

askit Level 1 Handbook

Introducing educators to the
askit strand of *Open Futures*



askit Level 1 Handbook

Introducing educators to the *askit* strand of *Open Futures*

By Roger Sutcliffe and Alison Hall

The *askit* strand of *Open Futures* has been developed by SAPERE, the UK charity for *Philosophy for Children* (also known as *P4C*).

P4C is an approach to teaching and learning which has been developed over 30 years, and is now practised in 60 countries worldwide. Research has clearly established it as a very effective way of raising academic achievement, enhancing pupils' social, emotional and behavioural development, and realising creative potential with any age group, any ability, and in any subject.

Throughout this publication *askit* is used to refer to *P4C* in the context of *Open Futures*.



We would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the content of this handbook, in particular Roger Sutcliffe and Alison Hall, Roger Standen, Paul Kettell, David Leat and Steve Williams.

Designed by Applied Information Group. Printed on recycled paper.

This handbook includes some photographs by Chris Butler at thephotographylounge.co.uk

Published by *Open Futures* © 2010. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

The Open Futures Trust

Registered Charity No: 1136095

A charitable company limited by guarantee, registered in England No: 07180844

Registered Office: 66 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London WC2A 3LH

HHT *Open Futures* is an initiative of the Helen Hamlyn Trust

Contents

Aims and objectives of the course	4
Introductory <i>askit</i> course	5
Introduction	6
Enquiry 1	8
Stimulus for enquiry	8
Sample plan for enquiry – Focus on Caring Thinking	9
Support for enquiry	10
Developing a community of enquiry	11
The aims and processes of communities of enquiry	14
The four Cs of <i>P4C</i>	16
Sample stimulus for an enquiry	17
Extract and scripted dialogue from a Channel 4 film	18
The sequence of enquiry	19
Establishing a community of enquiry	22
Enquiry 2	24
Stimulus for enquiry	24
Sample plan for enquiry – Focus on Creative Thinking	25
Developing philosophical questioning	26
Valuing questions	28
Questioning for thinking	29
The nature of philosophical questioning	30
Choosing stimuli	32
Developing facilitation	34
Facilitating enquiry and learning	38
Key elements of thinking and facilitation	39
Troubleshooting advice for successful facilitation	41
Enquiry 3	42
Stimulus for enquiry	42
Sample plan for enquiry – Focus on Critical Thinking	43
Support for enquiry	44
Reviewing and Planning	46
Appendices	52
Appendix 1	
What are the benefits of <i>askit</i> and <i>P4C</i> ?	52
Appendix 2	
SAPER Pathways	55
Appendix 3	
Traditional areas of philosophy	56

Aims and objectives of the course

askit provides a framework within the *Open Futures* programme as a whole. This handbook introduces its key themes and methodologies.

This course is designed specially for schools new to *Open Futures*, the skills and enquiry-based curriculum and its four strands of *growit*, *cookit*, *filmit* and *askit*.

It is hoped that this enquiry approach will be espoused not only within the other strands of *Open Futures*, but also across the curriculum, as a pedagogy fit for the 21st century.

They will also be encouraged to focus on, and practise, the ‘communicative’ skills that enable good collaborative learning. But – lest this prospect raises any anxieties about ‘having to speak in public’ – participants can be assured that contributions are always voluntary. What happens, generally, is that participants just grow in confidence about the contributions they can make.

Of the four *Open Futures* strands, *askit* is that which most clearly underpins the programme as a whole.

Most countries in the world are responding to the accelerating rate of technological and social change by placing greater emphasis on teaching their children skills and dispositions for life; and no skill or disposition is more important for independent, lifelong learners than that of asking good questions.

As Roger Sutcliffe, President of SAPERE, the national charity promoting P4C in the UK, has put it, “Questions are the tools with which you shape your own life”.

By the end of this course, it is intended that participants will have:

- Enjoyed asking questions of their own, both philosophical and practical
- Felt that they have good enough (albeit provisional) answers to their important questions
- Developed an understanding of the key concepts and practices of the *askit* approach, especially that of a ‘community of enquiry’
- Practised reflective listening and constructive reasoning
- Developed enough confidence to start applying the approach and encouraging colleagues
- Appreciated how the approach can support the other *Open Futures* strands
- Earned the SAPERE *askit* Level One Certificate of attendance

A few words about the methodology of the course

askit is an active and engaging process – very different from the ‘transmission’ model of education, which so often leads to passive learning. Those participating in the course will be encouraged from the start to raise questions, and to construct meaningful answers, of their own.

Modelling practice

The expectation that participants will become more reflective through the course is mirrored by an expectation that the course tutors will themselves model both reflectiveness and (its close relation) reasonableness throughout the course. They will listen well, not rush to judgement, and aim to have good reasons, not just for what they say but also for what they do. It goes without saying that these are high ideals – and ones towards which everyone might be striving, not just the tutors alone!

“While I was at college, I was introduced to the idea of Philosophy for Children. I really took to this. I thought, what a great idea: (to) give pupils, children – no matter what age and what environment – (the chance) to actually say what they feel, to be able to explore issues that are important to them.”

– Middle School Teacher



Introductory askit course

Typical Programme

Day 1

9:00 – 9.45	Personal Introductions, followed by General Introduction, based on page 6–7, “How does askit relate to Open Futures and UK education at large?”
9.45 – 11:00	Enquiry 1: ‘The Professor and the Ferryman’ + Review
11:00 – 11.30	Break
11.30 – 12.45	Developing a Community of Enquiry
12.45 – 1.30	Lunch
1.30 – 2.45	Enquiry 2: ‘Food, Glorious Food!’ (linked to <i>cookit</i>)
2.45 – 3.00	Break
3.00 – 4.30	Developing Philosophical Questioning and Choosing Stimuli

Day 2

9:00 – 9.30	Review of first day
9.30 – 11:00	Developing Facilitation, including Introducing Children to Philosophy
11:00 – 11.30	Break
11.30 – 12.45	Enquiry 3: ‘Tomato Bursts’ (linked to <i>growit</i>) + Review
12.45 – 1.30	Lunch
1.30 – 2.30	Reviewing Enquiries, including Valuing Reflection (linked to <i>filmit</i>)
2.30 – 3.30	Planning Enquiries into the Curriculum/Timetable
3.30 – 4:00	Preparing for the first enquiry (Tea break taken individually to suit)
4:00 – 4.30	Final Review, and Course Evaluation

Introduction

How do *askit* and *P4C* relate to *Open Futures* and UK education at large?

The Helen Hamlyn Trust initiated *Open Futures* in 2004. Lady Hamlyn summed it up as a “*skills and enquiry-based learning programme, linking learning to life*”. Its purpose, she said, was “*to help children discover and develop practical skills, personal interests and values, which will contribute to their education and help to enhance their adult lives*”.

One might have supposed that the UK National Curriculum had the very same purpose, and indeed its statement of Values, Aims and Purposes (1999) for the new millennium seemed to offer a similarly enlightened vision. The curriculum, it said:

- Should build on pupils’ strengths, interests and experiences
- Develop their confidence in their capacity to learn and work independently and collaboratively
- Develop and apply a broad range of knowledge, understanding and skills
- Develop their physical skills and encourage them to recognise the importance of pursuing a healthy lifestyle

Whilst it is probably true that the best schools and teachers do still try to build on pupils’ interests and experiences, it is widely acknowledged that the many prescriptions of content to be covered, and targets to be attained, in schools work against this attempt. Put bluntly, the curriculum prioritises adult expectations over children’s own experiences and excitements.

This imbalance was, partly, recognised in statements by the QCA, often referred to as ‘The Big Picture’ documents. For example, whereas the 1999 statement said that the curriculum:

- Should equip [pupils] with the essential learning skills of literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology

the latest statement puts ‘personal, learning and thinking skills’ on a par with literacy, numeracy and ICT as a ‘focus for learning’.

Yet nobody looking at school timetables could conclude that there has been a concerted shift away from literacy and numeracy towards more generic thinking skills – even though it is clear that critical and creative thinking are the philosopher’s stone that turn the base skills of reading, writing and arithmetic into the gold of literature, enlightenment and architecture.

Similarly, the 1999 aspiration that the curriculum should

- Promote an enquiring mind and capacity to think rationally
- is so much empty rhetoric unless accompanied by a commitment to nurture pupils’ questioning and reasoning skills.

A curriculum whose most valued outcome (if not actual aim) is success in national tests on prescribed syllabi runs exactly counter to the aim of promoting enquiring minds. Simply stated, the more pupils have to learn (and teachers have to teach) to a prescribed

course, the less encouragement there is to follow individual interests and develop truly enquiring minds.

Open Futures offers not only a more open pathway for pupils to follow, but a deeper and more practical commitment to developing their skills for a future that seems ever less certain.

By its own focus on two of the most basic and perennial of human skills – gardening (*growit*) and cooking (*cookit*) – and another two of the most subtle and significant of human skills – reviewing (*filmit*) and enquiring (*askit*), it presents an alternative model of a curriculum: a genuine skills-and-enquiry-based curriculum.

Such a model deserves to be seen as much more than an ‘add-on’ that pays lip service to skills or needs that are neglected in the mainstream curriculum. As argued in the accompanying *Open Futures Handbook on Enquiry-based Learning*, much of that mainstream curriculum could, in fact, be ‘covered’ by extending from these four skills/strands. But here it is enough to suggest that if the ethos of *Open Futures* – ‘linking learning to life’, or, just as potently, ‘linking life to learning’ – is accepted, then it needs to be celebrated and practised regularly, with at least one *Open Futures* session for every pupil each week, and ideally two or three. Time to plan how this can happen is programmed into the second day of this course.

For the rest of this introduction, the purpose is to give a little more background to the course itself, and particularly to explain its link with a long-established and widely-practised thinking skills ‘programme’ known as ‘Philosophy for Children’, or *P4C* for short.

P4C was the brainchild of Professor Matthew Lipman, of Columbia University in New York, in the late 1960’s. As a teacher of philosophy, he was dismayed at the low level of reasoning skill in his (undergraduate) students, and indeed at the poor quality of public discourse about important issues at the time – not least the Vietnam War.

Philosophy, at least in the Western tradition founded in Ancient Greece, has always started with ‘big’ questions and made a virtue of careful reasoning – the Greek word ‘philosophia’ means, literally, ‘love of wisdom’, and Socrates himself said that ‘Wisdom begins in Wonder’.

Lipman wondered whether this discipline, which had until then been almost exclusively an adult pursuit, could be introduced to young people so as to lead them into better ways of thinking. In his own words, “*the aim of a thinking skills programme such as P4C is ... to help (children) become more thoughtful, more reflective, more considerate and more reasonable individuals*”.

To fulfil this aim, Lipman wrote some stories for children, with support materials for teachers, which challenged everyone to reflect on their own lives as well as the stories, and to engage in

what he called ‘communities of enquiry’. (This idea, incidentally, preceded that of ‘learning communities’ and, indeed, much good practice nowadays, including ‘collaborative learning’ and ‘circle time’ at its best, follows the same principles as those of the community of enquiry.)

A range of tests (see appendix 1) showed dramatic improvements in children’s questioning, reasoning and comprehension skills as a result of Lipman’s work, and P4C has developed, in the decades since, into one of the world’s leading thinking skills approaches, used in over 60 countries.

It has also become clear that the approach has positive effects on children’s social and emotional, as well as intellectual, development. P4C – known in *Open Futures* as *askit* – encourages children to take each other’s questions, ideas and values seriously. In this process, children come to feel more valued themselves, and they grow as persons, becoming more willing and able to participate in group thinking, talking and working. This is why *askit* can be seen as foundational not only to the other, more overtly practical, strands of *Open Futures*, but also to healthy learning across the curriculum.

Extracts from BBC documentary, ‘Socrates for 6 year olds’ (1990) which effectively launched P4C in the UK

Teacher: I think that, given an opportunity, the quality for thought is always there. It’s just that the opportunity isn’t presented.

Patrick: When Laura and Paul grow up, and they get really old, they won’t know anything, ‘cos they used up all their thoughts.

McCall: Lauren, do you agree with Patrick, that you could use up all your thoughts, when you were young, and then you wouldn’t have any more?

Lauren: You can use up all your thoughts because sometimes I have thoughts and I forget them and I don’t have any more for the rest of the day.

McCall: So, that means you only have a certain amount of thoughts and then they’re all used up?

Stephen: I disagree with Lauren, because you always have thoughts, everybody has thoughts, there’s never no thoughts. There’s always at least one thought in the world.

Lipman: I think that you are watching a major change in the nature of education, because if you could get education to centre on thinking rather than rote learning, then you’re preparing for a very different kind of world.

Lipman: Children don’t have much private property. Perhaps they own their clothes and a few toys. It’s hard to say that they own even their bed, or

the furniture in their rooms – they belong to the family, or parents. And so the kind of security that comes with the ownership of property is usually not permitted to children. On the other hand, they do have their thoughts, and they cherish these. They are proud of these; these are very consoling; these are what they can be secretive about, and no one else can invade this privacy. And they have the use of language, which gives them a great deal of power – because with words they can talk to one another, communicate with one another, but also they can defend themselves. And I think words mean power to children, and having thoughts is a source of richness to them – perhaps the only source of richness.

Lipman: The community of inquiry in the classroom can function the way a safety net does for acrobats: it’s there in case you fall; it’s there to catch you and to keep you from serious damage. And I think that it does this in the sense that you know that there are others in the same boat, and that they feel for you. And so you don’t go immediately to the desperate remedy of violence and drugs. You talk it over beforehand.

Lipman: Those who are in greatest need and direst need often are given hand-me-downs, are given routine treatments: they are drilled, they are given basic skill until it comes out of their ears. Even if they could learn in some pedestrian way to read, they would not be learning to read critically, or to read imaginatively, or to write with any kind of creativity. It’s simply failing them as citizens, it’s failing them as human beings to do this.

Enquiry 1

Stimulus for enquiry

The Professor and the Ferryman

Like all the villagers the ferryman was poor. The money he made by rowing people across the river was hardly enough to feed his family. He had taken over the job of ferryman when he was a boy and had been doing it ever since. Although life was hard he never grumbled, for he was pleased to be of service to his passengers.

The ferryman learned a lot about life by talking to his passengers. He heard about life in the city, but he could not understand why people would want to live there. It seemed that city people spent all their lives rushing about with no time to think. The ferryman rowed slowly. He was in no hurry. He had time to talk and time to think about things.

One day a well-dressed man with a shiny briefcase climbed into his boat. He wore a smart suit and had well polished shoes. He looked like a city gentleman. Slowly the ferryman began to row his passenger across the river. After a while the man from the city spoke.

'My good man,' he said, 'have you studied any history?' 'No sir,' said the ferryman.

'What!' said the city man in surprise. 'Not studied history? Don't you know how important history is? Are you not proud of your country's history? Why don't you know any history?'

The ferryman shook his head. 'I don't know any history, sir. I can't read, sir. I never went to school and so I didn't learn history.' 'Didn't learn?' said the man. 'There's no excuse for not learning. That is why we are here. You surely learnt some geography?' 'No sir,' said the ferryman. 'I don't know any geography.' 'Well,' said the man, 'geography tells us about the world. Don't you know anything about the world – the countries, mountains and rivers...?'

'I never went to school,' said the ferryman, 'I don't know about these things.' After a few minutes the man asked: 'Have you studied any science?' 'Sci-ence? No sci-ence, sir.' 'Haven't you heard about science?' said the man in amazement. 'About the sun, moon and tides, about how things work? Scientists are the most important people in the world today. Look at me. I'm a scientist. Do you see my briefcase? It is full of important books and papers. I'm a professor of science. If you don't know about science then you don't know about the world. You have learnt nothing! And if you don't know anything you might as well be dead!'

The ferryman looked sad. He had never been spoken to like this before. He felt he knew nothing, so much knowledge hidden in books that he had never learnt.

Suddenly dark clouds moved across the sky. The boat began to rock in heavy waves and there was a roar of thunder. 'We will be caught in a storm,' said the ferryman. 'Can you swim?'

The professor looked fearful and clutched his briefcase. 'Oh dear!' he cried. 'I cannot swim. I never learnt!'

The small boat was tossed wildly to and fro by the wind and waves. Lightning flashed and the rain poured down. Suddenly a large wave overturned the boat, and both men were thrown into the swirling waters. The old ferryman lost sight of his passenger in the water and swam slowly to the safety of the shore. But the Professor, still clutching his briefcase, sank and disappeared beneath the dark waters of the river.

– Indian folktale, from Robert Fisher (1994), 'Stories for Thinking' Nash Pollock Publishing

Enquiry **1** Focus on Caring Thinking

Sample plan for enquiry (Listening and Appreciating)

Step/stage	Title	Details for facilitator	mins	
1 Getting set	Mind Spy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Partner A pictures something in their mind ('s eye) and says, 'I spy in my mind something beginning with ...' (as in 'I-spy') Partner B has 4 guesses about what is in A's mind. After each failed guess, A has to give a clue, such as 'animal', or 'smaller', or 'last letter is Y'. Roles alternate as long as time allows. 	5	
2 Stimulus	Read Around	One or two lines or sentences read aloud by each person in turn (though with 'right to pass')	5	
3 Thinking Time (private, then public)	Talking Points	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Individuals think of 1 or 2 'talking points' or 'big ideas' from the stimulus – something they think would be interesting to talk about. Pairs or trios share their 'talking points' in conversation, and agree for one of them to report their conversation to the whole group. 	2 2	
4. Question-making	Questions for Thinking	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Reporters invited to share their 'talking points', ideally building on other people's if there is a 'common interest'. Whole group invited to turn talking points / common interests into good 'questions for thinking', ie questions that need more thinking and discussion ('discussible questions'). Facilitator to write these on board, with names. 	10	
5 Question-airing	Celebration	Questions to be celebrated in turn by someone other than original questioners. ('I like X because...')	4	
6 Question-choosing	Omnivote (maybe 'blind')	"You may vote for as many questions as you like, including your own." (perhaps with eyes closed)	2	
			Total	30
7 First Thoughts	Questioners Kick Off	Invite the people whose question was chosen to give some of their own first thoughts in response to the person(s) who celebrated their question.	3	
8 Building	Speaker Chooses	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Invite the last of the questioners to speak to choose the next person to speak, and so on, unprompted, for next 10 minutes. Note: Advise anyone who wants to respond to anything said to hold hands out (or on their knee / heart, etc.) or thumbs up (on their knee / table, etc.) Facilitator becomes 'chair' again – focussing back on original question to see a what has been agreed b what remains to think about 	17	
9 Last Thoughts	Lessons Learnt	Allow time for reflection on 'what I learnt from the inquiry, and how it could change what I think / do'.	5	
10 Review (inc. Planning)	2/4/6/8	"How well did we listen, and whose ideas did each of us appreciate?" and what to do next?	5	

Enquiry 1

Support for enquiry

On this page are two 'discussion/enquiry plans' and further activities suggested by Professor Fisher. These will be referred to on the second day, in connection with facilitation and planning.

