
TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	2
Primary Experiences	2
K-3 Activity Books	2
 PHILOSOPHY AT THE PRIMARY LEVEL	3
The Environment Of Teaching	3
Teaching Conceptually	3
Thinking: A Developmental Process	5
Questions Can Teach	6
References	8
 INTRODUCTION TO ACTIVITY BOOKS	9
Skills And Concepts	9
Enrichment Unit For Studying The Meaning Of Humanness	11
K-3 Program Goals And Objectives	12
Suggestions For Using The K-3 Series	14
Overview of K-3 Activity Books	15
Level K- About Me	15
Level 1 - Living Together	16
Level 2 - My Expanding World	17
Level 3 - But I'm Different	18

Philosophy At The Primary Level

The Environment Of Teaching

Using philosophy with young thinkers involves the teacher setting a safe and secure environment for learning. When discussions of a philosophical nature begin and opinions are being expressed by students, teachers need to exercise patience with student responses. Search for the odd, the unusual, and the creative thinkers, and learn to respect the individuality of student inquiries.

The ability to lead young students in open and—often—complex learning tasks is both rewarding and exciting. To lead students in activities at higher levels of thinking requires patience and skill on the part of the teacher. It also means that teachers too are able to use these higher cognitive levels.

Using the *Philosophy For Young Thinkers* program will involve teachers encouraging young students to express their own unique ideas, images, and feelings. The *idea* is to challenge their thought processes, awaken their sensitivities, and spur them to express their own philosophical ideas in a variety of media.

Here are some teaching *shoulds* when using the *Philosophy For Young Thinkers* activities:

The Teacher Should:

1. Stimulate the imagination of young children. Permit students to think in words, pictures, and through music, dance, and drama.
2. Encourage self-expression. Students are themselves unique and should be encouraged to express their ideas openly and freely. No one has ever experienced the world in exactly the same way as any one of them.
3. Move students into divergent thinking. Challenge young students and then give them time to create unique and imaginative thoughts, ideas, pictures, and products.
4. Reward independent thinking. The non-conforming thinker will prefer to discover for him or herself, toy with the possibilities and implications of an idea, and will have the tendency to express ideas in an idiosyncratic way rather than considering how things traditionally ought to be.

Teaching Conceptually

The major thrust of the *K-3 Getting Acquainted With Philosophy* program is to encourage young students to explore fundamental philosophical concepts. Primary explorations begin by exploring the concept of *self*—one's attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors—and continues at Level One by discovering the essential aspects of *living together*. At Level Two explorations focus on the student's *expanding world*—family, friends, community, and natural environment—and return to the *self* at Level Three by taking a closer look at *individual differences and individual uniquenesses*.

Young thinkers want to know *why* and *how*. Given the opportunity to express themselves orally, artistically, and in writing, student questions and wonderings will often be complex and profound.

When teaching primary students, expect the unexpected. After all, in philosophy it is not the achievement of this or that goal that matters. Rather it is the ideas that are encountered in the pursuit of knowledge that excite and challenge the mind.

The question *why* seeks a reason for an action. Reasons will often contain hidden values, biases, and opinions which need to be clarified and openly explored. Honest and direct teacher articulation is a must.

Do not rush by the question *how*. Do not brush the child aside who asks *how*. The

Introduction To Activity Books

Skills And Concepts

The teacher using the *Philosophy For Young Thinkers Series* will find the program divided into a well-defined and well-planned sequential set of *Skills* and *Concepts*. The first part of this sequence is the *K-3 Getting Acquainted With Philosophy Series*. While using the activity books in this program, the teacher will discover a well-balanced and enriching program of higher cognitive lessons which focus on philosophical concepts and inquiry processes.

Skills

The skill portion of this series is itself divided into three separate higher thinking areas:

Research,
Thinking, and
Creativity.

These skills provide three higher level cognitive processes per year for the teacher to emphasize. These skills build upon each other at each grade level and provide a consistently sequenced curriculum of higher level cognitive processes for the teacher.

Research skills are included in these lessons because mastering research skills will help students acquire information, compare and classify new and old facts, discover new relationships, and look for assumptions. Research skills will form a foundation upon which the skills of thinking and creativity can be built.

