



Philosophy for Children (P4C) through Children's Books: An Example of A Study on Environmental Philosophy Education

Ergin ERGİNER¹, Nevra DEMİRİSOY², Aysun ERGİNER³

Abstract

It is important for children to be sensitive to environmental issues from an early age and to develop this sensitivity. In this context, there have been practices and discussions on environmental inquiry since the late 1970s when philosophy with children emerged. In this study, 4 of the illustrated children's books with the theme of environment that can be used in the field of environmental philosophy, within the scope of philosophy applications for children, were handled with the document analysis and content analysis methods within scope of qualitative research design. In the selection of this books in the study, criteria such as the possibility of making philosophical inquiries the use of which have been scientifically suggested or used in various studies, and the fact that they have gained intellectual popularity by being translated into many languages in the world have been determined. Philosophical questions were formed by listing the themes and topics, concepts, values and problem situations in the selected books by the researchers, and philosophical identity cards were prepared for each book. In the following stage of the study, quotations with philosophical thinking features in the books were symbolized through the target original sentences in the books. In the last stage, the sentences in the books that encourage children to philosophize were evaluated through content analysis. The aim of the study is to provide children with a critical and questioning approach to environmental problems by creating suggestions for educators who will benefit from children books in their philosophy studies with children. At this point, it was concluded that the illustrated children's book examined- within the scope of philosophy with children- are important resources in raising awareness about environmental problems to children and even adults. In terms of the results of the content analysis, it is seen that the children's books contain thought-provoking sentences that encourage children to protect the environment and are suitable for philosophy studies with children. According to the results of the study, it is recommended that the philosophical identity cards prepared for children's books be used in educational practices with families and teachers and in P4C workshops.

Key Words

Philosophy for children (P4C)
Environmental philosophy for children
Children's literature
Child book

About Article

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¹ Assoc. Prof. Dr., Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University, Türkiye, erginerginer@nevsehir.edu.tr, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7590-4755>

² MA student, Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University, Türkiye, ndmrsy50@gmail.com, <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1062-3212>

³ Assoc. Prof. Dr., Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University, Türkiye, aerginer@gmail.com, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0029-4032>

Introduction

While Dünder (2018: 4-6), 'Philosophy for children or children for philosophy?' was searching for an answer to the question, he actually thinks about how children, the only beings who recklessly increase the act of knowing in their daily lives, transform their learning into a magical state thanks to their sense of curiosity. After all, we agree that we need a pedagogy that will hear what they think, that will enable them to be themselves, think originally and not lose their creativity while building the future, without just imposing their own ideas on them. According to Yarkın (2018: 18), "philosophy accepts being a child only as the courage to ask questions, and an adult as the courage and effort to seek answers." When we consider Aristotle's 'Philosophy begins in wonder' argument, in this context, it becomes clear how philosophy is the work of children.

When we look at the first practices of philosophy as children's work, that is, philosophy for children, in the world, the fact that the above discussion dates back to 1976 (Lipman, 1976; Matthews 1976) draws attention to the fact that the issue is not an issue of the century we live in - the new millennium - but of the twentieth century. The issue began to be questioned in the first studies, and *Metaphilosophy* journal prepared a special issue of philosophy for children in those years. As is not surprising, the main actors of this work are Lipman and Matthews with their writings.

In the first work published by UNESCO when determining the aims of philosophy studies for children (Goucha, 2007), philosophy was given a truly meaningful and appropriate meaning through the metaphor of 'school of freedom'. In this study, Goucha (2007: ix-15) discusses philosophy for children with the following comment:

Philosophy, as a method, a procedure, a teaching process, enables each individual to develop questioning, comparison and conceptualization skills. What is the teaching of philosophy if not the teaching of freedom and critical reasoning? Philosophy implies exercising freedom through thinking, because it is a matter of not just expressing ideas but making rational judgments, because it is not just a matter of knowing, but also of understanding the meaning and principles of knowing. The primary concern of philosophy for children is to develop reasoning skills, a critical mind, and the capacity for self-reflection in children and youth. Such skills can be learned through the rational application of the scientific approach and the rigor of constructing scientific evidence.

During philosophy studies with children, it is seen that thinking and questioning exercises with children's books or reading texts have a positive effect on children's reading comprehension (Imani, Ahghar, Seif Naraghi, 2016; Safriyani & Mustofa, 2021), improve the critical thinking skills of readers at low reading levels (Jenkins & Lyle, 2010; Fletcher, 2020), and are highly effective in developing both cognitive and non-cognitive skills (Ventista, 2019). The shortcomings of today's education system in instilling reading habits in children are explained by literary historian Cevdet Kudret: 'If schools can inculcate reading habits, it is okay if they do nothing else.' (Çiçek, 2017: 10), it becomes even more meaningful. Although the phrase "even if it doesn't bring anything else" may seem a bit ironic in this context, the intended message emphasizes that reading comprehension is very important in the development of children's thinking. Studies focusing on teaching philosophy through children's literature (Wartenberg, 2009; Costello, 2011; Yılmaz & Bilican, 2021; Kulkul, 2023) agree that children's books improve children's reading skills. It can be thought that such a deprivation is due to a teachers' lack of equipment in children's literature or the fact that they do not include children's literature much in their teaching activities, and this situation disrupts the acquisition of reading culture and habit. Benefiting from the suggestions of children's literature science in education and using more children's books in learning and teaching processes can be considered as a solution to this problem (Lukens, Simith, & Coffel, 2013). Turkish children's literature terminology also has valuable works (Demiray, 1977; Gökşen, 1985; Oğuzkan, 1987; Dilidüzgün, 1996; Nas, 2002; Sever, 2008 and Şirin, 2019) that support this idea. These works simply introduce children's books but do not generally include an explanation of their use in teaching.

