# Philosophy and Critical Thinking in English Language Arts: ReadyGen and Beyond Grades 3-5

**Penn's Project for Philosophy for the Young
and The Teachers Institute of Philadelphia**

**Philosophy and Critical Thinking in
English Language Arts: ReadyGen and Beyond
Grades 3-5**

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Terry Anne Wildman, retired elementary school teacher from the School District of Philadelphia

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# I. About the Authors



**Allauren Samantha Forbes**

McMaster University (previously of University of Pennsylvania)

I am currently an assistant professor at McMaster University, though I recently completed my PhD in philosophy at the University of Pennsylvania under the supervision of Karen Detlefsen. My research focuses on the intersection of early modern European philosophy and feminist philosophy. While at Penn, I was fortunate to be able to participate in several Philosophy for the Young initiatives like Philosophy Clubs and Ethics Bowl; these activities were often the highlight of my week. Watching students (especially those in historically underserved communities) grapple with weighty and important questions with razor-sharp insight and sincerity reminds me why I (still) think philosophy is cool: it brings us together and helps us see ourselves and the world through new eyes.

**Eliezer Gottlieb**

Lewis Elkin ES

I have been teaching in Philadelphia for eleven years. I have seen how education focuses have changed over the years and this TIP class put into action what I have always wanted to incorporate into my classroom. Giving students scaffolding to access abstract concepts that are present in every aspect of our daily lives. Philosophy allows students to engage with complex issues as trust, circles of concern and gender roles. while at the same time add their unique and extremely valuable perspectives.

**Geralyn McGinty**

John B Kelly Elementary School

My name is Geralyn McGinty and I teach 3rd grade in the Germantown section of Philadelphia. This is my fourth year at Kelly, all in third grade. I have been with the district for 12 years. I think philosophy is important in the elementary grades to help develop their critical thinking skills. These skills will help the students become independent learners.

**Karen Detlefsen**

Professor of Philosophy and Education, University of Pennsylvania

As undergraduate chair in philosophy (2009-13), Karen became interested in philosophy's potential for public engagement and began researching models for ABCS (academically based community service) teaching. This led to her project in teaching philosophy to high school students, which has since expanded to include middle school students and elementary school students. There's nothing quite like grappling with youngsters over hard, important questions! She has integrated Penn undergraduates and graduate students alike in this form of public engagement.

**Kimberly Gallagher**

John B Kelly Elementary School

My name is Kimberly Gallagher and I am currently teaching 3rd grade at John B. Kelly Elementary School in Philadelphia.  I have been teaching for 20 years with the School District of Philadelphia.  I think it is important to bring philosophy to elementary students to foster advanced questioning and discussion among children.  I have facilitated many philosophical discussions in my classroom while teaching all subjects and have been very

happy with the level of deep thought and consideration in which my students have been engaged.

**Kireema Sprowal**

Lingelbach Elementary School

Kireema Sprowal is currently teaching fifth grade at Lingelbach Elementary School. One of my goals is that students will become so saturated with the critical thinking skills and strategies I implement it will become like second nature and as natural to them as surfing the web or posting on social media. Another goal is to incorporate the critical thinking skills that I learn from the seminar so deep within the curriculum of whatever subject I am teaching that the students will automatically make connections/associations to real life situations/scenarios which will turn them into "problem solvers" and build their skills associated with being a problem solver.

**Lisa Yau**

Francis Scott Key School

Lisa Yuk Kuen Yau 邱 玉 娟 is a 1st generation Chinese American and a naturalized U.S. citizen. At the age of 11, she immigrated from the then-British colony Hong Kong with her family to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Her late mother was a self-taught seamstress who used to say "learning by observation" is like stealing from rich people. Her late father often spoke in a chain of Chinese proverbs about life and education; one of his favorites (paraphrasing his Chinese) was something like: "Books are houses of gold, live in them, and pursue that knowledge for life." Lisa truly believes if children are taught to "think like a philosopher" as early as kindergarten, the world would be a safer, kinder, happier, and fairer place for all of us.

Lisa has been teaching in the School District of Philadelphia for 19 years; she currently teaches 4th grade at the. Lisa is a Teacher Representative for the Teacher Institute of Philadelphia since 2018, and a National Fellow of the Yale National Initiative (2019 and 2020). She has written curriculum units using content from origami engineering, modern

poetry, modern essays, philosophy, evolutionary biology, and Asian American history. Lisa is also a Teacher Consultant of the Philadelphia Writing Project and believes teachers are the frontline researchers in education. She loves to present her students with challenging and unique programs like Poetry Inside Out, Need in Deed, and Fallingwater's annual Gnome House Design Challenge. Currently, Lisa is a 2020-2021 Teacher Advisory Council member of the National Humanities Center.
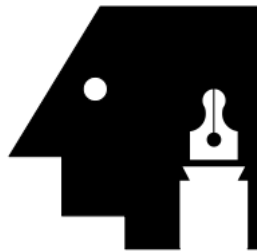


**Melissa Green**

John B. Kelly Elementary School

Melissa Green is currently teaching 5th grade at John B. Kelly Elementary School in Philadelphia.

**Peggy Savage**

Peggy Marie Savage is currently teaching 5th grade in the Port Richmond section of the city.

Peggy has a variety of students and student abilities from mentally gifted, autistic to E.L.L students. Peggy is a graduate of Mansfield State University where she started college as a music major and later changed to become an Elementary Education major with a minor in Mentally Gifted Education. Peggy received her masters from LaSalle College where she majored in Caribbean Bilingual - Bicultural studies (Spanish). Peggy has served as a Building Representative for almost two and a half decades. She is currently a Political Liaison for the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers.  Peggy volunteers as a Math & Science judge for the Upward Bound Math & Science Symposium (Temple University) which is an annual contest. For the last six years Peggy has worked as a teacher and teacher leader for Senator Vincent

Hughes S.O.S Literacy Program. Peggy is the co-founder of Girls on Fire workshops. The workshops cultivate young female teens to enter their piece of visual art or writing in a national Writing & Art competition sponsored by Scholastic. Peggy is a second degree blackbelt in Taekwondo and has studied Kung Fu Tai Chi as a way to relax and center herself. She is the proud parent of two beautiful daughters that will turn thirty & thirty-six in the year 2021.

This year I participated in a T.I.P ELA- Philosophy focus group at the University of Pennsylvania. Our cohort used the ELA ReadyGen curriculum. It was important to use the literature to explore concepts of fairness, beauty, citizenship, right and wrong, and truth. Writing the T.I.P unit was important because it allowed an alignment of student experiences with authentic text.

Current Award:(s): Women of Hughes Senator Vincent Hughes and his wife Sheryl Lee Ralph presented Peggy with the **Outstanding Educator Award** in May, 2016. North Light Community Award May 2020

**Stephen Esser**

Associate Director of Penn's Project for Philosophy for the Young, University of Pennsylvania

Stephen Esser received his PhD in philosophy from the Penn in 2018. Prior to graduate school, Steve had a 25-year business career. He has a long-standing interest in philosophy outreach to the public and K-12 students in particular. He works with area philosophers to organize events that engage the public, and has volunteered for many years at regional High School Ethics Bowl competitions.

**Terry Anne Wildman**

Terry Anne Wildman is a retired elementary school teacher from the School District of Philadelphia. She completed five Teacher's Institute of Philadelphia curriculum units, served as a Teacher's Representative, and was a Yale National Fellow for two years. In addition, she was a fellow in the Teaching American History Grant Program with the School District of Philadelphia for six years. She recently completed a project with the Museum of the American Revolution, co-writing the Teacher's Guide for the *Through Your Eyes* main exhibit.

Asking critical questions and allowing time for processing and thinking about information in the classroom is important at every stage of development and certainly every grade. Using philosophical questions to young students strengthens their thinking muscles and helps them to understand other's perspectives. It is important today to integrate critical thinking skills to enrich curriculum so that they may become successful adults.

## II. Philosophy in Elementary School: Why and How?



A. Children as Philosophers

This is a curriculum in philosophy for third through fifth graders. If your reaction to this is, *Philosophy for Children?! For eight-year-olds?! You're kidding, right?*, then you would not be alone. One common view of philosophy—and of the philosopher—is that it is a discipline reserved for the older and the more experienced. It's a subject, like particle physics, that is taught and learned in universities and colleges. Perhaps, this line of reasoning goes, philosophy could start to be introduced in high school, but not in elementary school.

We believe this response, while understandable, is based on a mistaken understanding of the nature of philosophy, and of the nature of the philosopher. It is true that philosophers trained in universities to teach in universities have honed skills and learned content that goes beyond the skills and knowledge of others, but this is true of virtually everyone trained to take on a specific job. And the skills and content that philosophers have honed have their seeds in things that humans start to think about at a very early age. This conception of philosophy has much in common with, for example, making music or telling stories. Just as making music is a fundamental human impulse, which one finds in many people at a very young age—think about the 2-year-old who hums to herself while being wheeled around in a stroller—so is thinking philosophically a fundamental human impulse, which one finds in many people at a very young age. And just as making music is a skill and an art that can be practiced and thus honed to a level of excellence few of us can master, so too doing philosophy can be practiced and thus honed to a level of excellence. And just as school

children may take music classes as part of that educational journey in getting better at making music, so too can school children take philosophy classes as part of their educational journey.

So, what *is* this thing called philosophy, such that we're justified in saying that it is something that very young children are already doing? The claim above about music is easily graspable; the parallel claim about philosophy is not. It may come as no surprise that some professional philosophers (those you might find lurking in the hallways of a university, for example) spend quite a bit of time thinking about just what, exactly, philosophy *is*. So, answering that question is not always straightforward. But there are some pretty common conceptions of the nature of philosophy, which make it easy to see that children, indeed, think philosophically.

B. The Nature of Philosophy: What Makes a Question Philosophical?



*Philosophy as Wonder*: One such conception, which is centuries old (it shows up at least as early as four centuries BCE, in the works of Aristotle) is that philosophy comes from the human drive to wonder about the world, or to be curious about the world. Children are natural wonderers. But one could argue that people wonder about a whole host of things that have nothing to do with philosophy. *I wonder what movie my friends and I will see tonight*, isn't a philosophical wondering in any interesting way. Similarly, when I child wonders, *Why do leaves turn color in the fall?*, a scientific answer can be given to that question; one need not turn to philosophy. One way of thinking about what makes a question born of wonder or of

curiosity a distinctively *philosophical* question is to think about whether or not an empirical answer that settles the case can be given to the question. So, for example, if a child wonders why it gets dark at night, an empirical answer, based in experience and investigation about the natural world, can settle that question. It is not an obviously philosophical question.

On the other hand, if a child wonders whether or not he should report his best friend to the teacher for stealing money out of a classmate's desk, no data or piece of experience about the world can settle that question. *This* is a philosophical question. A little probing can illustrate why it is a philosophical question. The child caught in the conundrum of whether or not he should report his best friend is weighing two good things against one another: the importance of standing by one's friends with loyalty, and the importance of respecting the property of other people. This could also be cast in negative terms as follows. The child is trying to choose the lesser of two bad options: betraying a friend, on the one hand, and contributing in some way to a classmate losing her money, on the other hand. Moreover, what if the family members of the friend who stole are going hungry every day, and the classmate whose money was stolen was going to use that money to buy her fourth pair of fancy sneakers? Do these background conditions make a difference as to whether or not the child should report his friend? One can imagine sensible and respectable reasons being given that the boy *should* report the friend, but one can also imagine sensible and respectable reasons being given that the boy *should not* report the friend. This is what makes this sort of question a philosophical question: there may be better and worse answers, and there may be better and worse ways of reasoning about those answers, but there is not one clear answer that all people should naturally accept given the facts at hand.

*Philosophy as Critical Thinking:* When we say, "there may be better and worse answers", and "there may be better and worse ways of reasoning", what do we mean by that? This brings us to a second, very common, conception of philosophy. According to this conception, philosophy is a way of thinking best captured by the phrase "critical thinking". Stating this may not be that helpful, however, given the wide range of conceptions of what it means to think critically; again, it may come as no surprise that philosophers themselves take seriously

a wide range of conceptions of critical thinking. What follows are some relatively uncontentious markers of what it means to think critically.



First, thinking critically entails using solid logic that allows one to understand the reasons behind one's views, and that one shares with others. Take the case of the friend and the stolen money. If one says that it's better for the boy to stand by his friend than to report the theft, and the reason given is, *because that's my opinion; it just feels right to me*, then this is not an answer based in logical reasoning that can be shared by others. Another way of putting it is, there is no way of engaging in a thoughtful discussion based in reasons, if this is the answer given, because there's no way of denying someone has an opinion or feels a certain way about something. But if one says that it's better for the boy to stand by his friend than to report the theft, and the reason given is, *one of the great goods of human life is the close friendships and relationships we hold with others, and to stand by his friend cultivates that great good*, then this is an answer based in solid logical reasoning that can be shared by others. Another way of putting it is, someone can engage with this answer with thoughtful discussion based in reasons. For example, one could answer, *I agree that one of the great goods of human life is the close friendships and relationships we hold with others, but this doesn't mean that anything goes. What if the friend brought a gun to school with the intention of killing a bunch of students and teachers? Surely the child would be morally obligated to report the friend to the teacher in order to save human lives, right?* And so forth.

Second, thinking critically entails uncovering and examining (perhaps unquestioned) assumptions driving our beliefs and values. Take the above line of reasoning, and specifically the part of it that says, *one of the great goods of human life is the close friendships and relationships we hold with others*. This is a big claim, and a response that would be indicative of critical thinking

in the sense of examining one's assumptions, would be: *is this true? and if so, why?* Most people would say that it *is* true, but some would disagree. Particularly solitary people might disagree with this assumption. This could lead to a rich philosophical discussion about the nature of a good life and role (or lack thereof) of other people in one's good life. But the second question—when it is true that close friendships and relationships make a life good, *why* does it make a life good—is open to significant, even if reasonable, disagreement. One person might say that having friends and family is important because when life gets really tough, we need people to lean on. Another person might say that having friends and family is important because, through our relationships, we learn how to treat people well and we thus become better people ourselves. And so on. The ways in which we examine and expand on our underlying assumptions, such as the assumption that one of the great goods of human life is the close friendships and relationships we hold with others, help us to think more carefully and critically about questions that face us. So, for example, one may say that a code among thieves is that you never snitch on your fellow thieves. But what good is there in a band of thieves? What good things do such relations among people bring to their own lives and the lives of others around them? The case of the boy and his friend discussed above is a different case, but bringing the example of the band of thieves to the fore helps us think more critically, and thus better, about the case of the boy and his friend. Will hiding his friend's thievery contribute to a flourishing friendship that contributes good things to the children's (and others') lives? The answer to this question is not straightforward (recall, again, the example of the hungry friend and the well-off classmate), but we can see how critically examining our assumptions can help us think more deeply and carefully about hard problems that matter to human life.

*Philosophy as Contributing to a Better Life*: The examples and discussion above leads to a third conception of philosophy, which we'll mention only briefly here. Children are faced, from a very young age and all the time, with questions and problems that do not admit of a single, obviously-correct answer, and that can be of great consequence. The case of the friend who steals is an obvious one. *Is it ever OK to lie, and if so, when and why?* is another. *What makes a*

*friend a good friend?* is another. *Why do some kids get to go to schools with lots of resources and other kids don't?* is another. And the list goes on, pretty close to endlessly. Giving young people the space and the conceptual tools to think through these questions deeply and well can contribute to a better life in at least three ways.



First, in our experience, bringing philosophy to young children in age-appropriate ways excites and satisfies young children. *This is my **favorite** class!* we've heard a fourth grader say. *Can we have philosophy club **every day**?*, asked a fifth grader. And so on.

Second, many questions in life—arguably many of life's most important questions—are not easy to answer with a clear, settled conclusion. The examples that we've discussed in this introduction underscore this fact. As we grow, our ideas about these hard questions mature and gain nuance. Life experiences require that we reconsider answers to questions that we might have thought we had settled for ourselves. Since philosophical questions do not admit of a clear, single right answer, the provisional nature of our conclusions makes sense. Moreover, it makes sense that one might disagree with well-meaning, thoughtful people on a problem or conundrum. Cultivating skills of philosophical inquiry, including the respect, capacity to listen and open-mindedness that such inquiries require, can develop in children a tolerance for multiple points of view that are reasonably-held, and a capacity to live well with uncertainty when it comes to questions that cannot reasonably be answered with a definitive and final answer.

Third, coming to have better ways of reasoning through hard questions such as those just mentioned, can equip children—and the adults they will eventually become—with tools to think more critically and carefully about the ways in which they will live, what kinds of ways of living are, for them, better, and ultimately, what kind of person they want to make themselves into. Our world is becoming increasingly complex, and the practice of

philosophy can help students to be more mindful about the choices they make in a myriad of situations they face in their daily lives.

## C. Philosophy in Public Schools in the USA



All this may seem well and good, but not appropriate, one might argue, given the state of public education in the USA today; specifically, given the gross disparities in resources across the nation's schools, philosophy may be great for the gifted and talented (some people do think this), and maybe for private schools and well-resourced public schools. But under-funded public schools staffed by teachers laboring under restrictive and closely-monitored working conditions face challenges that make the introduction of philosophy to their students impossible.

There is no doubt that inequities of a variety of sorts plague schools in the USA. The micro-managing of teachers' interactions with their students does, indeed, make philosophical education (indeed, all education) more difficult. There is also no doubt that teachers exercise extraordinary creativity in finding ways of bringing educational excellence to their students despite these inequities and burdens. Moreover, just as children ask themselves and wonder about philosophical questions all the time, so too do adults. As such, much teaching that goes on in a typical public-school classroom in the USA is already deeply steeped in philosophical question-asking and discussion. We believe that there are many

exciting ways of bringing philosophy into the public-school classroom in the USA, even under-resourced schools, and this project represents one such way.

D. Our Project and How to Use this Manual

The material we present here was developed and put together by teachers teaching in a variety of public elementary schools in the Philadelphia School District, and as such, it was developed in keeping with the teaching and learning conditions that exist in this public-school district. The team built the lesson plans around one widely-used English Language Arts curriculum used from third through fifth grades: the ReadyGen book series. That said, we take these lessons to be easily adaptable to a wide range of texts for this age group that deal with similar themes. Many of these lessons are tried and polished by teachers, and they are easily integrated into the pre-existing curriculum without delaying progress through the curriculum.

We've made this manual easy to use and to navigate. The "Overview of the 3rd-5th Grade Curriculum" lists the books covered in the ReadyGen series, a brief description of the contents of those books, the philosophical content that we identified within each book, and any lesson plans that teachers developed on the book. You can start here to see if you teach

any of these books, or to see if any of the books you teach track similar themes. From there, you can click on the hyperlinks to take you directly to the lesson plans of interest.

Within the lesson plans themselves, we've expanded a bit on the relevant philosophical content, but if you want more background on the various themes, click on the hyperlink within the lessons plans, that will take you to the "Philosophical Themes and Further Reading".

We hope you enjoy exploring philosophy together with your students, and we hope your students enjoy lessons like these and the thinking behind them.

# The Lesson Plans

# Overview of the Third to Fifth Grade Curricula

| Grade and Theme | Text | Description | Relevant Material from Philosophical Overview | Lesson Plans |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3: Observing the World Around Us | The Case of the Gasping Garbage, Michele Torrey | Doyle and Fossey are on a mission—a monster mission! It seems there's a giant bloodsucking monster gasping and gurgling in their friend Gabby's garbage can. Can they figure out what's up before the creature gobbles Gabby for lunch? | Evidence and How We Know [sequence of events] | • Kim Gallagher lesson plan on identification of evidence and how evidence is used to support claims |
| 3: Observing the World Around Us | Treasure in the Trees, Christopher Cheng | There's something special about the trees in the grove. When Nisha discovers their secret, her busy parents don't believe her. Nisha needs proof. Only then will she be able to stop the land from being sold. Will she be able to save the trees in time? | Evidence and How We Know; Non-Human Nature; Fact and Opinion; trust and loyalty | • Geralyn McGinty lesson plan on the philosophy of evidence and how we know, fact and opinion, trust and loyalty, and non-human nature |
| 3: Observing the World Around Us | About Earth, Pauline Cartwright | Where is the driest place on Earth? What causes wind and thunder? Join Zudu and his alien spaceship as they travel around our planet! Find out why the sky is blue, why we see rainbows, and so much more. | Evidence and How We Know | • Geralyn McGinty lesson plan on how do observations and other evidence support our knowledge? What is the responsibility of humans to the rest of nature?<br><br>• Terry Anne Wildman lesson plan on critical thinking skills to understand our connection between ourselves and nature |

| Grade and Theme | Text | Description | Relevant Material from Philosophical Overview | Lesson Plans |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3. Connecting Character, Culture and Community | The Year of Miss Agnes, Kirkpatrick Hill | Ten-year-old Frederika (Fred for short) doesn't have much faith that the new teacher in town will last very long. Most teachers who come to their one-room schoolhouse in remote Alaska leave, claiming that life there is just too hard. Miss Agnes is different—she doesn't get frustrated with her students, and she throws away old textbooks and reads Robin Hood instead! For the first time, Fred and her classmates begin to enjoy their lessons and learn to read and write—but will Miss Agnes be like all the rest and leave as quickly as she came? | Philosophy of Education (education versus learning); stereotypes; knowledge and experience; trust and loyalty | • Kim Gallagher lesson plan on education vs. learning, how stereotypes can influence learning by how people see a group of students |
| 3. Connecting Character, Culture and Community | The Song of Sky and Sand, Stephen Davies | Time is running out for the villagers of Simbi—they need to find a new source of water, and fast! One day, Ramata hears an old woman singing and realizes that the lyrics have a hidden meaning. Ramata bravely sets off into the desert with her grandmother, her cousin, and the very last bottle of water in the village. Will they be able to solve the riddle of the song and find water in time? | Evidence and How We Know; Non-Human Nature; trust and loyalty; circles of concern: family and friends | • Kim Gallagher lesson plan to create critical thinkers |
| 3. Connecting Character, Culture and Community | Deep Down and Other Extreme Places to Live, Shirin Yim Bridges | Who lives 3,000 feet down at the bottom of a canyon? What is it like to live with reindeer in the Arctic Circle? Find out how some of the world's most remote communities adapt to their extreme environments. | knowledge from lived experience/standpoint epistemology; human nature; evidence and how we know | • Geralyn McGinty lesson plan on evidence, knowledge from lived experience, and human's relation with nature |

| Grade and Theme | Text | Description | Relevant Material from Philosophical Overview | Lesson Plans |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3: Seeking Explanations | Storm in the Night, Mary Stolz | Too early to go to bed, and with only flashes of lightning to see by, Thomas and his grandfather happily find themselves rediscovering the half-forgotten scents and sounds of their world, and having a wonderful time learning important, new things about each other in a spirited conversation sparked by darkness. | Evidence and How We Know; Circles of Concern, Friends and Family; Stereotypes; lived experience | • Geralyn McGinty lesson plan on knowledge from lived experiences, stereotypes, circle of concerns, and human's relation with nature |
| 3: Seeking Explanations | Weather, Seymour Simon | Explore weather, a subject that changes every day, with award-winning science writer Seymour Simon. | Evidence and How We Know; knowledge from lived experience/standpoint epistemology; what is learning | • Geralyn McGinty lesson plan on evidence, and human's relation with nature.<br><br>• Terry Anne Wildman lesson plan on critical thinking skills to understand our connection between ourselves and nature. |
| 3: Seeking Explanations | Living Through a Natural Disaster, Eve Recht | Learn what it's like to live through natural phenomena. | Evidence and How We Know; knowledge from lived experience/standpoint epistemology | • Kim Gallagher lesson plan on knowledge through lived experience, and human's relation with nature |

| Grade and Theme | Text | Description | Relevant Material from Philosophical Overview | Lesson Plans |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3: Becoming an Active Citizen | Brave Girl, Michelle Markel | The true story of Clara Lemlich, a young Ukrainian immigrant who led the largest strike of women workers in U.S. history | knowledge from lived experience/standpoint epistemology; human 'kinds'; stereotypes; fact and opinion; circles of concern; trust and loyalty | • Geralyn McGinty lesson plan on knowledge from lived experiences, and the circles of concern |
| 3: Becoming an Active Citizen | Below Deck: A Titanic Story, Tony Bradman | Grace is onboard the Titanic, on her way to a new life in America with her uncle. But Grace soon finds life on the ship troublesome as she is mistakenly accused by another girl, Catherine, of stealing from the first-class dining car. When the ship strikes an iceberg, Grace finds Catherine stranded below deck, but she shows kindness and compassion by helping the child find her parents. In return, Catherine's parents help Grace onto a lifeboat, receiving safe passage to America. | human 'kinds'; circles of concern and the needs of stranger; stereotypes; trust and loyalty | • Kim Gallagher lesson plan on discrimination and its effects on society.  • Terry Anne Wildman lesson plan on critical thinking skills |
| 3: Becoming an Active Citizen | What Is Government?, Logan Everett Simon Adams | This book explains that a government is a system that helps people live and work together in harmony, whether in a local community or as a nation. | fact and opinion; stereotype | • Kim Gallagher lesson plan on fact and opinion, and critical thinking |

| Grade and Theme | Text | Description | Relevant Material from Philosophical Overview | Lesson Plans |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Lesson plans for alternative texts used in Fourth Grade* | * alternative fourth grade text: Thank You, Mr. Falker, by Patricia Polacco | | facts, opinions, and knowledge; knowledge in light of experience and social position; loyalty and trust; human nature; evil | Lisa Yau lesson plans:<br>• facts, opinions, and knowledge due to social position<br>• knowledge in light of experience and social position<br>• loyalty and trust<br>• human nature and evil<br>• human nature |
| 4: Becoming Researchers | Science Squad: Porpoises in Peril Gwendolyn Hooks | When the islanders notice that the porpoises are getting sick, Professor immediately calls in the Science Squad! Can Jada, Kate, Cam, and Reggie use their scientific and observational skills to find out what—or who—is making the porpoises unwell? | Evidence and How We Know; stereotypes; human 'kinds'; good and evil | • see next text |
| 4: Becoming Researchers | Mary Anning: The Girl Who Cracked Open the World, Debora Pearson | As a young girl, Mary Anning loved to hunt for fossils by the sea. She wondered whether these rock creatures had ever been alive and resolved to learn all she could about what she found. As her discoveries became larger and more unusual, she earned the respect of scientists far and wide and changed the way we study Earth's history forever | Evidence and How We Know; stereotypes; human 'kinds' | • Eliezer Gottlieb lesson plans on human nature/gender roles (combined lesson plan for Porpoises in Peril and Mary Anning) |
| 4: Becoming Researchers | Skeletons Inside and Out, Claire Daniel | Learn everything there is to know about skeletons in this informational text. | Evidence and How We Know | • no lessons to accompany this text |

| Grade and Theme | Text | Description | Relevant Material from Philosophical Overview | Lesson Plans |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4: Interactions in Nature and Culture | Why the Sea Is Salty?, Dot Meharry | Long ago, the water in the sea was as fresh as rainwater. That is, until a boy, a giant, and some ants came together! This traditional tale from the Philippines will tell you how the sea became salty | knowledge from lived experience/standpoint epistemology; | • no lessons to accompany this text |
| 4: Interactions in Nature and Culture | Three Native Nations: Of the Woodlands, Plains, and Desert, John K. Manos | The Haudenosaunee, the Sioux, the Pueblo: three native nations whose traditions and ways of life have faced many challenges through the centuries. Learn about the proud histories of these peoples and their rich cultures today. | knowledge from lived experience/standpoint epistemology; stereotypes and implicit bias; human 'kinds'; circles of concern | • Eliezer Gottlieb lesson plans on knowledge in light of experience and social position; and on human 'kinds'<br><br>• Terry Anne Wildman lesson plans on morality and circles of concern |
| 4: Interactions in Nature and Culture | The Longest Night, Jacqueline Guest | Wind Runner must complete his Vision Quest if he is to fulfill his dream of becoming a great warrior. He will need to learn the true value of trust and loyalty—how else will he survive for three long nights, alone on the mountain? | knowledge from lived experience/standpoint epistemology; trust and loyalty | • no lessons to accompany this text |

| Grade and Theme | Text | Description | Relevant Material from Philosophical Overview | Lesson Plans |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4: Exploring Impact and Effect | Earthquakes, Seymour Simon | In Earthquakes, Seymour Simon introduces elementary-school readers to earthquakes through engaging descriptions and stunning full-color photographs. He teaches readers why and how earthquakes happen and the damage they can cause through pictures, diagrams, and maps. He also gives real-life examples of earthquakes that have occurred all over the world. | Evidence and How We Know | • no lessons to accompany this text |
| 4: Exploring Impact and Effect | Anatomy of a Volcanic Eruption, Amie Jane Leavitt | Explore the explosive workings of volcanoes, the techniques scientists use to study them, and how people live in the shadows of these explosive landforms. | Evidence and How We Know | • no lessons to accompany this text |
| 4: Exploring Impact and Effect | A Tsunami Unfolds, Susan Korman | This book follows the story of the 2011 Japanese Tsunami as it unfolded, looking at the impact it had and the destruction it caused as well as the lasting impacts and how Japan has recovered. Taking a timeline format, it includes survivor stories alongside statistics about the disaster. | Evidence and How We Know; lived experience; good and evil | • Lisa Yau lesson plan on facts, evidence and knowledge; and supporting claims with evidence (combined lesson plan for Thank You, Mr. Falker, and A Tsunami Unfolds)<br><br>• Eliezer Gottlieb lesson plans on human beings and their relation to nature<br><br>• Terry Anne Wildman lesson plan on critical thinking skills, and human beings and their relation to nature |

| Grade and Theme | Text | Description | Relevant Material from Philosophical Overview | Lesson Plans |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4: Creating Innovative Solutions | Lunch Money, Andrew Clements | Greg Kenton has two obsessions—making money and his long-standing competition with his annoying neighbor, Maura Shaw. So when Greg discovers that Maura is cutting into his booming Chunky Comics business with her own original illustrated minibooks, he's ready to declare war. | morality and the circles of concern; friends; trust and loyalty | • Eliezer Gottlieb lesson plans on trust and loyalty<br><br>• Eliezer Gottlieb lesson plans on morality and the circles of concern, part 1<br><br>• Eliezer Gottlieb lesson plans on morality and the circles of concern, part 2 |
| 4: Creating Innovative Solutions | Using Money, Gail Fay | This book takes a look at checking and savings accounts and the various ways that people use their money. | knowledge from lived experience | • no lessons to accompany this text |
| 4: Creating Innovative Solutions | A Tale of Two Poggles, Margi McAllister | The town of Nether Poggle is dwindling because its main industry, envelopes, is failing and the town down the road, Upper Poggle, is far more appealing and modern. When Gabriela and Alejandro win an essay competition, they are awarded a day at the envelope factory. There they discover the factory has much more potential as an amusement park and set about putting plans in motion to make it happen. | evidence and how we know; lived experiences; trust and loyalty; human 'kinds'; stereotypes [cause and effect] | • no lessons to accompany this text |

| Grade and Theme | Text | Description | Relevant Material from Philosophical Overview | Lesson Plans |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5: Depending on Each Other | Night of the Spadefoot Toads, Bill Harley | When his father takes a new job in Massachusetts, Ben Moroney must leave behind his best friend Tony, a western banded gecko named Lenny, and worst of all, the desert home he has loved and explored. | knowledge from lived experience/standpoint epistemology; circles of concern; stereotype | • Kireema Sprowal lesson plan on facts, opinions and knowledge<br><br>• Kireema Sprowal lesson plan on supporting claims with evidence<br><br>• Melissa Green lesson plan on human nature and human 'kinds'<br><br>• Melissa Green lesson plan on morality and circles of concern, part 1<br><br>• Melissa Green lesson plan on morality and circles of concern, part 2 |
| 5: Depending on Each Other | Washed Up!, Payal Kapadia | On a remote island in the middle of the ocean, three families compete to win "Washed Up!"—the biggest, baddest reality TV show on the planet! How will the families adapt and survive in such hostile conditions? Which family will gain the most viewer votes and win the competition? | circles of concern: friends and family; evidence and how we know; trust and loyalty; truth and fiction; lived experience and standpoint | • Kireema Sprowal lesson plan on human nature<br><br>• Kireema Sprowal lesson plan on knowledge in light of experience and social position human beings and their relation to nature |
| 5: Depending on Each Other | Rain Forest Food Chains, Heidi Moore | This book explores the species and food chains within a rain forest habitat, and discusses why these food chains need to be protected. | Evidence and How We Know; non-human nature [cause and effect] | • Terry Anne Wildman lesson plan on critical thinking skills, and human beings and their relation to nature |

| Grade and Theme | Text | Description | Relevant Material from Philosophical Overview | Lesson Plans |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5: Finding Courage | The Road to Freedom, Lesa Cline Ransome | Emma and her mother know that their only hope of staying together is to run away from their slave master. Their journey will be brutal, but if they are ever to be free, they must place their lives in the hands of people they have never met. Do they have enough courage and strength to evade the unforgiving slave catchers and reach safety? | circles of concern: friends and family; trust and loyalty; human 'kinds' and stereotypes; good and evil; human nature | • Peggy Savage lesson plan on Facts, Opinions and Knowledge<br><br>• Kireema Sprowal lesson plan on morality and circles of concern<br><br>• Kireema Sprowal lesson plan evil<br><br>• Peggy Savage lesson plan using ReadyGen Curriculum lesson 2a on Angel Island, on human 'kinds', part 1<br><br>• Peggy Savage lesson plan using ReadyGen Curriculum lesson 2a on Angel Island, on human 'kinds', part 2 |
| 5: Finding Courage | The Great Migration, Jacob Lawrence | This stirring picture book brings together the sixty panels of Jacob Lawrence's epic narrative Migration series, which he created in 1940-1941. They tell of the journey of African-Americans who left their homes in the South around World War I and traveled in search of better lives in the northern industrial cities. | circles of concern: friends and family; trust and loyalty; human 'kinds' and stereotypes; good and evil | • Peggy Savage lesson plan on human nature |
| 5: Finding Courage | Real-Life Superheroes, Alison Hawes | Comic-book superheroes may be able to fly, but real-life superheroes have amazing powers of their own. Using inner strength and bravery, they stand up for their beliefs even when facing danger or abuse. Explore the efforts of four courageous crusaders who made a difference in the lives of countless others. | circles of concern; good and evil; knowledge and lived experience | • Peggy Savage lesson plan on human nature<br><br>• Kireema Sprowal lesson plan on evil<br><br>• Terry Anne Wildman lesson plan on human nature (human bravery), using Real Life Superheroes, The Great Migration, and The Road to Freedom |

| Grade and Theme | Text | Description | Relevant Material from Philosophical Overview | Lesson Plans |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5: Understanding the Universe | George's Secret Key to the Universe, Lucy Hawking Stephen Hawking | This is the story of George, who's taken through the vastness of space by a scientist, his daughter, and their super-computer named Cosmos. | Evidence and How We Know; trust and loyalty; stereotypes; facts and opinion; circles of concern: friends and family; good and evil | • [Melissa Green lesson plan on supporting claims with evidence](#)<br><br>• [Melissa Green lesson plan on critical views on technology, and supporting claims with evidence: state your claim, part 1](#)<br><br>• [Melissa Green lesson plan on critical views on technology, and supporting claims with evidence: state your claim, part 2](#) |
| 5: Understanding the Universe | Our Mysterious Universe, Laura Langston | This book looks to uncover the many mysteries that reside in our universe. | Evidence and How We Know | • no lessons to accompany this text |
| 5: Understanding the Universe | Jess and Layla's Astronomical Assignment, Laura Langston | Jess and Layla are given a school assignment to imagine what would happen if the astronomers of the past were all in one room. What would they say? Would they disagree with one another? While contemplating their assignment, Layla's dad's van gets turned into a time machine by a meteorite. They decide to go back in time and see the astronomers, right their wrongs, and ultimately answer the question set by their school assignment. | Evidence and How We Know; knowledge from lived experience/standpoint epistemology; philosophy of education | • no lessons to accompany this text |

| Grade and Theme | Text | Description | Relevant Material from Philosophical Overview | Lesson Plans |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5: Exploring New Worlds | Explorers: Triumphs and Troubles, Paul Mason | This book looks at the explorers who visited Asia (Marco Polo), the Americas (Cortes and the Aztecs, search for El Dorado), Antarctica (race to the Poles) and Australia (First Fleet, Burke and Willis) and looks at ...whether the explorers...in general were triumphant or troublesome based on their successes and failures. | knowledge from lived experience/standpoint epistemology; non-human nature | • no lessons to accompany this text |
| 5: Exploring New Worlds | Explorers of North America Christine, Taylor-Butler | This book is full of information and summaries on explorers through the ages, beginning with the Vikings and moving through Lewis and Clark. | knowledge from lived experience/standpoint epistemology | • no lessons to accompany this text |
| 5: Exploring New Worlds | Beyond the Horizon, Paul B. Mason | Defying her father, Sarah disguises herself as a cook's boy and gets a job aboard ...her father's ship, which is bound for India. When they stop in a port, Sarah follows the ship's cat off the ship but gets lost and cannot find her way back. An Indian family takes her in, but when her father threatens to destroy their home to set up a trading post, she has to reveal herself and stand up to him. | knowledge from lived experience/standpoint epistemology; human 'kinds' and stereotypes; circles of concern: friends and family; trust and loyalty | • Peggy Savage lesson plan on human 'kinds' |

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# Third Grade Lessons
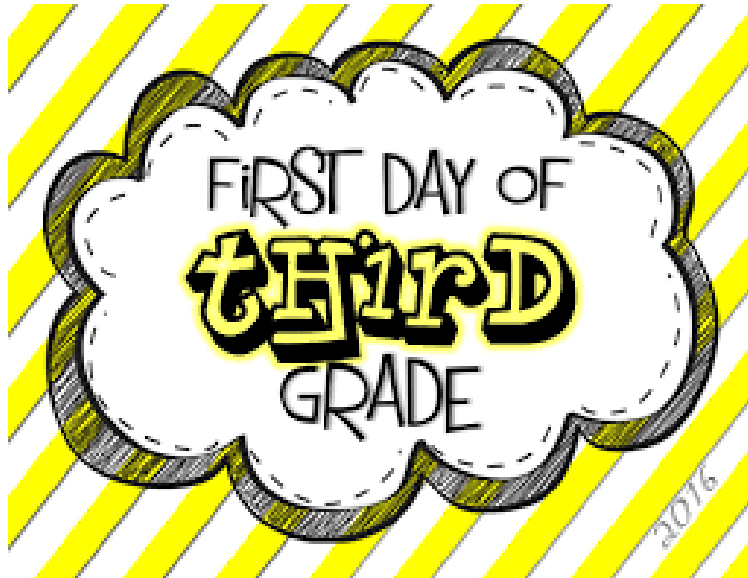
# Kim Gallagher
# Lesson Title:   The Case of The Gasping Garbage

**Rationale:** This book, although published as a novel, is a collection of 4 short stories broken down into 4 "cases" to be solved.  By its very nature, this book lends itself to teaching sequence of events and identification of evidence because it is a "detective" story. Furthermore, there is an antagonist present in the story; therefore, an explanation of the evidence and how we know things is also necessary.

