



Getting Started in Philosophy:

A Start-Up Kit © for K-1 2nd Edition

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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GOAL

TO HELP OUR STUDENTS DEVELOP THEIR ABILITY TO THINK FOR
THEMSELVES
AND TO USE THAT ABILITY IN A RESPONSIBLE WAY.

Dr. Thomas Jackson

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INTRODUCTION

Over the last few years, it has become quite evident that certain preliminary steps to precede the novel, "Elfie", are necessary to help our children, as well as the teacher, have a joyous and successful experience in "fee-lah-so-fee".

As with anything that we build, a firm foundation is always necessary, and philosophy is no exception. This foundation is the "Reflective Community of Inquiry." (For more information on a Reflective Community of Inquiry, see APPENDIX 1) Without this in place, the safety of each individual in the classroom is not truly secure. The result will be dialogue and discussions at a superficial level, never daring to scratch beneath the surface. For many of us, creating a "Reflective Community of Inquiry" is easier said than done. Some of us were taught as children, trained in teacher colleges, and practiced in our own classrooms, a philosophy that gave the teacher total control of the treatment of subject matter, decision making, and behavior management. The flow of knowledge and energy was usually top to bottom. In helping our children to think for themselves in responsible ways, we need to redirect this flow and provide opportunities for each person to express his or her ideas and thinking, to listen respectfully to others whose opinions may differ from our own. To be able to do this helps us to clarify and reassess our own thinking.

Creating a "Reflective Community of Inquiry" requires the ability to: 1) delicately balance the need to structure for the purpose of good management, and 2) the need to empower children so that the responsibility for what occurs in the classroom is shared by everyone. If we are asking both children and teachers alike to venture into an arena that encourages risk taking, then certain ground rules to protect the safety of each participant, including the teacher, are necessary. While empowering children, the teacher is STILL the facilitator and must set parameters within which this inquiry takes place. If this is not done, some students may take this opportunity to "run" the class at the expense of the safety of the other students. As the children's ability to respect the safety of the community grows, these parameters should be expanded.

The following are activities and suggestions that you may choose to use as a way to prepare your children prior to getting into the novel. For kindergartners, the start-up kit may be all that you will be using for the year. In the case of first graders, you may choose to do most of the activities during the first semester, moving on to the novel in the second semester. For the other grade levels, pick and choose activities that you feel are appropriate for your students. While many of the activities may be teacher-directed and initially do not fully engage the children in philosophical issues, they do serve the purpose of setting the basic ground rules and processes in place.

ideas flow naturally. As you find that your class is able to be spontaneous without infringing upon the safety of others, the need to use a community ball may become unnecessary.

One of the warm-up activities that has helped children to get the feel of passing the community ball is described below.

Pre-Activity 1: Calling on One Another

Materials: Community Ball, cushball or any object that can be used to pass to one another

Procedure: Sit together with the children in a circle, preferably on the floor or if necessary, on chairs. If you initially use chairs as a means to help with management, as time goes on and you feel a "safe place" is evident, move toward sitting on the floor. More about circles will be discussed in this section.

Tell them that we need to find out how many children are sitting in the circle. Have them count off until you've gone around the circle. Explain that we are going to call on someone in the circle and toss the community ball to that person. Talk about the physical safety of each individual as we toss the beanbag. You may find it safer to throw underhand, asking them to first call the person that they're going to toss to. Also being aware of following through with your hand so that it ends up in the direction of the receiver has been very helpful in creating a "safe place" in a physical sense.

The object is to pass the beanbag to as many different children within a minute. As different children receive the ball, the teacher counts out loud and stops at 1 minute. If your total class number is 21 and the children were able to throw to only 11 different children, ask them if we could do better if we tried again? It may be appropriate at this time to have the children evaluate reasons for not including more children. Use this brief evaluation time to reinforce the "doing" of tossing the community ball safely to one another, and raising of hands. The children may discover that they didn't call on as many individuals as they could have because some of us tend to call only boys or only girls or only our friends. Challenge them to try again. Do this in a playful manner and yet be aware that the ground rules of raising their hands, empowering them to call on each other whether they are your friends or not, and tossing the community ball safely are all being set in place.

As children get into the "doing" of philosophy, you may still find that the calling of one another is a problem. If so, see APPENDIX 2 in the back explaining some of the techniques that other teachers have used.

AN INITIAL INQUIRY: What Is A Safe Place?

One of the key elements that must be present in the classroom if scratching beneath the surface is to occur, is the expectation of safety to exist at all levels. I imagine a three-legged stool. Each leg represents a different kind of safety. One leg would represent the type of safety that we call physical, the second would be emotional or psychological, and the third would be intellectual. In certain aspects one builds upon the other and yet at other times, they overlap and seem to develop simultaneously. When all three legs are firmly grounded in place, the top can be securely placed without fear of it toppling over. The top or the seat represents the philosophical inquiry that helps us to scratch beneath the surface.

How do we encourage children to strive to create an intellectually safe place? The following activity is a description of what ensued in a kindergarten class on the topic, "What is a safe place?" The processes of calling on one another, and developing listening skills by periodically having someone repeat what has been said are encouraged and reinforced.

This inquiry is not meant to be philosophical as 1) the question is not originating from the children's interest, and 2) We know where we want to go with this one as we would like the children to become aware of physical, emotional and intellectual safety.

Pre-Activity 2: What is a Safe Place?

Materials: cushball

Procedure: Ask, "What's a safe place?" As children call on one another and respond to the question, you'll find that their answers will generally be naming a place that they consider safe. Nicole said a safe place for her is at her grandmother's house. Corey says a safe place is the playground. I asked why? Nicole replied with, "Because my grandma watches me so I don't get hurt." Corey's reason was that the teachers make sure we don't fight. As others began to discuss about safe places and their reasons for it being safe, it became clear that most of them understood safety primarily in a physical sense. If the idea of emotional safety does not come up at all, ask the children what would happen if they shared something important (a pet died, someone called them a name, etc.) and the response of their classmates was laughter? Would they feel safe in continuing to talk about it? In one of the 1st grade classes, one of the boys who was on the heavy-set side recounted an incident where in P.E. he was unable to

complete his pull-ups. As he struggled to do so, his classmates made fun of his attempts. I asked, "How did that make you feel? Did you feel safe?" When the other children heard him share this experience and how it made him feel, there was a look of understanding and acknowledgement of what it meant to feel emotionally safe.

You can then ask, "Is our classroom a safe place?" As the children answer "yes" or "no", you can ask them for reasons which in many cases turn out to be examples of situations that demonstrate the support for their position. Hopefully their reasons or examples will include both physical and emotional safety. If at this time, the children still seem to stress physical safety, just let it go and find other opportunities where you can reinforce the idea of emotional and psychological safety. Instead of asking how someone might feel, ask instead whether that person felt safe. If you're reading a story to the class and a few children are talking and playing around, you can say, "I want to share this story with all of you, but a few of you are not making us feel very safe because you're disturbing the people around you and I'm having a difficult time concentrating." Reinforcing this idea of a "safe place" will help to develop consideration and thoughtfulness toward others.

II. TEN ESSENTIAL LESSONS

1. BUILDING COMMUNITY

THE CIRCLE

Clearly physical arrangements send messages. The more traditional classroom setting of teacher's desk in front, students seated in orderly rows facing the teacher conveys certain messages about power and authority in the classroom. Sitting in a circle formation is encouraged whenever possible and appropriate. This physical set-up ultimately nurtures collaboration amongst the children, helping them to be more focused on the topic and allowing maximum eye contact. The circle also symbolizes the unity of the community. Together in such a setting, as co-inquirers, the teacher and the children can begin their adventure to wonder and to "scratch beneath the surface".

Activity 1: MAKING A CIRCLE USING YARN

Materials: Ball of yarn, cushball, beanbag, etc. (indicates speaker and helps with management)

Procedure: Seat the children and yourself in a circle (on the floor if possible). Some teachers use a mat or a chair for each child to help define their personal "wiggle" space. Tell the children that you are going to pass this ball of yarn around the circle. As you receive the ball, say your name and tell something about yourself.

Teacher begins by saying, "My name is _____ and I love to _____". Tell children to continue to hold onto the yarn when they pass the ball. After a few children have done this, stop to ask if anyone can repeat what the last child (e.g. Laura) has said. Teacher at this point asks Laura to call on a student who has their hand up. Laura then tosses the cushball to the child she has called. When the student repeats, ask Laura if it was correct. Because we are emphasizing the development of good listening, having the response repeated verbatim would be appropriate. As children get better at their listening skills, paraphrasing becomes appropriate since the goal is understanding what is being said. Often comments from teachers have been that their children have poor listening skills. We have also discovered from our experiences that clearly adults, too, need to also develop this skill. We tend to listen selectively and tune out what we consider not "the right answer". We became so good at this that we needed to relearn how to listen

to children in order to take advantage of the many opportunities that arise for philosophical discussion. It can be challenging, truly hard work.

As the children are introducing themselves, find the opportunity to introduce SPLAT. As soon as you find a child with a soft voice say, "SPLAT". (See APPENDIX 3 for other magic "fee-lah-so-fee" words and explanations.) Demonstrate: "If I were going to give this cushion to Kristy like this (throw gently) what happened to it? It didn't quite reach, did it? Well, that's what happened to Kristy's voice. It came out this far, but before it could reach my ears, it went SPLAT! Whenever you hear SPLAT, that means say it a little louder, please."

When the yarn ball has completely gone around, ask the children if they know what they have made. Hopefully they will say that they have made a circle. Have a discussion on the significance of this circle. (1st graders can grasp significance but it's a little harder for K.) Sometimes they come up with words like teamwork or cooperation. If they do not see the significance of the circle, ask several children to release the yarn. Ask, "Do we still have a circle?" Children should get the idea that each child plays an important part in forming this circle. Demonstrate what happens when you tug on the yarn. Children next to you will see that this causes problems for them. The analogy would be a bossy person who tries to take charge of the group. This behavior is like the action of the yarn being pulled. Someone else's personal space is being infringed upon.

