased understanding and use of philosophical inquiry in the classroom

(2) to enrich the understanding of philosophy and philosophical inquiry as well as its role in the development of good thinking and good judgment.

(3) to increase interaction and collaboration between the academic community of scholars in universities and teachers in schools on matters of logic, epistemology, creativity, metaphysics, ethics, aesthetics, inquiry, philosophy of science, mind, person-hood, community, understanding, learning, thinking, dialogue, discussion

(4) to promote discussion of the place of philosophy in the national and school curriculum and its infusion into the present curriculum; the place and contribution of philosophy to the intellectual, creative, moral and social development of individuals.

Structure

The journal will carry a range of articles reporting on all aspects of the practice of engaging in philosophical inquiry and developing critical and creative thinking. To this end it will be organised into four main Sections or Departments as follows:-

(1) Theory and Applied Research

a. Contributions concerning the more theoretical aspects of philosophy and inquiry such as:-
the nature and purpose, of philosophy, inquiry, community, conversation, dialogue, critical thinking, creative thinking, reasoning, etc.
the nature of childhood, adolescence, mind; the philosophy of childhood and development, etc.
epistemological, social, political and ethical dimensions of the practice of engaging children in philosophical inquiry.
policy and planning, future studies and directions; implications of recent Government Reports

b.Research studies of classroom practice: the impact of philosophy for children on classroom interaction, classroom discourse and dialogue; pupil participation, thinking and learning; teacher thinking and behaviour; classroom climate, etc.

(2) Philosophical studies
discussion and clarification of key philosophical concepts, topics and issues embedded in and raised by classroom readers and other materials;
exegeses of the philosophical literature on such matters.

(3) Reports from the field:

a. Reports from practising teachers on their experience of engaging children in philosophical inquiry; discussion of practical problems and possible solutions; innovative ways of using classroom materials, arranging classrooms, grouping, interacting with pupils.
Children's reactions and views new materials or exercises.
This section may well stimulate other research projects.

b, Children's work - writings, illustrations, etc.

(4)Resources & Reviews (R&R)
Reports from inservice or workshop experiences and challenges. News and reports from national and international conferences. Discussion of different approaches, new materials, exercises and such. New philosophical stories, teacher manuals and other materials. Reviews of books and other materials.

Welcome to Critical & Creative Thinking

Welcome to the fifth volume of Critical and Creative Thinking - the Journal for the Federation of Australian Philosophy for Children Associations. This Journal is dedicated to improving the teaching and research of critical and creative thinking by providing a forum for discussion and debate on all aspects, theoretical and practical, of the practice of engaging children in activities intended to develop and improve their thinking. We encourage classroom teachers as well as academics to send in their contributions for publication. Critical & Creative Thinking is intended to be a teachers' professional journal featuring a combination of theoretical and research articles with articles from teachers on their clasroom experience and practical strategies for engaging children in critical and creative thinking activities. Whatever program you are trying with your class, please write in and let us know about it and its impact on your students as well as its influence on your own teaching practice. There are many others who are interested in what you are doing, together we can help each other become even better teachers and educators.

Clive Lindop
Deakin University-Warrnambool

Notes for contributors

All contributions are welcome. Manuscripts should be typed and doubled spaced on A4 letter or US letter paper and accompanied with a disc copy, preferably 3.5 in Macintosh disc in Word 5 format (though IBM MS DOS is acceptable). Alternatively, to save time and avoid damage or loss in the mail, contributors may send their articles by E-mail (ASCII text) to:-

CLIVEL@deakin.edu.au

Please use the Author - Date system with endnotes and bibliography for your articles

NB: to maintain academic credibility, contributions to sections (1) Theory and Research and (2) Philosophical Studies, will be subjected to those processes of peer review normal for scholarly refereed journals.

Letters to the Editor

If often happens that one reads an article and wants to respond, but not in the form of a lengthy article. Such responses, which might simply add to a point made by the author either in agreement or disagreement, or offer an alternative view, etc. could appear as a 'Letter to the Editor.' The idea here is to encourage dialogue between readers and authors- in effect using the Journal to create a community of inquiry!

Send all postal contributions to

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Subscriptions

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Critical & Creatvie Thinking

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FIRST NOTICE

The International Council for Philosophical Inquiry with Children (ICPIC) and the University of Akureyri, Iceland

ANNOUNCE:

PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN ON TOP OF THE WORLD
The Eighth International Conference on Philosophy for Children

University of Akureyri
600 Akureyri
Iceland

June 18-21 1997

CONFERENCE THEMES:

I. Theoretical speculations
#183# The role and rights of children in the educational process
#183# Community of inquiry, civics and education for democracy
#183# Evaluation
#183# Research

II: Practical considerations: Means and methods
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#183# Alternate ways of presenting philosophical method and content to children
#183# Construction of philosophical exercises and discussion plans

III: Philosophy and children in different settings
#183# At home
#183# At kindergarten
#183# Inside and outside Schools
#183# In inner and urban Cities
#183# In rural areas, with or without the internet
#183# Limitations and possibilities
#183# Projects
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IV: Philosophy and staff development
#183# Reports of personal growth and maturity
#183# What makes a teacher a professional philosophy teacher?
#183# Research, teaching, professionalism and staff development
#183# The teacher as researcher
#183# The children as researchers
#183# The community of inquiry

The Conference will appeal to anyone interested in improving children's thinking through inquiry and dialogue. It will bring together teachers, philosophers and scholars from around the world. Countries from all continents will be represented.

The Conference will include sessions on the theory and practice ofphilosophical inquiry with children. Presentations will take the form of workshops, demonstrations and short papers using the "community of inquiry" model.

SPEAKERS INCLUDE:

Professor Nicholas Michelli — Education for global democracy
Dean of Education,
Montclair State University

Professor Ann Margaret Sharp — Philosophy, relationships and the sacred
President of ICPIC
and Co-founder of Philosophy for Children

Dr. Kristjan Kristjansson — Self-respect, magnanimity and moral education
Professor of philosophy
University of Akureyri

SPECIAL FEATURES:
#183# Post-conference workshops on Philosophy in the kindergarten (June 23-24, early booking essential!)
#183# Symposium on teacher education: Models from around the world (Saturday morning, June 21)
#183# Demonstrations and displays of New curriculum resources and materials

RATES:

Conference registration fee, June 18-21:	USD$100 (including, light lunches & one dinner)
Post-conference registration fee, June 23-24	USD $50 (including light lunches)

Single Rooms will be from USD 55 per night
Double Rooms will be from USD 85 (42.50 per person) per night
Breakfast is included.

CONFERENCE BROCHURE AND REGISTRATION FORM AVAILABLE FROM:

"1997 ICPIC Conference"
University of Akureyri
Department of Teacher Education
600 Akureyri
ICELAND

tel. +354-463-0504 or 463-0900
fax. +354-463-0999
email: tolli@unak.is

Closing date for registrations: 15 May 1997

Please note: Accommodation cannot be guaranteed if booked after 15 March.

International Coucil for Philosophical Inquiry with Children (ICPIC)

CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS

In order to nurture the idea of community of inquiry at the Conference, we are inviting proposals for presentations in one of the following forms:

- *** Paper presentation (includes speaking for no more than 15 minutes, followed by discussion) (session length: 1 hour)
- *** Symposium (consisting of 3-5 participants, speaking for no more than 10 minutes each, followed by group discussion) (session length: 90 min)
- *** Workshop (activity-based) (session length: 90 min)

Presentations should relate to one or more of the Conference themes.

The Conference will also include a special plenary session entitled: Teacher education: Models from around the world

We are calling for expressions of interest and written descriptions of models of teacher education in Philosophy for Children.

All proposals must be accompanied by a written abstract or outline of approximately 250 words, together with a few lines outlining your interest/involvement in Philosophy for Children.

The Conference Planning Committee will make all final decisions regarding acceptance of presentations, taking into account the need to construct a balanced program.

Please complete the form below if you propose to make a presentation (including the plenary session on teacher education).
Return the form to the Conference Office (address above) as soon as possible, but no later than 15 March 1997 please.

I, ______________________________ wish to (tick appropriate box):

o read or speak to a short paper (15 minutes plus discussion) entitled:

(abstract to be sent with this form)

o take part in a symposium (10 minutes speaking time per participant) on:

(abstract to be sent with this form)

o conduct a workshop entitled:

(outline to be sent with this form)

o take part in the plenary session on teacher education (description of model to be sent with this form)

My presentation relates to the theme(s) of:

(from the above list)

Name: --

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Announces a new postgraduate studies program

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Residential School 7-14 July 1997

ENROL NOW

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For Australain students, the fee is $650 per credit point unit. Note that as a full fee paying course there is no HECS fee and the course fees may be tax deductible as part of your continuing professional development (HECS is not tax deductible).

For course brochure and further information contact

the Course Coordinator, Clive Lindop
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E-mail: CLIVEL@deakin.edu.au

or the Student Administrative Officer, Jenny Farrell
Tel: (055) 633-314
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School of Social Inquiry
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Philosophical Discussion Plans and Exercises

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If the casting philosophy in the modality of fictional narrative is one way of dramatizing philosophy, the devising of philosophical discussion plans and exercises is another. This may at first seem to be stretching a point: exercises are among the most humble tools of education and would seem to be totally lacking in the glamorous glow that radiates from the more heavily dramatized portions of the curriculum. And yet, the case can be made that discussion plans and exercises, properly constructed, can embody the praxis of philosophy in an acceptable fashion, and at times can do so superbly.

Would-be classroom teachers of philosophy need models of **doing philosophy** that are clear, practical and specific. They need to be able to distinguish essentially decidable concepts from essentially contestable concepts, if they are to understand why only the latter are truly philosophical. The same is true with respect to other aspects of philosophical practice: teachers in preparation need to be able to distinguish the non-philosophical from the philosophical and the pseudo-philosophical when it comes to questions, counter-questions, follow-up questions, inferences, justifications and so on. They need to be able to tell philosophical epistemology from psychological epistemology. But above all, they must be prepared to see that these differences may lie more in the function than in the form. What makes a question philosophical rather than non-philosophical may lie not in the verbal form of the sentence but in the circumstances under which it is uttered, and it is only through the repeated exposure to the doing of philosophy that such circumstances come to be recognized.

Prospective teachers of philosophy at the elementary school level repeatedly want to know what it is that makes a discussion philosophical, and while this question is legitimate enough, it should be kept in mind that what such teachers are struggling to understand is **what makes a practice philosophical**? The discussion is only one part of that practice. Exercises and discussion plans represent another component, for they are integral parts of the elementary level philosophy curriculum, and without a curriculum of some kind, the chances that one will be able to do philosophy at all are greatly reduced.

Although similar in many respects, exercises and discussion plans have different emphases. Exercises aim to sharpen and strengthen cognitive skills, as well as to promote precision and specificity. Discussion plans aim to improve concept-formation through equipping students with such tools as criteria, reasons, arguments and definitions. But both exerises and discussion plans are embodiments of certain aspects of philosophical praxis, with exercises focusing on individual problems and cases and with discussion plans centering on general or universal concepts. Both are representative of the philosophical tradition, as embodied in the theories of the discipline or in its practice. At the same time, both provide opportunities for going beyond that tradition, as philosophers have always managed to go beyond it. These modes of transcending the tradition are as authentically a part of the tradition as are the modes of conforming to the tradition. To do philosophy is to

belong to a community whose members teach one another to do both. Doing philosophy also involves recognizing and respecting those whose openness of mind and freshness of thought enables them to be philosophically creative without prior instruction in how this might be helped to happen. Those who refuse to acknowledge the philosophical originality of a thinker simply because that thinker happens to be a child are guilty of the fallacy that is awkwardly called "ad hominem."

If we are to strengthen the bridge-the curricular bridge-between philosophers and home philosophers, we could do worse than to examine exercises and discussion plans with a view to constructing a taxonomy that will enable us to understand more readily what each of these is attempting to do: what its strategy is, how it functions, and how it embodies the philosophical tradition or is representative of the philosophical discipline. As long as we fail to do this, prospective teachers will reproach themselves for an incompetence which they wrongly assign to themselves rather than to us.

PHILOSOPHICAL DISCUSSION PLANS

A philosophical discussion plan consists of a group of questions that generally deal with a single concept, relationship (such as a distinction or connection) or problem. The questions may form a series, in which each builds upon its predecessors, or they may form a circle around the topic so that each question focuses upon the topic from a different angle. We can speak of these two families of discussion plans as **cumulative** and **non-cumulative.**

There are many different ways in which the questions in a discussion plan can be cumulative. For example, the questions may be formally the same, but deal with more and more comprehensive topics or domains:

DISCUSSION PLAN
Does everything have a story of how it happened?

Answer the following questions:

1. Does your desk have a story?
2. Does your school building have a story?
3. Does your home have a story?
4. Does your family have a story'
5. Does your street have a story?
6. Does your town or city have a story?
7. Does the Statue of Liberty have a story?
8. Does the United States have a story?
9. Does the world have a story?
10. Can a story have a story?

If you answered yes to any of the above questions, can you tell that story?

(*Looking for Meaning*, p. 8)

On the other hand, the discussion plan (see next example) may be said to be cumulative when the questions build on one another in the sense that each is a slight variation on its predecessor, as these questions shift from 'like' to 'prefer' to 'want' and to 'desire', along with shifts from singular to plural subjects and from positive to negative predicates:

DISCUSSION PLAN
When should we call things "good?"

1. If you like something, does that make it good?
2. If a lot of people like something, does that make it good?
3. If you prefer apples to oranges, does that make apples better than oranges?
4. If you want something, must the thing you want therefore be good?
5. If you don't want something, must that thing be bad or worthless?
6. Is it possible to like something that's bad?
7. Is it possible to know something's bad, and still like it?
8. If something is good, does that guarantee people will like it?
9. If something is good, does that guarantee people will prefer it to something bad?
10. If people know that something is good, and know the reasons why it is good, is it possible they could still dislike it?
11. Can something be good, even though there are lots of things that are better?
12. Can something be bad, even though there are lots of things that are worse?
13. Do you think that, if you fully understood the reasons why one thing was better than another, you might still want the worse thing?
14. Could something be valuable, even though no one valued it?
15. Could something be desirable, even though no one desired it?
16. Could a person whom no one liked still be likable?
17. Which would you prefer, something worthless that everyone wanted, or something valuable that no one wanted?
18. Which things should we call "good," those are desired, or those that are desirable?

(*Writing: How and Why*, p. 263)

With regard to non-cumulative discussion plans, we should again be prepared to encounter a number of varieties. Thus there may be a number of alternative solutions to a given problem

EXERCISE: Freedom

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
If you agree, why? If you don't agree, why not?
Agree Disagree ?

