"THAT'S A BETTER IDEA!"
PHILOSOPHICAL PROGRESS AND PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN

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Abstract:

Philosophy for Children is an important educational programme that engages children in philosophical inquiry as the means to make sense of the world. A key to its success is that participant's progress with making sense of the world or, more colloquially, they develop better ideas. Although philosophical progress is essential to the value of Philosophy for Children, there is little written on this important concept and what is written tends to be merely suggestive. The result is that teachers and students often find themselves lost in the dialogical, open inquiry of Philosophy for Children where there is no pre-determined end-point or uncontroversial 'right' answers they can move towards. This paper will uncover the seed of a conception of philosophical progress in the current Philosophy for Children literature and then 'grow' this into a more adequate conception of philosophical progress. I argue that philosophical progress in Philosophy for Children should be conceived of as the movement from philosophical problems to philosophical resolutions, or in other words, from incongruous and inadequate conceptions to transformed conceptions where the problems no longer occur. A framework of philosophical inquiry helps students to keep their bearings as they move from philosophical problems to philosophical resolutions, and helps them to identify milestones that indicate they are getting somewhere. They know they have made progress not because they have the 'right' answer, but because they have better conceptions that are in greater reflective equilibrium in comparison with the incongruous and inadequate conceptions they started with and in comparison with alternative resolutions. My recommendation is that such a conception of philosophical progress become a core feature of the Philosophy for Children programme so it can provide needed scaffolding for the essential aim of making philosophical progress.

Keywords: epistemic progress; philosophical inquiry; reflective equilibrium; resolution; conceptions

"Essa é uma idéia melhor!" Progresso filosófico e filosofia para crianças.

Resumo:

Filosofia para crianças é um importante programa educacional que compromete as crianças na investigação filosófica como um meio para dar sentido ao mundo. A explicação para seu sucesso é que os participantes fazem progressos dando sentido ao mundo ou, mais coloquialmente, desenvolvem melhores idéias. Embora o progresso filosófico seja essencial para o valor de Filosofia para Crianças, há pouco escrito sobre essa importante conceito, e o pouco que há tende a ser meramente sugestivo. O resultado disso é que os professores e os estudantes freqüentemente encontram-se perdidos no processo dialogal e investigativo de filosofia para crianças, no qual não há pontos de chegada pré-determinados ou respostas "certas" e incontestáveis sobre as quais eles poderiam alcançar. Esse artigo pretende expor o fundamento da concepção do progresso filosófico na literatura corrente sobre a Filosofia para Crianças e, a partir de então, desenvolver uma concepção mais adequada de progresso filosófico. Eu argumento que o progresso filosófico na Filosofia para Crianças deveria ser concebido como o movimento dos problemas filosóficos às resoluções filosóficas, ou, em outras palavras, das concepções incongruentes e inadequadas às concepções transformadas nas quais os problemas não ocorrem mais. A estrutura do questionamento filosófico ajuda os alunos a manterem suas referências quando fazem o movimento dos problemas filosóficos às resoluções filosóficas, e os ajuda a identificar os acontecimentos que indicam que eles estão chegando a algum lugar. Eles sabem que eles fizeram progresso não porque eles têm a "reposta certa", mas porque eles têm concepções melhores que estão num nível mais avançado de equilíbrio reflexivo em comparação às concepções incongruentes e inadequadas com as quais eles começaram e em comparação às resoluções alternativas. Minha recomendação é que essa concepção de progresso filosófico venha a ser a característica principal para o programa de Filosofia para Crianças, para que possa promover a estrutura necessária para a essencial aspiração de se fazer progresso filosófico.

Palavras-chave: progresso epistêmico; pesquisa filosófica; equilíbrio reflexivo; resolução; concepções

"Esa es una mejor idea!" Progreso filosófico y filosofía para niños

Resumen:

Filosofía para niños es un importante programa educacional que compromete a los niños en la investigación filosófica como un medio para dar sentido al mundo. La explicación para su éxito es que los participantes hacen progresos dando sentido al mundo o, más coloquialmente, desarrollan mejores ideas. Aunque el progreso filosófico sea esencial para el valor de *filosofía para niños*, hay poco escrito sobre ese importante concepto, y lo poco que hay parece ser meramente sugerencias. El resultado de ello es que los maestros y estudiantes frecuentemente se encuentran perdidos en el proceso dialógico e investigativo de *filosofía para niños*, en el que no hay puntos de llegada pre-determinados o respuestas indiscutiblemente "correctas" que ellos podrían alcanzar. Este artículo pretende exponer las bases de una concepción del progreso filosófico en la actual literatura sobre *filosofía para niños* y, después, desarrollar una concepción más adecuada del progreso filosófico. Argumento que el progreso filosófico en *filosofía para niños* debería ser concebido como el movimiento de los problemas filosóficos a las resoluciones filosóficas, o, en otras palabras, de las concepciones incongruentes e inadecuadas a las concepciones transformadas en las que los problemas ya no tienen más lugar. El marco de la investigación filosófica ayuda a los alumnos a mantener sus referencias en la medida en que se mueven de los problemas filosóficos a las resoluciones filosóficas, y los ayuda a identificar los hitos que indican que están llegando a algún lugar. Ellos saben que progresaron no porque tengan la respuesta "correcta", sino porque tienen mejores concepciones que están em un nivel más avanzado de equilibrio reflexivo, em comparación con las concepciones incongruentes e inadecuadas con las que empezaron y en comparación con resoluciones alternativas. Recomiendo que esta concepción del progreso filosófico se torne una característica principal para el programa de *filosofía para niños*, para que pueda promover la estructura necesaria para el objetivo esencial de hacer progreso filosófico.

Palavras chave: progreso filosófico; investigación filosófica; equilíbrio reflexivo; resolución; concepciones

"THAT'S A BETTER IDEA!"
PHILOSOPHICAL PROGRESS AND PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN

Clinton Golding

There is something wonderful about being part of a philosophical discussion. Participating in an animated dialogue that seems to move forward of its own accord is a source of intellectual delight. When we pursue an idea into uncharted territory we experience the thrill of the chase and the satisfaction of finally achieving a new insight. This is an experience of what I call 'philosophical progress.'

Philosophical progress, or its lack, is a major concern for Philosophy for Children (P4C).[1] If P4C students do not make progress developing better ideas, views and judgements, then, to paraphrase Gardner (1995), P4C is an epistemically pointless chat. Yet despite its importance, no comprehensive and systematic conception of philosophical progress is available to support philosophical progress in P4C. The P4C literature says a great deal about the pedagogical issues of developing philosophical skills, processes and attitudes and creating a successful Community of Inquiry (CI) but there are only scattered allusions to philosophical progress, how to achieve it and how to recognise it when it occurs.[2]

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[1] Philosophy for Children is most often associated with the theoretical work of Matthew Lipman and the series of novels and teacher materials developed by Lipman and Ann Margaret Sharp. However, when I write about Philosophy for Children I refer to educational practices that are not limited to Lipman's curriculum materials, but which have arisen out of and are indebted to these materials. Although this paper is explicitly situated in the P4C tradition, much of what I write, if suitably modified, would be equally useful for other philosophical pedagogies such as Nelson's (2004) Socratic dialogue or McCall's (2009) Community of Philosophical Inquiry.

[2] There is also no conception available outside P4C. Various theorists have proposed conceptions of progress (eg Darwin, 1859; Kuhn, 1962; Piaget, 1978; Spencer, 1851), but these have not been developed into a conception of philosophical progress that is useful for P4C. Although professional philosophers have a tacit understanding of when they are getting somewhere, and why one philosophical position is better than others, this has rarely been developed into an explicit theory, and never applied in a form useful to P4C. The few explicit conceptions of philosophical progress that I have found are: Lovejoy, 1917a, 1917b; Urban, 1926; Quine, 1970a; Rapaport, 1982; Moody, 1986; Neilsen, 1987; Nelson, 1962; Dombrowski, 1994; Campbell, 2003 & Rescher, 2006.

My argument is that 'philosophical progress' is an essential concept for P4C, that lack of understanding of this concept has caused difficulties for the praxis of P4C, and that 'philosophical progress' requires the same level of attention in P4C that has been given to the education of thinking and the development of a CI. In this paper I will develop a sophisticated and comprehensive conception of philosophical progress that can deal with the difficulties P4C would otherwise face. My aim is not to provide a definitive conception of philosophical progress for P4C.[3] Instead I will suggest the sort of conception of philosophical progress that is needed in P4C to improve what we currently have, which can be the stimulus for further dialogue on this important issue.

The conception I develop is that philosophical progress occurs as we move from philosophical problem to resolution. We make philosophical progress by resolving philosophical problems, which is different from getting 'right' or 'correct' solutions. I also supplement this conception with accounts of: philosophical problems and resolutions, philosophical inquiry, and criteria for making objective judgements of philosophical progress.[4] My final recommendation is that such a conception become a core feature of the P4C programme.

1.

When I refer to philosophical progress, I am only concerned with '*epistemic philosophical progress*' or the change and improvement of philosophical ideas.[5]

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[3] Nor will I elaborate how P4C students or teachers might learn to discern of make philosophical progress; the sorts of scaffolds for learning that are needed for students at different levels of development and experience of philosophical inquiry; how the P4C teacher guides this learning; or how the CI as a whole could be said to make progress. Although these are important issues, they are beyond the scope of this paper.

[4] I will not explore how P4C students learn to make philosophical progress, how the P4C teacher guides this learning, or how the CI as a whole could be said to make progress. Although these are important issues, they will be dealt with elsewhere. For example, see Golding (2008b).

[5] I employ a broad conception of epistemology here. A standard definition of epistemology is: the study of the nature, extent, sources, limits and legitimacy of *knowledge*. The conception of epistemology I use is not so restricted and includes a

I am not concerned with historical progress such as the historical development of philosophical knowledge (such as Hegel, 1807), or the advancement of the discipline of philosophy (such as Lovejoy, 1917a and b). Nor will this paper be concerned with psychological progress such as individual psychological improvement or the development of cognitive and moral stages (such as Piaget, 1978, or Kohlberg, 1981). Finally, although philosophy produces a range of aesthetic, social and personal products, achievements and benefits, it is the epistemic products and progress that are my focus.

