



The Philosophy
Foundation
THINKING CHANGES

Honorary Patrons
Professor A.C. Grayling
Professor Angie Hobbs

Patrons
Robin Ince
Dr Stephen Law
Dr Catherine McCall
Sir Anthony Seldon
Professor Amia Srinivasan
Dr Nigel Warburton

What can the Ancient Greeks do for us in the digital present?

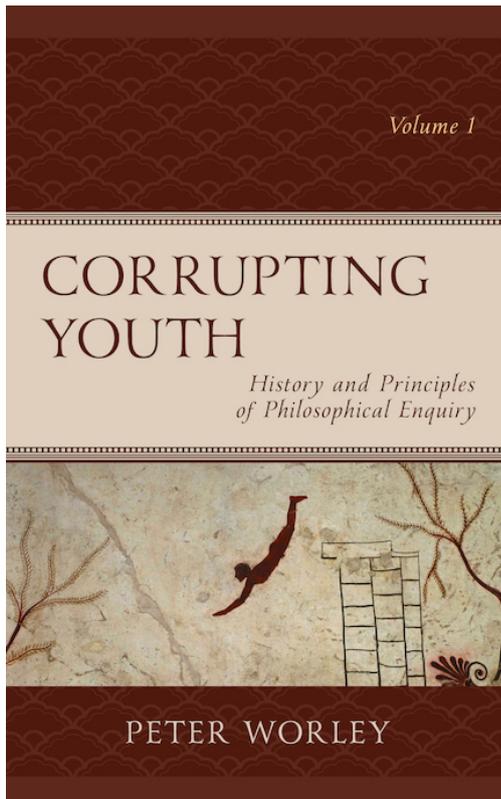
Corrupting Youth

Volume I History and Principles of Philosophical Enquiry (PhiE)
and *Volume II How to Facilitate Philosophical Enquiry (PhiE)*

January 2021

Volume 1 hardback £50, paperback £22.95

Volume 2 hardback £54, paperback £27



London, 15th January 2021

Socrates was sentenced to death for corrupting the youth of Athens.

The Philosophy Foundation's co-CEO Peter Worley's latest book, whose title is inspired by that event, presents a new and distinct way of helping children (or anyone for that matter) think philosophically, bringing the Ancient Greek art of philosophical conversations to the digital present.

Drawing on 30 years of teaching practice, and using Ancient Greek thinkers from Heraclitus to Aristotle, Worley outlines ways the Ancient Greeks can matter to us today in the classroom and beyond.

Professor Emeritus of Philosophy and series editor of *Big Ideas for Young Thinkers*, Thomas Wartenberg, says in his foreword,



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“What emerges from Worley’s examination of the ideas of the Greek philosophers is a model for doing philosophy with young people that is quite distinctive. [...] the manner in which Socrates interacted with the youths in his own home of Athens gives us guidance on how to get young people to engage in philosophical discussions that are genuinely the product of their own understandings rather than a reflection of the beliefs of their teachers.”

Giving people the skills to be able to think well for themselves is vital today. The rise of social media, misinformation, disinformation, fake news and alt facts brings today’s society closer to the society that put Socrates to death. Plato’s fear of relativism and the power of sophistry within democracy brought him to write the dialogues he is famous for today. In fact, Worley claims that this use of philosophical conversations or ‘dialectic’ – which can be traced back to Heraclitus and Parmenides – is possibly the most important thing the Ancient Greeks gave us:

“This was the origin of the intellectual processes that would enable the Greeks to develop a systematic method of rational thought making truth-seeking an open-access domain, for anyone capable of thought, not merely, as had been before, the preserve of a priest-class or an authoritarian fiat. More than democracy, this rational discourse is possibly the greatest gift the Greeks gave the world.”

Modern classrooms have to contend with developing knowledge for children, as well as giving children critical thinking skills needed to tackle the problems we are all faced with in the internet age. Current educational research shows the importance of oracy, metacognition (learning how to learn by yourself) and peer-to-peer learning that, Worley contends, is foreshadowed and even modelled in Plato’s dialogues.

