



Philosophy in the Classroom

Matthew Lipman

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This is a textbook for teachers that demonstrates how philosophical thinking can be used in teaching children. It begins with the assumption that what is taught in schools is not (and should not be) subject matter but rather ways of thinking. The main point is that the classroom should be converted into a community of inquiry, and that one can begin doing that with children. Based on the curriculum that Matt Lipman has developed at the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children, which he heads, this book describes the curriculum and explains its use. The text is self-contained, however.

This revision is thorough-going and incorporates new chapters, as well as new material in old chapters. Part One focuses on the need of educational change and the importance of philosophical inquiry in developing new approaches. Part Two discusses curriculum and teaching methodology, including teacher behavior conducive to helping children. Part Three deals with developing logic skills and moral judgment. It concludes with a chapter on the sorts of philosophical themes pertinent to ethical inquiry for children: the right and the fair, perfect and right, free will and determinism, change and growth, truth, caring, standards and rules, thinking and thinking for oneself. Education, in this sense, is not a matter of dispensing information; it is the process of assisting in the growth of the whole individual.

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