This lesson plan was created to teach identification of evidence and how evidence is used to support claims, as well as how we know things. Some of the important philosophical questions that students will grapple with include: How do we learn things? (From parents, pastors, siblings, friends, teachers, news reports, experts, etc.). Is it better to learn on our own through experiment/observations or from others, and why do you believe this? When is it okay to accept information from others as true?  Does it matter from whom you are learning?

For further information on these topics, please see Section A ("Facts, Opinions and Knowledge"), parts 5 and 6 of the [Philosophical Themes](#).

This lesson should take a total of 80 minutes or 4 (20 minute) sessions.

**Objectives:**
> 1.  **SWBAT** describe the characters in a story, including their traits, motivations, or feelings **IOT** explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.
> 2.  **SWBAT** recognize evidence and how we know things **IOT** gain a better understanding of the natural world.

**Standards:** PA Standards -
**CC.1.3.3.C** - Describe characters in a story and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events;
**CC.1.3.3.B -** Ask and answer questions about the text and make inferences from text, referring to text to support responses.
**CC.1.2.3.J** Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal spatial and temporal relationships.

**Assessment Evidence:**
Students will complete a flowchart showing the discovery of evidence with 80% accuracy. Students will write about how they know what they know.

**Learning Plan:**
• Read book aloud (Chapters 1 & 2) while students follow in own copy
• Discuss "How do we know the things that we know?"  "Can we trust that these things are true?"
• Brainstorm list of evidence gathered in Chapter 2 of *Case of the Gasping Garbage.*
• Place evidence in a class flowchart based on when it was "discovered"
• Read book aloud (Chapters 3 & 4) while students follow in own copy
• Brainstorm list of evidence gathered in Chapter 4 of *Case of the Gasping Garbage.*
• Have students place evidence in an individual flowchart based on when it was "discovered"
 • Read book aloud (Chapters 5 & 6) while students follow in own copy
• Have students create a flowchart of the evidence completely on their own

**Critical Thinking/Discussion Questions:**
• How do we learn things? (From parents, pastors, siblings, friends, teachers, news reports, experts, etc.)
• Is it better to learn on our own through experiment/observations or from others?  Why do you believe this?
• When is it okay to accept information from others as true?  Does it matter from whom you are learning?

**Resources:**
• ReadyGen copies of *Case of the Gasping Garbage*
• Chart paper
·Copies of flowchart [flowchart](flowchart)
• Duration:  4 x 20 minutes

**Differentiation/Modifications:**
Work can be done in groups.

# Geralyn McGinty
# Lesson Title:  Treasure in the Trees

**Rationale:** In this text, a young girl has to convince her parents that a grove slated for development should be preserved. Her parents own the grove and could use the money that land developers will offer her parents.

This text covers the philosophy of evidence and how we know, fact and opinion, trust and loyalty, and non-human nature over the course of four lessons. Some of the philosophical discussion questions students may address include: When, if ever, is it okay to keep secrets? Should children challenge adults when they feel strongly that they are right? How do you balance between the needs of humans and non-humans -- whose needs are more important and why?

For further information on these topics, please see Sections A ("Facts, Opinions and Knowledge"), B ("Supporting Claims with Evidence" – especially part 1), F ("Human Beings and their Relation to Nature") and I ("Loyalty and Trust") of the Philosophical Themes.

**Objectives: SWBAT** recount key details and explain how they support the main idea **IOT** determine the main idea.

**Standards:** CC.1.2.3.A - Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.

**Assessment Evidence:**
1) Students will write a paragraph on losing someone's trust and how they earned it back.
2) Students will write a paragraph explaining why (or why not) it is important to have someone trust them – and for them to have someone they can trust in their lives.

**Learning Plan:** Before reading, introduce vocabulary. Students will be reminded to look at the events in the story from the point of view of both Nisha and her parents. The following philosophical questions can be examined through a variety of teaching strategies. See Strategies and Resources Section below.

Lesson 1
Chapter 1 will be read with the students.
Question Stems:
- How did Nisha lose her parent's trust? Is that a big issue?
- Does science reveal the "truth"? If so, how?
- Why do we say "Seeing is believing"? Is it true?

Lesson 2
Chapter 2 and 3 will be read with the students.
Questions Stems:
- Why is a scientific discovery more important than land development? Is it?
- Why does Nisha need proof about her discovery? Is it a lack of trust or her age that causes her parents dismissal of her discovery?
- Could she be too young to make a discovery to science?

Lesson 3
Chapter 4 and 5 will be read with the students.
Question Stems:
- Why is an observation evidence?

Lesson 4
Chapter 6 will be read with the students.
Questions Stems:
- Why would a photo better evidence that a written log?
- Why was the word of a university professor more valued by Nisha's parents than her teacher or her?
- Do you think developing nature for houses a good thing or a bad thing?

**Resources:**
• *Treasure in the Trees* (book)
• This lesson can be spread out for 4 days - 40 minutes each day.

**Differentiation/Modifications:**
Students with plans or IEPS will be provided a sentence stems for the paragraph.

# Geralyn McGinty
# Lesson Title: About Earth

**Rationale:** This lesson plan ties into the science curriculum for the second quarter. The text explores how we know things about the world, such as why the sky is blue, why the sea is salty, and why sunsets are red.

This lesson plan was created to teach how we come to know about scientific facts. We will also discuss the relationship of people to the world's environment. Some of the important philosophical questions that students will grapple with include: How do observations and other evidence support our knowledge? What is the responsibility of humans to the rest of nature?

For further information on these topics, please see Sections A ("Facts, Opinions and Knowledge"), B ("Supporting Claims with Evidence" – especially part 1), and F ("Human Beings and their Relation to Nature") in the Philosophical Themes.

**Objectives:** SWBAT determine the main idea of a text **IOT** explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text

**Standards:**
**CC.1.2.3.A** - Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.
**CC.1.2.3.G** - Use information gained from text features to demons. **CC.1.2.3.C** - Explain how a series of events, concepts, or steps in a procedure is connected within a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.

**Assessment Evidence:** Create a plan to teach the younger grades about the planet we live.

**Learning Plan:** Introduce key vocabulary. While reading, students will be developing a chart of earth's phenomena, identifying the cause and the effect on the residents of the planet. Students will be encouraged to develop questions that they would like to have answered.

Read pages 2-5 of *About Earth* with the students.
Questioning stems:
- Did you know about the Solar System?
- How do you think we know that Earth is the third planet from the Sun?
- How did the planets get their names?
- Do you think we will ever find more planets?
- How do we know there is gravity? Have you ever wondered what would happen if gravity on Earth disappeared? What would you do to protect your family and your possessions?

- If you discovered a planet, what would you name it? Why?

Read pages 6-17 of *About Earth* with the students:
Questioning Stems:
- What would happen if we ran out of water?
- What is our responsibility to make sure this doesn't happen?
- Should there be laws on how to use water?
- Would you prefer to live in Antarctica or a Desert? Why?
- How do you think scientists know that sand used to be rocks?

Read pages 18-25 of *About Earth* with the students.
Questioning Stems:
- Why is the sky blue? How do we come to know this?
- Are rainbows real? Why does the sky change color?
- Why are people afraid of thunder and lightning? Are you afraid of thunder or lightening? Should we be afraid?

Read pages 26-32 of *About Earth* with the students.
Questioning Stems:
- What do you know about earthquakes? Volcanos?
- Could you design a house that could withstand an earthquake? a flood?
- What connection do we have with the Earth? Are we responsible to take care of the Earth? How can we care for the Earth?

**Resources:**
• *About Earth*
• A lesson plan for K or 1st grade.
• This lesson can be spread out over 4 days.

**Differentiation/Modifications:**
Students with plans or IEPS will be provided paragraphs with sentence starters and/or given assistance with writing the paragraph.

# Terry Anne Wildman
# Lesson Title - Breaking Down Artificial Boundaries.

**Rationale**:  Students will be challenged in the future to solve global environmental problems.  Practicing critical thinking skills may help students to understand their connection between themselves and nature.  With the ongoing loss of natural environments, especially in urban America, it is important for students to understand the relationship they have with the natural world.  This lesson is designed to ask students in elementary grades, specifically 3rd, 4th and 4th graders, what they see as their relationship and responsibility around in the community, their country, and the world.

For further information on these topics, please see Section F ("Human Beings and their Relation to Nature"), especially parts 1 and 2 of the [Philosophical Themes](#).

**Objectives**: SWBAT analyze a non-fiction or informational text IOT respond to critical thinking questions on the relationship between self and nature.

**Standards:**
1) CC1.2.3.L. Read and comprehend literary nonfiction and informational text on grade level, reading independently and proficiently.
2) CC1.2.4.J.  Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being and that are basic to a particular topic.
3) CC1.2.5.J. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal contrast, addition, and other logical relationships.

**Assessment:**  Exit Slip for each grade.  See procedures.

**Procedures:**
- After reading *About Earth* (3rd grade), *Weather* (3rd grade), *A Tsunami Unfolds* (4th grade), and *Rain Forest Food Chains* (5th Grade)*,* and or other appropriate non-fiction books on the environment, ask students one or two of the following questions from page 210 of *Teaching Thinking*:

  - Should we consider what is best for ourselves, best for others, or best for all (does that include future born children?)
  - Should we consider what is best for humans or should we consider animals, plants, rivers and other aspects of the physical world?
  - Who should we care for - our family, our friends, our local community, our country, or our world?  How should we show this care?
  - What is the environment, and what is the place of human beings in the environment?

- What should our duty be to other species?  Can we ever know what an animal feels or wants?
- What is 'development,' and what are the problems of modern development?
- What is good or beautiful about nature?  Why and how should we preserve it?
- What could we do to improve our local environment, and what should we do?
- Should people in rich countries help people in poor countries?  Why and how?
- What kind of world do you want to live in, and how could you help create it?

- For 3rd graders, divide into groups of 2-3 after reading *About Earth*, ask students to answer the last question: What kind of world do you want to live in, and how could you help create it? Share out answers.  Ask students in their groups to brainstorm: what they could do in their school community to bring the kind of world they want to live in.  Create a chart listing ideas.  Circle one thing the class could commit to doing in their classroom or school. Exit Slip - Write about one thing you could to make the idea they circle a reality.

- For 4th graders, after reading *A Tsunami Unfolds*, ask students to think: Should people in rich countries help people in poor or devastated countries?  Why and how?  A vote can be taken on if "rich countries should help out" by a show of hands to quickly get to the why and how.  Divide students into small groups and ask them to discuss: Who should we care for-our family, our friends, our local community, our country, or our world? In the case like the tsunami that struck Japan, how should we show this care?  Share out ideas.  Create a chart with 5 columns, label them Family, Friends, Community, Country, World.  Record ideas on the chart. Exit Slip: Ask students to write about who they think they should care for and why.

- For 5th graders, after reading *Rain Forests Food Chains*, ask students: What is 'development' and what are the problems of modern development?  Create a T-Chart - advantages and disadvantages of modern development.
  - Using Robert Fisher's strategies for dialogue (pg. 146), ask: What should our duty be to other species? Can we ever know what an animal feels or wants? Give students a few minutes to think and journal.  Then ask students to think-pair-share with a partner. Open up for class discussion. Ask follow-up questions without giving your opinion. Questions such as: Why? Do you agree or disagree? Can you say more? Can you give an example?  Again you withhold judgement with positive comments such as 'Thank you,' 'OK,' 'That's interesting.' "I see."  Encourage responses from the whole group - by surveying the class (Hand/thumbs up or down). To promote active listening, ask for a summary of what has been shared.  Give students a responsibility to nominate the next speaker during the discussion.  Challenge students to give reasons for their views by presenting opposing views. Remember to invite students to consider alternative viewpoints.  As an Exit Ticket, invite students to ask their own questions they now have after the discussion or to think about questions that still remain to be answered.

**Resources:**
- *Rain Forests Food Chains,*
- *A Tsunami Unfolds,*
- *Weather,*
- *About Earth*
- Chart paper
- Markers
- Graphic Organizers (T-Chart)

**Differentiation/Extension:**

For 3rd graders, take their ideas further by designing and carrying out a plan of action in the school or classroom.

For 4th graders, create "care" posters in which students can draw what caring for one of the groups would look like.

For 5th graders, ask students to think about a question they have from reading *Rain Forests Food Chains* or wrote about on their Exit Slip and complete a mini-research report on that topic.

# Kim Gallagher
# Lesson Title:   The Year of Miss Agnes

**Rationale:** In a remote village in Alaska, a new teacher, Miss Agnes, decides to teach there for a year before she retires.  The students do not have much faith that she will stay. Miss Agnes brings joy to the classroom and her students learn to read and write. This lesson plan was created to teach education vs. learning, how stereotypes can influence learning by how people see a group of students. This plan will also look at how students learn from teachers who they trust and have loyalty. Can a student learn from a teacher they cannot trust?  In order to create critical thinkers, third graders will be challenged to think "outside the box." This lesson should take a total of 340 minutes or 15 (20 minute) sessions.

For further information on these topics, please see Section C ("Knowledge in Light of Experience and Social Position"), especially parts 3, 4, and 5, as well as Section I ("Loyalty and Trust") of the [Philosophical Themes](#).

**Objectives:**
> 1.  **SWBAT** refer explicitly to the text **IOT** ask and answer comprehension questions about a literary text.
> 2.   **SWBAT** identify parts of stories, dramas, and poems using terms such as chapter, scene, and stanza **IOT** describe how each successive part builds on earlier sections.
> 3.  **SWBAT** engage in active listening and present themselves verbally in large and small group situations with both peers and adults **IOT** to meet grade appropriate outcomes/expectations as identified in the standards.

**Standards:** PA Standards -
**CC.1.3.3.B -** Ask and answer questions about the text and make inferences from text, referring to text to support responses.
**CC.1.3.3.E -**  Refer to parts of texts when writing or speaking about a text using such terms as chapter, scene and stanza and describe how each successive part builds upon earlier sections.
**CC.1.5.3.A** - Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions on grade-level topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

**Assessment Evidence:**
Students will complete an "exit ticket".  Why is stereotyping dangerous?  Explain your thinking.

**Learning Plan:**
- Discuss the meaning of stereotyping and examples of common stereotyping using SmartBoard or chart paper.  Read the first 4 chapters of *The Year of Miss Agnes*.
- Discuss learning vs. education by creating a t-chart on chart paper or SmartBoard.

Read chapters 5-8 of *The Year of Miss Agnes*.

- Discuss trust and loyalty in regard to family, community and teachers. Read chapters 9-12 of *The Year of Miss Agnes*.
- Discuss knowledge and experience. Which is more valuable? Read chapters 13-17 of *The Year of Miss Agnes*.

**Critical Thinking/Discussion Questions:**
- What are some common stereotypes? In which ways can this effect learning? (Hint: Think about Bokko and the deaf community.)
- Does all learning come from the classroom? Is it any less important? (Hint: Think about Ma and the villagers.)
- How do trust and loyalty play into a student's ability to learn? (Are you more likely to listen to a teacher that you believe you can trust?)
- How does experience affect you? Are you most likely to remember something that you are told or something that you experience on your own?

**Resources:**
- ReadyGen copies of *The Year of Miss Agnes*
- Chart paper
- Exit Slip
- Duration (15 x 20 minutes)

**Differentiation/Modifications:**
Work can be done in groups.

# Kim Gallagher
# Lesson Title:   Song of Sky and Sand

**Rationale:** This story is about the villagers of Simbi who are running out of water. Ramata sets off into the desert with her grandmother and cousin to find a new source of water. This lesson plan was created to teach heroes and heroic actions.  In order to create critical thinkers, third graders will be challenged to think more deeply about the actions and the mindset of a true hero, and how heroic actions compare to those we are obligated to perform in everyday life.  This lesson should take a total of 120 minutes or 6 (20 minute) sessions.

For further information on these topics, please see Section H ("Morality and the Circles of Concern"), especially parts 1 and 3 of the Philosophical Themes.

**Objectives:**
1.  **SWBAT** refer explicitly to the text **IOT** ask and answer comprehension questions about a literary text.
2.   **SWBAT** identify three key details in the text **IOT** determine the main idea.
3. **SWBAT** identify parts of stories, dramas, and poems using terms such as chapter, scene, and stanza **IOT** describe how each successive part builds on earlier sections.
4.  **SWBAT** engage in active listening and present themselves verbally in large and small group situations with both peers and adults **IOT** to meet grade appropriate outcomes/expectations as identified in the standards.

**Standards:** PA Standards -
**CC.1.3.3.B -** Ask and answer questions about the text and make inferences from text, referring to text to support responses.
**CC.1.2.3.A -** Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.
**CC.1.3.3.E -**  Refer to parts of texts when writing or speaking about a text using such terms as chapter, scene and stanza and describe how each successive part builds upon earlier sections.
**CC.1.5.3.A** - Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions on grade-level topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

**Assessment Evidence:**
Students will complete a main idea (3-column) graphic organizer, outlining the main idea and three key details.

**Learning Plan:**
- Discuss heroes.  Read the first two chapters of *Song of Sky and Sand*.  List one key detail on a 3-column main idea graphic organizer.

- Define and discuss typical vs. atypical actions of heroes.  Read chapters 3 and 4 of *Song of Sky and Sand*.  List another key detail.
- Discuss the possible mindset of a hero.  Read chapter 5 of *Song of Sky and Sand*.  List a third key detail.
- Discuss Ramata's actions and mindset.  Read chapter 6 of *Song of Sky and Sand*.  Students will work together in groups to identify the main idea.

**Critical Thinking/Discussion Questions:**
- Who is one of your heroes?  What does a hero look like?  What does a hero do?  What makes someone a hero and how are their actions different than those of others?
- Do all heroes save people or can a hero save something else?  (Be ready to pose possibilities, tangible and intangible, such as animals, buildings, parks, earth, your happiness)
- "Courage is resistance to fear, not absence of fear." is a quote by Mark Twain.  What does this mean?  Can heroes be afraid?
- Is Ramata a hero?  Why or why not?  To whom is she a hero?

**Resources:**
- ReadyGen copies of *Song of Sky and Sand*
- Chart paper
- 3-column main idea graphic organizer (class set)
- Duration (6 x 20 minutes)

**Differentiation/Modifications:**
Work can be done in groups.

# Geralyn McGinty
# Lesson Title:  Deep Down and Other Extreme Places to Live

**Rationale:** This book, *Deep Down and Other Extreme Places to Live*, looks at extreme places to live and ties into the second quarter Science Curriculum. This story covers the philosophy of evidence and how we know, knowledge from lived experience, and the relationship of human beings to nature.

For further information on these topics, please see Section A ("Facts, Opinions and Knowledge"), especially parts 5 and 6, Section C ("Knowledge in Light of Experience and Social Position"), especially part 1, and Section F ("Human Beings and their Relation to Nature") of the [Philosophical Themes](#).

**Objectives: SWBAT** recount key details and explain how they support the main idea **IOT** determine the main idea.

**Standards:**
CC.1.2.3.A - Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.
CC.1.2.3.B - Ask and answer questions about the text and make inferences from text; refer to text to support response.

**Assessment Evidence:** Students will create a travel brochure on one of the places within the story. Student can use a piece of construction paper to make a brochure. They can simply fold the paper in half or make a tri-fold. They can use pictures from the computer or draw pictures of one of the sites.

**Learning Plan:**
Introduce vocabulary for the story - students will be using context clues to determine word meaning.

*Students and teacher will read pages 4-11 together.*
Questioning Stems:
> What are extreme places?
> How would you feel if your neighbors were 3-5 hours away from
> you? How would this affect the way you live?
> What would it be like to have to walk or ride a horse/mule
> everywhere you want to go?
> Would you like to live at the bottom of the canyon?

*Students and teacher will read pages 12-17 together.*
Questioning Stems:
> Have you ever ridden or even seen a camel?
> Why do you think people would choose to live in one of the hottest spots on Earth?
> How would they live differently than you?
> Do you think you could live there? For 1 day?

*Students and teacher will read pages 18-25 together.*
Questioning Stems:
> Do you think Reindeer are real?
> How did the Sami people learn to train the reindeer?
> Could you live near the Arctic Circle? Would you like to stay in a
> Lavut? How would they live differently than you?
> Which of the three places would you prefer to live in?
> What would you consider to be an extreme place to live? What
> would be the most important thing for you to have living in this place?

**Resources:**
• *Deep Down and Other Extreme Places to Live*
• This lesson could be spread out for 3 days - 45 minutes each lesson
• Travel Brochure – construction paper, colored pencils, pens.

**Differentiation/Modifications:**
Students with plans or IEPs will be provided paragraphs with sentence starters and/or given assistance with writing the paragraph.

# Geralyn McGinty
# Lesson Title: Storm in the Night

**Rationale:** This story is about a grandfather and grandson who share stories during a storm that leaves them in the dark. This lesson plan was created to determine the central message of the text and help the students discover why people behave kindly towards one another. This story covers the philosophy of knowledge from lived experiences, stereotypes, circle of concerns and evidence and how we know.

For further information on these topics, please see Section H ("Morality and the Circles of Concern") of the [Philosophical Themes](#).

**Objectives:** SWBAT determine the central message, lesson, or moral, IOT explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.

**Standards:**
**CC.1.3.3.A** - Determine the central message, lesson, or moral in literary text; explain how it is conveyed in text.

**Assessment Evidence:**
Students will write a paragraph on their favorite part of the story and why it is their favorite part.

**Learning Plan:**
Introduce vocabulary for the story. Teacher will model using a character web to describe character traits, motivations and feelings, including empathy and compassion. We will read the text, while identifying how the Grandfather acts towards to his grandson. Students and teacher will work to understand and identify how the Grandfather's use of oral histories enable him to share experiences and the wisdom learned through the aging process with his grandson, help him develop the capacity of empathy.

*Pages 4-15 will be read with the students.*
Questions Stems:
  Why does Thomas think he will always be a boy?
  Do you think you hear better in the dark? Why? Does it work for the other senses
    too?
  How old do you think the grandfather is? Why does Thomas think he is older than
    the automobile and electricity?

*Pages 15-32 will be read with the students.*
Question Stems:
  How does the grandfather treat Thomas during the blackout? During his story?
  Do you think his Grandfather treats everyone the same? Or is he just being nice to

Thomas because they are related?
Why does the grandfather tell his stories?
Is it acceptable to show fear? Is there evidence in the text that says one way or
      another?
Are some fears more acceptable than others? Why?
Is it important to tell the truth? Are some truths better than others?
Did Thomas learn any lessons?
Do you think that Thomas showed any feelings toward his Grandfather? His cat?
What was the purpose of this story?

**Resources:**
• *Storm in the Night* (book)
• Around 45 minutes 2-3 days
• Character Web (on chart paper)

**Differentiation/Modifications:**
Students with plans or IEPS will be provided paragraphs with sentence starters and/or given assistance with writing the paragraph.

# Geralyn McGinty
# Lesson Title:  Weather

**Rationale:** This book explores weather and how it changes every day. This lesson plan ties into the science curriculum for the second quarter. This story covers the philosophy of evidence and how we know, and the relationship of human beings to nature.

For further information on these topics, please see Section A ("Facts, Opinions and Knowledge"), especially parts 5 and 6, and Section F ("Human Beings and their Relation to Nature"), especially parts 1 and 2 of the Philosophical Themes.

**Objectives:** SWBAT determine the main idea of a text **IOT** explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text

**Standards:**
**CC.1.2.3.A** - Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.
**CC.1.2.3.G** - Use information gained from text features to demons. **CC.1.2.3.C** - Explain how a series of events, concepts, or steps in a procedure is connected within a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.

**Assessment Evidence:** Students will be creating a KWL chart and will complete the L column with information that they have learned from the portion read.
Students will write a paragraph about things they can do to help the Earth stay clean or stay healthy.

**Learning Plan:** Introduce key vocabulary. Before reading the section, students will help create a KWL chart starting with the K, what they already know about weather. While reading, students will be encouraged to develop questions that they would like to have answered and noting them on the chart. We will be working to understand how the author is using facts (a lot) to explain weather to us and breaking the reading into 4 pages at a time to fully understand the weather.

*Read pages 4-9 with the students.*
Questioning stems:
      Can you use your senses to experience weather? How?
      Do you think the Sun really affects the earth's weather?
      What would happen if the Ice Age returned? How would it affect your life?
      What would happen if the Ice Caps melted and the coastal lands flooded? How
              would that affect your life?

*Read pages 10-15 with the students:*
Questioning Stems:

How do you think meteorologists found out about the jet stream?
Do you think it is possible to prove that temperatures drop on higher mountains? Why or why not?
How can observing or studying the clouds help you to track weather?

*Read pages 16-21 with the students.*
Questioning Stems:
Do you think all the water on the planet is drinkable? Why or why not?
What are some things we can do to help water stay clean?
Are we responsible for keeping water drinkable?

*Read pages 22-27 with the students.*
Questioning Stems:
Have you ever experienced a hailstorm? Sleet? Frost? Dew?
Where does hail, sleet, frost, or dew come from? How do you know?

*Read pages 28-32 with the students.*
Questioning Stems:
Do you believe that meteorologists can really predict the weather?
Should we be working to control the weather? Why or why not?

**Resources:**
• *Weather*
• Around 45 minutes
• Chart Paper

**Differentiation/Modifications:**
Students with plans or IEPS will be provided with an individual KWL chart and assistance provided.

# Terry Anne Wildman
# Lesson Plan - Breaking Down Artificial Boundaries.

**Rationale**:  Students will be challenged in the future to solve global environmental problems.  Practicing critical thinking skills may help students to understand their connection between themselves and nature.  With the ongoing loss of natural environments, especially in urban America, it is important for students to understand the relationship they have with the natural world.  This lesson is designed to ask students in elementary grades, specifically 3rd, 4th and 4th graders, what they see as their relationship and responsibility around in the community, their country, and the world.

For further information on these topics, please see Section F ("Human Beings and their Relation to Nature"), especially parts 1 and 2 of the [Philosophical Themes](#).

**Objectives**: SWBAT analyze a non-fiction or informational text IOT respond to critical thinking questions on the relationship between self and nature.

**Standards:**
1) CC1.2.3.L. Read and comprehend literary nonfiction and informational text on grade level, reading independently and proficiently.
2) CC1.2.4.J.  Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being and that are basic to a particular topic.
3) CC1.2.5.J. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal contrast, addition, and other logical relationships.

**Assessment:**  Exit Slip for each grade.  See procedures.

**Procedures:**
• After reading *About Earth* (3rd grade), *Weather* (3rd grade), *A Tsunami Unfolds* (4th grade), and *Rain Forest Food Chains* (5th Grade)*,* and or other appropriate non-fiction books on the environment, ask students one or two of the following questions from page 210 of *Teaching Thinking*:

  • Should we consider what is best for ourselves, best for others, or best for all (does that include future born children?)
  • Should we consider what is best for humans or should we consider animals, plants, rivers and other aspects of the physical world?
  • Who should we care for - our family, our friends, our local community, our country, or our world?  How should we show this care?
  • What is the environment, and what is the place of human beings in the environment?

- What should our duty be to other species?  Can we ever know what an animal feels or wants?
- What is 'development,' and what are the problems of modern development?
- What is good or beautiful about nature?  Why and how should we preserve it?
- What could we do to improve our local environment, and what should we do?
- Should people in rich countries help people in poor countries?  Why and how?
- What kind of world do you want to live in, and how could you help create it?

- <u>For 3rd graders</u>, divide into groups of 2-3 after reading *About Earth*, ask students to answer the last question: What kind of world do you want to live in, and how could you help create it? Share out answers.  Ask students in their groups to brainstorm: what they could do in their school community to bring the kind of world they want to live in.  Create a chart listing ideas.  Circle one thing the class could commit to doing in their classroom or school. Exit Slip - Write about one thing you could to make the idea they circle a reality.

- <u>For 4th graders</u>, after reading *A Tsunami Unfolds*, ask students to think: Should people in rich countries help people in poor or devastated countries?  Why and how?  A vote can be taken on if "rich countries should help out" by a show of hands to quickly get to the why and how.  Divide students into small groups and ask them to discuss: Who should we care for-our family, our friends, our local community, our country, or our world? In the case like the tsunami that struck Japan, how should we show this care?  Share out ideas.  Create a chart with 5 columns, label them Family, Friends, Community, Country, World.  Record ideas on the chart. Exit Slip: Ask students to write about who they think they should care for and why.

- <u>For 5th graders</u>, after reading *Rain Forests Food Chains*, ask students: What is 'development' and what are the problems of modern development?  Create a T-Chart - advantages and disadvantages of modern development.
  - Using Robert Fisher's strategies for dialogue (pg. 146), ask: What should our duty be to other species? Can we ever know what an animal feels or wants? Give students a few minutes to think and journal.  Then ask students to think-pair-share with a partner.  Open up for class discussion. Ask follow-up questions without giving your opinion. Questions such as: Why? Do you agree or disagree? Can you say more? Can you give an example?  Again you withhold judgement with positive comments such as 'Thank you,' 'OK,' 'That's interesting.' "I see."  Encourage responses from the whole group - by surveying the class (Hand/thumbs up or down). To promote active listening, ask for a summary of what has been shared.  Give students a responsibility to nominate the next speaker during the discussion.  Challenge students to give reasons for their views by presenting opposing views. Remember to invite students to consider alternative viewpoints.  As an Exit Ticket, invite students to ask their own questions they now have after the discussion or to think about questions that still remain to be answered.

**Resources:**
- *Rain Forests Food Chains,*
- *A Tsunami Unfolds,*
- *Weather,*
- *About Earth*
- Chart paper
- Markers
- Graphic Organizers (T-Chart)

**Differentiation/Extension:**

For 3rd graders, take their ideas further by designing and carrying out a plan of action in the school or classroom.

For 4th graders, create "care" posters in which students can draw what caring for one of the groups would look like.

For 5th graders, ask students to think about a question they have from reading *Rain Forests Food Chains* or wrote about on their Exit Slip and complete a mini-research report on that topic.

# Kim Gallagher
# Lesson Title:   Living Through a Natural Disaster

**Rationale:** This story shares stories of natural disasters around the world. This lesson plan was created to teach knowledge through lived experience.  In order to create critical thinkers, third graders will be challenged to think more deeply about the knowledge that can be gained through lived experience and about our relationship with nature.  This lesson should take a total of 100 minutes or 5 (20 minute) sessions.

