

RESEARCH
ARTICLE**Developing Children's Critical Thinking through Symbolic Narration: A Case Study of the Chapter 'The Lion and the Bull' from Kalila and Dimna****Bensaada Hichem**

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Abstract

This research paper, entitled "Developing Critical Thinking in Children through Symbolic Narration: A Case Study of the Chapter 'The Lion and the Bull' from Kalila and Dimna," explores the issue of fostering critical thinking skills in children during middle childhood. Symbolic narration emerges as an effective tool in guiding children toward developing their cognitive and critical abilities. In this context, Kalila and Dimna, with its allegorical literary style, serves as an ideal model for activating such skills, aiming to shape a conscious personality capable of evaluating situations objectively. This study—significant in its subject and original in its approach—employs a case study methodology focusing on the chapter "The Lion and the Bull" to highlight the role of symbolic narration in stimulating reflective and critical thinking in children. It also investigates the aesthetic dimension of literary texts, which enables children to uncover the underlying meanings behind events and characters.

The study is divided into two levels: the first is a descriptive-analytical level that examines the interaction between the aesthetic and cognitive dimensions of the text and how it fosters critical awareness in children. The second is an inferential level, focusing on the role of storytelling in developing children's skills to analyze and evaluate data before forming judgments.

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Introduction

This study explores the horizons of critical thinking skills in children and their importance in deepening awareness, considering it as a refuge for achieving justice and moderation. These are factors that serve a dual function: either upholding the truth or undermining it. It is no surprise, then, that Kalila and Dimna was chosen to illustrate this, as debate appears to be the driving force behind events and the generator of moral values. Furthermore, a contemporary critical investigation of this cognitive process requires a clear positioning of the researcher in order to reflect on the mental framework that enables children to grasp, examine, and assess the comprehensive aspects of the information presented to them. The dynamic nature of critical thinking, amid the

real interaction between external reality and artistic perception, is the key indicator for developing this skill. Childhood—synonymous with innocence—is highly receptive to storytelling, yet in an era of overwhelming information flow, these texts may contain complex issues, inappropriate implications, or unforeseen threats. Thus, the crucial function of iconic symbols—media that carry profound meanings—undergoes a practical cognitive test acquired through educational literature. As Ibn al-Muqaffa' states in *The Great Literature and The Small Literature*: "We are no less in need of the knowledge that strengthens our intellect than we are of the food and drink that sustain our bodies. The nourishment of literature fosters the growth of the mind as food does for the body." (Ibn al-Muqaffa', 1999 : 19).

Engaging with Symbolic narration also means engaging with the self, where intellectual effort is activated in weighing and comparing ideas, contributing to evaluation and judgment. Abu Hilal al-Askari affirms this by stating: "I have not seen anything more necessary for a noble person, after ensuring their speech is free of errors, than their need for proverbs, wisdom, and widely known sayings. These enhance expression, lend it prestige, and grant it acceptance, making it esteemed in people's minds, sweet to their ears, and inspiring them to remember and preserve it. Such expressions prepare one for debates, disputes, and exchanges, much like jewels in a necklace or blossoms in a garden. It is essential to seek out these elements, for neglecting them is a shortcoming, and knowing well-established proverbs is particularly important, as their benefit is widespread and ignorance of them is disgraceful." (Abu Hilal al-Askari, 1988: 10)

This perspective plays a crucial role in the child's self-development through educational literature. My attempt to affirm this requires substantial evidence and argumentation, particularly in the context of the cognitive effort exerted by individuals in shaping their awareness and understanding of reality. At this point, I ask: Can a child construct an independent understanding of the presented themes, or does their perception remain tied to the characters and situations they engage with? How does their opinion evolve from a mere initial impression to a critical stance based on scrutiny? What are the most effective ways to guide this thinking toward independence and objective evaluation? How can a child develop a structured cognitive framework for understanding specific topics? How does thinking become possible? This question branches out rapidly, yet it is a subject of inquiry that aligns with the encouragement of children's independent critical thinking. Answering these questions may illuminate key contributions of this research paper.

1. The Nature of Critical Thinking in Middle Childhood

The thinking process we aim to cultivate and redirect is not merely a pure intellectual pleasure focused on extracting textual values. Rather, it is a complex cognitive activity that includes comprehension, analysis, and reasoning, providing the recipient with an intellectual enjoyment that contributes to reshaping perspectives and evaluating data. Critical thinking is an essential part of this process, but it is more rigorous and complex in how it is tested through evidence. Hence, it is necessary to establish a reference framework to conceptualize the subject and, before that, to define the target age group. Our choice is based on the pioneering studies of Jean Piaget in the field of cognitive psychology. He indicates that critical thinking skills begin to take shape during middle childhood, which he defines as the operational

thinking stage (ages 7 to 12) (Jean Piaget, 2002: 125). This stage is characterized by the child's ability to perceive relationships, which later develop into abstract and inferential thinking during adolescence.

