Inquiry is no Mere Conversation
(or Discussion or Dialogue)

FACILITATION OF INQUIRY IS HARD WORK!

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There is a long standing controversy in education as to whether education ought to be teacher- or student-centered. Interestingly, this controversy parallels the parent- vs. child-centered theoretical swings with regard to good parenting. One obvious difference between the two poles is the mode of communication. "Authoritarian" teaching and parenting strategies focus on the need of those who have much to learn to "do as they are told," i.e., the authority talks, the child listens. "Non-authoritarian" strategies are anchored in the assumption that youngsters ought to be encouraged to develop their natural interests and talents and hence that it is important to allow the children to do the talking and that adults listen. Both strategies seemed flawed due to the absence of the inherent wisdom of its opposing view.

This chasm can be overcome. *The Community of Inquiry,* a pedagogical method used in *Philosophy for Children,* demands a method of communication which is able to bridge this gap. *A Community of Inquiry is* neither teacher-centered and controlled nor student-centered and controlled, but centered on and controlled by the demands of truth. Truth is absolutely essential to this method; it is only because of progress toward truth that participants are ultimately convinced of the fruitfulness of the process. Truth, however, is a hard taskmaster; it places severe restrictions on participants and puts exacting demands on the facilitator. These inherent restrictions and demands are too often underplayed, overlooked and sometimes seemingly overtly denied[1] by those who, quite correctly emphasize that ultimately this method depends on maintenance and enhancement of student autonomy. This underrating of the role of the facilitator has led to a severe undervaluing of this otherwise brilliant pedagogical method, but worse, it has left novice teacher/ facilitators ill prepared to utilize this method successfully.

PROGRESS TOWARD TRUTH IS IMPORTANT

There is perhaps an obvious, though relatively superficial sense in which progress toward truth is vital to the practice of inquiry and that is that if such progress is not made, the term *"Community of Inquiry"* becomes a misnomer. That is, properly speaking, in order to be said to "inquire," one must not only inquire about *something* (more will be said about the importance of maintaining focus later on), one must also make some progress-at least if such progress is possible. If you are inquiring after my health but do not pause long enough to find the answer, you can not be described as genuinely inquiring. And certainly if one is said to *successfully* inquire, surely one must have a substantially clearer picture of the topic under investigation at the end of the process of inquiry than at the beginning. If a *Community of Inquiry is* to be worthy of its name, in other words, it must make some progress toward "the truth."

Aside from the problem conceptual inaccuracy, there are two more substantial reasons why it is important for a *Community of Inquiry* to make progress toward truth. The first is that such progress is a vital reinforcer of the practice. That is, if the discussion never goes anywhere, if it remains mere conversation that touches first on one topic and then another, the worthiness of the process will never be reinforced by the worthiness of the product. Learning a sport provides a helpful analogy. Even if horseback riding lessons were both fun and good for one's physical health, if they never produced a product, i.e., a better horseperson, one's enthusiasm and confidence in the process would inevitably pale, as no doubt it would for one's instructor. If we want students to be sufficiently enamored with the practice that they will utilize with confidence and enthusiasm the skills and dispositions acquired within the framework of the *Community of Inquiry* outside of the classroom and if we want teachers to take this pedagogy sufficiently seriously that they willing make room for it along side such clearly important basics as reading, writing and arithmetic, then both students and teachers must be convinced that this practice is

productive. Like reading, writing and arithmetic, thinking in and of itself or even enhanced through community inquiry is not an end in itself; its value lies in the fact that it leads toward truth. If we want the practice to be valued, we must be sure of its associated with its intended product.

The second reason that progress toward truth is vital to a *Community of Inquiry is* that such progress is necessary if participants are to develop those cluster of skills and habits of mind that may be uniquely but are at least typically fostered with chronic exposure to a Community of Inquiry (See appendix I). Details of this important point are not possible within the confines of the present conditions, however a brief explanation of some of the items in column 2 of the chart (particularly as compared to column I in which progress toward truth is not presumed and which is too often the product of poorly trained novice facilitators) should serve to illustrate this point.