Epistemic progress involves the study of what it means for one idea to be an epistemic improvement over another. A conception of epistemic *philosophical* progress (rather than mathematical or scientific) explains what makes one philosophical idea better than another and gives criteria we can use to judge this. This is especially important in P4C so we can judge whether we are making progress during a philosophical discussion. Rather than just describing how our ideas change historically or psychologically, this paper investigates what it means to develop epistemically better or more valuable philosophical conceptions, answers, propositions or judgements, so we can recognise when we have improved and so we can aim to achieve such progress.

2.

There are two main issues that must be addressed in order to develop a conception of philosophical progress in P4C.

First, because philosophy does not seem to produce definite answers or bodies of settled truths it is difficult to understand what philosophical progress might be. In some disciplines, a conception of progress is relatively straightforward because of a high degree of expert agreement about appropriate methods and established findings. However, philosophical progress, whatever it might turn out to be, cannot be so straightforward. There

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theory of understanding in all its modes. Thus I use the term epistemology to refer to the study of the nature, extent, sources, limits and legitimacy of such things as beliefs, understandings, judgements and theories. Epistemic progress is therefore the study of what it means for one belief, understanding, justification or theory to be an improvement over another.

is no consensus about appropriate philosophical method that can be relied on to settle questions of philosophical progress and instead of established findings, there are multiple conflicting interpretations, arguments and positions, and widespread disagreement and debate. Because of this controversy inherent to philosophy, it is difficult to distinguish genuine philosophical progress from mere changes of opinion.

Second, it is also difficult to understand philosophical progress in P4C because it involves open inquiry without a pre-decided agenda. How do we know we are getting anywhere when we do not have a pre-determined conclusion to aim for and judge progress against? Also, P4C students reflectively construct their own philosophical ideas rather than finding them ready-made, but how do we know they have constructed a better idea rather than just a different one? What counts as progress by thinking and inquiry?

3.

A number of problems for the practice of P4C are caused by the controversial nature of philosophy and the open-ended inquiry in P4C, and I argue that a conception of philosophical progress is needed to resolve them. I illustrate these problems in the following discussion about the question: "What is racism?" These problems are unlikely to all occur in one P4C session as I have presented them, but nevertheless, these are all common problems observed in P4C classes.

Illustration of the problem of philosophical progress for P4C

Student 1 Racism is treating Chinese or Aboriginal people badly.

Student 2 Yeah, but everyone is treated badly.

Student 3 Some races have had it really bad though – you know, like slavery.

Student 4 I'd hate to be a slave.

Student 5 I reckon my Mum treats me like a slave.

Student 6 I bet I have more work to do at home than you do …

Student 7 Someone said calling white people "whitey" is racist.

Student 1 You're all wrong. Racism is when a minority is treated badly. Racism is only if someone thinks that, you know, African-Americans are dumb and so they don't give them a job.

Student 3 We've already said that. We're just going around in circles and I'm lost.

Teacher So what is racism then?

Student 4 I reckon it's when all people from a race are treated the same.

Student 1 No, that's not right either. It has to be bad treatment.

Student 2 What about the scientists? They must have discovered what racism is.

Student 8 We could do a survey to find out …

Student 5 I remember reading something about it being racist to make fun of other races.

Student 2 'Making fun' isn't right. It's more serious than that.

Student 1 That's just semantics. I don't care what anyone else says, racism is treating a race badly.

Student 4 We can't figure this out miss. Why don't you just tell us the answer?

Teacher No, you're doing fine. Don't forget there are no right and wrong answers in philosophy.

Student 9 Well, I reckon the answer just depends on whose opinion you ask.

Student 6 Yeah. Whatever you think is the right answer for you.

Student 8 Hang on, I just found 'racism' in the dictionary… Racism is: "Hatred or intolerance of another race or other races." We got it wrong when we said it was treating people badly.

Student 7 Miss, what's the point of this discussion? We should've gone straight to the dictionary.

Student 9 I don't even know why we're discussing this topic.

Teacher Don't give up too easily. Let's go back to the idea that racism is when a racial minority group is treated badly. It's not quite right yet, but I think we can pursue it a bit further. The minority group is being treated badly, but how else could we describe their treatment?

Student 1 I'm not sure.

Teacher What is it about the bad treatment that makes it racist?

Student 2 The minority race doesn't like it.

Teacher Almost. Try again.

Student 2 It's different from how the majority are treated.

Teacher Now you've got it. Racism is when a minority race is treated differently from the majority race. So, is racism ever acceptable?

Student 3 Maybe racism could be good when it gives a minority more opportunity?

Teacher Why would you think that?

Student 3 Well, it's good if people who have had a hard time, like Indigenous Australians, get extra stuff.

Teacher Maybe, but that's not quite the answer I was looking for. Wouldn't giving Indigenous people extra be unfair on the non-Indigenous people? Let's see if we can get a better answer.

Student 1 Maybe racism is OK when it's the minority against the majority?

Teacher Hmmm. Don't you think the majority would feel unfairly treated?

Student 1 I guess so. I'd feel bad if I couldn't do some things because of my race.

Teacher Good point. Can someone use this to explain how racism is bad?

Student 4 Racism is always bad because it's always unequal and unfair treatment.

The students in this discussion do not make philosophical progress (and may not even be aware of the problems that block their progress). My diagnosis is

that, even though they are engaging in philosophical inquiry, and this commits them to making philosophical progress, neither teacher nor students have a clear conception of what this means. Although they were discussing a philosophical question (and P4C classes may even fail to do this) they did not treat this question philosophically and seem to misunderstand the philosophical issues involved. They also do not seem to understand the nature of philosophical inquiry and thus how philosophical progress is different from, for example, what happens in science or mathematics. Neither teacher nor students realises the importance of evaluation, reasoning and argumentation for answering philosophical questions and instead students suggest methods more suitable for other disciplines, such as taking a survey.

Multiple answers are suggested in the illustration but students are not sure what to make of them. Some students try to prove one suggestion is right, but because they fail to construct an irrefutable argument, they then think that no progress can be made. At times they seem to think that they make philosophical progress by swapping opinions and saying whatever they like, rather than getting to the bottom of an issue through reasoning and argumentation. At other times they seem to think that we can resolve philosophical issues by appealing to an inappropriate epistemic authority. In this case they tried the dictionary, but in other cases they might appeal to expert opinion or 'the facts'. They cannot understand why there is so much disagreement and discussion when they should just be able to get the right answer and move on. Even when potentially useful suggestions are made, such as student 4's suggested definition early in the illustration, these are generally disregarded as merely a different opinion and are not given the consideration due to a suggestion that may lead to progress. In general, students do not see a clear path forward and so decide there is no path.

The first half of this discussion is unstructured and unproductive because the teacher allows students to say whatever they like (as demonstrated by students 3-6 wandering off the topic). The 'philosophy' is merely a shallow exchange of opinion, without rigorous critical examination or evaluation. The

P4C teacher does nothing to encourage productive inquiry and instead they allow students 4, 5 and 6, to make irrelevant suggestions and student 1 to dominate the group. Student 1 jumps to a conclusion and rejects any attempt to inquire further because they see no value in continuing the discussion once they have given what they consider to be the right answer. The other students seem to offer creative suggestions according to stream-of-consciousness rather than the logic of philosophical inquiry. They appear to wander aimlessly because they lack teacher guidance and they have no conception of what a philosophical inquiry is or how to follow one. This problem can be magnified in some P4C classes where P4C teachers, on the pretext of encouraging safety and empathy, give exaggerated praise to every comment while ignoring all sorts of logical error, ambiguity, imprecision and unsupported claims.

It is also possible to have the opposite sort of discussion, which is overly argumentative and polemical. This would have equally blocked progress because, even if the students were intellectually robust enough to participate in such a challenging intellectual environment (which is unlikely for the majority), they would get stuck testing and evaluating views without being able to suggest or elaborate new ideas.

In the second half of the discussion, after student 7 suggests they would be better off just reading the dictionary, the discussion seems to get somewhere, but only because the teacher controls it, simplifies the issues and ignores possible disagreements and complexities. This is problematic not only because the teacher has taken control of the discussion, but also because the teacher implies that there is a 'right' philosophical answer, and then directs students towards this answer. There is 'progress' in the sense of being inculcated into the position that the teacher has decided is correct but this is not the independent student progress needed in P4C.

In summary, lack of a conception of philosophical progress leaves P4C students and teachers intellectually lost. Without it they are unable to navigate the controversial paths of philosophy or the open inquiry in P4C, and therefore P4C becomes epistemically illegitimate.

4.

The P4C literature does address the issue of philosophical progress.[6] However, I argue that the conceptions presented are inadequate because either epistemic progress is confused with other kinds of progress, or if there is a clear conception of epistemic philosophical progress, it is not fully developed.

The P4C literature often ignores epistemic philosophical progress and is concerned only with what I call procedural progress such as students having a better discussion, improving their thinking abilities or moving closer to the ideal of a CI. P4C texts therefore include advice, tools, processes and exercises for helping students to make progress by moving from simple to complex thinking, from monologue to dialogue and from individualism to a Community of Inquiry (for example: Cam, 1995, 101-102; Splitter & Sharp, 1995, 128-129; Lipman, et al., 1980, 103, 110-113).[7] While developing better thinking and a mature CI is essential for P4C, I argue that an exclusive focus on procedural progress leads to what Murris (2008, 676) calls a "diluted form of P4C". For a concentrated form of P4C, a clear and detailed conception of epistemic progress needs to be included in the P4C literature.

Where epistemic philosophical progress is referred to in the P4C literature, it is often confused with procedural progress. For example, progress by correcting suggestions, refining ideas, and answering our questions is taken to be of the same kind as progress by getting better at inquiring together or

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[6] Often referred to by other terms such as "discernible movement and growth" (Splitter, 2006, 11; Splitter & Sharp, 1995, 79; Fisher, 2003); "self-correcting inquiry" (Lipman, 2003, 197); "closure" (Lipman, 1988, 168; Splitter & Sharp, 1995, 135; Burgh et al., 2006, 192-193; Smith, 2003, 35); "successive increments of understanding" (Lipman et al., 1980, 112); a "progressive elaboration of ideas" (Lipman et al., 1980, 175); or a "movement or development of ideas and arguments" (McCall, 2009, 12). It is said that the inquiry builds (Burgh et al., 2006, 165; Lipman et al., 1980, 104), is cumulative (Lipman et al., 1980, 112), and grows, emerges and develops (Lipman et al., 1980, 104; Kennedy, 2004, 754).