It is seen that philosophy studies for children based on children's books vary in terms of philosophy disciplines. While some children's books deal with more general philosophical inquiry such as metaphysics, epistemology, logic, ethics and value, and aesthetics, it can be said that some of them focus on more specific fields of inquiry, such as philosophy of language, philosophy of science, and political philosophy. The field of environmental philosophy is one of them and there are many children's books written on this subject.

Costello (2011: 252), who is known for his philosophy studies for children using children's literature, sees it as possible that today's technology children, who read Shel Silverstein's *The Giving Tree* (Silverstein, 2020), will find more technological solutions to nature's problems in terms of establishing relationships with nature and protecting nature, which seems possible for children who are increasingly exposed to technological forms of education, learning, and environmental encounters. *The Giving Tree*, which is mentioned with considerable references in the literature (Miller, 2011; Radeva, 2011) for helping children approach environmental problems more sensitively and gaining awareness of protecting nature, is valuable for children to develop environmental philosophy. In this book, it is thought that the *Giving Tree* can help develop alternatives to calculative and technological ways of relating to nature. Since the book met with its readers, it has also inspired the writing of other philosophical books for children that make them question the damage done to the world and its nature.

Challenging the idea of the West or all people in the past that nature is a resource for people, Bonnett (2020) says that it is possible to question our own existence in nature or leave nature under its own control, and in order to do this, we need to rely on environmental awareness, nature itself and the philosophy of education that we need. Therefore, he thinks that we need to establish a new and different relationship with nature. Philosophizing for nature, thinking more educationally for nature.

It was difficult to predict whether the atomic bombs dropped in the Second World War would be a new technological production or a future nightmare for the world. Today, we can read about this nightmare in children's books, from Coerr's *Sadako* (Coerr, 2010). Wall (2003), who discusses the protection of nature with political and philosophical arguments, again seeks an answer through science to the question of whether the technology created by humans through science will harm or benefit nature. To eliminate the possibility of turning the world into hell with out-of-control science by developing a holistic understanding of science that benefits from ecological appreciation. This view fits really well with Capra's (1983) argument that the reductionist scientific method is inherently flawed and the enemy of nature.

It is possible to conduct philosophical discussions with children on many topics, from the philosophy of knowledge to the philosophy of existence, from moral philosophy to metaphysics. One of these fields is undoubtedly environmental philosophy. The most obvious reason for the development of this new area of philosophical interest is the danger that advanced technology poses to human life on the planet. Philosophers have not remained insensitive to the importance of this problem (Wartenberg, 2009:118). The irony is that the cause of this danger to human life is the human being himself.

In Cevizci's (2022) taxonomy of the fields of philosophy, it is noteworthy that environmental philosophy is not included in the fields of philosophy. In terms of the fields of philosophy of knowledge, philosophy of science and philosophy of ethics, environmental philosophy is not included in a specific philosophical classification but is more eclectic in terms of its topics and even conceptually overlapping within the fields of philosophy. At the same time, in terms of determinism and the paradox of free will, it can be said that environmental philosophy in terms of moral philosophy is not included in the basic philosophical classifications due to the concern attributed to the shallowness of human knowledge.

Aşar (2021) stated that environmental philosophy criticizes the view of humans as the masters of other living creatures and the consequences of this. He also stated that thinking about the environment has existed since ancient times, but that it was seen as a philosophical problem due to the consequences of the ruthless destruction of the environment. Perhaps one of the first measures to be taken in solving or reducing environmental problems is most importantly, creating a solid

environmental awareness and this awareness should be gradually developed. For this reason, philosophical consciousness should be used (Gül, 2013: 21). Regarding this awareness, Bozkurt (2021) also says that illustrated children's books written about the environment can be used from early childhood, especially to become aware of the problems.

Problem, Purpose, and Importance of the Study

The education of children to gain environmental sensitivity, and thus to provide them with critical and philosophical thinking skills through environmental problems, is an important instructional effort in terms of conducting philosophical studies with children. The main problem of this study is to show, by using works of children's literature, how educators (parents and teachers) who are involved in this instructional endeavor can use children's books to teach philosophical thinking in a more concrete way. In line with this basic problem, the aim of the study is to use children's books to determine the algorithm of philosophical questions with the intellectual/semantic structure (theme, concept, value, and problems) in the books and to try to create "philosophical identity cards for children's books" in line with the philosophical and conceptual patterning of the problem addressed by the books through this algorithm. For this purpose, the quotations in children's books that have the characteristics of philosophical thinking are to be symbolized through the original sentences in the books.

A review of the literature suggests that environmental philosophy studies for children have a long history. Swift (1837, 2022), who can be regarded as one of the first, published "first lessons about natural philosophy for children" in two parts and tried to explain our planet and the meaningful movements and events in it for children, the mystery and philosophical formation of nature with evidence and illustrations. However, when the literature is examined, there are a limited number of studies (Bakırcı & Artun, 2011; Artun & Bakırcı, 2012; Çelikbaş, Yalçınkaya & Banoğlu, 2013; Yalçınkaya & Çelikbaş, 2013; Ağbuğa, 2016; Peker & Ahi, 2019) examining directly or indirectly making children think about environmental philosophy or making philosophical inquiries to better understand and protect nature.

However, it can be said that these studies are studies on the relationship between environmental philosophy and general education. The number of studies focusing specifically on doing environmental philosophy with children is quite small (Sharp, 2010; Gregory, Haynes, & Murriss, 2017). Studies on children's philosophical thinking with a direct focus on environmental philosophy are generally found in works written in English (Costello, 2011; Miller, 2011; Radeva, 2011). Philosophy practices can be used with children to raise individuals who are environmentally sensitive from early childhood, approach environmental problems critically and inquisitively, and contribute to the solution of these problems by developing their creativity. This study was deemed worthy of implementation in terms of addressing the issue of children's books in environmental philosophy studies for children, and it was aimed to offer suggestions to educators who want to conduct philosophy studies with children by examining four environmentally themed illustrated children's books that stand out in the literature.

