

A philosophical coming of age

What makes philosophical education for
children philosophical?



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Abstract

When I became more acquainted with philosophical education for children, I missed a clear idea of what exactly makes it philosophical. Driven by the conviction that philosophical education should safeguard a philosophical essence, in this thesis I try to find out what philosophical education for children (P4C) should entail in order for it to be considered philosophical. To answer this question I first explain what P4C is and which ideas lie at the root of the tradition. I discuss the ideas of pioneers of P4C, Lipman and Matthews and I show that P4C is a dynamic movement. In the second chapter I try to answer the question "What is philosophy?" with the help of four theories on the nature of philosophy in general, namely those of Deleuze and Guattari, Priest, Williamson and Van de Water. In the third chapter I describe and analyse seven contemporary methods in philosophical education with the help of the ideas of Matthews and Lipman and the theories of the second chapter.

While my initial idea was to construct a list of core characteristics or a bottom line of "philosophicalness" and my research question referred to philosophical education in general, during my research I came to the conclusion that I would not be able to do exactly that. Given the fact that education not only takes place on paper but also in practice and that a philosophical intention does not guarantee a philosophical outcome I believe that the only thing that I and the theories are able to do are stating that they are *more* or *less* philosophical, according to these theories. I believe that this conclusion contributes to the fact that philosophy is hard to define and is an illustration of the challenging relation between theory and practice in philosophy.

With this adjustment of goal in mind I propose several theoretical guidelines based on the theories and the methods that I discussed and that I believe will help to apply theory to practice and contribute to making education as philosophical as possible. To illustrate what philosophical education for children looks like in practice I discuss and analyse a recorded lesson in philosophy presented by WonderWhy.

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1. Introduction

Philosophical education has been around for ages. The famous Greek philosopher Plato had his own school and Socrates was famous for educating young people. Nowadays philosophical education is very popular; not only can you study philosophy at high schools and universities, public philosophical education is also very successful. Alain de Botton's School of Life and the International School of Philosophy are thriving and books by popular philosophers Stine Jensen, Bas Haring and Rob Wijnberg can be found in every bookshop. In this last-mentioned context, philosophy is presented and used as a way to handle everyday problems and encounters topics such as relationships, work, family, (un)happiness and how to be good.

In the early sixties pioneer Matthew Lipman started a new movement in philosophical education, namely philosophy for children. Since then, philosophy for children (P4C) has grown very popular. During the last elections the Party for the Animals in the Netherlands even included in their program that philosophical education for primary schools should become obligatory. There are more and more philosophical books for children and methods that can be used during lessons in philosophy such as *De vliegende papa's*, *Ik zag twee beren filosoferen* and *Kinderen Filosoferen* and the positive effects that philosophy has on the children are proudly presented. Trickey and Topping (2004) present that, amongst others things, research has shown that children who practiced philosophy at school improved their reasoning skills, their logical thinking, their abilities in reading and listening, and their skills in mathematics. Furthermore, Trickey and Topping (2004) present studies that showed children became more self-confident and that children who practiced philosophy as school had an increase in IQ in comparison with children that did not.

1.1 Relevance

Possible positive effects of philosophy for children aside, Katrien Schaubroek (2007) rightfully addresses in her review of *Peinzen, 49 filosofische vragen voor kinderen* by Anthone, Janssens, Vervoort, and Knops that there is a lack of attention for the philosophical aspect of philosophical education. She states that the real question is not whether or not P4C is useful or that it has positive effects on children but what makes it philosophical and whether or not P4C is to be counted as part of

philosophy. She strongly expresses her doubts that the proposed philosophical questions presented by Anthone et al. (2006) such as "What do you feel when you are in love?" and "What would you like to make appear if you could do magic?" are really philosophical questions. Furthermore, she doubts whether the two requirements "open" and "unanswerable" are everything that can be said about philosophical questions. Schaubroek even states that the philosophical background knowledge presented in the book cannot be called philosophical.

While these comments of Schaubroek target the authors of this specific book, I believe that her general point addresses the practice of P4C including teachers, organisations, schools, methods and books. I strongly agree with Schaubroek that the lack of boundaries or guidelines in the world of P4C poses a risk to the credibility of P4C, a doubt about the "philosophicalness" of the practice, or the quality of philosophy being practiced. In the worst case this approach provides an opportunity for anybody to teach anything they want.

Some would say it is inherent to philosophy to question instead of providing answers to questions. Yet, even if philosophy is a colourful abundance of opinions and methods and theories and thinkers, there should be something that ties everything together. There should be an essence of philosophy there somewhere. I think that is important that philosophical education safeguards this philosophical essence, because while philosophy can be about anything this does not mean that everything is worth the title of philosophy. To help form an idea of what exactly has to be safeguarded, I want to know what education has to consist of in order for it to be philosophical. I want to know if it is possible to formulate certain boundaries or characteristics that ensure the level of philosophy of philosophical education for children.

1.2 P4C versus academic philosophy

One way to construct a definition of what makes philosophical education for children philosophical is to compare it to other existing forms of philosophical education, such as academic philosophy. Are there any similarities, or do they differ completely? The comparison between philosophy for children and academic philosophy has been made by several others before, such as founding father of P4C Matthew Lipman. Lipman (1995) states the following about the difference between academic philosophy and philosophy for children. He says: "This is not the traditional, academic philosophy of the universities, but the narrative-and-discussion based doing of philosophy such as is to be found in the approach known as Philosophy for Children."¹ Not only does he explain what philosophy for children focuses on, he also makes a statement by saying that it is not alike to the kind of philosophy that is taught at universities.

This distinction between P4C for primary schools and academic philosophy is also addressed by Iris Zwart (2014) in her bachelor thesis *Kinderfilosofie en populaire filosofie, een discussie over didactiek en inhoud van de filosofie*. She states that P4C is more focussed on practicing philosophy instead of learning about the history of philosophical literature, as is the case with academic philosophy. As a result, what is discussed during the classes of P4C depends largely on the children's input. Therefore, it is not possible to follow a similar curriculum based on philosophical literature as is done in academic philosophy. Philosophical education for high schools is according to Zwart a combination of these two since she observed that there is attention to both the practice of philosophy as to the history of philosophy, philosophical theories and famous philosophers.

Liesbeth Jansens (2008) argues in her doctoral thesis *Wie is dat kind dat zich afvraagt "Wie ben ik?". Een cartografie van het discours rond filosoferen met kinderen als instrument tot burgerzin* that P4C cannot be compared to academic philosophy at all. Like Zwart, Jansens states that P4C mainly focusses on philosophical skills and doing philosophy, and observes that asking questions and thinking together as a group are the main activities. She adds that philosophical theories developed by famous

¹ Lipman, 1995, p. 1.

philosophers are not treated during the P4C classes and that therefore P4C is not comparable to academic philosophy.

Given the differences between philosophical education for primary schools and academic philosophical education one might wonder if philosophical education for primary schools is worth the title of philosophy at all if we take academic philosophy as the standard. There is, however, no proof that academic philosophy is or should be the standard. As co-founder of the Dutch Centrum voor Kinderfilosofie Thecla Rondhuis (2005) also states in her doctoral thesis *Philosophical Talent*: "Although tetralogues² are manifestations of philosophising, they are not identical to academic philosophy."³ So, even though tetralogue philosophy is not identical to academic philosophy, Rondhuis still considers both to be a manifestation of philosophising. Without stating that there are no similarities at all between academic philosophy and P4C, the aforementioned researches show that the major difference between academic philosophy and philosophy for children is the role philosophy plays in the education. Academic philosophy seems to be focusing more on philosophical theories and philosophical literature and philosophy for children focuses more on practicing philosophy. As a consequence, since they focus on different aspects of philosophical education and there is no specific reason that academic philosophy is the standard, both can be part of philosophical education. It would be a shame to not give P4C a chance to be considered philosophical at all due to the fact that it is not very similar to academic philosophy.

1.3 Research question

In this thesis I will try to define what exactly characterizes philosophical education for primary schools as philosophical. I want to know if it is possible to formulate certain boundaries or characteristics that safeguard the level of philosophy of philosophical education for children. Therefore, my research question is the following:

What should philosophical education for children entail in order for it to be considered philosophical?

² Tetralogue philosophy is Rondhuis's description of philosophy for children.

³ Rondhuis, 2005, p. 105.

I will answer this question by first describing the state of the art of philosophical education for primary schools in the literature in the first chapter in order to gain a clear understanding of what philosophy for children entails. In this chapter I will both describe the ideas of founding fathers Matthew Lipman and Gareth Matthews and I will show the current debates in the literature on P4C. In the second chapter I will try to answer the question "What is philosophy?" with the help of philosophical literature and form an understanding of what elements are essential to philosophy. I want to find out if and how I can formulate core characteristics of philosophy that I can use to determine whether or not P4C can be considered philosophical. With the help of the findings of my research in the second chapter and the theories of Matthews and Lipman that I described in the first chapter I will analyse seven methods that are used in P4C. I want to see how philosophy is represented in these methods and whether or not this view is compatible with the theories that I analysed. With the help of a case study based on a lesson of WonderWhy I will illustrate in the fourth chapter the everyday practices of philosophical education for primary schools and further develop the definition/theory of what makes philosophy for children philosophical. Despite the complexity of the question "What is philosophy" and the lack of consensus in P4C I hope I will be able to contribute to this interesting field.

2. Demarcation of the subject

In order to give a state of the art of philosophy for children I start at the beginning of the movement to describe how it has evolved. First I will describe the theories of the founding fathers of P4C, Matthew Lipman and Gareth Matthews, to find out what they have contributed. I will then show by means of an article by Nancy Vansieleghem and David Kennedy that P4C consists of different movements and that it is a dynamic concept.

2.1 Matthew Lipman

It is impossible to write about philosophy for children without mentioning Matthew Lipman. Lipman is generally seen as the founder of philosophy for children. During his career as a professor at Columbia University Lipman became disappointed with the critical thinking skills of his students and decided to do something about it. Instead of integrating a new critical-thinking-module in his academic courses he tackled the problem elsewhere, namely, in elementary schools. In 1972 Lipman founded an educational programme called Philosophy for Children and established the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children. Following the philosophy of John Dewey on education, Lipman was convinced that young children are capable of thinking abstract, learning how to think critically and how to reason profoundly. He created lessons for children based on logic and discourse. Lipman wanted to encourage the children to ask questions, to be creative, to be critical and to inspire them to strengthen their skills in reasoning by asking them their opinions about certain philosophical subjects.

In *Thinking in Education* Lipman (2003) composed a list of dominant assumptions of the reflective paradigm, that can be seen as criteria or a guideline for P4C. The reflective paradigm provides guidelines that help installing the community of inquiry that Lipman wishes to see during philosophy. The first assumption of the reflective paradigm is that: "Education is the outcome of participation in a teacher-guided community of inquiry, among whose goals are the achievement of understanding and

good judgment."⁴ Lipman prefers not to use words as "lesson" or "classes" but opts for "inquiry" instead. According to Lipman the goal of P4C is to let the group of children make inquiries and not focus on a concrete lesson that there is to be learned or a specific answer that needs to be given. The second assumption builds upon this idea. It states that: "Students are stirred to think about the world when our knowledge of it is revealed to them to be ambiguous, equivocal, and mysterious."⁵ The children are encouraged to express their own thoughts and opinions about the wonders of the world since the subjects that are treated during the philosophy inquiries are, as Lipman states it, mysterious and unclear. The most important thing during these inquiries is the inquiry itself, the thought processes and the way the children grow in their ability of critical thinking. As a result the subject and content of the inquiry depends on the input of the children. When touching upon a certain subject during the inquiry, there is no guarantee about what will be discussed or what specific way the conversation will go. This also means that there is no fixed curriculum that has to be respected. This is also expressed in Lipman's third assumption: "The disciplines in which inquiry occurs are assumed to be neither nonoverlapping nor exhaustive; hence their relationships to their subject matters are quite problematic."⁶ The fact that the children are encouraged to come up with their own philosophical questions and that they vote which one they find most interesting to discuss in the group is another testimony of the fact that this type of education is driven by the children. Lipman thus formulates the next assumption: "The focus of the educational process is not the acquisition of information but on the grasp of relationships within and among the subject matters under investigation."⁷ In order to do this in the best way possible cooperation from the children is needed: "Students are expected to be thoughtful and reflective, and increasingly reasonable and judicious."⁸ This assumption also expresses Lipman's aforementioned view that children are capable of thinking abstract and learning how to think critically. Since the goal of the inquiries in philosophy is not to require certain knowledge or to prepare the children for a test and a different attitude is asked from the children in comparison with

⁴ Lipman, 2003, p. 18.

⁵ Lipman, 2003, p. 18.

⁶ Lipman, 2003, p. 18

⁷ Lipman, 2003, p. 18.

⁸ Lipman, 2003, p. 19.

other school subjects, the teacher's role is also quite different during the philosophical inquiries. Lipman states that: "The teacher's stance is fallibilistic⁹ (one that is ready to concede error) rather than authoritative"¹⁰. It is not the main task of the teacher to teach or to preach the truth during the philosophical inquiries, it is their task to facilitate the conversation between children.

Lipman focussed on the ability of the children and believed that his programme could help children to become more critical and creative in their thinking. I will see how his ideas have evolved into nowadays P4C later on.

2.2 Gareth Matthews

A second authority in the field is Gareth Matthews. Where Lipman is mostly considered the founding father of P4C and has contributed to the content of P4C, Matthews has had a major impact on the emancipation of P4C. Matthews fully supports Lipman's idea that children are capable of doing philosophy. In his book *Dialogues with Children* Matthews (1984) writes about the philosophical conversations he had with a group of children at an elementary school in Edinburgh. He demonstrates that the children are perfectly able of carrying a philosophical conversation. Matthews reasons that they might even be more capable of doing philosophy than adults, because children's questions and responses are often *naturally* philosophical. With both his anecdotes and his theories Matthews tried to put philosophy for children on the philosophical map and inspire teachers and parents to practice philosophy with their children.