[7] Wilks (1995, 55-61) has a chapter called 'Monitoring Progress', and Rondhuis and Van der Leeuw (2000) have a paper titled 'Performance and Progress in Philosophy', but both deal only with issues of procedural progress.

becoming more skilful thinkers.[8] I argue that because many of the P4C writers either ignore epistemic philosophical progress or conflate it with procedural progress, P4C practitioners in the classroom are likely to be making the same mistakes.

Occasionally the P4C literature makes a clear distinction between epistemic philosophical progress and other kinds of progress. Yet this is infrequent, and while a useful starting point, the conceptions of philosophical progress that are presented are not sufficiently elaborated and provide little substantial guidance for practitioners. The following examples are representative:

> The mark of a good dialogue, that is one with genuine depth and a discernible sense of progress, is that successive contributors will be taking into account, not only their own ideas about a topic under consideration, but the other comments, questions and thoughts that have emerged along the way (Splitter, 2006, 11).

> A good discussion occurs in any subject when the net result or outcome of the discussion is discerned as marking a definite progress as contrasted with the conditions that existed when the episode began. Perhaps it is progress in understanding; perhaps it is progress in arriving at some sort of consensus; perhaps it is progress only in the sense of formulating the problem – but in any case, there is a sense of forward movement having taken place. Something has been accomplished; a group product has been achieved (Lipman et al., 1980, 111).

> Philosophy for Children seeks two kinds of objectives: progress in coping with the philosophical questions – which might include adapted beliefs, new hypotheses for experiment or even clarification of the question – and growth in the cognitive and social procedures of inquiry (Gregory, 2008, 11).

> What counts as progress in such dialogues? ... In Philosophy for Children the ideal immediate goal of a dialogue is for participants to arrive at one or more *reasonable philosophical judgements* regarding questions or issues that occasioned the dialogue (Gregory, 2008, 19).[9]

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[8] For example, under the term "progress with learning", Smith (2003) conflates epistemic philosophical progress indicated by the development of such things as shared understandings and new perspectives on the familiar (2003, 34), with procedural progress indicated by improvement in skills, attitudes and affectivity (2003, 38). Likewise in an appendix titled "How do we assess progress in philosophical discussion?" Fisher treats the improvement of student's cognitive skills, and getting a better philosophical discussion, as being the same kind of thing as epistemic philosophical progress or getting better philosophical ideas (2003, 266-267).

[9] In my own work I have also distinguished epistemic philosophical progress from other kinds of progress, by listing the possible results of philosophical inquiry that

An alternative conception of epistemic philosophical progress in P4C is that we make progress by moving towards the truth. Philosophy is said to be seeking truth (Burgh et al., 2006, 51) or is guided by the search for truth (Lipman, 1988, 148). The best statement of this conception comes from Gardner:

> Truth is absolutely essential to this method; it is only because of progress toward truth that participants are ultimately convinced of the fruitfulness of the process… If a Community of Inquiry is to be worthy of its name, it must make some progress toward "the truth" (1995, 38).[10]

Although this is a clear statement about epistemic philosophical progress, it is also inadequate as a conception of philosophical progress for P4C. The very notion of 'truth' is problematic and saying that the CI makes progress towards 'truth' does not explain what is meant by 'truth' in this situation, nor how we would know when we are moving towards it, nor when we have reached it.

Perhaps the most common conception of epistemic philosophical progress in the P4C literature is that we make progress by following the inquiry where it leads rather than moving to pre-empted outcomes.[11] This conception is elaborated metaphorically in the following two classic statements:

> A community of inquiry attempts to follow the inquiry where it leads rather than be penned in by the boundary lines of existing disciplines. A dialogue that tries to conform to logic, it moves forward indirectly like a boat tacking into the wind, but in the process its progress comes to resemble that of thinking itself (Lipman, 2003, 22).
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> Collaborative inquiry can and does make progress but, to borrow Lipman's metaphor, it is the progress of a yacht tacking this way and that into the wind, rather than of an arrow speeding unerringly to a fixed and predetermined target. Although the yacht may not be taking place in a race to the finish, it nevertheless arrives somewhere eventually. However, this endpoint cannot be determined in advance of the arrival. Likewise

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indicate philosophical progress such as creating a distinction or connection (see Golding, 2002, 10-11; 2006b). Yet as in the rest of the P4C literature, my earlier attempts at articulating a conception of philosophical progress for P4C do not go far enough.

[10] See also Gardner (1997 & 1998).

[11] This is variously expressed as following the argument (Lipman, 2003, 85 & 92), inquiry (Lipman, 2003, 22; Sharp, 1993, 57; Splitter & Sharp, 1995, 25) or reasoning (Lipman, 1988, 14) where it leads.

> the community of inquiry must 'follow the inquiry where it leads' (Splitter & Sharp, 1995, 25).[12]

'Following the inquiry where it leads' is a suggestive way of understanding philosophical progress, but, I argue, it is merely the seed for an adequate conception of philosophical progress for P4C.

First, the Deweyan conception of following the inquiry where it leads is not sufficiently specific to philosophy. There also needs to be more explicit details about what is distinctive about the process of *philosophical* inquiry and especially where we start and the outcomes we move towards. Some of these details are provided in the P4C literature, so this is not a significant reason why this conception could not be the basis of a conception of philosophical progress in P4C.

Second, and the more important problem, the conception does not provide sufficient guidance for philosophical novices. It requires expert judgement and discernment to follow an inquiry where it leads, but P4C teachers (not to mention students) tend to be philosophical novices. A conception of philosophical progress for P4C must provide more explicit scaffolds so P4C teachers and children can come to understand what is meant by following the inquiry where it leads and how to distil a line of inquiry to follow.

In conclusion, although the P4C literature states that epistemic philosophical progress is important in P4C, it does not provide enough specific details about what this is. However, without a sophisticated conception of

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[12] As well as the tacking-boat metaphor, making progress by following the inquiry where it leads is also described metaphorically as being like: Navigating uncharted territory, where we should keep on track, keep our bearings and avoid losing sight of what is under discussion so we do not wander aimlessly and get lost (Burgh et al., 2006, 190; Cam, 1993, 11; 1995, 52-53); Interacting with the "energy" generated by philosophical problems "the way a sailor interacts with the wind, or a surfer with the waves" (Kennedy, 2004, 759); Rearranging the furniture in our living room so that it is 'right' (Lipman, 2003, 189); Throwing ourselves off balance when walking, each step forward in the inquiry makes another step possible (Lipman, 2003, 87); A writer, halfway through a book, finding that it dictates what must be written (Lipman, 2003, 89); Moving from meaningless to meaningful conceptions (Lipman, 2003; Splitter & Sharp, 1995).

philosophical progress, P4C falls victim to the problems I discussed in section 3. My aim in this paper is to take the seed of the conception of philosophical progress from the P4C literature, distinguish it from the chaff of procedural progress, and then grow this to create a more precise, explicit and comprehensive conception that can be used to understand and promote philosophical progress in the P4C classroom.

5.

A conception of philosophical progress has to be consistent with the seemingly endless controversy in philosophy and the absence of settled, definitive conclusions. In the face of this controversy, we could take one of three positions about the possibility of progress in philosophy:

1) *Pessimistic:* Philosophy cannot make epistemic progress and only produces endless change and disagreement[13]

2) *Idealistic:* we make progress as we (eventually) get to the truth[14]

3) *Realistic:* Philosophy produces something of epistemic value, but not final, definitive conclusions. This position holds that philosophy makes progress, contra the pessimistic view, but it is realistic about what philosophy can produce, contra the idealistic view. Under a realistic conception of philosophical progress, there can be philosophical advances that are more than subjective improvements, but less than absolute truths.[15]

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[13] Scientism is a typically pessimistic view of philosophical progress as it holds that only science makes progress. William James' view of philosophy as merely expressing the tastes and temperaments of philosophers, and sceptical or nihilistic positions where philosophical questions and answers are taken to be meaningless, unsolvable or illegitimate, are yet others. There are also a range of pessimistic positions based on strong psychological, historical or sociological explanations of philosophical disagreements. Each of these positions is pessimistic about the possibility of epistemically legitimate progress in philosophy.

[14] This position is typical of Plato and Hegel. Peirce's (1934) pragmaticist view that 'truth' would eventually emerge from an inquiry that lasted long enough, is also idealistic, as is Habermas' (1972) similar view of truth as ideal consensus. Some P4C writers have also explicitly supported idealistic conceptions of philosophical progress, as I discussed in section 4.

[15] Nicholas Rescher's (1978, 2006) orientational pluralism is a characteristic realistic position about the possibility of philosophical progress. Rescher's position seems to be that we make progress by adopting one of the alternative lines of philosophical

I reject pessimistic views of philosophical progress because they ignore the legitimate epistemic products of philosophy. Even though philosophy does not produce uncontroversial right answers, it does produce something epistemologically more valuable than mere opinion, such as extensions or clarifications of theories and positions as well as what Moody (1986, 45) calls a necrology of failed positions and arguments.

I also reject idealistic positions about philosophical progress because they set standards for philosophical progress that are impossible to meet, while also ignoring the achievable epistemic products of philosophy, and they cause more problems for P4C than they solve.

Under an idealistic perspective, it is impossible to make or verify philosophical progress. Final, settled truth is an unattainable ideal, at least in philosophy, as even the most certain of philosophical conclusions can be challenged. For example, even the principle of non-contradiction is challenged by paraconsistent logic (Priest, 2006). Disagreement and pluralism is essential to philosophy because any philosophical problem can be given multiple resolutions that are mutually incompatible, but still defensible, and we cannot prove that one is correct and the others incorrect. It is also impossible to judge whether we are close to the truth because we do not have the independent access to the truth that is needed to measure the distance between our current conception and the true conception. Thus I reject the idealistic position because it is incompatible with the legitimate sense of purpose, achievement and satisfaction we have from pursuing philosophy, and instead it makes philosophy a seemingly pointless activity - why philosophise if we have made no progress for thousands of years and could not tell even if we had?