For further information on these topics, please see Section C ("Knowledge in Light of Experience and Social Position"), especially parts 1 and 2, and Section F ("Human Beings and their Relation to Nature") of the [Philosophical Themes.](#)

**Objectives:**
1.  **SWBAT** refer explicitly to the text **IOT** ask and answer comprehension questions about a literary text.
2.   **SWBAT** identify three key details in the text **IOT** determine the main idea.
3. **SWBAT** describe and identify historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, and technical procedures **IOT** describe the relationship between historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, and technical procedures in a text using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.
4.  **SWBAT** engage in active listening and present themselves verbally in large and small group situations with both peers and adults **IOT** to meet grade appropriate outcomes/expectations as identified in the standards.

**Standards:** PA Standards -
**CC.1.3.3.B -** Ask and answer questions about the text and make inferences from text, referring to text to support responses.
**CC.1.2.3.A -** Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.
**CC.1.2.3.C** - Explain how a series of events, concepts, or steps in a procedure is connected within a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect
**CC.1.5.3.A** - Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions on grade-level topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

**Assessment Evidence:**
Students will complete a [cause and effect chart](#) outlining various natural disasters and that which caused them.

**Learning Plan:**
- Read Chapter 1 of *Living Through a Natural Disaster* pages 4-5.
- Define and discuss cyclones.  Read chapter 2 of *Living Through a Natural Disaster*.

Prepare a class cause and effect chart on chart paper outlining the story of cyclone Tracy.
- Define and discuss floods. Read chapter 3 of *Living Through a Natural Disaster.* Have students complete a cause and effect chart outlining the story of the Huang He Flood in small groups on chart paper.
- Define and discuss droughts. Read chapter 4 of *Living Through a Natural Disaster.* Have students complete an individual cause and effect chart outlining the story of El Nino.
- Read chapter 5 of *Living Through a Natural Disaster.* Discuss how students could/should prepare for a natural disaster.

**Critical Thinking/Discussion Questions:**
- How did Cyclone Tracy change Darwin, Australia? How do the people of Darwin respond? What did they learn and how is life different for Darwin now?
- What are some of the ways the people who live along the Huang He tried to prevent the flooding? What happened during the Great Flood? How did the people respond? How have things changed?
- How does El Nino change the normal weather patterns in Central America? Is this a good thing or a bad thing? What changes occur with El Nino?
- What is one way people that are trying to help others to cope with disaster? What is something that you can do?

**Resources:**
- ReadyGen copies of *Living Through a Natural Disaster*
- Chart paper
- cause and effect chart
- Duration (5 x 20 minutes)

**Differentiation/Modifications:**
Work can be done in groups.

# Geralyn McGinty
# Lesson Title:  Brave Girl

**Rationale:** This lesson was introduced through a unit on strong women models. The text tells the story of Clara Lemlich, a young immigrant girl who came to lead a labor movement for women workers. This lesson plan was created to discuss the philosophy of knowledge from lived experiences, and the circles of concern.

For further information on these topics see Sections C ("Knowledge in Light of Experience and Social Position") and H ("Morality and the Circles of Concern") of the Philosophical Themes.

**Objectives: SWBAT** identify what the text says explicitly **IOT** demonstrate understanding of a text.

**Standards:**
**CC.1.2.3.B** - Ask and answer questions about the text and make inferences from text; refer to text to support responses.
**CC.1.2.3.A** - Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea

**Assessment Evidence:** Students will write an exit paragraph about something that they feel they can change and how they work towards changing it. Create a plan of action.

**Learning Plan:** Before reading, introduce vocabulary. Students will be reminded to look at the events in the story from the point of view of Clara and historical events.

*Pages 4-11 will be read with the students.*
Question Stems:
> Should children be working? Or be forced to go to school?
> Why do you think the rooms were without windows? And there were so many rules?
> Why would their bosses think they were stealing?
> Can you imagine having bathroom conditions like the ones that Clara and the other
>> girls endured?

*Pages 12-18 will be read with the students.*
Questions Stems:
> Why would people think girls weren't tough enough? Is it true that girls aren't as
>> tough as boys? Why or why not?
> Why did the factory girls listen to Clara?
> Why did Clara hide her injuries from her parents? Should she have told them? What
>> do you think they would have done?

*Chapter 20-27 will be read with the students.*
Question Stems:

> Why are people surprised that Clara starts a general strike?
> Is Clara a Hero? Why or why not?
> What did the strike accomplish for the women?
> Should Clara have done anything else?
> Why did the author mention her height throughout the story?

*Chapter 28-29 will be read with the students.*
Questions Stems:

> Facts about the Garment Industry.
> Why do you think they hired so many young immigrant women?
> Could you imagine being 6 years old and working in a factory?
> Why are health and safety conditions important in a workplace?
> If you were Clara, would you have stepped up to make changes for all of the women
>     that worked there or would you have stayed quiet?

**Resources:**
• *Brave Girl*
• 45 minutes 4x
• Plan of Action

**Differentiation/Modifications:** Students with IEP plans and modified plans will be provided sentence starters and additional assistance to complete the writing assignment.

# Kim Gallagher
# Lesson Title:   Below Deck: A Titanic Story

**Rationale:** This story is about a young girl traveling third class on the Titanic and is accused of stealing from the first-class dining car. This lesson plan was created to teach discrimination and its effects on society.  In order to create critical thinkers, third graders will be challenged to think more deeply about those who suffer discrimination and its effects. This lesson should take a total of 120 minutes or 6 (20 minute) sessions.

For further information on these topics, please see Section C ("Knowledge in Light of Experience and Social Position"), especially part 4, and Section E ("Human 'Kinds'"), especially parts 1, 2 and 3 of the Philosophical Themes.

**Objectives:**
1.  **SWBAT** refer explicitly to the text **IOT** ask and answer comprehension questions about a literary text.
2.   **SWBAT** identify three key details in the text **IOT** determine the main idea.
3. **SWBAT** identify parts of stories, dramas, and poems using terms such as chapter, scene, and stanza **IOT** describe how each successive part builds on earlier sections.
4.  **SWBAT** engage in active listening and present themselves verbally in large and small group situations with both peers and adults **IOT** to meet grade appropriate outcomes/expectations as identified in the standards.

**Standards:** PA Standards - **CC.1.3.3.B -** Ask and answer questions about the text and make inferences from text, referring to text to support responses.  **CC.1.2.3.A -** Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea. **CC.1.3.3.E -**  Refer to parts of texts when writing or speaking about a text using such terms as chapter, scene and stanza and describe how each successive part builds upon earlier sections.  **CC.1.5.3.A** - Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions on grade-level topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

**Assessment Evidence:**
Students will complete an argumentative writing on the topic of "Discrimination." Is there ever a good time for discrimination?  When and why or why not?

**Learning Plan:**
- Define and discuss discrimination.  What forms of discrimination exist? (Age, gender, class, ethnicity, race) Read Chapter 1 of *Below Deck:  A Titanic Story*.
- Discuss class/age discrimination as seen in the story.  Read Chapter 2 of *Below Deck: A Titanic Story*.
- Discuss race/ethnicity discrimination.  Read Chapter 3 of *Below Deck:  A Titanic Story*.
- Discuss gender discrimination.  Read Chapter 4 of *Below Deck:  A Titanic Story*.

- Discuss why someone might think discrimination is a good thing. (ie. All of the children got a seat on the life boat first.) Read Chapter 5 of *Below Deck: A Titanic Story.*

**Critical Thinking/Discussion Questions:**
- Day 2: What is discrimination? Does it only hurt the one who is being discriminated against? Why or why not?
- Day 3: Who is being discriminated against in our story? How is she being discriminated against?
- Day 4: Is the discrimination a problem? In what way? Do you think Grace feels discriminated against or is this "normal" for her? Does that make it right?
- Day 5: Did everyone change their mind about people from the lower class or just Grace? Do you think people can change if they are being discriminated against? Do you think they should change?

**Resources:**
- ReadyGen copies of *Below Deck: A Titanic Story*
- Chart paper
- Duration (5 x 20 minutes)

**Differentiation/Modifications:**
Work can be done in groups.

# Terry Anne Wildman
# Lesson Title:  Critical Thinking

**Rationale:** In order to create critical thinkers, third graders can use their ReadyGen books to make claims, to justify those claims with supporting evidence, and to come to a conclusion.  Using *Below Deck: A Titanic Story*, student will practice critical thinking skills to build a foundation for making inferences, analyzing texts and reasoning.  This lesson will take approximately 40 minutes.

For further information on these topics, please see Section B ("Supporting Claims with Evidence"), especially part 1 of the [Philosophical Themes](#).

**Objectives:**  SWBAT use details and evidence from the text to prove or contradict a statement about a passage IOT support claims made in a text.

**Standards:**  CC.R.CCR.1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence the writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

**Assessment Evidence:**
Exit Slip:  Ask students to write a claim about their school.  (for instance, our school has great teachers because we learn a lot every day and they care about our education.  (You could use this the next day - distribute exit slips - do not give students their own slip and have students write on the slip whether they think this is a good or a bad claim and why on the back).

**Learning Plan:**

• Introduce students to the term "claim" - to declare, insist, allege, etc. When a person makes a claim, they should back it up with evidence and reasons for making the claim. Explain that there are true and false claims. Give an example of a true and false claim.

• Tell students that in the early 1900s, a gigantic ship called the Titanic, the biggest built ship in the world at that time, sailed for the first time in 1912.  It was called "practically unsinkable" by the writers of the *Shipbuilder* magazine.  They made this claim because of its unique design.  It was built with a double bottom and 15 watertight bulkhead compartments (upright partitions separating compartments) equipped with electric watertight doors that could be operated individually or together by a switch on the bridge.

• Present the claim on the board: CLAIM: The Titanic is unsinkable so it is safe for people to travel across the ocean. EVIDENCE: 1) it was built with a double bottom and 2) it had 15 watertight bulkhead compartments with electric watertight doors. CONCLUSION: I will be safe traveling on the Titanic.

- Ask students: is this a good claim?  Discuss why or why not.  Have students decide as a class whether they agree or disagree with this claim.

- Read *Below Deck: A Titanic Story*.  Discuss the story - ask students: Was the claim that the Titanic was unsinkable a good claim?  Why or why not?  They should say that because the Titanic did sink, this was not a good or sound claim.

- On chart paper or white board, write What makes a good claim?  Divide students into small groups of 2 or 3. Have students discuss what makes a good claim - and what makes a bad claim?  Share out and record on chart paper.

- If possible, keep this posted as you practice critical thinking skills.

**Resources:**

- *Below Deck: A Titanic Story*

- Chart paper or Smart board

- If available, show illustration of Titanic on the History website.

**Differentiation/Modifications:**

This lesson could be completed after reading Below Deck: A Titanic Story.  Students may then be surprised to learn that the Titanic was billed as an unsinkable ship. If students have experience making claims, then students could be asked to pretend they were writing about this new ship.  After viewing the short video on its construction, what claims would they make about the ship?

# Kim Gallagher
# Lesson Title:   What is a Government?

**Rationale:** This book helps students to understand that the government was created to help people to live and work together in harmony. This lesson plan was created to teach fact and opinion.  In order to create critical thinkers, third graders will be challenged to think more deeply about what makes a fact, a fact and, what makes an opinion, an opinion, and also about how claims about facts are supported.  This lesson should take a total of 100 minutes or 5 (20 minute) sessions.

For further information on these topics, please see Section A ("Facts, Opinions and Knowledge"), especially part 1, and Section B ("Supporting Claims with Evidence"), part 1, of the Philosophical Themes.

**Objectives:**
1.  **SWBAT** refer explicitly to the text **IOT** ask and answer comprehension questions about a literary text.
2.   **SWBAT** identify claim, fact and opinion **IOT** demonstrate comprehension of a non-fiction text.
3.  **SWBAT** engage in active listening and present themselves verbally in large and small group situations with both peers and adults **IOT** to meet grade appropriate outcomes/expectations as identified in the standards.

**Standards:** PA Standards - **CC.1.2.3.B -** Ask and answer questions about the text and make inferences from text, referring to text to support responses.  **CC.1.2.3.L -** Read and comprehend literary nonfiction and informational text on grade level, reading independently and proficiently.
**CC.1.5.3.A** - Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions on grade-level topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

**Assessment Evidence:**
Students will classify a list of claims, facts and opinions about government and be ready to give verbal reasoning for their decisions.

**Learning Plan:**
- Day 1:  Teacher will define a claim.  Teacher will have a random web of claims regarding government services.  Students discuss those they believe are true and those they believe are false and why.  Read Chapter 1, "What Do Governments Do?" of *What Is a Government?*
- Day 2:  After reading Chapter 2 "Early Governments" of *What Is a Government?*, students will discuss some facts that led to the demise of these early governments.
- Day 3:  Discuss opinions.  What is an opinion?  Read Chapter 3, "Types of

Government Today" of *What Is a Government?* Is one form of government better than another? Is that an opinion or a fact? How do you know?
- Day 4: Discuss how some claims become facts. How much evidence is necessary? Who should we believe? Can we believe our government? Read Chapter 4, "How Governments Are Chosen?" of *What Is a Government?*
- Day 5: Read Chapter 5, "What's Your Role?" of *What Is a Government?*. Have students complete the classification paper described above.

**Resources:**
- ReadyGen copies of *What Is a Government?*
- Duration (5 x 20 minutes)
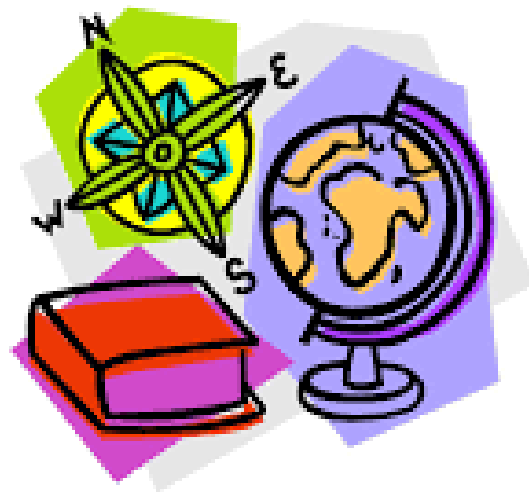
**Differentiation/Modifications:**
Work can be done in groups.

# Fourth Grade Lessons

# Lisa (Yuk Kuen) Yau
# The Taste of Knowledge: Is it Sweet or Bitter?

**Rationale:** Philosophers loves a good definition, especially when it involves the terms knowledge and belief.  In the book *Thank You, Mr. Falker* by Patricia Polacco, on page 1 and page 17, knowledge is described as "sweet" like honey and then it is compared to "the bee who made the honey, it has to be chased through the pages of a book!" Today's elementary school students, especially the ones who are deemed unsuccessful, often feel like the quest for knowledge is not sweet, but rather bitter and hard to enjoy. Sometimes learning is not about opening up minds, but a torturous beating of young people's soul to conform to a pre-conceived mold of what successful students should know.

On the flip side of the coin, are the successful students being burned out with too much knowledge, infested with the Rabbit Hole Effect too often and too much? On the path of learning, there will be a critical juncture when gaining knowledge is not going to be sweet, fun and pleasurable. In the urban fantasy novel *City of Bones*, the author Cassandra Clare wrote: "All knowledge hurts." Knowledge can be deliberating and hurtful when the truth can be a bitter pill to swallow. For instance, the history of the Holocaust and the scientific evidences of climate change can leave students feeling powerless and even hateful of the injustice of our human world.

Therefore, gaining a new set of knowledge can easily frustrate the "good" as well as the "bad" students.  In the Information Age where TMI is often an overwhelming reality. Knowledge becomes a process of industrialization and indoctrination of the minds and it can easily make students feel insignificant, inferior, not good enough, and sometimes even dumb and worthless because every "truth" will become meaningless due to the "fact" that every thought (good or bad, right or wrong) can be researched and supported by a "justified true belief" (Plato) of a self-made reality as much as it can be erased and deleted with a push of a button.

For further information on these topics, please see Section A ("Facts, Opinions and Knowledge"), especially parts 5 and 6, and Section C ("Knowledge in Light of Experience and Social Position"), especially parts 1 and 2, of the [Philosophical Themes](Philosophical Themes).

**Supporting Text:**
Page 1: "What is that taste?" the grandma asked. The little girl answered, "Sweet!" Then all of the family said in a single voice, "Yes, and so is knowledge, but knowledge is like the bee that who made that sweet honey, you have to chase it through the pages of a book!"
Page 17: She spooned honey on the cover and tasted the sweetness, and said to herself, "The honey is sweet, and so is knowledge, but knowledge is like the bee who made the honey, it has to be chased through the pages of a book!"

**Background about Knowledge for Teachers**: Briefly point out the possible differences among the various concepts of: knowledge and belief, claims/assertions and their justification.

**Objective:** SWBAT work together to write, discuss and formulate their reasons, beliefs and answers to the question: "What is the taste of knowledge?" IOT [insert any or all of the following 4th grade Common Core Standards].

**4th Grade Common Core Standards Addressed:**
**Key Ideas and Details**: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.2 Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text. **Craft and Structure:** CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in mythology (e.g., Herculean).
**Text Types and Purposes:** CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.1.D Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented. **Comprehension and Collaboration:** CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 4 topics and texts*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. **Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas:** CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.4 Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.

**Knowledge Lesson Steps:**
After first reading of *Thank You, Mr. Falker* or a book of your choice with their class, use this lesson to perform a second or third close reading.

**Optional: Warm Up (Do Now) Activities (10 min.)**
Have students complete the following Quick-Think either by writing independently or use the Think-Pair-Share instructional strategy with a partner before sharing with the whole class.
- Think a sweet thought
- Think a salty thought
- Think a sour thought
- Think a bitter thought
- Think a tasteless thought
- Think a tasteful thought

**Whole Group Instruction (15 minutes):**
- Have students Think-Pair-Share the question: What is taste?
- On a chart paper or the white board, solicit students for adjectives (such as sweet, sour, etc.) to describe the different kinds of taste. Brainstorm foods that associated

with each adjective. Ex: "sour" is associated with lemon, vinegar, sauerkraut. Optional: Record and post student answers on a T-Chart.

- Have students Think-Pair-Share the question: What is the taste of knowledge?
- Revisit the textual evidence about knowledge from *Thank You, Mr. Falker* on page 1 and/or page 17.
- Optional: Choose a few quotes to discuss literally and figuratively meanings of "taste" and "knowledge."

**Guided Practice (30 minutes):**
- Distribute the Student Handout titled *The Taste of Knowledge* and explain to students that scientists organize taste into 7 categories. The five most recognized taste are sweet, salty, bitter, sour, and umani. The taste of astringent and pungent (ex: chili) are still in debate. Umami is a Japanese word meaning 'pleasant savory taste'; it is the taste of glutamic acid/glutamate.
- Review the example based on *Thank You, Mr. Falker* and complete the last column titled "Agree or Disagree?"
- Assign students in pairs or in groups with one or two of taste to complete. Teacher will circulate, observe and assist students.
- Set up a Google Docs for students to type and share their findings and creative ideas.

**Discussion (10 minutes)**
- Project the shared Google Docs for a whole group discussion. After each share, ask the class if they agree or disagree by showing a "Thumb Up" or a "Thumb Down."
- Have each group explain their reasoning, before open the floor for agreement or disagreement. Teacher will ask prompting questions such as: Can you elaborate? Can you give me a real-life experience? Where are the textual evidences to support your ideas?

**Exit Ticket (5 minutes)**
- Post and read aloud the (below) quote from the book *Thank You, Mr. Falker*: "The little girl answered, 'Sweet!' Then all of the family said in a single voice, 'Yes, and so is knowledge, but knowledge is like the bee that made that sweet honey, you have to chase it through the pages of a book!'"
- Have student complete the following sentence stems independently as their exit tickets: I answered, "_____! (a taste)" Then the whole class said in a single voice, 'Yes, and so is knowledge, but knowledge is like the _____ (a food) that made that _____ (taste and food), you have to _____ through _____!'"

**Assessment Evidence:**
- Teachers will observe students during guided practice and group discussion. Use a discussion rubric to evaluate performances based on listening skills, speaking skills, depth of thinking and collaboration.
- Exit ticket should be rated on a scale of acceptable or unacceptable. If it is unacceptable, provide students will additional support until it is completed.

**Other Resources:**
Chart Paper, White Board, Smart Board or Overhead Projector
Graphic Organizer such as T-Chart (8 x 11 inches) for taste and associated foods
Student Handout "The Taste of Knowledge"
Book: Thank You, Mr. Falker
Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=abN2aP_Dzd0&vl=am (Reading by Jane Kaczmarek) Chromebooks or internet access,
A list of quotes about knowledge (see list below)

**Differentiation/Modifications:**
This lesson is designed for 60 to 90 minutes, but can be stretched into two separate days to allow students time to percolate their ideas and develop deeper understanding through partner and group discussion. For instance, teacher may want to activate prior knowledge by providing is a list of famous quotes with different definitions of knowledge.

Teacher may want to provide this list or a similar list of quotes about knowledge for students. This may help students jumpstart the discussion and challenge them to think of new ideas

**Quotes of Opposing Views about Knowledge (from Good Read, Brainy Quote, etc.):**
Socrates: "The only true wisdom is in knowing you know nothing."
Aristotle: "The roots of education are bitter, but the fruit is sweet."
Confucius: "Real knowledge is to know the extent of one's ignorance."
Benjamin Franklin: "We are all born ignorant, but one must work hard to remain stupid."
Frederick Lewis Donaldson: "The Seven Social Sins are: Wealth without work. Pleasure without conscience. Knowledge without character. Commerce without morality. Science without humanity. Worship without sacrifice. Politics without principle."
Chanakya: "One who knowledge is confined to books whose wealth is in the possession of others, can use neither his knowledge nor his wealth when the need from them arises."
Piaget: "Education is not to increase the amount of knowledge but to create the possibilities for a child to invent and discover, to create men who are capable of doing new things."
Cassandra Clare: "All knowledge hurts."
Helen Keller: "Knowledge is love and light and vision."
Kant: "All our knowledge begins with the senses, proceeds then to the understanding, and ends with reason. There is nothing higher than reason."
William Inge: "The aim of education is the knowledge not of facts but of values."

Veronica Roth: "Knowledge is power. Power to do evil...or power to do good. Power itself is not evil. So knowledge itself is not evil."

Kofi Annan: "Knowledge is power. Information is liberating. Education is the premise of progress, in every society, in every family."

C.S. Lewis: "You can't know, you can only believe – or not."

Janet Fitch: "In life, knowledge of poisons is essential."

Umberto Eco (The Name of the Rose):"Because learning does not consist only of knowing what we must or we can do, but also of knowing what we could do and perhaps should not do."

Kierkegaard: "Truth is subjectivity… the task is precisely to be objective toward oneself and subjective toward all others." (How does it relate to the phrase "it is my truth" and knowledge?)

Lao Tzu: "As soon as you have a thought, laugh at it."

Ethan Yau (My 7 YO nephew): "Knowledge is the Mind and the Mind is Knowledge. 'This is a banana (thinking about a banana but not pointing at a banana), so a banana is knowledge and knowledge are bananas."

**Student Name:**_____ **Date:**_____

## Lesson 1: The Taste of Knowledge: Is it Sweet or Bitter?

| Knowledge is… | | | Like… | | How? Be Creative! | Agree or Disagree? |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Taste | Food | Compare to | How do we get knowledge? | Explain your reasoning (If you need more space to write, use the back of this page.) |
| Ex. | sweet | honey | bee | "you have to chase it [knowledge] through the pages of a book." | I agree. My reasoning is: "When I read a lot of books, I know more. Knowing more makes me happy and happiness is a sweet [positive] feeling." |
| 1 | sweet | | | | |
| 2 | salty | | | | |
| 3 | bitter | | | | |
| 4 | sour/ acidic | | | | |
| 5 | umami/ savory/ meaty | | | | |

**Student Name:**_____ **Date:**_____

### Exit Ticket
### for Lesson 1: The Taste of Knowledge: Is it Sweet or Bitter?

**Direction:** Read the quote below and complete the sentence stem with your own idea of what is the taste of knowledge.

The little girl answered, "Sweet!"
Then all of the family said in a single voice, 'Yes, and so is knowledge, but knowledge is like the bee
that made that sweet honey,
you have to chase it
through the pages of a book!'"

**Please complete the following sentence stems.**

**I answered, "_____!" (a taste of your choice)**
**Then the whole class said in a single voice, 'Yes, and so is knowledge, but**
**knowledge is like the _____ (a food of your choice) that made**
**that _____ (combination of your taste and food), you have to**
**_____**
**through_____!**

# Lisa (Yuk Kuen) Yau
# Are Adults Wiser Than Kids?

**Rationale:** Philosophers love a good argument, and kids are budding philosophers because their young minds are full of questions that need answers. Sometimes our school is structured to discourage children's needs to ask questions. In school, kids are trained and expected to listen to adults, follow rules and don't ask questions, especially those questions that "seemed" to have no answers. As a teacher, I want to teach students to argue with grace and rigor, without fear and distrust, and be flexible to listen to ideas that are different?

In this lesson, student will classify all the characters in the book *Thank You, Mr. Falker* or a book of your choice into two categories: young versus old.  Students will address the question: "Are adults wiser than kids?" In book *Thank You, Mr. Falker*, all of the adults are giving Trisha (the main character) very sound and encouraging advices. What if adults in our students' lives do the opposite?  How can a child determine a wise person from a hateful person? What if a mother calls her child "dumb" and "stupid" repeatedly out of frustration, but without malice intent?  What if there is no teacher like "Mr. Falker" in Trisha's life or any child's life? On the other hand, if a teacher keeps telling students that they are smart, will these students get smarter by just hearing those words of encouragement?  Essentially, does wisdom come with age?

For further information on these topics, please see Section C ("Knowledge in Light of Experience and Social Position"), especially parts 1 and 2 in the [Philosophical Themes](#).

**Supporting Text:**
Page 4: As they walked, Trisha said, "Gramma, do you think I'm…different?" "Of course," her grandma answered. "To be different is the miracle of life. You see all of those little fireflies? Everyone is different." "Do you think I'm smart?" Trisha didn't feel smart. Her grandma hugged her. "You are the smartest, quickest, dearest little thing ever." Right then the little girl felt safe in her grandma's arms. Reading didn't matter so much."

**Background about Wisdom and Age for Teachers:**
Write the following vocabulary words on index cards to guide students during the group discussion: 1) experience, 2) unbiased/good judgment, 3) knowledge, 4) intelligence, 5) decision-making, 6) common sense, 7) understanding, 8) insight, 9) compassion; 10) kindness or benevolence. Also, from the video interview by Vanessa Hill with her Nana about wisdom, the following complex concepts about wisdom were discussed: Practical Wisdom (improving our well-being), Philosophical Wisdom (questioning and metaphysical), Benevolent Wisdom (moral and compassion), Self-Knowledge, Self-Wise, Self-Relativism, Tolerance of Ambiguity

**Objective:** SWBAT work together to write, discuss and formulate their reasons, beliefs and answers to the question: "Are Adults Wiser Than Kids?" IOT [insert any or all of the following 4th grade Common Core Standards].

**4th Grade Common Core Standards Addressed:**
**Key Ideas and Details**: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.3 Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions). **Craft and Structure:** CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in mythology. **Text Types and Purposes:** CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.1.D Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented. **Comprehension and Collaboration:** CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 4 topics and texts*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. **Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas:** CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.4 Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.

## Wisdom and Age Lesson Steps
After an initial reading of *Thank You, Mr. Falker* or a book of your choice, use this lesson to perform a second or third close reading.

**Optional: Warm Up (Do Now) Activities (10 min.)** Have students completing any of the following Quick-Think either by writing independently or use the Think-Pair-Share instructional strategy.
- Think of a time when you give someone a good advice.
- Think of a time when you receive a good advice from someone.
- What is good advice? What is wisdom?
- How do you measure if an advice is good or bad?
- Can we get wiser by practicing how you think and learning from your past mistakes?
- How age do you have to be before you can be considered wise? 10 year old? 16? 21?

**Whole Group (30 minutes)**

- Work with students to list and group all characters into 2 categories: kids (younger) versus adults (older).

| T-Chart Example<br>based on "Thank You, Mr. Falker"<br>Younger v. Older Characters | |
|---|---|
| Kid (Younger Character) | Adult (Older Character) |
| **Trisha (from 5 to 10 year old)** Older brother, Kindergarten kids (Michigan), 1st Grade kids, Sue Ellyn, Tommy Bob, 3rd grade kids (California), 5th grade kids, Stevie Joe, Alice Marie, Davy, Michael Lee, Eric. | **Trisha as an adult**, grandpa, uncles, grandma, mother, Kindergarten teacher, 1st grade teacher, 3rd grade teacher, Mr. Falker (5th grade teacher), Miss Plessy. |

- Ask students to Think-Pair-Share which group (kid or adult) is wiser. Remind students to explain their reasoning.
- Read aloud a dialogue between a younger and an older character that show good judgment. **Example (page 4):** *As they walked, Trisha said, "Gramma, do you think I'm…different?" "Of course," her grandma answered. "To be different is the miracle of life. You see all of those little fireflies? Everyone is different." "Do you think I'm smart?" Trisha didn't feel smart. Her grandma hugged her. "You are the smartest, quickest, dearest little thing ever." Right then the little girl felt safe in her grandma's arms. Reading didn't matter so much.*
- Discuss the dialogue with the following prompting questions: How do you measure wisdom? What is wisdom?  Can we learn from your mistakes and become wiser? Can we practice to get wiser?

**Videos and Discussion (25 minutes)**

Show the following videos on the question Are adults wiser than kids? After each video, stop and briefly discuss the content.

- Video 1 from Vanessa Hill, a science educator and psychology specialist shows Hill and her Nana are having a conversation on the question "Are Older People Wiser?" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TBiIhV-gwVw

- Video 2 from Inside Science TV. Cognitive neuroscientists are claiming that decision-making can improve with age. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vWtK5D0WHeA

- Video 3 (How to Age Gracefully) is produced by CBC Radio. People aged 7 To 93 give advice to their younger selves. https://www.huffpost.com/entry/people-of-all-ages-share-endearing-advice-to-their-younger-selves_n_55d72e74e4b0f593f7f7029d

**Exit Ticket (5 minutes)**
- Ask students to write an adage (a general truth) to their younger or older selves. **Ex:** Dear 7 year old: No matter what anyone said. STAY WEIRD. Signed a 8 year old.

**Assessment Evidence:**
- Teachers will observe students during guided practice and group discussion. Use a discussion rubric to evaluate performances based on listening skills, speaking skills, depth of thinking and collaboration.
- Exit ticket should be rated on a scale of acceptable or unacceptable. If it is unacceptable, provide students will additional support until it is completed.

**Other Resources:**
Chart Paper, White Board, Smart Board or Overhead Projector
T-Chart (8 x 11) for younger and older characters
Book: *Thank You, Mr. Falker*
Chromebooks or internet access to view three videos about wisdom and age (see above)
Quotes about Knowledge (see list below)

**Differentiation/Modifications:**
This lesson is designed for 60 to 90 minutes, but can be stretched into two separate days to allow students time to percolate their ideas and develop deeper understanding through partner and group discussion. For instance, teacher may want to activate prior knowledge by providing is a list of famous quotes with different definitions of wisdom.

Teacher may want to provide this list or a similar list of quotes about knowledge for students. This may help students jumpstart the discussion and challenge them to think of new ideas

**Quotes about Wisdom and Age. (from Good Read, Brainy Quote, etc.):**
Aristotle: "Knowing yourself is the beginning of all wisdom."
Socrates: The only true wisdom is in knowing you know nothing.
John Lennon: "Count your age by friends, not years. Count your life by smiles, not tears."
Paul Baltes: "Wisdom is expertise in the fundamental pragmatics of life."
Oxford Dictionary: Good judgment and advice in difficult and uncertain matters of life.
Oscar Wilde: "I am not young enough to know everything." "With age comes wisdom, but sometimes age comes alone."
C.S. Lewis: "No book is really worth reading at the age of ten which is not equally – and often far more – worth reading at the age of fifty and beyond."
J.K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix: "Youth can not know how age thinks and feels. But old men are guilty if they forget what it was to be young."
Mencken: "The older I grow, the more I distrust the familiar doctrine that age brings wisdom."
Job 12:12, "Wisdom is with the aged, and understanding in length of days."

Ebner-Eschenbach: "In youth we learn; in age we understand."

Chinese proverb: "Old ginger is spicier."

Wisdom comes with experience.

Charlotte Bronte, *Jane Eyre*: "I do not think, sir, you have any right to command me, merely because you are older than I, or because you have seen more of the world than I have; your claim to superiority depends on the use you have made of your time and experience."

# Lisa (Yuk Kuen) Yau
# Self, Family, Friends and School: Who Can You Trust and Why?

**Rationale:** In the book *Thank You, Mr. Falker*, the main character Trisha struggled with reading which led her to doubt her self-worth from K to 5th grade. Even though Trisha didn't trust her own self and abilities, her family supported her. When Trisha was five, the family performed the tradition of pouring honey on a book to symbolize how knowledge is sweet and worth chasing. In the first part of this lesson, student will investigate with the question "**Who Can You Trust and Why?**" by using *Thank You, Mr. Falker* or a narrative story of teacher's choice. Students will master the procedures and rules of a Socratic seminar, The Blink Man and Silent Write.

For further information on these topics, please see Section I ("Loyalty and Trust"), part 2, of the [Philosophical Themes](#).

**Supporting Text**:
p. 1. The little girl had just turned five…The little girl knew that the **promise** to read was at last hers. Soon she was going to learn to read.
Page 10: Mr. Falker would stand behind Trisha whenever she was drawing, and whisper, "this is brilliant… absolutely brilliant. Do you know how talented you are?"
Page 10: Mr. Falker, in his plaid jacket and his butterfly tie, said, "Stop! Are all of you so perfect that you can look at another person and find fault with her?"

**Background About Trust for Teachers:** https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/trust/
According to the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (2006), Trust is important as much as it is dangerous. In addition, trust is an attitude while trustworthiness is a thing, a property. In order to trust, there are complex conditions to meet: 1) Vulnerability to others (fear of betrayal); 2) Respect others and 3) Belief of other's competence.

**Objective:** SWBAT work together to write, discuss and formulate their reasons, beliefs and answers to the question: "Who can you trust and why?" IOT [insert any or all of the following 4th grade Common Core Standards].

**4th Grade Common Core Standards Addressed:**
**Key Ideas and Details**: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.3 Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions). **Craft and Structure:** CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in mythology. **Text Types and Purposes:** CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.1.D Provide a

concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented. **Comprehension and Collaboration:** CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 4 topics and texts*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. **Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas:** CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.4 Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.

