Summary of the Teaching of Philosophy in China

Philosophy in the National goals of Education
According to the government, socialist modernization serves as the main driver for the development of education in the People’s Republic of China. Education should stimulate the “development of morality, intelligence and physique for the socialist cause.” In 1999 the Ministry of Education (MoE) formulated the “Action Plan for Educational Vitalization Facing the 21st Century.” According to the China Education and Research Network (CERN), the teaching of ethics is promoted in primary and secondary schools. The CERN further states that moral education basic tasks are to teach:

- love for the motherland
- social ethics
- civilized behaviour
- observation of laws
- building up a correct outlook of the world
- about life and evaluation
- how to improve their socialistic consciousness

Primary education
The IBE website and the Chinese Ministry of Education website do not state specific goals for primary education. The primary education consists of a five-year and a six-year programme. For both programmes the weekly timetable of the most relevant courses is presented in the tables below.

### Weekly time allocation per grade in minutes per week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population: 1.324.708.000 (mid 2008)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gross Enrolment Ratio</strong>:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primary</strong>: 113% (2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Secondary</strong>: 76% (2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of GDP invested in education: N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of government expenditure invested in education: N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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3. N/A
4. N/A
5. [http://www.ibe.unesco.org](http://www.ibe.unesco.org)
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
10. [http://www.moe.edu.cn](http://www.moe.edu.cn)
### Subject

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ideology and moral character</td>
<td>45/45</td>
<td>45/45</td>
<td>45/45</td>
<td>45/45</td>
<td>45/45</td>
<td>45/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese language</td>
<td>450/495</td>
<td>450/495</td>
<td>405/405</td>
<td>360/405</td>
<td>315/405</td>
<td>315/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-/90</td>
<td>90/90</td>
<td>90/90</td>
<td>90/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>135/135</td>
<td>135/135</td>
<td>90/90</td>
<td>90/90</td>
<td>90/90</td>
<td>90/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painting</td>
<td>90/90</td>
<td>90/90</td>
<td>90/90</td>
<td>90/90</td>
<td>90/90</td>
<td>90/-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first number represents the six-year programme and the second number represents the 5-year programme.

### Hong Kong

For Hong Kong there is a suggested lesson time allocation which can be seen in the table below.

#### Weekly time allocation per grade in minutes per week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Learning Area</th>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Suggested lesson time allocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese language education</td>
<td>Chinese language, putonghua</td>
<td>25-30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science education; technology education; Personal, social and humanities education</td>
<td>General studies</td>
<td>12-15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts education</td>
<td>Arts and craft; music</td>
<td>12-15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Education Department of Hong Kong 2001.

Note: A regular school week consists of about 23.5 hours.

### Macao

In Macao subjects are lumped together into learning areas including:
1. Personal and social development
2. Basic skills
3. Discovering the world
4. Expressive skills

#### Weekly time allocation per grade in minutes per week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moral education, civic education, religious education (at least one of these)</td>
<td>35-90</td>
<td>35-90</td>
<td>35-90</td>
<td>35-90</td>
<td>35-90</td>
<td>35-90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language (first and second language), mathematics</td>
<td>630-900</td>
<td>630-900</td>
<td>630-900</td>
<td>630-900</td>
<td>665-990</td>
<td>665-990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social studies, natural sciences, hygiene and health, history, geography</td>
<td>140-270</td>
<td>140-270</td>
<td>140-270</td>
<td>140-270</td>
<td>175-315</td>
<td>175-315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aesthetic education, practical activities, music education, physical education</td>
<td>140-360</td>
<td>140-360</td>
<td>140-360</td>
<td>140-360</td>
<td>140-360</td>
<td>140-360</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the regulations by Ministry of Education, at primary schools the required course is called: "Moral Character and Life" and "Moral Character and Society". According to Dr. Ren-Zong Qiu of the Research Center for Bioethics at Peking Union Medical College its focus is on cultivating moral character, its function is socialization of pupils, but it is not the kind of rational endeavour which focuses on the training of independent thinking.

**Assessment**
At the end of primary education there is an examination, which includes language, mathematics and “check-ups for the other courses”. 

**Case studies of philosophy teaching in primary schools: Identified courses called “philosophy” in schools**
At the South Railway School in Kunming P4C has been used for over ten years. According to Kennedy and Koran (2004) P4C has been developing here since 1998 when Laurence Splitter, who introduced P4C in Australia, and David Kennedy came to Kunming. Now teachers and administrators are developing texts in Chinese to be used for philosophy in language arts classes.

**Case studies of philosophy teaching in primary schools: Philosophy related teaching in schools**

**Secondary education**
The weekly timetable of the most relevant courses are presented in the table below

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Citizen and Moral Character</td>
<td>45/45</td>
<td>45/45</td>
<td>45/45</td>
<td>-/-45</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese language</td>
<td>270/495</td>
<td>270/495</td>
<td>225/405</td>
<td>-/-405</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History/Society*</td>
<td>90/-</td>
<td>135/-</td>
<td>90/90</td>
<td>-/-90</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painting</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first number represents the three-year programme and the second number represents the four-year programme.

* History is only taught in the three-year programme while Society is only taught in the four-year programme.

**Hong Kong**

For Hong Kong there is a suggested lesson time allocation for junior secondary school, which can be seen in the table below

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weekly time allocation per grade per grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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### Key Learning Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Learning Area</th>
<th>Suggested lesson time allocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese language education</td>
<td>17-21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science education</td>
<td>10-15% (8-10% for schools whose curriculum has a technology education orientation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal, social and humanities education</td>
<td>15-20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts education</td>
<td>8-10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Education Department of Hong Kong 2001.*

*Note: A regular school week consists of about 30 hours.*

**Macao**

N/A

At junior high schools the required course is "Citizen and Moral Character" previously "ideology and politics", and includes citizen and personal virtue, citizen and family, citizen and law, citizen and society.