I also reject the idealistic position as it tends to lead to practical difficulties in the P4C classroom. If P4C teachers and students think that the aim is to reach 'truth', in the face of inevitable philosophical disagreement they

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resolutions on offer and defending them against problems raised by competing positions. We never reach the final truth, but we do advance the various philosophical positions (and problems).

tend to either dogmatically assert a view is true, or give up on the possibility of getting anywhere and think it is just a matter of opinion. Both of these perspectives block the possibility of philosophical progress. (I will discuss these issues further in section 13 when I discuss the epistemic position that P4C teachers and students need to take in order to make philosophical progress).

I do not reject the idealistic or pessimistic positions because I take them to be false, but because they are poor ways to understand philosophical progress in P4C. I advocate the realistic position that philosophy produces something that indicates progress, but I do not assert this as a truth, but rather as a justifiably better conception of philosophical progress. My argument is that given the inability of philosophy to produce settled truths, we better understand philosophical progress by considering the realistic achievement of philosophy. Under a realistic perspective, whether or not philosophy aims for or reaches truth is irrelevant for understanding philosophical progress. This position acknowledges that philosophy does result in epistemic achievements such as developing new arguments, questions and positions, contra the pessimistic position. This means it also makes explains our past and current sense of purpose, achievement and satisfaction from pursuing philosophy, and it shows that philosophy is a sensible endeavour to pursue, contra the idealistic position.

6.

In the spirit of Goodman and Elgin's (1988) reconception of philosophy I argue that philosophy is the discipline for *resolving* philosophical problems, not for finding philosophical *truths*. I call this the problem-resolution conception of philosophy and I argue that it is the best realistic conception of philosophy, that it extends the conceptions of philosophical progress in the P4C literature, and that it can provide a sound basis for supporting philosophical progress in P4C.

Under the problem-resolution conception, we make philosophical progress by moving from philosophical problem to philosophical resolution. This gives a more specific replacement for the somewhat problematic conception of progress by following the inquiry where it leads. Philosophical

problems are the stimuli for philosophical inquiry and we follow the inquiry towards philosophical resolutions.[16]

From the realistic perspective of the problem-resolution conception, when we philosophise we play the game of resolving problems, not truth finding. There are similarities between these games as there are between Australian Rules, Rugby, and American football, but they are different games with different rules, methods of play and most importantly, ways of scoring. Philosophy does not score settled truths because this is not the appropriate way to resolve philosophical problems and so not the legitimate aim of philosophy. But philosophy does make progress by scoring resolutions to philosophical problems. There is philosophical progress every time a warranted, defensible position is developed that resolves a philosophical problem. This is a goal in the philosophical game, even if it is only one of many positions on the table and even though it is a tentative, changeable and fallible position.[17]

I will outline what counts as a philosophical problem and resolution and then I will make explicit the implications this conception has for philosophical progress in P4C.

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[16] This Deweyan conception of philosophical progress is exemplified in the philosophical methodology advocated by such important philosophers as Socrates/Plato, Hegel and Wittgenstein. For example, the Socratic methodology discussed in the *Euthyphro* and *Republic*, as well as the Hegelian methodology, involve the dialectical movement from problems to resolutions. Wittgensteinian philosophical therapy also exemplifies the problem-resolution conception of philosophy by presenting philosophical problems as illnesses and philosophical resolutions as therapy or cures (see1972a, 71; 1972b, §6; 1991, 1.109, 1.132 & 1.133; 1961, 6.521; 1998, 22e). An alternative example of the problem-resolution conception of philosophy also comes from Wittgenstein, who writes: "A philosophical problem has the form: I do not know my way about" (1991, 1.123). This sort of problem is an inadequacy in our current conception that prevents successful intellectual navigation. Philosophical resolution for Wittgenstein is thus a new way of seeing, acting and being. Kuhns's (1962) account of paradigm shifts and Popper's (1963) account of falsification both provide alternative accounts of progress, which are compatible with the problem-resolution conception.

[17] Other conceptions of philosophical progress might stress different means of scoring points in the same philosophical game. I have stated that resolution is the main goal, but rejecting a failed conception by falsification and revealing error, which is the method of progress that McCall (2009, 83) emphasises, might also count as scoring a conversion rather than a goal.

7.

Philosophical problems involve incongruence and inadequacy in our conceptions that cannot be resolved by gathering empirical information, nor can they be given final, uncontroversial resolutions, regardless of the methods or approach.

Philosophical problems arise when we conceptualise the world and find that these conceptions fail in various ways. They occur because of an inability to make sense of something or to see how our ideas hang together, not because we lack information or knowledge. The classic problems of philosophy, such as mind and body, scepticism, the problem of evil, or applied ethics issues such as abortion or war, can be understood as such problems in our conceptions. In each of these cases, the philosophical problem is an inability to make sense of or understand an issue that remains even after we gather all the empirical information or established knowledge.[18]

Examples of philosophical incongruence include:

• Finding that our experiences present counter-examples to our theories about friendship, love or happiness. For example thinking that 'happiness' is doing what we want to do, but then finding ourselves unhappy after we do what ever we want for long periods of time.

• Being confronted with multiple perspectives on the same issue. For example, Biology presenting one conception of 'human nature', psychology another and religion a third.

• Valuing honesty, but also thinking that our children should tell their grandparents they liked their Christmas presents, even when they hated them.

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[18] This view of philosophical progress is Dewey-influenced but not strictly Deweyan. Dewey argues that philosophy should be concerned with social, personal and practical problems (Dewey, 1920, 124). I argue that the philosophical problems investigated in P4C must be problems that students experience as authentically problematic, but they do not have to be practical as such. We face real philosophical problems that prevent us from making sense which are abstract and theoretical.

Examples of philosophical inadequacy include:

- Lacking a comprehensive, principled account of what makes a child different from an adult.

- Believing that human life is intrinsically valuable, yet having no justification for this belief.

- Lacking a clear conception of how we should act when faced with the issues of eating veal or assisting a terminally-ill loved one to end their life.

Philosophical problems are unSettleable (with a capital 'S') in the sense that they cannot be given an uncontroversial, unique resolution in principle, no matter what method is used or approach taken.[19] Philosophical methods and approaches do not Settle philosophical problems because either their application leads to multiple, defensible and potentially contrary philosophical resolutions, or the methods and approaches themselves cannot be accepted as the uncontroversially best and only way to resolve philosophical problems.

8.

Philosophical problems are different from empirical problems and cannot be resolved by adding new empirical information, nor by finding the Settled truth. Instead, I argue that we resolve philosophical problems by moving to a new conception that is sufficiently comprehensive or refined to dissolve our incongruity and inadequacy and transform the issue so that it now makes sense. We resolve philosophical problems by creating a new way to look at, and be in the world within which the original problem no longer occurs. Kekes (1980, 115) puts this in a different, but insightful way:

> The solution is an interpretation which provides a possible way of thinking about a segment of reality. Interpretations can be thought of as

[19] Describing philosophical problems as those which cannot be Settled once and for all, is an extension of the view that science split from philosophy when a method for Settling scientific problems was discovered. Russell takes such a position: "As soon as definite knowledge concerning any subject becomes possible, this subject ceases to be called philosophy, and becomes a separate science" (1998, 90). Rondhuis and Leeuw (2000, 27-33) put this the other way around: Philosophy is the discipline that embraces intellectual autonomy and thus rejects external means, appeals to authority and definitive judgements that could Settle philosophical issues.

issuing a conditional: if you think of reality in this way and act accordingly, then what was previously problematic will no longer be so.

When we resolve a philosophical problem, we create a new congruent and adequate conception to replace the incongruous and inadequate conception. But, to take a lesson learned from Quine's holism, there will always be multiple defensible or warranted ways to achieve such a conception and so multiple resolutions are always available.

Similarly, philosophical resolution is not a final state where all doubts are dispelled, all questions answered or all lines of inquiry exhausted because every resolution contains the seeds of new progress. Every philosophical resolution not only dissolves the original problem and moves us forward, but it also raises new, more sophisticated problems and thus points to further possible movement. This is well-expressed by Lipman's metaphor:

> Philosophy … is not looking for terminal answers… Like a terminal illness, a terminal answer gives you no options… A good answer is instead like a candle in the dark. It provides both light and mystery. It should, of course, illuminate, while at the same time reveal the contours of the unknown so that the listener can surmise that there is much more to be investigated and learned (Lipman et al., 1980, 203).

To count as a resolution, it must be "worthy of acceptance" (Rescher, 2006, 13), warranted (Dewey, 1938), or in other words, it must be epistemically preferable to the problematic conception. The resolution must *work* to have the problem disappear and so it no longer has force, rather than being merely personally expedient or enabling us to psychologically cope.[20]

A resolution is warranted only if it works within rational constraints independent of our subjective preferences, which Dewey calls "extra-ideal, extra-mental things" (1977, 3). We must test our conceptions inter-subjectively against logic, experience and established knowledge before we are warranted to assert them as resolutions to our problems. If a conception is not adequate to account for, or congruous with, these external considerations, it fails to count as

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[20] Rorty (1998) and James (1912) are often interpreted as taking such subjective views of resolution, however this may not be a fair interpretation, and the view I advocate may be a better interpretation of their position.

a resolution. Putting it colloquially, these extra-mental considerations keep our resolutions honest or give them the seal of approval.

Put another way, a resolution must be more in wide reflective equilibrium with our intersubjectively-acceptable reasoned judgements than the problematic conception.[21] We do not resolve problems by reaching ideal reflective equilibrium (which would be as impossible to reach as Truth), but by moving to conceptions that are more in reflective equilibrium than alternatives. In particular we judge that a problematic conception is out of equilibrium and a resolution is more in equilibrium when that problem is removed. We make progress by removing one problem or one disequilibrium at a time.

