

CEI519/PHI552      Philosophy and Children  
Thursdays 5:20-8:10 pm

**Sample On-campus course**  
Dr. Wendy C. Turgeon

### **Syllabus**

- 1/26            Philosophy and Children-an introduction
- 2/02            Philosophy and Wonderment: defining terms, collecting ideas  
reading: Dialogues by Gareth Matthews
- 2/09            Our Educational Climate: current dilemmas and proposed solutions  
reading: PIC\*\*, 3  
Kio and Gus Discussion
- 2/16            Formal Curriculum and Methodology I  
our educational model: philosophy  
reading: PIC, 4 & 5  
KIO AND GUS discussion
- 2/23            Formal Curriculum and Methodology II  
building an environment and implementing techniques  
reading: PIC, 6 & 7  
KIO AND GUS discussion
- 3/02            methodology issues and Class work on paper projects
- 3/09            Exploration of alternative materials  
**Short Papers due**
- 3/16            Theoretical Foundations: Logic and Creativity  
reading: PIC, 8  
KIO AND GUS discussion  
**Short papers due**
- 3/23            Teaching ethics?  
reading: PIC, 9  
KIO AND GUS discussion
- 3/30            Philosophy and other disciplines  
Social studies, language arts, sciences  
KIO AND GUS discussion
- 4/06            Lisa-- philosophical text  
Class panels leading discussion
- 4/13            Spring Break- no class
- 4/20            Lisa--  
Class panels leading discussion
- 4/27            Lisa-- discussion continues  
Class panels leading discussion

**Required Texts** (four texts)

\*\*PIC= Philosophy in the Classroom by Lipman, Sharp, Oscanyan  
Dialogues or Philosophy and the Young Child by Gareth Matthews (excellent background reading to accompany the theoretical text).

Lisa this is a philosophical novel written for high school children

Kio and Gus this novel is written for 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> graders

Recommended additional text: Philosophy Goes to School and Thinking, Children and Education both by Matthew Lipman and Teaching for Better Thinking by Ann Margaret Sharp and Laurance Splitter.

**Assignments****1. Reflections paper** (5-8 pages)

Students will be assigned either a child's story with philosophical themes or some other form of philosophical catalyst (art work, film, etc.). You will each engage a group of children in a discussion about your material and your essay will report on the ensuing discussion and evaluate it. More information will be presented about this as the course goes on. **Due March 9<sup>th</sup>**

**2. Final paper**-- Choose from the following options based on your own personal research interests:

--theoretical background: psychological/philosophical perspectives; Growing Up with Philosophy or Thinking, Children and Education both edited by M. Lipman are good sources for ideas

--a review of current literature in psychology or philosophy of education; an active discussion debating the need for and methodology of educational reform includes writings by E.D. Hirsch, Jr., David Elkind, Howard Gardner, Nel Noddings, TheodoreSizer and Neil Postman.

--alternative curricula & methods that introduce philosophy into the classroom

--practical application: choose one of the philosophical novels (listed below) by Lipman and introduce it to a group of children

--write a comprehensive teaching manual for a children's book using the text manuals as a model

--choose a content discipline (eg., social studies, science) and explore how philosophy can be incorporated into its curriculum

-- a review and analysis of web sites devoted to p4c concepts and materials

--write a philosophical children's story with an accompanying short manual

**The paper should be 10-15 pages ; due May 4th**

3. Participate as facilitator in a class discussion of the novel Lisa to the class. Introduce the material, lead the discussion, assist the class in summarizing their discussions. The final facilitator(s) will return to Kio and Gus and do likewise.

\*\*This assignment may change based on enrollment counts

DUE: 4/6,20,27 and 5/4.

4. Another avenue for enrichment is **participation in the BlackBoard** inquiry that will be generated throughout the semester. I will also post our handouts in our online Blackboard site as well. I will discuss this in class.

**Please note:** The final grade will also take into account attendance and participation as well as written work. This class is essentially a community exploration of the themes of children and philosophy. Your participation and contribution will greatly shape the nature and focus of the whole group and is necessary for us all to benefit from the readings and ideas therein. If you miss more than two classes, your final grade will be lowered in proportion to the lack of participation.