**"Trust" Lesson Steps: Circle Group: Socratic Seminar (60 minutes)**

- **(5 min) Establish procedures and rules** for the Socratic Seminar.
  Have students sit in a circle with a "Speaker Chair" in the middle of the circle. Teacher will sit or stand by the Speaker Chair to model how to start a good argument and behavior. **Rule #1:** One person speaks at a time sitting on or standing by the chair.
  **Examples of procedures and rules:**
  **Have respect:** "[Say the name of the person you are addressing], thank you for sharing your view, but I disagree because…"
  **Use eye contact:** "[Name], I can see that you are passionate about this because…"
  **Be brave, take risks and speak your mind:** "It is scary to admit… I feel alone on this issue and the reason is…"
  Ask descriptive question to deepen understanding: "[Name] makes me think of another idea," "[name], please explain why would the main character does/feel/act this way...?" or "What textual evidence makes you think that the author meant...?"
  Clarify: "Can you restate your claim and elaborate? "I think what [name] is trying to say is...." or "I'm not sure I understand what you are saying, [name]... What is...."
  Paraphrase and add: "[Name] said that.... I agree with [name\ and I also think...."
  Synthesize (several ideas together): "Based on the ideas from [name], it seems like we all think that the main character is...."

- **(15 min) The Blind Man Activity:** Ask for a volunteer and then have that volunteer selects or solicit a partner and so on. Divide the class into two separate teams: A and B. Each team agree on the following roles: 1) the Speaker; 2) the Blind Man, 3) the Mole. The rest of the team members are Silent Observers who must be silent, observe and take mental notes. Put two chairs back to back in the middle of the Socratic seminar circle for the Speakers to sit. Blindfold the two Blind Man and lead them out of the circle, or they can just put two hands to cover their eyes. Silent Observers and Moles can change seat one time. The Moles can help or can mis-direct either team. Set a time limit: 3 or 5 minutes for the Speaker to give clear directions to the Blind Man to find an empty seat to sit on. Spend about 5 minutes to discuss what happened, who broke the trust, who was the Mole and how did you know, did the Speaker give clear direction, did the Blind Man understand the direction, etc.

- **(15 min) Review procedures and rules for the Socratic seminar**. Distribute copies of the text (*Thank You, Mr. Falker* or a text of teacher choice). Encourage students to make statements based on text evidences. Focus the inquiry about trust with these questions:
  Did the main character trust **herself**? Why or why not?
  Did the main character trust her **friends**? Why or why not?
  Did the main character trust her **family**? Why or why not?
  Did the main character trust her **school**? Why or why not?

- **(15 min) Facilitate a "Silent Group Vote".** Pass out four large notecards as the voting ballots. Write one question with choices per notecard from the following questions about trust: Have students pass the notecard to their left until everyone get to vote.
  1) Who do you trust the most? Choices: Self, Friends, Family, School, Others
  2) What do you trust the most? Choices: the Sun, the clock, money, YouTube, TikTok.
  3) Why do you trust? Choices: Do the right thing, Want to be liked, Need to feel belong, Fear, Love, etc. Example of a notecard:
  **Direction:** Make a tick mark under the answer you choose. You can also write out your own answer under the voting boxes if you don't agree with these choices.

| Who do you trust the most? | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Myself | Friends | Family | School Adults |
| | | | |

**Exit Ticket (5 minutes)** Have students complete the following sentence stems.
- I can OR cannot trust myself because…
- I can OR cannot trust someone else with my money because…
- I can OR cannot trust someone else with your life because?

**Assessment Evidence:**
- Teachers will observe students during guided practice and group discussion. Use a discussion rubric to evaluate performances based on listening skills, speaking skills, depth of thinking and collaboration.
- Exit ticket should be rated on a scale of acceptable or unacceptable. If it is unacceptable, provide students will additional support until it is completed.

**Other Resources:**
Chart Paper, White Board, Smart Board or Overhead Projector
Book: *Thank You, Mr. Falker,* or text of teacher choice
Chromebooks or internet access,

Quotes about Trust (see list below)

**Differentiation/Modifications:**
This lesson is designed for 60 to 90 minutes, but can be stretched into two separate days to allow students time to percolate their ideas and develop deeper understanding through partner and group discussion. For instance, teacher may want to activate prior knowledge by providing is a list of famous quotes with different definitions of wisdom.  Teacher may want to provide this list or a similar list of quotes about knowledge for students. This may help students jumpstart the discussion and challenge them to think of new ideas

**Quotes about Trust (from Good Read, Brainy Quote, etc.):**
Ralph Waldo Emerson: "Self-trust is the essence of heroism."
**Maria V. Snyder: "Trusting is hard. Knowing who to trust, even harder."**
**Khaled Saad:** "If you give your trust to a person who does not deserve it, you actually give him the power to destroy you."
**Nietzsche**: "I'm not upset that you lied to me, I'm upset that from now on I can't believe you."
Trust is highly subjective and highly contentious.
Deception is the enemy of trust, not secrecy
Trust is a confident relationship with the Unknown.

# Lisa (Yuk Kuen) Yau
# Protagonist's Character Development: The Essence of Good People

**Rationale:** Why do I have to be good? **Critical Thinking Inquiries:** Can a good person do evil deeds? When a good person does bad things, does it turn that person into a bad person? Can a bad person do good deeds? When a bad person does good things, does it change that person's moral values? What should we do to be good people? What synonyms/antonyms do you associate with good people? What synonyms/antonyms do you associate with bad people?

For further information on these topics, please see Section D ("Human Nature") and Section G ("Evil") especially parts 1 and 2 of the Philosophical Themes.

**Supporting Text:** p. In that dark place she felt completely safe.
Page 6: Reading was just plain torture… She just knew she was dumb.
Page 8: Now Trisha wanted to go to school less and less. "I have a sore throat," she'd say to her mother. Or, "I have a stomachache." She dreamed more and more, and drew more and more, and she hated, hated, hated school.

**Background Knowledge:** The true sentence, "All oaks are trees" becomes false when reversed. So does, "All carrots are vegetables." Can we say that *every* true sentence beginning with 'all' becomes false when reversed?

**Objective:** SWBAT discuss and complete a chart defining characteristics of a good person verse an evil person and citing textual evidence in the text IOT [fill in the following standards].

**4th Grade Common Core Standards Addressed:**
**Key Ideas and Details**: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.2 Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text. **Craft and Structure:** CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in mythology (e.g., Herculean). **Text Types and Purposes:** CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.1.D Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented. **Comprehension and Collaboration:** CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 4 topics and texts*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. **Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas:** CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.4 Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an

organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.

**Lesson Steps:** Ask the class to think of words to describe a good person in real life, movies, or books and what makes such person "good".  Then ask the class think of an evil person and their characteristics. Divide the class into two groups and instruct Group 1 to record their responses on the chart paper labelled "good" and Group 2 to record on the chart paper "evil."
After 10 minutes, have students switch chart papers.  After another 10 minutes, introduce the concept of "atrocity paradigm/theory of evil/essence of evil", theory of the good, and the Buddhist beliefs that good and evil are one entity.

Ask students for examples of good people and bad people in one of the following texts:
- Good = fine, high quality, virtuous, high standard, high moral, superior, righteous, decent, valuable, helpful, lovely, agreeable, attractive, honest, friendly, kind, sinless,
- Bad = poor, fake, evil, inferior, second-rate, worthless, wicked, immoral, corrupt, destructive, ugly, vile, hateful, malevolent, malicious, vicious, villainous, wrong, atrocious, sinful, can of worms, confusion, Pandora's box, hornet's nest, snake in the grass, delinquent, mean, foul, hideous, heinous, spiteful,

Distribute the "Graphic Organizer for Good Essence v. Evil Essence" in digital (GoogleDocs), worksheet form or on chart paper. Model how to complete the section for "Look (physical)" characteristic of the protagonist (good person) and antagonist (evil person) by reading pages?? Have students discuss the general characteristics of the protagonist and antagonist. Ask can a person be both good and evil, can a person learn to be good or evil, etc. Have students complete the graphic organizer in group of two by assigning them different parts. Observe and scaffold students by circulating from group to group.

After completion, have students discuss their findings, add and make changes during shared readings of other texts.

**Exit Slip:** Ask students to write about a time when they had witnessed a good person doing a good deed and/or an evil person doing an evil deed.

**Assessment Evidence:** Write an informative/explanatory paragraph that explains how "good people" like Clara Barton, Helen Keller, or Anne Frank displayed a figurative great heart and how "evil people" dehumanized others with cruelties and indignities.

**Differentiation/Modifications:** Students can be in pairs, assign a sentence (rather than pages) to read and analyze with the option to use their chrome-books for research and/or translation.

**Other Resources:**
Chart Paper, White Board, Smart Board or Overhead Projector

Student Handout for The Essence of Good People [see below]
Book: *Thank You, Mr. Falker* or text of teacher choice
Chromebooks or internet access,
A list of quotes about Good and Evil (see list below)

**Quotes about Good and Bad People (from Good Read, Brainy Quote, etc.):**
Eleanor Roosevelt, This is My Story: "No one can make you feel inferior without your consent."
Jen Wang, Koko Be Good : "If you think you're good people, and if you are, how would you know? Is it something you always knew? Or was it something you found? Some people are naturally good at it […]. Is it worth trying to be something you're not? Just because it's right?"

S**tudent Name:** _____**Date:** _____

## Student Handout for The Essence of Good People:

| | Good Person Protagonist? | | Evil Person Antagonist? | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Human Essence | Empirical Evidences (Same no matter who observe it) | *Textual Evidences Page #* | Empirical Evidences (Same no matter who observe it) | *Textual Evidences Page #* | Theories from Philosophers |
| Look (physical) | | | | | John Lockes Nominal Essence |
| Think (thoughts) | | | | | John Lockes Real Essence |
| Act (behaviors) | | | | | |
| Feel (emotions) | | | | | |

# Lisa (Yuk Kuen) Yau
# Antagonist's Character Development: Do Two Wrongs Make a Right?

**Rationale:** In most literature, there is an antagonist that does bad things. "It looks like there are times when it is right to give back what we got and other times when it is wrong. But how do we tell which is which?" This passage is an invitation to explore the moral nuances of reciprocity, or "returning in kind." Harry and his friends discover several basic concepts and rules of Aristotelean logic; and they puzzle over questions about the nature of thought, mind, causality, reality, knowledge and belief, right and wrong, and fairness and unfairness.

For further information on these topics, please see Section D ("Human Nature") in the [Philosophical Themes](#).

**Supporting Text:**
Page 11: That was the last day anyone laughed out loud. Or made fun of her. All except Eric. He had sat behind Trisha for two whole years, but he seemed almost to hate her. Trisha didn't know why. He waited by the door of the classroom for her and pulled her hair. He waited for her on the playground, leaned in her face, and called her, "Toad!"
p. 3: Trisha began to feel "different." She began to feel dumb.
p. 4: "Of course," her grandma answered. "To be different is the miracle of life. You see all of those little fireflies? Everyone is different."
p. 15: "But, little one, don't you understand, you don't see letters or number the way other people do. And you've gotten through school all this time, and fooled many, many good teachers!" He smiled at her. "That took cunning, and smartness and such, such bravery."

**Background About Golden Rule for Teachers:**
.
**Objective:** SWBAT work together to write, discuss and formulate their reasons, beliefs and answers to the question: "Do Two Wrongs Make a Right?" IOT [insert any or all of the following 4th grade Common Core Standards].

**4th Grade Common Core Standards Addressed:**
**Key Ideas and Details**: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.3 Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions). **Craft and Structure:** CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in mythology. **Text Types and Purposes:** CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.1.D Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented. **Comprehension and Collaboration:** CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative

discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 4 topics and texts*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. **Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas:** CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.4 Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.

**"Right and Wrong" Lesson Steps:**
**Four Corners and Philosophy Chairs (Where do you draw the line?)**

**Warm Up Activities (15 min.)**
Have students completing the following Quick-Think either by writing independently or use the Think-Pair-Share instructional strategy.
- Are babies born good or bad? (Nature v. Nurture)
- Is there a difference between "get even" and "teach someone a lesson?"
- Should a person retaliate against a bully? If yes, how and why?
- Is there a difference between "hitting back" and "self-defense"?"
- Can a good person do bad things?
- Can a bad person do good things?

**Whole Group Instruction (15 minutes):**
- Ask students which question is most important to them as a whole. Give students 2 minutes of freedom to stumble and decide. Other option: Have students Think-Pair-Share before deciding which question to use.
- Draw a line in the middle of the room. Once the question is chosen, ask students where they stand by moving to that area of the classroom.
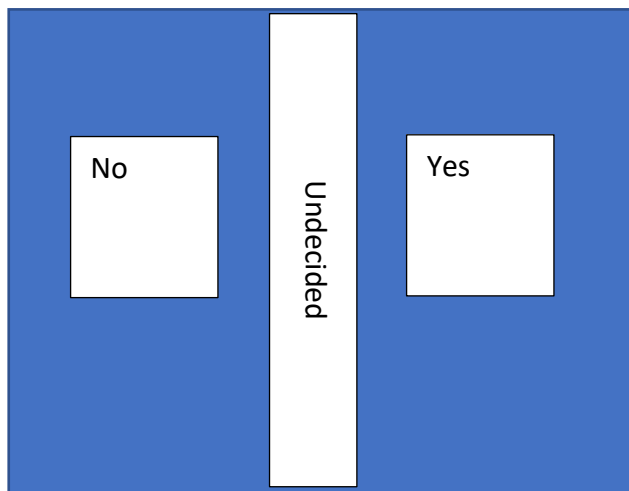


- Start the debate following the Four Corners or Philosophy Chair strategy
- Teacher will circulate, observe and assist students.
- Set up a Google Docs to share student findings and creative ideas.

**Exit Ticket (5 minutes)**

- Revisit the textual evidence from *Thank You, Mr. Falker* by having students answer this question. Students may use the book during this activity.
  If you have the power to do anything, what would you do to address a bully like Eric? Explain your reasoning.
  Potential answers: 1) Teach him a lesson; 2) Teach him how to be kind; 3) Call his parents, etc.

**Assessment Evidence:**
- Teachers will observe students during the debate. Use a debate rubric to evaluate performances based on listening skills, speaking skills, depth of thinking, eye contact, clarity, etc.
- Exit ticket should be rated on a scale of acceptable or unacceptable. If it is unacceptable, provide students will additional support until it is completed.

**Other Resources:**

Chart Paper, White Board, Smart Board or Overhead Projector
Book: *Thank You, Mr. Falker*
Chromebooks or internet access,
A list of quotes Moral Values (see list below)

**Differentiation/Modifications:**

This lesson is designed for 60 to 90 minutes, but can be stretched into two separate days to allow students time to percolate their ideas and develop deeper understanding through partner and group discussion. Teacher may want to provide this list or a similar list of quotes about what is right and what is wrong. This may help students jumpstart the discussion and challenge them to think of new ideas

**Quotes about Rights and Wrongs (from Good Read, Brainy Quote, etc.):**

Tolstoy, A Confession: "Wrong does not cease to be wrong because the majority share it."
Saint Augustine: "Right is right even if no one is doing it; wrong is wrong even if everyone is doing it."

E.A. Bucchianeri, <u>Brushstrokes of a Gadfly,</u>:"Errors do not cease to be errors simply because they're ratified into law."

C. JoyBell C., The Sun of Snowing: "Most things in the world aren't black, aren't white, aren't wrong, aren't right, but most of everything is just different."

Richelle E. Goodrich, <u>Making Wishes</u> "We try so hard to instruct our children in all the right things—teaching good from bad, explaining choices and consequences—when in reality most lessons are learned through observation and experience. Perhaps we'd be better off training our youth to be highly observant." "Your opponent's wrong doesn't automatically make you right. Most fights aren't about who's right; they are contention over degrees of wrongness."

J.R. Rim: "It's not about making the right choice. It's about making a choice and making it right." Ramana Pemmaraju: "Nothing is ever wrong if you learn out of it and nothing is right if it makes you arrogant. Watch On!"

John Stuart Mills: "To do as one would be done by, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, constitute the ideal perfection of utilitarian morality"

John Locke: "Good and evil, reward and punishment, are the only motives to a rational creature"

Seneca the Younger: "Virtue is nothing else than right reason"

# Eliezer Gottlieb
# Gender Roles

**Rationale:**
  We will look into the question "Are men and woman equal?".  In *Porpoises in Peril*, the female characters had lead roles and were the ones doing the more dangerous job. In *Mary Anning*, she was part of a lower class and was not given a chance to take a lead in anything. She had to persevere and overcome many obstacles in order to do her work and be recognized by other scientists. In this lesson we will examine roles of men and women in our world and then compare their roles in each book.
  For further information on these topics, please see Section E ("Human 'Kinds'"), especially parts 1 and 2 of the [Philosophical Themes](#).

**Objectives:** SWBAT compare and contrast gender roles of women in *Mary Anning* and *Porpoises in Peril.*

**Standards:** [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1](#)
Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 4 topics and texts*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1.A](#)
Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.

**Assessment Evidence:**
Students will write a concluding statement about how women were treated in each book.

**Accommodations:**
- Exit slip can include sentence starters.
- Partner students by reading level and ensure a strong reader is in the pair.
- Have students who need help with writing, work in small group with teacher.
- Allow students to share out if they have cannot write their answers.

**Learning Plan:**
- Present scenarios on equality and have them vote (jobs best for men or women). Have students support their vote by explain why they voted that way.
- What's the difference between men and women? And what do they have in common?
- Compare and contrast about how women and men were treated in each story.
- Think about the roles Kate and Reggie played. Why was she treated like that?
- Work as a whole class, or in groups, to cite evidence that supports the roles that they played in each story.

- Share out evidence.
- Have student complete sentence starters at the end of the worksheet as an exit ticket.

See worksheet below.

Name: _____                    Date: _____

Deep Dive into Theme
Warm up: Decide which job should be done by a man or woman.

| Job | M | W | Job | M | W | Job | M | W |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Doctor | | | President | | | Nurse | | |
| Principal | | | Police Officer | | | Cook | | |
| Soccer Player | | | Artist | | | Teacher | | |

How were women treated in each text? What jobs/roles did they have? How did the men in the story treat them? Refer to the text to support your answer. Cite page numbers.

| Porpoises in Peril | Mary Anning |
|---|---|
| | |

Compare and contrast how women were viewed in both books.

In the time of Mary Anning women _____

_____.

In the time of *Porpoises in Peril* women _____

_____.

# Eliezer Gottlieb
# Human 'Kinds'

**Rationale**

*Three Native Nations: Of the Woodlands, Plains, and Desert* is an information text about the Native Americans that lived in the United States. It provides information about their way of life and the ways it changed when European settlers arrived. Specifically, it recounts treaties that were made and broken as Native Americans were steadily moved off their lands. We will look into fairness and treatment of different groups of humans.

For further information on these topics, please see Sections C ("Knowledge in Light of Experience and Social Position") and E ("Human 'Kinds'") of the Philosophical Themes.

**Objectives** SWBAT discuss the spectrum of fairness and unfairness in relation to the Native Americans land loss to American settlers.

**Standards**
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1
Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 4 topics and texts*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1.A
Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.

**Assessment Evidence**
Opinion Essay.

**Accommodations:**
- Exit slip can include sentence starters.
- Partner students by reading level and ensure a strong reader is in the pair.
- Have students who need help with writing, work in small group with teacher.
- Allow students to share out if they have cannot write their answers.

**Learning Plan**
**Introduction**
- Have each student write about something that is unfair on a post-it.
- They will come to the board and place it on the anchor chart in between the words fair and unfair.
- As students come up to the chart, they can decide where their situation should be put in relation to the others.
- Guide discussions

**Present Instructional Content**
Student will work in groups and organize their situations on their own chart together and present to class.
- Present student with the situation at [Mr. Rushmore](#)
- Provide students with the following question and ask them to respond by writing an opinion essay.

**Closing/Reflection**
Prompt: Some people think that Mount Rushmore's land should be given back to the Lakota tribe and the monuments should be destroyed. Others believe the land is an important landmark of the United States and it rightfully belongs to the U.S. government. You're the judge. Write an opinion essay explaining what you think would be a fair solution to this conflict.

Resources:
*Three Native Nations: Of the Woodlands, Plains, and Desert*
Anchor Chart
Post-it Notes

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# Terry Anne Wildman
# Is it Important to be Fair?

**Rationale:** Unit 2 in the ReadyGen ELA curriculum for fourth graders focuses on nature and culture and how people interact with each other.  Using *Three Native Nations: Of the Woodlands, Plains, and Desert*, students will discuss and think about what fairness means for all people.  This lesson should take approximately 40 minutes.

For further information on these topics, please see Section H ("Morality and the Circles of Concern"), especially part 2, of the Philosophical Themes.

**Objectives:**  SWBAT explain what is directly stated in the text by citing specific details and examples from the text IOT determine the meaning of the text.

**Standards:** CC.RL.4.1. Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences in a text.

**Assessment Evidence:**

Exit Slip:  Ask students to right about a time when they felt they were treated unfairly and how it made them feel. What would fairness look like in that situation?

**Learning Plan:**

- Ask the class - what is fairness?  Record responses. Introduce the concept fairness-(to be impartial, lack of favoritism toward one side or another-equity, neutrality, open-minded).
- Ask students for examples of not being fair - ask students to agree or disagree to the examples - (was this a good example of not being fair?)
- Divide students in small groups and ask them to discuss - A. Is it important to be fair? Why or why not?  Report out and discuss responses. B. Is it always good to be fair? Report out and discuss responses.  C. Can you think of a time when it would NOT be good to be fair?  Report out and discuss responses.
- Read together "The Haudenosaunee" starting on page 4 of *Three Native Nations*. Reread and/or focus on pages 12 and 14.
- Have students discuss pages 12 and 14 in small groups of 2 or 3.  Have them decide what was fair and unfair (with reasons).
- Create a T-chart poster on the board or poster paper.  Label one column Fair and the other Unfair.
- Ask students to write on large post-it notes something in the text that was fair and something that was not fair and why they think that way.

- Have students go up to the T-Chart with their post-it notes and place one fair and one unfair event. Ask them to explain why. If time is an issue, ask each group to post one fair and one unfair event in the text.

- The T-Chart can stay posted and used during *Why the Sea is Salty* and *The Longest Night* to continue the discussion of what is fair and not fair.

**Resources:**

- *Three Native Nations: Of the Woodlands, Plains, and Desert*

- Poster paper

- Large Post-it Notes for each student.

**Differentiation/Modifications:**

Teachers can divide students in small groups and assign sections of the story for students to read and discuss what was fair and unfair about the information they read. Also, students of different reading levels can be placed in small groups to work together.

# Lisa (Yuk Kuen) Yau
# All Truths Are Not Equal

**Day 1 Introduction of Philosophy Arguments, Whole Group Instruction and Discussion**
**Day 2 Guided Practice and Independent Work**
> • with text *Thank You, Mr. Falker* (Literature, narrative text, fiction or nonfiction)
> • and text *The Tsumani Unfolds* by Susan Korman and Kimiko Kajikawa (Informational text, nonfiction)

**Rationale:** In *Thank You, Mr. Falker*, what Trisha knew or thought was true turned out to be true when she was young and false at a later time.

In the study of knowledge (epistemology), a traditional view (due to Plato) defined knowledge as "justified true belief" (JTB). Although contemporary philosophers have found exceptions to this definition, it is a useful starting point. While we may have many kinds of beliefs about what is the case, ranging from casual opinions all the way to well-considered judgments, only some of these are things we know. To qualify as knowledge, the thing we believe must actually be true, but more than this the belief must be justified or supported. Generally something we claim to be true must be appropriately supported by reasons and evidence. Philosophers organize this into a structure called an argument. Here, the reasons are listed (the "premises" of the argument) in support of the claim (the conclusion of the argument). Arguments can exemplify more than one method of support: for instance, they can use deductive or inductive reasoning.

For further information on these topics, please see Section A ("Facts, Opinions and Knowledge"), especially parts 5 and 6, and Section B ("Supporting Claims with Evidence") of the Philosophical Themes.

**Background Information about Philosophical Arguments for Teachers:**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z7f_uuy1JcM
With deductive and inductive reasoning, the claims (premise statements, either specific or general) should support the conclusion (the statement of the claim we are interested in).

**Objectives**: SWBAT choose sentences from the text and/or real-life situation, justify them as true or false fact, and conclude with inductive and deductive generalization IOT [insert one of the following 4th grade Common Core Standard].

**4th Grade Common Core Standards Addressed:**
**Key Ideas and Details:**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.1 and RI.4.1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. **Text Types and Purposes:** CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.1.D Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented. **Comprehension and Collaboration:** CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative

discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 4 topics and texts*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

**Truth Lesson Steps:**
**Prerequisite**: Make sure students understand what is a good argument v. a bad argument.
Optional Hook: Show students a short "hilarious" video clip of a bad argument.
Some suggestions: The script of "The Argument Clinic" from Monty Python can be founded at http://montypython.50webs.com/scripts/Series_3/27.htm .
A reenactment of "The Argument Clinic" by students at Warhill High School can be founded at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TQ8pT6L8BA4
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_JmA2ClUvUY (Talking Twin Babies, Part 2, a funny video of two babies seemingly arguing about something important.)

**Warm Up (Do Now) Activities (10 min.)**
- Have students completing the following Quick-Think either by writing independently or use the Think-Pair-Share instructional strategy.
  What is a true statement of fact? What is a false statement of fact?
  What is an opinion? What is a justified belief?

**Whole Group Discussion (40 min)**
- Discuss student answers. Possible answers: A fact is something that is known or proved to be true. An opinion might be subjective and may only apply to the person who believe in it. A justified belief is an opinion that can be supported by evidence and may then be plausibly true. Introduce the philosophical concepts and vocabulary words associated with facts and opinions such as universal v. personal, God v. human, absolute v. relative, objective v. subjective, etc.

- Record and post answers in a brainstorming graphic organizer similar to the one below.

| | True Fact | False Fact | Opinion or Belief | Justified Belief |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Definition | | | | |
| Examples | | | | |
| Synonyms | | | | |
| Antonyms | | | | |

- Introduce students to common forms of deductive and inductive arguments. A deductive argument often takes a general statement and uses it to support a specific

one.  An inductive argument often takes statements about specific instances to support a general conclusion.

Deductive argument (if premises are true, then conclusion will be true):
Premise 1: All dogs are mammals.
Premise 2: Spot is a dog.
Conclusion: Spot is a mammal.
Inductive argument (if premises are true, the conclusion is likely but not guaranteed to be true):
Premise 1: Every cookie I have eaten from this box has been crisp.
Conclusion: All of the cookies in this box are crisp.

- Close read and discuss the validity of the following deduction and induction reasonings based on the text *Thank You, Mr. Falker*, *The Tsunami Unfolds* or a text of your choice.

## Narrative Examples based on *Thank You, Mr. Falker*

Example #1 (deduction):
Premise 1: Bullies are people who say hateful things.
Premise 2: Eric has said hateful things such as "…magotty old dumbbell!" (plausibly true, p. 13)
Conclusion: Eric is a bully
Analysis: The conclusion is true if the premises are true, but the first premise is maybe too strong: would a person who just once said a hateful thing to someone be a bully?

Example #2 (deduction):
Premise 1: Eric was a cat.
Premise 2: All cats are bullies.
Conclusion: Eric was a bully.
Analysis: Here is a clear case where the deductive argument guarantees that the conclusion would be true if the premises were true, but clearly both premises are false!

Example #3 (deduction)
Premise 1: Trisha was kind.
Premise 2: Mr. Falker was kind.
Conclusion: Trisha was Mr. Falker
Analysis: Here we have reasons to believe the premises are true, but the conclusion does not follow. This does not have the right form for a good argument.

Example #4 (deduction)
Premise 1: Trisha and Mr. Falker are both kind.

Conclusion: Mr. Falkner is kind.
Analysis: In contrast to #3, this has the correct form to be a good deductive argument, although of course it doesn't tell us anything we didn't already know.

To review, here are two ways an argument can go wrong. 1) The premises support the conclusion but one or more of these premises are false. 2) The premises are true, but do not support the conclusion because of the incorrect form of the argument or missing premises.

Example #5 (induction):
Premise 1: Every first-grader I have met so far can read.
Conclusion: All first graders can read.
Analysis: While this is the right form for an inductive argument, it shows how the premises of this kind of argument, even if true, do not guarantee the truth of a conclusion. Going from specific cases to a general conclusion can lead to error if we find a new case that doesn't fit the pattern.

**Informational Example based on *The Tsunami Unfolds***

Example #6 (deduction):
Premise 1: Earthquakes are common in Japan. (true, p. 6)
Premise 2: A tsunami is a series of waves in the ocean created by earthquakes... (true, p. 10)
Conclusion: Tsunamis are common in Japan
Analysis: Both premises are true, but the conclusion does not follow. A different premise 2 would be needed, such as "All (or most) earthquakes in Japan cause tsunamis". But that would be a false premise!

Example #7 (induction):
Premise 1: Earthquakes have been common in Japan.
Conclusion: Earthquakes will be common in Japan in the future.
Analysis: This is a good inductive argument. Note the conclusion about the future is well supported, but like all inductive arguments, is not guaranteed. Perhaps in the (far) future, the geological forces giving rise to frequent earthquakes might change.

**Guided Practice (30 minutes):**
- Ask students in pairs or in groups to find two different sentences from one paragraph of a text to write one deductive reasoning and one inductive reasoning. Decide if you want to students to focus on the same paragraph or assigned them different paragraphs.
  Teacher will facilitate small group discussion and guide students to make conclusions.
- Create a GoogleDocs or provide student groups chart papers. Have student groups type or handwrite their deductive and inductive arguments before sharing with the class.

**Exit Tickets**:
- Ask students to choose one or two sentences from the text.
- Performance Task: Have students classify the sentences as true or false premises and construct a true or false conclusion.

**Assessment Evidence:**
- Teachers will observe students during guided practice and group discussion. Use a discussion rubric to evaluate performances based on listening skills, speaking skills, depth of thinking and collaboration.
- Exit ticket should be rated on a scale of acceptable or unacceptable. If it is unacceptable, provide students will additional support until it is completed.

**Other Resources:**
Chart Paper, White Board, Smart Board or Overhead Projector
T-Chart (8 x 11 inches) for taste and associated foods
Books: *Thank You, Mr. Falker*, *The Tsunami Unfolds* and/or text of your choice.
Chromebooks or internet access,

**Differentiation/Modifications:**
This lesson is designed to be completed in one or two days to emphasize using narrative along with informational text as well as using two different approaches of reasoning. Teacher may want to activate prior knowledge by providing definitions for the following terms: true, false, opinion, belief, premise and conclusion. Teacher may also want to provide students a list of sample deductive and inductive arguments for independent practice in class and at school.

Below are some additional examples:
The proportion Q of the sample has attribute A. Therefore: the proportion Q of the population has attribute A. (induction)

A student picks out 3 black balls and 1 white ball from 20 balls. Therefore: there we can predict there would be 15 black balls (3 x 5) and 5 white balls (1 x 5). (induction)

Trisha is a student who has dyslexia and struggled with reading. Therefore, students with dyslexia struggle with reading. (induction)

Every A is B. This C is A. Therefore, This C is also B. (deduction).

Natural disasters are destructive. A tsunami is a natural disaster. Therefore, a tsunami is destructive (deduction).

# Eliezer Gottlieb
# Rebuild?

## Rationale
      We will look into the idea of human's interaction with nature and responsibility to humankind.  In *A Tsunami Unfolds* it tell the story of the people of the Tohoku region in Japan where a tsunami devastated the area. After describing the destruction and the remaining radiation, it mentions that they had trouble starting the rebuild and how many people did not return. Together with students we will dive into the questions surrounding a rebuild and humans' relationship with nature.

      For further information on these topics, please see Section F ("Human Beings and their Relation to Nature") of the [Philosophical Themes](#).

## Objectives
SWBAT examine situations where rebuilds have happened after natural disasters and what is their responsibility.

## Standards
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1
Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 4 topics and texts*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1.A
Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.

## Assessment Evidence
Students will complete exit slip.

## Accommodations:
- Exit slip can include sentence starters.
- Partner students by reading level and ensure a strong reader is in the pair.
- Have students who need help with writing, work in small group with teacher.
- Allow students to share out if they have cannot write their answers.

## Learning Plan:
Many of the homes and businesses were built in the path of flood waters. Should people be allowed to rebuild in areas where natural disasters can occur? Should the government be responsible to help them?
Introduction:

Provide scenarios where natural disasters have occurred and have students move to the side of the room if they should rebuild or not.
- Scenario 1: Lightning strikes a log cabin and it burns down.
- Scenario 2: A beach house is destroyed during a hurricane in New Jersey.
- Scenario 3: An earthquake on a fault line demolishes a town in California.
- Scenario 4: Towns destroyed by volcanoes in Big Island, Hawaii.
- Have students explain their choice.
- Show the NPR piece about the rebuild in Paradise, California.
- In some parts of Paradise, FEMA is suggesting that residents no longer rebuild there. Some residents decide to build there anyway. Another wildfire threatens the area. The situation is very dangerous and firefighters may perish if they go to save the families that stayed. Should firefighters risk their lives to save them?

Exit Slip: Firefighters should/not be sent to save the families because _____.

**Resources:**
Class set of *A Tsunami Unfolds*

# Terry Anne Wildman
# Breaking Down Artificial Boundaries.

**Rationale**:  Students will be challenged in the future to solve global environmental problems.  Practicing critical thinking skills may help students to understand their connection between themselves and nature.  With the ongoing loss of natural environments, especially in urban America, it is important for students to understand the relationship they have with the natural world.  This lesson is designed to ask students in elementary grades, specifically 3rd, 4th and 4th graders, what they see as their relationship and responsibility around in the community, their country, and the world.

For further information on these topics, please see Section F ("Human Beings and their Relation to Nature"), especially parts 1 and 2, of the [Philosophical Themes](#).

**Objectives**: SWBAT analyze a non-fiction or informational text IOT respond to critical thinking questions on the relationship between self and nature.

**Standards:**
1) CC1.2.3.L. Read and comprehend literary nonfiction and informational text on grade level, reading independently and proficiently.
2) CC1.2.4.J.  Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being and that are basic to a particular topic.
3) CC1.2.5.J. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal contrast, addition, and other logical relationships.

**Assessment:**  Exit Slip for each grade.  See procedures.

**Procedures:**
• After reading *About Earth* (3rd grade), *Weather* (3rd grade), *A Tsunami Unfolds* (4th grade), and *Rain Forest Food Chains* (5th Grade)*,* and or other appropriate non-fiction books on the environment, ask students one or two of the following questions from page 210 of *Teaching Thinking*:

  • Should we consider what is best for ourselves, best for others, or best for all (does that include future born children?)
  • Should we consider what is best for humans or should we consider animals, plants, rivers and other aspects of the physical world?
  • Who should we care for - our family, our friends, our local community, our country, or our world?  How should we show this care?
  • What is the environment, and what is the place of human beings in the environment?