1. We are free if no one tells us how to live.
2. We are free if we make up and follow our own rules for how to live.
3. We are free when nothing gets in our way.
4. We are free if we think we're free.
5. We are free when we can do what we think best.
6. We are free if we are healthy.
7. We are free if we are intelligent.
8. We are free only when everyone is free.
9. We are free if we are ourselves.
10. We are free when all the above statements are combined.

(*Looking for Meaning*, p. 235)

In the foregoing case, the discussion plan leaves open the possibility that the various definitions of freedom may be mutually exclusive or

may be adequate only if taken in combination with one another. There are, however, other ways of examining the concept of freedom. Thus a dictionary will offer a variety of alternative connotations, some of which have little in common with others, and which are not meant to be taken additively. Here is an example:

DISCUSSION PLAN

What does the word "freedom" mean?

Discuss the way the word "free" is used in the following cases:

1. A shipwrecked sailor is washed up on a small desert island in the Pacific. "Oh, well," he says to himself, "I'm free to leave whenever I want to."
2. A service station sign says "Free Air and Water."
3. Some picketers are carrying signs reading, Free All Prisoners of War.
4. The prisoner walked out of the 'ail saying, "Today I'm a free man."
5. People living in a democracy are free people.
6. The parachutist set a record for a free fall.
7. "I don't like rhymes," said the poet. "I much prefer free verse."
8. "I bought this handbag in Japan," she remarked, "but it was tax free."
9. We checked the building out to make sure it was free of termites.
10. The policeman said, "Since your car wasn't involved in the accident, you're free to go."
11. The prisoner's left hand was handcuffed to the guard, but his right hand was free.
12. The fight that broke out on the playground was a real free-for-all.
13. "When you come to the border checkpoint," said one spy to the other, "don't be too free with information."
14. We enjoyed their free and easy way of dancing.
15. "Behave yourself at the party, said Mrs. Jones. "Don't be too free with the people you meet there."
16. An ad says that you get 100 free stamps for every $10 worth of groceries you buy at the supermarket.
17. "Let me give you some free advice," I told him.
18. I know some kids who attend free schools.
19. "At least," said Mr. Brown, "I now own this house free and clear."
20. "The better we are at thinking," said Joe, "the more free we are to think for ourselves."

Below are some possible ways of understanding and using the word "free." Can you match the meanings below to the items above?

Hints of alternative uses of the word "free":

a. not restrained
b. without charge or cost
c. able; having the power to do something
d. to liberate or set at liberty (verb)
e. without entanglements
f. unconfined, not in servitude
g. not part of a system
h. living under rules of one's own malting
i. unobstructed
j. frank, open
k. unrhymed (verse)
l. uninhibited, casual, natural in. open or release (verb)
n. exempt
o. easy
p. able to live the way one wants to

(*Ethical Inquiry*, p. 145)

Another type of discussion plan poses a problem that, it is hoped, will be a springboard for discussion. The problem may be in the form of an anecdote, a proverb, a parable or merely a distinction, but it has to be one that is intrinsically enticing. Thus, in the case of a distinction, what is controversial is whether the difference it rests upon is real but generally unnoticed, and whether the things thereby separated are of importance to people. (This is why ethical distinctions, such as "Pity is not sympathy" or "Rashness is not courage" may be sufficient to provoke classroom discussions.) On the other hand, the fictitious anecdote may be fairly elaborately contrived, such as this:

DISCUSSION PLAN
What is Fairness?

Children as well as adults are concerned about *fairness*. Everyone agrees that people should be treated *fairly*, but what is *fairness*? We agree that we should abide by the rules of "fair play," but what are the rules of "fair play?"
This is an opportunity for you to discuss the notion of *fairness*. Here is a story you might use for this:

A teacher comes into he classroom one day with a large bag of candy. She explains that the candy is a gift to the class, and she has been told she must distribute it *fairly*.
"Now," she says, "what is fair? Would the fairest thing be for me to give the most to those who deserve the most? who deserves the most? Surely it must be the biggest and strongest ones in the class who deserve the most, for they probably do most things best."

But the teacher is greeted by a loud outcry from the class. "What you propose is most unfair," they tell her. "Just because this one is better at arithmetic or that one at baseball or still another at dancing, you still shouldn't treat us all differently. It wouldn't be fair to give some members of the class, say, five pieces of candy, while others might get one piece or none at all. Each of us is a person, and in this respect we're all equal. *So treat us as equals and give each of us the same amount of candy.*"
"Ah," the teacher answers, "I'm glad you've explained to me how you feel about this. So, although people are very different from one another in many respects, fairness consists in treating them all equally."

"That's right!" the pupils answer, "fairness is equal treatment!"

But before the teacher has a chance to distribute the candy, the phone rings, and she's called down to the office. When she gets back, some minutes later, she find that the children have all been fighting over the candy. And now each of the biggest and strongest children has a great handful of candy, while the remainder have varying amounts, and the smallest children have only one each.

The teacher demands order, and the class becomes very quiet. Obviously she's very disturbed about what the children have just done. But she's determined to be fair and fairness, they have all agreed, is *equal treatment*. So she tells the children, "You taught me what fairness is. Each of you must give back one piece of candy."

This is where the story ends. Now discuss what you think fairness is.
(*Philosophical Inquiry*, p. 63)

The sequence of questions in a discussion plan generally proceed from simple to difficult and from **clear-cut** cases to **fuzzy** cases. Very often, the beginning questions address the readers directly, while the questions towards the end seek greater impartiality and generality. Here is an example:

DISCUSSION PLAN
Doing

1. If you see some people playing cards, are they making or doing?
2. If someone invents a new game of cards, is that making or doing?
3. What is the difference between making something and doing something?
4. When you say, "There's nothing to do!" would you rather be doing something or making something?
5. When people ask you if you're "doing well in school," what do they mean?
6. When someone you're introduced to says "How do you do?" what does he mean?
7. When you are told to do to other people what you'd like them to do to you, what does that mean?
8. People who are getting married say "I do." What do they mean when they say that?
9. When you're resting, are you doing something' ,
10. When you're hungry and your stomach growls, is that something it does or something you do?
11. Are there some times when you do your homework because you have to and other times that you do it because you want to?
12. Would you like to live in such a way that everything you did would be something you wanted to do?
13. It is sometimes said that "everything you do expresses the kind of person you are." What do you think this means?
14. Do you think it possible that people can just look at your face and figure out the sort of things you do when you're alone?
15. What is the difference between doing something and it well' ,

(*Philosophical Inquiry*, p. 84)

Here is an example of a discussion plan which moves from the clear-cut instances in the early part to more fuzzy instances in the latter portion:

DISCUSSION PLAN
Loyalty and reciprocity

Under what circumstances is it appropriate for loyalty to be reciprocal, and under what cir-cumstances is it not appropriate? Perhaps we can shed some light on this problem by discussing the following questions:

I . Is it appropriate for friends to be loyal to each other?
2. Is it appropriate for married people to be loyal to each other, or is it all right for one to be loyal but not the other?
3. Is it appropriate for comrades to be loyal to one another,
4. Is it appropriate for classmates to be loyal to one another?
5. Is it appropriate for brothers and sisters to be loyal to one another?
6. Is it appropriate for children to be loyal to their parents, but unnecessary for parents to be loyal to their children?
7. Is it appropriate for children to be loyal to their pets, but permissible for their pets not to be loyal to them?
8. Is it appropriate for citizens to be loyal to their government, but all right if their government is not loyal to them?

9. Do people over whom authority is exercised have to be loyal to people in authority, but not the reverse?
10. Can one be loyal to one's natural environment?
11. Is there a sense in which one's natural environment might be referred to as "loyal?"
12. What is meant by the phrase, "the loyal opposition?".

(*Ethical Inquiry*, p. 308)

Discussion plans also differ among themselves with regard to the degree of **didactic guidance** they provide. One of the discussion plans we have already considered ("What does the word 'freedom' mean?") is fairly non-didactic, in the sense that it does not lead students towards a particular understanding. A moderately didactic discussion plan might select several interpretations of a concept for underscoring or emphasis, as this one does:

DISCUSSION PLAN
What is Understanding?

We use the word "understanding" to mean many different things. thus we may say we *understand* chess when what we mean is that we know the rules of chess and how the game is played. Or we may say we *understand* our cat in the sense that we understand what it wants when it meows (that it's hungry, or wants to come inside). And we may say we *understand* a person in the sense that we an put ourselves in the person's place by thinking and feeling as that person does. In using the following discussion plan, see if you can get your students to express the different ways in which they *understand* what it is to understand.

1. If you have a pet (like a cat or a dog), do you understand it?
2. What do you mean when you say you "understand" an animal',
3. Do you understand the game of baseball?
4. What do you mean when you say when you "understand" baseball?
5. What are the differences between understanding a game and understanding an animal?
6. Do you understand trees?
7. When you say you understand trees, do you mean this in the sense that you understand how they live (like how the sap works, how the chlorophyll works, etc.) or how they grow, or some other meaning?
8. What's the difference between understanding a tree and understanding a game?
9. Do you understand your classmates? Do they understand you?
10. Do you understand your parents? Do they understand you?
11. Do you understand your teachers? Do they understand you?
12. What's the difference between understanding a thing and understanding a person?
13. Can you understand the way that your teachers understand you?
14. Why does Harry say, "If we think about electricity, we can understand it better, but when we think about thinking, we seem to understand ourselves better?"
15. Do you now understand the word "understanding" better than you did?

(*Philosophical Inquiry*, p. 91)

A discussion plan can be considered very didactic when it concentrates on a single alternative, even though it acknowledges that this

alternative is controversial. For example, here is one that is fairly insistent that the epistemological approach known as "objective relativism" be understood and taken into account, even though it does not demand acceptance of that approach:

DISCUSSION PLAN
On seeing things "as they really are."

1. Which person would you say is more likely to see the moon "as it really is"-a person looking at the moon from Earth, or an astronaut looking at the moon while standing on the moon?
2. Which person would you say is more likely to see the planet Earth "as it really is" a person standing on the surface of the Earth, or an astronaut looking at Earth from the moon? (Are answers to 1 and 2 consistent?)
3. Suppose two people are looking at your school building. One is standing a mile away, and one is standing right up against the building with his nose pressed to the wall. Can either one see the building "as it really is"? Explain.
4. Is there an exact distance that you have to be from something in order to SEE IT "as it really is"?
5. If someone were lying on the floor looking up at your desk, while you're looking down on it, does that mean that his view of it is wrong and yours is right?
6. Is it possible that everyone in the class has a different idea of the way your desk looks?
7. Is it possible that some viewpoints are better than other viewpoints? (If so, how?)
8. Is it possible that the more you consider things from different points of view, the better you know "what they're really like"?
9. Is it possible that some things are right and some things wrong, regardless of what point of view they are observed from? (If so, give examples.)
10. When people tell you that you should try to "be objective," does that mean you should:
    a) see things more from their point of view
    b) see things from the points of view of grown-ups
    c) see things more accurately
    d) consider things from as many different points of view as possible
    e) all of the above
    f) some of the above (which?)
    g) none of the above

(*Philosophical Inquiry*, p. 438)

Obviously the more didactic a discussion plan is, the more discretion should be employed in utilizing it. It does not follow, however, that curriculum developers should completely avoid discussion plans that concentrate on only a single alternative, so long as that alternative can be discussed by the students in an open and uncoerced fashion.

On this point too, there is room for variety. Most discussion plans do not provide suggestions for the manner in which the discussions themselves are to take place, but in some cases, the discussion plan will indicate some considerations that are to be taken into account, as in this case:

DISCUSSION PLAN
Means-end problems

Discuss the following assertions:
NOTE: Your discussions should take the following considerations into account:
- a) Clearly distinguish, in each case, between means and ends.
- b) Clearly distinguish, where possible, between ends (in the sense of goals or objectives) and results or consequences.
- c) Ask yourself whether the means that is proposed would in fact be likely to produce the end that is being sought.
- d) Ask yourself whether the means, if used, would produce, in addition to the desired end, other consequences which would be undesirable.
- e) Ask yourself whether another means might produce the same end more efficiently or with fewer undesirable side-effects.
- f) Ask yourself whether the end or goal is itself desirable.

Discuss the following, keeping in mind the above considerations
1. Jerry: "I'd like to see Cynthia elected class president, but it's too much trouble to vote for her."
2. Francisco: "Sure we need an elevated walkway across the boulevard. But why use steel? Plywood's good enough!"
3. Maggie: "We've got to give those savages the benefit of our civilization, even if we've got to use force to bring it about."
4. Cecil: "If you really want a certain result, you'll make use of the means that will produce that result. And if you refuse to use those means, then you really don't want that result."
5. Harriet: "Vic's genuinely and sincerely committed to making a million dollars. I'm sure that explains why he's been working so hard, night and day, on those counterfeit plates
6. Nick: "In order to have a revolution, you've got to break some heads, just as, in order to make an omelet, you've got to break some eggs.
7. June: "If you don't step on other people on your way to the top, they'll just step on you."
8. Millicent: "From a food packaging point of view, egg cartons and egg shells make ideal containers for eggs."
9. Vivian: "No one becomes a great violinist without study and practice."
10. Irv: "Candy is made to be eaten, milk is made to be drunk, and laws are made to be broken."
11. Samantha: "In order to relax, I smoke, and since I'm always tense, I smoke all the time."
12. Carl: "I eat to live and I live to eat."

(*Social Inquiry*, p. 21 8)

It is obvious that directions for the conduct of the discussion are likely to restrict its open flow, and therefore should be employed sparingly. On the other hand, there may be situations where the dialogue is so free, uninhibited and voluminous that restrictions which channel and discipline it can be very welcome and beneficial.

Further clarification of the nature of philosophical discussion plans can obviously be achieved by continued classification, but the varieties can be almost inexhaustible. This is the case so long as the discussion plans are not turned out by formula, so as to be fairly predictable, but are devised afresh for each new concept or problem. As Martin Buber says,

"Forgetting is good," and there is a sense in which the curriculum developer needs to forget what he or she has done in the past so as to be addressed by and to address each new challenge on its own terms.

PHILOSOPHICAL EXERCISES

If it is true that there are countless varieties of discussion plans, it is even more true, so to speak, that there are almost endless varieties of philosophical exercises. Philosophical practice is called for wherever something is taken for granted and needs examination, and such practice requires exercises in much the same way that athletes need to perform exercises as part of their professional preparation.

As has already been noted, exercises aim at exemplification, instantiation. But they also aim at the improved performance of standard procedures. After all, those who do philosophy, whether students or instructors, are all practitioners, engaged in philosophical inquiry. They need to perfect their technique no less than their insights and intuitions.

