

PHILOSOPHY PRIMER!



COMPREHENSION CHECK?



Philosophy Primer & Comprehension Check Henderson County, North Carolina

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To Parents and Other Educators:

This little book of questions is to be used with your children. The questions primarily pertain to the 361 stories of *The Red Well-Read Reader*. A few questions, though, address subjects that a story does not cover explicitly but obliquely. Discretion is essential. Not every question is childish. According to the age or maturity of your child, many questions must be reworded, explicated, or simply ignored altogether at first. Those questions that need to be ignored initially may be revisited later, say in four to eight months when your child has learned a little about how the world turns. Most of the questions are open-ended. In other words, except for the factual questions, none of the other ones have a right or wrong answer. However, many questions are decidedly slanted to those who esteem Christian ethics. All in all, we presume that our readers endeavor to live by *The Golden Rule* and abide by the *Ten Commandments*.

The questions have a threefold purpose: one, to help children comprehend the written word, not merely expressed meanings but, more important, implied meanings that are hidden between the lines, as it were; two, to help children be mindful of their behavior, i.e. the effects thereof on themselves as well as on those around them; and, three, to help them become aware of basic social, economic, and political forces at play in the world today which have a bearing on their lives and society at large.

There are three kinds of questions—those that are factual, those that evoke discussion, and those that require a great deal of explication.

There are relatively few factual questions where students can deduce an answer merely by the words of the text or passage. The vast number of them require a word or two of input from the parent.

In Story 47 *The Crazy Dane*, for example, there are two factual questions, one harder than the other. The easier one asks for the gender of the lion; although the answer is not stated in the text, there is a picture of the King of the Jungle which should suffice. The somewhat harder question asks for the nationality of the Dane. More often than not, youngsters won't be able to hazard a guess, but that's Ok. The question gives mother (or father) an opportunity to impart a bit of knowledge about this factoid as well as any similar ones, such as a Fin being from Finland and a Brit being from Great Britain.

The questions that evoke discussion are of a moral or philosophical nature and are designed to have children think deeply, perhaps more so than they have ever done before. In Story 256 *A Long Wait for Parole*, for example, there are three such questions that have the reader reflect on shoplifting, but one of them will do: to wit, *Who ultimately pays the cost for security guards?* Other questions of this nature address major problems pandemic in our society today, like corrupt politicians, dishonest journalists, shrinking family income, and never-ending wars. Still other questions of this nature address human frailties—such as self-centeredness, laziness, apathy, envy, hostility, and hatred. Because questions of this nature address the basic conditions of human existence, adults should find them well worth pondering themselves.

Those questions that require a great deal of explication address subject matter that children most likely have no awareness of. For example, Story 18 *Viciously Slapped*, which pertains to World War II, conjures up a slew of questions in the child's mind—questions about this war, about World War I, the likelihood of World War III, and scores of other wars he or she may have heard mentioned of before. Hence, parents must analyze these questions, perhaps research the subject matter, and then, instead of asking questions, present a lesson.

In general, the questions of this book encourage students to think with their *Heart and Mind Entwined*, 2B TOTALLY LITERATE'S motto, and to express their sentiments with their parents. Herein lies the mental exercise necessary to develop intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually. Moreover, this book enables parents to spend hours on end of quality time instilling their children with Christian values, values that are essential for children to become well-adjusted, self-sacrificing, loving, peace-seeking members of God's eternal family.

<p>Story 1 Nabbed</p>	<p>Do you think that this jail is a modern one? Do you think that Dr. McNabb belongs in a mental hospital rather than a jail? Is he most likely in a federal penitentiary, a state prison, or a county jail? How long do you suppose McNabb will remain incarcerated?</p>
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<p>Story 2 The Whacky Hack</p>	<p>Do you think Jack works enough? Do you think he has sufficient ambition to make something of his life? Judging from the looks of his house, do you think his property taxes are sky high? Do you think his wife might be inclined to leave him? What kind of 6-pack do you suppose he is drinking—Pepsi, Coke, or beer?</p>
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<p>Story 3 Tact</p>	<p>Does it take discretion to be tactful? Must politicians act tactfully? Should you use tact when discussing topics that might make people feel uneasy or annoyed? Is tactfulness innate (born with), or is it learned or acquired?</p>
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<p>Story 4 Brad</p>	<p>Why do you suppose Brad behaves so badly? What do you think is the cause of his problems? Do you suppose he grew up in a happy home with nurturing parents and loving sisters and brothers? Do you think his behavior will get even worse if left unchecked? If he were your son, how would you admonish him so he'd become well-adjusted and able to succeed in life?</p>
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<p>Story 5 Madge</p>	<p>Do you think Madge was often seen by the police bumming food and money? What age do you suppose she is? Does this story take place in Ireland? Supposing it doesn't but in the U.S. instead, then in what decade did it most likely occur (hint: The Great Depression)?</p>
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