In his book *Philosophy and the Young Child* Matthews (1979) argues against clinical psychologist Jean Piaget, who stated that children's capacity of thinking evolves gradually until it is fully "grown" when they are adults. Piaget describes four stadia that children go through during their development with corresponding ages that function as an indication. In for example the first stage from birth to the age of two, children start to develop their motor control. Abstract thinking and metacognition¹¹ are placed in the last stage, the formal operational stage that children go through from

⁹ Fallibilism is the philosophical claim that no belief can have justification which guarantees the truth of the belief.

¹⁰ Lipman, 2003, p. 18.

¹¹ Metacognition is a term invented by developmental psychologist John H. Flavell (1979) and refers to higher-order thinking that consist of for example thinking about thinking.

ages eleven to sixteen. For this reason Piaget believes that young children are not capable to practice philosophy or to grasp philosophical ideas and questions because they are not capable to think abstractly and to use metacognition *yet*, which you need to be able to do in order to practice philosophy according to Piaget. Matthews however believes that it can better be described as the other way around. After observing the natural philosophical remarks and questions of children Matthews (1979) states that practicing philosophy is easier for children and adults have to work harder in order to get into a philosophical state of mind because they have adjusted to all kinds of societal rules that oppress spontaneity and creative thinking.

In his book *The Philosophy of childhood* Matthews (1994) says the following: "My hypothesis is that, once children become well settled into school, they learn that only useful questioning is expected of them. Philosophy then either goes underground, to be pursued privately, perhaps, and not shared with others, or else becomes totally dormant."¹² To reignite the natural philosophy of children Matthews starts writing story-beginnings about children that have to deal with a philosophical problem. He uses these story-beginnings at the start of his lessons and after asking how the story should go on he watches the children having heated discussions full of philosophical questions and remarks. Not being taken aback by a lack of philosophical vocabulary or a way of formulating questions and sentences that is different than adults Matthews recognizes the philosophical nature in the thinking of the children and dismisses Piaget's idea. This does not mean that Matthews believes that children are capable to think or reason in the exact same way as adults but he does believe that Piaget's view leaves no room for appreciating any philosophical thinking in children at all. Matthews believes that adults should take children more seriously and that P4C should be considered a respected part of philosophy.

Matthews has played a huge role in the perception of the capabilities of the children, by stating that they are naturally philosophical thinkers and that adults might even learn something from the children.

¹² Matthews, 1994, p. 5.

2.3 An ongoing discussion

The ideas of both authors still continue to influence the theory and the practice of philosophy for children. At the same time, the variety in methods of teaching has grown steadily along with the popularity of philosophy for children. Lipman's ideas have been admired and criticized and Nancy Vansieleghem and David Kennedy (2011) even make a distinction between philosophy for children with/during Lipman and after Lipman. The first, due to the fact that it corresponds with the programme established by Lipman is named philosophy *for* children, the latter is named philosophy *with* children due to the fact that critics of Lipman believe that the use of the word "for" is paternalistic and gives the idea that it is something that is forced upon children by adults. Furthermore, as Vansieleghem and Kennedy state, the word "with" accentuates even more the importance of the dialogue, since one of the points of critique on Lipman raised by Karel van der Leeuw is that he emphasises the importance of analytical reasoning too much. Vansieleghem and Kennedy state that Van der Leeuw believes that P4C should focus more on creating an atmosphere in which the children can develop their own answers to the difficult questions they encounter in a life and a world that is dynamic. This discussion shows that P4C is an open and dynamic movement, something that Vansieleghem and Kennedy support: "Moreover philosophy for children will not be presented as a well-defined occupation and more or less precisely circumscribed activity, but rather as a concept that is created and that remains subject to the constraints of renewal, replacement and mutation."¹³

Since I am interested in philosophical education for children in general I will look at a variety of theories and methods to get a broad idea of what it entails, without affiliating myself with a specific movement in P4C. Therefore, in this thesis I will not make a choice in my vocabulary between for example philosophy for children, philosophy with children, inquiries, lessons, teachers and facilitators because I aim to make my research as objective as possible. This means that if I use descriptions such as "a lesson in philosophy" I mean the moment of the school day when the children practice philosophy and I do not refer to a paternalistic interpretation of P4C. If the

¹³ Vansieleghem & Kennedy, 2011, p. 180.

theories or methods that I discuss do have a specific meaning or reference in mind with their choice of words I will explicitly address it.

I now have a clear understanding of the history of P4C and what the philosophical inquiries should look like according to Matthew Lipman. I also understand by the work of Gareth Matthews that it was not a common perception that children are able to practice philosophy at the time. Furthermore, I have seen that there are discussions in the world of P4C about what it should entail that show us that it is a dynamic movement. In relation to the research question I understand by the theories of Lipman and Matthews that children are naturally capable of thinking philosophically and should be taken serious. Furthermore, philosophical education for children is conversation-based, guided by the children and the goal is to develop the critical thinking skills of the children by inspiring them to think together about philosophical problems and questions. The philosophical inquiries are the place where the children are invited to tap into their dormant philosophical knowledge and skills under the guidance of a teacher, who should not take an authoritative role during the inquiries. In the next chapter I will focus on forming an understanding of what is essential to philosophy that I can use as an indicator of the level of philosophy of P4C.

3. What is philosophy?

In order to determine whether or not philosophical education for children can be considered philosophical, I first need to define what I understand by philosophy and philosophical. First I will show what difficulties I encountered since defining philosophy is not an easy task. Then I will discuss four philosophers and their views on philosophy. This will help me construct a list of core characteristics that are essential to philosophy and that I can use to determine whether or not P4C is philosophical.

A question without a simple answer

From my own experience I can tell that it is not easy to define philosophy. As a new student in philosophy I dreaded the talks with distant relatives about my studies. More precisely, I feared two questions, namely "What do you study?" and "What can you do with philosophy?". I still remember the light panic whilst trying to form an answer as quickly as possible and I felt embarrassed because I could not explain what it was that I was doing. Eventually I always came up with some basics, namely that we read and analysed a lot of texts and that we discussed a lot of difficult questions about life and everything around us. Since I was not sure what I wanted to do with my studies I answered the second questions with the most common jobs that people who studied philosophy practice. Even though philosophy is not a vocational training and people end up in completely different areas most of the times I addressed the fact that a lot of people end up in research or become teachers in philosophy. But while my relatives were satisfied with these answers, I was not. It gnawed at me that I found it difficult to explain what philosophy is. How is it possible to study something every day without being able to give a clear definition of what it is that you study?

Choosing a method

When starting to look for literature how to define philosophy I encountered several problems. Most philosophical literature does not address this issue particularly or solely, or it seems to be assumed what philosophy is without explicating this further. Implied ideas about the nature of philosophy are most likely not going to give me enough to work with. One way to find out what philosophers think about philosophy is to analyse the complete works of all the philosophers and to search for the things they

find important. The way they write, the way they construct their ideas and the subjects they treat will certainly give me an idea on what they believe the nature of philosophy is. That is however a task unfit for this thesis and perhaps even in general, so I decided to look only at the literature that specifically treats the question: "What is philosophy?". But during my research I found out that only some philosophers have explicitly tried to answer the question, amongst others Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, Graham Priest, Timothy Williamson and Lambert van de Water. During my literature research these authors proved to be dominant in the field. Together they represent a broad view on philosophy. In this way I hope to be able to construct a definition as objective as possible, since none of the authors are affiliated with P4C or have written with P4C in mind. With the help of the theories of these philosophers I will try to construct core characteristics that will help me form an idea of what philosophy is and how can I can decide whether or not something is philosophical. I will first discuss Deleuze and Guattari, then Priest, Williamson and lastly Van de Water.

3.1 Deleuze and Guattari

One of the philosophers who has addressed the question is the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze. In his book *What is philosophy?* Deleuze and political activist and radical psychologist Félix Guattari research the nature of philosophy. Deleuze and Guattari (2014) see science, art and philosophy as modes of thought that help us confront the chaos and they compare the three to show the differences and similarities. They confirm that many philosophers have neglected this question and they wonder if the question *what is philosophy* can only be answered when one is of a certain age, namely, when you have the time and the experience to try to find the words. In the introduction they define a definition of philosophy as follows: "Philosophy is the art of forming, inventing and fabricating concepts."¹⁴ To them a focus on concepts seems crucial. In the rest of the book they further explain this definition.

Concepts

From the definition that Deleuze and Guattari (2014) formulate in their introduction I understand that philosophy is an activity, more precisely the activity of forming, inventing and fabricating concepts. To find out what they mean by this I will

¹⁴ Deleuze & Guattari, 2014, p. 2.

firstly explain what a concept is and secondly what they exactly mean by "forming, inventing and fabricating."

What is a concept? The most common meanings of the word concept are idea, understanding or plan. This is however not the meaning that Deleuze and Guattari have in mind. Peter Cook (1998) explains in his article *Thinking the Concept Otherwise* that for Deleuze and Guattari, a concept *expresses* an event. Cook (1998) explains that in an earlier work, *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze makes a distinction between bodies and events. Bodies can be described, but events cannot, at least not in the same way as we describe bodies. If we try to do so anyway, we end up describing the effects of the event or the bodies changed by the event, but this does not say anything about the nature of the event itself. What philosophers then should do is extract the event from the state of affairs that surround it and express the event. This expression is a concept. To illustrate how this works, Cook presents an example of Deleuze and Guattari, where they show that the Cartesian *cogito* expresses a complex event that consists of three other events, namely being, doubting and thinking. This means that philosophy is not about interpreting or describing things, but about creating concepts which means extracting and expressing events.

Throughout their book Deleuze and Guattari (2014) further develop their understanding of concepts. They state that concepts are multiplicities¹⁵, which means that they are not created out of thin air and that they can consist of many components, as we have seen with the Cartesian *cogito*. They also state that concepts have history¹⁶ and becoming¹⁷, which means that a concept created today can consist of other concepts that were created before and that concepts can be linked and related to each other, support each other and can belong to the same philosophy. Furthermore, concepts are inscribed on the plane of immanence¹⁸ and are peopled by "conceptual personae". The plane of immanence is not a concept but it is essential to the creation of concepts since they inscribe themselves into the plane, or as Deleuze and Guattari state: "Concepts are events, but the plane is the horizon of the events."¹⁹ To further

¹⁵ Deleuze & Guattari, 2014, p. 15.

¹⁶ Deleuze & Guattari, 2014, p. 18.

¹⁷ Deleuze & Guattari, 2014, p. 18.

¹⁸ Deleuze & Guattari, 2014, p. 35.

¹⁹ Deleuze & Guattari, 2014, p. 36.

explain the relation between concepts and the plane of immanence they add that: "If philosophy begins with the creation of concepts, then the plane of immanence must be regarded as prephilosophical". The plane of immanence can thus be seen as a prerequisite of the creation of a concept. A conceptual personae can be described as a special faculty of thinking. As Deleuze and Guattari show, the conceptual personae is not a person although they sometimes do carry a name, since: "Socrates is the principal conceptual personae of Platonism"²⁰. Plato used Socrates to create his philosophy, which means that through Socrates Plato's concepts were peopled.

The forming, inventing, fabricating, and the creation of the concept is best explained by referring to Deleuze's work in which he speaks about cinema, music, literature and philosophy. As Daniel Smith (2008) states in his entry on Deleuze on the Stanford Encyclopdia of philosophy, Deleuze has written a lot about philosophy and art and Deleuze thought of these works as philosophical and not as criticism, reflections or interpretations. In this work, Deleuze aspires not to simply talk about or to present an interpretation of the works but to present new insights, to engage in a so-called "philosophical encounter" and thus create new concepts, a view on the world that is new and has never been thought before. In the same way that for example Immanuel Kant presented an entirely new way to think about time, Deleuze wants to use the Kantian concept of time to create a new concept.

Non-philosophical

Next to describing what they mean by philosophy, Deleuze and Guattari also explain what they think is wrongly believed as philosophical. They state the following:

We can at least see what philosophy is not: it is not contemplation, reflection, or communication. This is the case even though it may sometimes believe it is one or other of these, as a result of the capacity of every discipline to produce its own illusions and to hide behind its own peculiar smokescreen.²¹

Even though it might be a common thought that philosophy is about contemplation, reflection and communication, Deleuze and Guattari beg to differ. According to Deleuze & Guattari, these subjects do not define what philosophy really

²⁰ Deleuze & Guattari, 2014, p. 63.

²¹ Deleuze & Guattari, 2014, p. 6.

is, namely creating concepts. Even though you can contemplate on concepts, you can reflect upon concepts and you can communicate about concepts, but this is not unique for philosophy. Nobody needs philosophy to do these things, scientists for example are perfectly capable of reflecting on science without help of philosophers.

Furthermore, a certain philosophical attitude with corresponding skills such as: "To know oneself, to learn to think, to act as if nothing were self-evident – wondering, 'wondering that there is being'"²² are also dismissed as being philosophical by Deleuze and Guattari. Interesting as they may be, learning how to think, knowing oneself and wondering are not seen as necessary elements for philosophy.

3.2 Priest

British philosopher Graham Priest takes a different approach in his article *What is Philosophy?*: he uses views of Wittgenstein and Derrida to help define what philosophy is. I will first show how Priest explains and criticises the theories of Wittgenstein and Derrida before I will describe his own views.

Derrida

Priest (2006) shows that Derrida's notion of philosophy is founded on a specific idea about language. According to Priest, Derrida believes that there is no fixed meaning to the things we say or write, language cannot escape itself and words are therefore not linked to non-linguistic things. Explaining the meaning of a word or explaining what you meant with a word only adds more. Derrida does however not claim that there is no meaning to words whatsoever, since he states that words get meaning by the differences there are between them. This means that the word "gay" gets its meaning by its contrast or difference with the words "straight" and "bisexual". Priest says that Derrida adds that meaning can differ over time and that every time a word is used its meaning can be changed depending on the context it is used in and therefore the differences it is opposed to. For example, when a woman writes a letter to a friend, the words she uses during writing probably have a different meaning than the words that the friend read, even though it are technically the same words. Her

²² Deleuze & Guattari, 2014, p. 7.

friend's reading is just another interpretation and another way of giving meaning to the words that the woman wrote.