One of the ways in which the philosophical exercise emphasizes particularity rather than universality can be its citing the opinions of various fictitious individuals, usually students, with which one is expected to agree or disagree and provide a reason for one's judgment. The following is typical of this sort of exercise:

EXERCISE: Copies and originals

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? In either case, give your reason.

Agree Disagree ?

1. Phyllis: "The flag that's on the flagpole in front of the school is a copy of the true flag, which is in a glass case in Washington DC."
2. Sue Ellen: "This dollar bill's a copy of the true dollar bill, which is in a glass case in Washington, D.C."
3. Shelley: "The light from the sun is original; the moon's light is only a copy."
4. Sid: "When you see a kid who's the spittin' image of his father, you have a case of copy and original."
5. Graham: "I've heard there's a new best-seller that has sold 10 million copies. I sure would like to see the original."
6. Tracy: "There's my silhouette in profile on the wall. It's a copy of my profile.
7. Zelda: "My memories are only copies of experiences I once really had."
8. Burt: "Right now I'm looking at the flag on the flagpole. But what I see isn't the flag itself; all I see is an image in my mind that's a copy of the flag."
9. Oscar: "My first, true love was Zelda. I've been in love many times since then, but all those succeeding times have been only copies."
10. Gus: "I've heard that Van Gogh made copies of paintings by Millet. I'll bet Van Gogh's copies were very original."

(*Writing: How and Why*, p. 155)

Of course, one can take these opinions as telescoped arguments and consider whether or not they represent valid inferences. This is to

examine the logic of such assertions, taken as testimony. On the other hand, one can evaluate the testimony to determine to what extent it can be taken as *evidence*. Here is how this could be done:

EXERCISE: Evidence

In each of the following cases, a person makes a judgment and claims that the judgment is based upon evidence.

A. Decide whether each piece of information given is in fact evidence that supports the judgment.

B. Decide whether all the pieces of information taken together are sufficient to justify the judgment.

1. "Of course they're in love! Haven't you noticed the way they always go dancing together, and they don't sit together in class, and they never have anything to say to each other in public?"
2. "Yes, folks, this is a genuine antique table from ancient Greece. Notice that it's made with the favorite materials of Greek craftsmen -plywood and linoleum. And it has the date carved right on the front of it-the date of the high point of Greek culture-2000 BC
3. "Of course it's the biggest city in the state. Look, according to this geography book it has more square miles and more population than any other city in the state. And the atlas says the same thing. "
4. "I think we're going to have a storm. There are heavy dark clouds in the west, the wind and the barometer are rising, and the wind is from the east."
5. "Certainly there's a real danger of war. Otherwise, why would there be all these peace conferences, and parades throughout the world of people demanding peace, and all the kids wearing tee-shirts with pictures of doves?"

(*Social Inquiry*, p. 216)

Perhaps the central aim of philosophical exercises is the cultivation of judgment, and this is generally accomplished through comparisons seeking to determine whether the things or relationships being compared are:
a) different, b) similar or c) identical. One might seek all three of these determinations in the same exercise, such as this one:

EXERCISE: "Only"

In each case, compare the two sentences and say whether they mean the same thing or different things:

1. The box contained only kittens.
1a. Only the box contained kittens

2. All the kittens in the room were white.
2a. Only the kittens in the room were white.

3. The kittens had only one tail..
3a. Only the kittens had one tail.

4. All the kittens had blue eyes.
4a. Only the kittens had blue eyes.

5. No kittens bark like dogs.
5a. Only kittens meow like cats.

(*Getting Our Thoughts Together*, p. 1 7)

On the other hand, exercises provide practice in cognitive skills, and while this may involve judgment in each and every instance, it is the skill-building function that can be paramount. For example, here is an exercise aimed at sharpening students' skills in finding inconsistencies:

EXERCISE: Finding inconsistencies

Which of the following cases do you think represent inconsistencies and which do not:

1. Alvin: "As a matter of fact, I never borrow from anyone, because if anyone lends me money, I always pay it back."
2. Dorothy: "I can dive, float and dogpaddle, but I can't swim."
3. Spud: "The reason I don't like history is that it just gives you lots of facts but never explains anything.
4. Pixie: Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, if there is any man among you who votes to convict my client, that man is no gentleman."
5. Hugh: "The doctors are right: I have terminal crud. But I never felt better in my life."
6. Violet: "I just happen to be a little ol" girl who's strongly success-oriented. Where do these people get the idea that I'm 'ambitious'?"
7. Zizi: "I'll admit that, wherever you are on the earth's surface, if you move forward in a straight line, you'll eventually come back to where you started. But no, I wouldn't call the Earth spherical."
8. Hank: "The colors in the spectrum that I find most beautiful are the reds-like ultramarine and indigo and aquamarine."
9. Trudie: "Shut up, everybody! How do you expect a person to concentrate with all this noise? I don't want to hear another word out of anybody, and believe me, when I say something like that, I mean it!
10. Bartholomew: "I think human beings should restrict their communication to other human beings. That's why, when the telephone rings, I won't answer it."
11. Edith: "It's important to learn from experience. That's why I say that now that the horse has been stolen, we've got to lock the barn door."
12. Brad: "Results are the only things that matter. The only time results won't matter will be when the world comes to an end."
13. Phoebe: "I don't care much for human beings, but I love humanity."
14. Carmel: "I oppose the tyranny of the majority but I favor democracy."
15. Josh: "The exception proves the r-rule - except in certain cases which are additional evidence for my contention."

(*Ethical Inquiry*, p. 43)

One of the criticisms often heard of critical thinking programs is that they build cognitive skills while neglecting to protect such skills from being misused by people with poor judgment or deficient values. This can be a trenchant criticism, but Philosophy for Children is not very vulnerable to it because skill-building and value-formation are so intertwined in that program. It aims to strengthen evaluative as well as classificatory judgments, so that students will learn what kind of thing an X is, and what makes it a good thing of its kind. This is a typical exercise involving skill-formation (reason-recognition) and evaluative judgment (distinguishing good reasons from ordinary reasons and non-reasons).

EXERCISE: When is a reason a good reason?

Consider the following remarks, and say whether you think that what is being said represents a good reason, a reason (although not necessarily a good one), or something that is no reason at all.

1. Gary: "The reason I suspect this man, Grench, of being the murderer is that the murderer wore shoes and Grench wears shoes."
2. Lola: "I suspect Grench because the murderer wore size 7-1/2 shoes and Grench wears size 8-1/2, and that's close!"
3. Dora: "I think Grench is innocent, because I get headaches whenever I try to figure things out like this."
4. Sam: "I think Grench was the murderer, in view of the fact that he confessed."
5. Jake: "I refuse to draw any conclusions before Grench's trial because he retracted his confession. "
6. Oliver: "Grench is absolutely innocent! My astrologist has told me so!"
7. Matilda: "Grench is one beautiful hunk of man! Of course he's innocent."
8. Nelda: "Grench did it, all right: his fingerprints were found on the gun. What difference does it make that the murder weapon was a knife?"
9. Howard: "Grench's grandfather served time for being a draft dodger. That's what convinced me he did it."
10. Sherryl: "Okay, I'm going to flip a coin. Heads he's innocent, tails he's guilty, How about that: tails!"

(*Ethical Inquiry*, p. 2 6)

An exercise may have multiple functions. It might, for example, contribute to the understanding of a concept, and at the same time strengthen the reasoning processes of the students who employ it. Consider, for example, how the following exercise fosters concept-formation, reasoning, and the sense of community:

EXERCISE: What is real, and what only seems to be real?

Prepare cards for four different desks or tables. This is what the cards read:

1. Things that seem to be real, but aren't.
2. Things that seem to be real, and are.
3. Things that don't seem to be real, but are real.
4. Things that don't seem to be real, and are not.

Now, each person is to bring an item to class and put it on one of the tables. Here are some suggestions:

a. an artificial flower
b. a toy automobile
c. a book of fairy-tales
d. a coke bottle filled with water
e. a potato carved in the shape of a cat
f. a paper airplane
g. a photograph of a member of the class
h. a small mirror

Go around the room, and each person, in turn, must challenge someone else to give the reason for putting that person's object on that particular table.

(*Looking for Meaning*, p. 4)

An exercise can have a logical function and at the same time it can simulate social practices that play an important role in social experience. In this connection, games represent exercises that sharpen student thinking about their daily lives, as the following version of "Simon says" can be helpful in distinguishing between intended and unintended meanings:

EXERCISE: Do we sometimes say things we don't mean, and mean things we don't say?

Virtually all children are familiar with the game, "Simon Says," and the best way to begin this exercise is to play a round of that game (until all but one person has been eliminated).

But now, ask the class what is involved each time the leader suggests something to them. See if they come up with the following possible combinations:

1. The leader may tell the class to do something, but not do it himself. (He may say "Hands on hips," but not do it.)
2. The leader may tell the class to do something, and do it herself. (She may say, "Hands on hips," and do it.)
3. The leader may say nothing but do something.
4. The leader may neither say anything nor do anything.

Item 4 above, is of course fairly unimportant. And Item 3 does occasionally trick some of the more unwary members of the class. But the important thing to note about Items 1 and 2 is that they are not to be obeyed unless the leader prefaces his/her command with "Simon Says." So the full array would look like this (using "Hands on hips!" as an example):

1. "Simon says, 'Hands on hips'! " (Leader doesn't do it.)
2. "Hands on hips!" (Leader doesn't do it.)
3. "Simon says, 'Hands on hips'" (Leader does it.)
4. "Hands on hips!" (Leader does it.)
5. (Leader is silent, but puts hands on hips.)

Is it possible that, in accepting or refusing a date, a person may send out very confusing signals, like the Simon Says leader, and can seem to be accepting when in fact she wants to refuse, or can seem to be refusing, when in fact she wants to accept?

(*Writing: How and Why*, pp 115-116)

Virtually any children's game can be reconstructed as to provide the basis for a philosophical exercise, and some (e.g., "Twenty Questions") are already useful for fostering classificatory or inferential procedures. It is because exercises pinpoint procedures that they can be effective in building skills. For example, if we want to expose underlying assumptions, we can employ an exercise involving necessary inferences, where the arguments are enthymemes (have missing premises) that need to be made explicit. Once the missing premise is supplied, it is obvious that the person using the argument may be guilty of stereotypical thinking. The two exercises that follow illustrate this principle in different ways. The first demonstrates how the finding of missing premises can reveal underlying assumptions. The second shows how these assumptions can be stereotypical.

EXERCISE: Underlying assumptions as missing premises

Sometimes someone offers a reason for a belief, but there appears to be an underlying assumption that has not been stated. Such an assumption may take the form of a missing premise. (A syllogism with a missing premise is called an enthymeme.)
For example, if someone says, "These are snakes, therefore they are reptiles," we see that this can be arranged as a syllogism with a missing premise:

1. (missing premise)
2. . These (things) are snakes. Therefore, these (things) are reptiles.

What is the missing premise that would make this deductive argument correct? Obviously, "All snakes are reptiles."

Complete the following arguments by finding the missing premise that will make the argument a correct one:

1. "He washed with soap; he must be clean."
2. "Of course he's a fool. Anyone who tries to fail at everything must be a fool."
3. "It's made by Grunchco; naturally it's good."
4. "They must be Texans, because they're all residents of Houston."
5. "You're a friend of Ed's, so you're a friend of mine."
6. "The only person in the world who has green hair is Margie, so you must be Margie."
7. "I hate all economic systems, so I hate capitalism and socialism."
8. "I like both tyrannies and democracies, so it follows I like Pangravia."
9. "They're not stupid so they must be crazy."
10. "If the light goes out, the lighthouse keeper must be sick. He must be sick."

(*Social Inquiry*, p. 206)

EXERCISE: Stereotypes

In the following examples, decide whether or not the case in point is an instance of faulty reasoning. If you think the reasoning if faulty, give a reason for your thinking so.

Faulty Reasoning Why I think it's faulty Reasoning Okay

1. Andy says: "Boys are aggressive. The star player on the 'girl's volleyball team is very aggressive. I'll bet she's really a boy.
2. Daisy says: "Jim's stingy. And everyone knows Transylvanians are stingy. So Jim must be a Transylvanian."
3. Eddie says: "My uncle Frank is from Texas. He must be a cowboy."
4. George says: "I'm timid. Lots of girls are timid. I must be effeminate
5. Ethel says: "Many students who get A's are fast readers. But I'm a slow reader. So I guess I'll never make A's.
6. Tom says: "All the parts of this machine are made of metal. This is a part of the machine, so it must be made of metal."
7. Joe says: "Any drop of water can freeze. This isn't a drop of water. So it can't freeze."
8. Mabel says: "Minnesotans live near Canada. Ed doesn't come from Minnesota. So he must not live near Canada."
9. Henry says: "I think lots of criminals are fascinating. Walter Zilch has just been convicted of bank robbery, so he must be fascinating."

10. Dora says: "All the parts of this sled are made of wood. this is a piece of wood. It must be part of this sled."
(*Philosophical Inquiry*, p. 36)

From the foregoing examples, it can perhaps be seen that philosophical exercises are not atomistic. Each illustrates a facet of the discipline of philosophy, and these facets are interconnected, just as each spot on the surface of the earth is different, but collectively they illustrate a single world. This is one reason why philosophy is so superior an approach to critical thinking-. Instead of each exercise representing a discrete skill, it represents a vast network or system that is capable of funneling the power of the whole into each of its several parts.

PUTTING THE STUDENT CENTER-STAGE

If the philosophical novel represents the dramatization of the curriculum, the philosophical discussion plan and philosophical exercise represent the dramatization of the student. That is, the discussion plan and exercise put the spotlight on the student's performance, as this occurs in the theatre of the community of inquiry. This performance, however, is not like the playing of a part, the enacting of a role where someone else has written the lines, which the actor proceeds to memorize and speak as the play is enacted. Instead, the response of the student to the questions in discussion plans and exercises is virtually unpredictable. In the philosophical curriculum, the discussion plans and exercises are devices for extracting creativity from students, for getting them to think for themselves-to be independent and resourceful in their thinking, while cooperative with the overall inquiry in which the community as a whole is engaged.

To be sure, they work in somewhat different ways to arrive at this result. The discussion plan fosters conceptual dialogue, with the result that the judgments elicited from the student are **procedural** insofar as they have to do with the timing of the student in entering the discussion, and **substantive** insofar as they are responsive to the developing understanding of the problem as it emerges in the deliberating community of inquiry. The exercise, on the other hand, tends to present each student with a particular facet of the overall problem, and to spotlight that student's response as an individualized performance. Judgments therefore, in the case of exercises, tend to be reasoning judgments: the inquiry focuses upon the logic of particular cases.