If progress toward truth is not a relatively predictable product of inquiry, one can not expect the participants of a *Community of Inquiry* to develop an inquiring mind (as such a habit is not seen as fruitful); the capacity to see the complex in the relatively mundane (as there is not sufficient focus nor progress to produce a more comprehensive/complex picture of the issue under inquiry); a deep respect for others as potential contributors to a highly valuable product, i.e., truth (as truth is not the product); a ready ability for self-correction in light of more plausible truth claims (as there is no progress toward truth); a confident understanding that pursuit of truth requires both patience and perseverance (which quite obviously can only be developed through frequent pursuits of truth); an appreciation of the difficulty of good reasoning (i.e., as the difficult task of progress toward truth is not experienced); that unique sense of integrity which balances empathetic listening with courageous support for one's own point of view (which is ultimately depends upon a deep appreciation of the primary importance of truth).

In his book, *Philosophy goes to School,* Matthew Lipman writes of the importance of progress toward truth, though his writing is so rich with insight, particularly with regard to the processes and procedures of inquiry that I fear that his comments with regard to the importance of truth as its regulative ideal are too often overlooked. Mat writes:

> *When a class moves to become a community of inquiry, it accepts the discipline of logic and scientific method; it practices listening to one another, learning from one another, building on one another's ideas, respecting one another's points of view, and yet demanding that claims be warranted by evidence and reasons. Once the class as a whole operates upon these procedures, it becomes possible for each member to internalize the practices and procedures of the others, so that one's own thought becomes self-correcting and moves in the direction of impartiality and objectivity. At the same time, each member internalizes the attitude of the group toward its own project and procedures, and this translates into care for the tools and instruments of inquiry as* **well as respect for the ideals (e.g., truth) that serve both to motivate the process and regulate it.**[2] (bold italics added)*

THE PROBLEM: OVERESTIMATION THE ROLE OF "FACILITATION"

Novices to the practice of co-operative inquiry often get the impression that success depends largely on "facilitation." This is so for a number of reasons.

1. Both the literature and teacher guides stress the danger of "over-intervention."

Novice facilitators are admonished that if this is to be a genuine inquiry, participants must be able to "follow the inquiry wherever it leads"[3,4] that "rather than force the children to stay on task... (the) conversation (should be) flexible enough to follow the students' interests..."[5] and so on. There is a sense in which all these messages are important, particularly when attempting to infuse the practice of community inquiry in a hitherto relatively authoritarian educational atmosphere. However, there is also a sense in which such comments can be highly misleading. Such admonitions communicate the impression - frequently unintentionally - that letting go of the reins of power *per se is* sufficient to create an environment in which inquiry will flourish.

2. Both the literature and teacher guide stress the natural philosophical prowess of students.

Interestingly enough, even the very name "Philosophy for Children" may suggest to many that children are natural philosophers and that, given an unfettered environment in which quality of thought alone is monitored, they will engage in genuine philosophical inquiry. As well, in their attempt to bolster the confidence of novice facilitators with regard to their capacity to competently handle philosophy in the classroom, and perhaps also in their effort to reinforce respect for students which is an important prerequisite for a successful community, teacher-guides sometimes romanticize the "natural" philosophical capacity of youngsters. This belief in childrens' unaided natural philosophical propensity is further fostered by such comments as those made by Lipman in his *Philosophy in the Classroom* that "under suitable circumstances, a room full of children will pounce on an idea in the way a litter of kittens will pounce on a ball of yarn thrown in their direction. The children will kick the idea around until it has been developed, elaborated upon, ..."[6] (although, it must be stressed that Mat also emphasizes the importance of teacher intervention[7]).

3. Modeling.

Over and over again, advocates of *Philosophy for Children* in particular and the *Community of Inquiry* in general stress the Deweyian belief that teachers-in -training must learn by the same method they intend to utilize in the classroom.[8] There is as much merit in this philosophy as there is in the seeming contradiction of didactically teaching others that didactic teaching does not work. "Modeling," therefore, has become the method par excellence by which this highly teacher-sensitive practice is supposed to be transmitted. The problem with relying solely on "modeling," however, is that, as is the case with much expertise, the techniques used by outstanding facilitators are often invisible[9]; to an on-looker, the inquiry process may very well appear as if it is proceeding under its own steam with the facilitator doing little else than being a traffic cop. Because modeling, masks the intricacies and in particular the philosophical nuances employed by experts for ensuring a successful community, this method of "transmission" reinforces the belief that "facilitation" of group discussion alone (albeit up-graded by rigorous attention to the quality of thought), will produce a self-correcting dynamic forward-moving *Community of Inquiry.*