Because the extra-mental considerations provide objective checks and balances, our resolutions are more objective than what Kant (1929) refers to as a subjective "self-contained game". Yet this is not the impossibly strong version of objectivity which is associated with making totally neutral, impartial, judgements about which conceptions correspond with or copy the world. The process of inter-subjective, wide reflective equilibrium is a middle-ground position that offers the most objectivity that is possible. When deciding whether a conception counts as a warranted resolution, we attempt to bring all available knowledge, reasonable judgements and rational considerations into reflective equilibrium (Daniels, 1979, 278; Neilson, 1995, 235). There is nothing further

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[21] My position here is neo-Rawlsian and presents a Quinian-style holistic theory of justification rather than a foundational or simple coherence theory. There is a precedent for this in the P4C literature as reflective equilibrium is also explicitly employed (Lipman, 2003, 103, 171 & 197), and can be traced back at least to William James: "The individual has a stock of old opinions already, but he meets a new experience that puts them to a strain. Somebody contradicts them; or in a reflective moment he discovers that they contradict each other; or he hears of facts with which they are incompatible; or desires arise in him which they cease to satisfy. The result is an inward trouble to which his mind till then had become a stranger, and from which he seeks to escape by modifying his previous mass of opinions. He saves as much of it as he can, for in this matter of belief we are all extreme conservatives. So he tries to change first this opinion, and then that (for they resist change very variously), until at last some new idea comes up which he can graft upon the stock with a minimum of disturbance of the latter, some idea that mediates between the stock and the new experience and runs them into one another most felicitously and expediently" (1912, 59-60).

that we could do to justify our resolutions.[22] So, even though a resolution is not a final Settled conclusion, it is a settlement (small 's') of a problem in the Deweyan sense of a fallible, revisable conclusion we are warranted to use for further inquiry but which is not so Settled that it is unrevisable (1938, ch1).

9.

We make philosophical progress when incongruous and inadequate conceptions are transformed into congruous and adequate conceptions that open up new paths of intellectual navigation. From this perspective we can make sense of philosophical progress despite widespread disagreement and the absence of Settled, definitive conclusions. Resolving a philosophical problem is epistemic progress because it is an advancement from previously incongruous and inadequate conceptions, but it is also compatible with philosophical disagreement because there are always several epistemically legitimate ways to resolve a philosophical problem.

The core of philosophical progress is transforming incongruous and inadequate conceptions so they are back in reflective equilibrium, but this is not the whole story. Philosophical progress involves successive iterations of resolving a problem, where every resolution becomes the source of a new problem to be resolved. The original problem arises as an incongruous, inadequate conception and we develop more advanced conceptions to resolve this problem. However, more advanced problems arise in the new conception. These may be new problems, or more subtle and complex variations of previous problems. In response we might develop yet more sophisticated versions of the resolution. Alternatively we might abandon a line of resolution

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[22] There have been various names and descriptions of this sort position that is "accessible enough to be realistically aspired to, yet objective enough to be worthy of the name" (Haack, 1993, 351-357). Harding calls it "strong objectivity" (1993, 69-71), Slade calls it "weak relativism" (1997), Bleazeby "subjective-objective" (in press) and Code, "mitigated relativism" (1991, 320). This position provides what Habermas (1987) calls a "superior vantage point" rather than the impossible view from nowhere that Nagel (1986) describes. Bleazeby (in press) and Gregory (2002) each present a more detailed account of this middle-ground position for P4C, based on a pragmatist conception of truth and knowledge.

that we judge to be fundamentally in error, or develop radical resolutions that were not previously available. Although we may return to the same sorts of problems and lines of resolution, we are not merely going around in circles or following philosophical fads, but developing more and more sophisticated problems and conceptions (see figure 1).
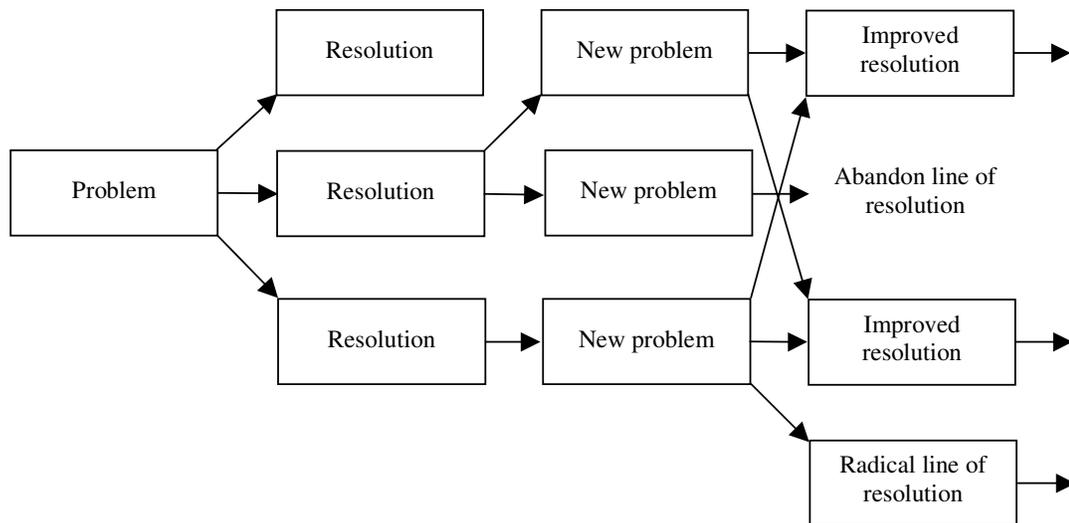
Figure 1: Diagram of philosophical progress from incongruous, inadequate, problematic conceptions to multiple philosophical resolutions that are more and more sophisticated, refined, congruous and adequate

10.

By understanding philosophical problems and resolutions, and how they are central to philosophical inquiry, P4C students are able to more effectively understand and make philosophical progress. In particular, they can understand what it means to follow the inquiry where it leads, and how we judge we are on track. We start with an incongruous or inadequate conception and then move to a philosophical resolution of this problem. We know we are on track by referencing the problem we start with and considering whether what is being said moves us towards a resolution. We know we have followed the inquiry where it leads because the philosophical problem we started with no longer occurs.

The problem-resolution conception also resolves many of the blocks to philosophical progress in P4C that I illustrated in section 3. I will discuss how

these are resolved in the rest of this section, thereby giving a clearer picture of making philosophical progress in P4C.

P4C students do not make philosophical progress unless they address philosophical problems. This means one block to philosophical progress is if students do not understand what a philosophical problem is. The problem-resolution conception remedies this difficulty by providing an account of philosophical problems.

To make progress, P4C students should not merely address issues that interest them, puzzle them or make them wonder, because these frequently are not *philosophical*, for example, "Why did the main character act like that?" or "Does that sort of thing really happen?" They should instead address issues that are philosophically problematic.

Also, the problem-resolution conception shows that to make philosophical progress, P4C students need to start with an *experience* of a philosophical problem. We make philosophical progress by resolving a problematic conception, but if students do not appreciate the issue they address *as* a problematic conception, then there is nothing for them to resolve and no progress is possible.

An implication is that P4C should not focus on philosophical questions, but on philosophical problems which are the real drivers of philosophical progress. Philosophical questions are independent of the problems they address, just as declarative sentences are independent of the propositions they declare (see Warren, 1998, footnote 12). This distinction has been under-emphasised in the P4C literature where the implicit conflation of questions and problems is the source of many of the difficulties with philosophical progress in P4C. Students tend to see the string of words that make up philosophical questions and not the underlying problem. The result is they fail to make progress because: they address a question with no problem in mind;[23] they have

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[23] This is the same difficulty that Peirce points to: "Some philosophers have imagined that to start an inquiry it was only necessary to utter a question whether orally or by setting it down upon paper, and have even recommended us to begin our studies with

empirical rather than philosophical problems in mind; or they have do not have one clear problem in mind. I argue that to make progress our attention should be on philosophical problems, and we should treat philosophical questions as tools to help articulate these problems.[24]

Even if P4C students address philosophical problems, they cannot make philosophical progress if they do not understand the conception that is the source of this problem. For example, young children do not understand the conception of determinism that arises from a scientific understanding of the world, or a sophisticated conception of political sovereignty, and thus they cannot understand the problems of free-will or political autonomy that arise from these conceptions. This means that sometimes philosophical progress will be blocked because the problems addressed are too sophisticated for some (or all) of the students.

Yet if we take a Brunerian view, we could argue that the problems of philosophy can be appreciated by any student, at any age, in some form. Even though they cannot understand the problem of freedom versus determinism, or political self-rule, they can understand simpler versions of these problem based on simpler conceptions of freedom and causation, and 'being in charge' or 'looking after ourselves.' Therefore we can facilitate philosophical progress by pitching the philosophical problems at the right level of sophistication for the students.

The problem-resolution conception can usefully illuminate this difference between the problems that children and adults can apprehend. The philosophical problems a five-year-old can apprehend are not the same as those an adult can understand, because they have different conceptions. The younger person's conceptions tend to be philosophically inadequate as they have not yet formed conceptions of all aspects of their world. An older-person might have

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questioning everything! But the mere putting of a proposition into the interrogative form does not stimulate the mind to any struggle after belief. There must be a real and living doubt, and without this, all discussion is idle" (1877, §4).

[24] This account of philosophical questions builds on, and is elaborated in, Golding (2006a, 2006b, 2007b, 2008a).

more adequate conceptions, but they may not have reflected deeply on these and so their conceptions will often be philosophically incongruous. For example, a five-year-old's conception of pets may be philosophically inadequate as it does not clearly distinguish which things count as pets and which do not, leaving the child unsure whether a guard-dog, a book, or a rock could be a pet. An older person might have formed a clear conception of what counts as a pet, such as a pet is an animal you take care of and love, but their conception is philosophically incongruous because it seems to imply that a little sister might count as a pet. The implication is that philosophical progress in P4C (and perhaps the general process of developing conceptions) occurs in a dialectical process similar to figure 1. We can better scaffold philosophical progress if we keep in mind that we must start with the conceptions the students' possess, then help them to discover what is problematic about these conceptions, and then, through dialogue, develop more sophisticated conceptions, which we can also problematise.

The differences between the philosophical problems that children and adults can apprehend can also explain the reluctance of some academic philosophers to accept that children can do philosophy, and why philosophy is traditionally restricted to upper secondary and tertiary education. The problems addressed in academic philosophy tend to be the most difficult, fundamental, and enduring philosophical problems that arise from our most mature, sophisticated and best conceptions of the world. If doing philosophy required engaging with these problems, then children could not do philosophy because they cannot understand the problems. However, the problem-resolution conception shows that even though children might not be able to appreciate the most sophisticated philosophical problems, they can do philosophy by addressing their own conceptions that are philosophically incongruous or inadequate.