- What should our duty be to other species?  Can we ever know what an animal feels or wants?
- What is 'development,' and what are the problems of modern development?
- What is good or beautiful about nature?  Why and how should we preserve it?
- What could we do to improve our local environment, and what should we do?
- Should people in rich countries help people in poor countries?  Why and how?
- What kind of world do you want to live in, and how could you help create it?

- <u>For 3rd graders</u>, divide into groups of 2-3 after reading *About Earth*, ask students to answer the last question: What kind of world do you want to live in, and how could you help create it? Share out answers.  Ask students in their groups to brainstorm: what they could do in their school community to bring the kind of world they want to live in.  Create a chart listing ideas.  Circle one thing the class could commit to doing in their classroom or school. Exit Slip - Write about one thing you could to make the idea they circle a reality.

- <u>For 4th graders</u>, after reading *A Tsunami Unfolds*, ask students to think: Should people in rich countries help people in poor or devastated countries?  Why and how?  A vote can be taken on if "rich countries should help out" by a show of hands to quickly get to the why and how.  Divide students into small groups and ask them to discuss: Who should we care for-our family, our friends, our local community, our country, or our world? In the case like the tsunami that struck Japan, how should we show this care?  Share out ideas.  Create a chart with 5 columns, label them Family, Friends, Community, Country, World.  Record ideas on the chart. Exit Slip: Ask students to write about who they think they should care for and why.

- <u>For 5th graders</u>, after reading *Rain Forests Food Chains*, ask students: What is 'development' and what are the problems of modern development?  Create a T-Chart - advantages and disadvantages of modern development.
  - Using Robert Fisher's strategies for dialogue (pg. 146), ask: What should our duty be to other species? Can we ever know what an animal feels or wants? Give students a few minutes to think and journal.  Then ask students to think-pair-share with a partner. Open up for class discussion. Ask follow-up questions without giving your opinion. Questions such as: Why? Do you agree or disagree? Can you say more? Can you give an example?  Again you withhold judgement with positive comments such as 'Thank you,' 'OK,' 'That's interesting.' "I see."  Encourage responses from the whole group - by surveying the class (Hand/thumbs up or down). To promote active listening, ask for a summary of what has been shared.  Give students a responsibility to nominate the next speaker during the discussion.  Challenge students to give reasons for their views by presenting opposing views. Remember to invite students to consider alternative viewpoints.  As an Exit Ticket, invite students to ask their own questions they now have after the discussion or to think about questions that still remain to be answered.

**Resources:**
- *Rain Forests Food Chains,*
- *A Tsunami Unfolds,*
- *Weather,*
- *About Earth*
- Chart paper
- Markers
- Graphic Organizers (T-Chart)

**Differentiation/Extension:**

For 3rd graders, take their ideas further by designing and carrying out a plan of action in the school or classroom.

For 4th graders, create "care" posters in which students can draw what caring for one of the groups would look like.

For 5th graders, ask students to think about a question they have from reading *Rain Forests Food Chains* or wrote about on their Exit Slip and complete a mini-research report on that topic.

# Eliezer Gottlieb
# Loyalty and Trust

**Rationale:**

In *Lunch Money* Greg and Maura's comic book enterprise violates the school rules. In battle to change the rules he has to trust his math teacher Mr. Z in order to present his case in front of the School Committee. By the end of the book, with the support of Mr. Z, they win their case with the School Committee to sell their comic books in school by offering to donate 50% of their profit to the school. In this lesson we will dive into the idea of trust. Who do you trust? How do you build that trust?

For further information of these topics, please see Section I ("Loyalty and Trust"), especially part 2, of the Philosophical Themes.

**Objectives**

SWBAT cite information in the text IOT to show how Greg builds trust with Mr. Z and Mrs. Davenport.

**Standards**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.1

Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 4 topics and texts*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1.A

Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.

**Assessment Evidence:**

Exit Slip – see below.

**Accommodations:**

- Exit slip can include sentence starters.
- Partner students by reading level and ensure a strong reader is in the pair.
- Have students who need help with writing, work in small group with teacher.
- Allow students to share out if they have cannot write their answers.

**Learning Plan:**
**Introduction**
- Post questions on board and have students write responses.
- What does trust mean? What's an example of trust?
- Who do you trust?
- Share our answers in groups and then share out whole class.
-

**Presentation of Content**
Tell students that they analyze Greg and Mr. Z's relationship.
Start by having them reread Chapter 8 when Greg refuses to apologize to Maura and then taunts Mr. Z.
Cite details that support how Greg is resistant to Mr. Z
Reread pg. 92 when he apologizes to Mr. Z and cite evidence in support of his changing attitude.
Reread pg. 171 when Greg and Maura approach Mr. Z about the flyer about the company that received permission to sell books at school and cite evidence.
Reread pg. 199 when Mr. Z speaks on their behalf.

After tracing their relationship, have students write about why Greg begins to finally trust Mr. Z.

**Reflection/Closing**
Exit Slip: Write about a teacher who you trust. Did you trust that teacher from the start? What helped you begin to trust that teacher?

Name: _____             Date: _____

<u>Trust</u>

Warm up:
What does trust mean? Explain what it means and give an example.

_____
_____
_____

Reread the assigned pages and cite evidence to support how Greg feels about Mr. Z throughout the book.

| In the beginning p. |
|---|
|  |
| In the middle p. |
|  |
| In the end p. |
|  |

Why does Greg begin to trust Mr. Z? Use the evidence you cited to support your answer.

_____
_____
_____
_____

Write about a teacher that you trust. What led you to trust them?

_____
_____
_____
_____

# Eliezer Gottlieb
# Value /Circles of Concern: Part I

**Rationale:**
     *Lunch Money* tells the story of Greg Kenton who's had his mind on money since was in preschool. He invents all types of ways to make money. In the middle of the book he gets into a turf war with a girl who is giving him competition. After the fight, in which she gives him a black eye, he gets into a discussion with his teacher about money and how much money someone needs vs how much you want. Students will look into the ideas into what has value and what is truly needed to make a person happy. They will analyze what Greg and Mr. Z say about money to help them make inferences about their beliefs about money and happiness. Are there things that money can't buy? This lesson looks into Singer's views on society and what we need to live a 'satisfying life'. In the second part we will delve into circles of concern.

     For further information on these topics, please see Section H ("Morality and the Circles of Concern") of the [Philosophical Themes](#).

**Objectives**
SWBAT cite information that supports how characters feel about money IOT makes to make an inference about their opinions about money.
SWBAT compare and contrast each characters' opinion about how money and happiness.

**Standards**
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.6
Compare and contrast the point of view from which different stories are narrated, including the difference between first- and third-person narrations.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.1
Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1
Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 4 topics and texts*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1.A
Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.

**Assessment Evidence**
Worksheet

**Accommodations:**
- Exit slip can include sentence starters.
- Partner students by reading level and ensure a strong reader is in the pair.
- Have students who need help with writing, work in small group with teacher.
- Allow students to share out if they have cannot write their answers.

**Learning Plan**
**Introduction**
- Pass out the worksheet explain the categories: (Needs – Must have to live, Wants – Don't need, but bring you happiness, Don't Need – item we don't need or bring us satisfaction) Examples so start their thinking: pillow, plates, phone, books, candy.
- Share out answers whole group and justify reasons for the category. Encourage discourse on items that are more evenly split.
-

**Presentation of Content**
Reread pages 92 – 94 as a group. Ask students to pay attention for details about what each does and says to help make an inference about what they think the characters feel about money.

Have students cite evidence that help support what each character feels. You may need to read a section and ask students for which character we should write down the supporting evidence.

**Reflection/Closing**
After discussing the differences have students decide with whom they identify with.

See worksheet below.

Name: _____          Date: _____
<u>Money on my Mind</u>
Warm up: Think of things in your home that you need to live and things you don't need, but bring your happiness and things that you just don't need.

| Need | Want | Don't Need |
|------|------|------------|
|      |      |            |

Reread the conversation between Mr Z. & Greg. Take notes about what they say to help make an inference about how they feel about money.

| Mr. Z | Greg |
|-------|------|
|       |      |

What can you infer about how Greg and Dr. Z think about money?

I can infer that Greg feels _____

_____

_____

I can infer that Mr. Z feels _____

_____

_____

I identify with _____

_____

_____

# Eliezer Gottlieb
# Value /Circles of Concern, Part II

**Rationale:**
*Lunch Money* tells the story of Greg Kenton who's had his mind on money since was in preschool. He invents all types of ways to make money. By the end of the book he learns to work together with his competition and create a plan for selling comics that is accepted by the school. We looked into the ideas of money, value and satisfaction. For this lesson we will look in Singer's ideas about circles of concern and fairness in education funding.

For further information of these topics, please see Section H ("Morality and the Circles of Concern"), especially part 4, of the Philosophical Themes.

**Objectives**
SWBAT delve into the ideas of circles of concern and whether schools from wealthier districts should be concerned with neighboring poorer districts.

**Standards**
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.1
Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1
Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 4 topics and texts*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1.A
Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.

**Assessment Evidence**
Exit Slip – see below

**Accommodations:**
- Exit slip can include sentence starters.
- Partner students by reading level and ensure a strong reader is in the pair.
- Have students who need help with writing, work in small group with teacher.
- Allow students to share out if they have cannot write their answers.

**Learning Plan**
**Introduction**
- Present situations about needs and see how students feel about responsibility.

1) If a student in your class doesn't have a notebook and you have an extra should you give them yours?
2) A student from another class?
3) A student from Stetson school?
4) A student in California?
- Have students talk in pairs and then discuss reasons for their opinions.

**Presentation of Content**
There is a thought that if you have more than you need, you should be obligated to share with those that do not.

Present new situations:
There is a neighboring school district that has brand new libraries, gymnasium, books and technology. Should they be required to share with schools in lower income areas?
Have students discuss and write their answers after talking in a group.

Now present a situation in a third world country that has even less than poorer schools in America. Should we be obligated to send our books and materials to them?

**Reflection/Closing**
After all the discussion have students answer exit slip question: Should wealthier schools be obligated to help schools without the same resources? Why or why not? Provide an example.

Name: _____          Date: _____
Money on my Mind
Warm up: Think of things in your home that you need to live and things you don't need, but bring your happiness and things that you just don't need.

| Need | Want | Don't Need |
|------|------|------------|
|      |      |            |

Reread the conversation between Mr Z. & Greg. Take notes about what they say to help make an inference about how they feel about money.

| Mr. Z | Greg |
|-------|------|
|       |      |

What can you infer about how Greg and Dr. Z think about money?

I can infer that Greg feels _____

_____

_____

I can infer that Mr. Z feels _____

_____

_____

I identify with _____

_____

_____

# Fifth Grade Lessons

# Kireema Sprowal
# Claim/Evidence/Conclusion, Part 1

**Lesson Title:**
"Ben Is The Worst Kid That Ever Lived"

**Rationale:**
  *Night of the Spadefoot Toads* is a sweet coming of age book about a 5th grader and his struggles with moving from a state that he loved and where his friends lived to another state that is the complete opposite of everything he has known. The reoccurring standard or ELA concepts that is a major concept to learn is citing evidence within a text and summarizing. Often times this is done without real forethought into having a deeper understanding and analysis of the text itself. These 2 lessons incorporate the following philosophical concepts and terms; claim (**making a statement**); evidence (**supporting the claim you state with evidence from the experiences within your own life**); and conclusion (**making a final decision that your claim is correct or wrong no matter what others around you believe or don't believe about it**). These terms seem to give the students a platform to obtain a deeper understanding of citing evidence within a text and being able to analyze the text to abstract a deeper connection to it.

  For further information on these topics, please see Section A ("Facts, Opinions and Knowledge"), especially parts 5 and 6, of the Philosophical Themes.

**Objectives:**

- Students will be able to define and give examples of the terms claim, evidence, and conclusion.
- Students will be able to apply what they have learned through a multi-paragraph written response (Response to Writing: ELA term within teaching) based on a prompt created from a text, specifically, *The Night of the Spadefoot Toads*.

**Standards:**

**CC.1.2.5.B:** Cite textual evidence by quoting accurately from the text to explain what the text says explicitly and make inferences.

**CC.1.2.5.C:** Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a text based on specific information in the text.
**Assessment Evidence:**
- Exit tickets (mini assignment based on what is being taught for the day)
- Response to prompt where students are either supporting the claim or not supporting the claim that Ben is the worst kid that ever lived

**Learning Plan:**
- Teacher makes an outrageous statement:

  ***Children should only get enough food based on how much they weigh and their age. My evidence that supports my claim are: that bigger children need more food and nourishment than smaller children because of their size; younger children don't need that much food; and babies can get food from their mother or milk (cows). Based on my evidence I conclude that the younger the child the less food they need.***

- Teacher asks students to raise their hands if they agree or disagree with the teachers' claim.
- Teacher takes at least 5 responses and keeps using the terms claim, evidence, and conclusion when responding to the "outrageous" teacher claim.
- Teacher then posts definitions of the 3 terms claim, evidence, and conclusion that have already been created by the teacher with a sentence strip and chart paper.
- Teacher explains what each term means and gives at least 2 more examples orally incorporating the 3 new terms just introduced.
- Using a chart paper, class creates a template that will be copied by students in order to fill out for an exit ticket.
- As a shared assignment teacher and class comes up with a claim about a character within the book we've read about so far; have students cite the evidence and fill it in on the class chart; then as a class we come up with a conclusion.
- After we have completed the class chart, then the students copy the template on a blank piece of paper.
- Teacher explains to the class that now they will be staking a claim that they will "dig" from *The Night of the Spadefoot Toad* and complete their own chart.
- Teacher circulates around the class to facilitate and guide as needed.
- Class comes back together and some students share out before assignment is collected as an exit ticket.

**Resources/Materials:**

- Vocabulary with definition for posting later in class
- Chart Paper
- Permanent Markers
- Pencils
- Blank Paper
- Class Set of *Night of the Spadefoot Toad*

**Differentiation/Modifications:**

- Model each step of the lesson as it is being done
- Create ready-made template for ESOL students
- Give some instructions bi-lingually
- Pair students for peer teaching
- Work with students one-on-one or a small group during independent time

See next page for worksheet.

**FOR APPENDIX**

Name:_____

Date:_____

Room:_____

## Staking A Claim

| | |
|---|---|
| Claim (STATEMENT) | _____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____ |
| Evidence (CITING FROM TEXT TO SUPPORT CLAIM) | _____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____ |

| Conclusion (END OF ARGUMENT) | _____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____ |
|---|---|

# Kireema Sprowal
# Claim/Evidence/Conclusion, Part 2

**Lesson Title:**
"What Does Mrs. Tibbett See In Ben?"

**Rationale:**
     *Night of the Spadefoot Toads* is a sweet coming of age book about a 5th grader and his struggles with moving from a state that he loved and where his friends lived to another state that is the complete opposite of everything he has known.  The recurring standard or ELA concepts that is a major concept to learn is citing evidence within a text and summarizing. Often times this is done without real forethought into having a deeper understanding and analysis of the text itself. These 2 lessons incorporate the following philosophical concepts and terms; claim (**making a statement**); evidence (**supporting the claim you state with evidence from the experiences within your own life**); and conclusion (**making a final decision that your claim is correct or wrong no matter what others around you believe or don't believe about it**).  These terms seem to give the students a platform to obtain a deeper understanding of citing evidence within a text and being able to analyze the text to abstract a deeper connection to it.

For further information on these topics, please see Section B ("Supporting Claims with Evidence"), especially part 1, of the [Philosophical Themes](#).

**Objectives:**
- Students will be able to apply what they have learned about "staking a claim", evidence, and conclusion within the philosophical terms taught to them by writing a multi-paragraph written response (Response to Writing: ELA term within teaching) based on a teacher generated prompt created from the text, *The Night of the Spadefoot Toads*.

**Standards:**

**CC.1.2.5.B:** Cite textual evidence by quoting accurately from the text to explain what the text says explicitly and make inferences.

**CC.1.2.5.C:** Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a text based on specific information in the text.

**Assessment Evidence:**
- Exit tickets (mini assignment based on what is being taught for the day)

- Response to prompt where students are supporting the inferred claim that Mrs. Tibbetts sees good in Ben regardless of his seemingly "deceitful" nature: letting the poisonous snakes out of the cage and not telling Mrs. Tibbetts

**Learning Plan:**
- Teacher revisits philosophically modified terms of claim, evidence and conclusion by reviewing the class made Staking A Claim poster and the lesson before.
- Teacher explains how the modified terms tie into citing evidence and supporting a statement being made through either a TDA (Text Dependent Analysis) or Response to Writing prompt.
- Teacher hands out a copy of the Staking A Claim template and instructs students that they will be using this template in order to support another claim based on The Night of The Spadefoot Toad.
- Teacher asks students to raise their hands if they agree or disagree with the teachers' new claim that they will be responding to and that should be posted on the board:

  ***Mrs. Tibbetts sees nothing but good in Ben even though he has lied about releasing the snakes that could have killed her and he did not stand up for her and tell the truth when she was excused putting students in harm by inviting them to see the Spadefoot Toads at her farm "knowing" she had poisonous snakes "loose".***

- Teacher takes at least 5 responses and keeps using the terms of claim, evidence and conclusion while referring and pointing to the definitions posted within the classroom as well.
- Teacher verbally explains why he/she believes that the claim is wrong based on being an educator and what Ben as a student has done in the story.
- Teacher then explains that now the students will be completing a Staking A Claim template in order to gather evidence (citing evidence) to support the claim posted by the teacher which will develop into a mini essay.
- Teacher explains that this might take at least 2 (45 minute) classes to complete.
- Teacher circulates around the class to facilitate and guide as needed.
- Class comes back together and some students share out what they have gathered so far (evidence) before the assignment is collected as an exit ticket.

**Resources:**

- Class Set of <u>Staking A Claim</u> template
- Vocabulary with definition for posting later in class
- Chart Paper
- Permanent Markers
- Pencils
- Blank Paper
- Class Set of *Night of the Spadefoot Toad*

**Differentiation/Modifications:**

- Model each step of the lesson as it is being done

- Create ready-made template for ESOL students

- Give some instructions bi-lingually

- Pair students for peer teaching

- Work with students one-on-one or, have a small group during independent time.

See next page for worksheet.

**FOR APPENDIX**

Name:_____
Date:_____
Room:_____

**<u>Staking A Claim</u>**

| | |
|---|---|
| Claim (STATEMENT) | _____ <br> _____ <br> _____ <br> _____ <br> _____ <br> _____ <br> _____ <br> _____ |
| Evidence (CITING FROM TEXT TO SUPPORT CLAIM) | _____ <br> _____ <br> _____ <br> _____ <br> _____ <br> _____ <br> _____ <br> _____ <br> _____ <br> _____ <br> _____ <br> _____ <br> _____ <br> _____ <br> _____ <br> _____ <br> _____ |

| Conclusion (END OF ARGUMENT) | _____ <br> _____ <br> _____ <br> _____ <br> _____ <br> _____ <br> _____ <br> _____ |
|---|---|

# Melissa Green
# Good vs. Bad

**Rationale:** This story is about a young boy who has to leave his friend and pet when his father gets a job in Massachusetts. This lesson was created to allow students to engage in discourse while analyzing character traits.  The lesson encourages students to use higher level thinking skills and forces students to use information from the text along their own understanding to support their responses.

For further information on these topics, please see Sections D ("Human Nature"), and E ("Human 'Kinds'"), especially part 4, of the Philosophical Themes.

**Objectives:** SWBAT analyze character traits

**Standards:**
CC.1.3.5.A
Determine a theme of a text from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.5.1
Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 5 topics and texts*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

**Assessment Evidence:**
Teacher will informally assess students' understanding during discussions.
Students will complete an exit ticket that demonstrates understanding of objective.

**Learning Plan:**
1. *2- sides Activity*
-Teacher will have students write their response to the following question:  **Is Frankie a bad person?  Why or why not? Explain.**
-Teacher will direct students to the corresponding side of the room based on their yes or no response. (Students can also be in the middle on their views)
-Students will pair up with someone on their side and share responses. (Teacher walks around and facilitates further discussion)
-Teacher will then have a student volunteer from one side share their response with the rest of the class.  The teacher will encourage discourse and by asking follow-up questions such as: *Would someone on the opposite side like to respond to your classmate's thoughts?  Would someone else on the same side or the middle like to add anything?*
- The teacher will say:  *I noticed that many of you through your discussion referred to Frankie as tough, mean, aggressive, outspoken, angry etc.*

- Question: *What does it mean to be selfish? Is it always a bad thing to be selfish? When is it okay and appropriate to be selfish? Teacher can give the following example: For example: Suppose your best friend is stealing from the store each morning as you guys are on your way to school. Is it okay to be selfish and remove yourself from that situation?*
Allow students to share responses and support discourse.
- Teacher will say: *So sometimes traits that we tend to automatically think of as negative, if used in different situations can actually be viewed as positive.*

2. **4 -Corner Activity**
Teacher has chart paper in each corner that reads: *When is it okay and appropriate to be aggressive and outspoken?*
Students will be given a number from 1-4.
Students will move to corresponding corners to discuss and write responses on T-Chart.

**Exit Ticket**: *When have you or someone you know been selfish to produce a positive outcome?*

**Resources:**
• Ready Gen: *Night of the Spadefoot Toads*
• Appropriate time needed for lesson: 45 minutes
• Chart paper

**Differentiation/Modifications:**
Students that have difficulty with written expression can engage in verbal discussion.
Teacher serves as facilitator to prompt further thought and discussion.

# Melissa Green
# Moral Obligation, Morality and Circles of Concern, part 1

**Rationale:** This lesson was created to allow students to engage in discourse while analyzing character traits. The lesson encourages students to use higher level thinking skills and forces students to use information from the text along their own understanding to support their responses. The Four Corner technique stimulates student learning through movement and discussion, and it can also be used as a formative assessment. Four Corners promotes listening, verbal communication, critical thinking, and decision-making.

For further information on these topics, please see Section H ("Morality and the Circles of Concern"), especially parts 1 and 2, of the [Philosophical Themes](#).

**Objective:** Students will be able to present, evaluate and discuss ideas about their views of the moral obligations of characters

**Standards:**

CC.1.3.5.A Determine a theme of a text from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text**.**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.5.1
Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 5 topics and texts*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

**Assessment Evidence:**
Teacher will informally assess students' understanding during discussions.
Students will complete an exit ticket that demonstrates understanding of objective.

**Learning Plan:**

1. Teacher will post the following question for students to respond to in writing:
*When is your duty to stand up for someone? Explain.*
- Students will turn and talk to someone and share responses. As a group, responses can then be shared.

2. 4 Corner Activity/Gallery Walk
- Teacher will post the following in each corner: Strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree, disagree

- Teacher will reread and recap events between Ben and Ryan. (page 17-Frankie teases and taunts Ryan on the school bus. Ryan exits the bus seemingly hurt and embarrassed. Ben was on the bus when it happened and remained quiet)
- Teacher will post the following question: Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree that it was Ben's moral obligation to stand up for Ryan? Explain. Students will write their response on a post it. Students will then move to the corresponding corner and post their note.
- Students will engage in discussion in groups. (Teacher walks around and facilitates further discussion)
Students will then rotate to the other 3 corners, read responses and discuss. Students will share out as a group.

3. Exit ticket: After discussing and hearing others' perspectives, has your perspective of whether Ben should have stood up for Frankie changed or not? Explain.

**Resources:**
• Ready Gen: *Night of the Spadefoot Toads*
• Appropriate time needed for lesson:45 minutes
• Chart paper, post-it notes

**Differentiation/Modifications:**
What strategies or methods will you use for different learning styles? What accommodations will you use for students with special needs (IEP)? Students that have difficulty with written expression can engage in verbal discussion. Teacher serves as facilitator to prompt further thought and discussion.

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# Melissa Green
# Good vs. Bad; Morality and Circles of Concern, part 2

**Rationale:** In the Night of the Spadefoot Toads, Mrs. Tibbets helps Ben feel more comfortable in his new school.  This lesson was created to allow students to engage in discourse while analyzing character traits.  The lesson encourages students to use higher level thinking skills and forces students to use information from the text along their own understanding to support their responses. Students will discuss what makes a good teacher versus what makes a bad teacher.

For further information on these topics, please see Section H ("Morality and the Circles of Concern"), especially parts 1 and 2, of the Philosophical Themes.

## Objective:

Students will be able to present, evaluate and discuss ideas about their views on a character.

## Standards:

CC.1.3.5.B Cite textual evidence by quoting accurately from the text to explain what the text says explicitly and make inferences.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.5.1
Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 5 topics and texts*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

## Assessment Evidence:
Teacher will informally assess students' understanding during discussions.
Students will complete an exit ticket that demonstrates understanding of objective.

## Learning Plan:

1. Teacher will post the following question for students to respond to in writing:
*What characteristics make a teacher great? Explain.*
Students will turn and talk to someone and share responses.  As a group, responses can then be shared.

2.  Students will work in pairs of small groups.
Teacher will give each group a T-chart complete based on Mrs. Tibbetts
Good vs. Bad.
Have students complete the t- chart by providing specific details from the passage that show Mrs. Tibbets as a good teacher and details that show Mrs. Tibbets as a bad teacher.

Each group will share out their responses.
Teacher will prompt further discussion by calling attention to groups that have the same supporting detail, but on the opposite side of the t-chart.
Teacher will prompt further discussion by asking: Is there anything on your chart that can be considered both good and bad?

3. Exit ticket: Would you want Mrs. Tibbets as a teacher? Explain.

**Resources:**
• Ready Gen: *Night of the Spadefoot Toads*
• Appropriate time needed for lesson:45 minutes
• Group T-Chart

**Differentiation/Modifications:**
 Students that have difficulty with written expression can engage in verbal discussion.
Teacher serves as facilitator to prompt further thought and discussion.

# Kireema Sprowal
# Human Nature

**<u>Lesson Title</u>:**
"Who Really Won?"

**<u>Rationale</u>:**

> *Washed Up!* is a short chapter book about a contest where 3 families are dropped off on a desert island for a month and have to survive and make it to a specific location on the island first in order to win a cash prize. The story mirrors the television series "Survivor" with the families coming from various social status: rich, middle class and poor.  Exploring the idea of "being human" in dire circumstances tends to lend itself very easily within the story line and the philosophical terms of essentialism (essence telling us how we should live) versus existentialism (complete freedom of self with no boundaries).  Through these overarching terms, a deeper look into who really won comes into play when ultimately the poor family won and shared the cash prize with the other two families who seemed not to need the money as badly as the poor family.

> For further information on these topics, please see Section D ("Human Nature") of the <u>Philosophical Themes</u>.

**<u>Objectives</u>:**
- Students understand and can define the terms essentialism, existentialism and be able compare and contrast the two terms.
- Students are able to identify or recognize the characters actions and behaviors as falling under essentialism or existentialism and then assess the true winners of the contest based off the actions and response of the characters in the final scene when the poor family won and shared the cash prize with the other two families.

**<u>Standards</u>:**

**CC.1.2.5.B** Cite textual evidence by quoting accurately from the text to explain what the text says explicitly and make inferences.

**CC.1.2.5.C** Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a text based on specific information in the text.

**<u>Assessment Evidence</u>:**
- Exit tickets (mini assignment based on what is being taught for the day)

- TDA or writing response based on the question: Who really won the contest? Students must incorporate terminology learned from the philosophy lesson and tie in to the story.

## Learning Plan:
- Teacher hands out at least 3 sheets of blank paper and instructs students to fold the papers in half in order to make a booklet.
- Teacher has students number the pages and then title the book "Human Nature: Essentialism Versus Existentialism"
- Teacher asks students to turn to page 1 in their booklets and get ready to respond in writing to a few questions posted on the board.
- Teacher poses a question to the class (class discussion):

**In your opinion, what are some characteristics that define a human as being human?**

- Teacher explains to the students that they have 5 minutes to jot down their thoughts and it does not have to be long, just a couple of sentences.
- Teacher allows at least 3 students to respond and does not correct or respond back. Teacher has students turn to page 2 in their booklets.
- Then the teacher asks another question to the class(class discussion):

**Do you believe that a human has the right to do anything they want?  Why or why not?**

- Teachers explains to the students that they have 5 minutes to jot down their thoughts and it does not have to be long, just a couple of sentences.
- Teacher allows at least 3 students to respond and does not correct or respond back.
- Teacher explains that there were some other people that asked those same questions (philosophers) and they came up with some answers of their own.
- Teacher pulls out 2 pieces of blank chart paper  and explain to students that they will be taking notes on pages 3 and 4 in their booklet by copying the information that the teacher will be writing on the chart paper.
- On chart paper one the teacher writes the name Plato as the title and then the key elements of the soul having three parts (reason, spirit, and appetite) and his definition.  If done as a table then have students jot down an example of a human doing something being ruled by that aspect of the soul: Ex. Appetite, a student cheating on a test to get the highest grade.

- On the second chart paper the teacher creates a graphic organizer with essentialism and the definition (the human essence of a person telling us how to exist or live) being on the top of one column and existentialism (the human realizing he/she is free and not being governed or having his/her freedom being hindered by anything or anyone) and its definition on top of the other. Students should have enough space to respond to the definitions given in writing.
- Teacher explains in a little more detail what is meant by each definition and then poses the following question:

  **What would the place you live be like if people believed and acted under the definition of essentialism and existentialism?**

- Allow students 2 minutes to turn to someone next to them to discuss and respond orally to the question.
- After the 2 minutes have students respond in words in their booklet for 6 minutes.
- Have at least 3 students share out with the rest of the class.
- Explain to students that we have read the book Washed Up! And know the characters and what they did within the story. Teacher reviews with students the essence of the story.
- Teacher posts one last question on the board and has the students respond in their booklets.

  **Based on everything you have learned about Plato, the three parts of a soul and the terms essentialism and existentialism, who do you believe were the real winners of the contest? Why or why not? What actions did the characters or character do to make you form your opinion?**

- Give the students at least 20 minutes to respond and collect the booklets as their exit ticket.

**Resources:**
- *Washed Up!*
- Vocabulary (on sentence strips) with definitions for posting later in class
- Chart Paper
- Permanent Markers
- Pencils
- Blank Paper
- Class Set of *Washed Up!*

**Differentiation/Modifications:**

- Model each step of the lesson as it is being done
- Create ready-made template for ESOL students
- Give some instructions bi-lingually
- Pair students for peer teaching
- Work with students one-on-one or, have a small group during independent time.

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# Kireema Sprowal
# Interaction of Nature and Culture

**Lesson Title:**
Surviving Nature? Real or Not, That Is the Question!

**Rationale:**
   In society we or continuously bombarded with countless reality shows that incorporate some aspects of technology, especially when it deals with a contest within nature. The students often read a lot of "realistic fiction" stories that blur the lines between reality and make believe without any deep discussion or analysis of the text to explore and explain what makes the story "realistic", believable, or just plain fantasy. Using the terms and concepts from the readings about nature, I explore the concepts of interaction in nature and culture through the story of *Washed Up!*

   For further information on these topics, please see Section C ("Knowledge in Light of Experience and Social Position"), especially parts 1 and 2, and Section F ("Human Beings and their Relation to Nature") of the Philosophical Themes.

**Objectives:**
- Find the appropriate language to support claims on whether a story, character or situation is real, fake or "realistic".
- Clearly identifying aspects of a story, character, or situation that makes it real, fake or realistic

**Standards:**

**CC.1.2.5.B** Cite textual evidence by quoting accurately from the text to explain what the text says explicitly and make inferences.

**CC.1.2.5.C** Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a text based on specific information in the text.

**Assessment Evidence:**
- Exit tickets (mini assignment based on what is being taught for the day)
- TDA or writing response reflecting the story where a student has to explain if the characters within the story are really surviving within nature using the terms and jargon taught within defining real, fake, and "realistic."

**Learning Plan:**

- Teacher poses a question to the class (class discussion):
  **If you were dropped off on a deserted island what 3 things would you would want to eat each day that you were there?**

- Teacher shares their 3 things and have at least 2 to three students share out.
- Then the teacher asks another question to the class (class discussion):

  **Do you think that that would be something realistic that could happen? Why or why not?**

- Teacher shares their response and then turns to students to elaborate or share out. Teacher has 2 to 3 students share.
- On a large piece of chart paper teacher creates a chart with the words real, fake, "realistic" and hand post-it to the students. Teacher explains that the students are about to read a book about 3 families competing in a contest that takes place on an island. But before we begin reading the book we are going to define what makes something real, fake or "realistic".
- Students then go to their desks and discuss for 2 minutes what they believe it is that makes something real or true and then write their definition on a post-it and post it up. The teacher will do this process 2 more times with the column for fake and "realistic".
- After all responses are up, the teacher will then read a couple responses from post-its and ask the class if they agree or disagree why of why not.
- Teacher defines what is real, fake or "realistic" using the philosophical jargon taught to us from class.
- Teacher reads first chapter *Washed Up!* and then asks the students to respond to reading in writing with the following prompt:

  **We were just introduced to 3 families that have to survive on a deserted island after being dropped off. Do you believe that the 3 families will be really surviving for the next 3 weeks? Why or why not?**

**Resources:**

- *Washed Up!*
- Vocabulary with definition for posting later in class
- Chart Paper
- Permanent Markers
- Pencils

- Blank Paper
- Class Set of *Washed Up!*

**<u>Differentiation/Modifications</u>:**
- Model each step of the lesson as it is being done
- Create ready-made template for ESOL students
- Give some instructions bi-lingually
- Pair students for peer teaching
- Work with students one-on-one or, have a small group during independent time.

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# Terry Anne Wildman
# Breaking Down Artificial Boundaries.

**Rationale**:  Students will be challenged in the future to solve global environmental problems.  Practicing critical thinking skills may help students to understand their connection between themselves and nature.  With the ongoing loss of natural environments, especially in urban America, it is important for students to understand the relationship they have with the natural world.  This lesson is designed to ask students in elementary grades, specifically 3rd, 4th and 4th graders, what they see as their relationship and responsibility around in the community, their country, and the world.

For further information on these topics, please see Section F ("Human Beings and their Relation to Nature"), especially parts 1 and 2, of the Philosophical Themes.

**Objectives**: SWBAT analyze a non-fiction or informational text IOT respond to critical thinking questions on the relationship between self and nature.

**Standards:**
4) CC1.2.3.L. Read and comprehend literary nonfiction and informational text on grade level, reading independently and proficiently.
5) CC1.2.4.J.  Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being and that are basic to a particular topic.
6) CC1.2.5.J. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal contrast, addition, and other logical relationships.

