

Lesson Plan: Garfield's Big Questions: Philosophy in *Why Am I Me?*

- Overview

America's first lovable comic strip cat, Garfield, has lessons to teach about what philosophy is and the big questions that philosophy asks – and how he answers those questions. This lesson guides students in articulating Garfield's philosophy as an introduction to reading *Why Am I Me?* and its philosophical meanings.

- Resources & Preparation

- Materials and Technology

- A variety of printed *Garfield* books or ability to view *Garfield* comic strips on smart board or large screen through <https://www.gocomics.com/garfield>
- Pens, paper, blank comic strips

- Instructional Plan

- Student Objectives:

- To identify common philosophical questions like “What is life?” and “What are we on earth for?”
- To determine Garfield's answers to these philosophical questions

1. Start by introducing the Garfield comic strip with your class – possibly reading one Garfield comic strip per day on the smart board – use the “Random” selector at <https://www.gocomics.com/garfield>. You don't need to explain why you're doing this other than as a “brain warmup” for reading and fun.
2. After a few weeks or a month, say that you want to bring up a big word: “Philosophy.” Ask if anybody knows what this means. (You might get some interesting answers!) Eventually, define philosophy as an area of study where people ask BIG questions about life and try to determine what everything is all about. Most people have a philosophy about life – why we are here, what we should be doing.
3. Now bring it back to Garfield. Make a list (with students' help) about characteristics of Garfield. (Cat, loves sleeping, likes to eat, has an owner named Jon, etc.)
4. What is Garfield's “philosophy”? You can make copies of the drawing, below, and ask students to color Garfield while adding words and phrases that explain what Garfield thinks about the world, life, etc. (Answers may include the point of life is to eat lasagna, sleep, and avoid Mondays.)

5. Tell students that Garfield’s philosophy is pretty basic, but that you’re going to read a book where philosophy is a little deeper than lasagna and to pay attention to the “deep” questions of “Why Am I Me?”

- Additional Resources:

For more focused lesson plans to teach philosophy to children, see “Center for Philosophy for Children” at the University of Washington at

<https://www.philosophyforchildren.org/resources/lesson-plans/>

What is Garfield's Philosophy of Life?



COLORING4FREE.COM