Probably the main reason philosophical progress can be blocked in P4C is because students (and teachers) do not understand the game of philosophical inquiry, what the rules of play are, and how we score goals. Without the help of

the problem-resolution conception, P4C students are likely to confuse the game of resolving philosophical problems with other games and so they fail to resolve philosophical problems and fail to make philosophical progress. For example, they might confuse scientific and philosophical progress, and then get frustrated because the issues they discuss in P4C do not seem to lead to Settled, scientific answers. Alternatively, P4C students (and teachers) often take philosophical dialogue to be a game played for its own sake where the aim is to get a dialogue that 'flows'. From this perspective, P4C becomes like the game of hackey-sack where there are no points to score and the aim is just to keep the hackey-sack moving for as long as possible. But this makes philosophical progress mysterious: How do we get anywhere if we are discussing just for the sake of it? Finally, students may try to play the game of philosophical inquiry in P4C in the same way that they play other pedagogical games. In many classes, the game is to get the 'correct' answers as quickly as possible. But if they play the P4C game in this way they may end up confused and frustrated because 'correct' answers are never reached.

The problem-resolution conception allows students to understand and play by the rules of the P4C game. The goal of the game is to uncover and resolve philosophical problems and we keep track of our progress by whether we have scored a goal or how close we are to this target. They can thus make progress by explicitly identifying the problem under discussion, suggesting possible resolutions and then critically analysing whether these suggestions work to resolve the problems or not.

11.

Although it advances the current P4C literature on philosophical progress, the problem-resolution conception alone is not sufficient for supporting philosophical progress in P4C. In the following sections I argue that the problem-resolution conception needs to be supplemented with detailed conceptions about the nature of philosophical inquiry, about the complex epistemic positions that P4C teachers and students need to take about the

nature of philosophical progress, and about how P4C students can make the complex judgements about whether they have made philosophical progress.

12.

I have argued that philosophical progress should be understood in terms of the inquiry process from philosophical problem to resolution. However, it is difficult to follow the path of the inquiry in the collaborative dialogue of P4C where multiple perspectives and directions are suggested. To help P4C teachers and students to find their way and judge what to do to make philosophical progress, P4C needs to provide them with the philosophical equivalent of navigation advice such as 'climb a tree' or 'follow a ridge line or a river'. I present this philosophical navigation advice in the form of a framework for inquiry with four components. In this paper I present a reasonably sophisticated version of this framework which would need to be simplified for younger and more novice students :[25]

1)   A *plan* for philosophical inquiry, broken into a sequence of stages from problem to resolution (see appendix 1)[26]

2)   Philosophical *moves* to be made for each stage in the inquiry.[27] The plan for philosophical inquiry allows each thinking move to be purposefully

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[25] This framework is based on a Deweyan conception of inquiry and expands the conception of philosophical inquiry presented in the P4C literature. The development of this framework is documented in Golding (2002, 2004, 20-21 & 2006b). Gregory (2007, 2008) has also developed a similar framework for inquiry, which incorporates stages, moves, products, and prompt questions as I do.

[26] My account of the stages of philosophical inquiry is based on Dewey's general account of inquiry: "Reflective thinking involves … (1) a state of doubt, hesitation, perplexity, mental difficulty, in which thinking originates, and (2) an act of searching, hunting, inquiring, to find material that will resolve the doubt, settle and dispose of the perplexity" (1933, ch.1 sec. 2). More specifically, my account is developed from Lipman's adaptation of this Deweyan process so that it explicitly describes philosophical inquiry (2003, 101-103; 2004c, 3-7; & Lipman et. al., 1980, 113-124; 1984, 4). It is also influenced by similar accounts from: Burgh et. al., (2006, 117-119) and Cam (2006a, 12-28; 2006b, 160-162). I extend these conceptions by explicitly linking the inquiry process they describe to my account of philosophical progress.

[27] The account of philosophical moves I develop is detailed in Golding (2005a, 2005c, 2006b). It is based on the philosophical moves that are identified and described in the P4C literature (Lipman et. al., 1980, 110-128; Lipman, 1988, 201-206; 2003, ch8; Splitter & Sharp, 1995, 9-10) but I have sequenced these moves according to the stages of

orchestrated so that the inquiry progresses from problem to resolution. Appendix 2 lists a number of the characteristic moves that students could make at different stages of philosophical inquiry in order to make philosophical progress. For example, if students have suggested some possible resolutions, the next stage is elaboration, so their next move could be to say something like "Building on that you could say …" or "An example of this view is…"

3)   Philosophical *milestones* or products of each stage in the inquiry. These are milestones on the way to resolving a problem and indicators of philosophical progress even when we have not reached a resolution (see appendix 3)[28]

4)   *Questions* that can be asked to prompt the moves to be made and the milestones to be produced (see appendix 4).[29]

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inquiry for resolving philosophical problems. Even though P4C argues that inquiry is the deliberate attempt to structure (Splitter & Sharp, 1995, 34; Lipman et. al., 1980, 146) or pattern (Cam, 2006a, 3; Dewey, 1938, 105; Kennedy, 2004, 754) our thinking moves, it is rarely explained in explicit detail how these moves are structured or patterned. Apart from the account in this paper, a notable exception is Gregory (2007).

[28] Dewey calls these milestones "temporary stopping places, landings of past thought that are also stations for departure for subsequent thought" (1933, ch5 §1). Buchler calls them instances of "philosophical motion" in the inquiry (1993, 529), while Lipman (referring to William James) calls them "flights and perchings" (2003, 88). Burgh et. al., (2006, 53-54) and Chalmers (1999, xix) both point out that attaining milestones can satisfy us that we are getting somewhere, even if we have not resolved our problem and even if we may be more confused than when we started. The list of milestones in appendix 3 was originally formulated in a simple form in Golding (2002, 11) and is influenced by similar lists from Lipman (2003, 86), Lipman et. al., (1980, 111), Burgh et. al., (2006, 132), Splitter and Sharp (1995, 129), and Smith (2003). It has been developed by explicitly organising the products of philosophical inquiry according to the problem-resolution conception of philosophy and the stages of philosophical inquiry. Gregory (2007) has also done something similar.

[29] Splitter and Sharp call these procedural questions (1995, 58-59) because they are about the processes and methods of philosophical thinking rather than about substantial content. Sprod describes them as "questions that require better thinking" (1993, 15-16) and Fisher as "invitations to good thinking" (1995, 154). I have elsewhere called these thought-encouraging questions because they invite and encourage the thinking needed for philosophical inquiry without leading students to a pre-decided conclusion (Golding, 2005c, 2006b). The list of thought-encouraging questions I endorse explicitly situates the thought-encouraging questions in the framework for philosophical inquiry, thus making clear their role in facilitating philosophical progress (see Golding 2006b). Gregory (2007) has also created a similar list. This list is also influenced by: Splitter and Sharp (1995, 56-57); Paul (1994, ch22; 1995), Paul and Elder

This framework enables P4C students to plan their inquiry, break it into manageable stages and give it structure and direction. It describes steps, which if taken, will reliably lead to resolving philosophical problems. It does not stipulate a script that must be followed, or a recipe that will guarantee success, but it does provide an invaluable reference point that can be used by P4C students to judge where they are and what will likely move them forward. Put in a different way, the framework does not constitute the game of philosophical inquiry and making progress, but it does describe a sequence of moves that will likely result in a goal.

P4C teachers and students use the framework as a heuristic to judge how far they have come in the inquiry and what has been accomplished ("We have just suggested possible resolutions" and "Good suggestion Jim"). Then they can judge what stage of inquiry they should go to next to advance the inquiry and which moves would be useful to make at this stage ("Next we need to look at the reasons for and against"). They can ask for and encourage these moves and milestones by asking prompt questions ("What is a reason to agree? What is a reason to disagree?"). At first the P4C teacher would suggest moves, identify milestones and ask prompt questions, but they do this so that eventually this responsibility will be distributed across the whole class and the students can use the framework to guide their own philosophical progress.

Although I present the stages of philosophical inquiry in a seemingly linear and mechanistic sequence, this is not because I think this is the most accurate description of philosophical inquiry, nor am I stipulating rules for how philosophical inquiry should proceed. Instead I argue that it is precisely because philosophical inquiry is not linear and mechanistic, and not broken into discrete stages, that P4C needs a linear sequence of stages of inquiry. The stages of inquiry provide a valuable heuristic device that can be used as a reference point for teachers and students to get their bearings; as a propaedeutic device

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(2002), Lipman, et. al. (1980, ch7), and Golding (2005a, 2005c) who typically organise the questions by the type of thinking they prompt without considering how these fit strategically in the stages of inquiry.

that novices can use to help them master philosophical inquiry; and thus as a pedagogical device to help P4C students learn to make philosophical progress. They start by using a version of the framework at the appropriate level of sophistication for their philosophical expertise, and they use it in a simple mechanistic and linear fashion to learn to make philosophical progress. As they develop mastery they can use more sophisticated versions of the framework, and through practise, their inquiry will become more spontaneous and playful (though the framework can still be used as a compass that can be used heuristically to get their bearings when lost).

13.

A conception of philosophical progress for P4C must also consider the impact of student and teacher conceptions of the whole enterprise of making epistemic progress. Drawing on the empirical and theoretical work of Perry (1970, 1981), Daniel et al. (2000, 2002, 2005, 2008) and Paul and Elder (1994, 1995, 2002), I argue that if students or teachers take unsophisticated epistemic positions about the nature of knowledge, meaning and progress, these will block the possibility of progress in P4C.[30] Unsophisticated epistemic positions are inadequate for dealing with the complex pluralism of philosophy, they block the possibility of dialogue and inquiry, and they lead to misconceptions about the epistemic aims of P4C.