4. Short-Cuts.

Their enthusiasm for this outstanding program and its innumerable and often immeasurable as well as desperately needed benefits combined with their pragmatic acceptance of the fact that there is very little educational funding available for novel programs, even less time, and still less risk-taking propensity on the part of traditional educators, along side a voracious hunger for "quick-fix" solutions to mounting educational ills, have prompted advocates of *Philosophy for Children* in particular and the practice of *Community Inquiry* in general to promote short-cut "short" teacher-training programs (e.g., the National Diffusion network which relies on just a few days of modeling). As finely tuned philosophical intuitions can not be nurtured in a short period of time[10] but group facilitation can, these short-lived modeling sessions further reinforces the propensity for teachers in training to focus on acquiring the skills of facilitation alone.[11]

5. "Canned" Questions and Comments

Last but I fear not least, and despite their warnings with regard to the danger of their employment[12], the lists of Rogerian type questions and comments that advocates offer as an aid to facilitating group discussion, further reinforces the belief that if a facilitator can keep the conversation going with such question as "What reasons do you have for saying that?" or "Could you clarify that remark?"[13] or such comment as "You appear to be saying that..." or "Well then, from your point of view ...,"[14] the result will be a successful *Community of Inquiry.* Without resort to an independent measure of success, namely progress toward truth, many a novice "facilitator" will come to believe that if the conversation has occupied the allotted time, and if most if not all of the students have participated, the result is what *Philosophy for Children* and a *Community of Inquiry* is all about.

FACILITATION ALONE RARELY PROGRESSES TOWARD "TRUTH"

Facilitation alone, when the participants are all or mostly seasoned philosophers, may be sufficient to ensure progress toward truth.[15] Philosophers, after all, have been professionally trained to track truth. Non-philosophers, however, have no such training and there is little reason to believe that the mere kiss of facilitation will bring them up to scratch. If that were the case, if philosophical propensity needed only grouped discussion in order to flourish, then presumably what we are attempting to import into the classroom through *Philosophy for Children* would surely occur relatively frequently outside the classroom: in the playground, for instance, or in the teacher's lounge; indeed in much of our everyday interaction. And again, if it were true that the capacity for philosophical thought were latently widespread waiting only the forum of group discussion in order to become manifest, then surely those who would be most proficient in teaching philosophy to children as well as those who would be most proficient in teaching teachers how to teach philosophy to children would not be those who have a Ph.D. in philosophy- a necessary qualification according to experts[16] - but rather those with a degree that focused on communication skills. Indeed, if philosophical propensity, intuition and insight were so easily acquired, one wonders why acquiring a philosophical Ph.D. is such a long, arduous process.

Facilitation alone is not sufficient. Simply letting a discussion follow "its course" will not create a *Community of Inquiry* for the very reason that without explicit intervention by the facilitator, the discussion will rarely follow "a course." And without "philosophical direction," the discussion will almost certainly not follow "a philosophical course." It may very well be true **that** the first step in successfully inducting traditional teachers into the practice of *Philosophy for Children is* to convince them to "let go of the traditional reins of authority." The next step, however, must be to help them create a new set of reins; ones that will help them (as opposed to leaving it up to the participants) to pounce on a philosophical topic when one emerges; that will help them maintain direction despite frequent digressions (as opposed to letting what ever will be, be) and give them the tenacity and insight to push toward truth - the ultimate goal of the endeavour. Facilitation is hard, sometimes grueling work. More than anything else, the fact that this practice is often exhausting testifies to the truth of the claim that this is no mere letting go. On the other hand the fact that the practice is almost always exhilarating if done successfully testifies to the reinforcing power of its goal: a step closer to truth.

A SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM: DEPTH, PHILOSOPHICAL SENSITIVITY AND TENACITY MUST BE ADDED TO FACILITATION

Aside from learning the "art" of facilitation, if teachers are going to become experts in leading a *Community of Inquiry,* they will need (l) specific training in pushing for depth in the dialogue, (2) assistance in becoming attuned to topics that are philosophically fruitful and (3) encouragement to maintain focus despite the frequent digressions that inevitably result from the format (e.g., students who, in waiting for their turn to talk, revert back to the points that may now be irrelevant).

1. Pushing for Depth

Aside from eliciting comments, clarification and justification, the facilitator must be encouraged to push for more in-depth thinking on the part of her/his students. That is, the facilitator needs to be persistent in ensuring that students not only justify their answers but justify their justifications, i.e., be prepared to articulate, or at least try to articulate, the thought that went into their comments. The facilitator's questions that "push" for depth are similar to, though more extensive and "deeper" than, those that "merely" promote "good thinking." One way of thinking of it is as the *second* why. Thus for example, some answers in a recent classroom discussion to the question of why people say negative things about other people's things (which related to the incident in which Gus said to Kio that her work was better) were: Gus is jealous; Gus is a show off; this was a "getting back" situation; Gus wants to be the best; Gus wants to be cool; Gus wants to push Kio around, perhaps because she is younger or perhaps because she is older, and so on. These are all plausible answers to the first level of "why." However, a "why" or a series of "whys" to *these* answers would have helped the discussion to move to a deeper level. Why do we say negative things when we are showing oft? Why do we need to show off? Does it work? Does

saying negative things make us feel better? If so, why does it make us feel better? If it doesn't make us feel better, why do we do it? One student said, for example, that saying negative things doesn't work anyway - that just because Gus says that hers is better doesn't mean that Kio will believe that hers is better. This comment seems obvious enough to stand on its own; on the other hand, it leads to the perplexing question of why we do these things when presumably we know perfectly well that they won't work. A cluster of follow-up questions may have led to a genuinely penetrating philosophical discussion. If Gus didn't believe that she was going to convince Kio that hers was better, why did she say that remark? What was she trying to do? Do you think she succeeded in whatever she was trying to do? Do you think it made her feel better? Might there have been an alternative course of action that would have been more successful in making her feel better - if she were jealous, or trying to show off, etc.?

If students believe that they can say whatever comes into their heads without having to show how this is important or relevant with respect to the topic under discussion,[17] without having to engage in conceptual analysis, without having to back their claims with reasons, without having to worry about being consistent,[18] they may tend to say whatever comes into their heads, and whatever comes into their heads may very well be boring and not worth listening to! If students are going to learn that it is worthwhile listening to one another, the facilitator must ensure that what students have to say is worth hearing. **The fact that everyone has something to say that is worth listening to,[19] does not mean that everything that anyone says is worth hearing.** Indeed, quite the contrary. If not much thought is put into what is said, there seems little point in wasting one's time and effort in attempting to analyze content, i.e., seriously listening.[20] And the fact that a good deal of what people have to say (including their internal dialogue) is said without much "thought," is the very reason why programs such as P4C are so important, i.e., such programs, hopefully, will induce students to think. This, then, is the job of the facilitator: to ensure that s/he is merciless in insisting that students are prepared to lay bare the thought process behind what they say. When they become aware that this is the environment into which they speak, they will be more apt to do some thinking before they open their mouths, i.e., what will come out of their mouths will be worth listening to.

Having said that the facilitator must be ruthless in ensuring quality of thought, relevance, consistently (or the awareness of the lack thereof) with the thoughts of others as well as the topic under discussion, the facilitator must also create an environment which is "relatively" risk-free. If students believe that they will be "crucified" or ridiculed or embarrassed if they are not able to do what in fact they are not yet able to do, i.e., think well, they may be reluctant to speak up in class at all and then the whole process will come to a grinding halt. So the facilitator needs to be merciful with regard to the quality of what is actually said while being merciless with regard to the attempt for depth. This is serious business; all earnest attempts to come to grips with the issue - regardless of their seeming audacity - are welcome; mere input in order to join "the chatter" is not. The point of this exercise is not for students to find their silent voices; the point is to push for depth in reasoning. The easiest way for a facilitator to create an environment that elicits depth of thought is to "jump in there with them." This is a question to which the facilitator herself does not know the answer[21] (which is one reason why philosophical topics are particularly fruitful as a focus of a *Community of Inquiry*) but it is a question that can initiate a fascinating exploration which the facilitator is prepared to lead[22]. Since this exploration is important, it is critical that, as team leader, the facilitator get the best out of every team member severally and collectively.

