

240 PHILOSOPHICAL QUESTIONS

for Deep Critical Thinking



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Sample

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PREFACE

Did you know that every month thousands of people search the internet for philosophical questions?

As the author of *Philosophy Adventure*, an introduction to “The Founding Fathers of Western Philosophy,” I find that incredibly exciting.

It gives me great joy knowing that people are looking for questions that will lead to deep reflection on profound matters and into meaningful discussions.

Another source of great joy is my dear assistant—who assembled this collection of questions to be used by families, teachers, and anyone else interested in exploring the world of ideas.

(She's a rock star researcher and writer, and a very dear friend.)

If your journey into critical thinking through this collection of questions ignites a desire to learn more about the history of ideas, I hope you'll consider embarking on a *Philosophy Adventure*.

Blessings on your studies!

Stacy Farrell

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"The unexamined life is not worth living."

Socrates

INTRODUCTION

Philosophical questions are an effective tool to stimulate and develop critical thought. They examine profound matters like free will and human nature; the source and value of happiness; morality and ethics; love, logic, and knowledge; religion, death, and the meaning of life.

Although such questions can open a “rabbit hole” that leads to endless and seemingly unanswerable questions, a list of philosophical questions like the ones provided here can be used as a springboard for developing critical thinking.

Such questions help us evaluate arguments, explore foreign ideas, identify potential biases, and think critically about our own beliefs and presuppositions.

We are preparing our our children to enter a society full of questions ... and questionable ideas.

Consequently, it is our responsibility to train them to think critically and, above all, seek truth when asking the deep questions that arise in their own hearts.

So let's begin by taking a closer look at what a philosophy question is.

WHAT IS A PHILOSOPHICAL QUESTION?

A philosophical question is open-ended. Since philosophy itself means "love of wisdom," it logically follows that a philosophical question is one that pursues a deep understanding of the subject examined.

The answer to this type of question isn't necessarily an easy one—nor is it always black or white. It requires thoughtful reflection.

The deeper the reasoning behind the answer, the better.

Bear in mind, there's no such thing as a dumb philosophical question. However, don't be surprised if the way questions are answered borders on the brink of absurdity at times.

The goal is to inspire thought.

So ... even if your students give nonsensical responses, if they're willing to explain how they came to their answer, count it as a win.

(Even giving an incomplete answer is better than not pondering the question at all.)

A good example of a philosophical question is one of the three overarching "pillars" of philosophy.

THE 3 BIG QUESTIONS OF PHILOSOPHY

The fundamental questions of philosophy deal with existence and fall into three main categories:

- Where did we come from?
- Why are we here and how should we live?
- Is there hope for our future and life after death?

How we answer those questions determines what we will value and how we will behave.

240 PHILOSOPHICAL QUESTIONS

With that in mind, it's clear just how important it is to train our children to ask meaningful questions and seek truthful answers.

The study of philosophy can help us do that.

It is natural to be inquisitive. Let's steward our students' curious natures well!

This resource presents 240 philosophy questions to help you (and your students) think through tough topics together.

It's tempting to look at these questions as a mere academic exercises, but philosophical ideas have shaped human history from ancient times until today—for better or for worse.

Look at them, instead, as a means of preparing your students to face (and combat) the deceptive ideas they will soon encounter.

QUESTIONS

of Free Will & Human Nature

"If a thing is free to be good it is also free to be bad."

C.S. Lewis

ARE WE REALLY FREE?

The question of free will versus determinism has been debated by great thinkers for centuries.

Some contend that we have complete freedom of choice.

Others believe that humans have no free will and cannot be held morally responsible for their actions (determinism). They argue that the choices we make stem exclusively from the nature we are born with and all the influences that surround us.

The Bible teaches that we have free will, *and* we're responsible for our actions. As Deuteronomy 30:19 explains:

"... I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live ..."

Here are some probing questions about will and humanity:

1. Are humans innately good or evil?
2. Can humans change their behavior if given enough time?
3. Do humans need God to exist?
4. What happens when we die?
5. Does consciousness continue after physical death?
6. Why does suffering happen?
7. Should we try to prevent bad events from happening? If so, then how would we go about doing that?
8. What makes human life so valuable?

ON FREE WILL & HUMAN NATURE

9. What makes us human?
10. Why does it matter if we're alive?
11. Is there anything wrong with being selfish?
12. Do humans need other people in order to live?
13. Can animals feel pain? If so, why don't they try to avoid hurting each other?
14. Are children born good or evil?
15. Is it okay to lie to protect yourself?
16. What is beauty?
17. Do all people deserve respect?
18. Did you exist before you were born?
19. Where do emotions come from?
20. Can we choose our emotions or do they just happen?
21. At what age are children held accountable for their actions? How do you determine that?
22. Where does self-worth come from?
23. How do you determine self-worth?
24. Is one human life worth more than another?
25. Is ignorance really bliss?
26. What is the goal of humanity?
27. Can predestination and free will coexist?