In gathering up the yarn, tell them that if this circle has good teamwork, the yarn will be rolled up in no time. Ask them to make a tunnel with their fingers through which the train (yarn) can pass. Usually at this point, kindergartners start to peter out. Go on to the next activity before closing with an evaluation with 1st graders. (See APPENDIX 4)

THE COMMUNITY BALL

One of the challenges of doing philosophy with children is to build an intellectually safe community that appreciates the diversity in the community, as well as a sense of unity. The following activity developed by one of our teachers exemplifies a creative way of building the concept of community.

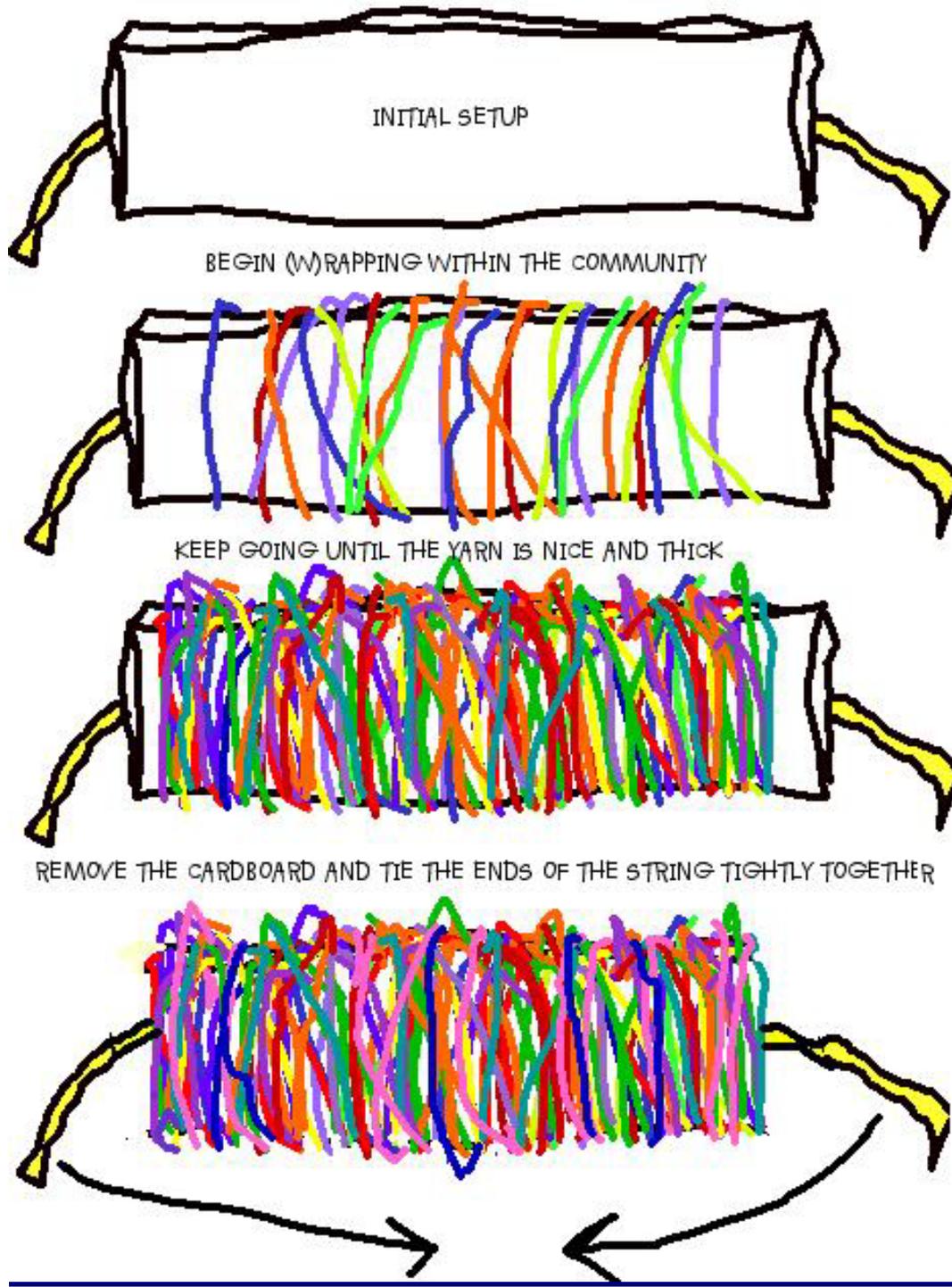
Activity 2: MAKING A COMMUNITY BALL

Materials: -12"x4" stiff cardboard or oaktag
-6' of various colored yarn for each child
-1 long piece of yarn for tying

Procedure: In a math lesson, you could do a bar graph on favorite colors. From this information, cut and roll into little balls the different colors of yarn. Have the children take their favorite color and sit in a circle. You begin by demonstrating what to do with the yarn. Do not tell them ahead of time what they are making. The surprise of the results of their efforts will be heightened by this secrecy.

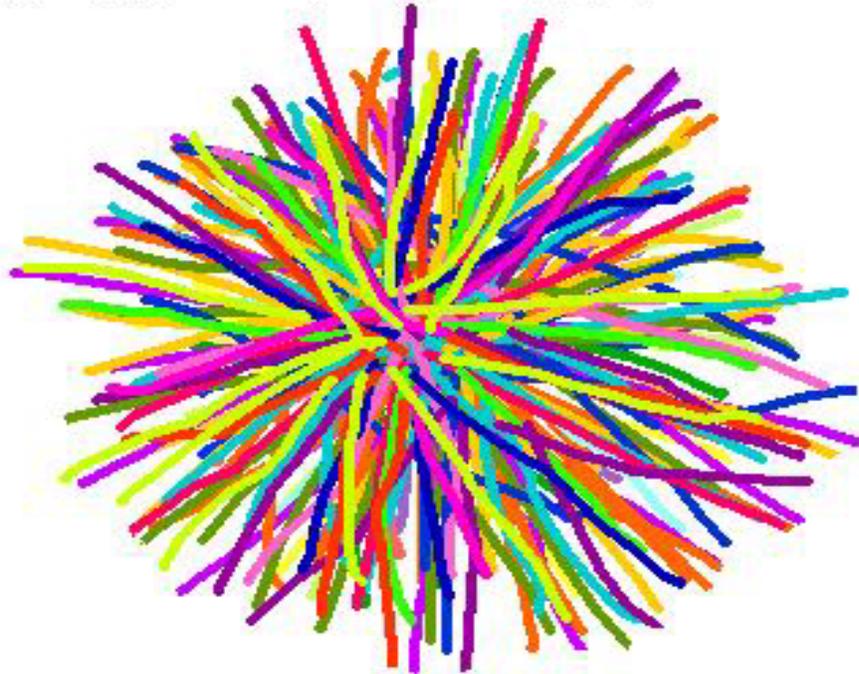
Take the 12" oak tag and your 6' of yarn. Begin wrapping it around the oak tag widthwise and as you do so, tell something about yourself. When you are finished wrapping, pass the oak tag to the child next to you. Have him talk about himself and wrap his yarn around the oak tag. When the last child has wrapped his yarn, put it aside and tell the children that they have just made something very special that you will share with them tomorrow. Depending on the size of your class, this activity may take more than one sitting. If so, just continue at another time so that the children do not get restless. You can keep the children on their toes by asking periodically if anyone can repeat what someone has just talked about. Before proceeding to tie the yarn together to make a community ball, add extra yarn of different colors to take care of new children that may join your class later in the year. This will ensure that they, too, will be represented. Please see the following pages for the illustration of how to make the community ball.

Illustration - How to make a Community Ball





FLUFF OUT THE YARN, PULL OUT LOOSE PIECES, TRIM THE WILD ONES, AND...



YOU'VE GOT A COMMUNITY BALL!!!

The teacher reported that the children were very excited to see what had resulted from their efforts. They recognized their colors in the community ball, which gave them a sense of ownership and belonging. The children stressed the need to take care of their community ball, to have respect for this new property and not to pull on the yarn as each color represented one of their classmates. The idea of a community symbolized in this yarn further created the unity, respect and safety needed in a reflective community of inquirers. (Don't forget to evaluate.)

Activity 3: SHARING, EMPHASIZING LISTENING SKILLS ACROSS THE BOARD

Materials: Community Ball

Procedure: Do a "sharing" in a philosophy format. Have children sit in a circle and be a part of the circle yourself. You may place a small chair where the child (e.g. Shea) who is doing the sharing will sit. Seat yourself away from the chair so that eyes will be focused on Shea, not you. An exception would be the shy child that might need your support to prompt him or her. To encourage listening, have Shea ask, "What did you hear me say?" If Shea is sharing something that he has made, he can also ask, "What do you like about what I made?" And lastly he asks, "Are there any questions?" When Shea asks these questions, he is the focus of the discussion and his questions invite the others to be involved in what is being said. Shea is in charge and calls and tosses the community ball to the child who will respond. Sometimes have someone repeat what has been said to make sure everyone has heard.

This format can be used when children share writings, pictures they have drawn, books they have read, etc. The teacher may also follow this format when doing current events or even giving directions.

CIRCLE-PHILOSOPHY

Reinforce the idea of cooperation and teamwork. Say something like, "Let's see if we're a real team today." Play a short game of "Whisper". Say something short like, "I love fee-lah-so-fee." Keep it simple so that they have a good chance of succeeding. Even if the message is not returned correctly, praise them on their listening and tell them that we'll try again another time. Play this game periodically at other times. You may have to begin with one word and as they get better, move into a sentence.