Thinking about the story

Key question: What does the story mean?

- 1 Who was the ferryman? What do we know about him?
- 2 The story says he never grumbled. – do you think this is possible? Do you know anyone like that? Who?
- 3 Why did he not live in the city? Do you agree with him?
- 4 Who was the well-dressed man? Why did he ride in the ferryman's boat?
- 5 Why did the man think learning history was important? Do you agree?
- 6 Why did he think geography was important? Do you agree?
- 7 Why did he think science was important? Do you agree?
- 8 Do you think the ferryman really knew nothing about history, geography or science? Why?
- 9 What happened at the end of the story? Do you think the Professor drowned? What might have happened next?
- 10 Is there a lesson to be learnt from this story? What do you think it might be?



Thinking about wisdom and learning

Key question: What is worth learning?

- 1 Why do children go to school?
- 2 Do you think all children should go to school?
- 3 What is education? Does it only happen in school?
- 4 Is what you learn in school more important than what you learn out of school? Why?
- 5 Where do you learn most – at home or at school? Why do you think so?
- 6 Which lessons do you think are most important?
- 7 Which lessons do you think are least important – or not important?
- 8 Some people are said to know a lot, some are said to be wise. What does 'wise' mean?
- 9 Do you have to be old to be wise? Why?
- 10 Do you have to know a lot to be wise? What do you need to know to be wise?

Further activities

- List all the subjects you learn in school. Choose those you think are important, and put them in order of importance. List your favourite subjects. Compare and discuss lists.
- Keep a learning log (think book or journal) to write your thoughts about what you learn.
- Draw a picture of your favourite teacher. Do others recognise who it is?
- Study the history of your school. Perhaps invite someone to be interviewed about their school days in the past.
- Design what your dream school would be like.

Developing a community of enquiry

Starting strategies

A 'Big questions'

Philosophy is often thought of as an attempt to answer 'big questions' in life, such as 'Who am I?', 'What is the right thing to do?', 'Is there purpose behind the universe?', etc, and it is good, of course, to seek answers to such questions from time to time. If adults never asked big questions – for example, about their work or their lives in general – they would probably struggle to have a strong sense of purpose or satisfaction.

askit encourages children to engage in such enquiries, too, but not necessarily using the particular questions above, which are rather stylised forms. (The question, 'Who am I?', for example, is not likely to come up in 'normal' talk – except, perhaps, as a question about which role 'I' might be taking in a play.)

There are, in fact, many other questions which relate to the big question of identity, 'Who am I?', and which children can easily engage with: for example, 'What does a name (not) tell you about a person?' or 'How well do your family know you?'

More often than not, philosophical enquiries with children start with such 'indirect' questions, arising from a stimulus that captures their interest.

The facilitator, then, has in mind at least three steps:

- 1 Helping children clarify their various interests
- 2 Helping them turn their interests into good questions for enquiry
- 3 Helping them connect those questions with others, especially 'bigger' ones.

Much of the later course/handbook is intended to help with the last of these steps, but here are some further thoughts about the first two.

Depending slightly on the context, such questions may be called 'subsidiary' or 'prior' questions (or, more colourfully, 'questions in waiting' or 'questions behind the question').

Readers are invited, in pairs, to come up with 2 or 3 other 'questions in waiting' that relate to the big question of morality ('What is the right thing to do?') and another 2 or 3 that deal indirectly with the 'meaning' of life ('Is there purpose behind the universe?').

B Common interests

One way of helping to clarify interests is to ask the children to think privately (in Thinking Time) of 'something you would like to talk about' – in short, a 'Talking Point'. Or you could ask directly for 'something that interests you in the story', or 'something you like or dislike about the story', or 'something that pleases or provokes (or even puzzles) you in it'.

Then invite individuals to tell the whole group what they were thinking, and facilitate short plenary conversations in response. If an interest is 'common', it will usually be articulated clearly enough during the conversation but, if not, you should clarify it at the end, preferably condensing it into a summary word or phrase.

You could proceed to turn the interest into a 'question for thinking' yourself, to provide a model, but, better still, try to facilitate whole, or small, group question-making. Ultimately, of course, the aim is for every individual to be able to form a question for herself.



C 'Big ideas'

The process outlined above can be supported or speeded up by encouraging children to look for 'big ideas' in the stimulus, *ie* ideas/words that they think most people would find interesting to talk about. For example, big ideas in the first 3 paragraphs of 'The Professor and the Ferryman' might include: *poor, family, grumbled, rushing, time and think.*

Most children develop an intuition quite quickly for what counts as a 'big idea', but if there is a need to explain it, here is an exercise that might be useful:

Pairs of ideas

Present the following pairs of ideas, and ask the children to discuss in pairs or small groups which of the two ideas is 'bigger', in the sense of 'Which idea is more interesting to talk about?' (perhaps adding 'to most people'):

- Animals/Anvils
- Brains/Braces
- Creams/Crimes
- Drains/Dreams
- Enemies/Entrances

The chances are that most will agree on Animals, Brains, Crimes, Dreams and Enemies. But even if they don't, they will begin to internalise the provisional sense of 'interesting for most people to talk about' simply by discussing the matter.

Older children could be given the ten ideas all at once, and asked to divide them into two lists, one of 'juicy concepts', the other of 'less juicy concepts' – or even to rank them from most to least.

D From big ideas to big questions

Once any big idea has been identified, a next, simple, philosophical move is to put it directly into a question of the form, 'What (exactly) is X?' ('What is it to be poor?', 'What is a family?', 'What exactly is it to grumble?', and so on.) This, in fact, was a classical move in philosophy, modelled on Socrates's own enquiries into big ideas such as courage and justice, and it is one that children could be encouraged to make for themselves.

Note, however, that this practice could become rather repetitive, and also encourage a resort to the dictionary for a definition, when the object of enquiry is not so much to find an equivalent form of words as to connect the big idea with people's different experiences. So, other ways of 'questioning' big ideas should be modelled and encouraged, such as using the 'big' question words, 'Why are some people poor?' and 'How do you feed a family?', or looking for causes or consequences, as in 'What **causes** people to grumble?' or 'What **happens** if people are rushing?'

Note, also, that the questions suggested here are general ones (*ie* not particular to the text) which provide more scope for enquiry. If the children spontaneously ask questions directly about the text in the early days, they are not to be discouraged – far from it. But a text-based question such as 'What did the ferryman think about when he had time?' can simply and helpfully be 'moved' by the facilitator into a wider question such as, 'What do people who have time usually think about?' The word 'usually' and the more advanced phrase, 'in general', are especially useful for this.

Readers are invited to look through the rest of the 'Professor & Ferryman' text to pick out another six 'big ideas' – or 'juicy concepts', as some older children like to call them – and make a common list.

Most suitable stimuli should yield at least a dozen 'big ideas' for possible enquiry.

E 'Big ideas' chart

Another way of introducing 'big ideas', or of consolidating their use, is to make space on the classroom wall for a 'Big Ideas' chart.

Put a few examples of your own up, preferably written large in felt-tip, on post-it notes. (This will enable you to move them around later, perhaps grouping or ranking them.) Then encourage the children to listen/look out for big ideas, not just in *askit* sessions, and to post them.

A variation on the chart suggested above is to have an A to Z chart of Big Ideas, encouraging children to fill in the letters that have fewer, or no, entries.

Remember that the QCA has suggested that the 'Knowledge and Understanding' focus of learning should be framed around 'big ideas that have shaped the world' – so, this is a way of bringing together key concepts from across the curriculum. It might be hoped that 'Conflict', for example, is preferred to 'Connectives' in this display!

F Themes behind

So far we have talked about big ideas in the stimulus itself, but sometimes a stimulus may point to a big idea without actually mentioning it. For example, the following ideas are not explicit in 'The Professor and the Ferryman', but certainly lie 'behind' it: happiness, tradition, needs, peace, home, friendliness, showing off, teaching/learning, educated, nature, VIPs, rudeness, common sense, panic, help, life/death, precious, and, as Fisher himself noted, wisdom.

The simple question, 'What (big ideas) does this (story/stimulus) make you think of?', helps children make suggestions of big ideas arising from/inspired by the stimulus. A good variation of this question, at least for older children, is: 'What themes lie behind this stimulus?'

Such practice in drawing out themes from a stimulus would strengthen the ability to identify key points in a text, standing children in good stead throughout their lives (not just for literacy tests!)

G Enquiry plans

These are, in effect, series of questions that explore different aspects of a key concept under investigation. There are many such plans to be found in the *askit* strand curriculum and elsewhere: Fisher regularly includes examples such as the one above, on wisdom and learning.

Some people find them useful just for developing their own philosophical awareness and facilitation skills – gaining ideas about how to connect children's questions with wider ones. Others use them directly with children in the early days of building a community of enquiry. They could be used, for example, as a 5 – 10 minute starter activity, to give children a feel for open questions and a good early experience of building dialogue. Groups of three could be given different questions at random and asked to discuss them for just a minute or two, then to team up with another trio and compare their questions and discussions. Or the trios could select their own questions from the list, and then compare. The activity could even be extended into plenary discussion of any of

the questions that promise to engage the whole group, though such discussion should not regularly take the place of enquiry based on the children's own questions.

Alternatively, enquiry plans can be used as a follow up activity after an enquiry, with a view to widening or deepening understanding – what is known as 'concept-stretching', or sometimes 'digging deeper'. The following plan, for example, could be used to stretch the concept/theme of 'skills', which people often draw out of 'The Professor and the Ferryman'.

- 1 Which of these seems more of a skill (or skilled), and why: riding a bicycle or reading a book?
- 2 Are there really such things as 'thinking skills', and if so how do they differ from other skills? In particular, (how) do they differ from 'academic' skills? (Use examples in your reasoning.)
- 3 Are there any skills that are purely physical, ie in which thinking plays no part?
- 4 Does your answer to 3 remain the same if you are told that 'skill' comes from the Old Norse word meaning 'discernment'? What part, if any, might discernment play in being skilful?
- 5 By considering a few examples of 'life skills', try to reach an agreement on what makes a skill a 'life' skill.
- 6 Does gardening count as a skill? Does it count as a 'life skill'? In any case, is it a single skill, or more than one? If more, analyse it into its component skills.
- 7 Follow the same sequence of questions for cooking as for gardening in the previous question.
- 8 To what extent could filming be counted as an important life skill, now and in the future?
- 9 Does asking questions 'come naturally'? Does that make it not a skill? If it is a skill, how complex is it, and how can it be developed?

Questions 6 – 9 in this plan are particularly relevant to the *Open Futures* programme, and may usefully be referred back to in the final quarter of the course, especially when considering how to plan for a skills and enquiry-based curriculum.

The aims and processes of communities of enquiry

As indicated in the introduction, the idea of ‘community of inquiry’ goes back some way. It was actually coined by American philosopher Charles Peirce (pronounced ‘Purse’, 1839 – 1914) to describe the community of scientists of which he counted himself a member.

Lipman gave the phrase new meaning and life by pointing it in the direction of philosophical enquiry, even whilst noting that ‘communities of inquiry’ can – and even should – exist in every subject/discipline.

This is not only because all subjects/disciplines aim to give general accounts of ‘how the world works’. It is also because all of them are based on similar principles and follow similar processes – valuing clarity and precision of exposition, for example, and accuracy of reporting and reasoning.

Nor should that be surprising, since they all derived from the same spirit and practice of enquiry in the academies and schools that started in ancient Greece.



The community of scientists that became more self-conscious in the 19th century may have given more formality to those principles and processes – but they had been integral to philosophical enquiry since its earliest practice.

What was not so integral to that practice was the participation of children. Many (but certainly not all) philosophers actually argued that children were too inexperienced or unsophisticated to ‘do’ philosophy.

A working definition of a community of enquiry:

A group of people used to thinking together with a view to increasing their understanding and appreciation of the world around them and of each other.

However, Lipman’s faith in the capacity of children to participate constructively in philosophical enquiry has been vindicated. Not only has P4C been taken up with enthusiasm in over 60 countries, most often starting from a university base, but children have continually surprised their elders with their reflections on some of the most important and contested questions of life.

Of course, developing a community of enquiry in which children feel safe to share their experiences and experiment with ideas requires more than just a focus on better questioning. There needs to be an equal emphasis on the social virtues that go towards building a community.

Pooh began to feel a little more comfortable, because when you are a bear of very little brain, and you think of things, you find sometimes that a thing which seemed very thingish inside you is quite different when it gets out into the open and has other people looking at it.

– The House at Pooh Corner, A.A. Milne

This point, along with further details about the principles and processes of enquiry, is made by Professor Ann Margaret Sharp, Lipman’s principal colleague, in the following extract.

Curious notes

- i) ‘Enquiry’ actually derives from a Latin word, meaning ‘seeking into’, which should be distinguished from ‘debate’, deriving from the French ‘debattre’, meaning ‘beat down’;
- ii) ‘Academy’ originally meant ‘silent place’, and ‘school’ originally meant ‘leisure’!

Quotations from “The Ethics of Translation”

By Ann Margaret Sharp, Lipman’s associate

Philosophy for Children aims not only to strengthen good reasoning, inquiry and concept-formation but to cultivate an intellectual and social virtue, to bring about the transformation of persons into more reasonable individuals committed to the creation of a reasonable world. Another way of saying this is to say that Philosophy for Children aims at the cultivation of wisdom.

Because it is assumed that every participant is a potential source of insight, it is vital that each member of the community make an effort to solicit and understand the views of all the other members.

When one engages in dialogue with others, one has to:

- Rehearse what others have said
- Assess the relevance and significance of one’s remarks
- Recognise other perspectives
- Explore previously unknown possibilities in the quest for understanding of oneself and the world

Persons skilled in translation are people who understand that collaborative philosophical inquiry necessitates an atmosphere of trust in which each person feels valued and respected. This trust manifests itself in participants sharing – sharing their ideas, their doubts, their feelings, their hopes and their ignorance.

People will feel that when they do choose to share their thoughts in the group, they will be listened to and taken seriously. To be taken seriously does not manifest itself in

blanket acceptance of each and every opinion that we voice. Rather it calls for a response of intellectual integrity.

The following are ways in which individuals can take the ideas of others seriously:

- Asking for reasons
- Pointing out consequences
- Clarifying implications or assumptions
- Offering an alternative point of view

And the following are all crucial moves of good inquiry:

- Careful and sensitive posing of examples and counter-examples
- Asking for criteria
- Being critical of one’s own ideas as well as those of others
- Allowing for silence in the group

Sharp’s list of skills needed for enquiry and reflection/dialogue of this order is not exhaustive – participants will be introduced to others during the course. But it is already challenging enough, and it may take some time before a group can move from being a ‘circle time group’ to a ‘discussion group’ and then on to being a ‘community of enquiry’.

Signs of progress, however, should be clear after half a dozen sessions, and the following framework should be helpful for overall planning and evaluating the children’s – and facilitator’s – journey. (There is more on evaluation later in the course, and in the handbook appendix pages 52–56.)



The four Cs of P4C

This section identifies four aspects of P4C that certainly enhance its philosophical nature, but in effect are aspects of thinking that one might look for in any community of enquiry. They are:

- **Caring Thinking**
- **Collaborative Thinking**
- **Critical Thinking**
- **Creative Thinking**

The presence or absence of thinking may be evident when looking at actions ‘from the outside’, but the thinking itself is an invisible process – albeit one with which each of us is intimately familiar. This invisibility makes thinking much more difficult to analyse, and then to assess, than a physical process (say, how an engine works).

Caring thinking, for example, might typically be recognised when one person speaks appreciatively of another. But such words might be insincere, or a learned social response, and may not, after all, express real care for the other or their thoughts and feelings.

Put another way, when such aspects of thinking are recognised as authentic, they are deemed to be expressing attitudes or dispositions that lie below the surface, or ‘come from the heart’.



So, what a community of enquiry is deliberately trying to cultivate is not merely polite forms of thought and communication, helpful though those may be, but genuine attempts to care and collaborate, to critique and create.

Ideally, these aspects of thinking complement each other in an holistic way.

For the purposes of planning practice and progression, the following analysis may be helpful:

- **Caring**
Listening (concentrating) and valuing (appreciating)
eg showing interest in others' experiences and values, showing sensitivity
- **Collaborative**
Responding (communicating) and supporting (conciliating)
eg building on each other's ideas, shaping common understandings and purposes
- **Critical**
Questioning (interrogating) and reasoning (evaluating)
eg seeking meaning, evidence, reasons, distinctions, and good judgements
- **Creative**
Connecting (relating) and suggesting (speculating)
eg giving comparisons, examples, criteria, alternative explanations or conceptions

Because these modes of thinking do complement each other, the facilitator of an enquiry should be aiming to keep them in balance. If an enquiry seems to be over-critical, for example, a facilitator might suggest the need for more creative or caring thinking; or if it seems to be becoming too diffuse, with too many new ideas to hold together, it would be appropriate to remind everyone of the need for more collaborative and critical thinking.