The difficulties that P4C classes face in relation to philosophical progress, which I illustrated in section 3, can be attributed (at least partially) to underdeveloped epistemic positions. The first half of the illustrated discussion is philosophically unproductive because the epistemic positions that students take are inadequate for dealing with the complex and controversial nature of philosophy. In the face of a range of plausible philosophical views, where none seem to be simply 'right' or 'wrong', some of the students end up confused and cannot figure out what is going on. Others resort to a dogmatic position and assert their opinion come what may, while others retreat to an equally

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[30] My account of epistemic positions and their effects on P4C is drawn from Golding (2009).

problematic relativist position and think that it is all a matter of opinion and so discussion is pointless. Some cannot understand why there is so much disagreement and discussion when they should just be able to get the right answer and move on. Others see no value in continuing the discussion once they have stated their opinion. The second half of the discussion, after student 7 suggests they would be better off reading the dictionary, is equally problematic because now the *teacher* takes an epistemic position that is inadequate for the complexity of philosophy. In the first half of the discussion the teacher allowed students to say any opinion they liked, but in the second half they change tack. Now their interventions indicate what line of inquiry is 'correct' and they direct students to this authoritative understanding. The discussion does get somewhere, but only because the teacher simplifies the issues into the 'right answer' and 'wrong answers'.

My diagnosis is that students and teacher have taken unsophisticated relativist or absolutist epistemic positions about philosophy. I argue that P4C students (and teachers) commonly take such positions, and when they do, this blocks philosophical progress in the same way it would be blocked when students or teachers lack adequate cognitive and social skills or dispositions. If they take a relativist position, such as all resolutions are a matter of opinion, then they think all conceptions are equally good and they cannot conceive of one conception being better than another. This means they cannot understand what it means to resolve a philosophical problem by getting a better conception. If they take an absolutist position, such as philosophical resolutions are either right or wrong, they can only conceive of better resolutions as 'the right answer'. This means they also cannot understand how reaching a philosophical resolution could be progress, given it is not a final, Settled, right answer.

To conceive of, and thus make philosophical progress, I argue that P4C students (and teachers) need to take the epistemic position of critical pluralism where philosophical resolutions are seen as inter-subjective reflective judgements. These judgements are not mere opinions, but nor are they 'right' or

'wrong'. Instead they are better or worse depending on how well reasoned or defensible they are.

I am not arguing here that any epistemic theory which appeals to truth or relativism will block philosophical progress. Many theories developed by mature philosophers have a range of sophisticated epistemic resources available, and despite similarities with absolutism and relativism as I have described them, they would count as what I have called critical pluralism. I am arguing here that the muddled and unsophisticated absolutist and relativist positions whose only epistemic categories are 'right', 'wrong' and 'mere opinion' will block philosophical progress.

Only critical pluralism has the epistemic resources for navigating and resolving complex philosophical problems. Making philosophical progress requires P4C students to judge some conceptions as better than others (which unsophisticated relativism cannot do), without being able to appeal to absolute right and wrong (which unsophisticated absolutism cannot do). Critical pluralism provides a position from which students can make such judgements in the face of the epistemic pluralism of philosophy. Critical pluralism allows P4C students to understand and engage in the process of resolving philosophical problems, and it is therefore a necessary precondition for making philosophical progress in P4C.

14.

The problem-resolution conception provides clear, objective criteria by which to judge whether philosophical progress has been made: Have we produced philosophical milestones? Are we at a later stage of philosophical inquiry than when we started? Does our new conception resolve the problem involved in the old conception? Does our new conception resolve more significant problems, lead to less unacceptable problems, and open up more new lines of inquiry, than alternative conceptions?

However, judging whether we have resolved a problem, and which philosophical resolution is better than others (i.e. in more reflective equilibrium) is extremely complex and controversial and requires expert philosophical

discernment. Students need scaffolding to help them to master this complex practice. I argue that simpler intellectual standards or criteria, that roughly approximate the full standard of reflective equilibrium, can provide this scaffolding (see appendix 5).[31] The standards I present here would need to be simplified for inexperienced P4C students and teachers. These can be used instrumentally as heuristics for judging that one conception or resolution is better than another without having to directly make the expert judgement about which is more in reflective equilibrium. For example, a clearer, deeper conception is better than an unclear, superficial conception. Although reflective equilibrium is the primary epistemic value, the simpler standards are viable epistemic criteria because conceptions that meet them are more likely to be in reflective equilibrium. Ultimately, a clearer, deeper conception is better than an unclear, superficial conception because it is more likely to be in reflective equilibrium.

15.

My aim in this paper was to present a conception of philosophical progress for P4C that can defuse the difficulties illustrated in section 3. I finish by illustrating how a dialogue in P4C can make philosophical progress when the dialogue is based on the conception of philosophical progress I have presented.[32]

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[31] There are numerous standards proposed for judging that one philosophical position is better than another. For example, the intellectual standards suggested by Paul are: clarity, accuracy, relevance, fairness, precision, plausibility, consistency, logicalness, breadth, depth, completeness and significance (1994, 473; Paul & Elder, 2002, 10). Lipman suggests: impartiality, comprehensiveness and consistency (1980, 174); precision, relevance, acceptability and sufficiency (2003, 233-234); and also originality, productivity, holism, generativity and inventiveness (2003, 245-247). Rescher includes: "consistency, uniformity (treating like cases alike), comprehensiveness, systemic elegance, simplicity, economy ("Ockham's razor," etc.)," and also "closeness to common sense, explanatory adequacy, inherent plausibility" (1978, 225). The list I offer in appendix 5 draws on these as well as Golding (2005a, 2005b) and a Project Zero assessment tool describing six continua for assessing thinking (Tishman & Palmer, 2006, 60-61).

[32] Further illustrations could be given of how P4C students of different ages and levels of experience can learn to make philosophical progress. Yet for the sake of this paper, this short, suggestive illustration of a mature and experienced community of philosophical inquiry will have to suffice.
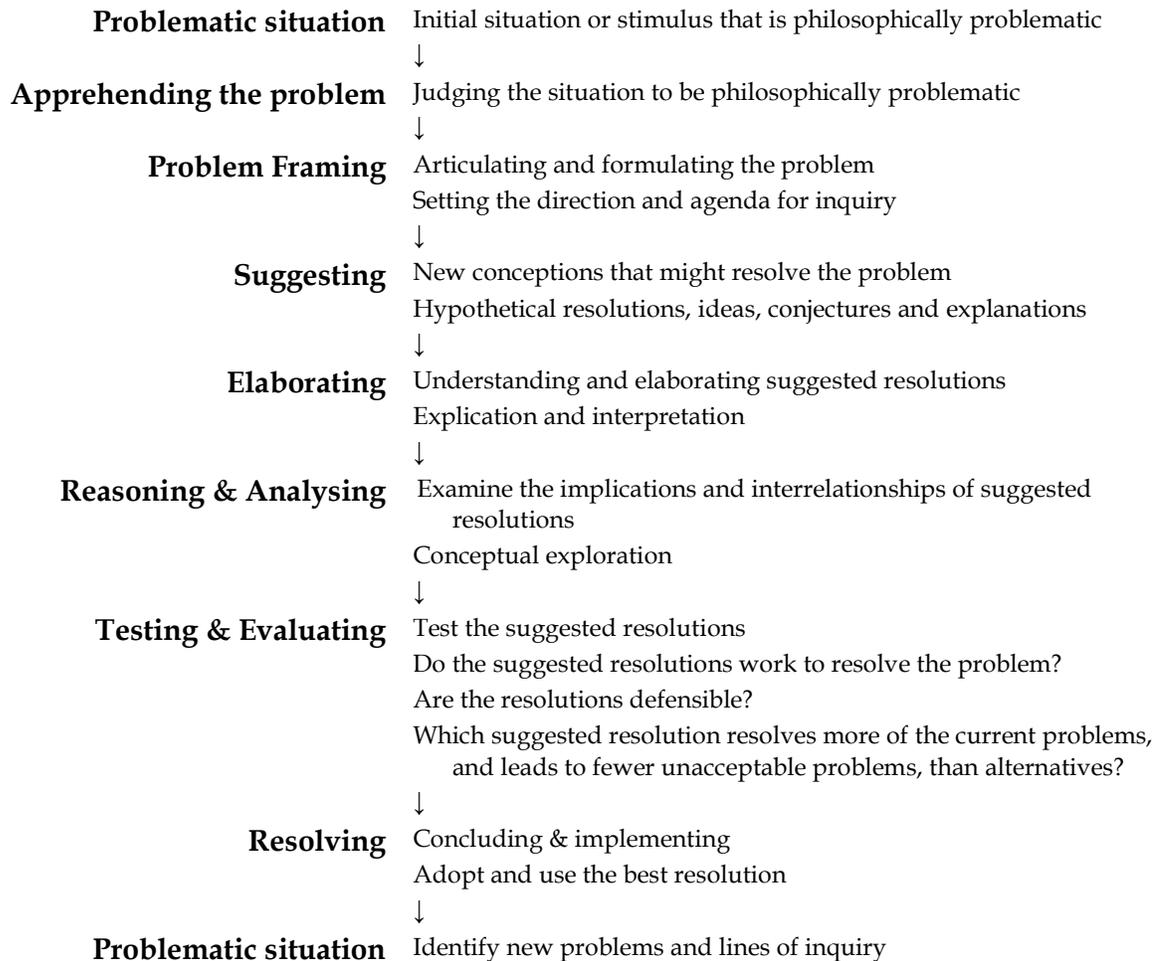
Illustration of philosophical progress in P4C

Student 1   What's the problem we're talking about?

Student 2   Remember last week we couldn't figure out why everyone thought racism was bad, even though it sometimes seems OK? Like when only Aboriginal people can play Aboriginal characters in a movie. We're trying to figure out whether racism is always bad.

Student 7   Yeah, but first we have to figure out what racism is, because no-one seems to be able to define it.

Student 5   I reckon racism is when a racial minority group is treated differently.

Teacher   Can someone expand on this view?

Student 6   Expanding on that, it's only racism if we treat someone differently *because* of their race.

Student 4   That would mean that racism is a type of action.

Student 2   Another possibility is that racism is about *defining* people by their race.

Student 3   Are you saying that anytime we talk about someone being good at basketball because they're African American, that it's racism?

Student 2   Yeah, I think so. We don't have to *do* something for it to be racism; we can be racist in our thinking.

Student 8   Well, we've made some progress coming up with these suggestions, but now we need to evaluate the reasons supporting them. Is racism about different treatment, about defining people, or something else?

Student 7   Saying that racism is only how we treat people is too narrow. Lots of people are racist when they *think* other races are inferior, but they don't do anything about it.

Student 5   Maybe we can make it broader by saying 'Racism is when we treat people differently, or think about them differently, because of their race'?

Student 2   I like that. This even covers my suggestion about defining someone by their race, which is either an action or a way of thinking about people.