Move on to Activity 4. Since it is quite long, do not feel that you have to complete it in one session or lengthen the time in order to finish.

⊗⊗⊗ **LENGTH OF SESSIONS: USE YOUR DISCRETION BASED ON YOUR CHILDREN'S ABILITY TO FOCUS** ⊗⊗⊗

Activity 4: WHAT HAPPENS IN THE CIRCLE?

Materials: -acronyms on cards (SPLAT, OMT, POPAAT, IDUS...)

-4 cards with the following:

Safe Place

Think

Listen

Take Turns

Procedure: Once the idea of the circle is explicit (working together), ask or discuss what's going to happen in the circle.

"FEE-LAH-SO-FEE!"

Demonstrate with feeling and fun. Tell the children that when they go home today and their parents ask them what did they do in school, don't say, "I don't know" or "Nothing". Tell them that you did "Fee-lah-so-fee" and say it with feeling. The next question that your parents are going to ask you is: "What is philosophy?" If you tell them that you don't know, they're not going to believe you. So today, let's talk about what is philosophy.

SAFE PLACE: Tell the children, "Remember we talked about what's a safe place? (Place this card down in the circle.) Who can tell us what it means to have a safe place?" Quickly review physical and emotional safety. Have them repeat the following with you. Dramatize with appropriate gestures to help children remember.

- 1) Philosophy is a safe place where you can say anything or ask any question to anybody, including the teacher, as long as you don't hurt his or her feelings.

This may be as far as you will be able to go in one sitting with your children. On a separate piece of paper, write the above sentence in helping you to remind the children of the safety that is necessary in order for philosophy to take place.

THINK: "How many of you do math? What about reading? Science? P.E.? When you go to P.E., what kinds of things do you do? (e.g. jump, play games, run, etc.)"

When you do all those things what are we exercising?" (If the children would like to, have them stand in the circle and jump in place, run in place and then quietly sit down.)

Usually they respond by saying that they're exercising their muscles and get strong. I then ask them if they know what an exercise gym or spa might be? Explain that this place also builds muscles, but to a higher degree with machines and planned workouts. In "fee-lah-so-fee" we also exercise something. Ask them if they know what it is? (I sometimes help them by striking a pose of "The Thinker". This usually works.) Place 2nd card in circle. I explain that in math, reading, science, etc. they learn to think. But "fee-lah-so-fee" is like the gym or spa where we stretch our thinking to the highest degree. Then say together...

2) Philosophy is a place where we're going to use our brains and THINK HARD!

LISTEN: Another thing we do in "fee-lah-so-fee" had to do with our ears. Usually at this point the children chorus in with "listen". Place the 3rd card in the circle. Tell them in order to help us listen, we're going to use magic words like SPLAT. (As you introduce these acronyms, display your card and explain to them what it means. Refer back to APPENDIX 3. You don't have to introduce all acronyms at once. Do it as the opportunity arises.)

3) Magic words are: SPLAT, OMT, POPAAT, IDUS, LSG, NQP, LMO, PBQ, and JAMP.

TAKING TURNS: We're going to call on each other and use our community ball to indicate who is speaking. The person with the ball has the floor.

4) We take turns and call on one another.

Activity 5: SUMMARY OF WHAT HAPPENS IN THE PHILOSOPHY CIRCLE

Materials: -chart paper
-markers

Procedure: Ask children to tell you what they remember about what is philosophy. Summarize on a chart, writing each child's comment and include name.

e.g., 1. We're going to call on each other. (Mark)
2. We can say SPLAT if we can't hear. (Lacey)

This is to review and set into place the processes that we hope will be occurring in future sessions and throughout your day. You can also use it as a brief reading lesson by having the class read the chart together or circle words that they recognize.

2. THINKING (with NAMES)

Activity 6: MORE THAN ONE NAME

Materials: -various objects that have two or more names.
(e.g. sun glasses, shades, dark glasses)

Procedure: For this discussion, you might have several objects in a bag. Somehow the mystery of pulling things out seems to captivate children. Begin by taking an object out, putting it in front of you and then asking, "Does this have a name?" (Something that lends itself to more than one name, like a Bart Simpson doll, or an object that might be difficult to name at first.) As a child offers a name, write that name on a card and place it by the object. You decide how many objects and how many different names to accept for a given object. In this activity, have them continue to practice calling on each other.

Variation:

Dr. J. and I both carry around a huge bag filled with objects and interesting things that the children can talk about. In one of the K classes that we visited, the teacher simply used a large grocery bag filled with things she had gotten from the classroom. She crumpled close the top and set the bag in front of her. With a puzzled look she asked, "What do you call this?" As the children responded to her questions, she would write on a card the name of the object and place the card next to the object. (e.g. bag, sack, brown bag, food bag) She used this opportunity to reinforce the calling of one another and having children repeat what they heard. They used the acronyms appropriately as the activity continued. The teacher then asked a child to reach into the bag and pull out the next object. This activity sets the stage and brings awareness that oftentimes, objects have more than one name which leads to people also having more than one name.

Activity 7: HOW MANY NAMES DO YOU HAVE?

Materials: Community Ball

Procedure: In lesson #6, we worked with different objects that could have more than one name. For this activity ask the children to show with their fingers the

number of names that they have. Some children will put up 3 fingers, others 4 or even 5. Go around the circle and have them tell you what names they are called. This might take awhile as you are giving each child a chance to respond by going around the circle. Remember, a child may pass if he wishes.

In addition to their middle names, to keep this activity playful inquire about pet names and say, "Does anyone call you 'baby'?" (This is usually received with giggles and shyness but soon many of them acknowledge that they are called baby.) Other names are 'honey', 'sonny', 'rascal', 'sweetheart', 'princess', etc.

A possible follow up to this would be to have the children go home and find out where they got their names. (Baby book, named after a parent, grandparent, made-up name, etc.) With this information, a graph could be made and a math lesson on graphing can be done.

Activity 8: ART--MY FAMILY

Materials: -paper for each child
-pencil, crayons, markers

Procedure: On a piece of paper, have the title, My Family. Somewhere on the bottom write, "My family name is _____." "I have _____ names." As the children are drawing the different members of their family, you may go around and talk to each child to record for them the different names that they go by.

Activity 9: FAMILY NAME

Materials: -Community Ball
-cards with last name of each child
-[W] letter from WRAI TEC (see APPENDIX 5)

Procedure: Review that the last time some of them said they had 3 names or 4 names, etc. In the middle of the circle, place cards with their family names upside-down and ask if anyone would like to pick a card? Have a child pick a card and sit in front of you (or on your lap) and read the name out loud. Ask, "Whose family name is this?" The child that picked the name then walks over and gives it to the appropriate child and goes back to his spot in the circle. The child who now has his family name can keep his name card and pull the next card. Continue to ask, "Whose family name is this?"

When all the children have their family names hold up the [W] and ask, "What do we mean by a family name?" Don't try to lead them to THE answer. See

where the children's understanding is at this point. Other questions to ask would be: "Does anyone else have the same family name as you? Can anyone that is not part of your family have the same family name as you? Can someone not have a family name?"

Activity 10: GIVEN NAME/FAMILY NAME

Materials: Community Ball

Procedure: Explain that their given name is also referred to as their first name. Go around the circle and have each child tell his or her given name. Ask them, "Do you know anyone that has the same given name as you?" Other questions that may be posed are, "If someone else has the same given name as you, does that make you two the same?" "If somebody else has the same given name as you, does that mean you come from the same family?"

In attempting to "scratch beneath the surface" and open up the question, use your WRAI TEC cards to help you to do this. You can ask them if what they think is TRUE and to give REASONS to provide support for that truth. Can they give EXAMPLES? Do the other children in the community agree/disagree? Asking this question not only gives the community a sense of where they are at the moment, but tends to serve the purpose of further opening up the inquiry. Asking a child who disagrees to further explain his/her position may shed light on a perspective that others of the community had not thought about. Can anyone think of a COUNTER-EXAMPLE that would make what is being said not true or co-exist with other possibilities or alternatives?

If time permits, go on to the second part otherwise continue later. To reinforce "given name" and "family name", have the children take turns and say, "My given name is Edward and my family name is Garcia." Each child tells his given and family name. You can do this a second time but each child introduces himself and his neighbor. My name is Edward Garcia and this is.....(say the given and family name of the child to the right. They need to listen on the first round so that they can introduce their neighbor.

Activity 11: ART ACTIVITY--NAMES

Materials: 3"x 8" white paper for each child

Procedure: Have the children write their names having each letter in their name represent something about them. For kindergartners, this might be too difficult and tedious. Use your own judgment as you know your kids best. Other

possibilities for K's would be to trace their names and have them draw in with markers or use macaroni, beans, etc. to fill in the spaces. Good time to talk about what is their first and last name initial.

I love flowers, and ice cream with a cherry on top. I'm full of questions, I smile a lot, and I love to give and receive presents!

Activity 12: SHARING-NAMES

Materials: -Children's drawings from Activity #11
-Community Ball

Procedure: This lesson could begin by each child sharing his/her drawing, using the cushion to indicate the next speaker. (Use the strategies we've learned so far of asking a child to repeat periodically what has been said verbatim, having them call on the next speaker, using appropriate acronyms.)

Activity 13: WHAT'S A NAME?

Materials: Community Ball

Procedure: Ask the children, "Does everything in the world have a name?" Toss the beanbag as they discuss their thinking on this question. Accept whatever they may have to say. Have them come up with examples of things in the world that have a name. Hold up the [E] and let them know that they have just given an example to help them begin to become aware of giving examples. As the children continue to inquire, you may find that some of them have different ideas of what constitutes a name.