2. A Philosophical Topic

Ronald Reed, writes in his article "On the Art and Craft of Dialogue,"[23]
What is essential then to the process of inquiry is what Alfred North Whitehead termed "scholarly ignorance.
"If the traditional classroom prizes the accumulation of information, the community of inquiry must prize its
own ignorance. The very recognition that there is something we do not know, that there is something
important to be gained the process, is what gives the community its existence.

This need for "scholarly ignorance," perhaps more than anything else justifies the inclusion of philosophy within an already overcrowded curriculum. In virtually every other subject, the teacher has information to impart or a point to get across. S/he is the authority. Even if s/he tries to utilise the *Community of Inquiry* method

within the confines of another subject, the reformulation of questions so that it has a philosophical bent may be necessary if the community is to generate the enthusiasm of genuine inquiry. Non-philosophical questions tend to have definitive answers that usually can not be decided through dialogue alone. Dialogue on these sorts of questions, i.e., non-philosophical ones, will result in a series of conjectures which may or may not be fruitful and, in any case, will usually require a follow up with empirical investigation or the acquisition of concrete knowledge if progress toward truth is to be attained. As well, use of the *Community of Inquiry* when focusing on non-philosophical issues must be done with extreme care as it may lead to resentment of the method rather than a piquing of interest. If the teacher already has the answer, why should the students waste time inquiring about something that the teacher already knows and who, with very little effort, could communicate?

A philosophical focus is unique in the ease with which an atmosphere of "scholarly ignorance" all around can be created and is thus, par excellence, a focus that is generative of genuine inquiry that can be enthusiastically and authentically modeled by the facilitator. Non-philosopher facilitators, therefore, must be specifically trained and aided, i.e., outside of and apart from the modeling arena, to distinguish questions which are philosophically fruitful from those which are not (see for example Focus Sheets in appendix II).[24] A question such as "why did he say `shut up'?" for instance, would be of little value as a focal point of inquiry if it remained on the empirical psychological level with conjectures such as "perhaps he was upset;" "perhaps he had a grudge," etc. These are questions to which we can not possibly know the answer unless we have access to the facts of the situation. The real fruit of such questions, rather, lie in their philosophical base namely in such musings as why we say unpleasant things to one another or what role the response "shut up" seems to play in North American interpersonal interaction, and so on. Since this is a question to which no one, including the teacher, knows the answer, but since this is a question to which in-depth dialogical inquiry will nonetheless bring genuine insight,[25] this is a question which will promote in-depth reasoning both severally and collectively.

3. Finding and Maintaining Direction

In and of itself, a complete change of topic is not an illegitimate move in an inquiry process. If the initial topic does not seem very fruitful and a far more interesting topic comes up, the community ought to feel free to follow this new lead. There is a danger, however, if this happens too frequently. As has already been stressed, participants of a *Community of Inquiry* must come to believe that, aside from being enjoyable in and of itself, the process is productive and that the result is a product of the process. This point can best be understood against the background of a larger philosophical picture. Through the process itself, youngsters will learn to listen to the points of view of others, to self-correct in light of countervailing evidence, to enjoy the liberating impact of trying out new thoughts, they will learn that it is important that opinions be justified, that reasons be offered for suggested courses of action and that not any reason is acceptable and so on. However, **the discussion has to go somewhere and where it goes must be in the direction of truth** .[26] However, in order for a *Community of Inquiry* to successfully produce a product, it will generally have to retain focus on a single philosophical issue that is either explicitly or implicitly contained in the original question.[27] This is the job of the facilitator.