Either way, philosophical inquiry is student-centered, and it is the thinking of each student that is dramatized, as well as the thinking of each collective group. The philosophical admonition to "Know Thyself' Is not to be taken lightly, nor is the Socratic warning that "The unexamined life is not worth living." It is the life of each and every philosophy student that must be examined and understood. Each student's mind becomes a theatre within a theatre, a drama within a drama. As Pixie notes, each of us has a story, and that story itself is enfolded within another story and another and another, as the stories of persons-intermesh with the stories of stories, and as the history of the flower in the crannied wall merges with our own history and the history of the world.

Philosophy is the discipline that rejoices in its own self-effacement so that it can call attention all the more dramatically to the cognitive performance of the student. And yet, strangely, by so doing it does not efface itself completely, but becomes more mysterious even as it becomes more intelligible, like the mind of the student as it hovers over the footlights and becomes illuminated from within as it is caught up in the spotlights that are aimed at it from throughout the theatre. We are indeed, as Michael Ende has remarked, beginning to approach a period which will be the Children's Enlightenment, as the 18th Century was a century of adult Enlightenment. But for this to occur, a philosophical curriculum for children will be utterly indispensable.

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'A good dinner and a game of backgammon:'

is philosophy worth the effort? - some thoughts on teaching philosophy to college students

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When Hume decided to take refuge in a good dinner and a game of backgammon, he was finding philosophy frustrating and difficult. I use this quote from Hume to introduce a cluster of questions that I would like to raise in relation to teaching philosophy to college students, i.e. students in years 11 and 12.

Students can find philosophy frustrating and difficult. Some will wonder about its 'relevance'. How then can we justify introducing them to this form of intellectual enquiry? When it comes to the question of justification, to the value of taking up philosophy, I am interested in going beyond the notion of value and worth in terms of some "forms of knowledge" thesis according to which academic discourses and forms of enquiry are taken as given. I am interested also in the question of the value and worth of philosophy to students, not only as students but also as human beings. Related to these questions of worth and of justification is the question of *what kind of philosophy* we pass on, indeed the more basic question of *what is philosophy?* How will students come to see the value and worth of philosophy in order to engage in philosophical thinking?

I am aware that by raising this last question, I have slid from the strictly philosophical question of justification, to the *psychological* question of student motivation. This slide into the psycholological, into questions of student engagement and motivation is important in revealing the "space" between knowledge as public and objective, and the private/personal space of the students' situations. In that "space", we can raise some important questions, such as,

* the relationship between philosophy as an academic enquiry to *lived experience,* to the life-worlds of the students,
* the relationship between academic knowledge and 'common' understanding, and
* finally, the question of how students *themselves* come to engage in philosophical thinking.

The question of why we bother with philosophy and persist with it has a long ancestry. Hume for example, did not take it for granted that the activity of philosophy justifies itself. In the *Treatise,* [1] Hume said that his philosophical activity drove him to melancholy and despair and it was at times like this when he felt that philosophical speculation seemed 'cold and strained, and ridiculous', that he found that the cure was not more philosophy but a good dinner and a game of backgammon.

At other times, Hume was conscious of the dissonance, the *gap* between philosophical activity and human life. He noted the gap that existed between the philosophical activity that absorbed him, to which he succumbed because of the weakness of his nature, and the lives of 'many honest gentlemen' in England who were totally immersed in domestic affairs and amusement. Some of us who are professional philosophers will identify with this sense of dissonance, this sense of the gap between the philosophical activity that engages us and the

alternative of not bothering. In recent years, we have become familiar with the way in which feminist philosophers have interrogated the removedness of mainstream philosophy from lived experiences. This interrogation of academic enquiry has also been seen within philosophy of education debates.

I refer, for example, to the discussion between Ray Elliott, Glenn Langford and Paul Hirst [2] on the nature of the academic disciplines, their relationship to life and to common understanding and the question of how we can justify introducing children to academic enquiry. Hirst is associated with the well-known 'forms of knowledge' thesis. [3] For Hirst, these forms are separate ways in which experience is structured and for him intellectual development consists in acquiring a degree of mastery in each of the Forms. Defining both academic disciplines and intellectual development in this way means that for Hirst the justification for introducing children to these forms of enquiry is quite unproblemmatic. For Hirst, mastery of the forms of knowledge is at the same time, quite simply, the development of mind and of a differentiated understanding.

Ray Elliott challenges this easy path of justification on several grounds. One that concerns us is that he says that Hirst's justification for introducing children into the systematic disciplines expresses the belief that the public/objective and the conventional must play a more fundamental part in the development of mind than the private/subjective and the lived. Elliott also wonders if the systematic disciplines can justify themselves as easily as Hirst makes out. To mount his challenge, he makes a distinction, not only between the public/objective and the private/subjective, but also between common understanding and academic disciplines. This distinction allows him to challenge the *givenness* of academic knowledge and the unquestioned value of being initiated into the academic disciplines. In the rest of this paper I will:

* discuss the relevance of Elliott's characterisations of both academic disciplines and common understanding to the question of teaching philosophy to college students. I will show that such a call to attend to "the everyday" and to lived experience is present in the work of other philosophers, outside the area of philosophy of education. I will refer, in particular, to the work of Lorraine Code [4] (in her project to re-envision epistemology.)
* I will further argue that we need such a distinction to address the question of how philosophy should be taught in the context of the senior college.
* finally, I will show how such a distinction raises the question of *what is philosophy.*

In 'Education and Human Being', [5] Elliott discusses the question of what is of educational value and states that to show that a subject has an educational value, we need to know either that it is a good means of developing the powers of the mind, or that it concerns things which is important for a human being to know about, or both. He says that it seems obvious that certain disciplines are about things that matter, such as Maths, Physics, History and philosophy. It seems obvious that at an appropriate age children should be introduced to disciplines of this kind, and that it would be good for those who show promise in a discipline to be encouraged, in due course, to enter upon a special study of it. However, Elliott thinks that it is *not obvious* that this would

mean that such students should automatically be introduced to the academic discipline of , e.g. philosophy for two reasons:

firstly, because a "discipline" has a complex character and may have educational drawbacks,

secondly, it may be possible to approach the objects which the discipline studies without learning the discipline, and that, in fact, ' could be the better way.'

Hirst and Peters are well known for their "forms of knowledge" thesis on the academic disciplines but also for their views on justification of a curriculum based on these forms. Elliott says that they do not properly face the problem of justifying the educational transition from common non-academic understanding to understanding within the systematic disciplines. It is not absurd to ask for this to be justified, says Elliott, and he gives several examples to illustrate this. He says that while, e.g. a child who had no aesthetic experience would stand in obvious need of aesthetic education, it does not follow that she should be taught Literary Criticism.

Hirst and Peters have the view that promising school students should without question be introduced to the academic disciplines. They write, 'A budding specialist needs a detailed knowledge of all the relevant concepts, skills and tests for truth that will progressively provide him with a comprehensive understanding within a given domain.' [6] Elliott, on the other hand, warns that what we need is a realistic idea of what the budding specialist may be letting himself in for ! Such warnings are not new and Elliott shows this by reiterating the criticisms of Husserl and Heidegger against the directions in which the science in their day had developed, how its practitioners proceeded for the most part technically, with only a technical understanding of what they are doing, how the sciences had come to embody a fundamentally manipulative orientation.

Whereas Peters and Hirst speak optimistically about the sciences and about the extent of agreement in judgements generally between practitioners within these areas, Elliott does not think that these agreements in judgements and in testing procedures guarantee objectivity or the worth and rightness of a discipline. He says, '..... it is far from inconceivable that a discipline should go on using its criteria effectively and all its practitioners be satisfied with it, yet no one know exactly how it is "organising experience" or exactly what it is that they are understanding in depth.' [7] There are, argues Elliott, in fact too many examples of how the academic disciplines can distort and cramp our understanding as well as our lives. Elliott gives an example from philosophical aesthetics, of the domination of Aesthetic Formalism in the earlier half of the century. Under the domination of that kind of doctrine, art became entirely a matter of discriminating abstract formal relations. Here was an example of how an academic understanding reduced ordinary understanding and insights to nothing.

If the domain studied in the disciplines is that "given" by common experience, then we need, Elliott argues, to look more carefully at the relationship between common understanding and academic understanding. In their discussion of the forms of knowledge, there is a form of knowledge that Hirst and Peters call "knowledge of persons" where branches of enquiry such as psychology, psychoanalysis and sociology investigate our understanding of people. But, asks Elliott, can we say that the knowledge achieved in these fields of enquiry surpass

and supersede common knowledge? Can we truthfully say that there is more insight about people in these enquiries than in the unsystematic understanding of people obtainable, say, in imaginative literature?

According to Elliott, what this discussion shows is that philosophy of education should take on the task of enquiring into the character of the disciplines with a view to assessing their educational value. He looks at some differences between "common" and "pre-theoretical" understanding and understanding through the disciplines.

Elliott says that unlike understanding within the academic disciplines, common understanding does not limit itself to any special area of being, but concerns itself with anything that will yield to it. It draws upon a considerable "truistic common lore concerning human being and the world". The area is rich in content and subtle in distinctions but, compared with theoretical knowledge, lacking in depth and systematic organisation. In addition, there is a large body of more or less explicit opinion, not universally accepted concerning the same matters. Everybody comes into contact with a large number of these opinions in conversation, through literature, or during the ordinary business of life. Some of these opinions are expressions of profound insight, but are not adequately criticised nor are their consequences fully explored, so that they fail to establish themselves intellectually against contrary opinions. Elliott writes, 'Compared with theoretical understanding, this domain of common understanding is rich and free, but lacks objectivity, and in consequence its depth is insecure.' [8] Elliott says that a good example of someone who posessed common understanding in large measure was Shakespeare.

Common understanding develops into a discipline when more attention is attached to criticism and re-examination. Further typical features in the development of a discipline are:

* limitation of interest to some particular area or aspect of being,
* invention of special methods of enquiry, some of which may become technicised
* exclusive use of certain accepted modes or styles of communication
* construction of concepts not used, or not used with full understanding by people who are not followers of the discipline; the substitution of these concepts, often without change of name, from the concepts of ordinary discourse;
* the transmission, not only of knowledge, methods, etc. but also of past projects in so far as they influence present attitudes and orientations of enquiry;
* the existence of overt and tacit, historically determined conventions of the discipline which are relevant to verification.

Based on these differences between common understanding and systematic disciplines, we need, says Elliott, to chart the relationship between them, in such a way that we can 'raise the question of the legitimacy and desirability of the departures embodied in the discipline, including changes in purposes or motivation.' [9]

Hirst and Peters, as I have indicated do not address such a question, mainly because they take for granted that promising students would automatically benefit from the specialism provided by the forms of academic knowledge. They tend further to argue that desirable educational qualities are only properly developed through initiation into these academic forms of enquiry. For example they look at a quality like creativity and argue that one could not be creative without

first being initiated into the areas of enquiry where creativity has its specific application and meaning. Elliott disputes this and wonders how much initiation and knowledge of specialist language is necessary before one could be creative in particular areas. He gives the examples of Nietzsche and Wittgenstein who probably did not have much philosophical training before their first philosophical books but they were men of formidable intellect and simply turned their attention to matters that we could call "philosophical". In fact, if one approached the objects traditionally studied by these forms of enquiry directly on the basis of ordinary language and natural understanding, it is likely that what one says about these objects 'may contribute to and even upset the disciplines one has not learned.' [10]

There are additional advantages of approaching the objects of interest from outside the disciplines. The learner does not have to follow accidental conventions as if they were essential to understanding. Neither will she have to concern herself with fashionable problems to the exclusion of possibly more important matters, nor will she necessarily have to adopt contemporary attitudes and approaches. These advantages are surely particularly desirable for students before tertiary studies where such freedom is not so forthcoming. The educational value of such study is also obvious. As Elliott says, it is a good means of fostering the life of the mind since this way, students have to think more for themselves, and when they express their views would not immediately run into 'an entanglement of ready-to-hand disciplinary criticism. With good teaching students could penetrate deeply into fields that supposedly belong to the disciplines, and develop their own points of view, 'without first having to confront the intimidating power of orthodoxy.' [11] The world is rich enough to go on rewarding understanding without demanding initiation into any academic discipline as a condition. There are, as Elliott has so far implied, disadvantages and losses involved in such an initiation.

In its estrangement from natural understanding, education in the disciplines tends to result in a loss of what Elliott calls "the primitive sense of being within the whole." [12] What Elliott means is that too often the academic ceases to learn from life and the world as he has come to see the world through the eyes of the discipline and to depend upon academic explanations which he did not originate, nor always fully understands. For this reason, Elliott thinks that educators who introduce students to the disciplines are responsible to do two things:

1. to have a clear understanding of the nature of each discipline, including the objects that it studies, the motivations which *contemporarily inspire* it and its relation to common understanding.
2. we need to be able to teach a way by which a person can recall herself from her discipline, once more adopt the relatively naive attitudes of common understanding even towards the objects of her discipline, and regain her capacity for the primitive synopsis.

The 'primitive synopsis' or the 'sense of the whole' spoken about by Elliott is something that he regards as having great educational value. According to Elliott, such a sense of perspective is an essential part of possessing understanding which is achieved, not routinely and academically, but as a result of engagement, energy and even desire. According to Elliott, understanding is achieved, as a result of intellectual eros, which is that composite of energy and desire called into being for the sake of achieving understanding. Elliott's view of this process is interesting and educationally significant, especially for

the teaching of philosophy, but there is no time to discuss this further. What I wish to use from his notion of intellectual eros is *the sense of the whole* that teachers need to take care to cultiviate for their students.

In a more pragmatic way, Mary Midgley [13] makes a similar point when she says that in the teaching of philosophy, we should be concerned with the promotion of understanding. In a way that is reminscent of Elliott, Midegley, says that understanding aims at treating knowledge as a whole so that it serves as something like the "background map" of the whole range of our knowledge. It should act, not only as a context for one's own specialty but also allow for other aspects to be integrated, such as the practical and emotional attitudes to life. This sense of context can be encouraged by attending to the questions that students ask, and to the range of other wide questions that link these spontaneous questions together. Midgley says that specialties need to be related to everyday thinking and made responsible to it. They must also acknowledge their own emotional aspect and relate to everyday feeling. Midgley says that what she requires of specialist knowledge goes against the grain since remoteness from everyday thought and feeling, or even contempt for them, is often one of the first things that higher education seems to teach people.