**Assessment:**  Exit Slip for each grade.  See procedures.

**Procedures:**
• After reading *About Earth* (3rd grade), *Weather* (3rd grade), *A Tsunami Unfolds* (4th grade), and *Rain Forest Food Chains* (5th Grade)*,* and or other appropriate non-fiction books on the environment, ask students one or two of the following questions from page 210 of *Teaching Thinking*:

- Should we consider what is best for ourselves, best for others, or best for all (does that include future born children?)
- Should we consider what is best for humans or should we consider animals, plants, rivers and other aspects of the physical world?
- Who should we care for - our family, our friends, our local community, our country, or our world?  How should we show this care?
- What is the environment, and what is the place of human beings in the environment?

- What should our duty be to other species?  Can we ever know what an animal feels or wants?
- What is 'development,' and what are the problems of modern development?
- What is good or beautiful about nature?  Why and how should we preserve it?
- What could we do to improve our local environment, and what should we do?
- Should people in rich countries help people in poor countries?  Why and how?
- What kind of world do you want to live in, and how could you help create it?

- <u>For 3rd graders</u>, divide into groups of 2-3 after reading *About Earth*, ask students to answer the last question: What kind of world do you want to live in, and how could you help create it? Share out answers.  Ask students in their groups to brainstorm: what they could do in their school community to bring the kind of world they want to live in.  Create a chart listing ideas.  Circle one thing the class could commit to doing in their classroom or school. Exit Slip - Write about one thing you could to make the idea they circle a reality.

- <u>For 4th graders</u>, after reading *A Tsunami Unfolds*, ask students to think: Should people in rich countries help people in poor or devastated countries?  Why and how?  A vote can be taken on if "rich countries should help out" by a show of hands to quickly get to the why and how.  Divide students into small groups and ask them to discuss: Who should we care for-our family, our friends, our local community, our country, or our world? In the case like the tsunami that struck Japan, how should we show this care?  Share out ideas.  Create a chart with 5 columns, label them Family, Friends, Community, Country, World.  Record ideas on the chart. Exit Slip: Ask students to write about who they think they should care for and why.

- <u>For 5th graders</u>, after reading *Rain Forests Food Chains*, ask students: What is 'development' and what are the problems of modern development?  Create a T-Chart - advantages and disadvantages of modern development.
  - Using Robert Fisher's strategies for dialogue (pg. 146), ask: What should our duty be to other species? Can we ever know what an animal feels or wants? Give students a few minutes to think and journal.  Then ask students to think-pair-share with a partner. Open up for class discussion. Ask follow-up questions without giving your opinion. Questions such as: Why? Do you agree or disagree? Can you say more? Can you give an example?  Again you withhold judgement with positive comments such as 'Thank you,' 'OK,' 'That's interesting.' "I see."  Encourage responses from the whole group - by surveying the class (Hand/thumbs up or down). To promote active listening, ask for a summary of what has been shared.  Give students a responsibility to nominate the next speaker during the discussion.  Challenge students to give reasons for their views by presenting opposing views. Remember to invite students to consider alternative viewpoints.  As an Exit Ticket, invite students to ask their own questions they now have after the discussion or to think about questions that still remain to be answered.

**Resources:**

- *Rain Forests Food Chains,*
- *A Tsunami Unfolds,*
- *Weather,*
- *About Earth*
- Chart paper
- Markers
- Graphic Organizers (T-Chart)

**Differentiation/Extension:**

For 3rd graders, take their ideas further by designing and carrying out a plan of action in the school or classroom.

For 4th graders, create "care" posters in which students can draw what caring for one of the groups would look like.

For 5th graders, ask students to think about a question they have from reading *Rain Forests Food Chains* or wrote about on their Exit Slip and complete a mini-research report on that topic.

# Peggy Savage
# What is the Cost of Freedom? Responding to Inequality & Injustice

**Those who do not move, do not notice their chains**.

**Rationale:** In unit two students are asked to find clues about the theme by looking at how characters respond to challenges or conflicts. Students learn that looking at details in a narrative and how characters respond to events help students determine the theme of any literary selection. *The Road to Freedom* allow students to think about the slave trade and slavery as two characters escape and avoid slave catchers in order to stay together as mother and daughter.

For further information, please see Section A ("Facts, Opinions and Knowledge"), especially parts 4 and 5 in the [Philosophical Themes](#).

**Objective:**
Enduring Understanding: Learners understand that people respond to inequality and injustice in different ways.

**Standard(s):**

**E05.B-K.1.1.2** Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.

**CC.1.2.5.B** Cite textual evidence by quoting accurately from the text to explain what the text says explicitly and make inferences.

**E05.B-K.1.1.1** Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences and/or making generalizations from the text.

**CC.1.2.5.C** Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a text based on specific information in the text.

**RL.5.3** Compare and Contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story, drawing on specific details in the text.

**CC.1.2.5.A** Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.

**Assessment Evidence:**

**Use a T - Chart** to record the responses of two characters from, *The Road to Freedom*.

1. On the left hand of your paper label the word, details about the theme ideas.

2. On the right-hand side label, What is the possible theme?

3. Have students use the Turn and Talk protocol to discuss ideas about possible themes.

4. Have students generate two possible theme ideas.

**Possible discussion point**: "Resilience is the key to success."

Entertain other possible themes through student discussions

**Anchor Text and Pacing Guide:**
- *The Road to Freedom* | Lessons 1-10

**Supporting Texts and Pacing Guide:**
- "Harriet Tubman" | Lessons 11
- *Operation Clean Sweep* |Lessons 12-13
- *Cesar Chavez* | Lessons 15-16

**Sleuth:**
- "The Price of Freedom"
- "On Loyalty to Country"

**Learning Plan:**

1) Have students preview chapters 1- 4 of *The Road to Freedom*. As they preview chapter 4, ask students to read to understand what the text is mainly about.

2)  After reading chapter 4, tell students that they are going to use the Turn and Talk Protocol to discuss the three out of the five questions listed below:
   a) What problems or challenges are helped or solved in chapter 4?
   b) What new problems and challenges are introduced?
   c) On the smart board list the number of challenges or problems faced by Emma and her mother.
   d) Do Emma and her mother face a moral problem for alluding the slave catcher?
   e) During that time period was escaping slavery the only way to respond to injustice?

**Exit Ticket:** Read the quote below. In your own words explain what the quote means. How does the quote help you interpret Emma and her mother's road to freedom?

"**Those who do not move, do not notice their chains.**" **Rosa Luxemberg**

**Extend the conversation. Emma and her mother decide to escape. They escape together. Was there any other way they could have stayed together? Did the system of slavery allow them to stay together?**

**History Reminders**:

- Students should be encouraged to think and talk about the meaning of freedom

- Students should know that enslaved Indigenous people and Africans came from nations with diverse cultures and traditions and that they continued many of these traditions while enslaved.

- Students should know that enslaved people had families that could be split up at any time.

- Students should know that enslaved people hated being enslaved, and resisted bondage in many ways.

- Students should know that enslaved people tried to maintain their cultures while building new traditions that continue to be important.

- Students should know that enslavers exploited the many types of highly-skilled labor of enslaved people for their own profit.

- Students should understand that slavery and race are intimately connected, that slavery came to be associated with blackness, and that white people developed racist ideas to justify enslaving people of color.

- Students will know that many people worked individually and in groups to end slavery.

- Students will know slavery was the cause of the Civil War.

**Materials:**

*The Road to Freedom*

**Differentiation:**

Students that have difficulty with written expression can engage in verbal discussion. Teacher serves as facilitator to prompt further thought and discussion.

# Kireema Sprowal
# Circles of Concern

**Lesson Title:**
"Who Really Cares?"

**Rationale:**
*The Road to Freedom* is a chapter book giving a fictional historical account about two characters who are enslaved, Mama and her daughter Emma, and their treacherous journey of escape from a plantation in the south to freedom in Canada.  There is a point when Mama and Emma finally make it to Philadelphia and are welcomed by Harriet Tubman.  The reader is drawn into the story by identifying with the main characters, Mama and Emma, and the various real life and death situations they encounter along with the blind trust in people they do not know in order to survive.  The philosophical concept of circle of concern fits perfectly with this harrowing historical tale.  The idea that your concern about someone, essentially that is not known to you, is much less than the concern you might have for someone that is closely tied to you within a circle by association or people that you know. Throughout the story, Mama and Emma are constantly encountering people that are further and further outside their circle of familiar people who would be concerned and the motives of each person they encounter helping them seems to depend on their experience and stance on slavery.

For further information on these topics, please see Section H ("Morality and the Circles of Concern"), especially parts 1, 2, and 3, of the [Philosophical Themes](#).

**Objectives:**
- Students are able to explain in their own words and within their own lives the philosophical concept of circle of concern.
- Students will be able to explain and identify the levels of concern for Mama and Emma, if any, based on motives and actions of each character that Mama and Emma encounter within the story.

**Standards:**

**CC.1.2.5.B** Cite textual evidence by quoting accurately from the text to explain what the text says explicitly and make inferences.

**CC.1.2.5.C** Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a text based on specific information in the text.

**Assessment Evidence:**
- Exit tickets (mini assignment based on what is being taught for the day)

- TDA or writing response on the question: Who really cares for and is concerned about Mama and Emma? Students must incorporate terminology learned from the philosophy lesson and complete circles of concern template.

**Learning Plan:**
- Teacher gathers students into a circle and leads a class discussion with a scenario and questions. Before the scenario(s) are given the teacher introduces the strategy of the "talking stick" which only allows one person to speak at a time by holding an object that enables them to be the only one to speak at that time.
- Teacher give the following as a scenario:

  **In Africa, in a small village, there is a family that doesn't have any running water.**
  **How do you feel about that?**

- Teacher expects or looks for responses from students that might reflect a generic answer with no real concern or thought about the matter as if it doesn't really affect them. Teacher allows 2 to 3 students to respond without saying anything.
- Teacher poses another scenario:

  **Now suppose the US government discovered that the water supply in every city in the state of Texas was poisonous and the citizens needed to be supplied with water to drink, wash clothes, do chores. Anything you need water for they now need. How would that make you feel and is there anything that you would want to do about it?**

- Hopefully students will seem a little more concerned because now the crisis is in the US and a little bit closer to home. Teacher allows 2 to 3 students to respond without saying anything.
- Teacher poses one more scenario:

  **What if you woke up the next morning and your house didn't have any running water because just before your family got up to start the day there was a water main break underground near you and all the water was gushing up and flowing down the street flooding everyone's basement. How would you feel and what would you do?**

- Teacher allows 2 to 3 students to respond without saying anything. The student responses should be more passionate and animated with a lot more students wanting to respond because now the scenario is something that falls within their own personal lives.

- While still in the circle the teacher pulls out a ready-made chart titled Circle of Concern, the definition (the levels of concern/care an individual has for another based on his/her circle of people he/she knows) underneath and a graphic organizer of a bullseye representing the scenarios just given and arrows illustration the increased levels of concern based on the scenario being part of the students personal life.
- Teacher then posts a Circle of Concern template that is a table that allows the student to record, explain and/or identify the level of concern that each character had with Mama and Emma based on their actions/words.
- Teacher explains what the student needs to do and how to complete the chart by completing the first encounter, whole class, while the students are still in class discussion formation.
- Teacher sends students back to their desk and has them complete the rest of the template. Explain to students that they have to support their response by citing evidence from the book.
- Before students turn in their templates as a n exit ticket, the teacher asks for 3 to 4 students to share some of their responses to each of the character interactions with Mama and Emma.

**Resources:**
- *The Road To Freedom*
- Copies of Circle of Concern template [see below]
- Chart Paper
- Permanent Markers
- Pencils
- Blank Paper
- Class Set of *The Road to Freedom*

**Differentiation/Modifications:**

- Model each step of the lesson as it is being done
- Create ready-made template for ESOL students
- Give some instructions bi-lingually
- Pair students for peer teaching
- Work with students one-on-one or, have a small group during independent time.

Name:_____
Date:_____
Room:_____

## Circle of Concern

**Directions:** We are currently reading *The Road to Freedom*. During Mama and Emma's journey to freedom they come across various people that they have to trust with their lives. After learning about the concept of circle of concern, cite evidence from the text to support your answer and explain the level of concern that each character has for Mama and Emma. You may get extra pieces of writing paper if needed to add more to your explanations.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Mama and Emma encounter(s) with the plantation owner** | _____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____ |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Mama and Emma encounter(s) with the Quaker woman** | _____ |
| **Mama and Emma encounter(s) with the slave catchers** | _____ |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Mama and Emma encounter(s) with the man with the potato wagon** | _____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____ |
| **Mama and Emma encounter(s) with Harriet Tubman** | _____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____ |

| Mama and Emma encounter(s) with the man on the boat that takes them to Canada | _____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____ |
|---|---|

# Kireema Sprowal
# Exploring Evil: Deed Versus Motive

**Lesson Title:**
"Who is Really Evil?"

**Rationale:**
*The Road to Freedom* is a chapter book giving a fictional historical account about two characters who are enslaved, Mama and her daughter Emma, and their treacherous journey of escape from a plantation in the south to freedom in Canada. There is a point when Mama and Emma finally make it to Philadelphia and are welcomed by Harriet Tubman. The reader is drawn into the story by identifying with the main characters, Mama and Emma, and the various real life and death situations they encounter along with the blind trust in people they do not know in order to survive. The concept of evil seems to be an obvious choice when reading the story of *The Road To Freedom*; however, when you begin to add the philosophical spin on the concept of evil, then it lends itself to a deeper discussion on the books' subject matter and critical way of viewing it.

   The concepts touched on and explored in the lesson are: (Western Philosophy) God being defined as omniscience, omnipotent and omnibenevolent and if He exist then he can't be good because "evil" still exist and He wouldn't allow it if He's God; (Claudia Card) taking God out of the evil equation and focus on human suffering with people doing bad things even with knowing the foreseeable, intolerable harm; (David Livingstone Smith) evil is the dehumanizing of another human being which lowers empathy for another person for personal "selfish" gain; and (Hannah Arendt) that categorizes evil as being absolute [monstrous intention to abolish humanity itself] and banal [an evil action brought about by someone who may be a perfectly ordinary non- evil person who does something carelessly or without thought. These four ways of looking at evil through the lens of philosophy is dwindled down and not confined to what will be taught within the lesson, but had to be placed within the constraints because of limitation of time.

   For further information on these topics, please see Section G ("Evil"), especially parts 1, 2, and 3, of the Philosophical Themes.

## Objectives:

- Students are able to give a more complex definition of evil than a generic version (someone who does something bad) using the terminology taught within the lesson.
- Students will be able to explain and identify the various forms of evil being displayed within *The Road To Freedom* based on the four ways it is showcased through philosophy.

## Standards:

**CC.1.2.5.B** Cite textual evidence by quoting accurately from the text to explain what the text says explicitly and make inferences.

**CC.1.2.5.C** Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a text based on specific information in the text.

## Assessment Evidence:

- Exit tickets (mini assignment based on what is being taught for the day)
- TDA or writing response based on the question: Who did evil deeds through evil motives in *The Road To Freedom*? Students must incorporate terminology learned from the philosophy lesson and refer to the Evil: Deed Versus Motive - A Philosophical View chart [described in Learning Plan below].

## Learning Plan:

- Teacher hands out 3 sheets of blank paper and has the students fold them in half to create a booklet.
- Teacher has the students title the booklet "Who is Really Evil?" and number the pages inside.
- Teacher gathers students into a circle with a pencil and their booklets to lead a class discussion with scenarios and questions. Before the scenario(s) are given, the teacher reviews rules for the "talking stick" strategy which only allows one person to speak at a time by holding an object that enables them to be the only one to speak at that time.
- Teacher gives the following as a scenario while having it be posted on the board:

**Suppose a man steals a bottle of Tylenols from his local CVS.  Would you think he was bad for doing it? Would you think he was evil?**

- Teacher expects or looks for responses from students that might reflect a generic answer of yes or no with simple explanations on their reasons.  Teacher has students turn to page one in their booklets and gives 5 minutes to write a response. Teacher allows 2 to 3 students to respond without saying anything.
- Teacher poses another scenario while having it posted on the board:

  **What if the man that stole the bottle of Tylenol was 65 and had no health insurance and recently lost his job and really needed the pills?  Would that change your opinion of him?  Why or why not?**

- Hopefully students will be more complex in their response to the new shift in the scenario.  Teacher has students turn to page two in their booklets and gives 5 minutes to write a response.  Teacher allows 2 to 3 students to respond without saying anything.
- Teacher poses one more scenario while having it posted on the board:

  **What if the 65-year-old man that stole the bottle of Tylenol, had no health insurance and recently lost his job needed the pills because his wife had a serious illness and was in a great deal of pain and it was over the weekend when the free clinic was closed and he couldn't drive in the snowstorm the were having to the ER? Would your opinion change of him being bad or evil? Why or why not?**

- Teacher has students turn to page three in their booklets and gives 5 minutes to write a response.  Teacher allows 2 to 3 students to respond without saying anything.  The student responses should be more passionate and animated with a lot more students wanting to respond because now the scenario paints a more empathetic picture of the man and the reasoning behind him stealing.

- While still in the circle the teacher pulls out a ready-made chart titled Evil: Deed Versus Motive - A Philosophical View, a table displaying the name of the philosophy and underneath written their take or view on evil:  (Western Philosophy) God being defined as omniscience, omnipotent  and omnibenevolent and if He exist then he can't be good because "evil" still exist and He wouldn't allow it if He's God; (Claudia Card) taking God out of the evil equation and focus on human suffering with people doing bad things even with knowing the foreseeable, intolerable harm; (David Livingstone Smith) evil is the dehumanizing of another human being which lowers

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empathy for another person for personal "selfish" gain; and (Hannah Arendt) that categorizes evil as being absolute [monstrous intention to abolish humanity itself] and banal [an evil action brought about by someone who may be a perfectly ordinary non- evil person who does something carelessly or without thought.

- Teacher then explains and gives examples of each view of evil that is displayed within the chart.
- Teacher sends students back to their desk with their booklets and has them record at least two examples of each view of evil within philosophy that they just learned about that has been acted out within the story, *The Road To Freedom*. Explain to students that they have to support their response by citing evidence from the book.
- Before students turn in their booklet as an exit ticket, the teacher asks for 3 to 4 students to share some of their responses from each of the philosophical views of evil.


## Resources:

- Evil: Deed Versus Motive - A Philosophical View teacher made chart [see description in Learning Plan above]
- Pencils
- Blank Paper
- Class Set of *The Road to Freedom*


## Differentiation/Modifications:

- Model each step of the lesson as it is being done
- Create ready-made template for ESOL students
- Give some instructions bi-lingually
- Pair students for peer teaching
- Work with students one-on-one or, have a small group during independent time.

# Peggy Savage
# *Angel Island*: A Look at Suffering and Mistreatment Through an Historical Lens

**Rationale**: This lesson plan follows ReadyGen Curriculum, lesson 2a for fifth grade. It continues to examine human suffering from a designed system in the United States. Using an informational text entitled, *Angel Island* students identify reasons and evidence of cruelty and injustice. Unit 2, Module B examines a group of people mistreated because of suspicions and misunderstandings.

For more information, please see Section E ("Human 'Kinds'"), especially parts 3, 4, and 5 of the Philosophical Themes.

**Objective/Essential Understanding:**

Readers understand that relationships between individuals and historical events are important to their understanding of a text.

**Standards:**

**CC.1.2.5.H** Determine how an author supports particular points in a text through reasons and evidence.

**E05.B-C.3.1.1** Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text, identifying which reasons and evidence support which point(s).

**CC.1.2.5.G** Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.

**E05.B-C.3.1.3** Interpret text features (e.g., headings, graphics, charts) and/or make connections between text and the content of text features.

**Assessment Evidence:**

1. Students will generate responses to the following question: How does one respond to their government's mistreatment?
2. Complete a K-W-L-S chart about Angel Island.

**Learning Plan:**

**Prior Knowledge**

1. Ascertain students' knowledge about Angel Island.

2. Identify the purpose and location of Angel Island.

3. Direct students to read pages 12-13.

4. Use a K-W-L-S (ascertain student's knowledge about Angel Island – students will complete what they have learned in the assessment.

5. While reading the text have students complete a 4-square graphic organizer:

    a. Box a- Take notes in this box on any new information you have learned after reading the text.

    b. Box b - In this box note how this information makes you feel.

    c. Box c - Write more new notes in this box that your classmates share with the class.

    d. Box d - In this box draw a picture of an image that you remember from the text.

**Critical Thinking/Discussion Questions:**

1. When an immigrant arrives in a new country should they have the same access to healthcare and other rights as an existing citizen? Why, or why not?

2. Should economic migrants be treated differently from those who have moved for political reasons? In what way should they be treated differently?

3. Should immigrants in a new country have the right to vote? Why or why not?

4. What should the standards for giving citizenship to migrants be?

5. Do you know what the existing standards are?

6. If an individual has entered a country illegally, what should be done with that individual?

**Exit Ticket:**

Expand upon one of these critical thinking / discussion questions. Write a three to six paragraph response:

1. If an individual has entered a country illegally, what should be done with that individual?

2. When an immigrant arrives in a new country should they have the same access to healthcare and other rights as an existing citizen? Why, or why not?

3. Should immigrants in a new country have the right to vote? Why or why not?

**Curriculum Resources**

- Thirty copies of ReadyGen Text Collections, Volume 2
- Composition paper

**Differentiation:**

Students that have difficulty with written expression can engage in verbal discussion. Teacher serves as facilitator to prompt further thought and discussion.

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# Peggy Savage
# Through the Eyes of an Immigrant: Analyzing Emotion and Suffering

**Rationale:** Unit 4 lesson 2A for fifth grade, asks students to evaluate the implications of dividing humans into groups. Unit four uses a supplemental text that highlights the experiences of detainees on "Angel Island." After reading, *The Road to Freedom*, students will come to realize the historical implications of the systematic suffering of large groups of people here in the United States.

For further information, please see Section E ("Human 'Kinds'"), especially parts 3, 4, and 5 of the [Philosophical Themes](#).

### Key Objectives:

- Students will be able to explain at least two emotions that the immigrants experienced during their stay on Angel Island.

- Students will be able to explain two challenges that the detainees faced while they were detained on Angel Island.

- Students will be able to learn new vocabulary words in context related to immigration. They will be able to use at least three words correctly in a sentence as part of a class discussion.

- Students will be able to show understanding of the immigration experience through a written response in a journal entry in which they are to try and imagine the experience from their own perspective as a young child.

### Standards:

**CC.1.2.5.C** Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a text based on specific information in the text.

**E05.B-K.1.1.3** Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, steps, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.

**CC.1.2.5.E** Use text structure, in and among texts, to interpret information (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution).

**E05.B-C.2.1.2** Compare and contrast the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information and text features in two or more texts.

**CC.1.2.5.F** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in grade-level reading and content, including interpretation of figurative language in context.

**E05.B-V.4.1.1** Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 5 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
Use context (e.g., cause/effect relationships and comparisons in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases used in a text.

**Teacher Notes:**

From the mid-1800's to World War II, China was faced with terrible famines, crushing poverty, and political turmoil. The changes in transportation technology made it possible for more and more people around the world to afford traveling across the Pacific Ocean in search of a better future.

**Learning Plan:**

1. Writing Prompt: Imagine that you are traveling to a new country by yourself. Your family has spent their entire life savings to try and send you to a better place. You have traveled on an overcrowded boat for about three weeks with many others sharing similar hopes and dreams. You are not allowed to bring many items with you, one suitcase at the most. What would you bring? In detail, explain why those items are important to you. Remember to use descriptive words.

2. Have all students preview the text. Encourage them to look at all of the images and captions on the page. Discuss the key differences between the text structure of *The Road to Freedom* and this informational text, "Angel Island."

3. Instruct students to go to pages 106 and 110. The sub titles are, "Chinese are Not Welcome!" and "Keeping the Chinese Out." Why do you suppose the author used an exclamation point in one subtitle and not the second one? What was she trying to emphasize in Keeping Chinese Out?

4. At the bottom of page 107 take a look at the painting. What does the caption say? Why do you suppose 15 Chinese workers were murdered by the angry mob?

5. Encourage students to read the paragraph about the Chinese Exclusion Act.

6. Using composition paper, complete the 3-2-1 graphic organizer, folding paper into a tri-fold and labeling:

    a. 3 - vocabulary words that are new to you

    b. 2 - facts that you learned about Angel Island

    c. 1 - summary paragraph about the text (4-6 sentences)

**Teacher Notes:** The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was the first law passed in the United States that discriminated against a specific group of people. It strictly limited the number of Chinese that could immigrate to the United States, or enter the country. From 1910-1940, immigrants wishing to come to the United States were detained on Angel Island, which served as an immigration station. Detainees were forced to sleep in barracks, which were large rooms that were often cramped and uncomfortable because of the number or people forced to sleep in a room. Immigrants slept in bunk beds; there were three bunk beds to a pole so they could fit more people to a room. The detainees would wait in the barracks until it was their turn to be interrogated. They seldom left the barracks, with few exceptions such as mealtime and exercise. The waiting process could last from several weeks to as long as two years. The interrogation process was a grueling process in which an immigrant was asked several questions to try and prove their status. If the detainees answered a question wrong or implied that they were not who they claimed to be, the immigrant would have to be deported and return to their country of origin.

**Evidence of Assessment**

1. Reread the text entitled, The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.
2. Use a red pen to highlight all examples of suffering. You can draw a rectangle around a word, phrase or sentence.
3. In groups of three or four use Text Talk and the following questions to discuss the passage:
4. How do you think the detainees felt as they waited to be interrogated? What emotions do you think they showed? Or did they show emotion?
5. Describe an emotion that would show if you had to wait to be interrogated?
6. This kind of treatment caused suffering. Do you think it's right for a government to cause intentional suffering to a group of people? Why do you feel that way?

**Materials Needed:**

- 30 copies of ReadyGen Text Collection , Volume I
- "Angel Island," pages 99-121
- 30 sharpened pencils
- Composition paper
- Red pen or highlighter

**Differentiation:**

Students that have difficulty with written expression can engage in verbal discussion. Teacher serves as facilitator to prompt further thought and discussion.

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# Peggy Savage
# The Great Migration: Keep Coming, a True American Experience

**Rationale:** Through art students learn of the author's migratory story to Harlem. At the time the author was 13 years old, he tells about people on the move. This move highlights the exodus of African Americans who left their homes and farms in the South around the time of WW1 and traveled to northern cities in search of better lives. This movement resulted in one of the biggest population shifts in the history of the United States.

For further information, please see Section D ("Human Nature") of the [Philosophical Themes.](#)

## Objective:

SWBAT identify aspects of a text IOT to reveal the author's point of view or purpose. SWBAT how the experiences of the artist tell this story through art IOT understand the author's purpose.

## Standards:

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.:** Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1:** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2:** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.6:** Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

## Evidence of Assessment:
Instruct students to read the quote below:

> "There was one thing that the white South feared more than negro dishonesty, ignorance, and incompetency, and that was negro honesty, knowledge, and efficiency." —W.E.B. DuBois, The Negro

Explain what you think WE.B. Dubois means? Was the Great Migration an example of people being honest, efficient and having knowledge? Reread the Great Migration again. Think about this question deeply.

**Learning Plan:**

1. Word Splash: Provide students with a blank sheet of paper Instruct them to splash (write ten) words or phrases around the word, "migration." Word splashes should include Canadian Geese, etc.

2. Discuss the word splash words and phrases. Develop a working definition for the word, "migration." Encourage students to Turn & Talk about a possible definition.

3. Provide the dictionary version. Ask students which definition is the best fit for reading, *The Great Migration*.

4. seasonal movement of animals from one region to another: "this butterfly's annual migration across North America"

5. movement from one part of something to another.

6. Look at the beginning of the text. Determine who is telling the story?

**Critical Thinking Questions, Issues and Challenges**

1. What was different about the black South in 1916 vs. that of 1876?

2. What kind of challenges did the migrants face when they arrived in the North?

3. What impact did the Great Migration have on Northern cities—their labor markets, economies, school systems, housing patterns, and politics?

4. What impact did the Great Migration have on Northern cities—their labor markets, economies, school systems, housing patterns, and politics?

**Exit Ticket:**

How were migrants in *The Great Migration* acting as free people? In what ways did their actions show they were living an authentic life?

**Materials:**
- *The Great Migration* – copy for each student
- Paper
- pencils

**Differentiation:**

Students that have difficulty with written expression can engage in verbal discussion. Teacher serves as facilitator to prompt further thought and discussion.

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# Peggy Savage
# Can Super Heroes Withstand Ridicule?

## Rationale:

Unit 2 provides a rich array of vocabulary and opportunity to analyze real-life characters who have withstood ridicule to do the right and just thing for others. In *Real Life Superheroes*, the risks of standing up for voiceless individuals when you were being ridiculed at the same time is the central theme. The unit uses various text to help students understand relationships between individuals and historical events and the importance of leadership.

For additional information, please see Section D ("Human Nature") of the [Philosophical Themes.](#)

## Objective(s):

Enduring Understanding: Understand that relationships between individuals and historical events are important to their understanding of a text. Learners: Understand that social movements are produced by a unique combination of leaders and events.

## Standard(s):

**RI 5.3** Explain the relationships between two or more individuals, events, ideas or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.

**CC.1.2.5.3**  Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain -specific words and phrases, including those that signal contrast, addition, and other logical relationships.

**RL 5.2** Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic, summarize the text. RI 5.2 Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.

## Assessment Evidence:

Performance-Based Assessment: Write a brief essay to explain the courage exhibited by one of the people in Real-Life Superheroes

## Four Square Analysis:

Students will choose two characters from the novel. Each character will be sketched or drawn in a square. Next to the square students will list two examples of how the character was ridiculed.

## Learning Plan:

1. Introduce the vocabulary word, "ridicule." Have students use a sheet of blank paper to splash words around the word ridicule. Try to use what you think the word could mean. Watch the video. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IjzZ0FakCyw Circle all the words you hear the narrator say.

2. Ask students to think of a time they felt they were being ridiculed. Have students turn and talk with their elbow partner. Encourage each pair or trio to share with another group adjacent to their group. Use an interactive timer to bring everyone back within three minutes.

3. Distribute, *Real Life Superheroes*. Have students take a walk through the book. Make sure they notice the text structure and how the book is laid out. Discuss the overall, "text structure."

4. Use a T- Chart to compare Richard Martin & Thomas Barnardo. Play the song / video, "Stand Up" co-written by the actress Ervio.
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NEMsIHVejWM

## Question(s):

1. How does one stand up when being ridiculed?

2. Could you stand up for yourself if you were being ridiculed by a peer?

3. When someone is being ridiculed or mistreated should others just stand by?

4. Some of the real-life superheroes had a rough start in life. Does their story inspire you? How so? Tell exactly what part of the real-life superheroes story was inspirational to you?

## Exit Ticket:

Students briefly describe a time when they were ridiculed? What was your first reaction?

## Materials:

Real Life Superheroes (Anchor Text)

Supporting texts are included in the ReadyGen Curriculum

**Differentiation:**

Students that have difficulty with written expression can engage in verbal discussion. Teacher serves as facilitator to prompt further thought and discussion.

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# Kireema Sprowal
# Conquering Evil

**Lesson Title:**
"Conquering Evil By Doing Good"

**Rationale:**

*Real-Life Superheroes* is a non-fiction chapter book showcasing the lives of Richard Martin, Thomas Barnardo, Raoul Wallenberg and Rosa Parks who are featured as real-life superheroes who observed the injustices being done within their time and found ways to fight back.  Reading the profiles of these four individuals shines a different light on the philosophical views of evil: (Western Philosophy) God being defined as omniscience, omnipotent and omnibenevolent and if He exist then he can't be good because "evil" still exist and He wouldn't allow it if He's God; (Claudia Card) taking God out of the evil equation and focus on human suffering with people doing bad things even with knowing the foreseeable, intolerable harm; (David Livingstone Smith) evil is the dehumanizing of another human being which lowers empathy for another person for personal "selfish" gain; and (Hannah Arendt) that categorizes evil as being absolute [monstrous intention to abolish humanity itself] and banal [an evil action brought about by someone who may be a perfectly ordinary non- evil person who does something carelessly or without thought.

Based on the injustice (evil) being done during each of their time, each one seemed to fight back against that form of evil through a variety of ways.  Richard Martin fought back against animal cruelty by forming the SPCA; Thomas Barnardo fought back against the severe poverty of poor children by establishing boarding schools for them; Raoul Wallenberg fight in World War II against the Nazis by saving thousands of Jews from being killed; and Rosa Parks fighting for equal rights for everyone and sparking the Civil Rights Movement by refusing to give up her seat on a bus. The reader gets to see how these four extraordinary people against mounting odds and tremendous evil conquered it by doing good.

For further information on these topics, please see Section G ("Evil"), especially parts 2 and 3, of the Philosophical Themes.

**Objectives:**

●       Students are able to give a more complex definition of evil than a generic version (someone who does something bad) using the terminology taught within the lesson.

● Students will be able to explain and identify the various forms of evil being displayed during the course of the lives of Richard Martin, Thomas Barnardo, Raoul Wallenberg and Rosa Parks based on the four ways it is showcased through philosophy.

● Students will be able to explain, citing the text and in detail, how the four Real-Life Superheroes Richard Martin, Thomas Barnardo, Raoul Wallenberg and Rosa Parks conquered the "evil".

**Standards:**

**CC.1.2.5.B:** Cite textual evidence by quoting accurately from the text to explain what the text says explicitly and make inferences.

**CC.1.2.5.C:** Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a text based on specific information in the text.

**Assessment Evidence:**

- Exit tickets (mini assignment based on what is being taught for the day)
- TDA or writing response based off of the question: What evil did the people profiled in Real-Life Superheroes face during their time and how did they conquer it through their good deeds? Students must incorporate terminology learned from the philosophy lesson and refer to the Evil: Deed Versus Motive - A Philosophical View chart.

**Learning Plan:**

- Teacher hands out 3 sheets of blank paper and has the students fold them in half to create a booklet.

- Teacher has the students title the booklet "Conquering Evil With Good Deeds" and number the pages inside.

- Teacher gathers students into a circle and leads a class discussion with a scenario and questions. Before the scenario(s) are given the teacher introduces the strategy of the "talking stick" which only allows one person to speak at a time by holding an object that enables them to be the only one to speak at that time.

- Teacher gives the following as a scenario and posts it on the board:

**What would you do if you and your friend was left back in the classroom and you saw him/her steal a piece of candy from the teachers' desk. Would you tell the teacher or keep it a secret? Why or why not?**

- Teacher has students turn to page one in their booklets and gives 5 minutes to write a response. Teacher allows 2 to 3 students to respond without saying anything.