The best way for non-philosophers to find and maintain focus on a fruitful topic is to have the discussion on a day following the reading of the novel and the picking of a question. That way, before any discussion begins, the facilitator has time to reflect on the philosophical puzzles imbedded in the question picked and hence can have a "Guiding Ideal" by which to monitor her own responses.[28] The facilitator ought nevertheless to keep in mind that "Guiding Ideals" are dangerous for two reasons. The most obvious one is that they may prompt the facilitator to "control" the direction of the discussion from the outset and hence steal the discussion from the participants. Constant maneuvers such as this may not only lead participants to believe that they are being manipulated by a hidden agenda but may also undermine the participants own belief that they themselves can, with some patience, track truth. This in turn will preclude the development of the sort of self-confidence that is essential for transfer outside of the classroom, i.e., for genuine philosophical reflection outside the P4C setting. The second danger of formulating a "Guiding Ideal" is that it may blind the facilitator to other philosophical puzzles embedded in the question and short-circuit an alternative perhaps more fruitful and relevant discussion. All of which is to say that facilitating a community of inquiry is a genuine art. If the facilitator can remember that progress toward truth is the goal but that it is a goal that can only be reached through the efforts of the

participants, she may be able to facilitate the tracking of truth by keeping in mind the former point while allowing the discussion considerable "slack" by keeping in mind the latter. I suppose the moral of the story is that the facilitator ought to feel a constant source of tension as a result of being continuously pulled between the two ideals of "truth" and "participant autonomy."

Having said that facilitators ought to have a range of topics in mind so as to be able to "see" a fruitful topic when it emerges, it needs to be emphasized that facilitator ought never either to have a lesson in mind nor seize an opportunity to create a lesson. This can be hard as so many opportunities to "teach" seemingly important lessons arise. However, the facilitator must be resolute in not giving in to this temptation. Given the topic, let us say, of why people make fun of other people, the facilitator may be tempted to enhance empathy and thereby decrease the incidents of this sort of behaviour by asking participants what they think people feel like when they are made fun of.z[9] What it feels like to be made fun of, however, is a different topic from why someone might want to make fun of some else and focusing on the former may hinder reflection on the latter. Reflection on the latter, however, may be necessary for genuine behavior modification. After being asked to focus on what it feels like to be made fun of, children will get the message loud and clear that such behaviour is wrong. Given that this is the case, and given that this is the message that a very important authority figure is trying to transmit, it would take a very self-confident child indeed to admit even to her/himself that he/she is ever guilty of such behavior. The result may be that the discussion reinforces a kind of simplistic self-deception: it is always someone else who engages in such behavior and the reason that others behave in such a despicable manner is because they are mean people. The reality, of course, is very different. Most if not all children engage in such behaviour at one time or another. However, if children are going to get control of this sort of behaviour, i.e., gain the capacity of self-restraint, they are going to have to recognize when they engage in such behavior and why they do, i.e., they are going to have to analyze in some detail why generally pretty decent people behave in unkind ways towards others. If they get the idea from the outset that the facilitator and/or the rest of the group think that only really mean kids engage in such behavior, it will be hard for them to honestly think about the topic let alone honestly discuss it.

When guiding-though not controlling-the direction of a philosophical discussion, it may be helpful to remember that while empathy is presumed to be an indirect payoff of participating in the community of inquiry, the direct payoff of philosophical discussion is understanding or philosophical insight. A facilitator's own interest in the perplexity of the question may be the best guide in philosophical discussions.

SUMMARY

If a community of inquiry is to be successful both in its main goal of moving toward truth and its side goals of enhancing good thinking and developing good character, it will require the firm guidance of an ever vigilant facilitator who maintains direction and forces depth with respect to the philosophical truth toward which the inquiry points. After a good deal of practice in facilitating discussion so as to maximize student autonomy, novice facilitators will need assistance in the delicate art of picking up the reins of direction once more; not in order to import truth which in any case is equally unknown to the facilitator as it is to the participants, but in order to ensure progress toward the goal which ultimately makes the endeavor worthwhile.

The novice facilitator must always keep in mind that her long term goal is to be much more than a facilitator. She must also be a model in her passion for truth; a dictator in her demands for excellence in reasoning; a philosophical sensitizer in demonstrating a capacity to focus on the philosophical fruitful; and a leader in ensuring that direction is maintained. We will do the novice no small favour by letting them know at the outset that "inquiry is not mere conversation" and that "facilitation of inquiry is hard work!"