Interestingly enough, Priest then states that even though it is often believed that Derrida's idea of language implies a specific view on the nature of philosophy, this was never explicitly said so by Derrida himself. But since he did not alienate himself from it either, we continue to attribute this view on the nature of philosophy to Derrida. One of the people that explains Derrida's supposed notion of philosophy is American philosopher Richard Rorty, whose theory is used by Priest to explain Derrida's view on philosophy.

Philosophy, as derived by Rorty from Derrida's ideas about language, is then nothing more than a kind of writing where there are lots of references to things, other philosophers and philosophical texts, or, in other words, "Philosophy is just this network of inter-textual connections."²³ This means that even though that according to Priest it is natural to suppose that philosophy is a truth-seeking activity, that cannot be the case in Derrida's view. If we accept Derrida's claim that there is no definite meaning to words, it follows that there is no definite truth either and therefore there is no use to trying to say or look for something true about subjects such as meaning and justice, topics often questioned by philosophers.

Priest is not satisfied with this notion of philosophy either. He states that the consequences of Derrida's theory of language and meaning do not only apply to philosophy, they apply to every linguistic activity including mathematics and science. Stating that mathematics and science are not truth-seeking activities is hard to accept according to Priest due to certain standards of "objectivity and applicability that work in those areas"²⁴. To illustrate this statement he gives the example that a plane built in line with the standards of modern aerodynamics will fly, whereas a plane built according to the standards of for example Aristotelean dynamics will most likely not. Furthermore, given the fact that Derrida only says that there is no definite meaning to words but not that there is no meaning at all, Priest states that we thus can only say that there is no definite truth but not that there is no truth at all. Sentences *can* express truths, but they might not be true for eternity since meanings can change. Finally, Priest

²³ Priest, 2006, p. 197.

²⁴ Priest, 2006, p. 199.

adds that the statement that Derrida makes is self-contradictory, for how could his statement that there is no truth be true and why should we believe it?

Wittgenstein

According to Priest (2006) Wittgenstein's idea of philosophy is rooted in his views on language. Priest begins by stating that according to Wittgenstein, every language is constituted by a language game with a corresponding set of rules on for example how to use words. Knowing what the rules are and following the rules are crucial to understanding the meaning of words. Furthermore, language is embedded in a form of life that you have to be a part of in order to understand the language. If you use a word taken from a form of life that you are not a part of, you will not understand its meaning. Wittgenstein, says Priest, believes that philosophical problems arise when you take a word out of the language game, thus making it meaningless, but you try to use it anyway. What philosophy should do is remind people of the language game the word belongs to and the philosophical problem is dissolved. As a consequence, Priest notes, this means that for Wittgenstein there is not a substantial philosophical theory, since the only thing philosophy can do is describe language and language games that already exist and are already admitted.

Priest thinks that Wittgenstein's theory is disappointing and false because he believes that there are more ways for philosophical problems to arise than only from a misuse of words. With the help of an example of a question about time travelling Priest shows that philosophical problems can also arise in their own language game. If we ask ourselves whether it is possible to travel backwards in time, what language game is it part of? According to Priest, this is both a philosophical and a scientific question, or "problem", but not one that derives from a word that has been taken out of its language game. Priest believes that the problem remains in the realms of philosophy and science. Furthermore, Priest shows that philosophy can critique a whole language game, such as the language game of religion. Knowing the rules of the game may possibly grant the meaning of a word but this does not mean that the meaning is also true. Philosophers can know the rules and play the language game and therefore know the meaning of the words that are used, but they can also doubt the whole language game itself, such as for example the language game of religion.

Priest

So what does Priest believe that philosophy entails? Next to being truth-seeking, Priest (2006) shows that almost every philosopher practices philosophy in a critical way and that "There are none of us who teach philosophy who would, I presume, teach it without trying to encourage a critical attitude in his or her students."²⁵ As a consequence, this critical attitude must be part of the nature of philosophy. Priest adds that critically evaluating ideas, - those of others, your teachers *and* your own – is an important part of learning philosophy. The next thing that Priest considers an important factor of philosophy is the fact that there is no limit to what will be evaluated with the help of this critical attitude, something that he touched upon already during his critique of Wittgenstein when he said that philosophy could question an entire language game such as that of religion. There is nothing that cannot be questioned and there are no dogmatic principles that need to be accepted without further ado, as is the case with other *intellectual inquiries* such as religion, history and science. Priest adds an interesting note, namely that philosophers not only questions everything, they also question the things that everybody else takes for granted. This can have as a consequence that new students in philosophy can have the feeling that "the rug is pulled from under them"²⁶, since they are used to classes and teachers that tell them what to think or between which limits they are allowed to criticise. When practicing philosophy they can question everything from any field of inquiry.

Whereas Deleuze and Guattari have a very specific role in mind for the philosopher, as the creator of concepts, Priest's attitude towards philosophy is focussed more on the liberty that comes with the profession, the liberty to doubt and to question anything and even the consequences this kind of attitude can have on your well-being. To add another interesting theory I will now look at philosophy from another, more analytical point of view, namely that of Timothy Williamson.

3.3 Williamson

British philosopher Timothy Williamson begins his book *The philosophy of philosophy* with the following statement: "This book grew out of a sense that

²⁵ Priest, 2006, p. 201.

²⁶ Priest, 2006, p. 203.

contemporary philosophy lacks a self-image that does it justice. (...) This is my attempt to do better."²⁷ Williamson's book is a defence of analytical armchair philosophy²⁸ treating three general themes. It is interesting to note that Williamson expresses himself in a critical way about philosophers and the way philosophy has been defined before, a feeling of discontent is almost tangible in his writing.

Misconceptions in philosophy

The first theme that Williamson (2008) treats is that philosophy is not that different from other disciplines. Williamson claims that even though many philosophers pretend or like to think otherwise, philosophy shows many similarities with other disciplines. He adds that there is for example no special kind of intuition that can only be used by philosophers when they practice philosophy, but that philosophers use the same kinds of cognitive skills that people in other disciplines use.

The second theme that follows from this is that the differences between the subjects that are treated in philosophy and other sciences are also less deep than is often thought. He adds that philosophical questions are therefore not that different from other questions. Philosophers may have a preference for certain subjects but there is no significant difference between kinds of questions. Williamson believes that philosophical questions are not simply about "words" or "concepts", he thinks that most of the time they are about the things that these words and concepts refer to. When we try to answer these questions, linguistic and theoretical skills help us to make a difference between valid and invalid arguments but it would be incorrect to think that philosophical knowledge comes solely from linguistic and theoretical expertise.

Thirdly, Williamson states that up until now, philosophers have failed to articulate an acceptable philosophical approach, which was also his motivation to write the book. Williamson finishes with claiming that good philosophy is evidence-based, and that evidence comes *only* from what we can know, or as he says so himself in the précis of his book: "Good philosophy is evidence-based. (...) Our evidence in philosophy is whatever we know; controversy over what our evidence comprises is inevitable."²⁹

²⁷ Williamson, 2008, p. ix.

²⁸ The belief that by thorough analysis of existing information you can gain new insight, so to say, without leaving your armchair to gather new information.

²⁹ Williamson, 2011, p. 471.

This view on evidence can be explained by the fact that Williamson's theory is a defence of analytical armchair philosophy, where new insight can be gained by thought-experiments done sitting in your chair. The fact that it is not necessary to leave the chair means that it is also not necessary to gather new evidence, everything that you know will suffice. The armchair knowledge that we can acquire with "offline employment of cognitive skills" ³⁰ such as intuition and evaluation, used in thought experiments is what philosophy is about according to Williamson.

Compared to Deleuze & Guattari and Priest, Williamson has a significantly different kind approach to philosophy. Whereas Deleuze and Guattari have a special role in mind for the philosopher as the creator of new concepts, Williamson essentially says that philosophy is not that special and almost devaluates it by saying that the subjects, tools and questions used in philosophy are not that different from other disciplines. This point of view lays the groundwork for his defence of armchair philosophy, where knowledge is acquired by offline use of cognitive skills in thought experiments. Priest however pays special attention to liberty and a critical attitude, something that is not addressed by Williamson. The next author that I will discuss will add another perspective on philosophy.

3.4 Van de Water

In the paper *Wat is filosoferen?* Lambert van de Water addresses two different types of philosophy: as a collection of thoughts and as a practice. The first kind is a collection of thoughts, ideas and visions that is "finished" or belong to one person or group. In this context we speak for example of the philosophy of Kant or the philosophy of the Greek. The second type of philosophy is the practice of philosophy, also described as philosophy as an idea and philosophical thinking. It is the latter kind of philosophy that is the subject of the research of his paper.

Philosophy of reality

As a starting point, Van de Water (1968) presents the following definition of philosophy: "We menen het filosoferen te kunnen omschrijven als een zodanig spreken over de werkelijkheid, dat daardoor de werkelijkheid ons aanspreekt en haar diepste

³⁰ Williamson, 2011, p. 470.

dimensies ontsloten en geïsoleerd worden." ³¹ which translates into "Philosophizing is speaking about the reality, upon which the reality speaks to us so that we can unlock and endorse her deepest dimensions". This definition is broken down into three parts, namely "philosophizing is speaking", "about reality", "unlock and endorse the deepest dimensions". The rest of the paper treats all the three parts in order to further explain this definition of philosophy.

The first part of the definition, "philosophizing is speaking", stresses the fact that practicing philosophy is done in a dialogue, and more specifically, it is a dialogue with reality. Van de Water explains that the world around us invites us to reflect on it and it raises questions in us. The dialogue that we have with reality can be seen as our way to interpret, to explain and to put into words everything that happens around us. In the second part, "about reality", Van de Water expands his idea of reality and he explains that the "real" or "true" nature of reality cannot be defined by us but that we can give meaning to it and try to understand it better by entering into dialogue with it. When Van de Water talks about the third part of the definition, "unlock and endorse the deepest dimensions", he explains that our language is inadequate and that we will never be able to completely grasp and understand reality. As a consequence, philosophy will never be a closed case and there will never be a definite answer to the questions that reality evokes in us.

Interestingly enough, the way Van de Water explains the relation between people and reality and how reality will always be a mystery to us but with the help of philosophy we can try to give meaning to it reminds me about how Deleuze and Guattari see concepts as expressions of events. Even though Deleuze and Guattari do not see it this way, the urge of creating concepts and new views on the world does seem like a way to give meaning to or to explain the things in the world that we do not understand. The substantial difference of course is that Deleuze and Guattari believe that this confrontation with the world should solely take the form of the creation of new concepts in the world, whereas Van de Water focusses more on reflection and interpretation, activities that Deleuze and Guattari reject as being philosophical. Van de Water's description of the relation between reality and philosophy is very different from

³¹ Van de Water, 1968, p. 193.

Williamson's view on philosophy, since Williamson advocates an armchair philosophy and Van de Water speaks about an interaction between us and reality and the way reality invokes questions in us. There are not a lot of similarities between the thoughts of Van de Water and Priest either, except perhaps that I can imagine that the realisation that we will never truly know the nature of reality presented by Van de Water can also give us the feeling that the rug is pulled from under us, a sensation that Priest described as almost inevitable when practicing philosophy.

I now have discussed a variety of theories and ideas about the nature of philosophy. As I have already shown in the discussion, there are more differences than similarities between the theories. This shows once again how difficult it is to define philosophy. The four authors, who tried to answer the same question, answered it in a completely different way, focussed on different things and came to different conclusions. I do not mean to say that there is absolutely no common ground between the theories on philosophy in general, but it is hard to compare them or to decide on a hierarchy. It reminds me a lot of the remarks I made in the introduction of this chapter when I addressed the difficulties I encountered when looking for relevant literature. Even though all the theories I discussed explicitly treat the question "What is philosophy?" it still is somehow assumed what philosophy is. Even in these texts, none of the authors start from scratch and propose their unique personal ideas. All of them replied to, inscribed themselves to or opposed to a common idea of philosophy or another person's view on philosophy. The most extreme example is of course Deleuze and Guattari, who explicitly said that several commonly believed philosophical activities are in their opinion not what philosophy is about.

Besides the fact that the question "What is philosophy" is complex and can be answered in many different ways, the choices you make in answering the question and forming a definition have a lot of consequences. If I would have chosen a different method and corresponding authors the ideas and definitions of philosophy would, most likely, also have been different than the ones I have analysed. The authors that I chose were relevant for my thesis but this does not mean that I have given a definite answer on the questions "What is philosophy".

Before I continue with my analysis I present a small overview of the authors and their key ideas, that will be used as the core characteristics in the analysis of P4C:

<i>Authors</i>	<i>Key ideas</i>
Deleuze & Guattari	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creating concepts. - Extracting and expressing events.
Priest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Critical attitude. - Questioning everything. - Feeling insecure.
Williamson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analytical armchair knowledge. - Good knowledge is evidence based. - Offline cognitive skills (I.e. intuition and evaluation). - Philosophy is not that different from other disciplines.
Van de Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Philosophizing is speaking about the reality, upon which the reality speaks to us so that we can unlock and endorse her deepest dimensions. - The true nature of reality is unsure, therefore no definite answers.