But it is not for the facilitator alone to be aware of these general directions and specific foci. The review session after an enquiry should be used to reflect upon any or all of the 4Cs, and indeed can result in the community agreeing to make a particular aspect of them, such as checking out evidence, a focus for the next enquiry.

Sample stimulus for an enquiry

Granny or the Goldfish?

The following dialogue was used by James Nottingham for an enquiry filmed by Channel 4 in 1999. The text is of an imaginary conversation that took place between a 6-year old girl, called Charlotte, and her teacher.

-
- Teacher:* Do you have a pet?
- Charlotte:* Yes. I have a cat and a guinea pig. And a goldfish. The cat is called Zephyr and the guinea pig is called Gip.
- Teacher:* Do you like them?
- Charlotte:* Of course. Everyone likes their pets.
- Teacher:* How would you feel if something awful happened to one of your pets?
- Charlotte:* Really sad. I had a rabbit once, but a dog got in and ate it. I cried.
- Teacher:* Have you heard of Africa?
- Charlotte:* It's a long way away. They have jungles there, and wild animals.
- Teacher:* There are people there as well. Millions of them.
- Charlotte:* I know.
- Teacher:* Would you care if someone in Africa were hit by a bus?
- Charlotte:* Not much. It probably happens all the time.
- Teacher:* Would you rather someone you didn't know in Africa was hit by a bus, or your goldfish died?
- Charlotte:* I'd rather someone was hit by a bus.
- Teacher:* How about 10 people killed in a bus crash?
- Charlotte:* I still don't want my fish to die.
- Teacher:* What if the choice is between your goldfish and a thousand people killed in an earthquake? What if you were magic, and had to choose?
- Charlotte:* Maybe the people are more important.
- Teacher:* What if it's between the people and Zephyr?
- Charlotte:* No way. I love Zephyr.
- Teacher:* What if it's either ten people in Australia killed in a bushfire or Zephyr hit by a car?
- Charlotte:* People I don't know?
- Teacher:* Yes. You don't know any of them.
- Charlotte:* Then I'd pick Zephyr not to be hit by a car.
- Teacher:* What if it's between Zephyr and grandma?
- Charlotte:* Um. Grandma's very old. She might die anyway.
- Teacher:* What if it's either grandma dies in 6 months before she would have, or Zephyr is hit by a car?
- Charlotte:* Are you going to tell grandma what I said?
- Teacher:* I don't know. Probably not.
- Charlotte:* I think grandma is more important.

Extract and scripted dialogue from a Channel 4 film

Why would you want to save somebody you don't know?

A: Princess Diana (1) you only really, like, knew her name, but (2) you didn't really, like, meet her, like, 'cos when she died all the ... all the people, they were sending, like, flowers and everything. In a way, she's a stranger, but you still, like, care for her.

B: What is a stranger (3)?

C: You haven't like, sort of, not met them, but (4) you haven't communicated with them.

D: I'd rather somebody else died than my family or friends, 'cos (5), like, I don't really know the other people. Even if they were nice – and they might be totally horrible.

E: Yeh, but (6) you're saying that you would rather strangers died just because you don't know them.

F: If, like, there were such a thing as God, why (7) would he, like, be making horrible people in the world, like the people in Kosovo. Why does he make people suffer?

G: I disagree with Amy because I think like God might want some bad people on the earth, because (8) he might think it's just too peaceful, and he might say, well, we've got to have some bother at some time. (Teacher invites someone else.)

H: It's impossible to have a perfect world. I mean, you need to have bad people in the world, 'cos like, you can't. If (9) we did have a perfect world, we'd be going around like, 'Oh, hiya, do you want to come in mine for a cup of coffee?' all the time, and always being nice to each other, not one bad thing said, and that wouldn't be right – it wouldn't be comfortable at all.

1 Caring recognition and creative exemplifying

Appreciation of other people's values/care, and creation of relevant example for consideration.

2 Critical reasoning

First hypothesis: If you know someone's name, you know them. *Self-correction:* Knowing a name is not sufficient to know someone. *Second hypothesis:* If you know someone, you have to have met them.

3 Critical questioning

Seeking more precise, and common, meaning of 'stranger'.

4 Critical reasoning

Thesis to build on: If you have met someone, they are not a stranger – you know them. *Own counter-thesis:* Meeting someone is not sufficient, either, to know someone – they can remain a stranger to you.

5 Creative reasoning

Hypothesis: Knowing someone makes a difference to how much you care for them.

6 Critical/caring reasoning

Thesis to challenge: As in 5. *Value implication being challenged:* Not knowing someone is a good enough reason for not caring for them.

7 Creative hypothesising, and critical reasoning & questioning

Hypothesis: if there is a good God, he would not make horrible people for no reason. *Observation:* There are horrible people. *Challenging question:* So what is his reason?

8 Creative hypothesising and implicit, caring reasoning

Thesis: perhaps God's reason for wanting bad people on the earth is to avoid it's being too peaceful. *Implicit reasoning:* bad people make bother, and bother stops it being too peaceful.

9 Creative hypothesising and critical caring evaluation

Hypothesis: if we had a perfect world ... everybody would be nice to each other, not one bad thing said. *Implicit evaluation:* that wouldn't would comfortable / desirable would it?

To start with they (children) look to the teacher, to say what does the teacher think? What should I say here to please the teacher, to please the adult? What are they wanting me to say? – because so often in lessons you're looking for ... what ... the one right answer, but in philosophy there is no one right answer. Each statement by the child is a potential source of truth.

– Extract from a Channel 4 film

The sequence of enquiry

As indicated, the 4Cs provide a good framework for planning and assessing progress over time, but for immediate practice there is a well tried sequence of steps that help to structure an enquiry

session. These are basically a refinement (and a natural development) of the six steps of enquiry that the philosopher John Dewey identified in his 1910 book, 'How we think'. They are as follows:

Ten steps

- | | | | |
|----------|---|-----------|---|
| 1 | Getting set
preparing physical, social and emotional environment > focus on thinking skill | 6 | Question-choosing
of starter question or 'agenda' |
| 2 | Presentation
of story / starter / stimulus | 7 | First thoughts
interpretations / initial answers |
| 3 | Thinking time
private reflection > sharing ideas / conversation | 8 | Building
'digging deeper' / 'spreading wider' / 'pursuing wisdom' |
| 4 | Question-making
open, 'inviting' questions | 9 | Last thoughts
on the question, for personal closure |
| 5 | Question-aring
comparing background / potential of questions, or similarities / differences | 10 | Review
of process > planning |



Further detailed suggestions for each of the steps

1 Getting set

- i) **Physical:** The class, group or community should sit in a circle. The room should be large enough to arrange the chairs in a circle so that all the members of the community can see each other and achieve eye contact with whoever is speaking. The group should also be able to hear each other clearly; therefore the acoustics of the environment need to be considered as well. The teacher should be part of the group and all participants should be viewed as equally important to the success of the community.
- ii) **Social and emotional:** Agreed guidelines can be established by the facilitator or agreed through discussion by the group in order to enable the community of philosophical enquiry to be a respectful, caring and collaborative environment. Suggested guidelines may be found in the section, 'Establishing a Community of Enquiry'.
- iii) **Focus on thinking:** Prepare the group for the enquiry by using a short thinking skills game, task or activity. This works as an 'ice-breaker' to relax people and get them talking, as well as stimulating their critical and creative thinking. If possible, connect the activity to a particular practice for the community to focus on in the enquiry. Bear in mind that far from needing a 'warm-up', some groups may need a calming exercise before starting the enquiry (particularly on windy days!) Also note that during an enquiry brain gym or other exercises may be helpful to maintain the group's engagement.

2 Presentation

The stimulus at the start of an enquiry is used as a means to providing the community with a shared experience. If everyone can be actively involved in its presentation, eg by reading or singing together, so much the better.

3 Thinking time

This usually happens in two parts: First, private reflection; and secondly, public reflection (ie the sharing of ideas in a whole group and/or small groups) usually referred to as 'conversation'.

- i) Provide individuals with the opportunity to reflect privately upon the shared stimulus. Pupils could be encouraged to find things that interested or pleased them, or confused or puzzled them, about the stimulus – things they might like to talk about; or to think about their feelings regarding the stimulus – things that provoked a reaction within them. They may wish

to record this reflection in the form of a cartoon, a speech bubble, a mind or concept map, or simply by listing some 'big ideas' in or from the stimulus.

Thinking time need not be very long in the early sessions – perhaps no more than 60 seconds – but the more the children can learn to invest in private reflection, the better. So aim to extend and celebrate this time – if only as an antidote to the pressure for quick, measurable results.

- ii) Initially, for children who have had no experience of philosophical enquiry, it is probably best to facilitate plenary conversations, eliciting responses to the stimulus from individuals, and inviting the rest of the group to respond to those responses. The aim is to establish some common interests (see page 11) on which to build some open, inviting questions.

It can help to write up some of the key words or 'big ideas' from these conversations, or even whole comments, which can sometimes be turned straight into questions, eg '*I think the Professor was rude*' could be turned into '*Was the Professor rude?*', to explore the concept of rudeness, or into '*What should be done about rude people?*', to evaluate rudeness and responses to it.

Once children have got the hang of private reflection and responding to each other's reflections, it becomes usual for the 'conversations' to be in pairs or small groups. This can be an occasion to reinforce good listening skills: supportive body language, eye contact, no interruptions, etc.



4 Question-making

Remind each group occasionally to check if their question is open or closed, and if they all agree that it's philosophical. As a variation on working as a group from the start, individuals might occasionally be asked to create their own question first, and the group negotiates which one to put forward. Initially, the facilitator writes the questions on the main board with the name of the author(s) next to it, but small groups may like to use A4 sheets/boards to write their own questions.

5 Question-airing

The questions should be reflected upon before selection begins. One approach is for each question in turn to be '**celebrated**' by someone other than the questioner(s). Another is for the whole group to look for possible **links between questions**, perhaps even categorising types of question. A third common approach, called '**Thinking Behind**', is for each group/pair/author to explain or clarify their question, followed by an opportunity for the rest of the community to raise any queries or identify issues or concepts involved within the question.

6 Question-choosing

The group will normally vote for the question(s) they would like to go forward for the discussion. This helps to give the 'community' a sense of ownership as well as allowing all contributions to be considered in a fair way. Common ways of voting apart from OPOV (One Person One Vote) are: Omnivote (voting for as many questions as you like), Voting with your Feet (standing by your favourite question), and Multivote (normally between 2 and 6 votes, sometimes distributed 'how you like' using ticks or tokens, or sometimes 'ranked', eg 3/2/1 or just 2/1). 'Immature' communities may vote 'blind'; 'mature' communities may choose a question by open consensus.

7 First thoughts

Consideration should be given to how these should be expressed, since the direction of the enquiry is often set by them. A fairly safe approach is for the person(s) who formulated the chosen question to share the thinking behind the question (if they have not already done that) and their initial thoughts, ideas and opinions about it. A more challenging approach is to invite suggestions as to how best to approach the question, eg by seeking first thoughts from a range of people, or some working definitions, or a provisional answer that might be critiqued, or a check on assumptions being made.

8 Building

The first words are followed by an invitation of responses from other members of the group. Guidance on how to facilitate this central part of the enquiry process – the part that is usually thought of as 'the enquiry' itself – is given in the later section on Facilitation (page 34). But here is a simple, practical idea that can be implemented from quite early on.

Ascribe roles to some pupils, for example scribe, idea linker, someone to keep a check on 'whether the question is being answered' / 'whether everyone who wants a say is getting one', etc. It is useful for the facilitator to ask these pupils for specific feedback, during or at the end of the enquiry (see Review below). It is worth noting that dominant or loud pupils often go quieter if they are made a 'scribe' to chart the enquiry on the board; they have a key, but quiet role!

9 Last thoughts

It is important that the group is given time at the end of the discussion to reflect upon what they have heard and upon their own thoughts, views and opinions about the question or issue that has been discussed. After a period of reflection each person should be allowed the opportunity to share their final thoughts about the question with the rest of the group, possibly writing a sentence to compare with that which they may have written in response to the question before the enquiry.

10 Review (and Planning)

This is an important step for enabling progression of skills and attitudes. Whereas 'Last Thoughts' are focussed on the **content** of the enquiry, the review is focussed on **process**. It is, in effect, formative (and self-) evaluation, and may use some of the formal evaluation tools introduced later in this course and handbook (page 45). Review is often done at the end of the day or week, rather than at the end of an enquiry session. This can enable the enquiry to run a fuller length, but also give a little more time for reflection. But since it is expected that review will lead into plans about how to follow up the enquiry (for example pursuing some research, especially on the internet, or reporting back after some 'hometalk', or a creative/curriculum project) as well as how to improve the next enquiry, it should not be left until just before that next enquiry.

Establishing a community of enquiry

Skills and dispositions

The process of negotiating a set of ground rules with the group is a vital part of creating a community of enquiry. Anyone participating in a meaningful exploration of questions and ideas needs a safe place to work and share this thinking work with others.

With younger groups, the rules are usually negotiated at the very start, and may be built on existing classroom or 'circle time' rules. With older groups, especially teenagers, 'guidelines' is a preferable term to 'rules', and it may be okay to assume that these have already been internalised – though you might always be ready to draw attention and discussion to any of them that do not seem to be 'working', for example OOPSAAT (Only One Person Speaks At A Time).

Most groups will admit the need for 'good / respectful / active listening', but this might need to be expressed more concretely, for example encouraging positive body language, such as eye contact and smiling, and readiness to respond. Other caring behaviours that keep anxiety to a minimum, such as not tolerating any type of 'put down', also usually feature.

There should also be a recognition of the need to explore the unusual or unpopular – what Joanna Haynes calls 'juggling with ideas', and John Dewey called a 'dramatic rehearsal' – where it is OK to get things wrong, because that is the purpose of a rehearsal.

Pupils should be encouraged to plan for what happens if someone breaks the rules, and to consider the use of 'time out' or 'extra thinking time', for re-phrasing and reconsidering what has been said.

Caveat!

Teachers will be aware that sensitive issues may be more likely to arise in sessions, such as philosophical enquiry, when children are encouraged to speak their minds. But disclosures, mild or serious, can happen at any time, and teachers must always exercise their professional judgement about how to deal with such cases. What might help, in advance of enquiry sessions, is to explain that they will be encouraged to share their ideas, opinions and even their feelings with the whole class, but not their secrets.

Other ideas worth considering

Participation

The right of every member of the group not to speak is always respected. However, it should equally be understood that 'not bothering' is not acceptable: there is a responsibility to engage with the group/enquiry, at least by responsive listening. Sometimes members can be encouraged to speak up via a private conversation out of class.

Self-regulation

As the sessions are less formal than some conventional lessons, much emphasis is placed on self-regulation of behaviour and thoughtful, reasonable, respectful group interaction. This may involve many stages of development, where turn-taking, eye contact and other elements of respect are practised and refined in short activities or games which enhance the practice of philosophical enquiry.

Reasonableness

Everyone is encouraged to offer ideas – but not every idea is well reasoned, or reasonable. The community of enquiry has a duty to pursue stronger or better arguments, and recognise weaker arguments, in its pursuit of good judgements. It may be important, then, to reflect on the very idea of reasonableness and on what counts as good reasoning. The following table gives some pointers in these directions.

Much of the spirit of P4C and of philosophical enquiry as encouraged in *askit* is captured in a summary of the thinking of John Dewey (1859 – 1952) from the *Blackwell Guide to Philosophy of Education*:

For Dewey, "an education that emphasizes community, communication, intelligent enquiry, and a reconstructive attitude can best serve the citizens of an ever-changing world."



Developing skills and dispositions in enquiry

Facilitator focus	Skills	Dispositions
Making it obvious that trust (between facilitator and children as well between children) and risk (intellectual and emotional) are balanced through respectful interaction between facilitator and children	Respectful listening	Willingness to listen and be interested in others Willingness to care for and about what other people say Curiosity
Using open genuine requests and offering plenty of thinking time	Sharing ideas Reflecting on ideas from all sources	Letting go of ownership and engagement with ideas regardless of ownership
Encouraging children to offer suggestions and supporting their confidence to speak aloud – small group work can decrease children’s inhibitions	Suggesting	Courage to offer ideas or possibilities to others for scrutiny Self-confidence to offer ideas that would normally remain thought but unsaid
Offering the responsibility to the children, supporting their individuality	Choosing	Confidence to make a choice and search for a justification
Being involved in wonderment, taking time to wonder with the children	Questioning	Curiosity and interest in asking and framing questions and finding out more
Highlighting the purpose of connected thinking and meaning-making and supporting any evidence of connections	Connecting	Valuing of meaning-making through linking
Valuing the use of reasons to support suggestions	Using reasons	Engagement in intellectual challenge of searching for a reason
Valuing alternatives, showing through own behaviour that a wider range of perspectives offers greater choice	Identifying different perspectives	Recognition and appreciation of the significance of other people’s views
Showing by using examples, how they can help with understanding and encouraging children to reflect on good/not good examples and how they can help in enquiry	Using examples	Endeavour to search through own experience for relevant examples and recognition that they enhance understanding
Supporting the relevance of distinctions through using them and drawing attention to them and the way they enhance understanding	Making distinctions	Valuing of sorting and categorisation to help make meaning

A table of skills and dispositions that support the development of a Community of Philosophical Enquiry

Enquiry 2

Stimulus for enquiry

Food, Glorious Food!

Food, glorious food!

Is it worth the waiting for?
 If we live 'til eighty four
 All we ever get is gru...el!
 Ev'ry day we say our prayer --
 Will they change the bill of fare?
 Still we get the same old gru...el!
 There is not a crust, not a crumb can we find,
 Can we beg, can we borrow, or cadge,
 But there's nothing to stop us from getting a thrill
 When we all close our eyes and imag...ine --

Food, glorious food!

Hot sausage and mustard!
 While we're in the mood --
 Cold jelly and custard!
 Pease pudding and saveloys!
 What next is the question?
 Rich gentlemen have it, boys --
 In-di-gestion!

Food, glorious food!

