

# BACKGROUND TO PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN ( P4C )

**Matthew Lipman** said:

*'What most schools teach is information. We are very suspicious of that in philosophy. Information is not judgement. Information is not reasoning. Philosophy is needed to help children to reason, to discuss, and to help them make solid, reasonable judgements.'*

**Philosophy for Children** is not designed to create mini-philosophers, nor is it aimed solely at "children". Rather, it uses structured and rigorous inquiry with students of all ages and abilities to develop



**Matthew Lipman**  
(1922 – 2010 )

Prof. **Matthew Lipman**, the creator of **P4C**, was Professor of Philosophy at Montclair State College, New Jersey and Columbia University, New York. He had many students with low standards of critical thinking. They could absorb facts passively but were not equipped to process it judiciously. From 1969 onwards he developed a programme of thinking skills, utilising stories he had written within which he had planted philosophical ideas. He developed a structure for rational discussion and a teacher resource for facilitating the discussion. His ideas spread and P4C became effective in raising educational standards in more than 30 countries, especially in Mexico and Latin America.

## P4C

P4C is a method of teaching and learning which can be used with any age of people, any ability and around any subject. It involves the age old art of philosophising: asking and responding to important and thoughtful questions but not the study of philosophy itself. Your role would be to lead a P4C session, called a “Community Enquiry” with a community group. It aims to develop the four C’s of creative, critical, collaborative and caring thinking skills

**P4C** sessions, called “Community Enquiries” with a client group of your choice to aid the four C’s of creative, critical, collaborative and caring thinking skills. Volunteers are trained to guide them to think independently, reflecting on their own ideas and creating their own philosophical questions