Teacher   Is this OK as a working definition of racism? Are you happy that we use this to think about our main problem of whether racism is always bad?

In this illustration, unlike the first, students reflectively and consciously make philosophical progress. They understand that they are playing the game of making philosophical progress where the goal is to identify incongruous and inadequate conceptions and then resolve these philosophical problems. They also understand that to play this game they have to take an epistemic position of critical pluralism. Because of this understanding, they clearly articulate their philosophical problem and attempt to resolve it by philosophical exploration rather than by gathering empirical evidence or talking to an expert. They understand the process of philosophical inquiry and refer to it to help get their bearings as well as to identify milestones that indicate philosophical progress.

Both teacher and students ask thought-encouraging questions to help guide the inquiry and keep it on track and moving forward. Finally, they evaluate suggested resolutions to see which best meets the intellectual standards and then improve them when they do not measure up. Overall, they make philosophical progress as they attempt to develop new conceptions of racism that are in greater reflective equilibrium in comparison with the inadequate conception of racism they started with, and this is a milestone towards resolving their primary problem of whether racism is always bad.

In conclusion I reiterate my recommendation that a conception of philosophical progress should be a core feature of the Philosophy for Children programme where it can to resolve a number of difficulties for the praxis of P4C. In this paper I have attempted to develop such a conception by bringing together and systematising the various references to progress in the P4C literature. I put forward this conception to stimulate further dialogue about how to conceive of philosophical progress and I urge the P4C community to engage in this dialogue as a matter of priority to support the epistemic legitimacy of P4C.

Appendix 1: Stages of philosophical inquiry

Problematic situation	Initial situation or stimulus that is philosophically problematic
	↓
Apprehending the problem	Judging the situation to be philosophically problematic
	↓
Problem Framing	Articulating and formulating the problem
	Setting the direction and agenda for inquiry
	↓
Suggesting	New conceptions that might resolve the problem
	Hypothetical resolutions, ideas, conjectures and explanations
	↓
Elaborating	Understanding and elaborating suggested resolutions
	Explication and interpretation
	↓
Reasoning & Analysing	Examine the implications and interrelationships of suggested resolutions
	Conceptual exploration
	↓
Testing & Evaluating	Test the suggested resolutions
	Do the suggested resolutions work to resolve the problem?
	Are the resolutions defensible?
	Which suggested resolution resolves more of the current problems, and leads to fewer unacceptable problems, than alternatives?
	↓
Resolving	Concluding & implementing
	Adopt and use the best resolution
	↓
Problematic situation	Identify new problems and lines of inquiry

Appendix 2: Philosophical moves

Apprehending the problem	Apprehending philosophical problem Deciding on purposes for exploring the problem	… is interesting because … I see… I feel … I think … I wonder … One challenge/doubt/puzzle is …
Problem framing	Articulating the problem Setting the agenda & organising the inquiry	This is problematic because … One question this raises is … We need to answer … first because …
Suggesting	Suggest new conceptions to resolve the problem	One resolution might be … Maybe … / How about … / What if … … deals with … questions because …
Elaborating	Clarify, define, restate, interpret & understand suggested resolutions	Building on that you could say … Another way of saying that is … An example/analogy is … … means … The definition of … is …
Reasoning & analysing	Detect assumptions Make distinctions and connections Make inferences	… is connected to … … is different from … That would mean … That assumes … We haven't considered … Someone might think … because…
Testing & Evaluating	Identify and evaluate arguments Choose criteria and intellectual standards to test suggested resolutions Confirm, revise or abandon conception	A reason for … is … A reason against … is … An example/counter-example is … We can test views by … The criteria we can use to judge are … … view meets/doesn't meet the criteria … resolves the problem because … … is defensible because …
Resolving	Implement or adopt resolution	We have resolved … because … We have not resolved … A conclusion we can draw is … … best resolves the problem because … New problems to consider are …
Reflecting	Keep track of the process of inquiry Self-correct Identify philosophical moves to be made	We are trying to … We are/aren't progressing because … Now we are …. … helps us because … Now we should …

Appendix 3: Philosophical milestones

Apprehending the problem	Wondered about a conception
	Uncovered, experienced or noticed a philosophically problem in a conception
	Decided the purpose for investigating this problem
Problem framing	Isolated, clarified and defined the problem
	Expressed the problem as a philosophical question or questions
	Organised a sequence of questions as the agenda for inquiry
Suggesting	Offered suggestion, hypothesis, perspective, conjecture or explanation intended to help resolve the problem
Elaborating	Interpreted, clarified and refined a suggestion
	Broadened, expanded or built on a suggestion
	Used analogies and metaphors to illuminate the suggestion
	Gave examples, analogies or metaphors to illustrate and illuminate the suggestion
	Qualified or quantified the suggestion
Reasoning & analysing	Made a meaningful distinction, connection, generalization, classification, ordering or ranking
	Discovered important relationships
	Drew a reasonable implication, prediction or consequence from a suggested resolution
	Uncovered assumptions and bias behind a suggested resolution
	Offered an explanation to account for the suggested resolution
	Defined and analysed concepts
	Recognised consistency and inconsistency (interpersonally and intrapersonally)
Testing & Evaluating	Formulated and applied criteria and intellectual standards to evaluate suggested resolution
	Evaluated the accuracy and plausibility of assumptions and implications of a suggested resolution
	Gave plausible reason, example or evidence to back up a suggested resolution
	Gave plausible reason, example or evidence to test or challenge a suggested resolution
	Detected fallacious reasoning, contradictions, vagueness and ambiguity
	Evaluated the quality of support for and against a suggested resolution
	Identified contextual features and how these change possible evaluations
	Tested suggestions against observation, experience, the views of others, settled knowledge or action to judge if it resolves the problem and is defensible
Resolving	Concluded or made a considered judgement about which suggested resolution is best
	Suspended judgement about a suggested resolution
	Self-corrected and changed mind in light of evaluation
	Rearranged, reordered or reframed knowledge and experience
	Realised what we don't know and the limits of our understanding
	Identified new problems arising out of new perspectives and resolutions
	Adopted or implemented a resolution
Reflecting	Described the process of the inquiry and where we are in the inquiry
	Evaluated what needs to be done next to follow the inquiry where it leads

Appendix 4: Thought-encouraging questions

Apprehending the problem	What is interesting?
	What do you see? Feel? Think?
	What does this make you wonder about?
	What challenges you, raises doubts, puzzles you or doesn't make sense?
	Why does this matter? Why would we want to discuss this issue?
Problem framing	What makes this problematic?
	What questions does this raise?
	How will we sequence our questions?
Suggesting	How might we resolve the problem?
	What are some other alternatives?
	Do our suggestions deal with all the questions or only some aspects?
Elaborating	How could we build on that suggestion?
	What is another way to say …?
	What is an example or analogy for that?
	What do you mean by …?
Reasoning & analysing	What is … connected to? What is … distinct from?
	If … is true, what would this mean?
	If … is true, what must be assumed?
	What have we not considered?
	Why would someone think …?
	How would you define …?
Testing & Evaluating	What are possible reasons for …?
	What are possible reasons against …?
	What are examples and counter-examples?
	How can we test which suggested resolution is best?
	Which criteria or intellectual standards can we use to evaluate?
	Which suggested resolutions meets our criteria & tests?
	Does the suggested resolution actually resolve the problem?
	Is this suggested resolution defensible?
Resolving	What have we resolved?
	What is still not resolved?
	What conclusion should we draw?
	Which suggested resolution best resolves the problem?
	What new problems arise?
	How should we act in light of this new conception?
Reflecting	What are we trying to do?
	Are we making progress?
	What are we doing now?
	How does this help us?
	What do we do next to make progress?

Appendix 5: Standards for judging one conception is better than another

Clear and precise | **Fuzzy**

Specific, exact. Described in detail, explained and illustrated. | Underdescribed, without detail, explanation or example. Unclear, imprecise, ambiguous or vague.

Ordered | **Messy**

Structured, and organised. Simplicity, economy and elegance. | Unnecessary complexity. Disordered, disorganised, unfocussed.

Reasonable | **Unreasonable**

Plausible, justified, defensible, acceptable and warranted. Rigorous, logical, critical. Supported by relevant evidence, reasons and arguments. | Implausible, unfounded, unjustified, unacceptable. Unreflective, unexamined and unreasoned. Based on fallacious and spurious reasoning.

Accurate | **Inaccurate**

Verified, checked and tested. Based on evidence, facts and strong reasons. Consistent with and supported by best knowledge. | Based on little or no evidence, research or argumentation. Unverified. Inconsistent with and unsupported by established knowledge.

Fair | **Biased**

Thorough, charitable and balanced. Based on consideration of all issues, factors, perspectives and arguments. Inclusive or impartial. | Based on unexamined assumptions, vested interest and bias. Egocentric, close-minded, dogmatic or partial.

Broad | **Narrow**

Accommodates all rational considerations, perspectives & alternatives. Explores significant & far-reaching implications, generalizations & connections. | Ignores rational considerations, issues and perspectives. Blinkered and limited. Overlooks connections, links and alternatives.

Deep | **Superficial**

Elaborated and multi-dimensional. Describes, explains and analyses. Captures what is important, significant, central and worthwhile. Insightful, illuminating, discerning, discriminating, sophisticated and refined. | Simplistic, scratches the surface, ignores complexity and one-dimensional. Without nuance, detail or analysis. Irrelevant, insignificant, trivial and unimportant details.

Fruitful | **Barren**

Probing, speculative & challenging. Generates productive questions, hypotheses & problems. Explores new & significant lines of inquiry. Liberating. | Closed, unreflective, unquestioning, apathetic, and resists further inquiry. Limits further inquiry. Constraining

Adequate | **Inadequate**

Complete, thorough, sufficient and comprehensive. Enables successful intellectual navigation. Adapted to, accounts for, or accommodates rational considerations. | Incomplete or insufficient. Blocks successful intellectual navigation. Maladapted to and does not account for important rational considerations.

Congruous | **Incongruous**

Consistent, coherent conception that is harmonious with our inter-subjective experiences, standards, knowledge, and considered judgements. Makes sense. | Inconsistent with other conceptions and settled judgements. Contradicts itself or other important conceptions. Incoherent, anomalous and contradictory.

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