UNANSWERABLE PHILOSOPHICAL QUESTIONS

Let's talk about some of the challenges that arise when we delve into the world of ideas.

Since philosophical thought lives largely in grey territory, it deals with questions that can't be answered with the usual "yes or no," "this or that" definitive response.

And as our children search for answers to these philosophical questions, they will encounter deceptive lies disguised as logic.

Many college professors of philosophy today will tell you that life's biggest questions remain unanswered.

Yet those who possess a biblical worldview have a much different perspective.

Even in a lost, confusing world, the Bible is a compass that always points true North. It declares truth in matters the world deems unanswerable.

That's why it is so important to teach our children how to think and how to reason from a biblical perspective.

PHILOSOPHY AND CRITICAL THINKING GO HAND IN HAND

Critical thinking involves asking questions, analyzing arguments, evaluating evidence, and making decisions based on those evaluations.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

It requires us to use logic, reasoning skills, critical analysis, and judgment.

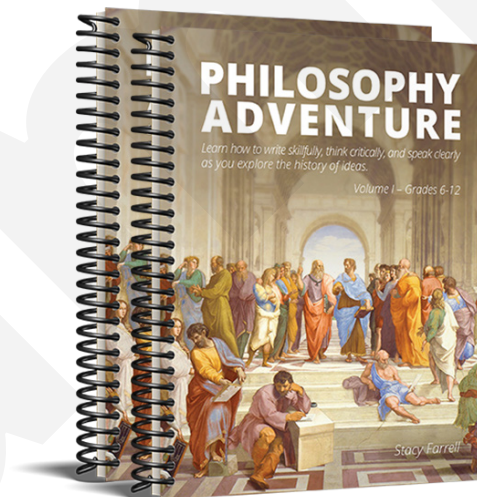
Sound familiar?

Critical thinking is an essential skill that allows us to make decisions and solve problems effectively.

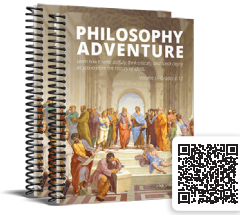
And while it may not seem so at first glance, it is a skill that enables us to defend our beliefs effectively when challenged.

That's why we focus so heavily on critical thinking from a biblical worldview in the resources we offer at [Homeschool Adventure](#).

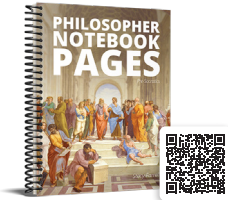
If you're looking for a way to help your students develop critical thinking from a biblical worldview as they explore the history of ideas, check out [Philosophy Adventure](#).



Homeschool Adventure Resources



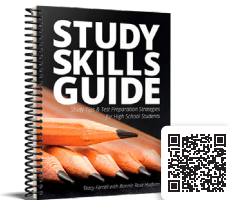
Philosophy Adventure is designed to help students 6th-12th grade cultivate and defend a biblical worldview by teaching them how to write skillfully, think critically, and speak articulately as they explore the history of ideas. If you need to teach advanced writing ... if you want your students equipped to discern truth ... if you wonder how to strengthen them academically ... **PHILOSOPHY ADVENTURE MAY BE YOUR SOLUTION!**



Do you have older students taking the *Philosophy Adventure*? You don't have to leave younger siblings behind! With coloring pages, copywork, maps, and more — **Philosopher Notebook Pages** makes it easy for young students to document their discoveries. **IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY TO INTRODUCE YOUR LITTLE ONES TO THE WORLD OF IDEAS!**



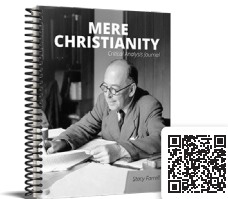
COMBAT A CULTURE OF RUDENESS WITH CLEAR ACTION STEPS & CHARACTER-BUILDING INSIGHTS. The *Good Manners Guide* contains 50+ pages of actionable strategies and thought-provoking lessons to help families display respect, kindness, self-control, and more in an increasingly godless culture.



DOES YOUR TEEN KNOW HOW TO STUDY? Approach study times strategically, and you will substantially increase your effectiveness. Relieve test anxiety with proven test-taking techniques. This newly revised edition of *Study Skills Guide* equips students with methods to organize their notes, maximize their study sessions, and boost their test performance.