4. Analysis of methods

Now that I have discussed the theories about philosophy in general, I need a representation of philosophical education for children. In this chapter I will discuss a variety of seven different textbooks that are either written for teachers or for children. I am curious about how these books view philosophy and what they understand by the practice of philosophy. I want to know how they speak about philosophy and how they define philosophy so that I can form an idea about what they want to teach the children and how this relates to the debate in the literature that I presented from Lipman and Matthews. With the help of my analysis of the textbooks³² I have made a table which presents if and in what degree the methods represent the aforementioned ideas of Lipman and Matthews. Since most of them respect almost all of the ideas in one way or another I focussed on the things that stood out, in either a positive (affirmative) or negative way. Presented in this chapter are the tables, short summaries of the textbooks and the results of my analysis. In the appendix the extended study can be found where I analysed the parts of the textbooks that represented their views on philosophy and I extracted the key themes and ideas from these fragments.

I have chosen these particular books because they present a colourful variety and different approaches to P4C and together give a broad image of what P4C looks like. This way, I will have enough information to address both the similarities between the books and to check what the individual preferences of the textbooks are. Unfortunately I do not have knowledge of the frequency in which these methods are actually used and even if they are used often it is not guaranteed that the teachers follow the instructions by heart. This means that this will be an analysis of the literature about the practice.

³² See the appendix for the extended study.

	1 + 2	3	4	5	6	7
Community of inquiry. ³³	+	++	++	+	++	+
Think about the mysterious world.	+	±	++	+	±	+
Philosophy has no boundaries.	+	++	++	±	±	+
Focus is not on information to be acquired.	++	++	±	++	++	++
Cooperation of children is demanded.	±	±	±	±	+	±
The teacher's stance is fallibilistic.	++	++	+	+	++	++
Children naturally think philosophically.	++	++	--	-	±	+
Adults and teachers discourage philosophical thinking in children.	--	--	--	--	++	++
Story-beginnings reignite dormant philosophical thinking.	+	+	++	-	-	+

³³ The yellow statements represent Lipman's characteristics, the orange statements represent Matthews's characteristics.

4.1+2 Ik zag twee beren filosoferen & Ik zag twee apen wetenschappen

Characteristics Matthews & Lipman	Methods 1 + 2
Community of inquiry.	+
Think about the mysterious world.	+
Philosophy has no boundaries.	+
Focus is not on information to be acquired.	++
Cooperation of children is demanded.	±
The teacher's stance is fallibilistic.	++
Children naturally think philosophically	++
Adults and teachers discourage philosophical thinking in children.	- -
Story-beginnings reignite dormant philosophical thinking.	+

Ik zag twee beren filosoferen is the first book by Maaïke Merckens and Sabine Wassenberg, founders of WonderWhy. WonderWhy provides guest lectures in philosophy for children at elementary schools in Amsterdam. *Ik zag twee beren filosoferen* is a complete introduction guide for people who want to start to practice philosophy with children between the age of 8 - 18. Their second book *Ik zag twee apen wetenschappen* focusses more on philosophy of science and is also meant for children between the age of 8 - 18. Since the theoretical pieces about philosophy are practically the same in the two books I decided to analyse them together. Small nuances or particularities for the specific books will be highlighted.

Merckens and Wassenberg (2014) talk about philosophy for children in general, the benefits of P4C, they give instructions on how to make the conversation philosophical and they treat different philosophical concepts such as logics, moral judgments and argumentation. The concepts of the lessons follow Immanuel Kant's division of philosophy in four questions, namely:

1. What can I know?
2. What should I do?
3. What can I hope for?
4. What is the human being?

Merckens and Wassenberg connect these famous and classical philosophical questions to different sub-disciplines of philosophy, such as ethics, philosophy of science and metaphysics. Each sub-disciplines requires a different kind of approach and different kinds of questions.

In both *Ik zag twee beren filosoferen* and *Ik zag twee apen wetenschappen*, philosophy is presented as a rational, critical and systematic activity of the mind. Even though there are no clear answers to the questions that are treated in philosophy, practicing philosophy should not be seen as vague.

As you can see in the table, the books of Merckens and Wassenberg score quite high on the points of Lipman and Matthews. When I look at their view of the practice of philosophy, I can see that the topics of philosophy can be vague, and that it can even be seen as a goal of the lessons that the children see that there is a sort of vagueness in the world, that the world is not black and white and that it is not that easy to say what is true. The way you think about this vagueness should however be structured and rational. As the table shows, the focus on the thinking itself is one of the points where the book scores the highest. They state that the thinking itself is the most important thing during the lessons instead of the answers that are given or the "outcome" of the discussion. Truth, wisdom and the essence of the world around us are the things that are being searched for during the philosophical conversation and can be seen as the goals of the lessons according to the method of WonderWhy. The teacher should adapt an attitude in line with the Socratic tradition, namely, neutral, open and without prejudices. The latter is especially in line with the ideas of Lipman since this leads to a situation where the children have the conversation and the teacher is more a guide instead of a lecturer. As that table shows, the fact that children are described as little philosophers and that they have the ability to truly wonder about things is especially in line with the ideas of Matthews. Philosophy for Merckens and Wassenberg is a search for truth and wisdom during which you use your mind in a rational and critical way and learn that there is a vagueness in the world.

4.3 Kinderen filosoferen

Characteristics Matthews & Lipman	Method 3
Community of inquiry.	++
Think about the mysterious world.	±
Philosophy has no boundaries.	++
Focus is not on information to be acquired.	++
Cooperation of children is demanded.	±
The teacher's stance is fallibilistic.	++
Children naturally think philosophically	++
Adults and teachers discourage philosophical thinking in children.	--
Story-beginnings reignite dormant philosophical thinking.	+

Co-founder of the Dutch Centrum Kinderfilosofie Nederland Berrie Heesen has written several books about and for philosophy for children. I will discuss two of his books, namely *Kinderen filosoferen* and *De vliegende papa's*. The first one consists of short stories about a child who loves questions but does not give a lot of answers. The stories treat different subjects such as rules, discoveries and thoughts and are accompanied by several questions and exercises for children. The book is targeted at the children instead of the teacher.³⁴

In agreement with the ideas of Matthews, Heesen (1998) presents practicing philosophy as something that you are already capable of doing, even without knowing it and without knowing what philosophy is. Not only are you capable of doing it, Heesen claims that you also already do it. Heesen describes four things that you do when practicing philosophy, namely, thinking about yourself, thinking about others, thinking about the world and trying to understand how everything works. Heesen emphasises the importance of others during practicing philosophy. Since there are no good or bad answers in philosophy and even the teacher does not know the definite answers there are only *better* or *worse* answers in comparison to the other answers that are given. This means that after comparing your own thoughts and answers to those of the others,

³⁴ There is a version available that is targeted at the teachers but under the pretence of diversity I was curious how philosophy was explained to children.

the group can decide what the best answer is. As the table shows, this aspect reflects the influence of Lipman, since the role of the teacher is transformed into that of a facilitator who does not know the answers and the children are the leaders of the conversation and they decide as a group. But it is also an addition to the theory of Lipman, since Heesen still wants the group to decide on an answer, even though he states that there is no definite answer.

The thing that is the most unique about this book is that there is some attention for philosophical theories. Not all stories in this book explicitly refer to philosopher or philosophical theories but there are stories that feature the famous philosophers Socrates, Plato, Kant, Wittgenstein and explain their lives and their ideologies in a simplified way.³⁵ For Heesen, philosophy, or thinking about thinking, yourself, others and the world, is something that everybody practices in order to try and understand how everything works.

³⁵ "Pjoki ontdekt de oudste vragensteller" is about Socrates and also mentions Plato. "Eerst Kant, Pjoki!" Is about Kant. "Woorden kun je niet eten, Ludwig!" Is about Wittgenstein.

4.4 De vliegende papa's

Characteristics Matthews & Lipman	Method 4
Community of inquiry.	++
Think about the mysterious world.	++
Philosophy has no boundaries.	++
Focus is not on information to be acquired.	±
Cooperation of children is demanded.	±
The teacher's stance is fallibilistic.	+
Children naturally think philosophically	- -
Adults and teachers discourage philosophical thinking in children.	- -
Story-beginnings reignite dormant philosophical thinking.	++

Heesen's second book, *De vliegende papa's* contains more background information for the teachers than *Kinderen Filosoferen*.

In this book Heesen (2009) presents philosophy as a means to help children to find their way in a world that is confusing. Education is seen as an important part of the child's upbringing and we should help children to become rational people who are capable of weighing different perspectives.

The reason *De vliegende papa's* does not score very high on Matthew's first point is that practicing philosophy (together) is seen as something that you can learn. Interestingly enough Heesen presented it in *Kinderen Filosoferen* as something that you are already capable of and that you already do. The difference in approach might be explained by the fact that *Kinderen Filosoferen* is targeted at the children and *De vliegende papa's* at the educators. Maybe Heesen believes that the children do not need to be taught how to philosophize but the educators need to be taught how to philosophize *with* the children. Another possible explanation might be that Heesen believes that at the base everybody is capable of doing it but that you can still learn how to do it better. Heesen is however the only author that *explicitly* agrees with Matthews on his last point, since Heesen states that the goal of the book and the short stories is to spark philosophical wonderment in children, thus enabling a state in which the group can think together about how the world works. Heesen believes that whilst practicing philosophy, you wonder about the fundamental questions of life that do not

have definite answers and you help the children to find their way into a world that is confusing.

4.5 Filosoferen in het basisonderwijs

Characteristics Matthews & Lipman	Method 5
Community of inquiry.	+
Think about the mysterious world.	+
Philosophy has no boundaries.	±
Focus is not on information to be acquired.	++
Cooperation of children is demanded.	±
The teacher's stance is fallibilistic.	+
Children naturally think philosophically	-
Adults and teachers discourage philosophical thinking in children.	--
Story-beginnings reignite dormant philosophical thinking.	-

The book *Filosoferen in het basisonderwijs* written by Ellen Algera and Marten Hidma (2012) is targeted at teachers.

As you can see in the table, this book scores the lowest in regard of Matthew's points. The main reason for that is that they simply did not mention anything specifically in line with Matthews ideas. After looking at the way philosophy is presented in *Filosoferen in het basisonderwijs* three main aspects of how philosophy is presented can be described, namely questioning the obvious, developing your thinking and trying to answer the questions in a structured and scientific way. I came across this demand for structural thinking before in the books of Merckens and Wassenberg, but they emphasise more the rational and critical part whereas Algera and Hidma focus more on the scientific part. Philosophy is explained by Algera and Hidma as a scientific act. As a philosopher you try to question everything that seems self-evident, because when you look closer at these subjects you can see that most of the times the answer is not that evident at all. Furthermore, philosophy is also about developing a certain way of thinking. It is also important to keep in mind that there are no "good" answers to be found during the lessons in philosophy. The goal for the children is that they develop their way of thinking and their opinions by learning how to argue for their opinions and how to structure their thoughts, whilst *trying* to answer the philosophical questions.

Also included are several tips and tricks for the elementary school teachers, or the moderators. As you can see in the table, these guidelines are mostly in line with

the ideas of Lipman because you are advised to guide the conversation but not to control it, that there are no wrong or right answers and that you, as a moderator, are not supposed to express your own opinions. One thing that specifically attracted my attention since it is not necessarily in line with Lipman. Even though it is repeatedly stated by Algera and Hidma that the teacher should remain a neutral role, there are noticeably more instructions on how to interfere and how to structure the conversation in relation to the other methods that I have analysed and that I have come across in Lipman's ideas. For example, the teacher is supposed to repeat what happens during the conversation, by means of repeating answers or writing things that are being said down on the blackboard. The authors also state that the teacher often will have to make the arguments and the thoughts of the children more concrete and to point out the common themes that are treated during the conversation.

For Algera and Hidma, philosophy is a scientific act where you try to answer questions about seemingly self-evident things in a scientific and structured way.

4.6 Kinderen leren filosoferen, praktijkboek voor leraren

Characteristics Matthews & Lipman	Methods 6
Community of inquiry.	++
Think about the mysterious world.	±
Philosophy has no boundaries.	±
Focus is not on information to be acquired.	++
Cooperation of children is demanded.	+
The teacher's stance is fallibilistic.	++
Children naturally think philosophically	±
Adults and teachers discourage philosophical thinking in children.	++
Story-beginnings reignite dormant philosophical thinking.	-

Rob Bartels's book *Kinderen leren filosoferen, praktijk boek voor leraren*, is targeted at teachers. At first glance not completely in line with Matthews, Bartels (2007) presents philosophy as a talent that can be developed. Furthermore, it is an open concept, poetically described as a "multi-coloured palette with which each teacher and his class paint their own picture"³⁶. It is emphasised that philosophy is an act that is best done with others. When you practice philosophy, you think together and you test your own arguments and ways of thinking to those of the others in order to make progress in your thinking and to gain new perspectives. Bartels explicitly refers to Lipman and Matthews when he talks about the origin of philosophy for children and when I examined the language and the descriptions that he uses when he talks about philosophy and the lessons you can also see that his ideas are based on their ideologies. Firstly, he corrects himself and treats the fact that children (can) think as a starting point and he believes that everybody practices philosophy, including children. He even adds, completely in line with Matthews ideas, that children might even practice philosophy more than adults do. Secondly, following the example of Lipman, the teacher is seen as the facilitator of the philosophical conversation and to help the children to think together. The teacher is not there to teach about philosophical theories

³⁶ Bartels, 2007, p. 9.

but to stimulate to children to think creatively, to argue their opinions and their thoughts and to enter into dialogue with their peers.

Bartels pays special attention to the question when a conversation can be seen as philosophical and presents four characteristics of philosophical conversations. The first aspect is the kind of questions that are being discussed, namely higher order questions that demand you to investigate a concept. There is no definite answer to these questions. The second characteristic of a philosophical conversation is the aspect of the dialogue, the attitude of the children and the way they enter the conversation. When the children enter the philosophical dialogue there should be a collective exchange of answers and questions and this exchange should be focussed on thinking together as a group. The children are not supposed to focus on their own answers or proving their own right. The third characteristic is the deepening of the dialogue. Bartels explains that a conversation can be brought to a higher, philosophical level by using and examining ways of reasoning, asking the children to explain why they think something, asking them to argue for their opinion and examining the concepts that are used in the conversation.

