The IAPC publishes curriculum materials in Philosophy for Children for use in grades K-12. The curriculum is designed to engage students in exploring the philosophical dimensions of their experience, with particular attention to logical, ethical and aesthetic dimensions.

Each novel is about 80 pages in length and is written in informal language, without technical terminology. Each manual is about 400 pages in length and contains conceptual explanations for teachers as well as discussion exercises and activities that can be used to supplement the students’ inquiry. These manuals are indispensable for conducting dialogical inquiry.

Students begin each philosophy session by reading aloud or acting out an episode from one of the novels and identifying issues that interest them, in effect creating their own agenda or lesson plan. For the remainder of the session they deliberate about these issues together as a “community of inquiry,” paying attention to the kinds of good thinking and democratic interaction that make their inquiry meaningful.

Teachers facilitate these dialogues in a number of ways. They encourage students to share their questions and ideas with the community. They model many kinds of good thinking “moves” such as clarifying terms, giving good reasons, offering examples and counter examples, drawing inferences, and challenging assumptions.

They reinforce the social aspects of dialogue such as listening to each other and building on each other’s ideas. They maintain a sense of where the discussion is going so that they can “scaffold” rather than direct it. They share their own sense of wonder about the issues and their willingness to learn from the community.