A philosopher well-known for a plea for "the everyday" is Lorraine Code. In her project to re-envision epistemology, she interrogates mainstream epistemology which she argues, holds up objectivism and neutrality as paradigmatic and in the process ignore the claims of "the everyday". In many ways, this echoes the concern that Elliott expresses about the dominance of academic understanding over the richness of common understanding.

According to Code, "the everyday" is that area of human experiences told in story and testimony which present an account of things quite different from what we find in academic accounts. By presenting the element of subjectivity into the picture, they "flesh out" what theories leave as gaps. But they do more. By showing what people are like, stories from the everyday challenge the objectivism of traditional theories, showing them, at times, at least, to be unrealistic and counter-intuitive.

In Code's work, we see the advocacy for the place of common understanding in "the everyday" which is often absent from objectivist accounts. Her reminder that knowledge is a construct produced by cognitive agents within social practices and is therefore neither neutral nor egalitarian, underlines what Elliott has said about academic disciplines and discourses and their being subject to fashions and expert control. Code's notion of "rhetorical spaces" and "textured locations" underline the fact that within these discourses, there are "tacit territorial imperatives" which limit what can be said and seriously entertained. Hence her plea that we take a look at the lives, social structures and circumstances where concrete moral and epistemic agents are engaged in deliberations that matter to them. "Everyday life" is the place where we see what real and variously situated knowers actually do and actually care about. This is the place where questions arise out of lived experience. Just as Elliott refers to the academic disdain of common understanding, so Code speaks of the ways in which mainstream epistemologies tend to disdain testimony and story especially from certain sources. This claim is part of her larger claim

that mainstream epistemologies are far from neutral and objective, but rather, are privileged, subjective and specific. From this standpoint, other experiences and voices are not heard or are deliberately excluded. Code argues that such hegemonic but detached epistemologies have been possible only because they have ignored the claims of other disparate voices as well as the claims of "the everyday". "The everyday" will bring with it lived experiences and stories that either enlighten or challenge our theories. But they must be allowed to be expressed.

In her plea for a "storied epistemology", Code questions the value of a detached philosophy and an abstracted view of philosophy. From this point of view, philosophy could not simply be "what academic philosophers debate about". We need to go beyond this kind of Hirstian response.

Wittgenstein once said,

> *'What is the use of studying philosophy if all that it does for you is to enable you to talk with some plausibility about some abstruse questions of logic etc., if it does not improve your thinking about the important questions of everyday life?'* [14]

It seems entirely consistent with Wittgenstein's view of philosophy that the common understanding advocated by Elliott and "the everyday" spoken about by Code should enter into philosophy as well as the teaching of philosophy. Indeed, we could argue for such an approach, not only from the point of view of the *use* of philosophy, which is the educational question, but also from the point of view of the question of "what is philosophy?"

I raised this question at the beginning of my paper in relation to the question of justification, the question of justifying the teaching of philosophy on educational grounds. I have throughout expressed dissatisfaction with a purely objectivist response to that question offered, for example, by the Hirst and Peters' "forms of knowledge" thesis. I said at the beginning that it is important to open up the "space" between knowledge as public and objective, and the private/subjective space of the situations of students and their lived experiences. The philosophers that I have cited, Elliott and Code, with their different philosophical concerns, give us ways of addressing that space. They give us ways of linking philosophy as an intellectual enquiry to the life-worlds of students and ordinary people. Such a link, I would argue, is not only valuable on educational grounds, making it possible for philosophy to engage students as it exercises a grip on their lives and their questions. Such a link between philosophy and lived experiences, also directs our attention to the important question of what is philosophy.

In his recent book, *World Philosophies,*[15] David Cooper says that good philosophy is that which is constructed by authors 'with at least one eye out for the human condition.' Part of the human condition is a sense of alienation and tension. This is the felt tension that Wordsworth expressed, '....... between ...... that intution of ourselves, as one with the whole ..... and that [of] ourselves as separate beings ...' [16] Good philosophy, according to Cooper, comes out of this latent tension and can be regarded as attempts to resolve it. It does so by offering accounts of human beings that do justice to their uniqueness in the universe and yet give them a "home" in it. The failure to address this

tension, says Cooper, is not only an intellectual debacle, but a human tragedy.

This view of philosophy is not only richer and more "real" than the Procrustean model of philosophy given by Hirst and Peters which sees any area of knowledge as that which the experts have carved out for us. It is richer also than the impression of philosophy given by many of today's technical journal articles. This view of philosophy is also pedagogically more promising as it sees philosophy as in a sense "natural" to intelligent and socially responsible young people, as being vitally connected to the questions which they raise, not only as scholars and potential scholars, but also as human beings.

If philosophy is presented as firmly related to the human condition, students are more likely to engage in philosophical thinking, as well as with the thoughts of others who have likewise so engaged. Such philosophy is less likely to disappoint. In contrast, a purely academic model of philosophical teaching in which content is dictated by the views and concerns of experts will not be what most students have signed up for. Such students are likely to be disappointed. As Elliott describes it,

> *'In an extreme case he might be like a person who trains as a soldier in order to free the Holy Land, and through nobody's fault, finds himself sacking Constantinople instead.'* [17]

Notes

[1] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1960), esp. 269-272.
[2] see Stuart Brown (ed.), *Philosophers Discuss Education*, (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1975)
[3] see, e.g. Paul Hirst, *Knowledge and the Curriculum*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974)
[4] see, e.g. Lorraine Code, *Rhetorical Spaces - Essays on gendered locations*, (New York: Routledge, 1995)
[5] R.K. Elliott, 'Education and Human Being', in *Philosophers Discuss Education*, op cit, pp. 45-72.
[6] ibid, p. 60
[7] ibid
[8] ibid, p. 62
[9] ibid
[10] ibid, p.65
[11] ibid, p.66
[12] ibid, p. 69
[13] Mary Midgley, *Wisdom, Information and Wonder, what is knowledge for?*, (London: Routledge, 1989).
[14] Norman Malcolm, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: a Memoir* (London: OUP, 1958), p. 39
[15] David Cooper, *World Philosophies an Historical Introduction*, (Oxford, U.K., Cambridge, U.S.A.: Blackwell, 1996), p.5
[16] *Philosophers Discuss Education*, p. 61
[17] ibid

Truth, hunches and our form of life: relfections on Harry Stottlemeier's Discovery Chapter 1.

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Why does Harry accept without hesitation that his 'all' statements such as "All oaks are trees," "All planets revolve around the sun," are true and that their reverse is false? Is he entitled to? Neither he nor Lisa question the truth of their examples nor their conclusion that if a true sentence begins with the word "No" its reverse is also true, but if it begins with the word "All" its reverse is false. Is their attitude reasonable, especially since they serve as models for others? Under "Leading Idea 10: Truth," the Manual points out that Harry does not explain how he knows that his discovery is true. It is suggested that perhaps he has a hunch. And this suggestion is more perspicacious than at first appears.

Neither he nor Lisa have reason to doubt the truth of their examples. They have learnt on the good authority of their parents, teachers, family, reference books, etc., that oaks are trees, all planets are things that revolve around a sun, and much more besides from when they first began to use these words in the language and through experiences at school and elsewhere. Their propositions about oaks, planets, etc., conform to the appropriate standards of truth for cases such as these. For Harry and Lisa to question the truth of such propositions would be to question the whole form of life to which, as children, they belong. For children, authorities such as parents, teachers, other family adults, tell the truth; and since it is borne out in their dealings with others too, the thought of questioning such truths just does not arise. To appreciate this point requires clarification of the concept of truth and its relationship to our form of life.

As in the case of Harry, the notion of truth applies to what is said. And what is said is distinct from what is used to say it - the words and sentence(s). Sentences, like words, cannot be true or false; ungrammatical, inelegant, English, French, yes, but not exaggerated, implausible, or inaccurate (White,1970, 10). What is said by a sentence has variously been called a "statement," "proposition," "thought," " belief" or "judgment." A.J.Ayer (1946, 8) proposed that any form of words that is grammatically significant constitute a sentence, that every indicative sentence, whether it is literally meaningful or not, constitute a statement, and that what is expressed by literally meaningful sentences is the proposition. Thus it is the proposition which can be true or false. On this view, to say that a belief, or a statement, or a judgment is true is always an elliptical way of ascribing truth to a proposition which is believed, stated, or judged. Having decided just what it is that can be true brings up the question "What is truth?"

Questions of the general form "What is X?" are often dealt with ostensively by pointing to an X. "What is red?" "Here, this sweater is red." "What is table?" "This is a table." And so on. There are difficulties with this way of answering the query, but that is not under discussion here. Questions such as "What is length?" "What is meaning?" "What is justice?" "What is truth?" as Wittgenstein says (1969, 1), produce in us a kind of mental cramp because we feel that we ought to point to something in reply to them but cannot. One way out of this impasse is to do as Ayer (1946, 87) suggests and treat such questions as requests for a definition of a symbol in use. Take such questions to be asking how the

sentences in which X occurs are to be translated into eqivalent sentences which do not contain X or any of its synonyms. Thus the question "What is truth?" asks for such a translation of the sentence "(the proposition) p is true."

Ayer, like many others, follows Ramsey (1927) in arguing that no such translation is needed. They treat the "is true" in such sentences as superfluous. According to this view, to say that a proposition is true is just to assert it and to say that it is false is just to assert its contradictory. Hence "What is truth?" is not a question which gives rise to any genuine problem, consequently no theory can be required to deal with it (Ayer, 87).

But this position is untenable. As Quinton (1973, 142) points out: an assertion is a sentence uttered as true, hence assertion presumes that the concept of truth is already understood. Thus the logical superfluity theory of truth is no answer to the question of what it means to say that a proposition is true. Since "is true" is not superfluous then, for any proposition, there must be something in virtue of which either it or its negation is true.

This something is a fact that we have been taught to regard as justifying us in asserting it (Dummet 1958). And because they have been taught them by appropriate authorities Harry and Lisa do not question the truth of their examples. A proposition is true if it corresponds to *what* a true proposition states. This is not circular (tautologous) because the *what* is not contained in the first clause rather it indicates the principal characteristic of truth - its objectivity. The truth of our statements does not depend on our making them, it depends somewhat on how the world is, on what the facts are. Our claims of truth do not establish the facts, it is the facts which justify our assertions of truth. Thus truth and fact are logically connected, and they are connected via the notion of objectivity. Truth claims are objective: their truth is independent of our asserting them and independent of our attitude towards them; they are also public claims in that they challenge anyone who cares, to check them and not agree. Should others disagree then doubt arises, so we then see the need for further investigation. In other words, the criterion of objectivity and therefore of truth and fact, is public agreement. And unless there is a world independent of ourselves and others there could be no agreement in judgments and no room for the notion of truth. Public agreement or intersubjectivity as Hamlyn (1970, 140) calls it is necessary for objectivity.

Intersubjectivity requires the existence of a common conceptual framework as a background against which people can communicate; in other words, it implies a common world. All this talk of facts and of correspondence with fact implies a form of realism, not in the sense that facts are identical with concrete states of affairs, but in the sense that a necessary condition of there being objective truth is that there be an independently exisiting world (Hamlyn, 140). To say that a statement corresponds to a fact is to say that the statement satisfies the appropriate standard of objective truth for that statement. What that standard is in any given case depends on what the agreed truth conditions are for that statement. So what is to count as fact depends on how we have come to see the world and upon the conceptual structure that is presupposed in our seeing it this way. And since this in turn rests on our form of life we cannot get completely behind this conceptual organisation, though we can question its applicability at any given point. For

Harry and Lisa to question the truth of their examples when they conform to the appropriate truth conditions is to attempt to get behind or beyond their way of life and its conceptual structure. Little wonder that they attempt to do so.

What we can say about the world depends on this agreed, intersubjective, system of concepts. And since this contains the criteria for truth there must be points of agreement concerning the applicability of these criteria. Hence there must also be agreement on what is to count as fact and what is not. The existence of such facts that make our propositions true is a precondition of any view of the world. What these facts are is something we can question only from a point of view within what is agreed, and which also provides the framework for intelligible discussion about what is fact and what is not.

As Hamlyn points out (p141), all this shows why if correspondence with fact cannot be the criterion of truth, intersubjective agreement may be. Since interpersonal agreement is the background against which we can speak of fact, this agreement provides the point of application for the concept of truth. If people agree on a matter it is to be expected that what they say will *normally* be true. When this is not the case, it is this fact which requires explanation. Interpersonal agreement provides the criterion for the application of the concept of truth and renders it intelligible; without it truth is impossible. That not everything that people agree about is true is no objection to this, but that they will *normally* agree on what is true is a precondition of the whole language of fact.

Harry and Lisa do not question the truth of their examples because they have grown up in a world where oaks are trees, etc. They have acquired this knowledge as part of the publicly shared conceptual structure of the world which is built into the lanuage. In learning the language they acquired these concepts and the accompanying framework of rules for using them appropriately, including the tests for their truth. Harry always works within this framework of rules. He has no reason to doubt that all oaks are trees, but he is not so sure about model airplanes being toys possibly because no appropriate authority has told him so and his own experience leads him to believe it. Doubt only comes after belief (Wittgensein 1969, #160). He arrives at his discovery after testing his hypothesis appropriately. When it fails with Lisa's sentence he doubts his rule and she asks the appropriate (conventional) question, "Have you tried it?" As they proceed their familiarity with the procedures leads them to intuitively, as we say, drop the need to establish the truth of the antecedent sentences and fall into the hypothetical if-then mode: if it's true that no mosquitoes are lollipops then it's also true that no lollipops are mosquitoes. Thus they proceed by hunch to establish their rule. As Wittgenstein points out (1969, #161) we learn an enormous amount and accept it on human authority, then find some things confirmed or disconfirmed by experience. And since Harry and Lisa rely on appropriate authorities and procedures they are quite entitled to their hunch. They have no good reason to doubt (even Harry and his belief about cucumbers). To do so would be inconceivable for them (Wittgenstein, #159). If Harry were to doubt that oaks are trees people would think that he did not understand what trees are (assuming he is not just plain mistaken). If he persisted in spite of repeated attempts to clarify his alleged error he would be regarded as demented (Wittgenstein, #155). And Harry is neither unreasonable nor demented.