We're anxious to try it.
 Three banquets a day --
 Our favourite diet!
 Just picture a great big steak --
 Fried, roasted or stewed.
 Oh, food, Wonderful food, Marvellous food,
 Glorious food.

Food, glorious food!

What is there more handsome?
 Gulped, swallowed or chewed --
 Still worth a king's ransom.
 What is it we dream about?
 What brings on a sigh?
 Piled peaches and cream, about
 Six feet high!

Food, glorious food!

Don't care what it looks like --
 Burned! Underdone! Crude!
 Don't care what the cook's like.
 Just thinking of growing fat --
 Our senses go reeling
 One moment of knowing that
 Full-up feeling!

Food, glorious food!

What wouldn't we give for
 That extra bit more --
 That's all that we live for
 Why should we be fated to
 Do nothing but brood
 On food, Magical food, Wonderful food,
 Marvellous food
 Fabulous food, Beautiful food,
 Glorious food!

Enquiry **2** Focus on Creative Thinking

Sample plan for enquiry (Connecting and Suggesting)

Step/stage	Title	Details for facilitator	mins
1	Getting set	Connections	1 Facilitator starts a first round by naming some 'thing' (eg peaches) and the next person has to name something else that connects (eg cream). The next connects to 'cream', and so on round the group. At the end, in pairs, everyone tries to remember the sequence of 'things' or ideas. 3
			2 If time, have another go, but this time not in a set order: anyone who can make a link stands up to say it and sits down afterwards. If two people stand up at once, the one standing nearest to the previous speaker is chosen. Facilitator repeats their link for clarity. 3
2	Stimulus	View video	The lyrics should be handed out afterwards. 4
3	Reflections	Big ideas	Each person invited to fill each thought bubble next to the lyrics with a different 'big idea' / 'juicy concept' / 'theme' that the stimulus makes them think of – and perhaps a question that it leads to. 2
4	Question-making	Ideas into Questions	1 Trios or fours compare their pieces of paper and negotiate which big idea to turn into a question. 7
			2 They make their question, write it in large letters on A4, and display it on the floor.
5	Question-linking	Question-linking	Everyone invited to link any of the questions, and explain the link. (Questions may be 'lumped' together if they are very similar, but not 'merged') 8
6	Choosing	Voting with Feet (possibly STV)	1 Everyone stands by their preferred question. 3
			2 If no question has a majority, invite votes for least popular questions to be reallocated.
			3 If two questions become 'tied', decide whether to toss a coin, or split the time for inquiry.
			Total 30
7	First words	Starter Suggestions	1 Everyone invited to think of suggestions for starting, and to stand up when they are ready. 2
			2 Once 3 or 4 are standing, ask them to give their suggestions and sit down in turn. 3
8	Building (including Last 3 Speakers)	Mind Mapping	1 Emphasise the importance of linking ideas with other people's, and with the question(s). 20
			2 Encourage this by making a public Mind Map of key concepts during the inquiry.
			3 Aim for 'free flow' dialogue, but be ready to intervene to ensure 'fair play'.
			4 Also be ready to use 'Last 3 Speakers' to check whether people / pairs can remember who made the last 3 contributions and how they linked.
9	Last words	Wider Brain	Everyone invited to say how they think their 'brains' / ideas have been 'widened', with new links made. 5
10	Review/Planning	Star and Wish	Any 'stars' for people who made good links? Any 'wishes' for how people could think better together <i>Later</i>

Developing philosophical questioning

Support for enquiry

Food and The Good Life

It is a truism to say that 'Humans cannot live by bread alone'. What may take some humans a long time to get right though, is a proper balance between valuing food and valuing other things that make up a good life. Or perhaps no one ever gets that balance quite right all the time. (Maybe that is why so many are on a diet, whilst others overdo the banqueting!)

As explained in this handbook's introduction, since many philosophers have regarded the good life as a proper aim in life, it seems fitting to spend some time wondering about what role food – especially good, healthy, food – can play in that pursuit.

There lies the rub, though. What counts as good and healthy food?

Some might say that that is a question for scientists – to study the effect of vitamins, proteins, etc., and thus to determine the best 'diet' for each person.

But the effect of food is not simply physical. That is to say, it does not act only on our muscles, but also on our minds. Indeed, arguably the 'mental' effect is more important for our long term happiness; and this is not even to consider the effect of food that may be cooked and presented to us with the special ingredient, love.



The effect on our minds and moods, mentioned in the song, is one of the 'big ideas' or 'juicy concepts' that might be drawn out of the stimulus and explored more fully through the use of follow up exercises, of which there are a few samples below, after a brief account of what is meant by 'concept stretching'.

Concept stretchers for 'Food, Glorious Food!'

We referred earlier to the way in which philosophical enquiry 'stretches' people's concepts – very often by enabling them to see how one concept connects with a variety of examples or instances, or else with another concept. Hearing how other people think of things (here, we recall Pooh Bear's realisation, page 14) is often a 'mind-opener' in itself. But as well as allowing such enquiry to take its natural course, it is also possible to use deliberate interventions as 'concept-stretchers'.

Enquiry plans – sets of connecting and expanding questions – can be used, as explained earlier, and a couple of these are begun below (A and B). They are, however, deliberately kept short, inviting participants to share suggestions for further questions. The first is designed to open up more general questioning about 'the good life', in the sense of a life worth living.

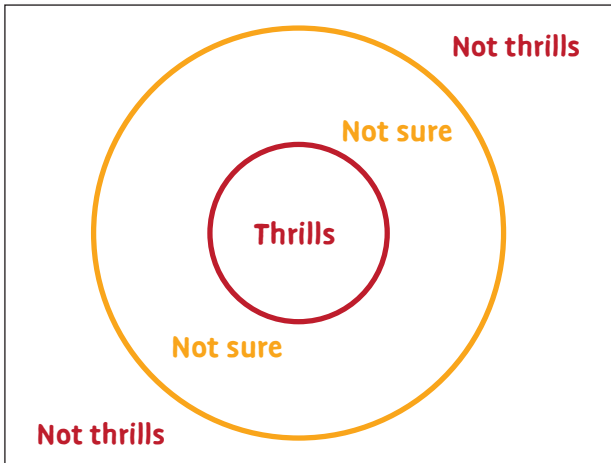
Another sort of concept-stretcher is 'Testing Examples', in which different examples are discussed, to decide whether they can be counted as examples of a concept, or not. The concept of 'thrill' is examined below in this way (c).

A Worth waiting for? What to live for

- 1 Make a list of at least 10 things that people wait for. Do these suggest different sorts or categories of 'things worth waiting for'?
- 2 Are some things more worth waiting for than others? (Examine different examples, and see if there are criteria, or reasons, for separating them into 'more' and 'less'.)
- 3 Are some meals more worth waiting for than others? If so, why?
- 4 Is it worth waiting to be a 'grown up'? ...

B Mood and food

- 1 Do some moods make people less keen on eating their food? If so, which ones, and why?
- 2 Do some moods make people more keen on eating their food? If so, is that a good thing?
- 3 If you are hungry, will any sort of food that fills your tummy make you feel in a better mood?
- 4 If you are not particularly hungry, can some sorts of food still improve your mood? If so, why?
- 5 What is it to be 'fussy' about your food, and can it ever be good for you? ...



C Getting a thrill

On a piece of A4, draw a circle nearly touching the two long sides, and then another circle, with the same centre, inside, allowing enough space to write between the circles (but also inside the inner one). Write the word 'Thrills' in the middle of the inner circle, and 'Not Thrills' outside the outer circle. Then, in pairs, write the numbers of the following examples down as 'Thrills' or 'Not Thrills', or, if you are not sure, put them in between the two circles:

- 1 Reaching the top of a mountain
- 2 Being on a winning team
- 3 Meeting the Queen
- 4 Reading a 'thriller'
- 5 Arriving at a holiday camp
- 6 Going on a sleepover
- 7 Riding on a roller coaster
- 8 Learning to ride a bike
- 9 Dreaming of flying

Discuss your decisions in pairs, or as a whole group, and see if you can decide what makes most people decide to count one thing as a thrill and not another.

Note: Exercise C can also be done using a 'concept-line' (sometimes called a 'continuum line'). Here is how these work, to examine the concept of 'skill' from 'The Professor and the Ferryman'.

Imagine (or make, *eg* with a rope) a line across the floor, one end of which represents 'not very skilled', and the other of which represents 'very skilled'. Invite people to 'locate' the following

on the line, giving reasons for their decision, and invite others to agree or disagree, also with reasons:

Juggling, Brain surgery, Designing a garden, Teaching, Calculating, Planning a pop concert, Slicing an onion, Walking on a tightrope, Tying a shoelace, Cooking a healthy meal, Meditating

You might add a few examples of your own, or, indeed, think of other continuum/concept lines that might be linked to 'The Professor and the Ferryman', *eg* polite < > rude, or to 'Food, Glorious Food', *eg* handsome < > ugly.

MTV in philosophy

Before moving on from this rich stimulus, it can also be used to introduce the acronym of MTV, standing for Meaning, Truth and Value. If we are encouraging children to question what they hear, this acronym provides a simple mnemonic for them to use and practise. Here are some lines from the stimulus, and the task can be set to question them either for their Meaning ('Is the meaning clear, or do we have to think about it?') or for their Truth ('Is the claim true, or is there reason to doubt it?') or for their Value ('Is what is said important, or of no great consequence?')

- 1 There's nothing to stop us from getting a thrill, when we all close our eyes and imagine food.
- 2 Food, glorious food! Hot sausage and mustard!
- 3 Rich gentlemen have it, boys – indigestion!
- 4 Three banquets a day – our favourite diet!
- 5 Don't care what it looks like – Burned! Underdone! Crude! – Don't care what the cook's like.
- 6 Just thinking of growing fat – our senses go reeling.
- 7 That extra bit more – that's all that we live for.



Valuing questions

The Question quadrant

In his book, *20 Thinking Tools* (2006, ACER Press, ISBN 0-86431-501-5), Professor Phil Cam, a leading light of *P4C* in Australia, explains and elaborates a ‘tool’ that he came across in a primary classroom.

The teacher had wanted to develop her children’s questions away from closed questions that were directly about the stimulus towards more open and general questions that invited discussion and enquiry. She had come up with a quadrant (as in a graph) with two axes. The horizontal one ran along from ‘closed’ to ‘open’. The vertical one ran from ‘about the story’ down to ... ‘not about the story’.

Cam’s own labels for the vertical axis are ‘textual’ and ‘intellectual’, but we have changed the labels in the example below, partly because not all stimuli are texts. The point is that this quadrant enables children of all ages to classify questions into four different types; and then they grow in confidence and competence at formulating questions of the type that are clearly more suitable for open and sustained enquiry.

Participants in the course will be given the chance to ‘practise’ classifying questions using this quadrant (see below), but they will also be encouraged to think of other ways of classifying questions.

An elementary way of doing this, for example, is to consider the main question words made famous by Rudyard Kipling in his verse from *‘The Elephant’s Child’*:

**“ I keep six honest serving-men
(They taught me all I knew);
Their names are What and Why and When
And How and Where and Who.”**

Of these, *When*, *Where* and *Who* almost always begin closed questions (as does *Which*), whereas *How* and *Why* usually begin open questions. What is an interesting case, which children might usefully investigate by examples, and the same might go for questions that begin, variously:

Is/Was ...

Does/Did ...

Can/Could ...

Will/Would ...

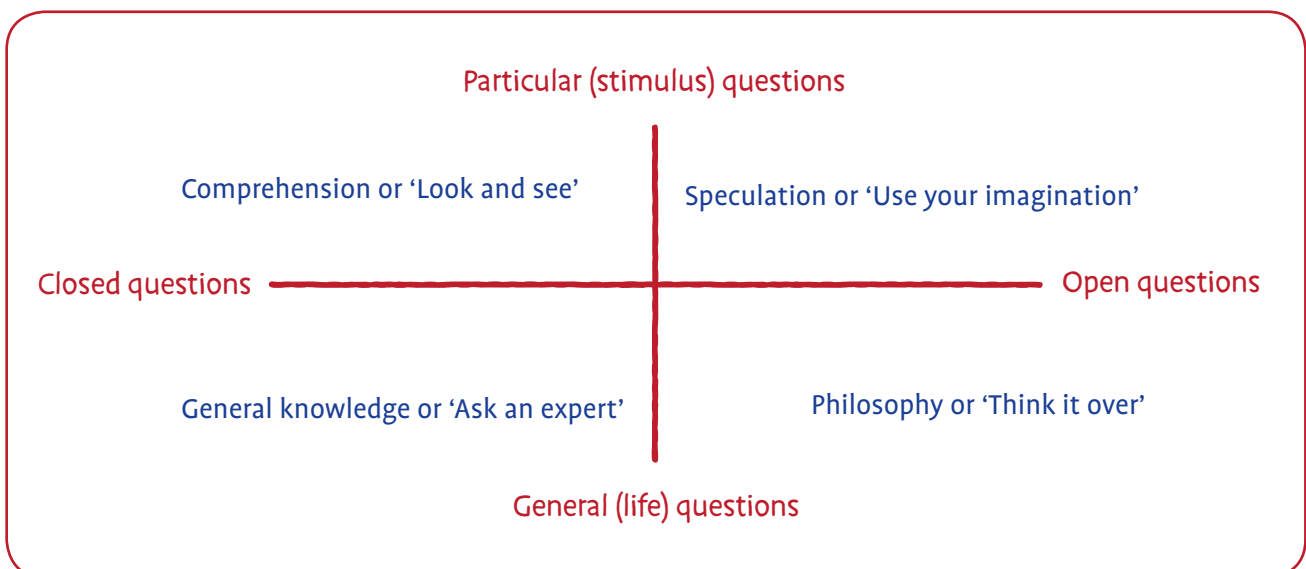
Shall/Should

Must/Ought ...

Might ...

Questions beginning with these words may always seem ‘closed’ because they invite a ‘Yes/No’ answer but, as long as there is disagreement about the answer, they are, in effect, open questions.

Roughly, the more ways in which children themselves can distinguish the forms and functions of questions, the more likely they will be to develop the will and skill to ask them – not only in *askit* sessions but in the other strands, and across the curriculum.



Questioning for thinking

Children's questioning skills can be considerably enhanced if facilitators themselves model thoughtful questioning. This is easier said than done, as many studies of teacher questioning have rather worryingly shown.

An article by Steven Hastings in the *TES* on 4/7/03 quoted research by Ted Wragg to the effect that only 8% of primary teacher questions were 'higher order' – ie demanding of careful thought by the students. (A 1989 Lincoln University study of higher order questions asked by secondary teachers, however, gave a figure of just 4%!) Yet, according to Hastings, a review of 37 projects in 1988 suggested that increasing the proportion of higher-order



questions to 50% brought significant improvement in student attitude and performance. A huge gap has to be made up by the profession, then.

Though it is likely that 'teaching to the SATS' exercised a pull towards more closed, lower-order questions in the 1990's, this may have been counter-balanced by a greater focus on Thinking Skills since they were written into Curriculum 2000. *askit* is leading the way towards better teacher questioning, and the Level 1 course is designed not just to refresh teachers' own curiosity and readiness to ask bigger, more open questions, but also to increase their skill in using a range of 'small' questions which challenge pupils to think harder and longer. Such questions are sometimes called 'procedural' questions, but 'probing' might be a better word for them.

The following examples are based on Matthew Lipman's 'Philosophy in the Classroom'.

- **Eliciting topics**
What do you find interesting/puzzling about that?
- **Eliciting opinions**
Why did you find that interesting/puzzling?
What do you think about it?
- **Aiding expression and confirming pupil's contribution**
You're saying that ... (use pupil's own words)....?
Now, let's make sure we've heard you right
- **Clarification**
Could you put that more clearly? (encouraging reflection; give time)
Are you saying that ...?
Would anyone else like to say what they think A is saying...? (check similarity)
- **Explication**
Is the important point in what you're saying...?
- **Meaning 1: definition of terms**
What is a ...?
What do you mean by...?
Can anyone give us an example?
- **Meaning 2: implications (ie what strictly follows)**
Do you mean...?
Are you implying...?
Doesn't it follow that...?
- **Meaning 3: suggestions**
Are you suggesting that...?
Aren't you hinting that...?
- **Assumptions**
What are you taking for granted?
What are you assuming?
Aren't you thinking that...?



The nature of philosophical questioning

The nature of philosophical questioning

One way of deciding whether a question is philosophical is to ask whether it fits into one of the traditional 'areas' of philosophy. These are listed in Appendix 3 (page 56), and most people would have an intuitive sense of most of them. They can generally recognise an ethical question (about what is right or wrong), for example, or a metaphysical one (about what exists other than matter).

Another approach, however, has been suggested by two leading P4C thinkers, Ann Margaret Sharp (USA) and Laurance Splitter (Australia). In their book, 'Teaching for Better Thinking', they argue that 'philosophical' questions almost always contain concepts that share certain characteristics. So, if a question invites discussion about that sort of concept, it could be counted as philosophical. Here is an account of those characteristics:

The value of philosophical questioning in the curriculum

It will be obvious how this approach fits well with the 'Big Ideas' approach introduced earlier in the course/handbook, where to identify an idea as 'big' was, in effect, to suggest that it was philosophical.

The general account of such ideas/concepts given then translates pretty well into the 3Cs: ideas that most people would find interesting to talk about would certainly be common and central, and almost certainly contestable.

What may not be so obvious, though, is how this approach leads to other powerful arguments for philosophical enquiry to be regarded as central to learning and teaching in a modern curriculum.

The three Cs of philosophical concepts

- **Common**
- **Central**
- **Contestable**

By 'common', they mean that the concepts are of everyday concern. One could cite some of the 'big' ideas of philosophy, such as 'True', 'Good' and 'Beautiful', and related concepts such as 'honest', 'important', and 'perfect'. But there are plenty of other common concepts that are worth enquiring into philosophically, such as 'animal', 'artificial', 'attitude' ...