As stated by Haynes & Murriss (2012:21-40), when we consider the idea that 'the books we encounter as children's books will not always be very innocent and may even be dangerous', it is important to consider that such studies that offer pedagogical preference suggestions to the reader about a book in terms of its usability in education. You will immediately understand how important it is. According to Koroğlu (2016:63), 'The responsibility of children's literature is to nourish the child's universe of emotions and thoughts. It is to introduce him to life and people through the expression possibilities of color, line and language. This perspective brings us to a point regarding human existence: Is it possible to see a person who does not know himself, humans, and life as 'human enough'? The child asks, 'Who am I?' 'Can he produce appropriate solutions to the questions that life poses before answering the question in line with his knowledge?' His questioning points out how important children's picture books are in the child's education in the context of children's literature, and how critical the choices made regarding children's books when used in the child's education are in terms of child development.

In this sense, we should take children's books more seriously and study their contributions to education better. The study aims to serve such a contribution with its fiction, pattern, methods and findings. Moreover, our classroom conversations contradict such beliefs about children's responses to literature, and we continue to be surprised by the meaning, complexity, and diversity that children extract from picture books (Haynes & Murriss 2012).

Method

In the article, environmentally themed illustrated children's literature products that can be used as stimuli in philosophy sessions with children were examined by document analysis method in terms of their philosophical questioning and the theme, they were constructed within the framework of qualitative research methods. Document analysis is the provision, examination, questioning and analysis of documents that can be described as primary or secondary type sources that will create data for the research (Özkan, 2021). After the books were read carefully by the researchers and relevant notes were taken, the discussion in the literature was also examined, and if an academic discussion was found about the book, evidenced references to the discussion were also shown in the findings by citation.

Spencer, Ritchie, Lewis and Dillon's (2003: 10) statement that 'evaluation studies carried out to increase the quality standards in qualitative research do not focus on how to do this better', a similar problem continues in compilation studies on document analysis and the fictionalizations created in the studies where emphasis is placed on handling patterns in a more creative way. In this study, an attempt was made to create identity cards for philosophical inquiry and conceptual patterning in the content analysis of the books discussed.

In order to conduct a better document analysis, we tried to create identity cards for philosophical questioning and conceptual patterning in the content analysis of the books. Since these identity cards, which are prepared as learning documents, also concern life beyond the school, curriculum and classroom practices, and concrete experiences related to the learning and teaching process (Palm, 2019: 5-6), an authentic assessment approach was adopted in this study. According to Palm (2019), in authentic assessment, it is important not to capture every aspect of different meanings in detail, but to outline the key features identified in a unique way. In the following stage of the study, the quotations in the books that have the characteristics of philosophical thinking were symbolized through the target original sentences in the books.

Children's illustrated books, whose features are given as the basis for the study in Table 1 below, are *The Bear that Wasn't* (Tashlin, 2010; 2017), *Be a Tree* (Gianferrari, 2021; 2021a), *Carl and the Meaning of Life* (Freedman, 2019; 2021) and *The Giving Tree* (Silverstein, 2010; 2020) have been examined for use in philosophy applications for children:

Table 1. Environmentally themed children's books and imprints used in the study

The name of the book	Publication Date Original/ Translation	Author and Translator / Publishing House	Subject
The Bear that Wasn't	1946/2017	Frank Tashlin and Şiirsel Taş / SEV Publishing	The destructive nature of man's relationship with nature
Be a Tree	2021/2021	Maria Gianferrari and Göyçen Gülce Karagöz / Koç University Publications	Similarities between people and trees
Carl and the Meaning of Life	2019/2019	Deborah Freedman and Nil Gün / Kuralması Publishing	Balance and harmony in the ecosystem
The Giving Tree	1964/2020	Shel Silverstein and Sevim Öztürk /Bulut Publications	Man's relationship with nature

References Based on Book Selection

Children's books are at peace with their environment and themselves. They have an important role in raising individuals who love nature and animals. These books, which introduce them to the world they live in and offer them rich life experiences with events and heroes, expand the children's world of meaning (Aslan, 2015). As stated by Lone (2017: 54), children's literature is a rich resource for parents and children who want to deal with philosophical problems. Many children's books have a natural creativity that can prompt philosophical inquiry. Each question arouses curiosity in a way that invites philosophical inquiry and calls for discovery of answers. Below are the references used as a basis for book selection:

1. *Children's books that can enable philosophical inquiry:* According to the discipline of environmental philosophy, children's books that can be used to inquire with children and organize community activities during the teaching process were preferred.

2. *Children's books used in philosophy studies for children:* Books that have been used or recommended for use in the field of philosophy for children are included. For example, The Giving Tree's appears to be used by Wartenberg (2009; 2018) and Yılmaz & Bilican (2019).

3. *Children's books about which scientific discussions are made in terms of philosophy studies for children:* Academic literature refers to books in which comments, criticisms or recommendations about the work are included. For example, The Giving Tree was examined in a wide semantic perspective in Costello (2011), Miller (2011) and Radeva (2011), and it was emphasized with solid evidence why it is an important children's book.

4. *Children's books that have value in popular culture:* One of the reasons for choosing children's books was that they have been translated into more than one language, have attracted intense attention, have been read and commented on Goodreads and book sales sites. Again, some children's books, for example, The Bear that Wasn't (Tashlin, 2017), although its author is not a literary figure, are a popular and popular children's book and are known all over the world. His works are still being translated into different languages, and his popular and intellectual appreciation is increasing day by day.