To summarise, to say that a proposition or statement is true is to say that it corresponds to a fact. But this point is often confused with the problem of how to tell whether a proposition or statement is true or not. This problem calls for a theory of justification rather than a theory of truth. The traditional approach is to follow Kant as does C.I.Lewis (1946, p35) who declares that any statement we know to be true is so known either by reason of experience or by reason of what the statement itself means. There are no other sources of knowledge than on the one hand data of sense and on the other hand of our own intended meanings. These latter which are certified by exclusive reference to defined or definable meanings are called *analytic* ; what is non-analytic being called *synthetic* . A.J. Ayer extended this distinction to serve as a criterion for separating literally meaningful statements (those verifiable by empirical observation or by analytic definition) from meaningless statements (those not so verifiable). Thus the question of how we can know whether a statement is true or not is settled by either analysis of the terms involved or by empirical observation. And this is the method employed by Harry and Lisa when they rely on experience and knowledge of meanings (e.g. submarines and kangaroos) in assuming the truth of their examples and trying out their rule on further sentences. So they fall into the mainstream of philosophic method with their procedure. This is taken up and expanded in the Manual with the exercises illustrating the difference between truth by definition and truth based on evidence. By using these exercises we are shown that this distinction is not as dry or dull as it seems for they invite speculation on the empirical/analytic status of selected examples as well as about the circumstances which would render given statements true or false. This shows that philosophic distinctions can indeed be a source of wonderment and imagination. Bringing this to our attention is one of the great strengths of Philosophy for Children.

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Reading Vygotsky . . .

Dina Mendoca: Portugal

I (re) read chapter five of *Pixie* when I was embraced by numerous doubts and questions about the statement "To make connections, to establish and discover relationships, produces meaning". I repeated this sentence so many times to myself that the words seemed to take the form of an unknown song . . .

I found peace, at least for now, in reading Vygotsky words and ideas in his book *Thought and Language.*

Vygotsky, as myself, "wanted to understand how a concept - an intellectual idea - is related to its meaning and the later to its various verbal embodiments"[1].

I thought that understanding some of Vygotsky's ideas would be not only interesting to us but also illuminate some presuppositions of Philosophy for Children. This is the intent of this paper.

For Vygotsky thought and word are not connected in their origin. Their connection originates, develops and growths through the developmental process that thought and speech go through themselves. In other words, the connection between thought and speech is not a given, complete, final connection but one that growths from the growth of each of them. This growth in their connection is not understood as something mechanical. As Vygotsky himself says: "The relation of thought to word is not a thing but a process, a continual movement back and forth from thought to word and from word to thought. In that process the relation of thought to word undergoes changes which themselves may be regarded as developmental in the fuctional sense. Thought is not merely expressed in words; it comes into existence through them. Every thought tends to connect something with something else, to establish a relationship between things"[2] The result of this union between thought and speech is, what Vyotsky called, the word meaning.

Both the old and the new psychology, said Vygotsky, assumed that this unity - word meaning - is complete and stable once it appears. Vygotsky, on the contrary, defended that the word meaning can never be complete. The word meaning is a continuos exchange process of thought and speech: "Word meaning is a phenomenon of thought only insofar as thought is embodied in speech, and of speech only insofar as speech is connected with thought and illuminated by it. It is a phenomenon of verbal thought, or meaningful speech - a union of word and thought"[3]

We can observe that in *Pixie*:
After talking with Miranda about space and time relationships she ends up exclaiming: "Oh! ... now I see what you mean."[4] Although Pixie understood a sense of the word relationship she continues to ask for the meaning of the word, we see her asking Mr Mulligan what are relationships. After discussing in her classroom what relationships mean, after being given several examples Pixie continues to pose the question. Pixie doesn't do this out of stupidity, on the contrary, brightly, she suspects the meaning of the word is not complete ... it will never be completely complete.

How does this process between thought and speech develop? The structure of speech is not the same as the structure of thought. One cannot be turned into the other in a ready made manner. Thought undergoes many changes as it turns into speech. Speech also changes before it is embodied with thought. Vygotsky describes four major stages in the development of unity between thought and speech:

First, so called primitive or natural stage, is a stage where the child possesses a preintellectual speech and preverbal thought. The child says things as repeating sounds that have no supporting idea.

Second comes the stage of the "naive psychology" where the child starts experiencing physical properties and starts using the collection of experiences as a tool. The child is for the first time exercising practical intelligence. In this stage the child will start dominating the structure of speech and use it in practical realities without really dominating the structure of thought. For example, the child will use words such as *because, if,* but appropriately before she understands the implicated relations of the use of such terms. What happens is similar to Connie when she is trying to understand the word "family". Connie can use the word and probably most of the time it will seem like she really knows what she is talking about, but she still hasn't understood the logical step behind the use of such word.

Third, the child starts using external operations in her internal problems. She will talk to herself. As if she is feeling said, she counts with her fingers, etc. According to speech development it is the stage of what Piaget called the egocentric speech.[5]

Fourth and last, the ingrowth stage, where there is a sharp division between inner and external behavior, and each one of them influences the other. The child will still talk aloud alone but the child will get silent if she/he realizes it is being observed. It is in the fourth stage that a phenomenon that Vygotsky called the inner speech can be appreciated. Inner speech is a transformed egocentric speech. I will come back to this notion later on.

I would like now to show how Vygotsky conceives the formation of concepts within this sequence I have described above.

Concept formation is attained in three basic phases:
The first phase occurs when a child tries to put together a number of objects in a certain unorganized way. When the child is doing this she/he doesn't put things together indifferently, there is some sort of effort for understanding. The child advances using the trial and error methodology, but also uses her/his vision as a selective tool and the child starts collecting elements of his/her experience as reference.

The second phase occurs when the child starts what Vygotsky called "thinking in complexes". This kind of thinking is already coherent and objective but it is limited to concrete and factual references and therefore lacks the abstract light of conceptual thinking. There are several kinds of complexes (associative type; resemble collections; chain complexes; diffuse complexes and bridge pseudo-complexes); and they gradually direct mind to the potential complexes of the third and last phase of concept development.

The principal function of the complexes of the second phase, in general, is to establish bonds and relationships. Complexes begin unification of impressions, they organize different elements of experience into groups, they create a frame work basis of reference for later thinking. The potential concept, characteristic of the third phase, is more than just this type of unification - the potential concept abstracts what is given in the complexes. In the complex thinking an analysis is made; in concept thinking an synthesis is added. The potential concept is the seed of concepts which, according to Vygotsky, can only be fully existent in early adolescence. This means that the child will dominate the use of some words, even use them correctly as an adult before the child truly dominates its meaning. The child surely understands some senses of the used word but misses the illuminating meaning which will enable her to include in it all the possible senses. What path will the child follow in order to achieve this later stage? The child will design a path from the dynamics between her social communication and the deepening of her own inner speech.

The notion of inner speech is a central one to understand Vygotsky's thought. Inner speech is a special part of speech. It doesn't follow the rules of social speech - in its structure it is closer to thought than to speech. However its development depends on the social speech development.

Social speech, thought and inner speech, live a dependent relation, one cannot develop without the others and every advancement of one of them has results in consequences fro the other two. In this relationship inner speech plays an important role - Inner Speech is the level of union, of transition. Inner speech is almost thinking only through meanings ... To use Vygotsky's words: "A thought may be compared to a cloud shedding a shower of words. Precisely because thought does not have its automatic counterpart in words, the transition from thought to word leads through meaning"[6].

To understand Vygotsky, it could be useful to think about the learning process of speaking another language. In some way when we learn another language we cover the steps described above. How many times have we used words without really knowing their exact sense? How many times where we understood in our discussions although we couldn't find the right words? - someone else was reading our inner speech. How many times have we not been understood because we can't find words? How many other examples of Vygotsky's words can we find?

I feel my thoughts collide together in the end. What initially started as a clarification is now a riddle of enthusiastic words of thoughts.
Before I start losing myself any further I would like to finish this paper in the same manner Vygotsky finishes his book, because his words are wise:

"Thought and language , which reflect reality in a way different from that of perception, are the key to the nature of human consciousness. Words play a central part not only in the development of thought but in the historical growth of consciousness as a whole. A word is a microcosm of human consciousness."[7]

Notes

1. Kozulin, 1990, 152. At least according to Kozulin.
2. Vygotsky, 1962, 125
3. Vygotsky, 1962, 120
4. Lipman, 1981, 31
5. Vygotsky accepts the Piaget terminology but he will interpret it differently.
6. Vygotsky, 1962,150
7. Vygotsky, 1962, 153

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Can studying philosophy influence students' overall academic performance?

Anthony Imbrosciano, St Bridigine's College, St. Ives, Sydney

The justification of any subject will always be multi-faceted, based on varying criteria and judgements of value. It will usually be controversial as well, meeting with supporters and opponents. And it will usually tend to be rather open ended, prone to qualitative factors that are not always amenable to empirical investigation. Philosophy for secondary students is no exception. Justifications will range from essentialist arguments, claiming the worthwhileness of the subject "in itself", or the fact that it has its roots in a well established historical tradition, through to a variety of pragmatic or consequentialist arguments, claiming anything from the enhancement of critical thinking abilities, to direct economic benefits to the community at large.

Personally, I tend to agree with Joseph Campbell (*The Power of Myth*, NY: Doubleday, 1988, 3-4)whose comments below about the study of Mythology could also be applied to Philosophy;

> I don't believe in being interested in a subject just because it's said to be important. I believe in being caught by it somehow or other. But you may find that, with a proper introduction, mythology will catch you... But once this subject catches you, there is such a feeling of information of a deep, rich, life-vivifying sort that you don't want to give it up.

Leaving Campbell's remarks in the background, the purpose of this report is to tentatively delve into one of the most pragmatic questions of all: Is there any evidence that studying Philosophy may have some bearing on students' overall academic performance? Due to particular circumstances, I have had a rather unique opportunity to investigate this question, albeit in a very limited fashion. May I state from the outset that I agree that only the most tenative conclusions, if any, can be drawn from my investigations - due mainly to the nature of the study and the small sample of students involved. I knew this from the start, but out of sheer curiosity did not want let a unique opportunity go by to examine the issue.

Brigidine College St.Ives is an independent, Catholic secondary school for girls from years 7-12. It has an enrolment that generally ranges between 600 and 650 students. In 1990, the then newly appointed principal of the college, Sr. Joan Smith, pressed for the introduction of a subject that would specifically target the development of logical thinking skills in students. Her initiative was based upon a strong conviction that in the future the ability to logically process and reflect upon information will become of increasing and paramount importance in education, and far more important that the simple transmission and recalling of information, which will be largely handled through technology.

She employed me to co-ordinate the program, to begin with Year 7 only, and gradually be carried through, year by year, as far as its success and other factors would permit. The subject came to be called "Philosophy/Logic". Its emphasis has been very much on informal and formal logic, as applied to traditional philosophical questions and more "everyday" issues. It is based on a four part series of curriculum materials/texts, written by myself, titled "Logicowls and Fowllacies".

The table below summarises the general topic areas covered across the 4 years of study.

Year 7: The Fallacies of Ignoratio Elenchii	1. Argumentum ad Hominem 2. Argumentum ad Populum 3. Argumentum ad Fidem 4. Argumentum ad Verecundiam 5. Argumentum ad Baculum 6. Argumentum ad Misericordiam 7. Argumentum ad Participans 8. The Straw Man Fallacy 9. Argumentum ad Quietem 10. The Genetic Fallacy 11. The Fallacy of Equivocation 12. Petitio Principii
Year 8: Generalisation Fallacies	1. The Inductive Fallacy 2. The Slippery Slope Fallacy 3. The Fallacy of Significance 4. The Naturalist's Fallacy 5. Rejecting the Conclusion of a Bad Argument 6. Argumentum ad Ignoratiam 7. The Fallacy of Unattainable Standards of Argument 8. The Fallacy of Composition 9. The Fallacy of Division 10. The Gambler's Fallacy 11. Inferring Necessary Causation out of Correlation 12. Reductio ad Absurdam
Year 9: Introduction to the Propositional Calculus	I. Propositions, Arguments, & Logical Validity 1. Negation 2. Conjunction 3. Inclusive Disjunction 4. Exclusive Disjunction 5. Material Implication 6. Material Equivalence 7. Truth Tables & Exercises 8. The Fallacy of the Undistributed Middle 9. The Fallacy of Denying the Antecedent 10. The Fallacy of Affirming the Consequent 11. The Fallacy of Inferring Equivalence out of Implication 12. Fallacies of Illicit Conversion 13. The Rule of Obversion 14. The Rule of Contraposition 15. The Shorter Truth Table Method

Year 10: Derivation Logic	SECTION 1: DERIVATION LAWS 1. Double Negation 2. Conjunction 3. Simplification 4. Addition 5. The Disjunctive Syllogism 6. The Hypothetical Syllogism 7. Modus Ponens 8. Modus Tollens 9. The Constructive Dilemma 10. The Destructive Dilemma SECTION 2: REPLACEMENT LAWS 1. De Morgan's Theorems 2. Commutation 3. Association 4. Distribution 5. Transposition 6. Material Implication 7. Material Equivalence 8. Exportation 9. Tautology SECTION 3: DERIVATION CONSTRUCTION 1. Assumption 2. Reiteration 3. Conditional Proof 4. Indirect Proof

A variety of teaching techniques were employed in teaching these topics, with particular emphasis on the community of inquiry approach.

The subject is compulsory for all students in Years 7 and 8, but comprises only 75 hours of indicative time across the two years (37.5 in Yr 7 and 37.5 in Yr 8). It then becomes a 200 hour elective in Years 9 and 10. One group of students elected to proceed with their studies for four years, up until the end of year 10 - being the first group in NSW to have the subject included as Board endorsed part of their school certificate studies. Over the four years, they thus studied the subject for the equivalent of 275 hours. In 1994, as Year 11 students, they did not study any further Philosophy/Logic, and in 1995, as Year 12 students, they did their HSC, once again not studying the subject.

Their response to the course was overwhlemingly positive, as indicated in the following, unedited remarks made as part of their evaluations at the end of Year 10, 1993.

Student evaluations

What Philosophy does is ignore the people involved and analyse the arguments for each side. This means that each side has to think clearly, and give strong premises and arguments for their case. Those involved have to be detached from what they are arguing so as to remain rational. This may sound simple, but in reality is extremely hard to do.

Philosophy relies on humans ability to think. However, people often don't want to think, and that is why it is resisted. Philosophy also makes people come up with their own ideas and reasons for things, which many find confronting.

The average person on the street would be in favour of Philosophy if they understood it. But the people, especially those in power, view it as a threat and so create myths about philosophy as being irrelevant and "weirdo stuff". Those in power have done this in numerous ways throughout history, such as publicly mocking philosophers, not having it in the education system, and even going as far as to execute those philosophers who posed a serious threat to them, such as Socrates in Athens in 399 B.C.E.

Since I started the course, I have tended to look deeper into things and pick up any obvious fallacies. Just to take an example: imagine a person listening to a radio program and the following was argued - "if Brigid is a true psychic, then her predictions will come true. Brigid's predictions did come true. Therefore, she is a true psychic." The person listening may become convinced. However, if she understood Logic she would recognise this piece of argument as a fallacy of affirming the consequent, and may think twice before being fully convinced. To use an analogy: if an object is a watchface, then it is round. This object is round. Therefore it must be a watchface. Philosophy, in other words, prevents one from falling prey to invalid argument, and the associated deceptions which often accompany them.