The Greeks stood at an important time of change in terms of language development. They had come from an oral tradition, but they were moving into a new written epoch. We also stand at a similar time of language development and change – the digital technology we have now has driven a fast-paced social-media-focused news agenda that has no laws regulating it. We must learn how to regulate this ourselves, and help children learn skills that will enable them to separate the good, the bad and the ugly.

The need, therefore, of philosophical conversations around matters of meaning, is vitally important – not only in being able to speak with accuracy, and listen with understanding, but also to be able to evaluate arguments and to be able to critically analyse what we are told and what we believe. And sometimes the need to back-down from our original thoughts and assumptions, to re-evaluate and re-think what we are doing or saying.

These are the skills that are developed through Worley’s Philosophical Enquiry and his new books shine a light on not only how we can do this, but also on why we should be doing this. In the closing paragraph of the books Worley says,

“...using a pedagogy derived from Plato’s analysis of learning within an anonymous slave boy in Athens two and a half thousand years ago, this book presents a modern way for modern children to overtly turn attention to themselves so that they may become their own resources to which they turn, that they may become their own teachers from which they learn; so that they may *become a Socrates to themselves.*”



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Endorsements for *Corrupting Youth*

'All facilitators of philosophical enquiry, and indeed all educators, should pounce on this book. In Volume 1, Worley offers a refreshingly rigorous, lucid and stimulating account of the history and principles of philosophical enquiry, drawing in particular on the varied dialectical approaches of ancient Greek philosophy. In Volume 2, he provides a wealth of eminently practical and imaginative resources, honed through his many years of experience, which will enrich and enliven the classroom and beyond for pupils, participants and facilitators alike. The aim of both well-integrated volumes is to foster the open, questioning mindsets - constructively critical, collaborative and imaginative - which are so urgently needed to tackle the complex challenges of the 21st century.'

Angie Hobbs FRSA, Professor of the Public Understanding of Philosophy, University of Sheffield

'*Corrupting Youth* is yet another great contribution to the literature on philosophy in schools from Peter Worley. Worley traces the ancient sources of his dialectical approach to philosophical enquiry, brings out its continuing value, and explains the principles and practices involved. Here is an expert facilitator who shows how you can become one too.' **Philip Cam, Honorary Associate Professor, University of New South Wales**

Corrupting Youth is a fresh, dynamic and engaging book, enriched by Peter Worley's experience in schools and enlivened by his great capacity for story-telling. With this two-volume compendium, Worley introduces the foundational principles of Philosophical Enquiry (PhiE): both theoretical (its roots in Ancient Hellenistic philosophy, especially Socrates and Heraclitus) and practical (the skilled facilitation of dialectical philosophical enquiry). Worley has written a book that is erudite, expansive and warmly encouraging. Accessible to philosophers and teachers alike, it contains so much of value, including the four components of philosophizing (responsive, reflective, reasoned and re-evaluative); the Greek concepts of logos and flux; the eight core values of PhiE, especially dissent, oracy, and friendship; and the session plans. Whatever your current approach to pre-college philosophy education, reading this book will only enhance it.' **Megan Jane Laverty, Teachers College, Columbia University**



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NOTES TO EDITORS

ABOUT PETER WORLEY

Peter is a Visiting Research Associate at King's College London. He is a multi-award winning author for Bloomsbury Education and author and editor for Crown House Publishing on The Philosophy Foundation Series of books. Peter is a PhD candidate at Sheffield University supervised Prof Angie Hobbs and Dr Joshua Forstenzer. His research compares the Ancient Greek underpinnings of Philosophical Enquiry in schools against the pragmatist assumptions of Lipman's Philosophy for Children (P4C).

Peter read philosophy at University College London and Birkbeck College, completing his MA in 2004. He has been working with children in education since 1993 and has been doing philosophy with children since 2002. As CEO he represents the charity worldwide speaking at international conferences and festivals, works in the classroom with children every week, trains philosophy graduates and classroom teachers, whilst leading TPF in its mission to transform thinking in education.