- Teacher poses another scenario and posts it on the board:

**What if your friend shared with you that his dad was beating him with extension cords and hitting his mom a lot, would you say anything to anyone? Why or why not?**

- Teacher has students turn to page two in their booklets and gives 5 minutes to write a response. Teacher allows 2 to 3 students to respond without saying anything.
- Teacher poses one more scenario and posts it on the board:

**What if you overheard an older student in school talking on the phone and it sounds like he is buying a weapon because he wants to take care of a bully in school that keeps picking on him and his younger brother? Would you do anything to try and stop it? Why or why not?**

- Teacher has students turn to page three in their booklets and gives 5 minutes to write a response. Teacher allows 2 to 3 students to respond without saying anything.

- Teacher explains that they will be reading a new class book and it is a non-fiction chapter book featuring four people who were considered to be real-life superheroes because they faced difficult situations and major injustices (evil) within their lifetime and were able to conquer it through doing good deeds.

- While still in the circle the teacher pulls out a ready-made chart titled Evil: Deed Versus Motive - A Philosophical View, a table displaying the name of the philosophy and underneath written their take or view on evil: (Western Philosophy) God being defined as omniscience, omnipotent and omnibenevolent and if He exist then he can't be good because "evil" still exist and He wouldn't allow it if He's God; (Claudia Card) taking God out of the evil equation and focus on human suffering with people doing bad things even with knowing the foreseeable, intolerable harm; (David Livingstone Smith) evil is the dehumanizing of another human being which lowers empathy for another person for personal "selfish" gain; and (Hannah Arendt) that categorizes evil as being absolute [monstrous intention to abolish humanity itself] and banal [an evil action brought about by someone who may be a perfectly ordinary non- evil person who does something carelessly or without thought.

- Teacher then explains and gives examples of each view of evil that is displayed within the chart.

- Teacher sends the students back to their desk with their booklets and has them write about, explain and identify what evil did each real-life superhero have to face as defined by one of the four philosophical views of evil and how did each real-life

superhero overcome the evil that they faced and in turn help others. Explain to students that they have to support their response by citing evidence from the book.

- Before students turn in their booklet as an exit ticket, the teacher asks for 3 to 4 students to share some of their responses from each of the philosophical views of evil.

**Resources:**

- Evil: Deed Versus Motive - A Philosophical View teacher made chart [see description under Learning Plan above]

- Pencils

- Blank Paper

- Class Set of *Real-Life Superheroes*

**Differentiation/Modifications:**

- Model each step of the lesson as it is being done

- Create ready-made template for ESOL students

- Give some instructions bi-lingually

- Pair students for peer teaching

- Work with students one-on-one or, have a small group during independent time.

# Terry Anne Wildman
# Are all heroes brave?

**Rationale:**  Unit 2 in the ReadyGen ELA curriculum for fifth graders focuses on people who are known for their brave acts.  Using *Real Life Superheroes, The Great Migration,* and *The Road to Freedom*, students will look at similarities and differences of these historic figures and discuss the concept of bravery.  This lesson should take approximately 40 minutes.

For further information on these topics, please see Section D ("Human Nature"), of the Philosophical Themes.

**Objectives:**  SWBAT analyze how characters respond to challenges through actions and dialogue IOT determine a theme of the story.

**Standards:**  CC.RL.5.2 Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.

**Assessment Evidence:**
Exit Slip - What have you learned today about the term bravery?  Who would you say was the bravest person you know today? Why did you pick them?

**Learning Plan:**

- Introduce the concept bravery - a quality or state of having or showing mental and moral strength to face danger, fear, or difficulty.  Give examples such as the lion in the Wizard of Oz.

- Divide students in groups of 2 or 3, give each student a piece of paper.  Ask them to discuss the word bravery - what it means to them.  Ask each student to draw a picture or write a scenario of bravery.

- While they are doing that, have two large pieces of paper with the words "More Brave" on one and "Less Brave" on the other.  Put them in the center of the room, on a board, or clipped to a line in the classroom - have them far apart from each other.

- Ask students to come up with their paper and share with the class what they drew/wrote. Ask the student to put their paper on the continuum and give the reasons why it should go there (they will decide how brave they think their paper is).  You can model this saying: "I put my paper here because….."

- As each student goes up, they put their paper on the continuum the same way - make sure they give reasons for why they are placing it where they put it.

- Then read one of the stories in *Real Life Superheroes*. Ask students to discuss in their groups what the character did that showed bravery. Share out. Then have students agree on where that character should be places on the bravery continuum - have each student give a reason why it should be placed where they think it should be.

- Do this for each of the four characters in the book.

**Resources:**

- *Real Life Superheroes, The Great Migration,* and *The Road to Freedom*

- Paper and pencils for students

- Large paper for signs (More Brave and Less Brave)

**Differentiation/Extensions:**

Teachers can keep this Bravery line posted in the classroom and use it while reading *The Great Migration* and *The Road to Freedom*. Following the same idea, teachers can have the class decide where to put these characters on the line giving reasons for their answers.

# Melissa Green
# Critical Thinking-Views on Technology

**Rationale:** This is the story of George who is taken to outer space by a scientist, his daughter, and a super computer. This lesson was created to allow students to engage in discourse and compare and contrast two characters while citing evidence. Comparative thinking is a natural form of thought and allows for analysis and critical thinking. Citing evidence is an important skill, especially in a society where it is increasingly more important for students to be critical of what they read. Citing evidence encourages students to use higher level thinking skills and forces students to use information from the text to support their understanding. Students will discuss whether the advantages of technology outweigh the disadvantages.

For further information on these topics, please see Section 2 ("Supporting Claims with Evidence"), especially part 1, of the Philosophical Themes.

**Objectives:** SWBAT compare and contrast two characters in order to understand their views on technology

**Standards:**

**CC.1.3.5.C** Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text.

**CC.1.3.5.B** Cite textual evidence by quoting accurately from the text to explain what the text says explicitly and make inferences.

**Assessment Evidence:**

Students will complete a T-chart that demonstrates understanding of objective

Students will complete an exit ticket that demonstrates understanding of objective

**Learning Plan:**

1. 1. Four Corner Activity
   a. Teacher will hang posters with the following questions below in the corners of the room
   b. Give each student an index card with a number (cards are numbered #1-4)
   c. On board write the following and have students write their responses on post-it notes):

       i.   #1- Is technology making people lazier? Explain

      ii.   #2- What are some positive results of technology?

     iii.   #3-What are some negative results of technology?

     iv.   #4- How would things be different if we didn't have the technology we have today?

    d.   -After writing response, students will move to the corresponding corner, post note, share responses and engage in discussion with peers

    e.   -Teacher will have volunteers share out from each corner

2.  Students will read text (independently or with a partner) pages 1-5

    a.   Teacher will set a purpose for reading:  Find evidence that supports George's views towards technology vs. his parents' views

    b.   Students will use a [T-Chart](#)  graphic organizer to track and record evidence that shows how George and his parents differ in their views on technology

    c.   After reading, students will share their T-charts to demonstrate understanding of objective

3.  Exit Ticket:  How is your parent or guardian different from George's parents? Use evidence from the passage to support your answer.


**Resources:**

- Ready Gen: *George's Secret Key to the Universe*

- Appropriate time needed for lesson:45 minutes

- Four Posters

- Post-it notes

- T-chart. Graphic organizer


**Differentiation/Modifications:**

In order to differentiate instruction and support students' needs, the teacher can incorporate small group instruction for readers that require more support and scaffolding in reading. Teacher can use the gradual release model to demonstrate citing evidence for the T-chart. Students that need more support in writing, can be supported by giving verbal responses while teacher completes writing on T-chart.

# Melissa Green
# State your Claim, part 1

<u>Rationale:</u> George's parents live without electrical devices and George thinks that computers allow students to learn about the world. This lesson was created to allow students to engage in discourse while stating a claim and supporting that claim with evidence. Citing evidence is an important skill, especially in a society where it is increasingly more important for students to be critical of what they read. Citing evidence encourages students to use higher level thinking skills and forces students to use information from the text to support their understanding.

For further information on these topics, please see Section 2 ("Supporting Claims with Evidence"), especially part 1, of the <u>Philosophical Themes</u>.

## <u>Objectives:</u>

Students will be able to state a claim, provide evidence and a conclusion

## <u>Standards:</u>

> **CC.1.3.5.A** Determine a theme of a text from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.
>
> **CC.1.3.5.B** Cite textual evidence by quoting accurately from the text to explain what the text says explicitly and make inferences.

## <u>Assessment Evidence:</u>

Exit Ticket: Based on reading, students will complete a response that includes a claim, evidence and conclusion

## <u>Learning Plan:</u>

1. 2 sides Activity
   a. Teacher will post the following claims and have students choose 1 and respond with a detailed written explanation:
      - It is acceptable for a child to disobey his or her parent or

guardian.

- It is not acceptable for a child to disobey his or her parent or guardian.

    b. Teacher will then have students go to the corresponding sides of the room based on their response (acceptable or not acceptable)

    c. Students will pair up with someone on their side and share response

    d. Teacher will introduce the terms "claim, evidence, conclusion"

    e. Teacher will explain to students that in the above task a claim was made, they supported it with evidence, and came to a conclusion

    f. Teacher will model creating an exemplar response to question while further reinforcing claim, evidence, and conclusion.

    g. Teacher will create an anchor chart for the room that students can reference to support understanding of claim, evidence, conclusion

2. Independent or Partner reading pages 6-13

    a. Teacher gives students a purpose for reading: Read to find out how George disobeys his parents.

    b. As students read, they will track evidence that shows how George disobeys his parents

    c. After reading, the teacher will allow students to share findings

3. Exit Ticket: Make a claim, support it with evidence and make a conclusion; Choose 1 of the following:
   - It was necessary for George to disobey his parents and go Next Door.
   - It was not necessary for George to disobey his parents and go Next Door.

**Resources:**

- Ready Gen: *George's Secret Key to the Universe*

- Appropriate time needed for lesson: 45-minute period

**Differentiation/Modifications:**

In order to differentiate instruction and support students' needs, the teacher can incorporate small group instruction for readers that require more support and scaffolding. The teacher can use the gradual release model to demonstrate citing evidence. The teacher can model the completion of the exit ticket.

Further reinforcement will occur in the next day's lesson, which continues with claim, evidence and conclusion.

# Melissa Green
# State your Claim Part 2

**Rationale:** In this lesson, students will look at the friendship between George and Annie and what makes a good friend. This lesson was created to allow students to engage in discourse while stating a claim and supporting that claim with evidence. This lesson allows students to engage in discourse and compare and contrast two characters while citing evidence. Comparative thinking is a natural form of thought and allows for analysis and critical thinking. Citing evidence is an important skill, especially in a society where it is increasingly more important for students to be critical of what they read. Citing evidence encourages students to use higher level thinking skills and forces students to use information from the text to support their understanding.

For further information on these topics, please see Section 2 ("Supporting Claims with Evidence), especially part 1, of the [Philosophical Themes](#).

## Objectives:

Students will be able to state a claim, provide evidence and a conclusion.

## Standards:

**CC.1.3.5.A** Determine a theme of a text from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.

**CC.1.3.5.B** Cite textual evidence by quoting accurately from the text to explain what the text says explicitly and make inferences.

## Assessment Evidence:

Exit Ticket: Based on reading, students will complete a response that includes a claim, evidence and conclusion

## Learning Plan:

1. First Activity
   a. Teacher will remind students of the prior day's learning, which focused on claim, evidence, and conclusion (Use anchor chart that was created for student reference and reinforcement)
   b. Teacher will post the following claims and have students choose 1 and

respond with a detailed written explanation that includes evidence:

- It is necessary for a person to have many things in common with their friend.
- It is not necessary for a person to have many things in common with their friend.

    c. Students will turn and talk to a classmate to discuss responses

    d. Teacher will remind students that in the above task a claim was made, they supported it with evidence and came to a conclusion

2. Independent or Partner reading pages 17-25

    a. Teacher gives students a purpose for reading: Read to find out how George and Annie are similar and different

    b. As students read, they will track similarities and differences between George and Annie through the use of a graphic organizer ([Venn Diagram](#))

    c. After reading, the teacher will allow students to share findings

3. Exit Ticket: Make a claim, support it with evidence and make a conclusion: Choose 1 of the following claims:

- George and Annie could become good friends.
- George and Annie couldn't become good friends.

**Resources:**

- Ready Gen: *George's Secret Key to the Universe*
- Appropriate time needed for lesson: (2) 45-minute class periods
- Create Critical Thinking Chart – claim, evidence, conclusion

**Differentiation/Modifications:**

In order to differentiate instruction and support students' needs, the teacher can incorporate small group instruction for readers that require more support and scaffolding. The teacher can use the gradual release model to demonstrate citing evidence and well as the completion of a Venn diagram. The teacher can model the completion of the initial claim, evidence and conclusion task or the exit ticket. The use of the [Venn diagram](#) is a form of differentiation, which enables students to organize information visually so they are able to see the relationships between the two characters.

# Peggy Savage
# Critical Thinking - Female Identity: Am I Happiest as a Boy? Analyzing Female Characters

## Rational:

In Unit 4 Module A, students take a deeper dive into character analysis and motive. In *Beyond the Horizon*, students analyze the motives of three characters. Specifically, they look at the complex relationship between Sarah and her father. Early in Chapter One, students learn that Sarah's father fails to bring her on a business trip to India. Students understand and realize the necessity to disguise gender-identity to realize a goal. They are encouraged to debate the advantages and disadvantages of radical identity change to gain opportunity.

For background information, please see the [Philosophical Themes](), Section E ("Human 'Kinds'"), specifically parts 1 and 2.

## Objective:

SWBAT compare and contrast two characters in order to understand their views on gender identity.

## Standards:
**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.3**

Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., how characters interact)

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.6:** Describe how a narrator's or speaker's point of view influences how events are described.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.7:** Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: Analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text (e.g., graphic novel, multimedia presentation of fiction, folktale, myth, poem).

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.8**

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.9:** Compare and contrast stories in the same genre (e.g., mysteries and adventure stories) on their approaches to similar themes and topics.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.10:** Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity: by the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, at the high end of the grades 4-5 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

**Learning Plan:**

1. Gallery Walk

   a. Create four posters. On one poster label "Advantages of being a Girl," on another poster label "Advantages of being a boy."

   b. Label the other two - Disadvantages of being a boy /girl. Encourage students to place their responses on the posters with sticky notes. Allow 15 minutes for this activity.

   c. Allow 5 minutes for students to look at each poster and reach a consensus about being a girl or a boy. Have them discuss any advantages or disadvantages for each.

   d. Instruct students to read chapter one and ponder this question: On page 7 as the coach disappeared, what do you think Sarah was thinking? How does this thinking propel her to act? As she cuts her hair she makes the decision to disguise herself as a boy. Does this make her happy? How do you know? Can disguising oneself increase one's happiness?

   e. Would this story be different if Sarah was a boy? Does Sarah's disguise give her the courage to be who she needs to be?

   f. How does her decision affect and shape the events in the novel?

2. Exit Ticket:

   a. Critical Thinking: Answer one of these questions

   • If *Beyond the Horizon* had taken place in 2019, do you think the father would have refused to take Sarah on the trip with him? Why do you feel that way? Explain your thinking?

   • At the end of the novel did Sarah appears happy? How do you know?

   • Can you provide your own definition of happiness?

**Resources:**

• 30 copies of anchor text: *Beyond the Horizon*
• 30 sharpened pencils
• 30 sheets of composition paper
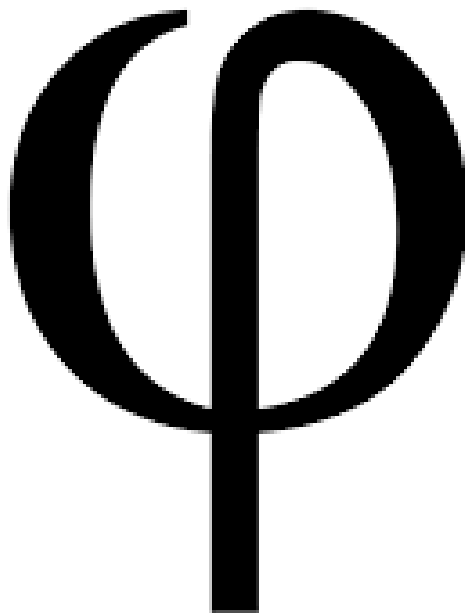• Post-it pads, various colors
• Four posters.

**<u>Differentiation:</u>**

Students that have difficulty with written expression can engage in verbal discussion. Teacher serves as facilitator to prompt further thought and discussion.

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# Philosophical Themes for Lesson Plans

**Philosophical Themes for Lesson Plans: Section Contents**

**A.** <u>Facts, Opinions and Knowledge</u>

**1.** Facts vs. Opinions

Perhaps someone has responded to something you said with this question: "Is that a fact or is it just your opinion?" We often see "fact" and "opinion" opposed to each other in this way. If we take a closer look, however, we can see that the two options do not neatly divide up the conceptual terrain we care about when we ask this question. To see this, let's take a quick look at the terrain and consider some examples. We will also briefly look at connections to other important ideas, such as truth and knowledge.

Philosophers consider facts to be things that actually exist; they are aspects of what is real. So, to be clear, the question is asking about whether the content of something you have said (perhaps relating a belief you hold) states or expresses a fact. Asking if I have stated a fact is asking whether what I have said corresponds to something that is the case, or is real. If it does, then, I have made a true statement about the world (according to a simple conception of truth - more on this below).

Note that another (more directly opposing) contrast to my stating a fact would be if I had said something *false* about the world. These are the two options if the statement is about something that describes how the world might be. It either expresses a fact, and is true, or, on the other hand, it expresses something that is not a fact and is false. In either case, what one is expressing must be a claim about the world that doesn't depend on my idiosyncratic perspective as a human being. This contrast can be described in terms of statements having "objective" versus "subjective" contents. Both true and false statements about the world have objective content: their truth or falsity doesn't depend on my particular subjective point-of-view.

With this as backdrop, we can now see that offering an "opinion" doesn't neatly contrast with giving a statement of fact (an opinion is not defined as the expression of a falsehood). In everyday usage there appear to be *two different things* one might mean by "opinion" when asking "Is that a fact or is it just your opinion?" First, it might refer to a statement or claim that purports to be true of the world, but might well be false. Here, the label of "opinion" is expressing doubt about the statement's truth. But there is a second

possibility: perhaps it is an "opinion" because it isn't the kind of thing that could be either true *or* false in a way that is independent of my human perspective (it expresses something subjective).

Let's look at an example of the first usage. I wake up in the morning with a bad toothache and declare to my partner: "I need a root canal." She says: "That is just your opinion." Now, whether I do need a root canal is the kind of thing that is either true or false about an aspect of the world (my tooth). My partner is suggesting, however, that my statement might be wrong: in this case she is probably thinking I do not have good reasons in support of the truth of my statement. After all, I don't know much about teeth! Now assume that later in the day I visit the dentist. The dentist carefully examines the tooth, and utilizing her tools and years of experience concludes that I clearly need a root canal. Having relayed this to my partner, she now considers it a fact that "I need a root canal". The statement has been appropriately justified or supported (we will take a closer look at the notion of justification below).

In contrast, assume I say: "Cumulus clouds are really much more wonderful than cirrus clouds." Now if I am accused of merely offering an opinion, this is for a different reason. The statement has no truth or falsity apart from my perspective: it is subjective. As a simple test, the difference between the two uses of opinion can be judged by whether we can imagine it to be true or not independent of the beliefs and feelings of particular human beings. In the root canal case, my particular feelings played a role in my making the assertion (my tooth hurts!), but my beliefs and feelings played no role in determining the statement's truth or falsity. In the cloud case, it is my personal feeling or preference that is being directly expressed.

Some cases may be harder to classify. I say: "Big dogs are way scarier than small dogs." This may be seen as an opinion of the second sort: it is subjective. However, it may be a fact that big dogs are capable of causing greater harm to a human. To the extent this is the idea I am imperfectly conveying, perhaps one might say I am making a well-supported claim about the world (just not very clearly).

## 2. Fallibility, Proof, and Skepticism

One objection to the discussion so far would go as follows: We can never be sure of our facts. Any expression of something true about the world, then, can be disputed. As a result, all we have are "opinions" (albeit two types, reflecting the discussion above). If we focus on the first type of opinion (a disputed statement with objective content), some may be more or less well supported by reasons or evidence, but this is just a question of degree. Even my dentist is fallible: sometimes she will make a mistake. When she says I need a root canal, perhaps this is still merely an opinion. Related to this suggestion is the idea that facts need definitive "proof." Sometimes it is said that a statement of fact is a claim that has been proved. But can we, for example, prove that I need a root canal?

Philosophers will usually say that "proof" is not a notion that applies to claims about the world (it is a concept defined within logic and mathematics). One suggestion is that we should refrain from talking about facts, and instead contrast insufficiently supported opinions with making a "considered judgement." Here, to make a considered judgment assumes we have collected and considered enough evidence to be confident about something, even if we concede that, like my dentist, we are all fallible. On the other hand, perhaps in everyday life there is no need to be so circumspect: there are times we are so sure that something is fact that to doubt it seems unreasonable. My cat is 10 years old, I am currently residing in Philadelphia, and there is soda in the fridge. To entertain skepticism in such cases ("I might be delusional/hallucinating" or "we might all living in a computer simulation!") isn't helpful in everyday life. So contrasting statements of fact (well-supported by reasons or evidence) with statements about the world that are clearly disputable seems fine, keeping in mind that if these latter are labeled "opinions", these need to be contrasted with statements of personal feelings or preferences.

## 3. A Note on Truth

The distinction between statements that might be true or false about the world from "subjective" statements that rely on a particular point of view is perhaps oversimplified. Can a statement (or proposition) be considered to be true or false independently of the existence of humans? We considered above the issue of our fallibility in considering whether our

statements correspond to facts, perhaps another problem lies in the notion that we can conceive of facts without reference to human thoughts and language. There are, in fact, many philosophical theories of truth in addition to the correspondence account (and some versions of the correspondence theory allow that facts may be in some way dependent on human minds). For many everyday examples and, importantly, for science, however, it seems sufficient to work with the idea that our statements are true if they accurately describe what is the case in the world independent of human minds.

**4.** Special Contexts: Scientific and Moral Cases

Sometimes the contrast between the way we use words in everyday life and in specialized settings causes some confusion. A prime example here is the use of "theory" in everyday life to mean something like "opinion" in the first sense discussed in Part 1 above. Here it suggests a not-well-supported statement about the world—some may use it to even mean just a hunch or guess about something. In scientific contexts, however, a theory is an idea (or set of ideas) that structure and explain a broad range of worldly phenomena. Importantly, a scientific theory is well supported by a variety of evidence – observations and/or experimental data about the various phenomena it describes and predicts.

Another case, mentioned in Part 2 above, is that of proof. Scientists are reluctant to declare that a hypothesis or theory is proved once and for all. The nature of scientific methodology is to continue to probe accepted ideas and wherever possible extend our understanding further. And, of course, the history of science shows many examples of theories that were superseded. This humility with which science proceeds should not, however, give rise to undue skepticism. Our best scientific theories have been extremely successful and have led to vast increases in our understanding while also forming the basis of reliable technologies.

A tricky case relates to statements that make moral or ethical claims. Can these be facts (or falsehoods)? In other words, do they have objective content, or do they necessarily fall into the second classification of opinion where the claim depends on a human point-of-view? If I assert that it is wrong to own other people and use them as I wish, does this correspond to something true about the world? On the one hand we have strong moral

convictions that seem to transcend mere opinion. At the same time, it is not clear how they correspond to a feature of reality. And of course, there are many disputed moral claims. Consider this claim: It is wrong to steal food from the store to give to really hungry neighborhood children whose parents have lost their jobs. Is stealing always wrong or are there permitted exceptions? Religious traditions provide a set of rules meant to provide clarity, and some philosophical approaches also postulate the existence of moral rules or other objective underpinnings for morality. These approaches are very controversial, however, and many consider the moral sphere to be about human beings and their judgements and actions, rather than about the world independent of us.

## 5. Beliefs and Knowledge

The fact vs. opinion distinction discussed in Part 1 connects to the ideas of belief and knowledge which have been a major focus of philosophers. A belief is the attitude one has when one takes something to be the case or to be true. It is a very general category that encompasses everything from casual opinions about things all the way to the kind of considered judgments that might underlie a firm statement of fact. Philosophers then ask: what is it that makes something one believes *also* something that one *knows*? In other words, what ingredients must be added to a belief for it to constitute knowledge? Traditionally, the first ingredient is that the belief must actually be true (a mistaken belief can't be knowledge). Beyond this, however, more is needed, because a belief that happened to be true just by chance is not considered knowledge. The belief must also be something that we are justified in maintaining: perhaps because it is supported by reasons in the right way or gained via a reliable process. The exact way these latter ideas should be worked out is a subject for ongoing debate. But the achievement of knowledge parallels the kind of accomplishment that enables me to express a fact (an item of knowledge) rather than "just" an opinion (a belief about the world that falls short of knowledge).

## 6. Kinds of Justification

What constitutes good justification or support for a statement of fact or claim of knowledge? This can be another complicated topic, but we will focus on the idea that support relies on

gathering supporting evidence of one kind or another. The most basic evidence is that which comes from direct observation. We trust that most of the time our senses give us reliable information about the world. With some evidence, such as scientific evidence, such observations are assisted by equipment (e.g. a microscope) that we have reason to believe is also reliable. The case of the dentist's diagnosis discussed in Part 1 above brings up an interesting issue: when is it OK to rely on another person's information (or "testimony") when expressing a fact? Sometimes we can compare the testimony to other reliable sources of evidence (perhaps a second opinion from another dentist), but sometimes this is not possible. We sometimes trust information if we believe the process by which it was obtained by others was sound. Either the person providing the testimony observed it, or, as in the case of the dentist, acquired the ability to provide the information through a process of training and experience with similar cases over time (gaining expertise). While the decision to trust testimony is not always easy, we generally seem justified in doing so if we understand in a rough way how it was acquired and have no particular reasons for doubting it.

However, philosophers have explored deeper issues that are involved when considering knowledge based on testimony. Reflecting on how we come to acquired most of what we think we know, we can readily see that we rely heavily on indirect sources— books, television, the internet, as well as the people we know in real life. It isn't feasible that we can trace all of this back to bedrock sources that we deem most reliable. This "problem of testimonial knowledge" has no easy solution. Also, the question of whose testimony is considered a trusted source of knowledge becomes enmeshed in issues related to society at large. Questions about how the role of social structures and positions within society bear on knowledge acquisition and sharing is a topic that we will consider separately (in Section C below). Here, though, it is worth noting that the acquisition of authority and expertise in scientific fields has a clear collaborative dimension. The trustworthiness of scientific sources of knowledge depends not only on training and certification processes (such as my dentist went through), but also on self-checking mechanisms such as peer review of research publications and replication of experimental results. The operation of these and other social/institutional factors play a key role in assignment of authority to scientific testimony.

**7.** Further Reading

John Corvino: "The Fact/Opinion Distinction"
https://www.philosophersmag.com/essays/26-the-fact-opinion-distinction
Christopher Lammer-Heindel: "Facts & Opinions"
https://philosophynow.org/issues/115/Facts_and_Opinions
Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy: "Epistemology" https://iep.utm.edu/epistemo/

**B.** Supporting Claims with Evidence: Inference and Arguments

**1.** Claims, Evidence, and Inference

In this section, we take a more structured approach to seeing how certain kinds of opinions or beliefs are justified, focusing on simple examples of claims. Here, to make a claim about something is to express a certain kind of thought, opinion, or belief in a spoken or written statement. Specifically, the statement must have to do with something about the world or what is real, independent of our idiosyncratic perspective on things. Claims are either true or false. For example: there is soda in my refrigerator; or, steel bars always expand when heated. In other words, using the terminology used in Section A (Part 1), a claim must have objective content. This is in contrast to other statements that depend on the subjective opinions or feelings of the person expressing them: such as when I insist to you that peach is the best flavor of yogurt.

How do we judge whether a claim is true? To decide, we must consider what would constitute adequate support or justification. This process starts with the notion of evidence. Evidence could take the form of statements that are already considered true, or those based on new information from reliable sources. As discussed in Section A (Part 6), these sources might include: direct observation using our senses; observations aided by devices such as a microscope or camera; or more indirect processes, such as trusted testimony from other people or from sources we consider to be authoritative. But the next step in the process is also crucial: it involves reasoning from the evidence to a conclusion about the truth of the claim. In other worlds, we must make an inference.

Note that we make inferences throughout our daily lives. We reason from things we know or think are likely to be true to draw further conclusions. If the ground is wet outside our door, I infer that it has rained. From there, I might infer that my dog, who was left outside, will be muddy and in need of a bath. In order to more carefully examine the nature of our inferences, it is very useful to organize our reasoning into *arguments*. Note that this use of the term "argument" differs from the way it is often used in daily life to mean something like a verbal fight. In the present context, an argument is a structured list of statements that present reasons (called premises) in support of a claim (the conclusion).

When we gather evidence in an attempt to justify a claim, we can organize it into premises and evaluate the support that it provides. We will begin by introducing two main kinds of reasoning (or rules of inference) that we might employ.

## 2. Deductive Arguments

The first kind of reasoning is deductive, and uses deductive arguments. What is distinctive about a deductive argument is that the conclusion is supposed to be guaranteed to be true if the premises are true. Put another way, it is not possible for the conclusion to be false if the argument is structured correctly and has true premises. Here is an example.

> Example (a):
> Premise 1: All dogs are mammals.
> Premise 2: Spot is a dog.
> Conclusion: Spot is a mammal.

You might notice that there is a sense in which the content of the conclusion was implicitly contained in the premises (philosophers would say the argument is not ampliative), and this is why the truth of the conclusion follows from the truth of the premises. The form of this example, that proceeds from a more general claim (about dogs) to a claim about a specific instance (the dog named Spot), is one of several typical ways that deductive arguments proceed.

To evaluate a deductive argument that has been presented, consider that there are two ways that they can go wrong. First, the premises might not, in fact, guarantee the conclusion as they should. Second, the premises might not be true.

> Example (b):
> Premise 1: All dogs are mammals.
> Premise 2: Spot is a mammal.
> Conclusion: Spot is a dog.

> Example (c):
> Premise 1: All frogs are mammals.
> Premise 2: Spot is a frog.
> Conclusion: Spot is a mammal.

In example (b), the truth of the conclusion does not follow even if the premises are true. Spot, after all, could be a cat or horse (for the purposes of evaluating an argument we only

use information presented to us—so it doesn't figure into things if there is by chance a dog in one's neighborhood named Spot).  Finding alternatives to the stated conclusion that also follow from the given premises is an excellent way to show that an argument has failed. In the jargon sometimes used, we would say the argument is not *valid*, since in a valid deductive argument the truth of the premises ensures the truth of the conclusion.  Turing to example (c): here the structure looks correct (the argument is valid), but Premise 1 is not true.  In this case it is said that the argument is not *sound*. A deductive argument needs to have both the correct structure and true premises to be sound.  And, of course, whether or not the premises are true will often be the focal point in evaluating an argument.  If we have gathered reasons or evidence in support of a claim, and they do indeed justify its truth, attention may turn to how we can be sure that the supporting reasons are actually true. Deductive arguments do play a role in everyday and scientific reasoning, but we often want to use evidence to support conclusions that expand our knowledge beyond what may have been simply implicit in the premises.   In such cases we will see, however, that guaranteeing a true conclusion is problematic.

**3.** Inductive Arguments

A second kind of reasoning uses inductive arguments. Unlike the case of a deductive argument, in an inductive argument the conclusion is not ensured by the truth of the premises, but is made likely to be (or probably) true.

> Example (d):
> Premise 1: Every cookie I have eaten from this box has been crisp.
> Conclusion: All of the cookies in this box are crisp.

Here, the conclusion moves from instances to a general claim (it is ampliative).  Clearly, the conclusion could be wrong even if the premise is true (the next cookie I try might be stale). It would be appropriate to qualify the conclusion by saying that it is likely that all of the cookies in this box are crisp.

Scientific reasoning often relies on inductive reasoning to generalize (or to project into the future), often relying on statistical information.  Some inductive conclusions reached in science seem very strong, however. Consider this argument:

Example (e):
Premise 1: All living things examined require water for survival.
Conclusion: All living things probably require water for survival.

Despite the consistency of the observations, scientists will still be open to exceptions (some hypothesize that another substance might take on the role of water for an exotic form of life).

The lack of certainty provided by inductive reasoning, however, can seem frustrating from our everyday perspective. Consider this classic example:

Example (f):
Premise 1: The sun has risen every day of my life.
Conclusion: The sun will rise tomorrow.

It may seem unreasonable to object that the conclusion is only probably true in a case like this one. After all, we rely on the consistency of patterns in the world to successfully navigate our lives. Yet it is important to realize the not-absolutely-guaranteed nature of inductive conclusions when evaluating arguments.

As in the case of deductive arguments, there are two ways an inductive argument can go wrong. Either the likelihood of the truth of the conclusion does not follow from the premises, or the premises themselves are false/unlikely to be true.


**4.** Fallacies

Our reasoning process often fails to support our claims, and in many cases for similar reasons. A fallacy is a category of error in reasoning where the conclusion does not follow from the premises. There are many common types which over time have received their own labels. For instance, if I argue that a dietary supplement will improve one's health by citing the recommendation of a film actor, I have made a fallacious "argument from authority". However, if the premises of any argument fail to provide adequate support for its conclusion, then an error in reasoning has occurred, whether or not it happens to be an instance of a particular fallacy.

**5.** Inference to the best explanation

One final kind of inference is worth mentioning, called inference to the best explanation (sometimes called abductive reasoning). Like inductive reasoning, inference to the best explanation does not guarantee the truth of a conclusion from a set of premises, but seeks to support a judgement that it is likely to be true (it is also ampliative). But it comes into play in somewhat different circumstances. Consider this example:

> Example (g):
> Premise 1: Jane is late for work.
> Premise 2: There is a traffic jam on Jane's normal commuting route.
> Conclusion: Jane is probably late because of the traffic jam on her route.

Given what we have to work with, this reasoning seems flawed: given that there are many reasons someone might be late (oversleeping, illness, flat tire), the conclusion that the traffic jam is likely to be responsible is not very well supported. Suppose we add a third (assumed true) premise as follows: Jane has been late to work exactly five times this month, and each time she blamed a traffic jam on her route. Now the argument for the conclusion via inductive reasoning is much more successful.