Bartels adds a fourth characteristic to this list, namely wonderment, or perhaps better called *philosophical* wonderment. Bartels states that practicing philosophy with children can also be seen as a means to keep the natural philosophical wonderment that children possess alive, instead of stopping it in its tracks as often happens in class according to Bartels, and of course also according to Matthews. As you can see in the table, Bartels is one of two authors that respect Matthews idea that children are often discouraged in their philosophical thinking by adults. Bartels says that children are often discouraged to ask questions during the lessons, since it is the responsibility of the teacher to ask questions and the responsibility of the children to answer them correctly. According to Bartels, wonderment stands at the root of philosophy but it can also occur during philosophical conversations when new questions come up instead of answers, when you gain a new perspective or when you are surprised with a train of thought that is unexpected. For Bartels, philosophy is an open concept and a talent that can be developed. With the help of his four characteristics Bartels explains what makes a conversation philosophical.

4.7 Peinzen, 49 filosofische vragen voor kinderen

Characteristics Matthews & Lipman	Method 7
Community of inquiry.	+
Think about the mysterious world.	+
Philosophy has no boundaries.	+
Focus is not on information to be acquired.	++
Cooperation of children is demanded.	±
The teacher's stance is fallibilistic.	++
Children naturally think philosophically	+
Adults and teachers discourage philosophical thinking in children.	++
Story-beginnings reignite dormant philosophical thinking.	+

In *Peinzen* by Richard Anthonie, Eddie Janssens, Steven Vervoort and Jan Knops 49 philosophical questions are presented with corresponding philosophical background for the teacher and follow-up questions. Anthonie et al are the only ones that tick off all of Matthews points and the introduction explains why. They state that they want to respect the curious, questioning attitude of children and that the questions in the book are meant to stimulate the children to practice philosophy. The choice for the word "respect" is interesting because it shows that they believe that it is something that the children already have that needs to be respected, preserved, safeguarded. Especially since they add that it is something that adults lose and even discourage in children after a certain age.

The rest of the book explains why they are also the only ones that do not have a minus sign in the entire table. There are three characteristics of philosophy for children the authors present. The first one is that philosophy is seen as thinking about, reflecting on and challenging everything that is being treated as obvious or self-explaining, in a systematic and structured way. The second characteristic is that the authors stress that philosophy for children is an activity with children and not a lesson for children or a class that is being taught to them. The last characteristic can also be seen as a definition, namely that philosophy is about answering questions that are not easily

answerable, philosophy is about thinking about your own position in the world, about how the world works and about thinking about thinking.

When the authors talk about the characteristics of philosophy with children, why we should practice philosophy with children and how you practice philosophy with children the ideas of Lipman are also clearly represented, and often explicitly referred to, for example to the theory of the community of inquiry of Lipman and the importance of the dialogue in which the children think together. For Anthone et al, philosophy is about answering questions that are not easily answerable, philosophy is about thinking about your own position in the world, about how the world works and about thinking about thinking.

Now I have presented a varied image of methods in P4C it is time to look whether or not they can be considered philosophical. Before I dive into the specifics I would like to make some general remarks. One thing that attracted my attention was that the theories about philosophy in general are much more specific and much more detailed than those about P4C. This can be explained by the fact that they both have a different audience and a different goal. The methods have a limited amount of words to make it as clear as possible what philosophy is and what the lessons are about whereas the theories have the freedom and the space to be wondering about concepts and to create an entirely new philosophy. What also stands out is that the methods pay more attention to the fact that philosophy is suitable for children, which is understandable with Matthews and Lipman in mind, given that they spent a lot of their time putting philosophy for children on the philosophical map and proving that children can practice philosophy. There is also more attention to the attitude and the role of the teacher in the P4C methods. It makes sense that there is not a lot of attention to that in the theories since the theories about philosophy in general are not targeted at teachers and not especially meant for people who want to know how to philosophize with others.

In order to create a clear overview I took the core characteristics from the theories from Deleuze & Guattari, Priest, Williamson and Van de Water and I constructed a table that shows which characteristics are represented by the methods and in which degree, similar to the table about Matthews and Lipman. After the overview I will discuss what the results mean for the level of philosophy of the methods.

	1+2 ³⁷	3	4	5	6	7
Creation of concepts ³⁸	±	-	+	±	+	±
Expressing events	±	-	+	±	+	±
Critical attitude	++	+	+	++	++	+
No boundaries to questioning	+	+	+	++	+	++
Feeling of insecurity	+	--	+	+	-	-
Analytical armchair knowledge	±	±	±	±	±	±
Evidence-based knowledge	++	-	-	++	-	-
Offline cognitive skills	-	-	-	-	-	-
Philosophy vs. other disciplines	--	--	--	--	--	--
Philosophy as a dialogue with reality	+	++	++	±	±	+
True nature of reality is unsure	++	+	++	+	++	±
No definite answers	++	++	++	++	++	++

³⁷ 1+2= Ik zag twee beren filosoferen en ik zag twee apen wetenschappen.

3= Kinderen filosoferen.

4= De vliegende papa's.

5= Filosoferen in het basisonderwijs.

6= Kinderen leren filosoferen, praktijkboek voor leraren.

7= Peinzen.

³⁸ The colours in the table respond with the different characteristics of: [Deleuze & Gattuari](#), [Priest](#), [Williamson](#) and [Van de Water](#).

Deleuze & Guattari

To my personal surprise, apart from Heesen's *Kindereen Filosoferen* that simply does not mention new insights or inventions, most methods have quite some overlap with Deleuze and Guattari's idea of philosophy as the creation of concepts. I did not expect that that would happen since Deleuze and Guattari had the most specific idea about philosophy.

Deleuze and Guattari's ideas are represented in a (very) simplified way and the vocabulary is not similar in any way, but since most methods do see philosophy as a way to explain the world and what happens around us chances are high that you end up expressing an event. I realise that the reason behind the new insights and the events that will be expressed during philosophical education for children are not compatible with Deleuze and Guattari's theories since most methods speak about interpretation and giving meaning. It is therefore hard to say whether Deleuze and Guattari would agree with me and state that the methods can be considered philosophical, especially since the methods focus on all the things that they specifically refer to as non-philosophical subjects and actions. Learning the children how to think, how to be critical, to question the things that seem self-evident and how to reflect, to contemplate and how to communicate are crucial parts of P4C and are denied by Deleuze and Guattari. One thing that some of the methods and the theory of Deleuze and Guattari do have in common is the fact that they see philosophy as a means to confront the "chaos", the world or the reality around us, but I also have strong doubts whether that would be enough to make them philosophical seen from Deleuze and Guattari's point of view, since the methods also see philosophy as a way to try to understand the chaos or give meaning to the chaos, whereas Deleuze and Guattari focus on the creation of concepts in the chaos.

Priest

As you can see in the table, the focus on critical thinking that Priest takes with the fact that everything can be questioned shows a lot of overlap with methods, and seen from these two points all the methods can be considered as philosophical. Since Priest's theory is not explicitly focused on how to teach these points in the best way I cannot say if he would agree with the techniques that the books about P4C use to stimulate critical thinking and to trigger them to question everything. The feeling of

insecurity that comes with practicing philosophy, or in his words, the feeling of having the rug pulled from under you is also addressed by four of the methods, namely *Ik zag twee kinderen filosoferen*, *Ik zag twee apen wetenschappen*, *De vliegende papa's en Kinderen leren filosoferen in het basisonderwijs*. They state the world is vague and there are no right or wrong answers and we therefore have to decide which answers we find best for ourselves, our group or our generation.

Williamson

Looking at the table it seems almost impossible that the methods can be considered philosophical from Williamsons point of view. Whereas the methods focus a great deal on questions, what kinds of questions must be asked and that there are no right or wrong answers, Williamson believes that there is no such thing as "special" philosophical questions and that philosophy in general is not that different from other disciplines. This means that the skills that are needed to practice philosophy are not special philosophical skills, the kind of intuition, the kind of thinking and other cognitive capacities that are needed to perform armchair philosophy are the same capacities psychologist for example use. Analytical armchair knowledge is not explicitly mentioned as a goal by the methods, but would that imply that P4C is indeed not philosophical? I do not believe that that is necessarily the case. Williamson might not prefer the descriptions used in the methods and the special status that is given to philosophical questions and philosophical thinking, but the armchair knowledge that Williamson is searching for and that can be acquired with "offline employment of cognitive skills"³⁹ used in thought experiments is something that could be found in the classroom as well. Thought experiments are often used in P4C to inspire and help the children to think about subjects they have never thought about before, such as Matthew's story-beginnings and most of the introductions and philosophical questions used in the methods.

Van de Water

After examining the characteristics from Van de Water in the table, I can see that there is a great chance that the methods would be considered philosophical since Van

³⁹ Williamson, 2011, p. 470.

de Water's approach to philosophy is very compatible with the ones I have encountered in the methods. As you see in the table, all of Van de Water's points are ticked off by all of the methods. Both pay special attention to questions about the reality around us and the fact that there are no definite answers to these questions. The thing that strikes me as interesting is that the points that Van de Water emphasises are very generally stated by the methods, almost as self-evident. Maybe this idea is only based on the fact that all the methods mentions them, which makes it look like they are self-evident. However, the methods can definitely be considered philosophical from Van de Water's point of view.

4.9 What makes P4C philosophical?

Now that I have compared the view on philosophy of P4C with the different definitions of philosophy in general I should be able to answer my research question. As I have shown, some definitions are compatible with P4C and some are not. In the next paragraph I try to find out what this means for the level of philosophy for the methods. Do the definitions of philosophy in general *really* have the authority to say whether or not the methods can be considered philosophical? And what do I do with the theories that only partly confirm the characteristics taken from P4C? In other words, what will be the answer to my research question?

In the introduction I already mentioned Katrien Schaubroeck (2007) and her review on *Peinzen*. Not only did she stress the importance of and the need for attention to the question what makes methods for philosophy with children philosophical, she also expressed her strong doubts whether the questions and the philosophical background in *Peinzen* could be called philosophical. At first I agreed with Schaubroeck and I must confess that I felt confident that I would be able to dismiss certain methods as philosophical in this thesis, that I would be able to formulate characteristics that methods have to have in order be considered philosophical, or some sort of bottom line of philosophicalness. But as I dived in the literature about philosophy in general and the methods my doubts about whether I would be able to do that grew. It was very difficult to formulate a definition/standard of philosophy and I realised that the part of P4C that I analysed was mainly theoretical. But as the methods have already shown, education does not take place merely on paper and is a combination of theory and practice. Therefore I felt that I had to adjust my goals and

admit that I will not be able to dismiss methods as philosophical. In the next paragraph I will explain why.

At a certain point I began to doubt whether Schaubroeck was right to doubt the philosophical nature of the questions in *Peinzen*. I also doubted whether it was really that important if the questions in the method were purely philosophical. I wondered if it was possible to have a philosophical conversation about a non-philosophical question, and of course the other way around. Perhaps Williamson (2006) was right in saying that there are no special philosophical questions, maybe there are only some kinds of questions that lend themselves particularly well for a philosophical conversation. But whether the responses to a question or the conversation that follows can be considered philosophical does not only depend on the question that it started with. Perhaps it does not depend on it at all. It also troubled me that I had paid very little attention to the children in the discussion about the philosophical nature of philosophy for children. Taken both from personal experiences during my internship and inspired by the literature about P4C (both Matthews and Rondhuis present the conversations they had with children and the methods focus a great deal on the practice) I concluded that due to the structure of the lessons a great deal depends on the children. I can imagine that you can ask children a marvellous philosophical question but if they are not interested, if they do not understand it or if they are too distracted to be bothered chances are very low that you will have an interesting philosophical conversation. Although I clearly stated that my analysis of the methods concerned the theory about the practice, I felt that I could not ignore the importance of the practical part of the education. After all, my research question concerned philosophical education for children in general.

But what does this mean for the theories, the methods and my research question? By appreciating the role and importance of the practice of philosophical education I do not mean to say that the theories I have discussed and the methods that I have analysed are completely useless. But I do believe that this proposes a boundary to what extent the theories can approve or dismiss something as philosophical. On paper, the ideas on philosophy expressed by the methods may or may not be compatible with the ideas on philosophy expressed in the theories, but I think that it would be arbitrary to then conclude that philosophical education for children in general is not philosophical, since the education also takes place in practice. The theories can show us that some of the methods are *more* or *less* philosophical than others, but they

cannot guarantee that the outcome will also be philosophical. Thus, given how hard and complex it is to define philosophy and the consequences of the preferences that you have for a specific answer to this question, the only thing that I can say is that according to a certain theory and a specific view on philosophy, a method is more or less philosophical. What I specifically do not want to advocate is an *anything goes* approach to P4C. Even though I do not believe that questioning the philosophical nature of a question means that the education that follows from is also not philosophical, I do believe that Schaubroeck was right in questioning it in the first place. I still believe that philosophy can be about anything but not everything is worth the title of philosophy. However hard it is to define philosophy, that should never be a reason to stop trying to do so and declare everything as philosophical. If anything, it should be all the more reason to try to define it.

The philosophical intention of the lesson and the preparation can contribute a lot to the philosophical level of the practice. This means that I do not believe that a philosophical question or a lesson that is philosophical on paper guarantees for a philosophical practice, but I also do not believe that merely stating "You can say anything you want and there are no right or wrong answers" is a guarantee either. What my struggles with the research question mainly show is the difficult relationship between theory and practice and the complexity of defining philosophy (for children) and creating boundaries.

Synergy

What then should philosophical education for children entail in order for it to be considered philosophical? I believe that the magic happens in the interaction between the theory and the practice and thus the interaction between the teacher and the children. The teacher bases his lesson on theory and puts it into practice with the children. As a consequence of the nature of philosophy, a lot depends on the children and the teacher. Since the lessons are question and conversation based, there are no short-term goals or things that the children need to learn during the lessons, perhaps apart from certain skills or an attitude. There is nothing that you can easily test and it is not that easy to know when a lesson was successful. You have to go with the flow of the conversation that is being held by the children. Eventually of course the children make the conversation philosophical because of the (philosophical) things they say

and the way they interact with each other. I however do believe that the role of the facilitator is very important because they help to make the situation as suitable and as comfortable as possible, so that the philosophical inquiry can thrive.