5. *Attracting the attention of different disciplines and positive or negative criticism:* Children's books in literature have attracted the attention of different disciplines. For example, taking Lind's Sandworm series (Lind, 2018, 2018a, 2018b), Mackesy's the Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse (Mackesy, 2021) or Exupéry's The Little Prince (de Saint-Exupéry, 2021) into consideration, it's possible to say that they appear very interested in philosophy. The Giving Tree has been the subject of interest and focus in the field of law (Cousin, 2015), media and education (Hines, 2019), and politics ([DrunkDictator](#), 2011). The Giving Tree, While Hines (2019) bombarded it with negative reviews, Cousin's (2015) reviews are extremely positive. The Taking Tree: A Selfish Parody (Travesty, 2010), also written as a reaction to The Giving Tree and presented to the reader as a selfish parody that 'takes rather than gives', may have been translated into Turkish. A children's book has also been written, which we can translate.

6. *Examining the book in its original language:* In translated works, the meaning attributed to the work is sometimes limited to the interpretation of the translator(s), and in order to design the philosophical thinking fiction more effectively, the works are also examined in their original language.

Table 2. The references with which the books match

References	Books Reviewed			
	The Bear that Wasn't	Be a Tree	Carl and the Meaning of Life	The Giving Tree
-Being suitable for philosophical inquiry	✓	✓	✓	✓
-Using in P4C Studies				✓
-Having a scientific discussion about P4C in terms of P4C			✓	
-Being valuable in popular culture	✓			
-Attracting attention and receiving positive or negative criticism in different disciplines				✓
-Reviewing in the original language		✓	✓	✓

When Table 2 is examined, it is seen that Shel Silverstein's *The Giving Tree* is mentioned with more references.

Data Collection, Editing and Reporting

In the first stage, after the books were examined in detail, the problem, or problems they addressed and the theme or themes they covered were determined, and the concepts and values that emerged from the theme and could be taught to children were listed. In the second stage, a list of philosophical questions was created to enable the books to be used in philosophy practices for children and to create teaching activities. In the last stage, "philosophical identity cards for children's books" were prepared using the algorithm that emerged regarding the philosophical qualities of the books and the process of teaching philosophy with children. Thus, an attempt was made to help the reader see the whole picture. The cards generally contain the conceptual structure and philosophical questions reflected in the content of the books, and a kind of conceptual photograph of the books is taken. In the ongoing process, the books were analyzed in terms of their content, and the original reference sentences in the books that enabled children to think philosophically were tabulated by quoting. Erginer (2021) was used in this fiction.

Validity and Reliability

Golafshani (2003) suggests some strategies to test or increase reliability and validity in qualitative research. First of all, in order to increase the credibility of the study, books used in the literature to teach environmental philosophy to children (Çiner and Erginer, 2023) were tried to be examined. Afterwards, the four books used in the research were decided. In terms of transferability, researchers endeavored to maintain an unbiased approach in reporting the study and supervised each other. To ensure consistency, direct quotations were used particularly in the data collection and analysis stages, with the aim of presenting evidence to the reader. All examined documents and obtained data were stored for verifiability.

Assumption Regarding the Difficulty and Limitation of the Study

It is assumed that the philosophical thought-provoking value of every qualified children's book and its power to make children think will be limited to the creativity of the person who evaluates the book. Auden said, 'Good books that only adults can read require adult experience to understand the book, but there is no such thing as a good book that only children can read.' In his opinion (Rundell, 2021: 9-10), as discussed in this article, it is important for researchers to conduct academic studies on how children's books are handled and should be used in children's thinking education. The

measurement approaches used in the study are the ethical responsibility of the researchers. Throughout the study, the second author was in a guiding position as he was the thesis advisor of the first author, but they cooperated at all stages of the study.

Results

The results of the study were discussed in two parts: creating philosophical identity cards for children's books and quoting original reference sentences in the books that provide philosophical thinking in children.

Creating Philosophical Identity Cards for Children's Books

Below is the data regarding the results:

The Bear that Wasn't

While Bear, the hero of the book, is preparing to hibernate in the forest, people coming to the forest cause some changes there. Days pass, the number of visitors increases, and the work increases. Finally, a giant factory was established. Moreover, this factory is right above the Bear's cave. The bear cannot convince anyone in this factory that he is a bear.

Figure 1 below is the ID card diagram prepared for the book *The Bear that Wasn't*:

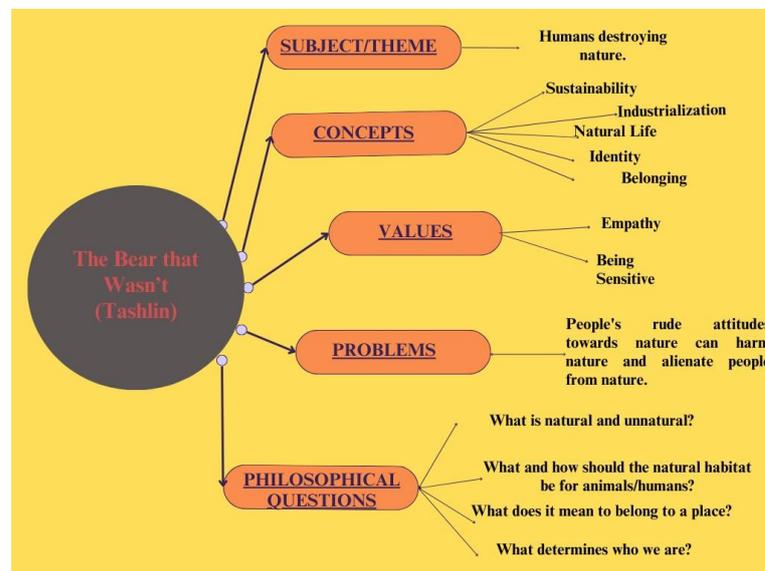


Figure 1. The Bear that Wasn't ID card diagram, (Tashlin, 2017)