Thinking skills will assist students to operate upon and process new information gained through research. If the teacher will carefully examine the chart "Enrichment Units for Studying the Meaning of Humanness," he or she will discover the interrelatedness of these skill areas. For example, at the Kindergarten level children will be taught to acquire new information through the research skill of *observation*. The skill of observation is further divided into two subskills: collecting data and describing data. To assist students in operating upon and processing this data, the thinking skills of identifying information, listing facts, and matching similar data will be taught. The teacher will also find the same relationship between research and thinking skills at grades one, two, and three. The teacher should also take note of the sequential progression of these skills at each grade level and, thus, the necessity of mastering each skill in sequence.

The skill of *creative thinking* is likewise matched and sequenced with research and thinking at each grade level. Creative thinking is taught in order to open the student to the world around him or her, to create within the student curiosity about the self, others, and the environment in which the student lives. Creative thinking at the primary level also includes brainstorming, idea production, and evaluation. Mastering these skills will help the student to become more divergent and more selective in his or her thinking. These skills are important in operating upon both the physical and social environment of the student. It has been our experience that teaching research, thinking, and creativity in the primary years will build a foundation for philosophical and conceptual thinking which will aid students for years to come.

Concepts

Also found in the *Philosophy For Young Thinkers Series* is a well-planned and sequentially developed set of philosophical concepts. Conceptually, this program stresses fundamental affective concepts—the self, others, and connectedness to others and the environment—the development of which are prerequisite to sensitive philosophical thinking.

K-3 Program Goals And Objectives

Area One-Cognitive Skills

01. Research

1- Make Effective Use Of Perceptual Thinking

- a. Visualizing mentally
- b. Discriminating properties of objects
- c. Discriminating among events
- d. Perceiving relationships
- e. Interpreting meanings

2- Make Effective Use Of Associative Thinking

- a. Linking and matching similar ideas and events
- b. Relating terms and meanings
- c. Translating signs and symbols
- d. Relating behavioral traits and actions
- e. Understanding concepts

02. Thinking

1- Make Effective Use Of Knowledge Skills

- a. Building knowledge of specifics
- b. Building knowledge of ways and means of handling specifics
- c. Comparing and contrasting ideas and objects
- d. Identifying supporting details
- e. Classifying information into groups
- f. Listing, grouping, and labeling information
- g. Organizing data under specific headings

2- Make Effective Use Of Comprehension Skills

- a. Relating knowledge of specifics
- b. Translating and explaining ideas
- c. Summarizing and reorganizing ideas
- d. Predicting outcomes
- e. Understanding cause-and-effect relationships
- f. Deducing answers through descriptive clues
- g. Distinguishing between fact and opinion
- h. Interpreting feelings of people—fictional and real

03. Creativity

1- Make Effective Use Of Creative Thinking

- a. Wondering why, why not, what if, and just suppose
- b. Recalling past experiences

- c. Gathering facts and seeking answers
- d. Observing the odd and unusual
- e. Understanding and using figurative language

2- Make Effective Use Of Adventurous Thinking

- a. Thinking bold new thoughts
- b. Developing curiosity about the physical and social self
- c. Projecting beyond what is
- d. Developing the ability to compose stories and poems

Area Two-Affective Skills

04. Self-Awareness

1- Becoming Acquainted With One's Thinking Ability

2- Becoming Responsible For What One Says And Does

3- Becoming Aware Of One's Physical Capabilities

4- Identifying Oneself As A Part Of The Home, School, And Community Environments

5- Exhibiting Self-Motivation To Extend Into Learning Experiences

05. Awareness Of Others

1- Knowing That We Are All Alike And Different

2- Knowing That Differences Are Acceptable

3- Deciding That Each Person Is Important

4- Developing Positive Relationships

06. Receptiveness To Others And Nature

1- Realizing That Each Person's Behavior Affects Others

2- Knowing That Listening To Others Is A Good Habit To Develop

3- Understanding That Each Person Does Many Things Well

4- Knowing That Sharing Is An Important Part Of Caring

5- Taking Responsibility For One's Own Words And Deeds

6- Understanding The Consequences Of One's Actions

7- Developing Positive Relationships With Others

8- Developing A Sense Of Respect And Responsibility Towards Nature