Ask them if they know what their teacher's first and last name might be? If your children have done Activity 11 (Given Name/Family Name), they'll already know your full name. Once it is established what the teacher's first and last name is, ask them to tell you the name of another object. After pointing to a desk and a chair, I then asked if I could call the desk a "Jane" (This was their teacher's first name.) and the chair a "Chong"? Playfully toying with this idea of names attached to other things, helped to keep it light and the children interested. This question was received with squeals of laughter and a chorus of "NO". I asked why this couldn't be? One of the children said if I called the desk "Jane" and the chair "Chong", then their teacher wouldn't have a name. Another child chimed in with, "Not! There's a boy in first grade with the same name as me." Can you just see the richness of this discussion, and this was taking place in a kindergarten classroom. I asked whether it was okay for me to call their desk a "Jane"? I then

3. GIVING REASONS

"Because" is central as a marker indicating that a person is about to give a reason [R]. Much of the doing of philosophy grows out of the asking for and giving of reasons. Reasons form the basis of both explaining and attempting to justify our beliefs and our behavior. It is a key "tool" in learning to "scratch beneath the surface". This idea of giving a reason is initially puzzling to most (if not all!) kindergartners. The following activity is a way to begin to introduce this important idea.

Activity 14: GIVING REASONS

Materials: -13 index cards with letters: b e c a u s e r e a s o n
Tape cards together and fold accordion style.
-Pretend microphone

(I use a pencil or marking pen. The children have to talk into it. They love this!)

Procedure: To begin, tell the children there is a very special word that you're thinking of and you want to see if they can guess what it is. After a few guesses, tell them you will give them a hint. You then need to ask a question that will allow you to ask, "Why?" You could ask, "What is your favorite TV program?" and then "Why?", or "What would you do if you had two heads?" You will be moving around outside the circle as though you were conducting an interview. (By standing on the outside, this keeps you from blocking everyone else out when you're interviewing.) You want to do this until someone says, "because.....". When you hear this, ask the other children if they heard the special word? Once they recognize it, put the word "because" in the circle and ask them if they know what comes after someone says "because"? You can tell them it is a "reason" and put the other card in the middle. Continue the interview so that any child that would like to answer one of your questions can do so. Don't forget to use the pencil as your microphone. From this point on, it is important to use every possible occasion to highlight the giving of a reason. Find some way of highlighting in a playful way the use of the word "because" whenever it occurs. Dr. J. would slap his thighs every time a child said, "because". This really caught on and all the children began to do it. They even did this the following year when they were in another class and he came for a visit. You don't have to be as dramatic as he is, however.

REASONS (more concrete)

Initially, I used Activity 14 (Giving Reasons) with the kindergarten and first graders. Activity 14 went well with the first graders but while the kindergartners

seemed to have fun, there was a sense that they were missing the point. In collaboration with the kindergarten teachers, we decided that there was a need to come up with an activity that was more concrete, and near and dear to their hearts. This meant, of course, food!

Activity 15: THE OREO COOKIE DILEMMA

Materials:

- 1 Oreo cookie (safely wrapped in clear paper)
- bag of Oreo cookies (enough for entire class)
- index card with BECAUSE (made in Activity 15)
- Community Ball

Procedure: Ask: "Does anyone know what a problem might be?" Use the community ball to find out what the children know. If possible, allow all the children that have their hands up to have a chance to speak. While we want to empower the children by allowing them to call on one another, there are times when you need to move it along because the meat of the lesson is still to come. This is one of those times. The teacher calls and throws the community ball and has the child respond. Have child throw the community ball back to you and continue to throw to get their responses. In this way, you are setting the pace. Some kindergartners are not able to verbalize what a problem is. They know that it can make you sad or even mad. Their vocabulary seems to limit their ability to explain. One of the children responded by saying that a problem is two people talking. At another school, the children were more verbal and were able to say that a problem is when you have to solve something. I asked whether a problem was always bad as their examples centered on fighting with someone and needing to solve the problem. I asked, "Can problems ever be good?" Initially, they said that problems are bad but inevitably a child came up with the idea that it could be good like when someone offers you candy to eat and you have to choose which one to take. For some children, deciding what to wear can be a problem. Figuring something out in math or how to finish a puzzle can also be a problem.

Tell them that you have a problem and you would like them to help you solve it. As you're talking to them, pull out from your bag an Oreo cookie and place it in the center of the circle. (A Hershey kiss works well, too.) Tell them that your problem is that you want to give this cookie to the class but as they can see, you have only 1 cookie and we have.....(let children count off individually around the circle) 22 children! Ask, "What shall I do?" Children responded with:

- give the cookie to the "best" listener (as child is saying this, he folds his hands in his lap and sits very erect, looking very serious)

- cut it in half
- cut it in 22 pieces so we all can have a taste
- don't leave the cookie because you have only one and it's not fair
- give it to the teacher
- go to the store and buy some more

Up until now, we were dealing with problem solving and the children did come up with some delightful suggestions. In order to move this on to giving reasons, I told them that I liked all their suggestions but the reality was that I still had only 1 cookie. I told them that I was going to go around the circle and ask, "Do you want this cookie?" (I asked that the children respond in complete sentences.) If the answer was something like: "Yes, I would like that cookie." Then I asked, "Why do you think I should give this cookie to you instead of anyone else in this classroom?" As the children spoke, I held up the "because" cards which seemed to help them to think of a reason. We had responses such as:

-because I like that kind.
-because I don't have any.
-because I'm special.

After going around the circle, I would ask the children how they would feel if I gave the cookie to only one child. Of course they all said they would be so sad. I would give the cookie to the child that seemed to have the most unique reason and in the midst of their groaning, I would pull out the bag of Oreo's so that all could enjoy! (ALWAYS EVALUATE AT THE END OF YOUR SESSION!)

4. ASKING QUESTIONS

Although young children frequently ask questions, this question asking is non-reflective in that when asking a question, children are not explicitly aware of the fact that they are "asking a question". Being able to deliberately formulate a question, in other words, is a learned skill.

This ability to deliberately formulate a question is an important one in developing the ability to DO philosophy. It sets the stage for learning to differentiate kinds of questions. To facilitate this ability, the following exercises have proven to be helpful.

Activity 16: THE HOT SEAT

- Materials:
- chair (or just a space or mat on the floor)
 - colored poster board cut into cloud shapes (at least 10 to write

words that signal questions such as: is, how, why, etc.)

-Community Ball

Procedure: Playfully point to a chair and say, "That chair (or spot) is a hot seat." With very young children, they may take you literally and challenge you about whether the chair really is hot or not. (In another lesson, we will work with words like "hot" that can be am BIG uous in context.) Explain to them that you call it a "hot seat" because when you sit on it, they can ask you anything that they want as long as they don't hurt your feelings. Remind them that this is a safe place where most questions can be discussed. Sometimes, however, they won't know if a question is okay to ask so tell them to go ahead and ask anyway and if it infringes on your personhood, that you could politely let them know by "passing". Questions like, "How old are you? Are you married? How many children do you have? Do you spank them?" might come pouring out. Be ready to be on the HOT SEAT!

As the children raise their hands, call on a child and throw the community ball. As the child is asking the question, write the signal word that is used and place it on the floor in front of you. This helps to make the children aware that questions can begin in many different ways. Keep these signal words for future lessons.

Activity 17: RIDDLE BOOK

Materials: "The Bennet Cerf's Book of Riddles"

Procedure: A natural way of introducing the idea of what a question is to kindergartners and first graders is through the use of riddles. Children love to ask riddles as well as respond to them. A kindergarten teacher suggested using "The Bennet Cerf's Book of Riddles". Find riddles that exemplify question words (who, what, when, where, why and how). Each time a riddle is shared, flash the question introducing the word to the class. The children love listening to the riddles and trying to find answers to fit the questions.

A possible follow-up would be to have the children come up with their own riddles and make a big book comprised of their riddles. Have them work in pairs or by themselves and illustrate their riddle. Use this book to help them become aware of questions and also to help them to read.

Activity 18: MYSTERY BOX # 1

Materials: -mystery box

-poster board clouds with signal words

Procedure: Use the various words that help elicit questions to the children. Ask, "Can you guess what's in the mystery box? Decorate the mystery box to captivate

the children's curiosity. Be as mysterious as possible to provoke a sense of wonder. Don't forget to put an object inside of it! Since we are encouraging children to ask questions using different signal words, the questions may require more than a "yes" or "no" answer from you.

This activity is primarily to elicit questions. When actually engaging in philosophical issues, there is no single correct answer but a variety of possibilities to ponder. While this activity does have an answer, the purpose again is to get the children to practice asking questions.

In the following activity, a mystery box is again presented. However, whatever is placed in the box is unbeknownst to all in the community of inquiry. The classroom teacher is now on equal footing with the students and together can explore the many possibilities that the inquiry may take.

Activity 19: MYSTERY BOX #2

Materials: -odd shaped mystery box (have another teacher, spouse, etc. place an object inside)
-Community Ball

Procedure: Pass the mystery box around the circle so that each person may have a chance to hold, shake, smell, etc. the box. When it has gone completely around, have one of the children place the box in the middle of the circle. This will prevent the children from focusing on you as we want them to begin to look at each other as a community for the flow of the discussion. If possible we want our children to begin to respond to one another instead of always through the teacher. At this young age, the teacher facilitates the discussion by offering a question that the children can nibble on.

The session may proceed with the children passing the community ball and saying, "Can there be a _____ in this box? If they make a statement such as, "I think it's a _____. Ask the child to put it in a question form. Be sure to ask for a reason. Ask children if they agree or disagree and ask them to repeat what has been said periodically as a way of keeping the community together and focused on listening.

5. USING "IF...THEN" REASONING

"If...Then" introduces the whole area of conditional and hypothetical reasoning. It introduces a vocabulary for thinking and talking about the implications or consequences of behavior. It helps us to understand what we're doing in making connections.