The theme of the book is about humans destroying nature. According to the results of the concept and value analysis about the book, it can be said that the book can teach children the concepts of 'sustainability', 'industrialization', 'natural life', 'identity' and 'belonging', and the values of 'empathy' and 'being sensitive'. The main problem that children are expected to realize and deal with in the book is that 'People's rude attitudes towards nature can harm nature and alienate people from nature.' The philosophical questions in the book are 'What is natural and unnatural?', 'What and how should the natural habitat be for animals/humans?', 'What does it mean to belong to a place?' and 'What determines who we are?'.

When the literature is examined, it is understood that *The Bear that Wasn't* is used in philosophy studies for children and is recommended to educators (Matthews, 1976: 8). According to Yılmaz & Bilican (2019:40), it is possible to conduct an investigation from two different focuses in the illustrated story book titled *The Bear that Wasn't*. The first is an investigation centering on the destructive effects of a human and mind-oriented understanding of life, which peaked with modernism, on nature and therefore on human life, and the second is an investigation focusing more on the philosophy of being and focusing on the features that 'make something what it is'. The fundamental question in natural philosophy is what the main substance of existence is. Questioning

this first substance, which means that all beings originate from it, appears as the 'substance problem' (Topdemir, 2009).

According to Ağbuğa (2016), air, water and soil are the three basic elements necessary for the sustainability of living life. All these resources, which are polluted, destroyed and even used unconsciously, have become more important with the awareness of increasing environmental problems. People use philosophy to solve these problems. Similarly, in *The Bear that Wasn't*, children are made to think about environmental problems by using an absurd thinking approach, while at the same time they are left alone with a problem.

Be a Tree

Be a Tree, which has a poetic narrative, depicts the language of communication that trees establish with life. The book presents the anatomy of a tree from its branches to its trunk, from its roots to its leaves, from its bark to its core. Meanwhile, it is emphasized that the tree is not alone, that there are thousands of other trees around it. The existence of trees in a forest and the power of the communication network they establish with each other through their roots and the fungi there are mentioned. In the parts of the book where he draws attention to the power of being in the forest together, 'Mother trees, ... keep eye on.!', 'Wise trees, ... 'becomes shade' .', 'Strong trees, ... become shelter .!'; 'Healthy trees, ... help .!' These expressions attribute the characteristics of the human world to nature through trees, thus allowing humans to identify with nature.

The theme of the book is about the similarities between trees and people. While the book clearly expresses the concepts of universe, homeland, society and family, it reveals that trees interact like humans, thus encouraging us to identify with trees. On the other hand, it makes it possible to move from the concepts that we would consider as the essence, existence and substance of a tree to the concepts of the essence, existence and substance of a human being. In addition, it is thought that the book can teach children the values of 'helpfulness', 'solidarity', 'freedom', 'being positive' and 'being a good person/living being'. The problem of the book is how aware we are of the perfect harmony that exists in nature and the damage that underdeveloped awareness will cause to the environment. The philosophical questions in the book have been determined as 'Are other living beings social beings like humans?', 'Are humans a part of nature?', 'Does nature teach people something?'

Figure 2 below shows the ID card diagram prepared for the *Be a Tree* book:

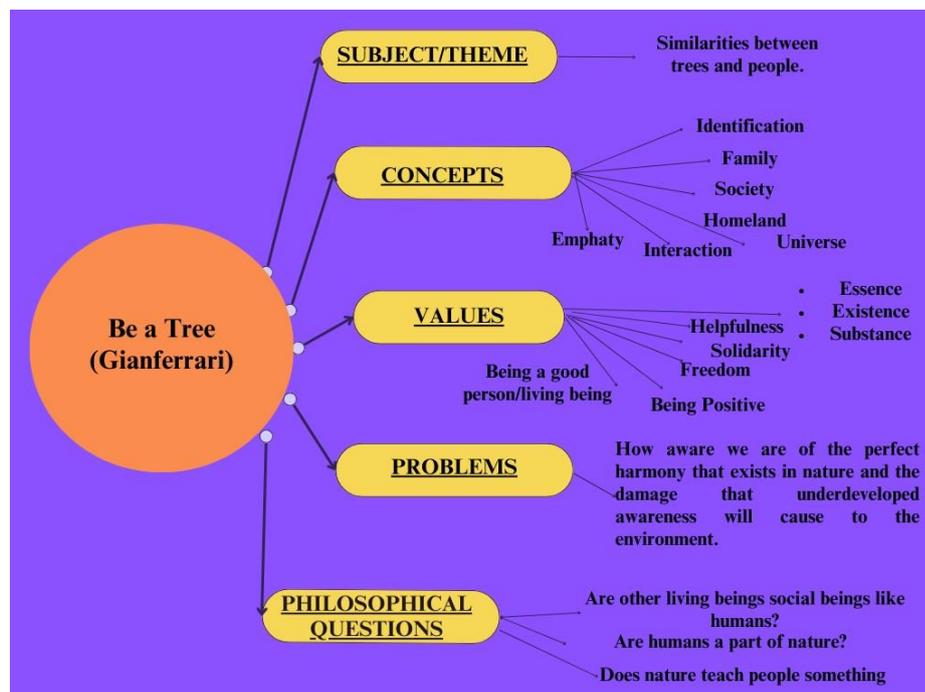


Figure 2. Be a tree ID card diagram, (Gianferrari, 2021)

According to Yalkın (2021), 'Is a human being a part of nature?' Philosophical discussions can be carried out focusing on the answers to the question, the consequences of the brutal use of something that its a part of, what nature provides to humans, the relationship of humans with nature and their similarities. Within the framework of this social structure and position, human beings realize their existence within the boundaries of nature. For this reason, it is the main duty of humanity to address today's situation vis-à-vis nature from a humanist perspective within the framework of 'consciousness' in which solutions will be produced in line with 'common goals'.