To be a philosopher, or someone who can argue well, both knowledge of formal and informal fallacies and derivation logic is necessary. Ultimately, how can topics such as the existence of God, or morals be argued successfully without a knowledge of valid argument?

Philosophy is an extremely effective tool which enlightens one's views and allows open minded, informed reactions to issues, opinions and arguments in our society. Without the ability to think logically, you are able to be manipulated in ways that would otherwise go unnoticed.

Philosophy separates true argument from the interference of beliefs that often stop one from thinking clearly.

Philosophy and Logic has taught me how to reason and decide for myself what is morally and socially correct. It has also taught me how to take control and have power over my own mind so that I will no longer simply cave in to doctrines that surround me.

Philosophy can be used against rhetoric and sophistry, teaching us about the common misuse of words. It has the power to uncover things that those in power do not want uncovered.

Often using rhetoric and propaganda, or other subtle techniques to divert attention, shifting the meaning of words to suit themselves, people seek to persuade others to their own views. Logic aims to cut through all of that.

Philosophy can show society the way towards a new and different level of thinking. It is what is desperately needed to escape indoctrination.

Philosophy provides you with the only freedom which you can truly be said to have - that between your ears.

I think it is quite obvious from these comments that the over riding benefits of teaching Philosophy can be expressed in two words: empowerment and freedom.

My interest in a possible link between the study of Philosophy and a positive influence on general reasoning and hence other subject areas began in 1990, when a preliminary pilot study showed some interesting results. At the start and again at the end of the year we conducted our own research study. The Year 7 students at our sister school, Brigidine Randwick, acted as a control group. Both groups had been given a standardised reasoning test known as the New Jersey Reasoning test, earlier in that year. The Randwick students, however, did not undertake any studies in the subject throughout the year. The test was then re-given to both groups at the end of the year.

The Brigidine St.Ives students showed significant gains in their scores on the test, well above the improvements obtained by the Randwick students. Indeed, it was found that the St.Ives students achieved a net 1% gain in outright reasoning ability per every 3 lessons taught.

The purpose of this study, however, was to look more specifically into the question of whether "Philosophy" students tended to perform any better or worse than their colleagues of similar ability in their HSC. For the purposes of this study, the criterion for HSC performance used was the TER score. IQ scores were used in determining general ability levels. These were available for 17 of the 23 "Philosophy" students, and for 50 out of the 70 "non-Philosophy students", as obtained from records kept by the assistant principal, as passed on from primary school when the tests were done.

The group that elected the course in Years 9-10 tended to be of above average ability, though a number of "bright" students did not elect it. The mean IQ for the "Philosophy" group was 116. The mean IQ for "non-Philosophy" group in the year group was 109. It would clearly be unfair to compare two groups of differing ability levels, so adjustments were made as follows.

Lower IQ students in the "non-Philosophy" group were eliminated from the study, starting with the lowest IQ scores, proceeding upwards. This continued until a mean IQ of 116 was reached for the "non-Philosophy" group. By this stage, 31 students out of an original available 50 remained. The resulting range of IQs that resulted from this adjustment was 107 - 135 for the "non-Philosophy" group, compared with 101 - 127 for the "Philosophy" group.

Next, the mean TER scores achieved in the HSC were compared. The mean TER achieved by "non-Philosophy" students was 75. The mean TER achieved by "Philosophy" students was 90.

Non philosophy students

Student	IQ	TER
1	117	78.40
2	118	72.10
3	121	76.40
4	114	62.40
5	113	79.80
6	113	39.90
7	112	94.75
8	125	88.55
9	118	83.65
10	122	86.45
11	110	52.00
12	111	59.75
13	116	94.90
14	109	58.10
15	112	68.20
16	113	70.45
17	121	94.70
18	111	90.35
19.	111	95.40
20.	107	84.25
21	121	82.70
22	114	15.00
23	116	44.30
24	122	87.60
25	114	95.80
26	113	95.00
27	122	55.80
28	109	63.50
29	135	84.80
30	113	84.70
31	118	90.90

Philosophy students

Student	IQ	TER
1	122	96.35
2	122	90.30
3	114	96.75
4	118	87.10
5	118	86.80
6	127	92.75
7	114	86.85
8	114	89.05
9	101	96.30
10	113	94.45
11	116	98.05
12	121	74.50
13	121	85.65
14	113	85.80
15	109	85.55
16	123	98.65
17	113	83.05

	N	Mean IQ	IQ Range	TER range	Mean TER
Non-P students	31	116	107-135	15.00-95.80	75
Phil. students	17	116	101-127	74.50-98.65	90

Assuming that a 15% differential in TER score is to be deemed to be significant, there are a number of ways of dealing with this result - ranging from the conclusion that it is pure coincidence and shows nothing at all, to a claim that the study of Philosophy/Logic in the junior school appears to have had some kind of lasting influence upon the students' thinking ability that has then spread across the entire range of their studies.

Another interesting phenomenon to note concerns the range of TER scores achieved. Interestingly, 12 of the 31 students in the non-Philosophy group achieved TER scores below the minimum achieved by any of the Philosophy students. One may also note a that the lowest TER achieved by a Philosophy student was 74.05, but that the second lowest was 83.05; a result which would have placed this student in 16th position within the non-Philosophy group. What is notable about the Philosophy students' results, in other words, is the relative absence of "poor" results.

Those doubtful about the general phenomenon of "transfer of learning" or the benefits of Philosophy will probably be inclined toward the former conclusion. Advocates of Philosophy in schools, on the other hand, may take this as no surprise, and as merely quantifying the self-evident truth that education in thinking skills offers students a range of benefits in their education, which include better overall academic results. And anything in between.

Another possible explanation would dwell on the fact that these results, interesting as they be, only prove that there **may** be a strong correlation between TER score and studying Philosophy. To see the relationship as necessarily causal, however, is of course a far riskier hypothesis. Perhaps a third variable is at work, which correlates with both TER achievement levels and the disposition to elect to study a subject such as Philosophy in the first place. For example, the character traits or personality dispositions which lie behind a student selecting Philosophy may be the same sorts of character traits or personality dispositions which lie behind high TER achievement. At this stage, this is of course as speculative as any other hypothesis. I open up this preliminary pilot research, however, to follow up studies and continued inquiry.

The Cape Grim and Emu Bay Incidents: an historical community of inquiry

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Introduction

There has recently been much discussion in Philosophy for Children circles in Australia as to whether it is better to try to introduce Philosophy for Children as a separate subject in the curriculum, to try to infuse it into other subjects (or Key Learning Areas, as they are now known) or to attempt a combination of the two. I don't wish to argue the pros and cons of any of these courses of action in this article, though my personal preference is for the latter. Rather, I want to present another example of what infusion into a learning area might look like (in a previous article - Sprod, 1996 - I did this for the Science KLA). In doing so, I also hope to disseminate some materials which teachers might like to try themselves.

One of the eight Key Learning Areas presented in the National Statements and Profiles is Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE - but known under different names in some States). SOSE subsumes a number of the traditional arts disciplines, including History. As is common throughout the world, the National Statements and Profiles call not just for the learning of facts, but also for the development of an understanding of the nature of each discipline. Additionally, the SOSE National Statement (AEC, 1994, p. 5) explicitly states that values are important in SOSE in three ways: as an object of study, as an influence on what is selected for study and as a result of study. Three clusters of shared values are identified in the document: democratic process, social justice, and ecological sustainability.

However, the treatment of values in the Statement is in some respects worrying. Indeed, it seems that the Statement assumes that children are to be taught these values, which are taken as being largely unproblematic: they are described as shared values, though one would have to question whether all Australians hold values such as "concern for the welfare... of all people... and commitment to redressing disadvantage", given the recent election and speeches of, and reactions to, Pauline Hansen. What the statement means (and I agree) is that such values *ought* to be shared, but even that sentiment is much contested, as the debate on 'political correctness' shows.

There is some ambivalence in the Statement. Take this paragraph:

> There are various legitimate and keenly contested views about how these values should be translated into action, and debates about the meaning of democratic process, social justice, ecological sustainability and about appropriate action are central to this learning area. (p 6)

The first part of the sentence assumes the values listed are, as Winnie-the-Pooh would say, Good Things and that all that needs to be decided is how to implement them. The second half is less clear cut in that it recognises that, even if there is widespread agreement that, say, environmental sustainability is a Good Thing, it is not at all clear that everyone who says so is talking about the same thing. The ecological sustainability of North Forest Products bears scant resemblance to that of the Wilderness Society. I would argue that unless children are exposed

to the substantive arguments both for and against such values, including particular interpretations of them, and are assisted by teachers to think these through in a rigorous way, then the teaching of these values in schools is both open to the charge of indoctrination (or political correctness) and is likely to be less effective in producing reflective changes in values that are not well supported by good reasons.

What follows is a plan for a lesson (or several lessons) based on a couple of related primary source documents from Tasmanian history. The plan is designed to address the exploring of both the philosophical underpinnings of the historical endeavour, and a series of moral values. As is well known to practitioners of Philosophy for Children, such an approach also claims to improve children's thinking and to strengthen many of the values listed listed in the SOSE Statement, such as "respect for different choices, viewpoints and ways of living... and equitable participation in decision making".

Background

The two incidents, to which the primary source documents reproduced below refer, took place in the far North-West of Tasmania in 1828 and 1829. The details given here are drawn from fuller accounts in Ryan (1981) and Lennox (1990). The white men involved were employees of the Van Diemen's Land Company, which held a vast lease in the area and had started moving in flocks of sheep and the shepherds to look after them. The Aborigines were from the local Pennemukeer tribe, and had had relatively little contact with whites at the time. The Black War had yet to start (1830) and the official policy of Van Diemen's Land Governor George Arthur was peaceful co-existence (though this was far from the reality, particularly in the south east).

In December 1827, some VDL Co. shepherds tried to entice some Pennemukeer women into their huts. When the men of the tribe objected, a skirmish broke out: one Pennemukeer man was killed and a shepherd wounded. On 31 December, apparently in retaliation, the Pennemukeer people drove a mob of sheep off a cliff - 118 were killed. Six weeks later, the Cape Grim incident, involving four VDL Co. shepherds, occurred. Although the initial reports of the incident forwarded to Hobart reported six Pennemukeer (including one woman) killed, it subsequently became apparent that the number was more like 30, and that the bodies had been thrown off the same cliff as the sheep had been driven off. The writer of the account, Edward Curr, was the Chief Agent of the Van Diemen's Land Company in the North West, as well as being the official magistrate.

The second account refers to an event at Emu Bay (now Burnie) in 1829 in which a Pennemukeer woman was killed. The writer, Alexander Goldie, was the Stock Manager for the Van Diemen's Land Company. In this incident, he was mounted and with 4 other company employees. One was a 17 year old convict, another a man who had been wounded by a spear through his thigh in a previous skirmish. The other two men apparently took little part in the incident. Goldie was writing to Arthur after having received a letter (dated 30 September 1829) from magistrate Curr (also his direct superior in the VDL Co.) which included the phrase "the killing of this woman amounts to murder in a *moral* sense." Curr had already written to Arthur (30 September 1829) informing him of the death, but saying that it was difficult to investigate it. That letter also included another account of the incident by Goldie, similar to this one and cited by Lennox (1990).

Source Documents

The Cape Grim incident (approximately 10 February 1828).

This was the manner in which the story was first related to me: nothing was said about the natives being a party of people who were returning from the islands with birds and fish, nor do I now believe that was the case but I think it probable they were going there. But suppose that were the real fact and that the natives were only going to or returning from the islands with birds and fish, how was I to establish the fact? Who was there to prove it except the parties implicated? What would be the consequence of the very first step I should take to bring them to justice. It would be this, that they would at once make out the case to be one of necessity on their parts, and to shew this it would not be necessary to shew that the natives actually first fell upon them but that they were proceeding in such a manner as gave them just cause to apprehend that was their object, a principle which has been fully recognised in Government orders on the subject and indeed of which common sense points out the necessity. Now have no doubt whatever that our men were fully impressed with the idea that the natives were there only for the purpose of surrounding and attacking them, and with that idea it would be madness for them to wait until the natives shewed their designs by making it too late for one man to escape. I considered these things at the time for I had thought of investigating the case, but I saw first that there was a strong presumption that our men were right, second if wrong it was impossible to convict them, and thirdly that the mere enquiry would induce every man to leave Cape Grim.

Edward Curr to the Directors of the Van Diemen's Land Company
Vol.5/1 Despatch No. 11, 28 Feb. 1828 Cited in Lennox (1990, 171)

The Emu Bay incident (21 August 1829).

On getting within 200 yards or less we were perceived by them, when they instantly took into the bush, which was very scrubby. I then struck my horse into a gallop desiring the men to keep on the Beach while others run into the scrub. Just as I was seizing one that I had galloped after a gun was fired, and on my coming up with her I heard a scream when I instantly called out not to hurt her, but before I got to the Beach she was dead and there was a little girl standing alongside of the men. On enquiry I found the man who carried the gun, seeing the woman (but not knowing whether a man or woman at the time) entering the scrub he fired and wounded her very much about the lower part of the body, and not being quite dead, although she could not have had long, one of the men hit her on the neck with an axe and cut the jugular vein, when she instantly died and was as I formerly said, completely dead before I got on the Beach.

Alexander Goldie, in a letter to Governor Arthur, 5 October 1829
Cited in Lennox (1990, p 185)

Discussion Guide

These two documents can be used to open up a large number of important ideas in two areas. Firstly, the interpretation of such documents raises a number of key ideas that underpin the nature of historical facts, knowledge and research (Leading Ideas 1 and 2). Secondly, there are a number of questions about how we are to judge the actions of people in the past (Leading Ideas 3, 4 and 5). Of course, in order to judge people from the past, we need also to be clear about the values and standards that we use in judging even now (Leading Idea 6). Some discussion guides for exploring these ideas with children are presented below.

Leading Idea 1: How can historical facts be established?
Establishing what actually happened in the past can be easy, or it can be very difficult. Having access to primary source documents doesn't necessarily solve the problem, as we see in the next leading idea. However, the problems can be nearly as acute, or somethimes even more acute, for the participants in the actual incidents themselves. Curr was not present at the event that he wrote about, so strictly speaking, his document is a secondary source with regard to the actual incident, even though it is a primary source for the wider VDL Co./Pennemukeer relationships of the time. So Curr faced some of the same problems about establishing the facts that we do. Not quite the same, though. He could interrogate white eye-witnesses; we cannot. We can refer to accounts gathered later from Pennemukeer who were present; he would have had great difficulty in getting these accounts.