Activity 25: "IF.....THEN" TEAMS

Materials: -Community Ball

-pictures of things (eggbeater, monkey, doctor)

Procedure: Divide your community into an "If" team and a "Then" team. You might put the word "If" in front of the "If" team and "Then" in front of the "Then" team. Ask for a volunteer on the "If" team to start. Hand this person the community ball and then have them select a picture from the stack that was prepared earlier. The person with the community ball says, (e.g. "If I were a monkey, then...."). At this point the child tosses the community ball to someone on the "Then" team to complete the sentence. See if someone can repeat the whole sentence. The "Then" person now returns the community ball to someone on the "If" team and the game continues. This provides another "invitation to speak". So long as interest is sustained, continue.

Activity 26: WHISPER-DISCUSSION

Materials: -Community Ball

- "Because" and "Reason" cards

- cards with "If...then" statements

Procedure: The children should be familiar with playing the game of "whisper" as we introduced it earlier. The kindergarten teachers have said that their children really enjoy playing this listening game and try very hard to be quiet and attentive.

This time whisper the following sentence: "I am 3 years old." Have fun and if it comes back sounding like something else, just laugh and tell them that they have beans in their ears! See if there is anyone who can repeat the original message. When you find a person that is able to repeat the message ask, "If you were really 3 years old right this minute, then what?" Have a discussion with this and be sure to ask for a reason. If the discussion lags or seems to lose energy, you can nudge it along by posing questions or offering LMO (Let's MOVE ON) or NQP (Next Question, Please). This question went well with 1st graders. With K's I asked, "If I were a dinosaur, then what?" This seemed to keep their interest more. Another possibility would be, "If I were a power ranger, then...." If the class votes to NQP, have ready a stack of questions from the Elfie manual

(Chap. 1, episode 3, pg. 5). For example,
If fish could fly, then.....
If the ocean was made of pancake syrup, then.....
If everyday was a holiday, then.....
If it never stops raining, then...
If there were no schools, then...
If children could do anything they wanted to, then.....
If you were 10 feet tall, then...
If a car had square wheels, then...

The order in which these cards are discussed does not matter. There will be times when you use questions from the exercises that have a progression and you'll need to select the cards to be discussed. In this activity, I usually shuffle the cards and place them face down (like "Go Fish"). Then I ask for a volunteer to come up and pick a card to read aloud. First graders can usually do this with help from the children sitting alongside of them. For kindergartners, perhaps writing these "If.....then" statements on large cards and reading together as a class after a child has made a selection might help.

With kindergartners, if you reword the above sentences to read "What would happen if fish could fly?" seems to help them in their thinking. The children will have a tendency to look towards you for an answer. Deliberately look elsewhere so that they will begin to look and respond to each other.

Activity 27: Art Activity

Materials: -white or pastel construction paper for each child

Procedure: Fold paper in half. On the outside write IF....., and on the inside write THEN..... Have the children write in their own way or draw under IF. Open it up and draw a picture of the consequence.

6. CLARIFYING "TRUE"

Activity 28: FOR SURE, PROBABLY, CAN'T TELL

Materials: -cards with: "For Sure," "Probably," and "Can't Tell"
-empty bag (one that you can't see through)
-3 ziploc sandwich bags:

bag #1: 15 pennies

bag #2: 5 black checkers or poker chips and 2 red checkers or poker chips

bag #3: 7 different colored marbles (or any other object)

Procedure: In helping children develop a way of expressing where they stand on a particular issue or question, it is helpful to spend some time distinguishing "for sure", "probably" and "can't tell". These can then be used in connection with the [T] letter in the Toolkit (How many of you think at this point that it is true "for sure?". "How many of you think at this point that it is "probably" true?", etc.) As more "scratching beneath the surface" occurs, thinking by individual students about a particular question or issue may change. This is part of the "self-corrective" nature of the COI.

In working with young children, we have found that these distinctions are initially puzzling. In an effort to help clarify this, one of our graduate students, along with a kindergarten teacher, developed this activity. It's a lot of fun to work with the kids to find things from their experience that relate to "for sure", "probably", and "can't tell."

FOR SURE

Show them an empty bag. Tell them this is not a magic bag. Turn it inside out so they can see that there is nothing in it. Then show them a handful of (approximately 15) pennies. Ask them to count as you drop the pennies into the bag. Ask for a child to come up and place his hand in the bag. Before he withdraws his hand ask, "What do you think you will pull out?" Usually the children will respond by saying that it will be a penny. Then ask, "For sure?" The majority of times kindergartners will reply in the affirmative. When they don't, I remind them that this is not a magic bag. I ask if they remember what we put inside? The first child then calls on the next and the question is repeated. Do this several times so that the children are very confident to the point of being positively "for sure" that they'll pull a penny.

PROBABLY

Place 5 black checkers and 2 red checkers in the bag. Be sure the children see you place these in one by one. Ask a child to put his hand inside the bag again. Ask the same question as earlier, "What do you think you will pull out?" Then ask, "Is that for sure or probably?" Sometimes a child will still insist that it's "for sure" that he will pull out a black checker. Usually there will be other children in the community that will not agree with him. Have them give their reasons why they think it is not "for sure" but "probably". Ask them if they can tell you the difference between "for sure" and

"probably".

CAN'T TELL

Show the children one marble at a time taking note of the different color of each marble. Ask a child what color does he think he will pick? At the K level, there are some children that insist they are able to predict the marble color they will get. Most of the children agree that they "can't tell" because there are too many colors.

7. DEFINING CRITERIA

Activity 29: What is Real? HANGMAN

Materials: -chalkboard or chart paper to do hangman
-"because" and "reason" cards
-large WRAI TEC cards

Procedure: Tell the children that we're going to play a game today. They're going to have to guess my missing word before I complete the picture of the hangman. This activity can be considered a variation or Step 4 in "Plain Vanilla". It is the game of hangman that will springboard the inquiry into "What is real?"

Are _____ real?

For kindergartners, it's a good time to help them to recognize their alphabets. Have the children read the incomplete sentence together. If they get hung before the missing word is discovered, that's okay. They can continue the game and you can elaborate the hangman by adding earrings, etc. The sentence should read, "Are power rangers real?" We had a really lively discussion on this one. Children began to explore the idea of whether cartoons are real. As one child says, "The voices are real!" As your children begin to express their idea of what is real, you will find that depending on what the "criteria" for real is as set up by the class, certain things will not apply. However, IF the criteria change, THEN what is considered real will also change. As the community begins to "scratch beneath the surface" they will find that more than one answer can co-exist.

As the inquiry progresses, don't forget to ask for a reason! You may find yourself or the other children asking questions like, "What do you mean by _____?" This is a good time to whip out the "W" in WRAI TEC and

introduce it. You may ask a child for an example of what they are saying. Then explain the "E". Use whatever letters are appropriate. (See APPENDIX 5)

8. IDENTIFYING "Am-BIG-uous" WORDS

In building our skills to develop higher order thinking, we strive for clarification. We often assume that people understand what we mean. In helping children to become clearer in their thinking, Dr. J invented the "KISS" game. It is a playful way of demonstrating how certain words in context can invite different meanings and consequences. The introduction of ambiguous words may come when you get into the novel and a word may come up in your reading or a question posed by one of your children may include a word that is ambiguous. Or you may do this activity to precede the novel so that the children are already aware and "tuning in" to the concept of ambiguity. In Pixie (3rd to 5th grade), there is an activity called "Teakettle" which deals with ambiguous words. Below is a description of how the "KISS" game can be played with younger children.

Activity 30: THE "KISS" GAME

Materials: -bag Of Hershey's kisses
-[W] and [R] cards from "Good Thinker's Tool Kit"
-Community Ball

Procedure: On the day that I plan to introduce ambiguous words, I try to wear something that has pockets so that I can place a Hershey's kisses inside. As we all sit in the circle I ask the children if there is anything special that they would like to talk about today. Sometimes they'll say yes and have a million suggestions and on other days they have no suggestions. In the midst of their suggestions or my making suggestions I say, "Oh, I almost forgot--Jeremy, would you like a kiss from Mrs. _____?" Usually this is followed by a pained look on the face and a "YUK!" I then ask a few more children the same question. I slowly bring out the Hershey's kiss and place it in my hand and suddenly, the children become excited and want to change their answer. Point out to the children that the word "KISS" has a rather fancy name:

am-BIG-uous

Have them say "am-BIG-uous" together (with emphasis on "BIG" by having them stand up on that syllable, keeping it playful.) Then point out that an "am-BIG-uous" word has at least two different meanings. Once they see that "KISS" can mean (a) a lip kiss, or (b) a Hershey kiss, then explain that "fee-lah-so-fers" (philosophers) are concerned with [W] kinds of questions like "What do you mean by..." in this

case, "What do you mean by kiss?"

This time go around the circle and ask each child if they would like a kiss. It might go something like this:

T: Would you like a kiss? (Hold up [W])

C: What kind of kiss?

T: A smooch kiss!

C: No, I don't want that kind.

T: (Hold up [R]) and ask for a reason.

C: Because I only kiss my mommy and daddy.

T: Well, how about a Hershey kiss?

C: Yes, ummmm yummy!

T: Why do you want a Hershey kiss?

C: Because I'm hungry!

Be ready for a "yes" from some of the children who want you to kiss them. To avoid getting their colds, you can suggest that you blow them a kiss that they can catch. Dr. J has a pair of large, red lips made out of cloth that he uses to comply with their request. Another suggestion would be to ask them if they would like to have a "HUG" instead of a "KI SS". Now that Hershey's has come out with a candy called Hugs, that word is also am-BIG-uous. Also giving children hugs if they ask for it may be healthier for everyone involved. I find that even children who initially say they don't want Hershey kisses because they might get cavities, somehow manage to change their minds once they see that their classmates are enjoying the treat. If you know that a child may be allergic to chocolates, bring something different for that one person.