At senior high school there is a course called "Philosophy", it is a second year's required course, the content of the course include:

**Chapter 1 Start from the reality**

**Chapter 2 View things in relation and development**

**Chapter 3 Insist the method of contradiction analysis**

**Chapter 4 Know cause, situation and tendency of things**

**Chapter 5 Know essence from phenomena**

**Chapter 6 Adhere correct values**

**Chapter 7 Choose the target of life**

**Assessment**

There is a qualification examination system during the secondary stage, which combines exams and checks. Further information is not available.

**Case studies of philosophy teaching in secondary schools: Identified courses called “philosophy” in schools**

Although no information is available at the moment

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17 This information was provided by Dr. Ren-Zong Qiu, Director of the Programme in Bioethics at the Institute of Philosophy, and of the Research Center for Bioethics at Peking Union Medical College

18 Ibid.
A pioneering international workshop on philosophy for children in Kunming, China

By Liao Boqin and Deng Peng

The efforts to introduce Philosophy for Children to China began more than 7 years earlier. In 1988, we got to know Professor Lipman and began to write material to introduce his thoughts to China and to translate his writings. We received 13 tests books from Professor Lipman with the help of Dr. Dengpeng. These works were: (1) Kio and Gus, (2) Wondering at the World, (3) Pixie, (4) Looking for Meaning, (5) Harry Stottlemeier’s Discovery, (6) Philosophical Inquiry, (7) Lisa, (8) Ethical Inquiry, (9) Suki, (10) Writing: How and Why, (11) Mark, (12) Society Inquiry, and (13) Philosophy in the Classroom. Professor Zhangshiyahas begun to organize all translation work on the 13 books. In 1992, we finished all translation and editorial work, but the printing of the books was delayed because of financial problems. The first opportunity to publish these works was in July of 1996 when we got to know Mr. Li Liming in Kunming, principal of Railroad Middle School at that time. Mr. Liming wanted his school to be the first to receive training in Philosophy for Children. We told the news to Professor Lipman and editor Lijian at the Shanxi Education Publishing House.

In order to make the first step to developing Philosophy for Children in China, Professor Lipman donated his copyright to the Shanxi Education Publishing House. At the same time, the Principal Li Liming and Peng Kun made a promise to support the workshop and purchase 680 (60 series) of textbooks. Meanwhile, all translators promised to sell a quantity of books, thus editor Lijian was successful in persuading the head of the publishing house to print all translated books. Furthermore, our excellent trainers, Dr. Philip Guin from America and Dr. Laurence Splitter from Australia, received financial support to come to China for the training.

Why was the workshop successful?

We are facing times that are changing at lightning speed. From the teachers and students to the heads in the National Education Committee of China, all are eager to reform the structure of the education system from the Examination-Oriented Education to the Essential-Qualities-Orientation Education. Their goal is to raise the quality of the whole nation to meet the challenges of the 21st Century. But the question remains; how to do this in reality? Chinese people are searching for a practical way. At the time that we are asking these questions, Philosophy for Children is being introduced into China. Philosophy for Children and Community of Inquiry may be short cuts toward educational reform. Schools and universities are anxious to try the methods of Philosophy for Children in teaching and learning. The training carried out for and by the teachers showed many advantages to Philosophy for Children, which participants found to be full of vitality. In fact, «Philosophy for Children is our conviction that the procedures of the community of inquiry, in combination with the conceptual richness of philosophy, offer a unique and crucial perspective on the development of personhood, a perspective that underlies the way we view ourselves, each other, and the world». By the method of «converting the classroom into a community of inquiry, ... students listen to one another with respect, build on one another’s ideas, challenge one another to supply reasons for otherwise unsupported opinions, assist each other in drawing inferences for what was said, and seek to identify one another’s assumptions». These two ideas were examined in theory and in practice so that the participants really understood them after the training.

Excerpts from the original article in Analytic Teaching, Vol. 19, nr. 2, 2000

Case studies of philosophy teaching in secondary schools: Philosophy related teaching in schools

Not available at this moment.

19 http://www.viterbo.edu/analytic/vol%2019.%20no_2/development%20of%20children%20thinking%20and%20the%20reform.pdf
Identified programmes to provide teaching materials in philosophy

Philosophy during language arts class

1. 学会思考, 学会提问.
   (To learn how to think and raise questions.)
2. 学会提出不同观点.
   (To learn to put forward different views)
3. 学会倾听别人观点.
   (To listen to others’ opinion)
4. 能自觉运用基本的逻辑思维方法阐述自己的观点. (分析综合推理 归纳等)
   (To be able to apply basic logic thinking to explain your own opinion)

练习(Exercises)
哪些个体是有生命的,哪些没有? (Which of the following is living organism, which is not?)
1. 流动的水. (Flowing water)
2. 用雪堆成的雪人. (Snowman)
3. 你的眼睛. (Your eyes)
4. 树木 (Trees)
5. 用木头做成的桌椅. (Wooden tables & chairs)
6. 机器人. (Robot)
7. 植物人. (Human vegetable)
8. 做了心脏移植手术的病人的心脏. (The heart from a patient having had heart transplant)
9. 还未出生的胎儿. (Fetus)

South Railway School, Kunming

Links

http://www.dsej.gov.mo/
http://www.edu.cn/20010101/21782.shtml
http://www.emb.gov.hk/
Acknowledgements

This summary was prepared by Arthur Wolf, and comments on initial drafts were made by several experts. In particular we acknowledge the assistance of Dr. Ren-Zong Qiu, Director of the Programme in Bioethics at the Institute of Philosophy, and of the Research Center for Bioethics at Peking Union Medical College.