This does not mean that I believe that children are unable to practice philosophy on their own, but in the context of the classroom I think it would not be successful to tell the children to practice philosophy and simply quit the room and leave it to them. Not only are the children used to have a teacher or a guide when they are at school, the influence that the teacher has on the children is immense. From personal experience I have seen the impact that teachers have on the children and it can make all the difference for the philosophical conversation if the teacher cooperates and is enthusiastic. Two specific examples come to mind, where in one class the teacher was not supportive at all and sat grumpily in the corner typing on her computer, only stopping to correct the children or to say things like "we do not say things like that here" and another teacher who joined the conversation, asked questions and put herself in the same level and position as the children. The first teacher caused the children to hold back and to not fully give themselves during the conversation, eying her as they said something. The second teacher inspired the children to engage more, resulting in a fruitful discussion.

If we believe that theory can help make the practice more philosophical but is not a guarantee for a philosophical outcome, then there are certain consequences for the relation between theory and practice. In the paper *The independence of practical ethics* Alex John London presents an idea that is applicable to the view that I have in mind. Based on the philosophy of Aristotle on rhetoric and philosophical ethics, London (2001) tries to explain why and how practical ethics can be independent from ethical theory. London proposes an attitude towards philosophy focussed on an understanding of equality with those involved in the dialogue. Instead of focussing on the normative theories, London (2001) believes that we should understand the importance of the dialogue in daily practice. Thus, a basic attitude in his view is to treat each person that is involved in an ethical dilemma as a free and equal interlocutor. This idea of free and equal refers to the citizens in the Greek society that were not necessarily philosophers. Therefore, if you want to make a point or if you want to convince your interlocutor, you should do so with arguments that are built out of reasons that are understandable to them. This demands an attitude from the speakers

that reflects respect and an aim to understand each other better and to go on an investigation together instead of an attitude that aims at winning and reflects a somewhat sophistic rhetoric. As the title of London's paper already gives away, he argues that practical ethics is independent of theoretical ethics, which means that we do not need to refer to all kinds of theories when we have to deal with a practical ethical dilemma. As a consequence, we will depend more on our skills instead of theoretical knowledge. This is something I recognise in the methods as well, as the theories are presented as instructions or guidelines both for the children as for the teachers/facilitators, but in practice the children and the teacher depend more on the skills than on the theory. The attitude that London described also reflects my view of the facilitator, who should treat the children as free and equal individuals.

4.10 Guidelines

With my new orientation in relation to the research question in mind, I wondered whether it would be possible to express in what way theory can contribute to the practice and help make it the most philosophical as possible. I decided to bring all the information I had gathered, researched and analysed together and construct a list of guidelines that will help to apply the theories that I discussed to the practice and will help to make the education (both theory and practice) as philosophical as possible.

Questions

The first thing that is important to emphasise is questions. Questions play a big role in the methods, they want to inspire the children to think creatively, to come up with questions and they want to encourage the children to maintain their questioning attitude. Even though starting with a philosophical question might help a lot to steer the children in the "right" direction and fact-questions hardly take the conversation to a deeper level, it is definitively not a given that you cannot have a philosophical conversation about what you feel when you are in love. So, yes, Schaubroeck was right in doubting the philosophical quality of the questions in *Peinzen*, but I believe that this does not necessarily say anything about the quality of the (philosophical) conversation that follows. It is possible to have a philosophical conversation about a non-philosophical question and vice-versa. However, this does not mean that the philosophical question is useless. I consider the philosophical question as a good starting point that can help provide a situation where a philosophical conversation can

flourish, or as Williamson sees it, there is no such thing as a special philosophical question, but some questions lend themselves particularly good for a philosophical conversation.

No definite answers

The next thing that will contribute to the level of philosophy of the inquiries are certain requirements for the questions that are being discussed. The most general remark I can make is that it must be questions without straightforward answers. This derives from the ideas of Van de Water and as we have seen, this is something that is respected by all the methods that we discussed. Some authors call these questions "higher-order questions" such as Bartels (2007) in *Kinderen leren filosoferen*, others do not give them a name but stress that philosophy is about questions that you cannot answer with a simple fact. The questions inspire the group to enter into an inquiry and to wonder about the possible answers together.

Following from this idea from Van de Water, most of the times it is emphasized that talking about questions that do not have straightforward answers also means that there are no right or wrong answers. This is mostly combined with a statement that the teacher does not know the answer either. Some authors simply state that there are no right or wrong answers, others, such as Heesen (1998) in *Kinderen Filosoferen*, prefer to speak about "better" and "worse". This means that there is no definite answer but that does not lead to a situation of answer-relativism where absolutely anything that you might say is equally relevant, and thus leads to a situation where it practically does not matter what you say. What the best answer is, is decided by the group after reflection and comparison of the answers. I believe that this is a risky approach to P4C since it can be a slippery slope from "better" and "worse" to good and bad and no matter how often you will emphasise that the answer you decide on as a group is not a definite answer, you still concluded the lesson with an answer which undermines the message of there not being a definite answer in philosophy. Speaking in terms of more and less philosophical, this part of the method *Kinderen Filosoferen* from Heesen is less philosophical and will most likely not contribute to a philosophical inquiry.

Emphasis on reflection process

This leads me to the third guideline, namely the focus on the thinking process, argumentation and logical reasoning. As I have presented, Lipman and the books state

that the answers themselves are not the most important thing and that the children are not supposed to learn material or answers by heart. This is also in line with the ideas of Priest, who addressed the importance of a critical attitude in philosophy. This means that the thing that is the most important is the process of how children come to certain answers and if they can explain why their answer is a good answer. The teachers are advised to push the conversation further and to ask the children to argue for their opinions.

Collective effort

The next thing that will contribute to the level of philosophy is an emphasis on the importance of the group. In both the literature of Lipman and Matthews, the theories about philosophy in general and the methods it is not specifically said that it is not possible to practice philosophy on your own but Lipman and Matthews and the methods stress the importance of thinking together. They claim that it brings the discussion to another level, since you are able to share your thoughts and opinions with the group and you can test them. Other people's opinions can bring you new insights, which Deleuze and Guattari support as philosophical since it is very similar to the creation of concepts, and together you can come one step closer to the possible answer to the philosophical question. Another important aspect of thinking together lies in the word *together*. During the philosophical discussions, there are no winners and there are no losers, you argue in order to train yourself in formulating your arguments. You can convince other people by using strong arguments but this does not mean that you have won the discussion.

The focus on the fact that there are no wrong or right answers, the emphasis on the reflection process and the collective effort are very practical guidelines to make the conversation as philosophical as possible, or to facilitate a situation that is beneficial for a philosophical conversation. I consider these characteristics to be slightly higher in the "hierarchy" than the question, since I believe that it will be significantly harder to have a philosophical conversation with someone who is very dogmatic and believes his or her answer is the correct one and is not willing to listen to your opinions or views. This is also why I believe that it can be dangerous to apply Heesen's method and make use of "better" and "worse" answers. I also think that it is understandable and beneficial that there is a focus on the thinking process and that fact that thinking is seen as a

group activity since this prevents the discussion from getting into a debate where everybody tries to convince the other of their own right without maintaining an open and critical attitude to both their own and other people's opinions. If there is an opportunity to "win" for example the debate or the argument, there is a good chance that people are less willing to switch opinions or to admit that they do not know what is true anymore.

Philosophical wonderment

Although this guideline is not mentioned explicitly that often, it returned several times, in for example *Kinderen leren filosoferen* by Bartels (2007). It attracted my attention because without explicitly using the words philosophical wonderment, I noted a lot of traces of it in the literature, the theories and the books, such as a special attention to curiosity, vagueness and/or realisation that you do not know the truth. I believe that there are several things that can be described by philosophical wonderment. The first thing is the realisation that something that you once thought was self-evident is not anymore, this is addressed by all the books as something central to philosophy. The second thing is the natural state of wonderment that children (still) possess. Some books, such as Merckens's and Wassenbergs (2014) *Ik zag twee beren filosoferen* and *Ik zag twee apen wetenschappen* and *De vliegende papa's* by Heesen's (2009) seek to safeguard or to encourage this state. Matthews also recognised this natural state of philosophical thinking in children and constructed his story-beginnings to ignite the thinking during the lessons.

Some of the authors, such as Anthone et al (2006) in *Peinzen* talk about a state of curiosity that children have that inspires them to ask questions about everything that is new to them or that they do not understand. The third form of wonderment can be a certain attitude (of wonderment) that can be taught with the help of philosophy. A questioning/open/curious/wondering/critical attitude that allows you to wonder and to be wondered by the things you encounter. The idea of inspiring the children to wonder and to question can be very stimulating for the philosophical level of the conversation because it will challenge them and inspire their critical thinking. This critical attitude along with the realisation that you can question *anything* is exactly what Priest described as essential to philosophy.

Teacher vs. facilitator

The last guideline that I will present has to do with the role of the teacher. All of the books contained a small paragraph for the teacher (or the person) who will lead the lessons in philosophy with instructions or tips on how to lead philosophical discussions and what the role of the teacher should be in the lessons. Comparable to where Lipman chose to replace the words "lesson" or "class" with "inquiry" because he wanted to make sure that the focus was on the inquiry instead of certain facts or lessons that had to be learned, most books chose to not to use the word "teacher" anymore but to speak of a facilitator, a compere, of someone who guides the conversation. This is a clear representation of the fact that the teacher is not really a teacher anymore during the philosophy classes. Very often it was recommended that the teacher should adopt a Socratic attitude. With this in mind, the teacher should step out of its usual role of "master" and should pretend that he does not know anything about the subject, he does not have the definite answer, the floor is the children's and the teacher should not judge their opinions. The personal opinion of the teacher should not be noticeable since the children are the leaders of the philosophical discussion. The teacher can guide, ask for clarification, ask questions or challenge the children but the goal of all these actions should be done to facilitate the philosophical conversation in the best way possible and not to pass on certain knowledge or to get the children to give certain answers.

I believe that this might be the most important characteristic. Even though it is not mentioned in the theories about philosophy in general, I think it would be naïve to assume that the children will figure out on their own how to create concepts or how to acquire analytical armchair knowledge. I have shown in what way P4C is compatible with the theories, but in order to make sure that the theory is put into practice, I think we must acknowledge the importance of the teacher. Philosophising in every-day life can be very different than philosophising in the classroom. Apart from perhaps academic philosophy, you usually do not philosophise with ± 30 people every week about a subject they did not choose themselves for a limited amount of time. And, usually, philosophy is not done in an environment of teaching and learning, in a relationship with a teacher and a student. With P4C, it is up to the teacher/facilitator to deal with the time restraints, to let the children forget about grades and performances at school and to trigger them to think about subjects they have never thought about

before. It is up to the teacher to correct them, to make them listen to their peers, to force them to argue for their opinions, and to inspire them to think freely, critically and with an open mind. It is up to the teacher to let the children have their opinions and to refrain from judgments, and to refrain other children from unfounded judgments as well.

5 Illustration

5.1 Theory versus practice

Up until now I have mainly spoken about literature and theories about P4C and philosophy in general. The methods that I have treated have already addressed that even though they present several guidelines that can be helpful, practicing philosophy with children ultimately remains a *practice*. In this chapter I would like to focus on the practical side of the theory, because if the philosophy happens in the interaction between children and teacher I am very curious what a philosophical practice looks like. To present an illustration of philosophy with children in practice I will use information from my personal experiences that I gained during my internship at WonderWhy.

5.2 WonderWhy

From the beginning of February until the end of June I did an internship at WonderWhy. Apart from being curious about philosophical education for children in general the same question that inspired this thesis went through my mind during my internship. What was philosophical about the education that WonderWhy provided for the children? Would I be able to recognise it, and was I going to witness it? I witnessed lessons in philosophy for children from the age of 8 to 12. WonderWhy uses two methods during their lessons, the first is that the children all have three pieces of coloured paper, red, orange and green, that they use to vote or to express their opinion about a question or a statement. The second is that children can raise their finger if they want to say something and if they want to react directly to something a peer just said, they raise two fingers.

To present an illustration of the practice I will describe and analyse one lesson given by WonderWhy that I both followed and recorded. This specific lesson was for a group of children of the ages 11 or 12. It was their second lesson in philosophy and the main subject was respect. I chose this lesson because the recording was of the best quality which gives me the opportunity to present it as precise as possible.

The facilitator started the class with a reminder for the children that they should listen to each other and that they are not allowed to all talk at the same time. When the

facilitator asked the children if they would agree that we would take some pictures of them to be used for the website of WonderWhy, a spontaneous discussion arose. Most of the children did not want their picture taken and the teacher took the opportunity to start a philosophical conversation about the reasons behind their opinion. She asked if the children could come up with philosophical questions about pictures. One of the children proposed "What is a picture?" as a philosophical question. While some children laughed at him and told him the answer was obvious, the facilitator praised him and affirmed that this was indeed a philosophical question because you can think long and hard about it. The conversation continued and they discussed whether or not strangers should be able to take or use your picture and the relation between pictures and privacy. After a while the facilitator wrapped up the discussion about pictures with a few recapitulative remarks and made a bridge to subject that she initially had in mind for the class, namely, respect. She asked them to write down their answer to the question "What is respect?". When the children were done, she asked them to read their answers out loud while she made an overview of their answers on the whiteboard. Amongst other things, the children came up with the following definitions:

- Respect is talking appropriately.
- Respect is being polite.
- Respect is being appreciative.
- Respect is being understanding.