After your children have been introduced to the idea of ambiguity, you can play a game with them which requires dividing the class into two or three teams. The description of the game is targeted for 1st grade and older. However a variation of this game can be introduced to kindergartners.

Activity 31: AMBIGUITY IN CONTEXT

Materials: -different sounding tone bells for each team

-list of ambiguous sentences both visual and auditory

Procedure: Have 3 children act as captains and select their teams. Have the children sit in 3 straight lines and give the captains of each team a tone bell. Tell them that you are going to read a sentence. If they can identify the am-BIG-uous word in the sentence, they are to ring their bell. If the captain gets the correct word, that is a point for that team. The captain must also give the different

meanings of that word as it applies in context to that sentence. No one else is to give an answer. For each meaning given, another point is awarded. Set a time limit and if the child is unable to give you the correct word or the meanings within a certain time, use some kind of signal that would allow the other teams to ring. If a word is identified and only one meaning has been explained, and if all the captains have had a chance then it is open to anyone. Call on the person that raises his hand first to answer for his team. You can either have the captains move to the back of the line and the rest of the children move up, or you can have the captains pass the tone bell to the person behind them and so on.

Auditory Ambiguity (in context)

1. We heard the child's shoe/shoo as she passed by the door.
2. Be careful not to break/brake it suddenly.
3. Did you hear the whale/wail last night?
4. A little piece/peace is all I need.
5. Hold that beat/beet for as long as you can.
6. Do we have a tea/tee time for tomorrow afternoon?
7. She said, "Sew/so, I can do that!"
8. If she brings a present, you can bring two/too.
9. If you're too far, come closer to here/hear.
10. The hair/hare is on the table.
11. His role/roll was terrific
12. Our son/sun is important to us.
13. The flower/flour was white.
14. Last night's meet/meat was great.
15. The man carried the dough/doe in a box.

Visual Ambiguity (in context)

1. The mango is green. (not ripe, color)
2. To begin, you may serve. (as in a meal, or tennis)
3. The tablet is on the counter. (book, medicine) (table top, weighing machine)
4. A roar was heard for miles around. (animal sound, crowd yelling)
5. The old man sold straw for a living. (hay, drinking straw)
6. We saw the kid jump over the fence. (child, baby goat)
7. I have an old pen. (writing pen, pig's pen)
8. Before you can enter, you need a check. (money, examination, mark)
9. The stars came out last night. (movie stars, celestial bodies)
10. They sat by the bank waiting for their friends. (river bank, financial)

institution)

11. We didn't enjoy the fall. (season, fall down)
12. Be careful when you box large objects. (to fight, to wrap)
13. He stole the plate. (steal, ran to base without being tagged), (dish, homeplate)
14. I made a basket today. (container, basketball point)
15. This point is very important. (tip, score, position or stand)
16. I have a bill for you. (currency, a statement or invoice)
17. Some pills are unpleasant. (medicine, bad person)
18. Be careful of the punch, it's strong. (juice, hit)
19. There are a lot of nuts here. (crazy people, walnuts, etc.)
20. Watch out for the bat that is flying. (mammal, baseball bat)
21. How many feet are there? (body part, measurement)
22. The teacher gave the student a short note. (music, written message)

9. RECOGNIZING "ASSUMPTION"

In our everyday language, we tend to use what we playfully call QQ's. QQ's are questions phrased within another question. As teachers we often ask children, "Why did you cut in line?" or as parents we ask, "How are you going to pay for this car?" In both these questions, we are ASSUMING something. In the first question, we are assuming that you did cut in line. In the second question, we are assuming that you are planning to pay for the car. We can assume anything that we want to but it does not necessarily mean that our assumption is true. Becoming more aware of QQ's helps us to become clearer in our own thinking.

Activity 32: QQ's

Materials: -12 cards with questions on them (some QQ's, some not)
-Community Ball

Procedure: Have the children sit in a circle. In front of you place 3 cards. The first card says QQ's. Below to the right place the second card that says YES and on the left NO. The purpose of the first part of this activity is to determine which questions are QQ's and which are not. In another pile, turn your cards with the questions upside down and mix them up. Ask for a child to volunteer to "Go Fish". Have the child read the sentence, then fold the first word back and see if there is another question inside. If there is, the child will place that card below the YES card. If the card does not have a question within a question, it would be placed under NO.

For the second part, take only the questions that were determined to be

QQ's and reshuffle them and place upside down once again in the circle. In place of the YES and NO place TRUE, FALSE and ? cards. Have someone select a card and read only the inside question. Try to determine whether the inside question is TRUE, FALSE or ?

For the last part, eliminate all QQ's that fell under FALSE. If the inside question is false, there is no need to ask the outside question. Take only the TRUE and ? questions and face upward. Have children vote on the questions to see which one they would be interested in having a discussion.

The method described above does not deal with all types of QQ's. If you phrase you questions negatively, for example: "Why didn't you tell the truth?", and if the answer to the inside question is yes, there is no point in asking the outside question. Watch out because how the question is asked can be tricky.

Here are some examples of questions for the game or make up your own that would be appropriate for your children. Laminate and make a fold after the first word.

1. Why are you smart?
2. What do you dream?
3. Who is Alex?
4. When is time important?
5. Why does your brain sleep when you sleep?
6. Can I be your friend?
7. Where did you hide my money?
8. How old are you?
9. When did the world begin?
10. When am I real?
11. Why are friends important?
12. Why must the world end?
13. How did you become a teacher?
14. Where are my car keys?
15. When will I be a grown up?
16. Why is Larry punching you?
17. Why are girls smarter than boys?
18. Why are some people rich and other people poor?

10. PROBING "Philosophical" QUESTIONS

In the following lesson, an attempt to weave literature with names is

described. The source of the material comes from an article called, "Thinking in Stories" by Gareth Matthews in the magazine, Thinking, the Journal of Philosophy for Children, Vol. 10, No. 1. This lesson was tried with a kindergarten class who began "fee-lah-so-fee" in the 2nd semester.

Activity 22: TOO MANY DAVES - What do you wonder about?

Materials: -"Sneetches and Other Stories" by Dr. Seuss

SYNOPSIS: In this story, Mrs. McCave has 23 children whom she names all Dave. Of course you can imagine the confusion and problems that arises when she wants to call only one of them.

-Community Ball

-chart paper and marker

Procedure: Tell the children that you're going to read to them a story from Dr. Seuss. Ask them to think about the story as it is being read. Initially, Mrs. Y. and I thought that whatever the children thought about the story would probably not be in a question form. If your children are unable to formulate questions when asked, do Activity 17 (The Hot Seat). When I asked them what they were WONDERING about as I read the story, these kindergartners came up with the following questions:

- 1) I wonder why all the children look alike?
- 2) I wonder why they all have the same color hair?
- 3) I wonder why they all have the same feet?
- 4) I wonder why they all have the same clothes?
- 5) I wonder why the mommy had so many children?
- 6) I wonder why she named them all the same name?

For this lesson, we did not vote on a question. Instead we passed the community ball to the child that came up with the first question. A glimpse of that dialogue went something like this:

T: Nicole, you were wondering why all the children look alike? Do you have any idea why? (Nicole has the option of discussing her own question or passing to someone else who might have his or her hand up.)

N: Yes, I think they all look alike cuz' they were born same time.

D: Yeah, like twins!

T: Sometimes twins do look alike. (You could ask them whether they know any twins. Do they look alike? You might get an example of fraternal twins.)

N: But I don't think so.

T: At first you said you thought they looked alike because they were born at the same time, but now you've changed your mind?

- N: Yes, because I don't think a mommy can have so many babies at once.
- T: Hmmmm, what do you think boys and girls?-----silence-----Does anyone agree or disagree with Nicole? Can you think of a mommy that can have lots of children at about the same time?-----silence-----Do any of you have a dog at home? (Several children raised their hands.) Are any of your dogs mommy dogs?
- R: I have a mommy dog and she has this many babies. (Holds up 10 fingers.)
- P: My cat had 10 babies!
- T: So Ramoan and Paul in a way have disagreed with Nicole saying some mommies can have many babies at once. And they gave 2 counter-examples. At this point, we ran out of time so we did an evaluation. Mrs. Y. continued to discuss the other questions with her children in several sessions that followed. Other question that could be raised in order to continue to push open and unpack this question would be:

- 1) What do we mean by a mommy?
- 2) Can only a lady be a mommy?
- 3) Can you be a mommy even if you don't have children?
- 4) Can people look alike but not be from the same family?
- 5) Can people from the same family look different from each other?
- 6) Can people look exactly alike, etc.

Activity 23: WHAT MAKES YOU, YOU?

Materials: -Community Ball
-imagination

Procedure: The last time I read to you the story, "Too Many Daves", and you had lots and lots of questions which we had a chance to talk about. Today I'd like to play a pretend game with you. I want you to pretend that in front of you there is a magic bottle. In this bottle is a magic potion that can change you. Everybody pick up your bottle, now let's take off the cap (dramatize by struggling to take it off). Together now let's take a gulp (children noisily gulp, including the teacher), another gulp, one last gulp. Now put your bottle down, close your eyes and let the magic begin. As children close their eyes, chant:

*Magic potion makes us the same,
Change us, change us, change our name!*

Have them open their eyes and ask? "Do you feel different?" Then point to several children and say, "Your name is Elfie. Your name is Elfie. Your name is Elfie. Guess what my name is?---Elfie! If you could really change your name to Elfie, would you still be the same person or would you be a different person? Call

on different children to see what they think. If responses are limited, ask the question in a different way. For example, "What would happen if after school you went out to meet your mom or dad, what do you think might happen if your name were Elfie? Most of the responses were that it wouldn't make a difference because they would still look the same and their parents would recognize them. A few said they would be different and their parents would leave them. Other questions that could be asked:

- 1) Do certain names make you feel good while other names make you feel bad?
- 2) If you could change your name to anything you wanted, what would you change it to?
- 3) If John and David (arbitrarily pick two children in your class) were to switch clothes with each other, would they be different? Would John become David and David become John?
- 4) If we wore the same hairdo, clothes, shoes, etc. would we become the same?

