

# Philosophy for Children Alberta

## Senior Elementary Learning Outcomes

# GRADES 4 5 6

### Overview

Grades 4, 5, and 6 lay down a core foundation of skills that will follow students for the rest of their lives. The Alberta Education curriculum requires students to develop specific critical thinking skills within each subject area and competence in generalizing beyond the specifics of the classroom. Students are also expected to share ideas constructively and collaborate to solve problems. Critical thinking development and the formation of a community of inquiry are the core benefits of incorporating the Philosophy for Children program into your classroom.



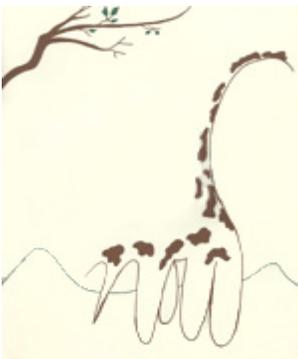
**KIO & GUS** tells the story of Kio who visits his grandparents' farm and becomes friendly with Gus, who lives with her family not far away. Gus helps Kio become aware of the world as the blind experience it, and some of the differences that characterize the creative activities of the blind. Kio's grandfather was once a sailor, and early in the book tells of an encounter he once had with a whale. He is determined to visit a site where he can observe whales once again, and Kio persuades him to take the two families along. The main characters are children who are sensitive to language and ideas as well as to the animals, people and things in the world that surrounds them. The way they explore these ideas and sensitivities is through conversation between themselves and with others. Among the contrasting concepts that Gus and Kio wonder about are make-believe/reality, fear/courage, saying/doing, and truth/beauty. Young readers will find their sense of wonder challenged as much as their reasoning skills. The type is large and readable, with some blank pages for young readers to try their hand at book illustration.

Grade Range: 1-4; **Target Grades: 2-3**



**PIXIE** is an elementary school student perplexed and delighted by many aspects of her life experiences. In this novel she discovers many different kinds of relationships, as well as reasons and rules. When her schoolteacher assigns each student to choose a mystery creature and find it on the class trip to the zoo, Pixie's notions of class relationships have some startling consequences. This novel emphasizes relationships (logical, social, familial, aesthetic, causal, part-whole, mathematical, etc.) as well as competence in dealing with such relationships. Ethical concepts include sibling-rivalry, personhood, respect for others, friendship, secrets, promise-keeping, parent-child relationships, obedience, teasing, and autonomy. Readers will find the pages strewn with philosophical ideas and puzzles that lead to lively classroom deliberation. The type is large and readable, with some blank pages for young readers to try their hand at book illustration.

Grade Range: 2-5; **Target Grades: 3-4**



**NOUS** is the sequel to Pixie. In it we are introduced to a story written by Pixie featuring an intelligent giraffe confronted with a moral dilemma. The Giraffe, whose name is Nous, thinks first of what her moral obligations would be as a person of virtuous character. Brian and Pixie, along with their classmates, try to help her by discussing what a moral education should be. In so doing they help Nous decide what to do, even though it is not a decision they favor. A wonderful springboard for getting young people to focus their discussions on ethical matters. The type is large and readable, with some blank pages for young readers to try their hand at book illustration.

Grade Range: 4-7; **Target Grades: 5-6**

# Alberta Learning Outcomes

## Sample P4C Curriculum Connections

### Subject Areas

#### English Language Arts

##### Explore thoughts, ideas, feelings and experiences

- *Pixie* revolves around the creation of a story for a class project, creating opportunities to explore the nature of stories and narratives.

##### Manage Ideas and Information

- Effective ways of grouping information to make it easier to understand are modelled in *Kio & Gus*.

##### Enhance the Clarity and Artistry of Communication

- Playing with language, specifically with similes and analogies, allows students using *Pixie* to practice these skills and consider their value.

##### Respect Support and Collaborate with Others

- *Nous*, *Pixie*, and *Kio & Gus* model for students effective and respectful ways to work, play, and communicate with others.

#### Science & Mathematics

##### Scientific & Mathematical Reasoning

- Evidence, interpretation, inference and deduction are reasoning concepts and methods exemplified in *Kio & Gus*.

##### Communication & Teamwork

- The community of inquiry models an ideal investigative community

##### Statistics & Probability

- An episode in *Nous* raises the distinction between the possible and the probable. Throughout the story the effect of chance on moral choices exists as well.

##### Direct Curriculum Complement

- *Kio & Gus* explores ideas of zoology and ecology, complementing units on Wetland Ecosystems and Trees & Forests.

#### Social Studies

##### Values & Attitudes

- The development and teaching of moral character forms the major theme throughout *Nous*, providing many opportunities for reflective discussion.
- Each novel encourages students to think about the rights, opinions, and perspectives of others, promoting an appreciation for cultural differences.

##### Knowledge & Understanding

- *Kio & Gus* features a main character with a perceptual disability (she is blind) highlighting alternative ways to understand the world.
- Students are required to critically assess stories as a way of learning about history; language and meaning are major themes in *Pixie*.

#### Information & Communication Technology

##### Communicating, Inquiring, and Problem Solving

- Each novel presents the students with a opportunity to practice and evaluate a variety of methods for investigating difficult questions.

##### Processes for Productivity

- A system for organizing discussion and investigation is modelled and practiced in every philosophy session through the community of inquiry.

#### Health & Life Skills

##### Relationship Choices

- The management of feelings and their relationship to our individual moral compasses is taken up in *Nous*, *Kio & Gus*, and *Pixie*.

##### Life Learning Choices

- Each novel presents realistic life choices creating a natural opportunity for discussions related to effective and practical decision making.