### **Philosophical**

<b>Novels written for children</b>	<b>Grades targeted</b>	<b>Range</b>
The Doll Hospital	preschool	Pre-K-K
<u>Elfie</u>	1	K-2
<u>Kio and Gus</u>	2-3	K-5
<u>Pixie</u>	3-4	K-5
<u>Nous</u>	3-6	
<u>Harry Stottlemeier's</u>	5-6	4-7
<u>Discovery</u>		
<u>Lisa</u>	7-8	7-12
<u>Suki</u>	9-10	8-11
<u>Mark</u>	11-12	9-12

### **Some questions to invite children to think about:**

Have you ever thought about being some else if you had another name?

Do you sometimes wonder what is at the end of the galaxy?

Do you ever wonder if you can do something wrong, even if everybody else is doing the same?

Do you sometimes wonder if something can happen completely by accident?

Do you wonder sometimes if all were different, if we had no clocks?

Do you wonder sometimes what are colors in fact?

Do you wonder sometimes if a robot can think?

Do you wonder sometimes where the numbers come from?

Do you wonder sometimes if a stone has feelings?

Do you wonder sometimes if all that is happening can as well be a dream?

## CEI 519 BIBLIOGRAPHY--

by Ann Marie Antener and Wendy C. Turgeon

### ***Children's Books for Philosophical Discussions***

#### **Books with Universal Appeal**

Andersen	H.C.	The Ugly Duckling
Baum	Frank	The Wonderful Wizard of Oz
Carroll	Lewis	Alice in Wonderland
Carroll	Lewis	Through the Looking Glass
Jarrell	Randall	The Bat Poet
Milne	A.A.	The World of Pooh
Steig	William	Pink and Yellow
VanAllsburg	Chris	Jumanji
VanAllsburg	Chris	The Polar Express
VanAllsburg	Chris	Two Bad Ants
VanAllsburg	Chris	The Sweetest Fig
VanAllsburg	Chris	The Wretched Stone
White	E.B.	Charlotte's Web
Williams	Margery	The Velveteen Rabbit

#### **Primary Grades (Kindergarten to Second)**

Aardema	Verna	Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears
Babbit	Natalie	The Something
Baynton	Martin	Jane and the Dragon
Brenner	Barbara	Wagon Wheels
Browne	Anthony	The Tunnel
Bunting	Eve	Swan in Love
Catalanotto	Peter	Emily's Art
Chorao	Kay	Albert's Toothache
Dahl	Roald	Fantastic Mr. Fox
Depaola	Tomie	The Legend of Blue Bonnet
Duquette	Keith	Happy as a Tapir
Fenner	Carol	Tigers in the Celler
Fox	Mem	Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge
Gannett	Ruth Stills	My Father's Dragon
Goble	Paul	Iktomi Loses His Eyes
Hall	Donald	Oxcart Man
Himmelman	John	Talester the Lizard
Keats	Ezra Jack	Dreams
Leonna	Leo	Alexander and the Windup Mouse
Leonna	Leo	Fish is Fish
Leonna	Leo	Frederick
Leonna	Leo	Let's Make Rabbits

Leonna	Leo	Swimmy
Lobel	Arnold	Frog and Toad Together
Lobel	Arnold	Owl at Home
Madonna		Mr. Peabody's Apples
Mayer	Mercer	There's a Nightmare in my Closet
Mayer	Mercer	A Silly Story
McCloskey	Robert	Make Way for Ducklings
McKee	David	Tusk Tusk
McLerran	Alice	The Mountain who loved a Bird
McNaughton	Colin	Once Upon an Ordinary School Day
Moss	Marissa	Regina's Big Mistake
Munson	Derek	Enemy Pie
Parish	Peggy	Amelia Bedelia
Pfister	Marcus	The Rainbow Fish
Pollaco	Patricia	Babushka Baba Yaga
Seuss	Dr.	Hurray for Duttendorf (and any of his other books!)
Seuss	Dr.	Thudwick the Big Hearted Moose
Silverstein	Shel	The Giving Tree
Tashlin	Frank	The Bear that Wasn't
Tudor	Tasha	First Delights
Waber	Bernard	Ira Sleeps Over
Waber	Bernard	I Was All Thumbs
Waber	Bernard	But names Will Never Hurt Me
Wells	Rosemary	Peabody
Wright	Betty Ren	The Cat Next Door