I had the children close their eyes again and chanted another chant to undo the spell:

*Magic potion gives us back our names,
Change us, change us so that we're not the same!*

Activity 24: BEING IN TWO PLACES AT ONCE

Materials: -Community Ball
-"Owl at Home" by Arnold Lobel

Oftentimes we have the tendency to think we know THE ANSWER, thus precluding us from seeing other possibilities. Young children are not so apt to be stuck in this way of thinking. They are so open to all the imaginable ways possible that one could contemplate as an answer.

In the story, "Upstairs and Downstairs" from Arnold Lobel's book Owl at Home, the children entertain the idea of being in two places at the same time. They find owl's predicament and his solution both amusing and silly. But inevitably when confronted with the question, "Can you be in two places at the same time?" there is always a child who will willingly tease open this question. This book was read to several classes of kindergartners. The result of the discussions was so creative that the idea that it is impossible to be in two places at once was quickly thrust aside by the adults in the circle.

Rather than sharing with you the possibilities that the children came up with, I'll leave it up to your children to come up with their own creative ideas. Don't forget to use WRATEC (APPENDIX 5) in your discussion. If for some reason your children are stuck, you can help them by asking if they can be both inside and outside of a hula-hoop or a circular rope at the same time? Have them demonstrate. Can a person be both inside and outside of the classroom? What if the two places are not close in proximity, then what? Usually at this point, the children are soaring with ideas and solutions.

III. THE USE of LITERATURE

LITERATURE AS A VEHICLE

Imagine a treasure chest full of wonderful treasure. As we peer into the keyhole, what we see is a small portion of the entire contents of this chest. If we talk about these treasures based on what we saw through this tiny keyhole, what we would be discussing would be a limited, narrow version of its actual contents. A literature book, like a treasure chest, can be full of wonderful philosophical potential. If we do not develop our own philosophical thinking skills, we may end up using literature in the same way as one who peers through a keyhole. Raising a philosophical question such as, "What makes you, you?" may be philosophical in content but if the treatment or the activity of the inquiry is not philosophical, we may end up leading the children to THE ANSWER. When this happens, the inquiry never moves beyond the superficial. Develop in your students the skills of higher order thinking by keeping an open mind.

Generating QUESTIONS

Activity 20: TIKKI TIKKI TEMBO

Materials:

- poster board clouds with signal words
- bag (large enough to place signal words)
- chart paper and marker
- Book: "Tikki Tikki Tembo," Retold by Arlene Mosel

Procedure: Tell the children that you are going to read to them, "Tikki Tikki Tembo". It is a story about a boy with a very, very long name, and how it almost got him into deep trouble. After the story is told, tell them that you have a bag filled with magic words. These magic words signal that something special is going to happen. Tell the children that these words indicate that we are wondering about something.



THE PHRASE, "I WONDER....."

HELPS CHILDREN FORMULATE THEIR THOUGHTS INTO QUESTIONS



Ask for a volunteer to pull a magic word from the bag and read it out loud. Because it's a safe place, the children can ask the children around them for help.

This child has the option of asking a question using this magic word that would pertain to the story. For example, if the child pulls out a cloud that has the signal word "where", then she would think of a question such as: "Where did the old man with the ladder live?" The question is written on the chart paper with the child's name next to the question. As you are writing their question, you can ask as you get to the end of the sentence, "What should I put at the end to indicate a question? (One of my first graders said, "Put a hook and a dot!") The children may also opt to pass and call on another child to take the magic word and formulate a question having to do with the story just read. I also use this opportunity to have them help me spell. Many times at this age level, once someone starts a question with "why?" every question starts in the same way. This activity helps the children to be aware that questions can be asked using different signal words. You could use these signal words to help children ask a variety of questions when doing other subject areas as well.

Using PLAIN VANILLA™

Activity 21: TIKKI TIKKI TEMBO (Discussion Using Plain Vanilla- See Appendix 6)

Materials: -Chart paper with children's questions
-Because and Reason index cards

Procedure: Present all of the questions that were contributed by the children. Do a "Plain Vanilla" (See APPENDIX 6). When doing the novel, we go through the steps of "Plain Vanilla". As you begin to feel comfortable with these steps, you can play around with it and make changes by adding or deleting to it. "Plain Vanilla" is not meant to be used like a manual. Instead it serves as an initial guide that operationalizes the use of the novel and exercises.

Though we are not using the novel, we have in a sense already done step 1 since we've read and shared the story with the children. We've also done part of step 2 as we've elicited questions from them. The other part of step 2 is categorizing the questions and then voting to discuss a question or questions. (Categorizing will be explained in Appendix 7.) You may skip over the categorizing unless you feel comfortable enough to tackle it at this point. If not, have the children read with you the questions that they generated. Then have them have as many votes as you feel necessary and select the question/questions for discussion. Keep in mind the three questions that receive the most votes.

Initially questions that are asked tend to be quite literal and don't always really seem to have much philosophical potential. However, since the initial reading of the story was primarily to elicit a variety of questions, I did not intentionally

select a book that would necessarily lead to a more philosophical type of questioning. Some of the questions that they came up with were: "Who flew the kite?", "Why did Tikki Tikki Tembo fall into the well?" "How did the water get into the well?"

Once a question has been selected, you may go back to the person who originated the question and ask, "What made you think of this question?" Use the community ball and start the discussion going. Whether the question is philosophical in nature or not, honor the question by discussing it with the children the best that you can. Using WRAI TEC, will help you to begin to treat the question philosophically.

If the first question selected begins to lose energy, this would be an appropriate time to introduce the acronyms LMO (Let's Move On) or NQP (Next Question, Please).

Introducing P4C Novels

Our goal is to move the children into the novel. You, the teacher, are the best judge as to when this is appropriate. The actual time of starting has varied considerable for both K's and 1st grade. With some K's, for example, using the Start-Up Kit throughout the year has been appropriate. We have also had some K classes begin the novel toward the middle of the 2nd semester and have been rather successful. It is suggested that 1st graders use those activities in the Start-Up Kit that are appropriate and by the 2nd semester, move into the novel. P4C Novels and Teacher's Manual for different grade's level are available through internet order at:

<http://www.montclair.edu/pages/iapc/intro.html>

Activity 33: Introducing "Elfie"

Materials: -Community Ball
-novel, "Elfie"
-chart paper

Procedure: Tell the children that you would like to share a story with them. This story is like a chapter book. Show them the cover of the novel and see if they have any comments. As you begin to read ask them if there is anything they are wondering about or any questions they would like to ask. Keep the reading to a paragraph or two and stop to ask for questions. As the children give you questions, write it down on chart paper with their names. From these questions will arise discussion and dialogue within your communities of inquirers.

A 1st grade teacher wrote the episodes on chart paper and had the children read together. Another 1st grade teacher typed out the episode into a letter form and made copies for each child. She also had her children use the back of their letters to draw what they were thinking about. She would then go around and ask them to tell her about their picture and she would write their question for them. Using all three methods along with any that you may come up with will give variety and added interest to the readings.

IV. APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: THE RELECTIVE COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY

As a COMMUNITY: An Intellectually Safe Place

- fun/joyful
- respect for persons
- any question is ok
- appreciation of diversity of viewpoints
- listening as important as speaking/wait time
- the community establishes its own rules
- everyone feels empowered to contribute

As a REFLECTIVE community:

Explicit, "metacognitive", reflective, consciously articulated awareness of the standards and criteria that are at work in the community. For example, the criteria that define a "safe place", the criteria that will be used to decide whether or not a discussion was successful.

As a reflective community of INQUIRY:

Co-inquiry: No one in the group knows THE answer, or where the inquiry will lead. The inquiry will, however, have a self-corrective component.

The topic is selected BY the community, and begins where the community is in its understanding of the topic. WRAI TEC, the "Good Thinker's Tool Kit", provides the "mind tools", intellectual structure, or "process tools" within which the inquiry will proceed.

THE COMMUNITY AS AN "INTELLECTUALLY SAFE PLACE"

The idea of Community in the Reflective Community of Inquiry begins with the classroom as an intellectually safe place. This means that all participants in the community (students and teachers) feel free to ask virtually any question or state any view so long as the operant principle of *respect for persons* is honored. It is the community aspect of the community of inquiry that provides the context for learning the social skills necessary for inquiry; and it is the philosophically oriented inquiry that provides the intellectual tools ("higher-order" thinking skills) necessary ultimately for work beyond the memorization level in all the other content areas of the curriculum. The idea of community incorporates the

importance of questioning, careful listening, and attentive participation by all members of the community of inquiry who are partners in an effort where all are "teachers" as well as "students".

Elements of a safe place include the following:

1. In a safe place, people are kind. Sarcasm, fighting, backbiting and name-calling are exceptions. Kindness, consideration and forgiveness are the usual way of life.
2. In a safe place, there is laughter, not just the canned laughter of television, but real laughter that comes from sharing meaningful work and play.
3. In a safe place, there are rules. The rules are few and fair and are made by the people who live and work there, including the children.
4. In a safe place, people listen to one another. They care about one another and show that they do.

THE COMMUNITY AS REFLECTIVE

As a reflective community both you and your students will be explicitly aware of the standards and criteria that are at work in the community. It is important to discuss with them the conditions that make possible an intellectually safe place. The use by the group of criteria to evaluate the dialogue/discussion sessions is also intended to foster reflective awareness. Making and using the "Good Thinker's Tool Kit" is another way of making explicit the tools of the community.