“Naturalist sensitivity,” which Lone (2017: 50) calls sensitivity to the natural world, is the ability to observe the differences between living things and seeing the details and changes in the natural world that many of us miss. In order to develop this sensitivity, the book draws attention to the similarities between people and trees.

Carl and the Meaning of Life

Carl and the Meaning of Life is about a worm named Carl. While Carl continues his life cycle underground, he also performs tasks such as leaving fertilizer and turning the soil over. One day, he begins to search for this answer when a field mouse questions why he is doing all this. When he asks this question to the animals he encounters, the answers he receives do not satisfy him because these animals evaluate existence from their own perspectives and give different answers to Carl. Carl continues his search until he finds the answer.

The theme of the book includes balance in the ecosystem. In the illustrated children's book, where the value of 'responsibility' is discussed through the concepts of 'existence', 'life cycle' and 'purpose', two different problem situations are coming forth: 'Each of us has a different life purpose.' and 'Failure to comply with our responsibilities may cause harm to us and our environment.' These problems, which are expressed as 'What are the purposes of existence of living things?', 'Do all living things in the world have a responsibility?' and 'Can everything be connected?' enable philosophical inquiries through the purposes of existence and responsibilities. The questions are treated as philosophical discussion questions of the book.

Figure 3 below shows the ID card diagram prepared for the book Carl and the Meaning of Life:

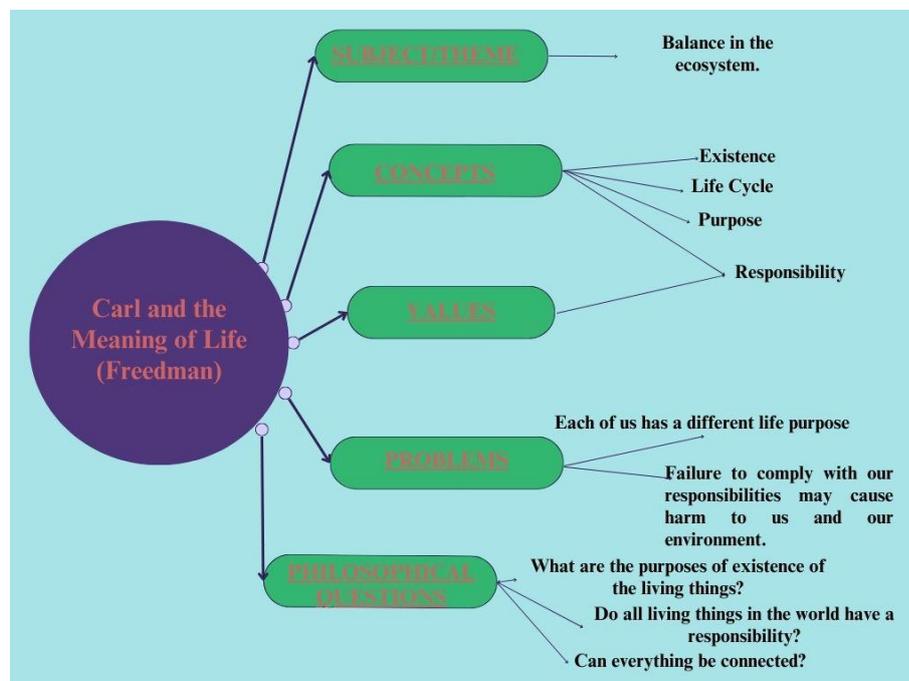


Figure 3. Carl and the meaning of life ID card diagram, (Freedman, 2021)

Probably because a meaningless existence is contrary to human consciousness, humans have tried to add meaning to the existence of themselves and the world (Sezer, 2012: 212). The book also

touches upon the purpose and meaningfulness of existence itself. Carl, the hero of the book, tries to make sense of his own existence by questioning his purpose.

The environment is of vital importance for people with its elements such as water and air and the numerous benefits it provides. For this reason, it deserves to be treated sensitively, just like a human. People are responsible for the environment and the respect shown to each individual should also be shown to the environment. Help can be taken from philosophy and philosophical consciousness to create this kind of consciousness in people. Because philosophical consciousness can reveal our responsibilities towards the environment through questioning and making sense (Gül, 2013).

The Giving Tree

The Giving Tree tells about the friendship between a child and a tree at different times. The child comes to see the tree every day, collects its leaves, swings on its branches, eats its apples and rests in its shade. Both are happy. As time passes and the child grows, his wishes for the tree begin to differ. Moreover, the child does not see the tree as often as before and leaves it alone. Even though these two 'friends', whose frequency of meeting has decreased, meet again at different times in a structure where the balance of giving and receiving cannot be maintained at the center of requests, something has changed.

The theme of the book is 'Man's relationship with nature.' Based on the values of 'generosity' and 'love', the book offers the opportunity to evaluate the concepts of 'friendship', 'sacrifice', 'demandingness', 'selfishness' and 'happiness' together with the concepts of 'child, adolescent, adult and old person' in different periods of life. In the book, the problem that children are expected to realize is that 'man's selfish desires can harm nature'. 'Is there a limit to our desires?', 'Does nature always make people happy?', 'Do we need someone to be happy?', 'Is there a limit to a living being's sacrifice?' These questions are considered as philosophical questions that can be addressed in this book.