Exercise: Fact or not?
After reading the two accounts, decide whether each of the following statements is a fact, definitely not a fact, or whether you are unsure as to whether it is a fact or not. Be sure to have reasons for your judgement.

	Fact	Not a fact	?
The Pennemukeer attacked the shepherds at Cape Grim			
The Pennemukeer were intending to attack the shepherds at Cape Grim			
The Pennemukeer were intending to gather fish and birds from the Islands at Cape Grim			
The shepherds believed that the Pennemukeer were intending to attack them at Cape Grim			
The shepherds attacked the Pennemukeer at Cape Grim			
Curr believed that the shepherds thought the Pennemukeer were intending to attack them at Cape Grim			
Every man would leave Cape Grim if Curr tried to find out what happened			

Discussion Plan
1. Why does Curr ask "How was I to establish the fact?" about what the 'natives' were doing?
2. What were his difficulties in establishing this fact?
3. How might Curr have gone about establishing the fact of the matter?
4. Can *we* establish what the Pennemukeer were doing?
5. How might we go about it?
6. What are the similarities between finding out what happened a couple of days ago and finding out what happened a hundred and seventy years ago? What are the differences?

Leading Idea 2: Accounts - truth, self interest and prior beliefs
Clearly, one of the problems with primary sources is that we don't know if the writer is telling the truth. They might not be, and there

are several reasons why this might happen. They might lie to protect themselves, particularly if the incident is one in which they might be accused of wrong-doing, or of neglecting their duty. These circumstances potentially arise in both the accounts here. However, they might be intending to tell the truth, yet not do so. It is becoming quite well known that independent eye-witnesses to the same event can report it quite differently. People do not always remember or perceive the same happenings in the same way. Sometimes, this may be because of their prior beliefs and consequent expectations. For example, a shepherd who believed the 'natives' were blood-thirsty savages might interpret their actions differently from one who thought of them as peaceable. We must remember that one of the men at Emu Bay had previously been wounded in a fight with the Pennemukeer. This problem applies to you as historian as well: your attitude to the people involved in telling the stories might well influence your interpretation of what they say.

1. Goldie, in the second account, says he called out not to hurt the woman. Do you believe him? Why, or why not?
2. Goldie says the woman's throat was cut. Do you believe him? Why, or why not?
3. In Goldie's account, the man carrying the gun said he didn't know whether the person entering the scrub was a man or a woman. Do you believe him? Why, or why not?
4. By his account, Curr was apparently told that the 'natives' had looked like they were going to attack. Do you think this was true? Why, or why not?
5. In asking how he could establish the facts, Curr asks "Who was there to prove it except the parties implicated?". Why is this a problem?
6. Carr has "no doubt whatever" that the VDL men did believe they were about to be attacked. Why do you think he has no doubt?
6. Is self interest the only reason why an eye witness account might be inaccurate?
7. How can we separate out truth from self interest in analysing eye witness accounts?
8. What is the role of your own sympathy or lack of sympathy (e.g. for the Pennemukeer, for the VDL Co. men) in your judgement about whether these accounts should be believed or not?

Leading Idea 3: Reasons and rationalizations

When people are trying to make a case, they commonly give reasons for their assertions. However, just because reasons are given doesn't mean that the case is more solid: reasons can be good or bad. Even a reason that seems good to the person giving it may look much less convincing to others. Such reasons may be better described as rationalizations - reasons that are thought up purely to bolster an argument or decision which is probably questionable.

In the Cape Grim account, Curr gives three reasons for not investigating the incident further. He says that he thinks there was a strong presumption that VDL Co. men did think the Pennemukeer were intending to attack; that even if they hadn't thought this, it would have been impossible to convict them; and that looking into the matter further would have meant the men would leave Cape Grim.

If your children look more closely at these (and other) reasons advanced in the accounts, they may be able to draw some distinctions. Some of the reasons advanced seem better than others, and they can ex-

plore what makes them better or worse. Some of the reasons seem to be self-serving, even possibly thought up subsequent to the act, and may be called rationalizations rather than reasons: you can investigate the difference.

Another distinction that might be made is between moral reasons - reasons that appeal to some principle of what would be right or wrong to do - while others are prudential reasons - reasons which take account of the possibilities and practicalities without reference to morality. In the Curr examples above, it might be argued that the first reason is moral (a sincere belief that one is about to be attacked morally justifies attacking first), while the third is prudential (the company did not want its men to abandon the lease, irrespective of whether they were in the right or wrong). The second might be either, or a mixture. Note that, even if a reason is a moral reason, it can still be open to question as to whether it is morally right or not.

1. What were Curr's reasons for not carrying forward his investigation of the case?
2. What were the reasons of the "man who carried the gun" in the second account for shooting the woman?
3. What were the reasons for cutting her throat?
4. Which of these reasons were good reasons? Why?
5. Which of them were bad reasons? Why?
6. Were any of the reasons given not moral reasons? What sort of reason were they?
7. Should moral reasons take precedence over prudential reasons in all cases? If not, when shouldn't they?

Leading Idea 4: Common sense and historical context

Common sense is an interesting notion. Curr appeals to it in his assertion that to attack first in a situation where a threat is perceived is morally justified. Someone once asked what is so common about common sense, and we might also ask what is sensible about it. Many people seem to use 'common sense' to mean that anyone who thinks clearly about the question will come up with the common sense answer - that such an answer is in some way obvious. Common sense is then grounded in human nature and rational thought.

Another interpretation, however, is that common sense refers to the stock of taken-for-granted assumptions that lie behind everyday living. On this interpretation, common sense is tied very much to culture and to the spirit of the times. Once such a belief is opened up to scrutiny, it may be found to be less sensible than everyone thinks, and so gradually become less common as well. For example, it might once have been common sense that an errant child needs to be beaten. You might even explore with the children the extent to which their common sense is the same as, or differs from, their parents'. How often do we hear parents admonishing children to use their common sense? Different groups within the same society probably do have different ideas about what common sense says.

1. Is Curr right in saying that the VDL Co. men would have been justified in attacking the 'natives' if they genuinely believed that they themselves were about to be attacked?
2. Is Curr right in saying that 'common sense' points out the necessity of doing so?
3. Is the common sense of 1828 the same as common sense now?

4. What is common sense?
5. Where does common sense come from?
6. Does everyone from the same age (or society) have the same common sense?

Leading Idea 5: Morally right then and now

One of the trickiest questions in moral theory is whether morals are objective or relative. Objective morals are universal (apply to everyone) and timeless (do not change over time). If morals are relative, then what is right in one place and time can be wrong in another.

Such a question is of considerable importance to historians. If morals are objective, then we have every right to condemn the actions of whole societies, let alone individuals. If morals are relative, then moral condemnation becomes more tricky. It depends then very much upon the way in which morals are relative. Some would argue that what is morally right in a particular place and time depends on the moral standards of that society. In this case, it is still possible to condemn the actions of individuals, but only against the morals of that society, and the historian needs to try to discover what those moral standards were. If, on the other hand, morals are relative to individuals, then "what is right for me is right" and condemnation seems impossible. Of course, morals might be relative not to societies, but to sub-groups of society, so that the morally right for nineteenth century clergymen is different from that for shepherds in the wilderness of the same era. And this is not to even broach at this stage the difference between the moral codes of the whites and the Pennemukeer - these accounts give no indication of the latter.

The question of applying moral blame and approval to the past is not an easy one to resolve, for even if we judge that a society was morally wrong in certain respect (such as its treatment of indigenous peoples), we must then decide whether we can hold people within that society who act in accordance with the 'morality of the day' as personally blameworthy. Should they have been able to see through the evil of their society's stand, or are they exonerated by being immersed in it?

1. Why do you think the men in the second account cut the jugular vein of the wounded woman?
2. Were they right to slit her throat, assuming it was true that she did not have long to live?
3. Why do you think that the man giving the second account is very open in admitting that her throat was cut?
4. If the men in the account thought it was morally right (or even morally obligatory) to slit the throat of a mortally wounded person, and we think that it is morally wrong, who is correct?
5. How much can we insist that people in the past are morally wrong if they do things we would consider wrong now?
6. If a particular act is wrong now, has it always been wrong?
7. If a particular act is not morally wrong now, does that mean it will never be wrong?
8. If one and the same act can be seen as morally wrong now, but morally correct in another place or time, does that mean that there are no absolute moral values?
9. Is it an argument in mitigation of a morally wrong act if it can be shown that the accused lives in a society that accepts that act?
10. Do we have the right to make moral judgements about people in the past?

Leading Idea 6: Putting out of misery - how should we treat humans compared to animals?

Implicit in the previous Leading Idea is the question of the morality of specific acts. One of the most troubling from the point of view of differing moral standards is the slitting of the wounded woman's throat. Another is the morality of attacking if you feel threatened, in the absence of an attack on you.

Nowadays, many people would see the deliberate killing of a person in pain without asking for their consent as immoral (some also argue that the matter of consent is irrelevant - such killing is immoral in any case). When it comes to animals, however, many of the same people would see 'putting them out of their misery' as morally acceptable. In the Emu Bay incident, the question arises as to whether the attitude of the VDL Co. men towards the Pennemukeer was important in their actions. Did they see them as persons like themselves, or as more like a form of lower animal? Nor have we addressed the circumstances in which these men found themselves. It must be remembered that they were a long way from any sort of decent medical help, even by the standards of the day, and may well have 'put out of their misery' their own colleagues in similar circumstances.

Such empirical questions cannot be answered from these accounts alone. Nevertheless, an exploration of the moral issues inherent in the subject matter that children study at school will, in my opinion, help them to confront moral issues and to see that there is little in their lives that does not have a moral aspect. If we are concerned to help children to grow up stronger morally, then it seems to me that we need to help them to reflectively form an ethical viewpoint through engaging jointly with moral issues in many contexts.

1. The woman in the second account was apparently very badly wounded. Was it right to put her out of her misery?
2. If a racehorse sustains a very serious injury in racing, it is often 'destroyed'. Is this morally right?
3. Given that a person is suffering and that there is no chance of either saving them, or even of alleviating the pain, is it right to kill them?
4. Is there a difference in the way we should treat animals from the way we should treat humans?
5. What sort of differences between beings (e.g. different race, different species) are morally relevant? Why?
6. What makes a being worthy of moral consideration?
7. Would it be right to put someone out of their misery if they ask you to - does consent make a difference?

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Could my eyes tell me lies?

(Peter and Kathleen Davson-Galle)

If I tried to read a sign,
That's written in some other time,
Or place, that uses language queer
That to my language is not near,
I could not tell just what is said,
Or what is meant inside their head.
Of course I know what my words mean
But is your meaning what it seems?
Now were I you and you were me
Then we would have a guarantee
We had a language, which we
Both understood the same, you see.
We're not; yet seem to understand
Each other, on the other hand
How could I tell your words are not
A foreign tongue (like Hottentot)?
So, do you mean the same as me
When you say: 'a pretty tree!'?
How could I tell what's in your head
And what you meant by what you said?
It may be words that are quite near
And yet the meaning be quite queer.
And do you even see like me
Mightn't we both see that tree
Yet see it somehow differently?
Indeed, how do I know (or you)
If what we "see" is really true?
What if the world "talks" to my eyes
In foreign words, or "tell me lies"?
How could we tell if what we see
Is how the world doth really be?

Meta-musings

The above grew out of a conversation which my eight year old daughter, Kathleen, and I were having about how one had knowledge of the external world (a common theme in the P4C literature). 'Via the senses' was, in effect, her answer to the question. This prompted me to ask whether she thought the senses might ever mislead and, if so, how that could be. I expected a discussion of illusions ("bent" sticks in water and whatnot) to ensue but what actually occurred was governed by a more interesting remark, a reply more deeply challenging of our common sense realism about perception. Kathleen observed first that if someone spoke to us in a language that was not our own then we would likely misunderstand what they were trying to say. She then went on to say that maybe it is the same with the world, mightn't the world "speak to" us in a "language" which we didn't understand and thus we might misunderstand what it was "telling" us about what it was like? Neat parallel, I thought, hence us playing around and generating the above piece of joint authored verse.

Apart from the ideas generated by conjuring with the idea of nature having a "language", there are some other philosophical issues which easily emerge from the verse; I will put them as questions.

Is knowing what someone else is saying a matter of knowing what is in their head? If so, how could we ever know what anyone meant? Is it only foreign languages that raise the worry of what a speaker means? What counts as you and me meaning the same by our words? Could I be you and you be me or is that incoherent somehow? If incoherent, why? What makes you, you anyway? (A theme I have touched upon before). Consider the exclamation: 'a pretty tree!'. Do such value-judgemental claims (aesthetic in this case but the same query arises for moral value judgements) raise particular communicative problems? It is not, after all, as if speakers seem to be easily thought of as attributing some commonly accessible property (of "prettiness") to the tree, and, without some such commonly understood reference, what would "agreed meaning" amount to? (Or <u>is</u> there some objectivity to values? - another common P4C theme). Moving back to Kathleen's "language of nature" suggestion, it is a common view in the philosophy of perception that, to use a phrase of Wittgenstein's, we "see-as" rather than just simply see. That is, our perceptions have organisation and interpretation "built-in". This raises a few matters. Could different observers, with the different frameworks of belief and conceptual schemes that they bring to the task of interpretation of their "raw" sensory input, ever see (or "see-as') the world the same? And what of the world itself, does it have a determinate way that it is, does it "exist-as" in some one objectively real way or is its way of being somehow a function of how we do our organising? (One does, after all, sometimes talk this way; e.g.: 'for the aboriginals, the mountain was formed by the great serpent heaving its back' - though perhaps, like 'the social construction of reality', this is just a misleading turn of phrase that is not meant literally). And if there is a real, objectively existing, structure to how the world is organised, then are we correctly equipped to receive and accurately "read" whatever it "tells" us about itself via the senses? How could we know whether what reality is really like is how we conceive of it as being? (A quick walk through humanity's intellectual history is sobering; as the quip has it, the history of science is the history of false theories). Finally, note Kathleen's "eyes tell me lies" turn of phrase; could your eyes really tell you <u>lies</u>? What is a lie as opposed to a mere falsehood and as opposed to being merely misunderstood? Are your eyes <u>telling</u> you anything - true or false? Or does it have to be some sort of conscious mind to do telling? What of a dog? Could a dog <u>tell</u> you something? Could it lie?

Undoubtedly more could emerge; one of the things that always strikes me about the Lipman materials (and other stories-based materials) is that there is always more that emerges in discussion than was ever put in by the author.

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V P C A

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