The facilitator repeatedly asked the children to define their definitions further. What did they mean with polite, appreciative and understanding? Are they the same, and if not, what are the differences? The children had a hard time differentiating between being appreciative and being understanding and did not agree with one another. Whilst asking the children to define their definitions further the facilitator also encouraged the children to help each other, to complement each other's responses and to specifically define what part they did or did not agree with.

The next part of the lesson the facilitator gave the children the assignment to discuss five statements about respect in small groups. One of the group was the leader of the conversation. The other children had to express and argue their opinions about the statements. The task of the leader of the conversation was to make sure that everybody has their equal turn and, more importantly, he or she should ask the others *why-questions*, such as, "Why do you think that?". The facilitator emphasised that the

children were allowed to change opinions after hearing convincing arguments from the others.

Afterwards the children voted for which statement they wanted to discuss again with the entire class. They voted for the statement "You have to respect all religions". The facilitator asked the children to use their coloured pieces of paper to express their opinions about the statement. Red for no, green for yes and orange for doubt or both yes and no. This way, the facilitator has a very clear overview of the different opinions and can directly ask why they are for or against. She can also directly ask a child to argue against an opposing opinion without having to ask if there are any opposing opinions. The first girl she asked to explain her opinion had voted red. The reason she gave was "Just so", but the facilitator was not satisfied with this argument, she wanted her to explain profoundly why she thought that you do not have to respect all religions. The girl could not explain her opinion, but another girl helped her and stated that you do not have to respect all religions because you do not have to respect IS. In the discussion that followed the children discussed whether or not the fact that someone who believes in a religion and does something bad can be a reason to disrespect the entire religion, whether or not we should respect Geert Wilders and if you do not have to respect someone (or their religion) if they do not respect you (or your religion). At the end of the conversation the facilitator let the children vote again to see if their opinions had changed after the group discussion or if they found new insights or convincing arguments and she presented a short summary of the questions and the subjects that came up during the group conversation. As a conclusion the facilitator asked the children what they had learned from this class, and she added that philosophy is not about facts or specific knowledge but about other things. She asked the children what they thought they learned from practicing philosophy. One girl answered that the children stand and argue for their opinions. A boy said that you learn to respect other people's opinions and how to remain an open attitude towards others. The facilitator continued this theme and took the opportunity to emphasise that everybody is allowed to have their own opinion and that you are always allowed to change your opinion.

What can I draw from this representation of the practice? Do I recognize any of the literature that I described, or does the facilitator put the guidelines that I formulated into practice? I can definitely say there was a focus on questions, the children were

encouraged to think critically, to argue for their opinions, the facilitator addressed the importance of an open attitude and emphasised that you are always allowed to change your mind. The philosophical question was quite literally the starting point in this lesson, since the facilitator spontaneously started a conversation by asking a philosophical question about their aversion to photos. The rest of the lesson questions remained important, since the facilitator asked a lot of questions, instructed the children to ask why-questions in the group discussions and she also praised children who came up with their own philosophical questions. The children were also encouraged to think together and not against each other. Furthermore, the guiding characteristics were also present, from the very first remark the facilitator made about the importance of listening on. The importance of the facilitator that I have argued for in the previous chapter has also been illustrated by this lesson. Apart from giving the lesson in general, I can see that the main thing she does is encouraging. She encourages them by asking the children's opinions, pressuring them to argue for their opinion, praising their attitude, formulations or original questions and by reminding them that everybody is entitled to their own opinion and is allowed to change their mind. She refrains from entering the conversation on the same level as the children, by which I mean that the facilitator does not give her own opinion or answers, but she guides and structures the conversation by intervening with new questions or presenting short summaries of what has been said up until that moment. All in all I think that this lesson was a clear representation of the practice, but also showed how the theory applies to the practice by proving that the guidelines I formed were respected.

Conclusion

The subject for this thesis was chosen partially from a concern about the level of philosophy of philosophical education for children. Whilst becoming more and more acquainted with the theories and the methods of P4C, I was surprised that most methods could perfectly describe the positive effects of philosophical education like an increase in IQ and better reading skills but lacked an explanation about the philosophical nature of P4C. I was convinced that there had to be something core to philosophy that should be represented by P4C as well, and I went on an investigation to answer my research question: What should philosophical education for children entail in order for it to be considered philosophical?

To answer this question, I first explained what philosophy for children looks like by researching which ideas laid the groundwork for modern-day P4C. I discussed pioneers Matthew Lipman and Gareth Matthews and their views and how they are perceived and represented today. I learned that Lipman decided to inspire young children to think critically and to improve their reasoning skills after being disappointed in the critical reasoning skills of his students and I saw that Matthews had an important impact on the emancipation of P4C, by showing that children are natural philosophers and deserve to be taken seriously. To be able to determine whether or not P4C can be considered philosophical I needed an understanding of philosophy in general that I could use as a standard criterion. Therefore, I searched for literature that answered the question "What is philosophy?" and found theories from Deleuze and Guattari, Priest, Williamson and Van de Water that helped me construct a diverse list of core characteristics to philosophy, such as a critical attitude and an aim to create concepts. With the help of these characteristics I could analyse P4C and see whether or not there were similarities between the two.

In order to find out what P4C itself thinks about philosophy I analysed seven contemporary Dutch methods and their definitions of philosophy. Whilst analysing the methods with the theories in mind doubts about my conviction that there had to be something core to philosophy and that I would be able to describe what that was began to grow. I doubted whether the theories that I discussed had the authority to declare or dismiss the methods as philosophical. Even if the methods could be considered philosophical according to the theories, this would not guarantee that the practice that

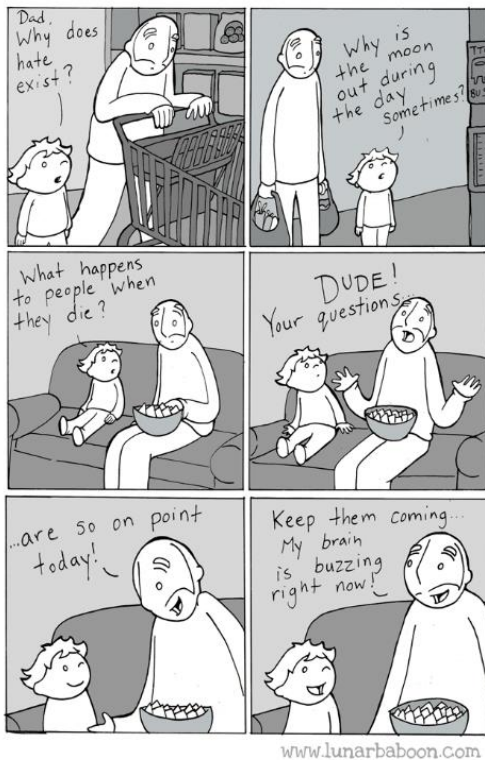
follows from the theory will also be philosophical. Since education is a combination of theory and practice, I had the feeling that I needed to adjust my expectations of the power of the characteristics, and perhaps even recognise that my research question itself was a philosophical question without a definite answer.

Without claiming that the discussed methods, characteristics or theories are useless I do believe that the only thing that the theories can claim is that the methods are more or less philosophical. With this in mind I tried to define how the theories and the methods I discussed could contribute the most to the level of philosophy of the education by presenting a list of guidelines based on all the information I had gathered up until then. I argue that the methods and theories should be used as facilitators of the philosophical practice. With the help of the theory of London I addressed the consequences of this idea for the relationship between theory and practice. Lastly, I presented an illustration of the practice with the help from personal experiences during my internship at WonderWhy that showed how the relation between theory and practice works.

I am aware that the methods and theories discussed in this thesis do not cover the complete discipline of P4C and philosophy in general. If I learned anything from my research it is that the complexity of defining philosophy and philosophical education for children demands more attention, and I therefore invite future researchers to keep trying to define philosophy and to further investigate the philosophical practice of philosophical education for children in order to further define what it should entail. With this thesis I do not mean to dismiss methods, teachers or questions as philosophical. Even though some might be a little less philosophical than others when looked at from an academic philosophical point of view, this guarantees nothing about the actual conversation that they might spark. I believe it would be unwise to focus solely on the methods and the guidelines and I agree with the methods that the magic happens in the interaction between theory and practice and in the interaction between the children with the guidance of a teacher. Ticking off all the characteristics of the theoretical list does not mean that the inquiry that follows is philosophical, but I do think that it can certainly help. In other words, the characteristics and theories that I have discussed in this thesis can help to make the practice philosophical, but without a guarantee. I advise everybody that practices philosophy with children to retain a balance between theory and practice, for I still believe that practice that is not based on any theory

whatsoever poses a risk to the credibility of P4C and that such an approach provides an opportunity for anybody to teach anything they want. Yet, I also believe that it would be a shame to focus solely on theories and miss out on the philosophical, witty, critical and oftentimes funny things children say during inquiries.

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I remember that the expression "It takes a village to raise a child" sprung to my mind whilst leaving my supervisor's office after a meeting a few weeks ago and it felt very applicable to the process of writing a thesis. I would like to take this moment to thank my village who have helped me during the past few months. First of all my supervisor Mariëtte, thank you for your guidance, your advice and your flexibility. I would also like to thank Maaïke Merckens-Bekkers and Sabine Wassenberg, for giving me the opportunity to do an internship at WonderWhy. I would also like to thank my parents Willemijn and Tieme, for their love and support not only during the writing of my thesis

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Appendix

ANALYSIS METHODS PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN.



Table 1 Ik zag twee beren filosoferen & Ik zag twee apen wetenschappen

Maaïke Merckens-Bekkers & Sabine Waassenberg

Fragments	Key concepts
<p>In kinderen schuilen niet zelden kleine filosofen. Kinderen kunnen zich echt over dingen verwonderen. Zonder enige terughoudendheid stellen ze vragen naar waar ze precies vandaan komen.⁴⁰</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Children can truly wonder about things.- Children are often (little) philosophers.
<p>Filosofie is de activiteit van het filosoferen. Filosofie is ook de traditie van het filosoferen zelf, we spreken dan over de geschiedenis van de filosofie. Filosoferen is het systematisch nadenken over vragen waar niet een eenduidig antwoord op is. Sommige mensen denken dat filosofie ‘zweverig’ is. Dat is het juist niet. Het is juist zo rationeel en kritisch mogelijk.⁴¹</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Activity.- Systematic thinking.- Questions with no definite answers.- Rational and critical.

⁴⁰ Merckens-Bekkers & Waassenberg, 2014, p. 5.

⁴¹ Merckens-Bekkers & Waassenberg, 2015, p. 5.

Wanneer is een gesprek geslaagd? Niet als iedereen goed heeft opgelet of als er is gelachen. Ook niet als de leerlingen geboeid gediscussieerd hebben. Het is pas een goed geslaagd filosofisch gesprek als de leerlingen op een gegeven moment doorkrijgen dat met de filosofische vraag iets aparts aan de hand is. Dat er een soort vaagheid in de wereld is die maar moeilijk in goed of fout is te verdelen. Of: dat de wereld niet zwart-wit is. Als je ze kunt meetrekken in het 'grijze gebied', zien ze in dat we over ieder woord een uur met elkaar kunnen discussiëren en de betekenissen van de woorden maar moeilijk te definiëren zijn. Wat betekent denken dan precies? Wie bedoelen we precies met dieren, ook mensen, of toch niet? ⁴²

- Vagueness in the world.
- Gray area instead of a world divided in black and white.

Het is mooi als de leerlingen inzien dat de filosofische vraag zelf al voor problemen zorgt, als je er maar diep genoeg over nadenkt. Want dat is immers bij iedere filosofische vraag het geval. Het gaat dan ook niet om het antwoord, maar om de weg ernaartoe, het denkwerk zelf, en het in kaart brengen van de filosofische raadsels onderweg.⁴³

- The answer itself is not important.
- The thinking process.

We onderzoeken concepten, willen weten hoe de wereld in elkaar steekt. We zijn op zoek naar de essentie van dingen. En niet naar iemands persoonlijk gevoel bij een gebeurtenis. We zoeken naar waarheid en naar wijsheid.⁴⁴

- The essence of the things and the world around us.
- Search for truth.
- Search for wisdom.

⁴² Merckens-Bekkers & Wassenberg, 2015, p. 12.

⁴³ Merckens-Bekkers & Wassenberg, 2015, p. 12.

⁴⁴ Merckens-Bekkers & Wassenberg, 2015, p. 12.

Table 2 Kinderen Filosoferen

Berrie Heesen



<i>Fragments</i>	<i>Key concepts</i>
<p>De volgende drie vragen zal ik beantwoorden,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Kun jij filosoferen? Het antwoord is ja. 2. Heb jij het al eens gedaan? Het antwoord is ja. 3. Hoe ik dat weet? Dat zit zo. Als je leert praten, ga je ook denken en zelf vragen stellen. Je hebt gedachten, daar denk je soms over na. Filosoferen is nadenken over jezelf, de anderen en de wereld. Je ontdekt nieuwe gedachten. Bij het filosoferen zijn er geen goede en foute antwoorden. Er zijn wel betere en slechtere antwoorden.⁴⁵ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Everybody can practice philosophy. - Everybody does already practice philosophy. - Practicing philosophy is thinking (1) about yourself, (2) thinking about others and (3) thinking about the world. - No wrong or right answers but better and worse answers.
<p>Het leuke van filosoferen is dat de meester of juf ook niet zeker is van het betere antwoord. Het betere antwoord bepaal je met elkaar: alle kinderen en de leraar samen of allen die aan de eettafel zitten en samen nadenken. Als jij denkt dat jouw antwoord beter is, dan moet je de anderen daarvan overtuigen. (...) In de filosofie doe je het vooral met argumenten en verrassende gedachten.⁴⁶</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The teacher does not know the answer (either). - Better answer. - Convince others with arguments.
<p>Als we filosoferen proberen we eerst te verwoorden wat onze gedachten zijn. Daarna gaan we kijken of die</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Putting your thoughts into words.

⁴⁵ Heesen & Zeelen, 1998, p. 9.