THE COMMUNITY AS REFLECTIVE INQUIRY

Inquiry, then, grows out of community interest and involvement. The members of the classroom are co-inquirers into a topic, whenever appropriate, that is of interest to and selected by the whole community, and not just the teacher. Members of the community are not, therefore, passive learners, but active inquirers, each with a responsibility to bring his or her best thinking to bear on the topic. Such a notion greatly diminishes both the role of textbooks and the teacher as the primary source of information. The topic becomes the locus and supporting evidence is sought from appropriate sources.

Inquiry also includes intellectual rigor. As the community develops, there is a growing expectation that reasons will be given to support views, that evidence will be sought in support of claims, that clarification of meaning is of importance, and

that assumptions and implications will be pursued. A willingness to probe assumptions is nurtured--"What are we assuming in this situation?" And while all this is being orchestrated, children are expected to give examples to illustrate what is meant, drawing upon their own experiences. Children are challenged to search for counter-examples to test the truth of the claims being made. WRAI TEC, "the Good Thinker's Tool Kit", is used as a model to stimulate this intellectual endeavor.

As each student becomes a more active inquirer, a more reflective thinker emerges. The importance of listening to each other, of participation by more than just a few students or a teacher who dominates, is incorporated into the inquiry. Students become more sensitive to what their peers are saying as well as more reflective to what they are saying. More thought goes into what is being articulated. This reflective posture is directly connected to his/her listening.

The participation in this community of inquiry by teachers brings about changes in them, too. The reflective component connected with the insights they hear from their students prompts a reappraisal of their own training and approach. Indeed, this new approach prompts a transformation of the teacher's view of his/her role in the entire education process. An important developmental change from teacher as "transmitter" to teacher as facilitator or co-inquirer occurs.

APPENDIX 2: CALLING ON ONE ANOTHER



KEEP A BALANCE

GOOD MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES CAN HELP SET UP THE ENVIRONMENT FOR QUALITATIVE INQUIRY TO OCCUR. AT THE SAME TIME, TOO MUCH MANAGEMENT CAN ALSO SERVE TO HINDER THE INQUIRY PROCESS.



- For habitual cushball holders, teachers may use fingers to indicate seconds passed. As a class it may be decided that 6 seconds will be given before the teacher steps in and calls on the next speaker.
- To prevent complaints that children call only on their friends, you could open it up for suggestions from the students. One suggestion we have is to call on one another in a girl-boy order. This seems to satisfy all.

- Every so often, go around the circle allowing every child an opportunity to speak or pass. We usually do this with a response that will not be too lengthy. e.g. If you have a general question like: "Can a person not know anything?" It is sometimes difficult to begin to unpack this question with the little ones. If you break this down further by asking: "Can each of you think of something that you don't know about or can't do?" Responses such as, "I can't drive a car," or "I don't know how to write like my older sister" is sometimes heard. Continue to pass the cushball so each child may respond.
- Using the cushball can help in management as it gives only one person the floor. However, there are times when the children can get silly and overthrow the cushball purposely, thereby disrupting the flow of the inquiry. One teacher had her children walk over and place the ball into the next speaker's hand. She was able to slow down the process which helped with management. Sometimes this is necessary. The danger of stressing too much management, however, is that it can affect the quality of the inquiry. As the children are aware of the parameters, let loose of some of the rigidity of management in order to push forward and nurture the inquiry process.
- The child whose question is being discussed may be the person in charge of the cushball. Or if you are using questions from the manual, the questions may be written on individual cards and the child who selects a card and reads the question may be in charge.

APPENDIX 3: ACRONYM FUN

The use of the following acronyms has proven effective in developing a safe place where the dialogue/discussion can then unfold in a non-threatening way. Your group can, of course, develop their own acronyms. Some teachers at Koko Head Elementary and Waimalu Elementary use the acronym **PSL** or please speak louder. Children who are soft-spoken readily speak up when the group says **SPLAT**. It's okay to say **IDUS**. And when more than one person is speaking at a time, **POPAAT** works.

SPLAT: A little louder, please.

SPLAT means that what a person said just barely got out of their mouth and then went "splat" onto the floor. In other words, we need you to speak a little louder so we can hear you. With a child who speaks especially softly, you might, after a couple of attempts, try the "kiss" game, or ask the child if he/she would like someone sitting close to them to repeat for them.

IDUS: I Don't Understand

IDUS is meant to empower students to be able to say when they don't understand. It has proven much easier to have students say IDUS than "I don't understand." Teachers are encouraged when they soon find IDUS showing up in other content areas.

POPAAT: Please One Person At A Time

Once students learn that during philosophy time we are very interested in what they have to say, "they" often all want to speak at the same time. POPAAT has proven effective in this context. When people start speaking out of turn, someone says "POPAAT" which means that all must stop talking. The last sanctioned speaker then continues.

LGS: Let's Get Started

OMT: One More Time

OMT can be used when neither SPLAT nor IDUS quite does the trick.

NQP: Next Question Please

LMO: Let's Move On

PBQ: Please Be Quiet

(A less gentle version of "POPAAT")

JAMP: Just A Minute Please

GOS: Going Off Subject

APPENDIX 5: W R A I T E C (The Good Thinker's Tool Kit)

In having a dialogue/discussion, developing and treating the discussion philosophically would be ideal because it is in this realm that the skills of higher order thinking, both critical and creative, can be developed to its highest degree. Sometimes the questions that the children raise are philosophical in content. For example, "Is Elfie real?" and "How many skies are there?" are questions that lend themselves well philosophically. To unpack these questions, use the seven components that make up WRAI TEC as a way to do this. Many times your students will come up with questions that may appear to have little or no philosophical content. For example a question like, "How tall is Elfie?" may be of great interest to your children. If the question itself appears not to be philosophical, you can still treat it philosophically as an activity by using WRAI TEC. Not every discussion will involve all the components of WRAI TEC.

It would be helpful to you in gaining confidence and competence in unpacking questions if you made your own set of WRAI TEC cards. A suggestion would be to make the cards large (approximately 10" square) on oaktag and fadeless paper. On the colored side, cut out or ink in the letters. On the reverse side, write notes to yourself to help you remember what each letter means. What follows is an elaboration of each letter.

The Good Thinker's Tool kits™

- * WHAT do you/they mean by ____?
- * WHAT is missing here?
- * WHAT have I forgotten to ask?
- * WHAT is going on here? What is the problem?
- * WHAT does this have to do with me?

- * REASONS (What reasons are there to support what is being said?)
 - * Why do you say that?
 - * Can you give a reason? Is it a good reason?
 - * What makes a reason a good reason?

- * ASSUME
 - What are we assuming (taking for granted as true)?
 - * What other assumptions might we make?
 - * How are our assumptions influencing what we are seeing/judging/thinking/saying?

- * INFERENCES
 - * What inferences have we made from what was said?
 - * IF...THEN (If what was said is true, then what?)
 - * IMPLICATIONS (What are the implications of what is proposed?)

- * TRUE
 - * Is what is being said true?
 - * How do we know?
 - * How could we find out?

- * EXAMPLES Can you think of an example to illustrate what you mean?
- * EVIDENCE What evidence can we find to support the claim being made?

- * COUNTER-EXAMPLES Can you think of a counter-example to the claim being made?
 - * For example, suppose someone claims, "You have to be able to read to be successful." Is this true? Can we think of a counter-example, i.e., someone who cannot read yet is successful?

What do you mean?

Reasons

Assumptions

Inferences, If...Then,
Implications

Truth

Examples, Evidence

Counterexamples

APPENDIX 6: PLAIN VANILLA

"Plain Vanilla" represents one strategy for facilitating a philosophical cycle. The following are the steps involved in operationalizing or doing "Plain Vanilla". A more in-depth discussion is contained in the "Guide for Teachers".

Step 1: READ: a paragraph or two, an episode, or a whole chapter from one of the novels.

(In the lower grades, the teacher may read do the reading. The story may also be written on chart paper so that everyone can read together. One of our first grade teachers typed each episode in a letter form and gave each child the letter to be read in the circle.)

Step 2: QUESTIONS FROM CHILDREN: As children ask their questions, write it down on chart paper with their names next to the question.

CATEGORIZE QUESTIONS: This can be done every so often. A more detailed explanation on how to categorize will be discussed in APPENDIX 7.

VOTE: As a class, determine how many votes each child will have and select the 2 or 3 questions that the children seem most interested in discussing. If the children lose energy for the 1st question, NQP (next question, please) to the next question.

Step 3: DIALOGUE/DISCUSSION: Development of student questions through the use of WRATEC. If the discussion seems to hit a snag but you are familiar with manual exercises and/or discussion plans that lend themselves well to the child's question, you can introduce these exercises.

Step 4: VARIATION: Teacher initiated activity to introduce any logic, reasoning, "thinking about thinking" or other skill development exercises that are appropriate. These activities may come from the manual, literature, a current event, poem, song, film, etc. After this step, loop back to Step 1 for the next paragraph, episode, chapter, etc.

APPENDIX 7: CATEGORIZING

In Step 2 of "Plain Vanilla" categorizing is included. It is not necessary to categorize each time you get to Step 2. However, when you do decide to do this with your children, you can make it easier if at the time that you take their questions, you place their questions on individual strips of paper instead of chart paper. I watched a 2nd grade teacher do this with her children and they did very well. She returned their questions to them and asked for a volunteer. The first child read her question out loud and made up her own mind as to what her question was all about. For example, the child's question may have been, "Why do people dream?" and she may decide that this question is about dreaming. The teacher would then write DREAMING on one end of the chalkboard and the child would tape her question underneath. The teacher then asked if there were any other children who had questions that they thought belonged under this category. If there were, she had them each stand up and read their question before placing it under the heading. The first child then called on the next hand and the next child decided what category his question would be. Another category was then added. The children often found that their questions sometimes could belong in more than one category. The children often agreed and disagreed in a very constructive way that made this activity a very worthwhile experience.