Figure 4 below shows the ID card diagram prepared for the The Giving Tree book:

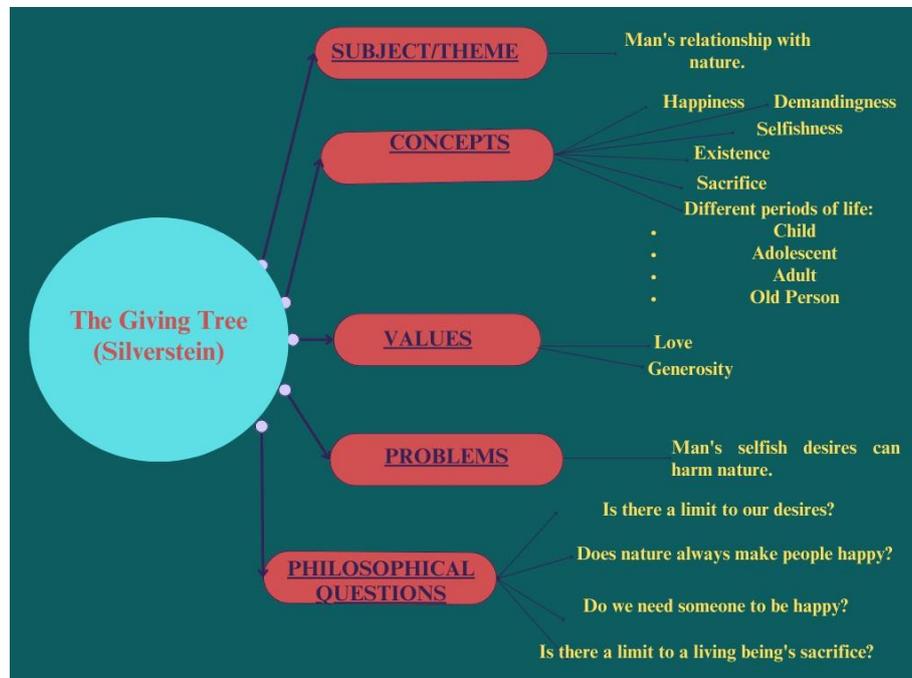


Figure 4. The Giving Tree ID card diagram, (Silverstein, 2020)

The story in the book offers the opportunity to examine concepts such as friendship, unconditional love, sacrifice, and happiness through the nature-human relationship. It is explained that unconditional love and giving without expecting anything in return can also be a reason for happiness, and on the other hand, it criticizes the consumerist attitude of man in his relationship with nature, who sees nature as an endless resource that he can consume as he wishes (Yılmaz and Bilican, 2019:76). In

the book, the child constantly asks for something from the tree. In this book, attention can be drawn to the child's and the tree's perception of 'happiness'. The tree is happy with what it gave to its friend. What about the child? With the book, it is possible to question whether our unlimited desires will bring happiness and whether we need to make someone happy in order to be happy.

There is a perfect balance between all living and non-living beings in the world. It is not possible for this balance to be solely human-oriented. All other beings have the right to live, just like humans. At this point, humans, who are unique in having intelligence, are in an active position in the awareness and solution of problems (Ateş, 2009). In the book, over time, the balance of giving and taking becomes such that the tree loses its integrity and turns into a log. It is important to draw attention to this point in philosophy sessions with children. Because as time goes by, the relationship with the tree evolves into a situation where the tree is damaged.

In the preface of Costello's (2011) work on teaching children's literature and philosophy, Wartenberg says the following about Silverstein's (2010) *The Giving Tree*: 'In this story, a child constantly makes demands of the tree, with its permission, until the tree remains a tiny stump. He is found, he wants something. This story raises an important ethical question: What are the limits of consent? For example, is the child's treatment of the tree ethically wrong because his actions irreparably harm the tree, even if the tree fully consents to being treated this way by the child? The children's books I like best are those that give children the opportunity to think about issues like these - issues that are philosophical in the sense that these issues are part of our daily experience. *The Giving Tree* makes it easier for children to engage in a philosophical discussion. The insights children have into issues traditionally discussed by professional philosophers are incredible!'

The Giving Tree actually hides its rich philosophical content with its seemingly simple story and images. The deep philosophical meaning in the story sheds light on children's ability to make sense of environmental problems in the world and two major academic environmental movements (deep ecology and ecofeminism). The book helps children, parents and teachers to consider and think about the environmental issue in the story within an ecological and feminist framework. This literary work allows us, as adults, to step back from our classical and everyday attitudes towards nature and our everyday ways of being in the world as adults, and enter a more open, childlike space where boundaries are not so carefully drawn. The work explores how we should understand three phenomena: 'sadness and loss', 'listening to trees', 'longing for sacred experiences with nature'. While reading *The Giving Tree*, its emphasis on our lived experiences extends phenomenological methods to children's literature (Miller, 2011:252). As can be seen, *The Giving Tree* has created a lot of discussion areas in the literature compared to other works.

Quoting Original Reference Sentences in the Books that Provide Philosophical Thinking for Children

Reference sentences in the books that are thought to provide philosophical thinking in the study are given below:

Table 3. Reference sentences that are provide philosophical thinking

Books	Quotations
The Bear that Wasn't	- "...until finally a big, big, huge, huge factory is built. Right over the hibernating Bear's cave..." - "You're making a terrible mistake because I've been a bear for as long as I can remember." - "You're not only a silly man in a fur coat who needs a shave, you're a very stubborn man."
Be a tree	- "Let your leaves wave in the wind,... let them feed you and the world." - "Your own wood will sustain you." - "Now look around you. You are not alone. You are one of many trees." - "So be a tree. Because together we are a forest."
Carl and the Meaning of Life	- "Why?' asked a field mouse collecting seeds. 'Why are you doing this?'" - "Everyone was doing what they could."
The Giving Tree	- "Come child... play in my shadow and be happy. Child I'm too big to climb and play,' he said." - "The tree was very happy." - "The boy said, 'I'm too old and sad to play.'" - "The tree was very happy. But the tree wasn't really happy."