WHAT IF YOU COULD MEMORIZE AN ENTIRE BOOK OF SCRIPTURE? *Philippians in 28 Weeks* contains 160+ pages filled with step-by-step memory work, copywork, journal questions, recitation charts, and more. *Philippians in 28 Weeks*—an easy way to memorize the entire book using a streamlined approach that eliminates overwhelm.



HAVE WE FORGOTTEN WHOSE WE ARE? In this "Age of Tolerance," Christians are in danger of forgetting (or never learning) what distinguishes a Christian worldview from other worldviews. The *Mere Christianity Critical Analysis Journal* is a powerful tool to strengthen critical thinking while cultivating a biblical worldview.



NOT FOR WOMEN ONLY. Don't let the title deceive you—this elegant fable is not for women only. It captivates boys and men as well. *The Wise Woman* enchants readers while it contrasts the ugliness of pride, selfishness and conceit with the beauty of humility, sacrifice, and compassion. It's an unforgettable family read-aloud (or an independent study for your teen.)



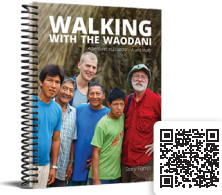
SAFEGUARD YOUR FAMILY AGAINST SOARING FOOD PRICES. Save money at the store by reviving the lost art of food storage and preservation with *Food Prep Guide*. It contains 150+ pages of tutorials, projects, stories, strategies, and more to help you prepare for lean seasons.



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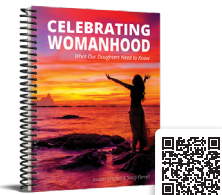
ARE YOUR CHILDREN FEARFUL? Do they struggle with the unknown? Are they scared of being alone? Frightened by creatures or storms? **Overcoming Fear** helps you expose and address fear at its root—and presents its remedy. **WATCH FEAR GIVE WAY TO FAITH AS YOU CULTIVATE A RIGHT VIEW OF GOD’S POWER, LOVE, AND SOVEREIGNTY!**



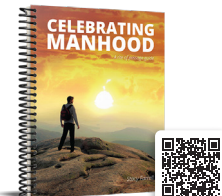
A STORY YOUR CHILDREN WILL NEVER FORGET! Embark on an exciting expedition through the jungles of Ecuador and relive the heroic story of Operation Auca. Learn how Jesus transformed a savage killer into a humble evangelist. **Walking with the Waodani** contains 90+ pages of culture, geography, agriculture and more for a complete unit study geared toward missions.



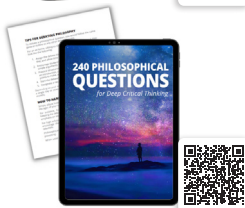
BRING JOY & EXCITEMENT TO YOUR STUDENT’S WRITING! Encourage even reluctant writers to write creatively with clear, step-by-step instructions & exciting prompts you’ll find inside **Creative Freewriting Adventure**. **NO PREP REQUIRED. Just grab a pen and paper, set the timer for 15 minutes, and WRITE!**



AWAKEN YOUR DAUGHTER TO THE NOBLE CALLING OF WOMANHOOD. Combat cultural lies as you cultivate a right view of her value and identity in Christ. **Celebrating Womanhood: What Our Daughters Need to Know** is a practical, Scripture-based examination of her role in God’s story.



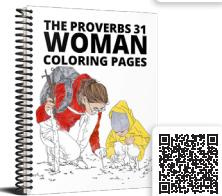
WELCOME YOUR SON TO THE WORLD OF MEN. Host a Special Rite-of-Passage Evening with a Step-by-Step Blueprint: **Celebrating Manhood**. Enjoy a simple way to mark this significant milestone—with everything you need for a night to remember.



EQUIP STUDENTS 6TH-12TH GRADE TO IDENTIFY DECEPTIVE LIES DISGUISED AS LOGIC. **240 Questions** is a gentle introduction to critical thinking where students explore important ideas from a variety of perspectives—always in pursuit of truth. (Available in digital format only.)



COMBAT A CULTURE OF RUDENESS WITH CLEAR ACTION STEPS & CHARACTER-BUILDING INSIGHTS. Help your children stand firm with love and kindness in a fallen world. **The Good Manners Course** contains video demonstrations, thought-provoking lessons, printables, quizzes, and more!



USE EVERY TOOL—EVEN COLORING PAGES—TO AFFIRM GOD’S TRUTH ABOUT WOMANHOOD. **The Proverbs 31 Woman Coloring Pages** can be used alone or as a companion to Celebrating Womanhood. Young ladies (and even adults!) will enjoy coloring while learning the qualities of a virtuous woman.



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