By 'central', they mean that the concepts are ones which are at the heart of how human beings think of themselves and other people and things. Again, one could cite 'big' ideas, such as 'God', 'Time', and 'World', or 'smaller' but equally powerful ideas

such as 'Self', 'Family', 'Home'. And there are less obvious concepts, such as 'cause', 'possible', 'same' and 'different', that might be just as central to our thinking, and worthy of enquiry.

As to 'contestable' concepts, Sharp and Splitter are making the point that all of the above concepts, and philosophical concepts in general, seem to be hard for everyone to agree about. Not only does there seem to be disagreement about their meaning, but often people disagree about their value.

(Take the classic ideals of the French revolution, for example: Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. It is hard to see a time when everyone will agree exactly what they mean, and which is the most valuable or important. But this is not to say, of course, that it is pointless enquiring into such concepts, and 'applying' our understandings of them.)

What is a philosophical question? – by concepts

Either

- 1 In pairs and then as a whole group, look back at the questions created in the two enquiries so far, and identify the concepts in them that could be said to be Common, Central or Contestable (or, most strikingly) all three.

Or

- 2 In pairs make an 'A to Z' of concepts that would be philosophical according to the 3C criteria, (eg Art, British, Courage, etc.) N.B. You might try to use words that are common to children as well as adults – the sort that could go into a 'Big Ideas' chart.

Argument 1:

A first argument was made in the Introduction: that the thinking skills and communicative dispositions cultivated by *askit* were amongst the most important for children to develop for their future lives.

Argument 2:

It can also be claimed, with confidence from studies and student stories, that these dispositions and skills, practised regularly and systematically in *askit* sessions, translate immediately into better learning across the school curriculum.

Children will not only be better motivated to learn through asking questions, but will be better able to process their learning through reasoning about it.

Argument 3:

This argument is that nowadays good or ‘deep’ learning is increasingly seen as more than just the accumulation and regurgitation of information.

For sure, children can be drilled to ‘learn’ dates in History or definitions in Science, but it is the understanding of the significance of data that counts as worthwhile, lifelong learning. And such understanding is only achieved by making sense of information, in relation to the key concepts, or big ideas, in the field, whether that be *force* and *revolution* in History, say, or *force* and *revolution* in Science.

Philosophical enquiry provides the best practice at making sense of big ideas/concepts. The approach that it practises – of asking questions and making links, with life and other learning, to gain more understanding of concepts – is precisely the approach that will enable children to master the ‘big ideas’ that shape the world (and, thereby, shape the ‘subjects’ into which we partition the world).

Connection with other strands of Open Futures

‘Subjects’, incidentally, need not mean only the traditional curriculum subjects. It can and should include systematic activities and substantial topics or projects.

So, there are big ideas in gardening (eg seeds, growth, environment, seasons, nutrition, protection); in cooking (eg recipe, balance, taste, diet, presentation, variety); and in filming (eg subject, story, view, recording, selection, reviewing, editing).

And there could – even should – be creative projects within these fields, ideally connected with other big ideas in the curriculum. There will be more about projects later in this course/handbook.

James Nottingham:
from ‘Your Granny or your Goldfish’

“ We have got it written into our curriculum, so that twice a week we have philosophy lessons. We share a stimulus of one sort or another. Now, that might be a picture; it might be a short story or folk tale; we might even listen to a bit of music; and we create comments from that stimulus. We then sit back and look at those comments, and then think, right, what are the issues involved in those comments? – and then we create for ourselves philosophical questions.”



Choosing stimuli

For their first enquiries, most people find picture books or purpose-written stories (such as 'The Professor and the Ferryman') give the most scope for children to begin thinking philosophically. They have the security of being familiar with the genre, but can fairly easily be moved to start wondering more widely for themselves.

After a while, though, both pupils and teachers find other things that stimulate their wonderings, and actively seek out interesting, even intriguing stimuli. The following have all been used:

- News articles
- Picture books
- Photographs
- Art works
- Dialogues
- Short extracts from novels
- Poems
- Songs
- Sayings, proverbs, quotations
- Comics
- Film extracts
- TV or You-tube clips
- Artefacts or objects
- Essays
- Real events or incidents

Note that it would be unusual to use entire books (or even films) as a stimulus, because there would normally be too many avenues to follow up. On the other hand, although occasionally single sentences or even single words can be the launchpad for enquiry, the norm is to choose a stimulus or starter that might have some variety of themes or possible avenues to explore, without being overloaded.

The themes do not have to be very traditional philosophical ones, such as justice, truth, etc. Indeed, one of the attractive features of the askit approach is that it has considerably broadened the range of themes or concepts that seem fit for philosophical enquiry.

Suggestion

(to follow up before the second day)

Participants are encouraged to look for a possible stimulus in between the end of the first day and the beginning of the second – scouring their homes, or the internet, or whatever – and to bring what they come up with to the second day.

This will provide everyone with a range of possible ideas/stimuli, which they could compare and celebrate before, or after, they have further discussion about what might make for a good enquiry.

Review Activity

(at start of second day)

Here is a multiple-choice 'quiz', designed for fun, but also enabling some revisiting of key points from day 1.



Review activity quiz

- 1 Tutors of Level 1 are expected to model**
 - a readiness
 - b resolution
 - c reasonableness
- 2 The foci of the National Curriculum and Open Futures explicitly include building**
 - a character
 - b skills
 - c enquiry
- 3 P4C stands for Philosophy for**
 - a Children
 - b Citizens
 - c Communities
- 4 P4C was the brainchild of Professor Matthew Lipman at Columbia University, New York**
 - a in the late 1950's
 - b in the late 1960's
 - c in the late 1970's
- 5 Lipman saw reasonableness as the path to the ultimate goal of education, namely**
 - a a good job
 - b good judgement
 - c a good life
- 6 Lipman was influenced by the Russian psychologist, Lev Vygotsky, who emphasised the importance in learning of**
 - a coordination
 - b collaboration
 - c consolidation
- 7 The ancient Greek word, philosophia, meant love of**
 - a wealth
 - b wisdom
 - c women
- 8 Who said, "Wisdom begins in Wonder"?**
 - a Socrates
 - b Bertrand Russell
 - c Plato
- 9 Complete the quotation about John Dewey:**
"an education that emphasizes community, communication, intelligent enquiry, and a reconstructive attitude can best serve the citizens of..."
 - a A war-torn world
 - b A globalised world
 - c An ever-changing world
- 10 Charles Peirce is credited with coining the phrase 'community of enquiry' in respect of**
 - a philosophers
 - b astronomers
 - c scientists
- 11 Which of these principles might be common to all sorts of communities of enquiry?**
 - a clarity
 - b precision
 - c kindness
- 12 Two of the 4Cs are Collaborative and Critical (Thinking). What are the other two?**
 - a Creative
 - b Compassionate
 - c Caring
- 13 The spirit of enquiry is very different from the spirit of debate, which originally meant**
 - a beat up
 - b speak up
 - c beat down
- 14 Enquiry originally meant**
 - a hide and seek
 - a seek and find
 - c seek into
- 15 Arrange these (jumbled) 10 steps into the standard order:**
 - First thoughts
 - Question-asking
 - Building
 - Thinking time
 - Last thoughts
 - Presentation
 - Getting set
 - Review
 - Question-making
 - Question-choosing

Note: More than one answer could be correct, but in that case do not tick all three – choose the two most emphasised in the course so far.

Developing facilitation

Introducing children to philosophical enquiry



Before the first philosophical enquiry session with the class or group the teacher/facilitator will need to prepare the session that introduces the class to *askit*. The following guidance is intended to assist teachers in this task.

Initial explanation – younger children

For younger children, philosophical enquiry can be explained as a way of thinking together and sharing thoughts and questions about 'Big Ideas'.

"It allows other people to see what you think and, if they want to, lets them to build on those ideas. Also, they share their thoughts, and you can add to their ideas."

"It is important to think your own thoughts so you don't have to think exactly the same as other people, even if they are your close friends."

"In philosophy everyone has to try to give a reason for what they think, so the word 'because' is very important."

"Sometimes people say such good things that other people change their minds because of what they have heard. We call this learning from each other."

Initial explanation – older children and students

For older children and students, the explanation would be more detailed. The process of philosophical enquiry involves all students in considering and then questioning the concepts or 'Big Ideas' they identify from reading, looking at or listening to the stimulus or starting materials. These questions are then shared, thought about carefully and explained more before the students select one that they find most interesting to discuss further.

This discussion is linked, so that opinions and ideas build on each other and relate to each other.

Some ideas don't link and sometimes they are different from all the others, but our work is to make sure we listen carefully to all ideas, so we can decide on which ones we think are the strongest.

Philosophical enquiry offers children a thinking place where their opinion matters and they can make meaning through talking to each other, and find strong reasons to support their opinions.

Creating a collaborative learning environment

When first working with children using philosophical enquiry, the collaborative learning environment encourages the thinking and the talking to become the focus of the learning. The children and the facilitator learn to focus differently; away from the teacher as the centre of the learning, towards sharing questions and ideas. Students become co-enquirers more collaborative, less competitive learners, who make meaning together through enquiry.

EYFS – pre-philosophical skills, language and disposition development

Enquiry sessions at EY do not usually follow the standard pattern used in the Junior school, for obvious reasons: the children work for shorter periods of time, initially at least, on learning and developing the skills, language and dispositions necessary to support more formal enquiries.

These skills might involve:

- Speaking and listening
- Observation and memory
- Turn-taking and patience
- Respecting others
- Making connections or distinctions
- Making choices
- Offering reasons
- Categorising
- Asking open questions

In an activity where children make links between pictures, and say why they connected them, the facilitator would model and encourage the use of the words *link*, *connection*, *choice*, *reason*, *why*, *because*, as well as perhaps *agree* and *wonder* – and the words used as reasons to connect them which might range from colours to textures, styles and content – to teach the vocabulary necessary for enquiry.

The following activities would be appropriate for short 5-8 minute sessions with groups of 5 – 8 children:

Choices and reasons

- Using a collection of items – which do you like best and why? Pictures, toys, buttons, flowers, cars – mixed up items
- Using stories they have heard during the week – which characters would you most like to be – what would you then be able to do?
- Using colours or shapes – which is your favourite and why? If you could choose, what would you make that colour (clothes, room, toys, the sky, grass, streets etc.) or that shape? (the moon, a flower, a car, a tree, a mobile phone, a book, a climbing frame)

You will notice that the facilitator is posing the questions at this early stage and the children are exploring the skills of choosing and finding reasons. These may need to be carefully worked through at an early stage, with the facilitator offering a range of possibilities for the child to choose from if they can't think of a reason themselves. The language clarification and repetition by the facilitator is a key element of the session, as with so much work at this stage.

Over a period of time, as the children become confident in talking to each other, they will begin to emulate the questions, language and interventions used by the facilitator. Each suggested activity above may become part of a series of sessions designed to support the focus skill, which is practised in other areas of the free flow or group sessions during the following few weeks, so that there is an integration of specific skill building into the general curriculum. Alongside these skill builder sessions, story-time can be structured to encourage children to ask 'wondering questions', which can form the starting point for enquiry.

Key Stage 1 Philosophical enquiry as making sense of the world; questioning for meaning

An introduction to philosophical enquiry at KS1 might focus on philosophy as the way in which we make sense of the world, through asking questions.

Having considered the above list of questions, and tuned the children's attention to conceptual questions, the way is open for them to try to create some questions from a stimulus or

story. Encourage them to sort their own questions into two groups: easy or 'one right answer' questions and not so easy or 'wondering questions'. Having answered the first group, the rest are then available to consider, clarify and select the question(s) most interesting to pursue in the dialogue. This is a good place to end the first session, with the discussion or dialogue part of the enquiry scheduled for later in the week and the focus question on display in the classroom.

This break allows for the children to reflect on the question(s) between question-making and first words, offering a chance to think independently and share the focus question with others or at home before discussing it in class. It also offers the facilitator the chance to plan a series of possible interventions s/he might use to deepen or broaden the discussion. Here is a sample enquiry plan, based on a theme from the picture book, 'Something Else'.

How do you know someone is really your friend?

Enquiry plan

- What do friends do? What don't friends do? Are these lists always separate?
- How do friends feel or think about each other?
- In the story (Something Else) who were friends? How do we know they were friends?
- Who were not friends and how do we know that?
- Is there a difference between knowing and thinking that we know? Does this matter?
- In our other reading, can we think of examples of friends who are 'really friends'?
- Do friends have to be real?
- Can you be friends with animals, toys, imaginary creatures, people you don't know – how?
- Is there a difference between a 'friend who is real' and a 'friend who is a real friend'?

A 'last thoughts' round might feature a small group '2 minute talk' focussing on:

- What are the 3 most important things about a friend who is 'really your friend'?

Or this summative question could provide an additional exercise to follow up the enquiry.

The 'How do you know if someone is really your friend?' enquiry plan draws our attention to the concept of friendship, and how one might make sense of it – through considering action and

non-action, thinking and feeling. It takes us back to the story to search for criteria and examples, then to other stories for further examples. Then it brings us to personal experience through focussing on real/imaginary/other cases – but asking us to refine our criteria, before re-visiting the original question, with a supplementary exercise before last words.

Philosophically, the question offers scope to explore friendship, knowledge, belief and reality, as well as the skills of reasoning, clarifying, categorizing, justifying and seeking good criteria.

It is this stage of facilitator preparation which is vital in identifying the possible areas for deepening the dialogue, even if, as is usual, much of the preparation is not used immediately.

The evaluation and subsequent session development allows for other conceptual and skill work to be explored and enhanced, so the enquiry process is one that rolls forwards from the first session, initially according to the direction of the children's questions.

The questions are important, because they help us understand the world and make sense of things that don't have 'easy answers'. The following question list may help here:

- **What is the first letter in the alphabet?**
- **How do you know someone is really your friend?**
- **What is the name of your road?**
- **How many children are there in our class?**
- **Are some toys only for girls to play with?**
- **Is it fair to have a winner?**

By asking the children which questions they can answer easily, with an answer they are sure is correct, you will be left with the questions that could be called 'I wonder' questions (some of which will be philosophical or have a context that allows them to be philosophically investigated) – these are good for discussion because there may be many different possible answers, and reasons for 'making up your mind'.

Key Stage 2 **Philosophical enquiry as the pursuit of wisdom; questioning for value**

At KS2 an introduction to philosophical enquiry could start from the children's familiarity with philosophy – do any of them know what is involved or what philosophy is about? First thoughts can be listed and revisited after the first few enquiry sessions for review and modification from their own experience.

One philosophical activity they may have identified during the exercise, is the search for wisdom. Working at Y5&6, can the children think of examples of wise people? It may be easier to begin by finding examples of unwise people – the key activity here is to try to find criteria for either – what is it that makes someone (un)wise? The listing of these criteria will help them to decide what they think. A follow up question could be to ask if all the people in each list are always (un)wise? Here we search for consistency. It is important to make time available for this activity as it attunes the children's minds to what wisdom is and why it is worth striving for.

These activities offer children the chance to practise the necessary thinking skills of making choices, ordering, using reasons to justify choices and reflection on their choices, having reviewed those of others. We end with a suggestion that could be adapted for use before introducing children of any age to philosophical enquiry.

In preparation for the first enquiry session, the search for rich or juicy concepts from stories or other stimuli is also worth practising. This can be done conventionally, using a story, picture or other resource for a full enquiry, or as an activity prior to using the 10 steps.





What questions could the children ask about the picture, the flowers, or about what the picture leads them to wonder about? Individually, give them 2 or 3 minutes to jot down as many questions as they can – try for at least 5 each. Younger children could work in small groups for this part of the activity if preferred. Then, in groups of 4-6, sort the questions into groups – those that have a single correct answer and those that can be answered in a variety of possible ways.

You can see that the above exercise is a modification of the Phil Cam question quadrant exercise explained earlier in the handbook.

The above lists can be used in many ways – children can supply the answers they know to Column 1 questions and research the

Single correct answer questions	Questions with several possible answers
Examples:	Examples:
What type of flower are they?	Are the flowers dead or alive?
What season do Chrysanthemums flower?	What is life?
Are they always pink?	When do flowers start to die?
How long do they last in water?	Why did someone pick these particular flowers?
What conditions do plants need for life?	Why do we think flowers are beautiful?
Are they all the same?	What is it that makes something beautiful?
Why are the flowers all pink?	Are pictures of beautiful things as beautiful as the real thing?

answers to the rest. They may decide that some C1 questions can be modified to then go in C2. Column 2 will contain some questions that are mostly imaginative, some that are related to the picture but more philosophical, and some that are less related to the picture (general questions) and also philosophical. Questions in Column 2 will generally initiate richer dialogues.

It is the facilitator's job to help the children move from specific to more general questions, but this process takes time and they will need a context to return to, so don't dismiss the questions that still relate to the picture – they just require a different emphasis from the facilitator.

Asking the children to search out the 'Big Ideas' from the Column 2 questions attunes them to the conceptual richness of philosophical questions, which will be a useful technique to apply in subsequent enquiries. It also will show them a difference between philosophical and imaginative questions, as the latter will usually be conceptually less rich.

Facilitating enquiry and learning

Roles and recommendations

The role of the facilitator

The title 'facilitator' is used to try to differentiate the role from the traditional one of the teacher as the fount of knowledge. In phrases coined by an ICT educator, teachers in the 21st century should no longer see themselves as 'the sage on the stage', but as 'the guide on the side'.

Matthew Lipman:
from *Socrates for 6 year olds*

“Children in a classroom, or philosophers, will tack back and forth like a boat going into the wind – they will go this direction, they will go that direction. But on the whole, they go forward, and that’s the difference between a philosophical dialogue and a mere conversation: there’s a forward movement.”

'Guide' is, in fact, an established metaphor for one of the roles that a philosophical facilitator takes on: guiding an enquiry towards better understanding of what to believe or do.

Literally, of course, a 'facilitator' is someone who makes things easier for others (Latin 'facile' = easy), and certainly philosophical facilitators want to help others, particularly children, to think things out for themselves. But it is worth noting that this could involve, from time to time, the need to be challenging, and not to take the 'easy' path of just enabling everyone to say whatever comes into their heads.