⁴⁶ Heesen & Zeelen, 1998, p. 10.

<p>gedachten kloppen. Dit doen we door deze gedachte te vergelijken met andere gedachten van onszelf en gedachten van anderen.⁴⁷</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comparing your thoughts to those of others In order to find out if your thoughts are correct.
<p>Filosoferen is dus nadenken over jezelf en de wereld en proberen te begrijpen hoe het allemaal zit.⁴⁸</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thinking about yourself and the world. - Trying to understand everything around you.
<p>Vraag niet of het antwoord goed is, want het is jouw antwoord. Of het beter of slechter is, weet je pas als je jouw antwoorden met anderen hebt vergeleken. ⁴⁹</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No good answer, no definite answer. - Better or worse in comparison to other answers.

⁴⁷ Heesen, & Zeelen, 1998, p. 10.

⁴⁸ Heesen, & Zeelen, 1998, p. 11.

⁴⁹ Heesen, & Zeelen, 1998, p. 11.

Table 3 De vliegende papa's

Berrie Heesen



Fragments	Key concepts
<p>Korte verhaaltjes kunnen een thematiek presenteren, waardoor een groep kinderen geprikkeld wordt om gezamenlijk over eenzelfde kwestie na te denken. De bedoeling is de verwondering over hoe iets zit te activeren, zodat daarna het samen nadenken over hoe iets zit de kern kan vormen.⁵⁰</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Trigger wonderment.- Thinking together about how things work.
<p>Laten we kinderen opvoeden als mensen die niet alleen later moeten leven, maar nu ook leven en hun weg in deze wereld (die verwarrend is) moeten vinden. Het samen leren nadenken over de vele vragen die we op onze weg vinden is onvermijdelijk en een logisch onderdeel van de moderne opvoeding.⁵¹</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Education.- Confusing world.- Thinking together.
<p>We willen allemaal dat kinderen redelijke mensen worden, dat ze niet alleen in staat zijn tot invoelen en rationaliteit, maar redelijk zijn, een afweging maken tussen verschillende perspectieven, hun eigen belangen en die van anderen onderling wegen in concrete situaties. Redelijkheid is een morele kwaliteit. Het gaat er niet om kinderen op te voeden voor een ideale wereld, doel is ze heel concreet te</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Preparation to make children into reasonable people.- Reasonableness is a moral quality.- Help children get a grip on the world and help them to define their place in the world.

⁵⁰ Heesen, 2009, p. 7.

⁵¹ Heesen, 2009, p. 9-10.

helpen zoveel mogelijk grip te krijgen op hoe ze zelf in deze wereld staan.⁵²

Kiezen voor opvoeden (en onderwijs is een deel van de opvoeding) in deze wereld betekent aandacht besteden aan fundamentele levensvragen op tal van terreinen zonder dat vaststaande antwoorden voorhanden zijn. Samen filosoferen kun je leren, dit boek wil daarbij helpen.⁵³

- Fundamental questions about life without definite answers.
- Practicing philosophy together can be taught.

⁵² Heesen, 2009, p. 10.

⁵³ Heesen, 2009, p. 10.

Table 4 Filosoferen met kinderen in het basisonderwijs

Ellen Algera & Marten Hidma



Fragments	Key concepts
<p>Filosofen zoeken naar (wetenschappelijke) antwoorden op vragen. Filosofie is met het verstand antwoorden vinden op vragen die je stelt over het leven in de breedste zin van het woord.⁵⁴</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Searching for scientific answers. - Philosophy is about answering questions of life through reasoning.
<p>Vragen die gesteld worden in de filosofie zijn niet zomaar wetenschappelijk van aard, maar hebben duidelijk raakvlakken met het menselijk bestaan: het zijn vragen die bij ons, mensen horen. Dit zijn vragen die gaan over zaken die vaak heel impliciet en vanzelfsprekend lijken te zijn. (...) Filosofie probeert deze vanzelfsprekendheid weg te halen, omdat gezond verstand en gemeenschappelijke aannames vaak verhullen dat we eigenlijk helemaal niet precies weten wat de kern van het probleem uitmaakt. (...) we moeten die vanzelfsprekendheid dus los laten en kijken of we dan een inzicht kunnen verwerven in het wezen van dat wat we proberen te onderzoeken.⁵⁵</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Questioning things about human life that seem straightforward. - Take away the false securities. - Gain new insights.
<p>Een van de dingen die moet gebeuren om te kunnen filosoferen is het tussen haakjes zetten van allerlei opvattingen, aannames, ideeën en vanzelfsprekendheden die we met ons meedragen. Wanneer we ons oordeel opschorten komt er ruimte om de vraag of het onderwerp echt te doordenken. Dit in het oog houdend, gaat filosoferen</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Doubt. - Really think the subject through. - Think creatively. - Questioning obvious facts.

⁵⁴ Algera & Hidma, 2012, p. 2.

⁵⁵ Algera & Hidma, 2012, p. 3.

niet alleen over het onderzoeken van onderwerpen en thema's, maar ook over het ontwikkelen van een specifieke denkwijze. Het is niet alleen voor degenen die filosofie studeren of filosoof zijn, maar voor iedereen, spannend om met filosofie bezig te zijn. Omdat het stimuleert op creatieve wijze te denken en om nieuwe en niet voor de hand liggende vragen te stellen. Het gaat erom vraagtekens te zetten bij dingen waar we normaal niet bij stil staan en daardoor ons oordeel op te schorten.⁵⁶

Filosofie is dus een wetenschappelijke discipline die gaat over (schijnbaar) alledaagse vragen. Een filosoof probeert deze op een systematische wijze te onderzoeken en helderheid te scheppen of om antwoorden te formuleren op deze vragen.⁵⁷

Bij filosoferen gaat het niet om het vinden van de 'juiste' antwoorden, maar om het ontwikkelen van denkvaardigheden en een eigen zienswijze. Kinderen leren argumenten te geven voor hun mening en gedachten. Zij leren onderscheid te maken tussen opvattingen die er wel toe doen en opvattingen die er niet toe doen. Daarnaast leren kinderen bij het filosoferen veel vaardigheden.⁵⁸

Tips en handreikingen voor de gespreksleider:

1. Begeleid maar stuur niet te veel.
2. Maak het gesprek niet te lang.
3. Herhaal de rode lijn.

- Philosophy is a scientific method.
- Research systematically.
- Try to answer seemingly mundane questions.

- No right answers.
- Developing thinking skills.
- Developing your own point of view.
- Arguments for opinions and thoughts.

- Not a teacher but a guide.
- Try to limit your (personal) influence in the conversation.
- No right or wrong.
- No personal opinion.
- Focus on structure, explanations and formulations.

⁵⁶ Algera & Hidma, 2012, p. 4.

⁵⁷ Algera & Hidma, 2012, p. 4.

⁵⁸ Algera & Hidma, 2012, p. 5.

4. Wees bewust van de structuur van het gesprek.
5. Reik andere invalshoeken aan.
6. Geef kinderen de gelegenheid toelichting te geven.
7. Analyseer niet te vroeg.
8. Benadruk dat er geen goed of fout is,
9. Hou je eigen mening voor je.
10. Let op de formulering van de kinderen.⁵⁹

⁵⁹Algera & Hidma, 2012, p. 15.

Table 5 Kinderen leren filosoferen

Rob Bartels



Fragments

Filosoferen is een talent dat kinderen kunnen ontwikkelen. Uitgangspunt daarbij is altijd dat kinderen zelf (kunnen) denken. Het is een cognitieve kwaliteit, maar heeft niks te maken met weetjes. Het is een ander soort vaardigheid: in discussie met elkaar tot een uitgekristalliseerde mening komen met de volwassen begeleider, de leraar, degene die het gesprek faciliteert. De filosofie biedt kinderen de ruimte om creatief te denken en de resultaten van dat denken te spiegelen aan de argumenten van anderen, om zo tot nieuw inzicht te komen. Dat betekent dat iedereen in hun omgeving gevraagd kan worden om verklaring, om uitleg, om argumenten voor de (geconcludeerde) opvattingen.⁶⁰

Ook omdat we kinderfilosofie niet willen presenteren als een gesloten concept, dit is het en zo kun je dat het beste doen. Integendeel, filosoferen met kinderen is een veelkleurig palet waar iedere leraar met zijn groep zijn eigen beeld schildert: filosoferen is een leerproces van de leraar en een groep kinderen dat ze zelf vorm moeten geven.⁶¹

Key concepts

- Practicing philosophy is a talent that can be developed.
 - Practicing philosophy is a cognitive quality.
 - Creative thinking.
 - Comparing arguments.
 - Gaining new insight.
 - Adult guider/teacher/the one who facilitates the discussion.
-
- Philosophy for children is an open concept.
 - Practicing philosophy is a learning process.

⁶⁰ Bartels, 2007, p. 8.

⁶¹ Bartels, 2007, p. 9.

<p>Alle mensenkinderen filosoferen. We moeten wel. Niet alles wat we om ons heen waarnemen kunnen we verklaren. Toch willen we begrijpen, daarom filosoferen we. (...) Filosoferen is van alle tijden en van alle leeftijden. Ook kinderen filosoferen, misschien nog wel meer dan volwassenen.⁶²</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All children practice philosophy. - We (have to) practice philosophy because we want to understand the things around us that we cannot explain. - Children might practice philosophy even more than adults.
<p>Filosoferen kun je het beste samen met anderen. We filosoferen om ons een mening te vormen.⁶³</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Practicing philosophy is best done with others. - Practicing philosophy in order to form an opinion.
<p>Filosoferen met kinderen is een activiteit. Kinderen denken met elkaar na in een poging om wat niet verklaarbaar is toch beter te begrijpen. We dragen niet over wat filosofen zoal voor ideeën ontwikkeld hebben, maar vertrouwen op ons eigen denken. En dat van elkaar. De leraar, de gespreksleider, helpt de kinderen de weg van het gezamenlijk nadenken te gaan.⁶⁴</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Philosophy with children is an activity. - Teacher/ compere. - Thinking together.
<p>Uit de antwoorden van de leraren kunnen we drie aspecten distilleren, waaraan we filosofische gesprekken kunnen herkennen: (1) De soort vragen die besproken worden: we noemen dat ook wel hogere orde vragen. (2) Dialoog: de houding en de wijze waarop de kinderen met elkaar in gesprek zijn. (3) Verdieping: deze ontstaat o.a. door het gebruik van argumenten en redeneerstrategieën. (4) Verwonderen. (door de auteurs eraan toegevoegd)⁶⁵</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Higher order questions. - Dialogue. - Deepening of the discussion. - Wonderment.

⁶² Bartels, 2007, p. 14.

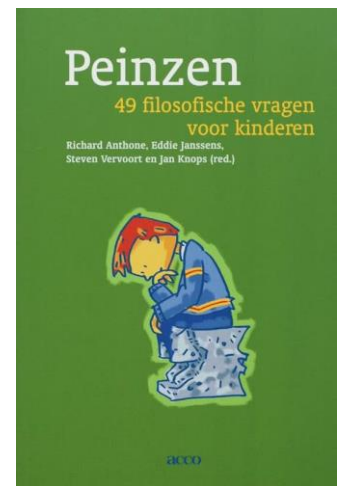
⁶³ Bartels, 2007, p. 16.

⁶⁴ Bartels, 2007, p. 17.

⁶⁵ Bartels, 2007, p. 85.

Table 6 Peinzen

Richard Anthone, Eddie Janssens, Steven Vervoort & Jan Knoops.



Fragments	Key Concepts
<p>Wij, de samenstellers van Peinzen, willen de onderzoekende, nieuwsgierige en vragende houding van kinderen respecteren. Aan de hand van het lesmateriaal dat wij in Peinzen hebben opgenomen, willen wij kinderen stimuleren om te filosoferen.⁶⁶</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Respect the curious attitude of children. - Stimulate children to practice philosophy.
<p>Filosoferen is nadenken, reflecteren over, het ter discussie stellen van datgene wat gewoonlijk als vanzelfsprekend wordt ervaren. Filosoferen met kinderen is samen op een systematische en gestructureerde wijze nadenken en praten over filosofische vragen. Filosoferen met kinderen is een activiteit mét kinderen in plaats van een les vóór kinderen. Het is een onderzoekende activiteit die te maken heeft met vragen stellen. (...) de Kern van de filosofische activiteit bestaat uit denken over de eigen positie in de wereld en hoe de wereld in elkaar zit, én uit denken over het denken.⁶⁷</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thinking about, reflect upon and question that which is seen as self-evident. - Think and talk in a systematic and structured way. - Activity with children. - Activity of inquiry. - Thinking about your position in the world. - Thinking about how the world works. - Thinking about thinking.
<p>Kenmerken:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The group is leading. - Not a teacher but a leader of the discussion.

⁶⁶ Anthone et al, 2006, p. 7.

⁶⁷ Anthone et al, 2006, p. 11.

- Onderscheid tussen persoonsgebonden kennis en algemene kennis.

- De groep bepaalt de onderzoek criteria
- Van leerkracht naar gespreksleider
- Vanzelfsprekendheden ter discussie stellen
- Antwoorden en kinderen serieus nemen
- Vertrouwen in het eigen denken
- De betekenis van de dialoog
- Speciale aandacht voor het denken⁶⁸

Filosoferen met kinderen wordt niet geleerd door er enkel over te lezen. Het komt er op aan om zelf aan de slag te gaan. Filosoferen met kinderen wordt in de praktijk geleerd door regelmatig samen met de kinderen in het diepe te springen. (...) Filosoferen met kinderen is een activiteit die leerlingen en leerkrachten samen moeten leren.⁶⁹

- Importance of the dialogue.
- Thinking process is central.

- Practicing philosophy with children is learned in practice.
- Practicing philosophy with children is an activity both the students and the teachers have to learn.

⁶⁸ Anthone et al, 2006, p. 12.

⁶⁹ Anthone et al, 2006, p. 26.