### **Intermediate Grades (third, fourth and fifth)**

Baylor	Byrd	Hawk, I'm your Brother
Brown	Jeff	Flat Stanley
Carrick	Carol	The Accident
Carter	Forrest	The Education of Little Tree
Cooney	Barbara	Miss Rumpius
Creech	Sharon	Love That Dog
Dahl	Roald	The Magic Finger
Estes	Eleanor	A Hundred Dresses
Gardiner	John Reynolds	Stone Fox
Gerstein	Mordecai	The Man who walked between the Towers
Greaves	Margaret	A Net to Catch the Wind
Knutson	Barbara	Why the Crab Has No Head
Meddaugh	Susan	Martha Calling
Meddaugh	Susan	Martha Speaks
Miles	Miska	Annie and the Old One
Patterson	Katherine	The Great Gilly Hopkins
Patterson	Katherine	The Crane Wife
Polacco	Patricia	Appelmando's Dream
Rawls	Wilson	Where the Red Fern Grows

Rotowoski	Margaret	After the Dancing Days
Smith	Doris	A Taste of Blackberries
Smith	Roger	The Empty Island
Steig	William	Abel's Island
Steig	William	Dominic
Steig	William	Sylvester and the Magic Pebble
Steig	William	The Amazing Bone
Tudor	Tasha	A Time to Keep
Tudor	Tasha	Springs of Joy
Viorst	Judith	The Tenth Good Thing about Barney
White	E.B.	Stuart Little
Wagner	Jane	J.T.
Willard	Nancy	Nightgown of the Sullen Moon
Zolotow	Charlotte	William's Doll

**Advanced grades (fifth, sixth, etc.)**

Babbitt	Natalie	Tuck Everlasting
Banks	Lynn Reid	Indian in the Cupboard
Brinton	Turkle	Thy Friend, Obadiah
Bryars	Betsy	The Summer of the Swan
Buffet	Jimmy	The Jolly Mon
Cleary	Beverly	Ralph S. Mouse
Cooper	Susan	Over the Sea Under Stone, The Dark is Rising, Greenwich, etc.
Evaline	Ness	Same, Bangs and Moonshine
George	Jean C.	Julie of the Wolves
Graham	Kenneth	Wind in the Willows
Hinton	S.E.	The Outsiders
Jester	Norman	The Phantom Tollbooth
L'Engle	Madelaine	The Time Trilogy
Lewis	C.S.	the Narnia series
Lowery	Lois	The Giver
McLachlan	Patricia	Baby
Musgrove	Margaret	Ashanti to Zulu
Steinbeck	John	The Pearl
Walsh	Jill Paton	Unleaving
Zindel	Paul	The Pigman

This bibliography simply offers suggestions. If you know of other works that you feel might make excellent material for a philosophic discussion, by all means try them out! This is how the bibliography grows.

## CEI 519      Philosophical Questions

What sorts of puzzlement constitute a **philosophical** attitude towards experience? In thinking about the issues below, ask yourself: what do **I** think of this question? In what ways would children engage themselves in this question?

### Ethics

1. What makes something right or wrong? How many meanings of "right" and "wrong" are there?

the right time  
the wrong shoe  
the right thing to do  
my right hand  
the wrong book

2. Likewise, the notions of "good" and "bad"...?

3. How do I know what is "fair"?

### Epistemology or Theory of Knowledge

4. How do I **decide** to do something?

5. What makes an idea or statement true or false? Can truth change?

6. How do words mean? How does language come about and relate (or does it) to the world?

7. What is the difference between a belief, an opinion, and knowledge?

### Philosophy of God

8. Can you think about God? Describe the contents of your thoughts.

9. I've never seen God; is It real? How do I know it is real?

10. Why do people talk about God in such different ways? Are some ways better than others? How would we judge among them?

### Metaphysics

11. What makes me 'me'? How much can I change and still be me?

12. Is time real? How so or why not?

13. What makes something real?

14. Is there a meaning of life? What does that question itself mean?

## Aesthetics

15. What makes something beautiful? the eye of the beholder or a quality in the object?

16. What is creativity? in art? in science? elsewhere?

17. How does an artist create?

18. What is the "work of art" (in literature, painting, music, dance, theater? etc.??)

As a group, come up with what you judge to be a philosophical question. What makes it philosophical?