Now, return to the original argument and we will modify the first premise to clarify that Jane is late for work for the first time. Again, we would say that Premise 2's information about the traffic jam is not enough to elevate it as the clearly likely explanation for her lateness. However, now assume we do a little detective work and find that we can add some additional premises. A neighbor reports seeing Jane that morning looking well, dressed for work and leaving her house at the usual time. Suppose also it is reported that Jane has a late model car that has given her no problems. This additional information makes the conclusion that Jane is probably late due to the traffic jam better supported (compared to her being sick, oversleeping or having a car problem). This would be an example of inference to the best explanation. Rather than appealing to the frequency of occurrences (as in the case where Jane has been late many times), which is a hallmark of inductive reasoning, we now appeal to a more disparate set of premises that seem to offer explanatory considerations for our conclusion. A difficulty this kind of inference presents is that it relies

on our ability to consider not just one claim, but also a set of competing explanations, and of course we might err by failing to think of all the possible alternatives.

**6.** Further Reading

Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy: "Argument" https://iep.utm.edu/argument/

## C. Knowledge in Light of Experience and Social Position

### 1. Introduction

On a common view (see Section A, Parts 5 and 6), knowledge consists of true beliefs that have been justified or supported by reasons or evidence. In our discussion in the earlier sections we focused on relatively straightforward cases involving commonplace instances of knowledge. But it is also important to recognize that knowledge, beliefs, and evidence – what I know and how I know it – can be shaped by someone's personal experience, and hence importantly also by their social environment.

Some knowledge and ways of knowing are socially constructed. This may sound strange given a common-sense kind of definition of knowledge – that *knowledge* refers to facts or truths about the world. How could such a thing be socially created? Well, some knowledge is generated by personal experience, and some personal experiences cannot be shared by others. This unequal division of knowledge can also lead to problems in how we think about ourselves and the world and in how we treat others. Knowledge and access to it can constitute a kind of power that some can wield over others.

### 2. Social knowledge

Some knowledge is generated by personal experience and some is independent of people altogether. The location of Antarctica is independent of any human at all – even if no one had ever been there or even seen it, it would still be a potentially-knowable fact that Antarctica is where it is. In contrast, some things can only be known by experiencing them: a person born into a wealthy family cannot know *what it is like* to experience poverty, for example. This *what it is like*-ness is still a kind of knowledge, even if it isn't independent of a human perspective in the way we typically view physical or scientific knowledge. The wealthy person can gather information about what it is like to live below the poverty line – by reading about it, or listening to people who have or are experiencing that kind of life – but she cannot know it without help. This kind of knowledge is first-personal (it is generated by a person's experience) and it is social (it is influenced by one's social relations).

Who someone is – what groups they belong to – can also shape how people experience things and therefore what people know. People of different genders or races, for

example, are likely to experience things differently and thus know different things. A Black person will know what it like to be Black, while non-Black people will not, and a woman will know what it is like to live as a woman while a man will not. These experiences can be communicated – a woman can tell a man what it is like to be a woman – but he can never know this on his own.

Knowledge is social and so too is how we communicate knowledge. If you tell me something, I come to know what you've said – but only if I believe that you are telling the truth. My trust that you are correct, that you aren't the kind of person who would lie to me is socially conditioned. Some people are regarded as more trustworthy than others (given representations in the media, for example), and our estimations of who is trustworthy often depends on power or close connection. I am more inclined to believe my friend than a stranger, and more inclined to believe an authority figure than someone who isn't, even if my friend and the authority figure are wrong.

### 3.  Standpoint epistemology

One set of views about knowledge as a social thing, *standpoint epistemology*, suggests that we all occupy a social location or viewpoint on the world, and that this location gives us a way of knowing. Our viewpoints are determined by our membership in different groups. My viewpoint is determined by my race, gender, and a whole host of other identities – my religion, my economic status, my level of education, and so on – because this shapes how I experience the world. My identities shape my perspective because they determine how I am treated by others (*what* I experience) and how I think about my place in the world (*how I understand* my experiences). The key insight from standpoint epistemology is that different people will know different things.

Standpoint epistemologists argue that people who are members of oppressed groups have a broader perspective than people who are not members of those groups. Because they are marginalized, they learn how the dominant groups see the world: there are lots of depictions of what it is like to be white in popular media, for example, and far fewer of what it is like to be Indian, East Asian, or a member of an Indigenous group.

Marginalized people also have to learn how the dominant groups see the world in order to navigate it for their own safety. If I am a member of a marginalized group and I don't know how members of the dominant group see me, I cannot anticipate the dangers I may face. The opposite is also true. If I am in a dominant group, then it is not necessary for me to know what it is like to be a member of other groups (or what problems they may face) in order to go about my daily life. I can live in ignorance without consequences.

Different social positions – when those positions have different degrees of power or control over the social, political, and economic environment – create an asymmetry in knowledge.

### 4. Implicit bias, stereotypes, and prejudice

One of the ways that social knowledge and power imbalances play out is in the creation and maintenance of implicit biases, stereotypes, and prejudices.

An *implicit bias* exists when there is an unconscious connection between some sets of traits – that we are more likely to draw certain connections or see things in a certain way, but without consciously thinking about it. If I told you I was bitten by a dog, for example, it would be easier for you to connect that claim with a pit bull than with a famously gentle breed of dog like a Boston terrier. Implicit biases are like intellectual shortcuts that you don't even realize you're taking. Taking these shortcuts is dangerous, however: if you don't notice that an implicit bias is shaping how you think, you might make an error – for example, assuming that all pit bulls are dangerous and shouldn't be adopted.

A *stereotype* is similar to an implicit bias although it is explicit. Stereotypes are claims about how something is – like a rule of thumb – and while they may be widely believed this does not make them true. Further, they can be damaging whether or not they are true and whether or not they are positive. Consider the stereotype "Asians are good at math." Even if this were to be true – which is not at all obvious (some Asian people are skilled in math and some aren't) – it is harmful because it undercuts the effort and skill of the particular person to whom it is applied. It is disrespectful to suggest, as this stereotype does, that someone is gifted in math because of her race rather than her dedication, practice, intellectual skill, etc.

Turning next to prejudice, what we tend to mean by prejudice is that someone has not responded correctly to their evidence – that their belief is not justified. To say that I am *prejudiced* is to say that I possess evidence that a belief is incorrect and yet I have not adjusted that belief. For example, imagine a young boy, John, living in an isolated community where women are regarded as intellectually inferior to men. All the men but none of the women on this island are educated and encouraged to show off their cleverness, so every woman that John has ever met seems to him to be less intellectually gifted than the average man. John's belief is false but because of his limited experience we wouldn't say he is prejudiced: all his evidence supports his belief. Now imagine that John leaves the island for college and meets lots of educated and eloquent women. If he doesn't revise his belief about women being intellectually inferior, then he doesn't just have a false belief: he is also prejudiced.

The real danger of all three possibilities – of implicit bias, of stereotyping, and of prejudice – is that they intersect with social knowledge and power in a troubling way. Power preserves asymmetrical knowledge: if I am in a dominant group, not only do I not need to know what it is like to be a member of a marginalized group, but I also don't need to interrogate my own ways of knowing and how they might be faulty. This means that I would come to the wrong conclusions about the way that the world is and that I might act badly towards others out of that ignorance.

### 5. Epistemic injustice

A special kind of wrong caused by prejudice is called *epistemic injustice*. An epistemic injustice occurs when bad practices like stereotypes or prejudices prevent someone from being able to communicate knowledge.

One kind of epistemic injustice is *testimonial injustice*. In *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, Mr. Greenleaf dismisses Marge when she says that Mr. Ripley murdered her fiancé: "There's women's intuition, Marge, and then there are facts." This is a testimonial injustice because Mr. Greenleaf doesn't take women seriously as knowers, so he doesn't believe her (or even take her seriously) when she says what turns out to be a true claim. Marge cannot communicate her knowledge because she isn't being taken seriously. There are lots of

parallel cases, but in each instance, some bad view about the group that speaker belongs to prevents her from being able to share her knowledge.

Another kind of epistemic injustice is *hermeneutical injustice*. This is when some set of marginalized people has been left out of the discussion and so their experiences (their missing social knowledge) cannot be properly understood. Before people created the term 'sexual harassment,' for example, it was difficult for people to understand women when they described this kind of bad behavior at work. Women could not describe the problem in a way that conveyed the seriousness of the harm because their experiences hadn't been included in setting out categories that we use to understand things. Again, there are many parallel cases but in every instance exclusion on the basis of social group lead to a lack of knowledge derived from personal experience.

**6.** Further Reading

Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy: "Feminist Standpoint Theory"

https://iep.utm.edu/fem-stan/

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: "Implicit Bias"

https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/implicit-bias/

**D.** <u>Human Nature</u>

**1.** Introduction

There are a wide variety of conceptions of human nature that have been proposed. These tend to begin with a description of human nature, and then move on to discuss the implications this has for how one should live. If it is human nature to be fundamentally selfish, for example, then this will impact how we should approach group activities such as education or democracy.

On the topic of human nature, a question debated by philosophers is which comes first – essence or existence? *Essentialist* views say that there is a special essence or core that makes us human and the particular features of people are a result of these essences. *Existentialist* views say that there is nothing prior to what we make of ourselves: in adopting values and taking action I create my own nature for myself.

**2.** Comparing Two Conceptions

An essentialist view, which is found in a number of religious traditions as well as some philosophical systems, traditionally starts with an account of the soul. The soul is the essence of the human being. Though humans may have individually distinct souls according to these views, the fact that we all have souls of the same kind shows us to be fundamentally alike in an important way - it identifies us as humans. These views are descriptive: humans are a certain way because they have this shared essence.

Some have argued that there is no single essence that can describe all and only those we would call human beings. A scientific account, for example, would say, that, in common with other species, there are actually no traits that all and only humans have in a strict sense. The boundaries of what it is to be human (or any other species) are blurry. Lacking an essence need not imply humans are a kind of blank slate, of course. We are born into a certain factual situation, and we must form goals to strive for in light of these facts. However, if it were true that human beings have an essence, then this precedes and conditions our existence. It is what sets the stage for the particular challenges we are set against and must overcome in order to thrive.

A philosophical view that opposes this approach to human nature is existentialism. Existentialist views deny that there is a soul or essence that comes before our actions: on this view, existence precedes essence. Existentialists say that if there is an essence at all, it is individual and of our own creation. My nature is completely under my own power – my values and my actions determine the kind of thing that I am at a fundamental level – and it is different from yours.

The existentialist conception of human nature doesn't make descriptive claims about what people are. Rather, humans are centers of subjectivity: we are as we feel ourselves to be. Most importantly for the view, we feel ourselves to be free: we are then, simply, free beings. As such, we are free to choose our natures via our chosen projects. How we live in the world makes us who we are.

This view goes on to say that we are living our lives well when we are *authentic* – when our actions are in line with our values and thus our nature. To act a certain way because I think I have to, or because someone tells me I must, is inauthentic and *alienating* – it pulls me away from my self (the self I have created through adopting values and taking actions).

This view is sometimes criticized as not taking into account all of the ways we obviously aren't free, especially those born into difficult and oppressed circumstances. Someone born into slavery cannot reasonably be criticized for not acting authentically (as she desires to) because her social environment is dangerous and beyond her control. Still, the thrust of the view is that we make ourselves through our choices - exercising whatever types and degrees of freedom that obtain. Even if I am being forced into bad circumstances, I can – and, on the existentialist view, must – choose how to respond.

**3.**  Further Reading

Skye Cleary and Massimo Pigliucci: "Human Nature Matters"

https://aeon.co/essays/theres-no-philosophy-of-life-without-a-theory-of-human-nature

Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy: "Existentialism" https://iep.utm.edu/existent/

**E.** <u>Human 'Kinds'</u>

**1.** Introduction

Each human being is unique. But we are continually grouping people together by what are perceived to be shared attributes. Many thinkers make use of the idea of social construction in an attempt to understand how types and groups of human beings come into being where none of the physical attributes of the members of these groups would suffice to explain their memberships. The construction of these groups may be seen as due to very broad impersonal forces, such as cultures or large institutional structures. The example of this is the social construction of gender, a force that profoundly and pervasively shapes a conception of men and women in ways that have little to do with sex differences. Social construction may also be smaller and more personal in scale. The students in a certain teacher's class may be shaped into a group with certain distinctly shared characteristics as a result of the class environment the teacher and students have built together over the course of a school year.

**2.** Gender

Sex might be thought to provide one way to group humans, into males and females. On a common contemporary understanding, however, the categories of women and men are gender types, and these are based on shared social factors. Simone de Beauvoir famously claimed that one is not born, but rather becomes a woman. There is a temptation to treat perceived differences in characteristics between men and women as stemming from some biological basis, but they are in fact due to societal forces, often of ancient standing (for example, men are "ambitious" while women are "nurturing"). Feminists see oppression as a dominant dimension of these social forces. Characteristics associated with women place them in a subordinate societal position. Fortunately, implicit in the social construction of genders as they might exist at a certain time and place is the possibility of change. If society can be changed, then the social norms and assumed characteristics that describe the genders will also be changeable. People individually and as part of broader movements can strive to alter the given social structure they find themselves in.

### 3. Race

Another way in which humans are grouped is according to race. Even though there are many intuitive notions of what race is, there has been much debate not only on how this categorization system might work, but also whether it should be used at all. Some traditional views assume that race is a purely biological thing – that it depends entirely on how someone looks, on their genetic ancestry, or some other such biological basis. These views have come under pressure from the modern scientific understanding that humans are very homogeneous biologically. Biological differences in groups across that trace their ancestry to different geographic regions are actually very superficial. Also, others have noted that there can be an important personal and cultural aspect to race, too: someone may not look like a 'typical' member of a racial group but still identify as such based on their familial or cultural background. Like in the case of gender, many philosophers would stress the role of social construction in creating racial groupings.

Whether race is actually a good or useful category by which to group and understand humans at all is subject to ongoing debate. Some suggest that the idea of belonging to a race helps build communities and shared conceptions of what matters, and that it actually can help resist historical or ongoing injustices. Others have argued that it in fact perpetuates injustices and contributes to social and political divisions that undermine communities.

### 4. Are There Really Different Kinds of Humans?

In the philosophy of science there is a long-standing debate about how things are grouped into scientific kinds. At one end of the debate is a view that scientific analysis is able to identify types and kinds of entities that truly exist in nature independent of human inquiry. An opposite view is that scientists through their interests and practices actually create the kinds that they describe by imposing boundaries that don't independently exist. Between these poles, many philosophers have pursued more nuanced strategies that acknowledge the role that scientists, with their particular institutional roles and cognitive limitations, play in the identification of kinds, while also finding a role for the natural patterns of cause and effect that scientists set out to probe in making their determinations.

Likewise, when it comes to our notions of human kinds, there may be greater or lesser correlation of socially constructed groupings with physical attributes.  For example, consider the case of people with shared psychological or medical conditions: here there is a complex interplay of factors at work.  If a person is labeled as suffering from depression, being thereby a member of the group of depressed people, this may have implied different psychological traits at different times and places.  Here prevailing social ideas may play a role in characterizing depression alongside changing medical and scientific wisdom about what psychological/biological/genetic factors might actually be at work.

In the case of other groups, more purely social factors may play a role in creating human kinds we find ourselves belonging to. We may be categorized by membership in our neighborhoods, schools and workplaces, and we may be truly shaped in many ways by our finding ourselves in these contexts for periods of time.  Of course, we help co-create or sustain many of these groups as well, and must consider our responsibility for how they shape the lives of others.

### 5. The Danger of Human Kinds

Viewing humans as separated into kinds can have tragic consequences.  Prejudice and stereotyping can undermine the ability of people in some groups to fully realize their potential.  Wars and atrocities can be driven by a perception that other groups are so distinct from us as to be devalued, or even dehumanized. Reflecting on the ways in which our ideas about groupings may have been shaped by societal and cultural forces can be an antidote to the various harms that might be fostered by dividing humanity into kinds.

### 6. Further Reading

Sally Scholz: "The Second Sex" https://philosophynow.org/issues/69/The_Second_Sex
Jonathan Webber: "Against Type" https://aeon.co/essays/what-existentialist-philosophy-reveals-about-prejudices
Ian Hacking: "Making Up People" https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v28/n16/ian-hacking/making-up-people
The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: "Race" https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/race/

**F.**  <u>Human Beings and their Relation to Nature</u>

**1.**  Introduction

The relationship humans have to the natural world is of critical importance to examine—now perhaps more than ever before.  The recent history and projected outlook for the environment is troubling, featuring substantial human-caused impacts, notably climate change and loss of biodiversity. In addressing our response to the challenges these impacts present, it is helpful to critically consider the conceptual issues involving our relationship to nature.

**2.**  Are Humans Separate from the Natural World?

What do we mean by "nature" or the "natural", and, depending on the answer, how does our notion of what it is to be human relate to these categories?  One way to get a grip on the concept of nature or the natural is to consider what we hold to be in contrast or opposition to it.  For instance, a common idea is that what is "natural" can be contrasted with that which is "artificial" or "man-made".  If natural and man-made are opposing terms, then this seems to imply a picture where humans are distinct from nature in an essential way. Humans may interfere with or exploit nature to greater or lesser degrees when they interact with it, but they are irrevocably separate.  Yet there are difficult or vague boundaries involved in this picture.  For example, if humans plant a grove of trees, is it part of nature? If not, is it the case that if these trees subsequently reproduce and spread unaided by humans, they "return" to nature at some point?  Also, from the perspective of evolutionary biology, humans are animals who share common ancestry with all other living things.  If humans are not part of nature now, were they sometime in the past? And if the answer is yes, when and why did the transition take place?  A candidate here might be the onset of tool-use: this allowed humans to create artificial things using materials drawn from nature. But, of course, we now know from careful observation that a variety of other animals also use tools, and we don't intuitively think this separates them from nature. Perhaps we might point to intensive agriculture as a historical turning point.  But any attempt to pick a dividing line in this way is very likely to be disputable.

### 3. Comparing Conceptions

A better way to interrogate our relationship with nature might be to consider conceptions that have been widely held and may have influenced how we interact with our world. We might then prescriptively try to see how they might be improved. Historically, some religions have explicitly defined humans in such a way to make them distinct from nature. God gave souls to humans, and in some traditions assigned them mastery over the earth. Perhaps the contrast with the "natural" implied here is that of the "supernatural". Humans in this understanding are special because of our immaterial souls and special relationship to God, attributes shared with nothing else in the world. This separation opens up the question of what, if anything, we owe to the natural world apart from dealing with its effects on us.

Even within a religious worldview, however, there is room for different viewpoints. For instance, one important contrast historically in Europe was between medieval Christian thought, which utilized elements of a worldview drawn from the philosopher Aristotle, and a successor conception that became manifest circa the 17th century. The older Aristotelian view considered living things to be examples of the most basic or real natural substances. While non-human living things were not judged to have a soul in the manner of humans, they were thought to have an inner active principle, or form, along with their own goals or ends. The emerging scientific worldview, in contrast, stressed the essential nature of the world as that which is measurable or quantifiable. The world consists of matter whose only essential attribute was that it has extension in space: this matter comprises the phenomena we observe via the motion of its constituent parts. This worldview considers living things, in common with non-living objects, to be basically mechanical in nature. Human bodies are likewise mechanical, but humans are also, uniquely, endowed with a soul. This conception's sharp distinction between humans and everything else seems particularly likely to foster the view that the natural world is something for humans to exploit, rather than something to value for its own sake. This materialistic-mechanical worldview arguably serves as a legacy that has influenced our relationship with nature, at least in the West. Sensitivity to the origin of some of our shared background assumptions about nature may be helpful in assessing our options for how we proceed with environmental issues.

**4.** Better Alternatives?

There are other worldviews, of course. Some would look to traditions such as Buddhism or Taoism for insights into a different perspective on the relationship of humans to nature. Greatly simplified, these traditions suggest we should consider the idea that humans are unique and separate from the rest of nature as a mistake or even an illusion. It is a false conception that is deeply complicit in creating the various ills that have resulted from our dealings with the environment. Our near-sighted focus on our human interests must be replaced with a holistic perspective that considers the entire interrelated web of being. If there is a divinity, we might reconceive of it as something that is shared in by all things, not only by us.

**5.** Conclusion

Even if we don't embrace all the elements of these alternative worldviews, there is a common thread that we can consider adapting where possible. This is the suggestion that humans should endeavor to view ourselves as embedded participants in an evolving world, and not as distinct actors separate from nature. Such a re-conception of the relationship between nature and humanity might serve as a backdrop for contemplating significant changes in how we interact with the environment.

**6.** Further Reading

Jennifer Stitt: "For Rachel Carson, Wonder was a Radical State of Mind"
https://aeon.co/ideas/for-rachel-carson-wonder-was-a-radical-state-of-mind
John Worthington-Hill: "Seeing True Nature"
https://philosophynow.org/issues/132/Seeing_True_Nature
Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: "Environmental Ethics"
https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ethics-environmental/

## G. Evil

### 1. Introduction

Students reading history and literature will come across people engaged in wrong or bad actions, or who we might judge to have a bad character. Beyond just what we label "bad", however, they may also encounter instances of what most people would call "evil". Possible examples in the context of US history might involve slavery and the treatment of Native Americans. What is evil, and when it is appropriate to use the term?

### 2. The Concept of Evil

In the history of philosophy, one topic where evil was commonly discussed had to do with the nature and existence of God. Here, the following question was posed: if God is perfectly good, all-knowing and all-powerful, why is there still evil in the world? In this context, the concept of evil used was typically very broad, and specifically encompassed suffering that resulted not just from human acts but also natural events (like floods or earthquakes). In more recent times, however, the concept of evil has been discussed in a narrower sense, spurred by contemplation of episodes in human history. This concept of evil applies specifically to humans and their actions.

If developing a definition of evil in this context is to be useful, it would have to apply to only a subset of what is considered bad or wrong. Hannah Arendt was a notable figure in contemporary philosophical work on evil, whose writings (beginning in the 1950's), focused on evil in the context of the Nazi regime and the Holocaust. What was it about the Holocaust that could help define that which is not just wrong but evil? Was it the scale of the event? Was it the way it was systematically conducted by a totalitarian regime? Arendt's focus in early work was on how the Nazis' distinctive "radical" or "absolute" evil was embodied by the use of their concentration and extermination camps to utterly abolish the individuality and the humanity of their victims. In later work, she controversially introduced the notion of the "banality of evil" in her writings in the wake of the trial of the Nazi Adolph Eichmann. Here, Arendt's impression of Eichmann as an ordinary or commonplace figure who nevertheless committed extraordinarily evil acts put emphasis on the Nazi system rather than on the culpability of the individual actor. This view was criticized for

underplaying the personal embrace of evil acts on the part of Eichmann and other participants in the regime.

While recent philosophers have continued to debate how to define evil, the exploration of historical cases continues to guide the work. Claudia Card has called her recent book on the topic *The Atrocity Paradigm: A Theory of Evil.* Using actual examples that most would agree are uncontroversially evil helps Card to distinguish evil from ordinary wrongs. Her definition has two components: evils are foreseeable, intolerable harms produced by culpable wrongdoing. The idea of intolerable harm, in turn, is derived from the perspective of the suffering of the victims: an evil deprives humans of what is needed to make life possible and minimally worth living.

This notion of robbing people of their humanity is a consistent theme through much of the work on the concept of evil. And while this concept clearly applies to the large systematic examples drawn from history that serve as paradigms, once a working definition is in place, the ingredients can help identify evil in other cases.

### 3.  Dehumanization
What makes it possible for evil to occur, where evil involves taking away the things that make someone fully human, such as their freedom to pursue their interests, their individuality, or the minimal conditions for life itself?  Dehumanization, or the conceiving of others as something less than human, is a candidate for a common element in attempts to explain evil. Those who commit atrocities may view their victims as sub-human, and therefore not worthy of the concern we might normally grant another person. And indeed, this appears to be a thread that runs through prominent historical examples. Racial characterizations made by oppressors of their victims in the cases of slavery or the Holocaust depict them as inferior: indeed, they are viewed as inferior not in a superficial way, but rather are characterized as deeply and thoroughly sub-human.  In these cases, two elements are combined: the conception of human nature as involving a particular essence, and the denial of this essence to those who are victimized.  And the best early defense against evil, then, may be to combat signs of this kind of thinking whenever and wherever they are encountered.

**4.** Further Reading

David Livingstone Smith: "The Essence of Evil" https://aeon.co/essays/why-is-it-so-easy-to-dehumanise-a-victim-of-violence

Thomas White: "What did Hannah Arendt Really Mean by the Banality of Evil?"

https://aeon.co/ideas/what-did-hannah-arendt-really-mean-by-the-banality-of-evil

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: "The Concept of Evil"

https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/concept-evil/

## H. <u>Morality and the Circles of Concern</u>

**1.** Introduction

If we look at examples of kind or charitable acts performed by people we know, we may find that these are often directed toward those who are close to the person doing the good deed: close either in terms of the nature of their relationship, or, more literally, in geographic proximity. We see ourselves as having special obligations to help our family members ("charity begins at home"). We may also feel inclined to help those in our neighborhood or our city. We typically take ourselves to have special duties toward fellow citizens of our country as well. But, in deciding how to do good, is this local focus appropriate?

**2.** Moral Codes in Practice vs. Theory

Morality can be thought of as something embedded in a culture, which we might describe as if we were an anthropologist. There are certain common codes of conduct and prevailing attitudes about what is the right way to conduct oneself in any group or society. In this context, we will find that moral norms commonly dictate that altruistic acts are to be directed to members of one's group. Philosophers typically approach morality in a different way. They seek general theories for how a person (perhaps defined more carefully as a rational moral agent) should act. There are many such theories. Introductory texts in ethics focus attention on two prominent approaches.

The first approach is consequentialism: a morally right act is one that leads to favorable consequences compared to other options, with what counts as favorable/unfavorable defined in various ways. Classic formulations focus on the goal of maximizing aggregate pleasure or happiness and minimizing suffering or unhappiness. With consequentialism, one must undertake a cost/benefit analysis of sorts to judge whether an act is morally right.

A competing family of theories says that we should not attempt to focus on consequences (which may be difficult to assess), but should define the proper moral rules or principles that our actions should follow. An example here would be the golden rule: in any given situation, act toward others as you would want them to act toward you. There may be a list of such principles that define a moral code. Note here that the golden rule, like other

basic moral rules, is *universal* in nature. As is the case in the simplest forms of consequentialism, universal moral rules seek to offer the correct guide to everyone's moral conduct across all scenarios. There is no distinction made between contexts involving my family members or fellow-citizens, compared to others.

There is thus a sharp contrast between the common role of local ties in determining the targets of kindness and charity (family, friends, etc.) and the guidance of universal moral theories. Some philosophers have argued that reflecting on this contrast should prod us toward directing more our moral concern to people *outside our immediate circles*. In doing so, we greatly expand our opportunities to do good. In practice, these kinds of arguments are more commonly put forward by consequentialist theorists, while rule-based theorists can more easily modify their approach to mark out special duties toward family, friends and fellow citizens. Still, proposing that we have a simple universal duty to help others in need can drive a similar argument from a rule-based approach to morality.

### 3. Who Should I Help?

Consider the following example. I am contemplating hosting a more-elaborate-than-usual birthday party for my child and a group of her friends this year, including an outing to the zoo. The total cost is $200. However, I could skip the party and donate that money instead to a well-regarded charity that distributes bednets in malaria-prone areas overseas, helping people avoid contracting the deadly disease. The argument is that given that it is good to help others, then when it is in my power to accomplish it (without sacrificing anything of comparable moral worth), I should do so. In this simple example, I should donate the money and forgo the party.

We can break the argument down into several components. First, the argument refuses to compromise on our obligation to help others. The suggestion is that as long as there is no significant moral harm done by forgoing the party, then we should donate the money. Clearly the same kind of reasoning could lead me to skip buying a new pair of dress shoes to replace my scuffed ones and donating the money, and so on for many more examples. There is a concern, however, about the how demanding this kind of calculation can be. Exactly how much should I sacrifice to help others in need? What if I think the new

shoes will help me succeed (all else equal) in an interview for a more interesting job I am pursuing? If the demand to help others begins to compromise my ability to pursue my personal goals and projects, doesn't that ask too much of me? There is a general difficulty here in drawing a line between the moral conduct that we can and should expect from ourselves and the kind of sacrifices ("beyond the call of duty") that we associate with heroes or saints.

Second, the argument refuses to take proximity or distance into account. To focus on this dimension, assume instead that we are comparing two charitable opportunities, one in our local community and one overseas. In this case we should give to the one expected to do the most good. It is hard to find a better cause than saving lives, and it is the overseas anti-malaria charity that has the best chance of doing that. Note that in the past, it was often impractical to effectively direct aid to distant places, but this is not a significant barrier today. But perhaps one can object that strengthening my local community has an intrinsic worth that should also influence the decision.

Third, the argument applied specifically to the birthday party example asks us to refuse to give weight to special duties we have to those closest to us. What about my obligation to care for my child? While my child won't suffer significantly if there is no party, don't I have a general duty of care to make her life happier?

We have a strong intuition that it is morally acceptable to favor the welfare of ourselves and those close to us over that of distant strangers. We also tend to feel that cultivating our personal relationships and communities is an intrinsically worthwhile goal. One idea that accommodates these intuitions is the suggestion that the best outcome for all will be facilitated if everyone does care a bit more for those close to them, whose needs they know the best. This idea, however, does not easily accommodate examples like ours where there is a huge obvious imbalance in actual present needs. As mentioned, various amendments to universal moral theories might be made in an attempt to create a balance that accommodates our intuition about special obligations to those close to us. But how to go about creating this balance in a principled way is a challenging task.

**4.** Conclusion: Looking for Opportunities to Expand the Circle

Philosophers continue to debate these issues. But understanding that in real life family and friends will continue to be of special importance to us, what lessons can we take from an exercise in universal moral reasoning? The idea may be to use this thinking to jolt us a bit from our locally-focused habits. We should often be able to do better by expanding our circle of concern, without undue sacrifice. This way of modifying our personal approach to morality also fits in with a larger story about moral progress. Humans have historically defined themselves in terms of group membership: family, tribe, religious group, nationality, etc. Too often, of course, when we focus our concern locally, the people outside those circles get wholly inadequate consideration. At worst, we de-value others, leading to discrimination and to conflict. While deciding how to act in any given case can be difficult given competing demands, expanding our circle of concern ever wider can be a path toward doing more good in our lives.

**5.** Further Reading

Mark Coffey: "Ten Reasons Why I Love/Hate Peter Singer"

https://philosophynow.org/issues/59/Ten_Reasons_Why_I_Love_Hate_Peter_Singer

Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy: "Ethics" https://iep.utm.edu/ethics/

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: "The Definition of Morality"

https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/morality-definition/

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: "Consequentialism"

https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/consequentialism/

**I.**  Loyalty and Trust

**1.**  Loyalty

Loyalty is often considered a virtue.  But it is one that can also be morally problematic.  We are loyal to a person, group or cause when we are ready to persist with an attachment to it even if it is potentially costly to us.  Loyalty usually is accompanied by strong feelings about the value of our attachment. When we are loyal to a group, we also tend to identify with that group: it becomes part of our conception of ourselves.

Loyalty might go hand in hand with what we see as a duty or moral obligation to a person, group or cause. For example, we have an obligation to care for our children, and we also feel intensely loyal to them.  However, there seems to be no necessary connection between loyalty and moral obligation.  We may become loyal to a group even when there is no special moral obligation involved.  One issue when considering the relationship of loyalty to our moral obligations is that it is a local or particular attachment, whereas many moral theories imply we have some obligations that are universal in scope (as discussed in Section H) .  A moral principle such as the golden rule asks us to act toward others the way we would wish them to act towards us: the rule does not distinguish between people or groups we are loyal to and others. Loyalty grows out of our nature as social creatures, and is often governed by social norms.  As such, the influence loyalty has on our conduct may coincide with sensible moral principles, but it also might not.

This leads to a consideration of where loyalty can be problematic.  Certainly, this is the case if group loyalty is accompanied by our devaluing those not in the group or potentially causing them harm. More generally, our commitment to be loyal might lead us morally astray if it causes us to assist the person or group we are attached to in doing something wrong.

The American philosopher Josiah Royce explored these issues and arrived at his own theory of loyalty. Royce defined loyalty in terms of a commitment to a cause and the community that shares that cause.  To address the concern over morality, Royce defined a narrower version of true or genuine loyalty and distinguished it from vicious or predatory loyalty.  True loyalty also includes loyalty to the possibility of loyalty to others:  it is therefore

loyalty to a cause/community that does not cause harm to other causes/communities. In contrast, vicious loyalty is destructive to other causes/communities. There have been evil deeds that have been furthered by loyalty: these were cases of the vicious kind. Because many of our loyalties are local and particular, they will risk falling short of true loyalty. True loyalty should lead us to join in ever more inclusive and universal shared causes/communities. Royce acknowledged that some of these highest causes may not be able to achieve their goals in our lifetimes (obtaining truth, for example), but they represent ideals we should strive towards (he called these "lost" causes, but note that by this terminology he did not mean misguided or unattainable in principle). Royce's approach emphasizes communities, rather than individual relationships. While we may be loyal to individuals, this may be connected to shared causes, and may not be clearly distinguishable from obligations (and associated feelings) that are due to other aspects of the interpersonal relationship, such as friendship or family connection.

**2.** Trust

Trust is an important part of building relationships with people. It enhances our ability to cooperate, and thus helps us accomplish much that we could not achieve in its absence. What is interesting is that trust also exposes us to *risk*: the idea of trust includes within it the possibility of betrayal. This leads us to ask under what conditions trust is warranted: what makes someone trustworthy? This is a difficult question to answer because if we knew enough to guarantee someone will do something on our behalf, there is no reason for trust to enter the picture. It isn't clear we can base trust solely on the rational weighing of evidence. Further, it seems unlikely that we can will ourselves to trust someone. We can cultivate conditions that foster trust, but can't force the issue.

What are the ingredients that go into trust? Trust is perhaps a surprisingly nuanced concept, and philosophers have disagreed about many of the particulars. First, to trust someone to perform some action, I must first judge that that they are both able to perform it and also favorably disposed toward performing it. More than that, though, it seems there is a sense that I approve of the person's willingness to perform the action. I think they care about doing it in a similar way that I do, and this in turn produces a positive feeling within

me (it's possible this I may not always be conscious of this). This is why I will feel badly if my trust is betrayed.

Trust then, is a positive element that can be added to a relationship built on mutual interests or goals (although it is true that we might trust someone in a limited way, such as to perform some particular task). We trust each other to actually or potentially do certain things we care about, and this adds to positive feelings we may have toward one another. Importantly, we make ourselves vulnerable to each other, and living with this vulnerability makes our relationship a deeper, more meaningful one.

**3.** Further Reading

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: "Loyalty" https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/loyalty/

Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy: "Josiah Royce" https://iep.utm.edu/roycejos/

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy entry: "Trust"

https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/trust/

# *That's All!*