Not only is a community of enquiry a group of people that think together – which requires a careful discipline of its own – but also a group of people that are trying to think critically and creatively.

Clearly, then, if an enquiry lacks criticality (the questioning of criteria for good judgement) or creativity (the expression of different ways of thinking) the facilitator has prime responsibility for ensuring that contributions are relevant and constructive.

This does not mean that he or she has to inject critical comments or creative solutions of her own: the aim is to elicit these from the community. Some explicit models/examples may be necessary in the early days, of course, and there is an ongoing need for good thinking skills or 'moves' to be made explicit – for example, calling for examples, to enrich meaning.



However there are plenty of other ways of eliciting good ideas from the community, and further recommendations are given in the next few pages.

Returning to the general picture briefly, it will, of course, always be some part of a teacher's role to impart knowledge, but, with information, and indeed misinformation, now more available than ever via the internet, it will increasingly be teachers' responsibility to assist children in processing 'information'. Developing the role of facilitator as philosophical 'guide' will enable teachers to model and encourage appropriate practices, such as questioning, reasoning, evaluating and generating alternative interpretations and ideas, in other lessons across the curriculum.

One other point to emphasise at this stage is that a prime responsibility of the philosophical facilitator is to cultivate the social and emotional security that will enable members of the group to contribute their best to the enquiry. This is the need for careful discipline just mentioned. The role is similar to that of a chair or referee who is charged with seeing 'fair play'. Or another helpful metaphor is that of the 'guardian' of the ethos of the community. But, again, it is better to involve the whole group in trying to deal with any interpersonal problems that arise in the course of the enquiry – the aim being for the group to self-facilitate, as well as for individuals to self-manage.

Key elements of thinking and facilitation

From Fisher, R. *‘Teaching Thinking’*, Cassell 1998

Thinking includes a number of important elements that a facilitator can model and encourage to provide forward movement in a discussion. The facilitator is there to provide positive cognitive interventions that help take the discussion forward.

During the discussion the facilitator needs to be aware of opportunities to focus attention on the key elements of thinking.

These include...

- **Questioning**
Asking good questions to provide a focus for the enquiry.
- **Reasoning**
Requesting reasons or evidence to support arguments and judgements.
- **Defining**
Clarifying concepts through making connections, distinctions, and comparisons.
- **Speculating**
Generating ideas and alternative viewpoints through imaginative thinking.

- **Testing for truth**
Gathering information, evaluating evidence, examples and counter examples.
- **Expanding ideas**
Sustaining and extending lines of thought and argument.
- **Summarizing**
Abstracting key points or general rules from a number of ideas or instances.

Strategies to extend and develop student thinking include:

- **Thinking time**
Encourage pauses for thought or some moments of quiet meditation on a topic. Remember to provide at least 3 seconds thinking time after you have asked a question and 3 seconds thinking time after a child gives an answer
- **Think—pair—share**
Allow individual thinking time about a question, invite discussion of the question with a partner, then open up for class discussion



- Ask follow-ups**
Ask children to extend or qualify what they said by asking questions that challenge their thinking such as 'Why?', 'Do you agree or disagree?' 'Can you say more?', 'Can you give an example?', 'Describe how you arrived at that answer' (see Questioning for Thinking)
- Withhold judgement**
Respond to student answers in a non-evaluative way eg a positive but neutral response such as 'Thank you', 'Ok', 'That's interesting', 'A-ha', 'I see'.
- Invite the whole group to respond**
Encourage a response from the whole group by saying things such as; 'How many people agree/disagree with that point of view?' (Hands/thumbs up, down or to side). You can also ask questions such as 'Having heard that what questions might we ask?'
- Ask for a summary**
Promote active listening by asking for a summary of what has been said eg 'Could you summarise Kim's point?', 'Can you explain what Jane has just said?', 'Can you tell me the arguments so far?'
- Play devil's advocate**
Challenge students to give reasons for their views by presenting opposing points of view, or by asking students to be devil's advocates, 'Who can think of a different point of view/ an argument against that?'
- Invite a range of responses**
Model open mindedness by inviting students to consider different view points: 'There is no single correct answer to this question. I want you to consider alternatives'.
- Encourage student questioning**
Invite students to ask their own questions before/during and/ or after discussion. 'Has anyone a question about what has been said?' etc.



Troubleshooting advice for successful facilitation

- **Are the concepts involved problematic? Are the pupils finding them relevant or meaningful?**

If not you could suggest dilemmas, challenge concepts and identify any inconsistencies.

- **Are too many facts being stated or too many authorities being referred to?**

Try to encourage the pupils to question all statements of fact. Alternatively pose questions or counter arguments for these facts.

- **Are the pupils listening to each other so as to build upon and question each others' ideas?**

Introduce the language of connections and building upon them and reinforce this by saying *'How does that connect/link to what X has said?'* Model questioning and build questioning games into the thinking circle. You can tell them that you have been talking too much and are now going to opt out so they need to question each other.



- **Are too many ideas being introduced that the focus of the discussion is becoming lost?**

Track the discussion with key points on the board, in a 'concept map' or 'mind map' – possibly asking a pupil to do this. Keep referring pupils to the original question, eg *'How does that point help us to understand the question?'*

- **Are you contributing too much? Are the pupils talking to you rather than to each other?**

This may be likely to happen at the beginning but try to decrease the amount you contribute to the discussion and make the pupils more responsible for it. Encourage pupils to develop eye contact with each other rather than with you. Don't act as an authority: flip any questions back to the group to answer. Move your place in the circle each time. Stay silent so they have to speak – but associate silence with thinking time. Use friendship groups during the discussion for short clarification tasks.

- **Are pupils being disrespectful or fearful of contributing?**

Discuss 'what makes a good discussion' (a meta-discussion). Re-establish rules positively by emphasising and praising those who are following them well. Remember that it is the quality of thought that is important and it is equally valuable to be listening as it is speaking.

- **Too many anecdotes or personal stories that can go off on their own tangent?**

Don't let these escalate. Have a few, then make comparisons or contrasts, and analyse motives, responses, reactions, consequences within the stories. Ask for generalisations: *'Does that always happen?'* or *'Would that always be the case?'*

- **Is the group/class too large and not all can or will contribute?**

Split them into groups: pairs, three's, four's can help in many ways, not least because it means the pupils can move about and form a constructive break. Use a method such as 'thumbs up' if you want to speak and encourage pupils to give others a chance to contribute if they see their thumb up. One possibility is to give everyone three cards, each contribution "costing" one card.

Enquiry 3

Stimulus for enquiry

Tomato Bursts – food for fun

A news article adapted from *Science Daily* 4 March 2009

Which would you rather eat?

- Carrots or X-ray Vision Carrots?
- Dinosaur Broccoli Trees or Broccoli?
- Peas or Power Peas?
- Tomato Bursts or Tomatoes?

‘Cool names can make for cool foods,’ says the author of a scientific study into food labels for young children.

His study of 186 four year old children found that children ate nearly twice as many carrots when they were given exciting names like ‘X-ray Vision Carrots’.

He says that ‘giving a food a fun name will make kids think it will be more fun to eat’.

A restaurant study showed this also worked at an adult level, because people expected something more interesting or exciting just from the description of the food.

One researcher thought the reason might be to do with imagination. If the imagination starts to work because of the interesting food description, perhaps this is why the appetite grows?

Children’s activity

An alternative to the sample shown

- 1 Using the four examples in the article, ask the children to ‘blind vote’ for the options they find most attractive. Get a sense of which vegetable names are most popular.
- 2 Then ask the children to move to one side or other of the classroom, depending on their choices – exciting vegetable names on one side, usual vegetable names on the other.
- 3 Ask them then to discuss their choices and try to find the 3 most compelling reasons why their choice was best.
- 4 Then ask them to nominate a person to be their ‘market stall holder’ – who has to try to interest people in their vegetables by role playing a market seller, using their vegetable to attract customers to buy their vegetables, just from the descriptions.
- 5 Each group has a chance to try to sell their vegetables – then everyone has the option of moving places according to what they heard – does anyone move? If so, what were their reasons? Does this prompt any questions – especially about the claims used and the truthfulness of the claims?

Enquiry **3** Focus on Critical Thinking

Sample plan for enquiry (Questioning and Reasoning)

Step/stage	Title	Details for facilitator	mins
1 Getting set	Would you rather?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Children choose from the 4 carrot pictures over the page: which they would rather eat – and why? Children suggest as many reasons as they can why each is most appealing. Ditto, for why each is least appealing. 	6
2 Stimulus	Listen and picture	Facilitator reads the article slowly to group, inviting them to make pictures in their minds.	2
3 Thinking time	Pooling ideas	Individuals call out ideas prompted by the activity and stimulus – to be written on board.	3
4 Question-making	Question fest	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Individuals proceed to write as many questions as they can, prompted by these ideas. Fours share and discuss their questions, and agree on one of them to put forward. They write their question IN LARGE LETTERS on A4, and display it on the floor. 	3 7
5 Question-airing	Thinking behind	Each group is invited to share the thinking behind their question.	4
6 Question-choosing	3/2/1	Individuals choose their 3 favourite questions, ranking them: 'most' (3 votes – stand up), 2nd (2 votes – 2 hands) to '3rd' (1 vote – 1 hand).	5
			Total
7 First thoughts	Write to reply	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Everyone invited to use their paper to write a sentence or two in response to the question. Anyone who wants to read out what they have written is invited to do so. 	5
8 Building (including Middle Words)	Reasonable responses	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasise the importance of linking ideas with other people's, and with the question(s). Encourage this by making a public Mind Map of key concepts during the enquiry. Aim for 'free flow' dialogue, but be ready to intervene to ensure 'fair play'. Also be ready to use 'Last 3 speakers' to check whether people / pairs can remember who made the last 3 contributions and how they linked. 	10 10
9 Last thoughts	Next questions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Everyone to write down a question that they would still want to ask. Everyone given the chance, in turn, to read out their question. 	1 4
10 Review/Planning	www...ebi	Pairs discuss 'what went well', and make suggestions for 'even better if'.	

Enquiry 3

Support for enquiry

Which would you rather eat and why?



These pictures correspond to the sample plan for enquiry on the previous page.

Possible lines of research and development

Mainly for fun

Visit the Carrot Museum website www.carrotmuseum.co.uk/trivia.html where there are various 'trivia' about this common vegetable. In order to engage actively with these, small groups might be encouraged to select 10 trivia that they quite liked, and to turn them into multiple choice questions, with which they could quiz each other.

More on names

Visit www.garden.ie/howtogrow.aspx, a gardening website in Ireland, where you can click on different pages for different vegetables. Explore the varieties (different names) of a number of vegetables, and make a record of some of the more interesting names. What makes them interesting? Are they all descriptive, or do some need interpretation or imagination?

More on growing

The nursery rhyme, 'Mary, Mary, quite contrary, How does your garden grow?' is literally asking how (well) a garden is growing, but some interpretations of the rhyme suggest that the Mary referred to is a Queen (of either England or Scotland) and the 'garden' is her whole country (See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mary,_Mary,_Quite_Contrary.) Which interests the pupils more, gardens or nursery rhymes and their history? Explore what makes (the) different things interesting to different children.

Then ask the children to think about what interest itself is. Is it something that takes place in your head? Can an interest grow, and if so, how (for example, how could an interest in gardening grow?) We talk about 'getting interested', but can you in fact make yourself interested in something? (For example, could you make yourself interested in Nursery Rhymes?)

Evaluating philosophical enquiry

Both the Last Thoughts and Review stages of an enquiry engage children in the process of evaluation. Last Thoughts focuses on the substantive part of the enquiry, whilst Review is more directed towards the process of enquiry.

In effect, the former is asking, 'What progress did I/we make in my/our thinking, especially in enlarging our understanding (and, perhaps, what do we still need to think about)?', whilst the latter is asking, 'How did we help each other to think (and, perhaps, what could we do to help more)?'

There are some standard frameworks for evaluation, the simplest of which is probably Edward de Bono's PMI (Plus, Minus and Interesting). This can be used in Last Thoughts to focus on the content or substance of enquiry (particularly 'Good or interesting ideas that others had') or as part of Review to focus on aspects of the process that helped or hindered good thinking.

A couple of popular variations of PMI particularly suitable for Review are:

- Two stars and a wish = 'two things to praise, and one that I hope could be better next time' by me or by us.
- www.ebi = 'what went well ... even better if'

Expressions of these ideas could be initially in pairs, and then shared voluntarily, or shared with everyone as part of a round. The latter could be 'translated' into a Community Progress Chart. If a round is being used, as in circle time, some Sentence Starters might be suggested, eg

- I liked the way we ...
- I didn't like it when ...
- I'd prefer it if ...
- It was really helpful when ...

Other ways in which children can review might include questionnaires, continuum lines (from 'enjoyed a lot' to 'didn't enjoy very much', or from 'thought a lot' to 'didn't think much'), written or drawn reflections in speech bubbles or in thinking/philosophy journals (or 'enquiry diaries'), or marking a character on a Blob Tree.

Another effective – and immediate – evaluation tool is to use "thumbs" to indicate responses from very positive (two thumbs up) to very negative (two thumbs down) to a range of questions asking participants to reflect on the experience of the enquiry. Some examples are given below:

- Did we listen well?
- Did we build upon one another's ideas?
- Did we look at different points of view?
- Did we explore our disagreements reasonably?
- Did everyone get a chance to contribute?
- Did we take good care of one another in the enquiry?
- Did we take care with the words we chose to speak?
- Have our questions improved/become more philosophical?
- Did we come up with really good ideas or suggestions?
- Did we examine the concepts that we used?
- How good were the reasons that we gave for what we said?
- How far did we make progress in coming to better understandings?

Reviewing and Planning

Ideally, time should be found for Reviewing every enquiry straight or soon afterwards – perhaps on return from a break. Even in a full timetable there should be at least 10 minutes available for such important reflection. A part of this, moreover, should be focussed on planning ahead:

- What opportunities for practising our skills can be found in the curriculum planned for the coming week?
- What links can be made with other concepts and topics in the curriculum?
- Are there any research questions that we might take forward as a whole group or in research teams?
- Can we turn our philosophical thinking to creative projects, such as writing stories, plays or dialogues? Or making displays or even works of art?

In any case, a thorough review, of not fewer than 30 minutes, should take place at least every 4th session, especially to identify any particular skills or dispositions that could be improved through more concentrated practice. If a problem is identified, there should be positive encouragement for pupils themselves to construct possible solutions.

Finally, it is worth recognising that the review can focus on different people as well as different aspects: individuals can self-evaluate, or evaluate their talking partners; or the group could consider how it is working as a whole; or they could even focus on the role of the facilitator. Brave communities/facilitators could record or video enquiries to be used as a basis for such review.

A more thorough form follows that might be used for formative assessment of oneself and/or others. It covers a lot as aspects of the process and might, therefore, be a little overwhelming if used all at once. Perhaps better to focus on one or two dispositions/skills at a time.



Activity for developing awareness (or practice) of the 4Cs

For each of these statements ‘I can/I do’ (or even ‘I did’), decide whether it is usually a sign of: *

- A** Caring Thinking
- E** Creative Thinking
- I** Critical Thinking
- O** Collaborative Thinking

- 1 Disagree and say why
- 2 Use ‘thinking time’ well
- 3 Ask a good question
- 4 Give an example
- 5 Think of ‘what follows’
- 6 Remind everyone of the question
- 7 Suggest a new idea
- 8 Make a comparison
- 9 Work well with others
- 10 Look after people’s feelings
- 11 Draw a distinction
- 12 Give full attention to the speaker
- 13 Ask for evidence
- 14 Build on someone else’s idea
- 15 Try to explain myself clearly
- 16 Thank someone for their thought
- 17 Ask a good question
- 18 Name someone when I spoke
- 19 Ask for an example
- 20 Act in a friendly way

* Some cases might come into more than one category, but try to decide which one is more likely. There should be about 5 in each category. By all means add other cases of your own.

A The ethos/spirit of community of enquiry

Caring Thinking *Listening and Valuing – Concentrating, Validating and Appreciating*

Were we / Was I ...?

Were we / Was I ...?

1	Attentive	... concentrating on the stimulus, and on anyone speaking?		
2	Reflective	... thinking about the stimulus, and about other people's ideas?		
3	Respectful	... showing respect, eg by being polite, letting people finish ...?		
4	Fair	... giving everyone equal encouragement to speak, by waiting my turn, not speaking too long ...?		
5	Appreciative	... showing interest in experiences or opinions that were different from my own?		
6	Sympathetic	... imagining what others felt like?		

Collaborative Thinking *Responding and Encouraging – Communicating, Conciliating and Advocating*

Were we / Was I ...?

Were we / Was I ...?

7	Responsive	... referring to other people by name, and to their particular ideas?		
8	Constructive	... supporting, and building on, others' ideas?		
9	Participative	... playing a helpful part in the group tasks and activities?		
10	Friendly	... being friendly, whether agreeing or disagreeing?		
11	Courageous	... speaking bravely about my experiences and feelings?		
12	Purposeful	... pushing for decisions about what to think, and what to do?		

B The practice of enquiring together

Creative Thinking *Connecting and Suggesting – Correlating, Speculating and Alternating*

Were we / Was I ...?

Were we / Was I ...?

13	Coherent	... linking ideas with each other, especially with the main question or line of enquiry?		
14	Realistic	... seeking and giving examples to link with life?		
15	Imaginative	... suggesting new ideas and comparisons?		
16	Speculative	... suggesting different possible explanations?		
17	Independent	... saying what I thought, even if it was different from others?		
18	Adaptable	... changing and improving my own thinking?		

Critical Thinking *Questioning and Reasoning – Interrogating, Differentiating and Evaluating*

Were we / Was I ...?

Were we / Was I ...?