Peter developed the method of Philosophical Enquiry that is at the heart of The Philosophy Foundation's work, as captured in his first book *The If Machine: Philosophical Enquiry in the Classroom*, which was adapted into a BBC series and nominated for a BAFTA in 2013 and is now available as a second edition. His next books, *The If Odyssey* and *The Philosophy Shop*, were both shortlisted for Educational Book of the Year, 2013, with *The Philosophy Shop* winning this prize, as well as Best Anthology and Best Philosophy Book 2012. His co-authored book *Thoughtings* was selected as Best Teaching Book 2013. In 2014 his fifth book *Once Upon an If: The Storythinking Handbook* was shortlisted for the Educational Resources Award as was his sixth *40 Lessons to Get Children Thinking*. His last book for Bloomsbury was part of the '100 ideas' series – *Questioning*. He has given two TEDx Talks about philosophy in schools: How to be a Rebel & Plato not Playdoh.

Peter regularly gives talks and presentations about philosophy in schools and the Philosophy Foundation's PhiE method at national and international conferences, and has been published in many teaching magazines and philosophical journals. Peter has been interviewed on the BBC World Service, on the BBC Radio 4 Today programme, on Radio 3's Nightwaves about philosophy in schools, has appeared on the Sunday Politics Show South (TV Show) about The Philosophy Foundation's 4Rs Campaign to bring reasoning in to schools and was interviewed on Sky News about P4C. He has spoken and run workshops at various literary, education and philosophy festivals, including the Hay Festival, How the Lights Gets In, Oxford Literary Festival, Cheltenham Literary Festival and the Sunday Times Festival of Education.

ABOUT EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

The Education Endowment Foundation¹ has listed classroom interventions that improve learning for young people. Within the top 10 interventions are three that are met through Worley's PhiE method. These are Metacognition and self-regulation (+7 months), collaborative learning (+5 months) and oral language interventions (+5 months).

¹ <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/>



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Worley E., and Worley P., paper on research with King's College London into developing metacognition through PhiE, published in 2019, showed a 62% improvement in metacognition and critical thinking. Teaching Critical Thinking and Metacognitive Skills Through Philosophical Enquiry. A practitioner's report on experiments in the classroom:

<https://www.e-publicacoes.uerj.br/index.php/childhood/article/view/46229>

Philosophical Enquiry develops collaboration and oral language skills, evidenced through the IOE research completed in 2012 into The Philosophy Foundation's approach. Teachers consistently reported improved verbal reasoning and higher-order thinking, as well as better speaking and listening skills, confidence, concentration and behaviour. Teachers also said pupils showed greater respect, empathy and tolerance of the opinions of others. 60% of parents questioned said they felt their child had become more articulate and able to put across their point of view more clearly.

<https://www.philosophy-foundation.org/validation-research>

ABOUT THE PHILOSOPHY FOUNDATION

The Philosophy Foundation's (TPF) mission is to bring understanding, wisdom and flourishing to the heart of education for children and adults. TPF train philosophy graduates to conduct philosophical enquiry with nursery, primary and secondary school children, older students and adults. Since forming as a social enterprise in 2007 they have worked directly with over 52,000 young people in schools - nursery, primary and secondary - helping them to develop vital cognitive and affective skills that enhance their school work, and their life beyond school. Over 90% of TPF schools have more than the national average of children on free school meals (with 56% of TPF schools having double the national average) and are in areas that serve communities with a wide mix of language and educational needs.

TPF have maintained an average re-contract rate with schools of 91% since 2010 (when they became a charity) - and this year maintained 92% of their schools. This demonstrates the high level of impact and value schools place on their work, as schools pay for it from their own budgets on the whole.

TPF also work in prisons (where a large proportion of the population come from very disadvantaged backgrounds) and community settings with adults and the elderly. They work in some unique settings where education is not straight forward, including: Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital School; Special education needs schools, with looked-after children and with the homeless.

For more information, please contact

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