In the book *The Bear That Wasn't a Bear*, a factory is built right above the Bear's cave, which is in hibernation. Bear does not know where this place is. At that very moment, Bear is seen by a foreman as "a silly man in a fur coat who needs a shave", which is the focal point of the discussion in terms of P4C. This focus emphasizes the main problem of the book mentioned earlier: Man's harsh attitude towards nature harms and alienates him from nature.

In the book *Be a Tree*, the similarities between trees and humans are emphasized and the "essence" is emphasized. On the other hand, the statements that humans are not alone, that they are one of the many trees around them, thus forming a forest, point to the question "Is man a part of nature?" as a focus of philosophical discussion.

Carl and the Meaning of Life creates a natural focus for a philosophical discussion when a worm named Carl starts to question why he does what he does every day. "Why? Why are you doing this?" is an invitation to philosophical inquiry.

In the book *The Giving Tree*, the tree is constantly "giving", and the child is in the position of "demanding" and the concept of happiness is emphasized, "The tree was very happy." and the sentences "But actually the tree was not happy." create a spark for us for a philosophical questioning.

Discussion

While Johansson (2018) emphasizes that not only the content but also a way of life that questions the boundaries of the spaces where philosophy takes place with children is important for philosophy studies with children, he also touches upon the relationship between the child-philosophy-literature triad and pedagogy. The science of pedagogy should take a holistic approach to the education of children's philosophical thinking, and children's literature occupies an important place within this whole. When children's literature products are considered in terms of environmental philosophy practices with children, we encounter an intellectual and creative learning atmosphere. This can be considered normal in terms of literature being a discipline that penetrates people's worlds of thought and imagination.

When we consider the event in terms of philosophical disciplines, according to the characteristics and autonomous structure of the relevant philosophical field, it offers the reader/learner opportunities to become aware of a problem and think critically about that problem. As it is concluded

in this study, children's books that connect environmental philosophy can provide children with a deep awareness and sensitivity about environmental problems.

In the study, the works written for the above-mentioned environmental philosophy explain the reasons for the existence of living things, that it is a necessity for all living things in the world to live in harmony and understand each other, that unlike humans, we can compare the relationships of other living things with each other to the social relationships of people with each other, and that humans are a part of nature, that nature can teach people, that there are many things that humans can learn from nature, that all living things in nature need each other, that humans' endless demands of nature and their behavior focused on only using and consuming nature are preparing for the end of all living things, what our natural habitats and their boundaries are, that all living things in nature need each other and that it is obvious to children. They are demonstrative in a way. According to the results of the study, it can be said that the book that is at the center of the discussions among children's books is *The Giving Tree*.

According to Lenz (1994: 160), Shel Silverstein's *The Giving Tree* depicts many contrasting moods. Nature is loving and helpful towards the child, but human greed leads to misuse of its resources. The little child's heavenly mode of consciousness deteriorates into the imprisoned greed state of the ego. In fact, the one who robs nature is robbing himself, not realizing that the danger is directed towards himself.

The importance of using children's books in education is undeniable, and the success and cultural achievements of the students of teachers who use children's literature products have always been qualified. For example, a study by Berg-Cross & Berg-Cross (1978), in which *The Giving Tree* was also used, showed that the attitudes and values expressed by four- to six-year-old children who were read a picture story book in the learning environment could be significantly changed. It is noteworthy that this study dates back many years.

Hines (2019), in his study evaluating *The Giving Tree* from a critical perspective, draws interesting lessons for adults and states that special messages are given to adults in this book, which is widely perceived as a children's book. The author, who examines the reasons why these messages are not innocent at all, recommends that the implicit messages the book contains should be reviewed when using it for children.

In this context, we witness that children's books teach relevant lessons not only to children but also to adults. The fact that Exupéry's *The Little Prince* is a work written for children does not change the fact that it has lessons for adults as well. Who would have known that *The Little Prince* would write an epic for pedagogy in a constructivist approach? Today, this book provides the healthiest pedagogical support and guidance to teachers and pedagogues - that is, adults - in their educational practices. We must accept that many more children's books can do this, as shown in this study, and as also shown in this study, we must examine, analyze and evaluate many children's books in terms of philosophy practices with children, transform them into forms that educators can use, and make new contributions to education by using them in our teaching practices.

Considering the references made by researchers to the importance of pedagogical evaluation in terms of the use of children's books in the teaching process, children's books should be pedagogically filtered for the reader or user of the book, as in this study, and the evaluations should be shared with the reader.

The skills experienced by the researchers in the process of designing and finalizing the study show that it can be said that it is quite new, especially in the Turkish literature, to conduct philosophy studies with children that have practical value for educators in terms of teaching using children's literature products (Yılmaz & Bilican, 2021; Kulkul, 2023). Because it is seen that these studies started in the 1970s on a world scale (Lipman, 1976). Therefore, education should focus on studies.

While Johansson (2018) emphasizes that not only the content but also a way of life that questions the boundaries of the spaces where philosophy takes place with children is important for philosophy studies with children, he also touches upon the relationship between the child-philosophy-literature triad and pedagogy. The science of pedagogy should take a holistic approach to the

education of children's philosophical thinking, and children's literature occupies an important place within this whole. When children's literature products are considered in terms of environmental philosophy practices with children, we encounter an intellectual and creative learning atmosphere. This can be considered normal in terms of literature being a discipline that penetrates people's worlds of thought and imagination.

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