19	Philosophical	... asking 'big (idea)' questions, and seeking 'wisdom'/understanding/explanation?		
20	Precise	... asking specific questions seeking clarification?		
21	Sceptical	... examining the truth of what is said? eg questioning evidence or assumptions		
22	Discerning	... attending to differences/distinctions and counter-examples?		
23	Practical	... suggesting conclusions or lessons that might be drawn? ('what follows')		
24	Judicious	... giving and weighing reasons/criteria for deciding or disagreeing?		

Scale: 0 = hardly ever, 1 = (some) sometimes, 2 = (most) most of the time, 3 = almost all the time

The role of reflection in learning

The national charity for promoting *P4C* is known as SAPERE (pronounced as you wish: 'sa-pa-ry' or 'sa-peer-y'). In the original Latin it meant 'to know, or be wise' (as in 'homo sapiens'), but it is also an acronym, standing for the 'Society for Advancing Philosophical Enquiry and Reflection in Education'.

Most of the handbook has focussed on enquiry as a fundamental part of good learning and teaching. But it is easy to understate, or even overlook altogether, the importance of reflection in these processes, especially in good learning.

How many school weeks or days, or even lessons, end with a period of reflection on what has just been learnt and, even more importantly, on what difference it makes to one's view of the world and of oneself? – Very few. But what a difference that would make if it became routine!

We should, of course, distinguish here between plenary reviews that are just testing whether limited, objective, learning outcomes have been reached, and personal reviews that are connecting new learning with existing knowledge, and with past experience and future interests.

Reflection, in fact, is the key to such personal review. Without it, 'new' lessons are easily forgotten in the rush to get to the next 'lesson' – or to the playground. Without it, there is no careful making sense of one's own learning and experiences.

It is through reflection on one's past that one creates coherence and new meanings for oneself, and it is through reflection on one's future that one creates a sense of importance and new possibilities for oneself.

It is such reflection(s) that *P4C/askit* is consistently trying to develop, both through formal structures, such as 'Private Reflection' and '(Public) Review', but also through the very process of 'thinking about your thinking'. And if such processes are carried forward into other areas of the curriculum – including the other strands of *Open Futures* – then the learning in those areas will be both sounder and more satisfying.

How can reflection be practised in those areas?

One simple answer to that question is to adopt the *askit* practice of review more regularly: each gardening or cooking session could end with a review, not just 'what (objective facts) did we learn this session?' but, for example:

- 'What did we learn for ourselves this session?' or
- 'What did we learn about ourselves?' or
- 'What did we learn/appreciate for the future?' or
- 'What has this session made us more curious about?'



There could also be more opportunity given for private reflection in these and other sessions, leading to a sharing of personal feelings, attitudes, tastes or opinions, rather than 'correct answers'.

But, of course, *askit* is not the only strand of *Open Futures* that places a premium on reflection, recollection and re-creation (in the sense of creating new ideas for the future). *filmit* provides the opportunity for children to review all that is going on in and around their lives, including at school, and to 'edit' it into meaningful stories about their learning and lives. This is an opportunity that should be grasped by children and teachers alike.

Planning for *askit* in the timetable

Perhaps it can be assumed that schools and teachers who have signed up to the *Open Futures* project are already persuaded that it provides some essential ingredients for the education they want to give their children. Perhaps, also, they are clear about the different but complementary ingredients that the four strands offer: the balance between 'hands on' and 'minds on' skills – all of them skills for life – which should enhance children's school experience at the same time as preparing them to lead lives that are healthy in body and mind.

Schools run to timetables, however, and the timetable always appears stretched to fit in all that the parents and governors (not to mention the government) seek. How, then, can a new project, however obviously worthwhile, be incorporated into the timetable without having to sacrifice something else?

In regard to *askit*, there is a surprisingly simple answer to this question: the slots already exist in the timetable and simply need to be re-headlined.

Let us be clearer still. *askit* is acknowledged to be the outstanding way of addressing the following parts of the curriculum:

- **Statutory:**
Speaking and Listening (Literacy)
Reading and Reasoning (Literacy)
- **Non-statutory, but almost universal:**
Social and Emotional Education (*P4C* is recommended by SEAL – see doc 5.4.3)
- **Non-statutory, but increasingly significant:**
Personal, Social and Health Education
Citizenship Education and Global Dimension
- **Cross-curricular learning skills, with growing profile:**
Thinking Skills

No school can fail to make provision for all of these, whether they are labelled ‘statutory’ or not. What *askit* uniquely provides is the capacity to provide for all of them simultaneously. (Even when the focus is on personal/ethical learning, the community of enquiry is always pulling the individual to take a social/global/political perspective).

So, in addition to allocating at least one Literacy lesson a week to *askit* (to practise speaking, listening and reasoning, and to enrich reading and writing) schools could well plan another *askit* lesson in which to practise particular personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS) – either in the context of SEAL or in regard to the Global/Citizenship dimension (or ‘topical issues’). Two lessons a week, that is, with no significant sacrifice – indeed, with a real gain in focus, both on skills and on matters of personal and social importance.

Of course, this may not be the only way of reconfiguring the timetable, and participants are encouraged to explore other possibilities in the time programmed. But it is important to do so with the recognition that there is no short cut to deep learning and good lifelong habits of enquiry and reflection. Regular, concentrated practice, at least once a week, is known to yield markedly good results. Irregular sessions, or aspirations to ‘infuse’ habits – but without making explicit commitment, or even reference, to them – have nothing like the same impact or value.

Ideas for topic work

There is, of course, another way – additional, that is, rather than alternative to the above – of making the most of enquiry and reflection skills. And it has the extra advantage of enabling the best integration of *askit* with the other strands of *Open Futures*. This is to build topic and/or project work around some of the important themes connected with Growing, Cooking and Filming.

By ‘important’ here, we mean, centrally, themes that connect with the (philosophical) purpose of living ‘the good life’. Here are some suggestions, linked with standard curriculum subjects, though of course several themes could cross curricular areas:

- Historical enquiry: sweetness/honey, spices, advertising, shopping.
- Geographical enquiry: variety, supplies, trade, climate, water, waste/pollution.
- Scientific enquiry: health, needs, nutrition, ‘natural’, fresh, additives, senses, insects, food chain.
- Personal/Social/Global enquiry: virtues, self-care, sharing, wants/treats, enjoyment, packaging, fairness.

There could be many other themes or topics arising from growing and cooking that might appear less ‘philosophical’ and more ‘concrete’ – for obvious examples, fruit and vegetables, or spades and knives. At first sight, moreover, such ‘things’ might appear fairly limited as topics, let alone ‘projects’. But perhaps it is their very ordinariness or materiality that blinds us to their potential for enquiry.

One of the pleasantly surprising things about philosophical enquiry is that it has the capacity to turn mundane things into objects of wonder, and to turn from objective properties to subjective appreciations.

It is scientifically interesting to notice the diversity of fruits and vegetables, and to classify them. It is philosophically interesting to wonder at the diversity, and to see what different people and cultures make of that diversity.

Apples become more interesting when they are thought of in connection with the production and appreciation of cider (and grapes with wine, of course). Potatoes become more interesting when they are seen as a staple diet (the very concept of which opens up new directions of enquiry). Similarly, spades and knives connect with the rich concepts of tools, cutting, cultivation, metal, design, etc.

In short, philosophical enquiry is forever seeking and making conceptual connections that celebrate human perceptions, perspectives and practices. Topic work that is not philosophical in this sense will turn out to be mere gathering of facts, lacking in life and, before long, largely forgotten. Put another way, philosophy turns out to be the ‘stone’ that turns routine learning about the material world into rejuvenated or ‘golden’ learning about the human world.

Let us now point the further potential of ‘project’ work – as distinct from topic work – by which we mean something a little more active than just ‘read up and present’.

Here are a few ideas, the first of which has already been a hugely successful project capturing the imagination of a Year 3 class for a whole term – and not just because it was inspired by ‘Wallace and Grommit’! Most of the ideas could involve *filmit* in some way, and the later ones are actually based on films that are already on the website. www.openfutures.com/filmit

Ideas for project work

- 1 Planning, preparing for, and executing a **'Vegetable Competition'**, in village fete style. (For details, see report in the appendix.)
- 2 **'Evaluating Food Labels'** – gathering labels, considering what they do and don't label, why, and how effective it is.
- 3 **'Insects – Friends or Foes?'** – preparing for a debate, or presentation followed by discussion, using data collected through the year, both 'live' (investigated in the garden) and 'on paper' (researched from books, experts, or the internet).
- 4 **'Skills into Jobs'** – interviewing gardeners and/or cooks about their jobs, and about what skills are most important for their work; extending the project, perhaps, to other skilled workers. Creating a grand chart that links skills with jobs, using photographs, icons, etc.
- 5 **'What's in a Garden?'** – discovering the variety of gardens (even the variety of 'kitchen' gardens) – visits to allotments, perhaps, or RHS/local gardens, video-clips from *'Gardener's World'*, etc., plus photos from books and magazines, leading to grand garden designs.
- 6 **'Class Café'** – planning and perhaps implementing a class café for one-off or even occasional use, balancing 'home-made' with bought items, and taking consideration of health (and safety) issues. (Incorporating, also, the maths of profit and loss!)
- 7 **'Feast or Famine?'** – research into food surpluses (including what to do with more vegetables than you need!) and food wastage and/or shortage, leading to a class list of 'Top Ten Thrifts' – how to manage food well.
- 8 **'Taste Tests'** – basically, finding out about taste (buds) – what and why people have favourite tastes and are put off by some tastes.
- 9 **'Film Fans'** – exploring the world of films – their origins, their uses, their makings, the classics, etc. Maybe filming fans talking about their favourite films. See Carden School's Film Club on the *filmit* website.
- 10 **'Introductions'** – Introductions can be of individuals ('how could I best introduce myself, or my friend?') or of groups, or even a whole school, as in 'Hello From Everyone at Armathwaite'.
- 11 **'School News'** – lots of opportunity to identify and celebrate special events in the school's calendar/history, eg Throstle Farm's OFSTED inspection, or Gawthorpe's new Children's Centre, or Chyngton Primary's Music Day.
- 12 **'The Way We Do It'** – reflecting on, and celebrating, particular customs or ideas that make your school different, eg Hamilton Lodge's 'Sign Language Game', or Petersgate Infants' 'Getting Ready for Christmas'.
- 13 **'Issues or Dramas'** – eg Rycroft's 'Say no!' or Parkland Junior's Anti-bullying film, or inventive films, such as Barnham's 'Poor Pumpkin' or Chyngton's 'Ben and his Shadow' or Carden's 'Florence Nightingale'.
- 14 Not least, **'Open Futures' Films**, reflecting on growing, eg Parkland's 'Onions Advert', cooking, eg Tangmere's 'Hot School Meals', and enquiring, eg. Glade Infants' 'Investigating Exercise', or 'Hunting Electricity', or St John the Baptist's 'Lights, camera ... Action!'

Principles of Enquiry-based Learning

- 1 Every person's experience is unique, and so are their interests.
- 2 Accordingly, formal as well as informal time is created for individuals to raise questions that help them to make sense of their experience, and to share and pursue their interests.
- 3 Children need support in formulating such questions.
- 4 This requires teachers themselves to focus on listening to children, as well as to introduce and model the language and discipline of enquiry, especially philosophical enquiry.
- 5 There is a special value in learning with others and in learning from others.
- 6 In a community of enquiry proper respect is paid to differences of interpretations, beliefs, feelings, views and values.
- 7 Children are thus encouraged to develop virtues of thinking, such as reasonableness, open-mindedness and patience (for example by calling for reasons, celebrating changes of mind, not interrupting).
- 8 Both the individual and the community benefit from regular pauses for silent reflection ('thinking time'), and review which may lead to better discussion, and to resolute or creative activity beyond the enquiry.

Systematic practice

To put these principles into practice, there is a need for children (and teachers) to have regular sessions of philosophical enquiry, as the most effective way of developing the skills and dispositions of enquiry-based learning. In effect, there should be a commitment to at least one *askit* session a week and preferably two (see the following table), enabling the following cross-curricular aspects of

learning to be dealt with integrally and intelligently:

- PLTS – (Personal) Learning and Thinking Skills – *thinking*
- SEAL – Social and Emotional – *feeling*
- Oracy – leading into better Literacy – *talking*
- Citizenship – and the Global / Moral Dimension – *acting*

Philosophical enquiry, moreover, should not be seen as something peripheral to, or separate from, practical, scientific or historical, investigation – nor, indeed, as separate from performance and artistic enquiry and expression. All of these human activities are but means towards, or part of, the good life, for individuals and communities. As Thucydides, the Greek historian, said nearly 2,500 years ago, ‘History is philosophy teaching by examples’. All teaching, in that sense, should be philosophical – continually reflecting on the question of what is valuable to human beings.

It should also be emphasised that deep learning cannot take place unless the learner has made good sense of what they have been taught (or are teaching themselves). That pursuit of understanding, and indeed appreciation, is not only philosophical in its end, but needs to be philosophical in its means: good thinking in science or history, or indeed in gardening or cooking, is not different from good thinking in philosophy. What philosophy adds, though, is a continual reflection on one’s thinking, such that it steadily improves and translates into better learning and more effective action.

Three possible ways of putting skills and Enquiry-based Learning into the timetable

	Bronze	Silver	Gold
Regularity	<i>askit</i> timetabled for 1 hour a week.	<i>askit</i> timetabled for 1 and a half hours a week.	<i>askit</i> timetabled for 2 hours per week.
How?	As a speaking and listening Lesson (literacy).	As a speaking and listening Lesson (literacy) plus half an hour at end of week for Review.	As a speaking and listening Lesson (literacy) plus two Review half hours, say, one the day after the <i>askit</i> enquiry, and one at the end of the week.
Other Open Futures strands	As and when possible – varying by season and topic planning.	As and when possible – varying by season and topic planning.	As and when possible – varying by season and topic planning.
Review	Every 4th week session is a review of skills development as part of APP: 1 Social/communicative 2 Emotional/affective 3 Thinking/cognitive 4 Personal/interests, values Followed by discussion of how the class could keep improving how it works together, as part of AfL.	Foci as on left, but with possibility of going into more detail. Also, possible to link more systematically with SEAL and/or PSHE. Regular emphasis on how the learning of the week has stretched understanding of the world and of each other.	Foci as on left, but with possibility of separating the skills focus (to be done in the post-enquiry session) from the content focus, <i>ie</i> further questions for reflection or research (to be done at end of week).
Planning of content	Can also be done in the 4th week review – making links with other OF strands, but also with other learning in curriculum, <i>eg</i> Maths, History, Science, etc. Again, this can be part of AfL, and indeed of ongoing, adaptive curriculum planning.	Opportunity in the half hour review to revisit the <i>askit</i> lesson, and other lessons, to develop new questions for reflection or research.	In effect, this is a regular, end of week, occasion for reflecting on the content of the enquiry, and of the week’s learning, and for continuing to stimulate curiosity/enquiry by seeing what further questions the learning has led to.

Appendices

Appendix 1

What are the benefits of *askit* and *P4C*?

Most of the 'hard' test data comes from America in the late 1970's and early 1980's, using Lipman's original materials. In one study, the New Jersey Educational Testing Service (ETS) found that experimental subjects made a 36% larger gain in mathematics than did control students, and the gain in reading was 66% larger.

Full details of these studies can be obtained from the IAPC (Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children, New Jersey: <http://cehs.montclair.edu/academic/iapc> or from SAPERE www.sapere.org.uk

The following are samples that show the clearest results

E = Experimental Group, and C = Control Group

Karras (1979)

- **Groups**
5th and 6th grade students in Lexington
(E = 150, C = 150)
- **Implementation**
2 hours per week for 1 year
- **Measures**
Reasoning ability
(NJ – New Jersey – Educational Testing Service, formal and informal logic test)
- **Result**
E significantly better than C on post-test
($p < .05$)

Cinquino (1981)

- **Groups**
5th and 6th grade gifted & talented students in NJ
(E = 47, C = 0)
- **Implementation**
7 months
- **Measures**
Formal reasoning (NJ ETS-developed test)
Inferential reasoning (CTMM)
Ideational productivity (HMR., WCU, WCB)
- **Results**
Highly significant ($p < .01$) gains on each measure.

Shipman (1982)

- **Groups**
6th grade students in Pennsylvania
(E = 750, C – matched demographically with NJ students)

- **Implementation**
2.5 hours per week for 1 year
- **Measures**
Formal and informal reasoning
(NJ ETS-developed test)
Ideational fluency and flexibility (WCU)
- **Result**
Reasoning: E consistently greater than C on post-test.
- **Ideational fluency**
14 out of 16 E classes showed significant gain.

Iorio, Weinstein & Martin (1984)

- **Groups**
3rd, 4th & 5th grade students in New York City, with diverse ethnic backgrounds and varying commands of English (E = 380, C = 344)
- **Implementation**
1 year
- **Measures**
Formal and informal reasoning
(NJ ETS-developed test)
Teacher's perception of student's ability to function rationally (CDC)
- **Result**
Reasoning: E showed significant improvement compared to C ($p < .001$).
- **Teacher's perception**
E teachers show significant increase compared to C.

Overall, 11 of the 14 studies had reasoning as a dependent variable, and in each case improved performances on that ability were found to be significant. In the 3 studies that examined the effect of the intervention on reading comprehension, significant gains in performance were evidenced. A significant improvement was recorded in studies of ideational productivity, fluency and flexibility, as well as in each of the 3 studies that examined behavioural dimensions of student performance. The Cinquino study also reviewed parental attitudes to *P4C* and found that of the 35 parents she interviewed, 33 said that they wanted their children to participate in the programme if it continued.

Test And Evaluation Results – UK

Village Community School, Derby (1993)

Two Yr 7 classes were split in half to give a balance of boys and girls and reading abilities. One half were given one hour each week of philosophy for 27 weeks, using *P4C* materials and methods. The other half were given an extra English lesson.

The London Reading Test, a common test of reading comprehension for

11 year olds, was given before and after the trial, as was a questionnaire to assess pupils' intellectual self-confidence.