NOTES

1.   See R. Reed's "Inventing a Classroom Conversation," in A.M. Sharp and R.F. Reed's *Studies in Philosophy for Children: Harry Stottlemeier's Discovery*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992, pp. 158-164.
2.   Matthew Lipman, *Philosophy Goes to School*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988, p.148.
3.   A.M. Sharp, "A Letter to a Novice Teacher: Teaching Harry Stottlemeir's Discovery," in A.M. Sharp and

R.F. Reed's *Studies in Philosophy for Children: Harry Stottlemeier's Discovery.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992, p. 168.

4   A.T Lardner and F.G. Moriyon, "Bringing Inquiry to the Schools: an Overall Framework for Teacher Guides." Unpublished document.

5.   R. Reed, *Op. Cit., p.* 163.

6.   M. Lipman, *Philosophy in the Classroom.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1980. p.104.

7.   Thus he says that "...it is the teacher who, at least in the classroom, can manipulate the environment in such a way as to enhance the possibility that the children will continually grow in philosophical awareness. It is the teacher who can elicit the themes in each of the chapters in the philosophical novels, who can point out themes the students in the classroom fail to identify, who can relate the themes to the children's experience when they seem to be having trouble doing so on their own, ... Further it is the teacher who, through questioning, can introduce alternative views with the aim of always enlarging the students horizons, never letting complacency take precedence. In this sense, the teacher is a gadfly, encouraging the students to take the initiative, building on what they manage to formulate, helping them question underlying assumptions of what they arrive at, and suggesting ways of arriving at more comprehensive answers." *Ibid., p.* 83.

8.   M. Lipman, *Philosophy goes to School,* Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988, p. 4.

9.   I am reminded of a comment by a riding teacher that communication between an expert rider and a horse are virtually invisible to the on-looker. This no doubt contributes to the common misconception that riding is simply a matter of sitting on a horse.

10.   Lipman specifically says that "In order to be successful, the teacher must not only know philosophy, but know how to introduce this knowledge at the right time in a questioning, wondering way that supports the children in their own struggle for understanding." *Philosophy in the Classroom, p.* 83.

11.   At the Vancouver Institute of Philosophy for Children, a minimum of 80 hours of teacher training and support is considered necessary for philosophical intuitions of non-philosopher novices to be sufficiently finely tuned to be able to consistently conduct optimal philosophical inquiry.

12.   "Children will quickly catch on to the fact that a teacher is using a prepared set of questions, and to canned questions they will soon begin to provide canned answers." *Ibid., p.* 125.

13.   *Ibid., p.* 112.

14.   *Ibid., p.* 114.

15.   As is evident in the superb Communities of Inquiry that emerges amongst professionally trained philosophers at IAPC workshops.

16.   Lardner and Moriyon, *Op. Cit.*

17.   Which shows how important it is for focus to be maintained on one specific topic (point no. 3).

18.   Again this reinforces the importance of maintaining a focus on one clear topic.

19.   And I believe this to be a fact.

20.   With the obvious exception that "seriously" listening may seduce another into "really" thinking about what she/he is saying.

21.   This assumption is a great "leveler" and automatically lowers the risk.

22.   Being "team leader" means that, in the name of the team's pursuit of truth, the leader wants to ensure that s/he gets the best from all the participants. That is why the leader doggedly searches for the thought behind the comment; not because s/he is picking on any individual. And in any case, since s/he will be "picking" on everyone, s/he will be perceived to be picking on no one.

23.   R. Reed, "The Art and Craft of Dialogue," in A.M. Sharp's and R.F. Reed's *Studies in Philosophy for Children.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992, p. 150.

24.   Suggesting that non-philosophers can, with sufficient preparation, be prepared to translate the questions offered by the students into philosophical themes at the time they are offered (as is done at IAPC and is suggested in many teacher-training manuals) is asking too much. As a matter of course, question picking and philosophical discussions should take place at different times so that teachers have an opportunity to reflect on the potential philosophical content of the question picked for discussion by the students. Routinely filling out "Focus Sheets" can be helpful (see appendix 11). A useful enterprise is also to have teachers bring questions offered by students to a teacher "Community of Inquiry" and have the group

suggest associated philosophical questions and discuss why they are fruitful (along side an on-going discussion of what distinguishes a philosophical from a non-philosophical discussion). Teachers should also be encouraged to seek help from one another should they be confronted with a question that they think lacks philosophical potential.