Overall, the philosophy sessions had a modest though reliably positive effect on reading ability. 12 out of 15 pupils in the group improved their scores by more than would have been expected over the eight months, 5 of them making very large gains. Only 8 out of the 17 pupils in the non-philosophy group did so, and 5 of these made very small gains.

Although the study was on a small scale (7% = 1 pupil), the results of the questionnaires proved interesting. Overall, pupils doing philosophy (P) made gains in their total scores on 10 statements that were very consistent and sometimes quite large. The non-philosophy group (N) did not make any significant gains.

In particular, those who were inclined to stick at it when the work is hard rose from 57% to 71% in P, but fell from 64% to 49% in N. Those who were happy to question other people's ideas rose from 36% to 64% in P, but fell from 43% to 21% in N. Those who enjoy asking questions about all sorts of things rose from 57% to 64% in P, but fell from 63% to 49% in N.

Improving Reading Standards In Primary School Project (Dyfed, 1994)

The report mentions the positive effects of philosophy with picture books on a number of children with Special Educational needs. Here are two case studies:

Child G – a Year 1 'at risk reader'

"Child G was a restless and unfocused member of the group during the early stages of the intervention. He was always putting up his hand but was very indiscriminate in his contributions. His restless and talkative behaviour made him a constant distraction in the classroom. Gradually there was a significant change in his behaviour. By the end of the intervention period he was fully engaged in the discussions; his regular contributions demonstrated high quality listening and were nearly always pertinent. His teacher commented that in class work there was an improvement in his listening skills, concentration and ability to focus on the task in hand."

Child J – a Year 3 child with special needs

"Child J came to school with very little language – wouldn't speak to classmates, teacher, or visitors to school, she was also a very restless child who could not sit still or concentrate. The philosophy discussions have helped her a great deal, at first she did not participate but eventually she both asked questions and joined in the discussion. She still has great difficulty with new language but is now more forthcoming verbally and sociable. She now speaks to visitors and so for the first time has been able to be assessed by the education psychologist. It has also been noted that her ability to sit still and listen has improved."

Research Carried Out By Elizaneth Doherr, Clinical Psychologist, Norwich (July 2000)

Main findings

When children between the ages of 5 and 8 are being taught philosophy they significantly outperform children receiving standard teaching, ie they are much more able to:

- Generate alternative post-event attributions (eg Imagine the situation in which the teacher always asks John to answer her questions in class. Why would that be?)
- Recognise different emotions
- Make links between thoughts and feelings

Theoretical implications

Despite the deprived social circumstances of the school, the children are capable of cognitive abilities normally reserved (eg according to Piaget) for children from the age of 12.

Teaching philosophy can have a "positive" and "an immediate effect on cognitive ability".

Clinical implications

Teaching can help 5-8 year olds to possess the three core abilities necessary for Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. Philosophy could therefore be used as a preparation for therapy.

Educational implications

As philosophy "helps to compensate for the relative absence of thinking and emotion based conversations in the home...philosophy... may be an effective way of helping socially disadvantaged children to be on an equal footing with others".

Philosophy helps children to become 'cognitively flexible'; ie have a "disposition to use their thinking skills in a variety of situations". This flexibility could have a "more fundamental effect on an individual's cognitive vulnerability to depression..."

"The bottom line implication is that such teaching may provide a foundation for a happier more psychologically healthy adult life."

Extracts From Ofsted Report Of Wapping First School (March 1997)

The inclusion of philosophy in the curriculum directly impacts on the development of pupil's moral and social development as well as enhancing their capacity to become independent learners.

The inclusion of philosophy in the curriculum contributes to the development of pupil's positive attitudes to themselves and others. As pupils progress through the school they develop the ability to understand and respect the opinions of others, to be helpful and tolerant and to tell right from wrong.

The philosophy project, including the use of circle time, enables older pupils to heighten their understanding of right and wrong in a reflective and mature manner.

By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils can use an appropriate vocabulary to engage the listener and take an active part in discussions when opportunities are presented. An example of this was in the philosophy lesson when pupils demonstrated their ability to discuss ideas, listen with concentration and question each others' ideas and opinions.

Pupils' responses are very mature, perceptive and thoughtful and pupils will confidently offer their own personal feelings and opinions in an atmosphere of trust and respect.

Extracts From Ofsted Report Of Tuckswold First School, Norwich (February, 1998)

The school is committed to developing pupils as lifelong learners and this is reflected in the work which is specifically planned to develop pupils' thinking skills. This runs as a thread through the planning and delivery of all subjects of the curriculum. It is a strength of the school and it is a significant factor in the achievement of high standards in the skills of problem solving and scientific investigation.

Philosophy sessions enable pupils to consider and raise probing questions. This is a very positive aspect of the work of the school. In more formal, demanding situations, such as philosophy sessions, pupils respond readily with comments and probing questions. For example, in a Year 1 philosophy session pupils were commenting in

turn about a dinosaur fossil. As the pupils began to guess what the fossil might be, questions were raised, such as “which dinosaur was the first on the earth?” “How did dinosaurs get on the earth?” “Where did the first people come from?” Other pupils began to discuss these issues and a debate ensued between the pupils, skilfully managed by the teacher. Sessions such as this were seen across the school and were impressive.

The school’s dedication to enquiry as a learning strategy, enhanced by the excellent philosophy lessons, contributes greatly to the spiritual and personal development of pupils. The emphasis placed on pupils’ thinking and speaking for themselves at all times, but particularly through philosophy sessions, enables them to make good progress in speaking and listening. Pupils speak clearly and listen well to adults and to one another.

Extracts From Ofsted Report On Northwood Primary School, Kent (July, 1999)

Teachers develop pupils’ ability to express their thoughts clearly through philosophy lessons in particular.

In English, the quality of teaching, the development of the Literacy Hour and of thinking, speaking and listening skills through philosophical discussions have all had a positive impact on pupils’ standards.

The introduction of philosophy to the curriculum has further enriched pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

In philosophy sessions they develop skills which enable them to debate and challenge within a group in an acceptable manner.

Comments from children

“Philosophy relaxes me. If I’m worried, how can I learn anything? Because the class will respect my opinion, I can be myself and even change my mind without being laughed at.” – Ellie, aged 10

“Philosophy helps me to think, and I need to think well if I want to learn.” – Megan, aged 9

“I think philosophy should begin at school. It is good because it gives you time to think. It helps you to ask questions. It shows you that there can be many answers to one question.” – John, aged 10

Comments from other children

- “I like being able to express myself and argue without getting into trouble.”
- “It has helped me quite well with my growing up, and to release my bad and good feelings.”
- “Philosophy helps me have more thoughts and imagination.”
- “It helps you with using the right words during a conversation.”
- “Philosophy gives you something to think about.”

I think, therefore I am in Clackmannanshire

Clackmannanshire presented exciting results to the 11th International Conference on Thinking Skills in Phoenix, Arizona, about an innovative educational initiative started two years ago. Clackmannanshire Council now has evidence that the reasoning abilities of Clackmannanshire children have improved since the Council’s primary schools started using a philosophical enquiry approach one hour each week. The approach seeks to challenge children to think for themselves in a supportive classroom ‘community of enquiry’.

Intelligence used to be thought of as a single unitary ability fixed from birth. However, the evaluation of the Clackmannanshire

initiative has shown highly significant improvements in the children’s reasoning abilities as measured on the Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT). Improvements were found across the children’s verbal, nonverbal and quantitative reasoning abilities. The possibility of such improvements occurring by chance was found to be less than one in a thousand. Steve Trickey, Senior Psychologist, Clackmannanshire Council, is working closely with the University of Dundee on the evaluation. He said: “Not surprisingly schools are frequently judged by how pupils do in external examinations. The results we have should mean that the children will perform better in such examinations in five years time.

“This is because the pupil’s Cognitive Abilities Test scores in primary school are strongly related to their subsequent examination attainments when they reach 16 years of age. However examination success is far from the main purpose of Philosophy for Children. If schools can help promote wiser and more balanced children, who can adapt to rapid change and work with others, then we are well on the way to promoting a more reasonable society and future for all concerned.”

The most important part of each lesson is a whole class ‘enquiry’ that explores the meaning and underlying theme of the story or poem. As the year progresses, the teacher aims to facilitate gradually the development of dialogue. The children are encouraged to support routinely their views with reasons. One head teacher and one senior teacher have been seconded part time to provide support to the teachers involved. The initiative started with 20 teachers and has now been extended to over 100 primary school teachers in all the council’s primary schools. The fundamental aim of the programme is to promote more reasonable thinking and wiser decision making in all children.

As well as gains in the children’s reasoning abilities, the results also suggest developments in the children’s emotional intelligence. Questionnaire responses indicate that the children see themselves as being more aware of each other’s feelings and more likely to think carefully before they act. There is also evidence that pupils feel more confident and that they see classroom behaviour in general as having improved. Video recordings provide further evidence of developments that have taken place in the classroom since the initiative began.

Email stickey@clacks.gov.uk

Thinking skills project raises children’s IQ by 6.5 points

Educationalists at the University of Dundee have positively evaluated a method to improve children’s thinking skills.

University and Council educational psychologists have systematically reviewed the evidence for the effectiveness of the “Philosophy for Children” (P4C) programme, first developed in the USA by Matthew Lipman, and carried out in schools in Clackmannanshire.

P4C improves children’s thinking skills by getting the children to generate their own questions. It involves pupils and teacher sharing a short story, picture, poem object or some other stimulus. Children then generate their own questions which are discussed briefly by the whole group before one is selected for more intensive discussion. P4C thus involves critical questioning, linking questions, collaborative enquiry, building on each other’s ideas, reflecting, problem-solving, decision-making and summarising. In addition to impact on thinking skills, it is inclusive and builds team work skills.

Working with Clackmannanshire Council, Professor Keith Topping of the University of Dundee’s Faculty of Education and Social Work has discovered that this project can raise children’s IQ by 6.5 points.

Keith explains: “Some educators argue that improvement in thinking

is impossible to measure. However, this review identified 10 rigorous controlled experimental studies of P4C. These studies measured outcomes by norm-referenced tests of reading, reasoning, cognitive ability and other curriculum-related abilities, by measures of self-esteem and child behaviour, and by child and teacher questionnaires. All studies showed some positive outcomes and a consistent moderate positive effect size (0.43) for P4C on a wide range of outcome measures. This suggests a gain in IQ of 6.5 points for an average child.”

Clackmannanshire Council have now implemented the programme across the authority, involving over 100 teachers. The scheme has been found to be cost effective and compares very well with other methods adopted elsewhere in Scotland, which often have limited evidence on effectiveness and cost more per pupil.

Steve Trickey, Senior Psychologist for Clackmannanshire Council said: “P4C is by no means the only programme available for developing thinking skills. However, our work indicates that P4C is effective in relation to all five of the National (Scottish) Priorities for Education.”

Contact Professor Keith Topping on 01382 464000 or k.j.topping@dundee.ac.uk

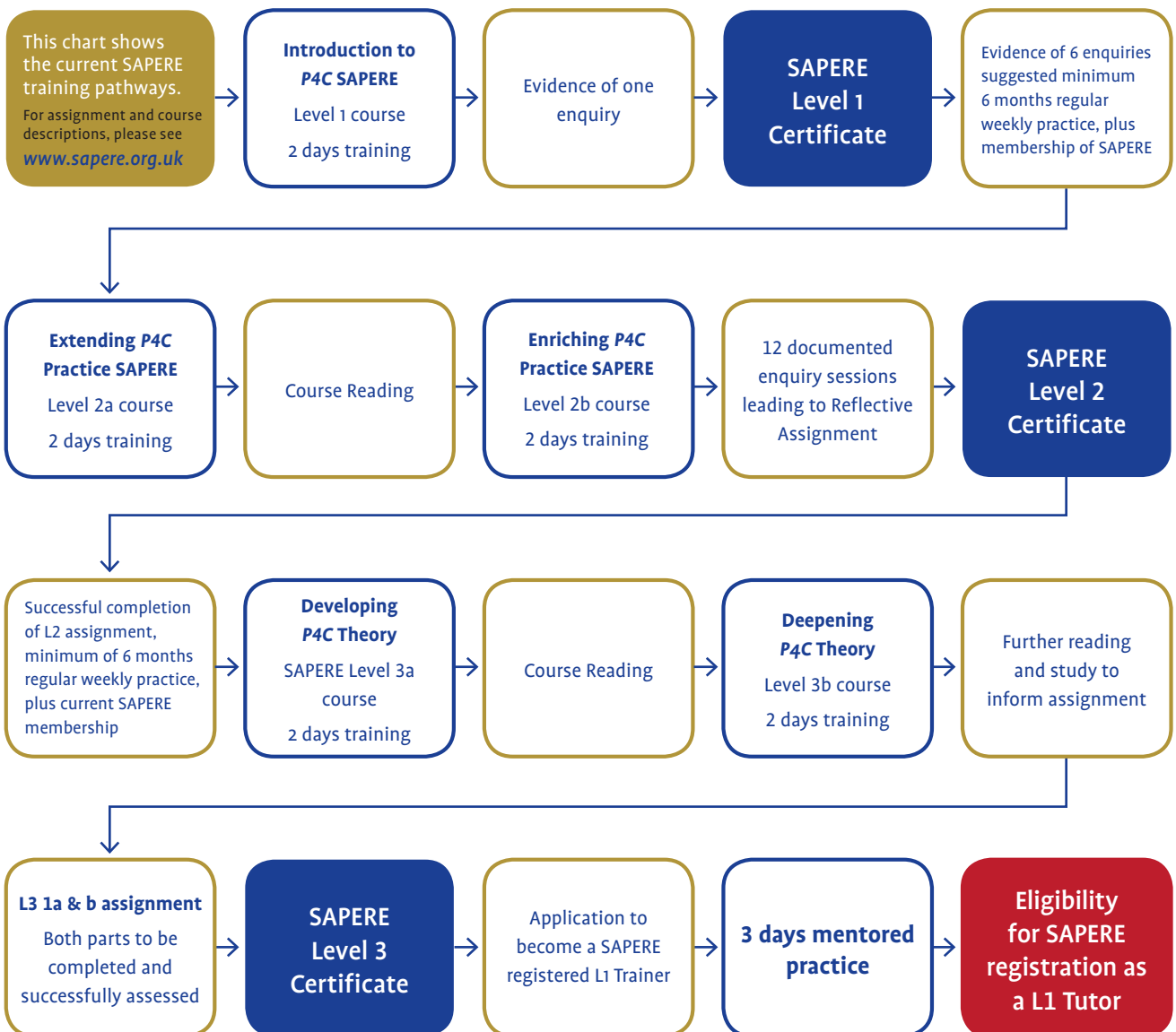
Appendix 2 SAPERE Pathways

As explained earlier, SAPERE is the national charity promoting Philosophy for/with Children, and has been established as such since 1993.

It has succeeded during that time in establishing P4/wC as the leading approach to the teaching of ‘thinking skills’ in the country – not least because P4/wC is more than just a thinking skills approach: it is a way of teaching in itself, and presents a positive and practical vision of the learner as an independent thinker and autonomous being.

It is this vision that has attracted over 50 people to pursue a 3-level pathway to becoming registered as a SAPERE Level 1 trainer, and that pathway is shown below.

In addition to advancing these people on their own learning journey, SAPERE has validated the training of some 10,000 teachers in the UK, many of whom have proceeded beyond Level 1 to extend and enrich their practice at Level 2. This step is strongly encouraged for those who have responsibility for coordinating *askit* or enquiry-based learning in general in their schools.



Appendix 3

Traditional areas of philosophy

There have been various ways of distinguishing philosophy over the centuries, one of the basic being to separate it into the studies of 'natural' philosophy and 'moral' philosophy. (These were names of buildings in the 16th century Bodleian Library in Oxford.) The former paved the way for the modern 'natural' sciences, whilst the latter can obviously still be linked with human, social and political 'sciences'.

There was a period in the middle of the 20th century when some philosophers 'reduced' their field of study virtually to logic and 'how words work'. But, although being logical and precise in one's use of words remains very important in philosophy, it is no longer seen as the 'be-all and end-all' of the subject. Indeed, if anything, the fields of interest of philosophers are growing ever wider, with specialists not only in traditional areas such as science, religion and law, but also, for example, in the philosophy of sports or the philosophy of artificial intelligence (a sub-division of the philosophy of mind).

Another, practical, way of approaching philosophy is to think of it as addressing broad themes or questions, *eg* the four main questions of philosophy as articulated by Kant (1724 – 1804) in his lectures on anthropology (listed below, with ancient Greek terms in brackets):

- 1 *What can I know?* (**epistemology** – the study of knowledge)
- 2 *What should I do?* (**ethics** – the study of moral values)
- 3 *What can I hope?* (*a. politics* – the study of power, or *b. aesthetics* – the study of non-moral values, such as beauty and art)
- 4 What is man? (part of **ontology** – the study of what sorts of things exist)

As well as the philosophical areas indicated in brackets, we might add:

- 5 **Logic** – the study of arguments (focussing on what words mean, and on what follows 'necessarily') – connected with epistemology
- 6 **Metaphysics** – the study of the fundamental nature of things (focussing on what may lie 'behind' what we experience – connected with ontology).

What is a philosophical question?

Mapping questions with areas of philosophy

The purpose of this activity is to connect the various subject areas of philosophy to typical questions within those areas, so as to appreciate the range of philosophical questions.

Firstly individually, and then in pairs, map (*ie* link) each of the following questions to one of the areas of philosophy listed (in bold type).

Note: Two more, modern, areas are also included here: **Philosophy of Mind**, and **Philosophy of Language**.

- a Should Scotland have its own representative at the United Nations?
- b Does a horse know it's a horse?
- c Could computers fall in love?
- d Doesn't what you have just said contradict what you said yesterday?
- e Are some people destined for greatness?
- f Can songs capture the best of poetry and of music?
- g Should doctors always strive to keep alive?
- h What makes a good metaphor?
- i Does God exist?





Open Futures

www.openfutures.com