25. This may, interestingly, turn out to be a helpful partial definition of a "philosophical question."

26. Lipman similarly points out in *Philosophy in the Classroom,* that "if (students) find that the teacher will put up with aimless discussion, they will continue to ramble on pointlessly until they get bored." P. 92.

27. This is in direct contradiction to Ron Reed's claim that the Community of Inquiry must resemble the free flow of conversation rather than that of dialogue which requires that participants stay on task. Ron argues, in many ways convincingly, in favor of a conversation orientation as it is more sensitive to the interests of the students as well as the fact that it requires an active and continual involvement of the participants as opposed to the greater dependency that task-orientated dialogue requires. See R. Reed, "Inventing a Classroom Conversation," Op. Cit.

28. For example if the question is "why does Seth make fun of Elfie?" related philosophical puzzles to which a facilitator might be alert are: What is the difference between making fun of someone and just being mean? What is the difference between making fun of someone and having fun with someone? Why do we call making fun of someone "making fun"? If the intent is to make people laugh at someone, why would we want others to laugh at someone?

29. Asking what it feels like to be made fun of is not a philosophical question. Asking the difference between making fun of someone and having fun with someone is. The subtlety of this difference reinforces the need to help novice facilitators hone their philosophical intuitions.

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APPENDIX II

PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN "FOCUS SHEET" FOR TEACHERS

Teacher's Name:_____
Grade:_____

Date:_____

Source:

Question picked:

Possible associated philosophical questions: (To be filled in *before* discussion)

Actual focus of philosopical inquiry:

What we learned:

Follow-up:

What we learned from follow-up:

APPENDIX I

KINDS OF PEDAGOGICAL DISCOURSE	1 Facilitated Conversation	2 Community of Inquiry	3 C.I. Modelled Discussion (Issue Decided)	4 C.I. Modelled Discussion (Outcome Decided)	5 Debate Discussion	6 Didactic Teaching
A GROUP DYNAMIC	• facilitator models active listening; ensures that multiple viewpoints are aired and that opinions are supported	• facilitator models active listening, ensures that multiple viewpoints are aired, and that opinions are supported and tested for their adequacy • facilitator helps focus on one topic and assists in achieving "depth: — in tracking toward truth	same as CI except facilitator decides topic	teacher airs multiple viewpoints with the view to correcting flawed understanding	speakers advocate one point of view, each hoping to win the day	• teacher attempts to transmit knowledge through verbal explanation • books might be classed in this category
B SKILL ACQUIRED	• rhetoric and listening • genuine communication • the importance of reasons • the creative importance of listening to others	• rhetoric and listening • genuine communication • the importance and difficulty of good reasoning • the creative importance of listening to others • the importance of genuine cooperative inquiry	same as CI (unless the issue becomes polarized)	rhetoric & listening	rhetoric & listening to rebut	enhanced capacity to concentrate
C KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING	moderate acquaintance of viewpoints of others	• a comprehensive picture of the complex issues related to one topic or a set of related topics that are relevant and pertinent to the student's own life and the way s/he sees the world • a fairly in-depth acquaintance of viewpoints of others	• a comprehensive picture of the complex issues surrounding a topic that the instructor believes is important. Discussion may or may not make it relevant. (Unless the issue becomes polarized.)	in-depth knowledge & understanding of lesson to be learned	• polarized positions may mean less understanding of the viewpoints of others • false dichotomy may result in false confidence in solution	• maximum amount of knowledge potentially transferred • understanding may be in questions
D VALUE ACQUISITION AND CHARACTER FORMATION	• respect for persons as independent thinkers • impulse control • courage • empathy	• respect persons as independent thinkers & for their capacity to creatively co-operate in tracking toward truth • an inquiring mind: the capacity to see the potentially complex in the mundane • empathy • impulse control • self-correction • courage • patience/perseverance • integrity • competent value assessor	• respect persons as independent thinkers & for their capacity to creatively co-operate in tracking toward truth • self-correction • empathy • courage • patience/perseverance N.B. All of the above may be confined to academia. (Unless the issue becomes polarized.)	respect for authority	arrogance or timidity	• respect for authority • may shake the confidence in the student's capacity to grasp the vastness and complexity of knowledge offered