Understanding a child's thinking skills requires a precise grasp of their developmental characteristics. This enables the alignment of strategies to foster these skills in a way that matches their cognitive level and ability to engage with abstract concepts. At this stage, children gradually move away from intuitive and emotional thinking, becoming more capable of distinguishing between facts and opinions, linking causes and effects. As one logician states, "Thinking is a mental process by which we draw a roadmap to achieve a specific goal" (Zaki Naguib Mahfouz, 1989: 47). This process is reflected in the construction of clear logical and inferential standards. This allows us to say that reading a text is an adventure—it is the human ability to make proper use of reason, independence in judgment, and discernment to achieve the targeted competency in educational activities. Experts in critical and creative thinking, Richard Swartz and Stephen Parks, adopt a similar approach. They view this integrated process as comprising three essential thinking skills (Parks S. & Swartz R., 1994: 128): creative thinking, comprehension and clarification, and critical thinking. Each skill plays a crucial role in directing the thinking process toward the desired goals:

- First: Comprehension and clarification aim to accurately retrieve, classify, compare, sequence, and organize information, as well as clarify reasons and hypotheses and identify relevant data.
- Second: Creative thinking seeks to produce an original, unique, and unconventional outcome by generating numerous new and detailed ideas.
- Third: Critical thinking aspires to reach an accurate judgment through examining the accuracy and reliability of information, searching for evidence and explanations, analyzing, reasoning, and predicting.

However, skills alone are not sufficient to achieve the desired results. Continuous educational guidance within the classroom environment is necessary. This involves developing effective teaching methods that enable children to grasp the values embedded in textual references. Since achieving this competency relies on drawing inspiration from wisdom and proverbs embodied in *Kalila and Dimna* by Ibn al-Muqaffa', the ultimate goal is to instill these values in the child's consciousness and enhance their understanding of them. Nevertheless, delving into the essence of ideas does not prevent us from considering the characteristics of this age stage, particularly the formation of self-awareness, influenced by prior knowledge acquired from the social environment. This necessitates exploring mechanisms to adjust some misconceptions ingrained in children's minds through experience and upbringing. These include cognitive biases and preconceived notions which, if not

examined and evaluated, could negatively impact the intended learning process. The challenge, therefore, is not only to develop critical thinking but also to employ cognitive flexibility that enables children to reassess their positions and reconsider their assumptions rationally.

In light of this challenge, stories designed for children serve as the ideal model for generating and simulating value-based ideas. The reference to iconic signs—symbolic characters—at the beginning of this study was not arbitrary. A study that examines the feature of affinity and emulation in children must acknowledge that the first level of reading is accepting the other's hospitality and entering their world. The text opens with a narrative introduction, "It is said that...", which fulfills a communicative function and draws us into a fantastical, mythical atmosphere characteristic of fables. This positions the child before a multi-layered reading experience that transcends the surface level of events to explore the deeper meanings embedded in the story. The book *Kalila and Dimna by Ibn al-Muqaffa*, which aims to enrich children's cognitive perceptions, is widely acknowledged for its unique literary value. It is a classical Arabic text from the second century of the Islamic era, bearing the marks of its time. The text is interwoven with allegories and symbolic references of ethical and educational nature. It has been said that "the wise chose it for its wisdom, the naive for its amusement, and the eager learner finds motivation in it" (Bidpai, 2007: 33). This aligns with the very foundation of educational literature, which seeks to cultivate morals and ethics indirectly by attributing wisdom and moral lessons to animals.

Although the book was originally intended for rulers and political elites, it can be adapted for children due to its engaging storytelling. It transcends rational thought and transports readers into an imaginative world where animals become the counterparts and substitutes for humans. This makes it a multi-layered educational text that appeals to different age groups depending on how it is presented and interpreted.

2. Critical Thinking in Children: The Aesthetic and Rational Interaction in Building Awareness

Discussing critical thinking in children is an invitation to read a text with open eyes, restoring its human connection and active value. Its effectiveness lies in its rationality, as it approaches the world with a unique vision shaped by the environment in which the child lives. *Kalila and Dimna* is built upon a vast reservoir of wisdom that reflects human nature—both in its transformed form and in its creation of various modes such as cunning, deception, trickery, embezzlement, and fraud. Since discourse is synonymous with storytelling, I have encountered several critical questions, the most notable being: How did Ibn al-Muqaffa manage to

rescue his ideas from becoming mere nonsense without purpose? Does the aesthetic dimension play a decisive role in bridging the gap between the original source and its wisdom-based context? Under what circumstances is a child capable of questioning dramatic reality and reshaping their perceptions? Does philosophy, with its contemplative approach and dialectical tools, contribute to this? And which is more effective in shaping a child's critical awareness: aesthetics or rationality?

Understanding the formative value—the educational and pedagogical aspect—of narrative texts requires going beyond direct storytelling to an approach that enhances a child's awareness of the dialectical nature of discourse. A story is not merely a form of entertainment; rather, it serves as a methodological framework that helps children develop their ability to reconstruct events and extract meanings. This, in turn, enables them to shape their personalities and mental responses to various situations. More importantly, it allows them to construct a coherent interpretative vision that guides their ability to evaluate and think critically.

Tracy Howell and Gary Kemp, in their study on critical thinking, emphasize the importance of distinguishing between argument and interpretation. They state: "An argument attempts to provide reasons for believing a claim whose truth has not yet been established, whereas an interpretation assumes that the claim is already accepted as true and seeks to determine why." (Howell; Kemp, 2015: 54). For this reason, the stories of *Kalila and Dimna* provide a space that allows children to question different situations and infer the underlying meanings behind the characters' actions. This contributes to the development of critical awareness that combines logical reasoning with interpretative understanding.

In my view, critical thinking is not limited to drawing conclusions and analyzing arguments; rather, it extends to how these arguments are presented in a way that stimulates a child's imagination and encourages them to engage with them consciously and creatively. The aesthetic process itself plays a role in refining a child's human behavior—not just in terms of rules to be followed but also in actions that possess high aesthetic value. This is because they are performed harmoniously and "create a sense of familiarity with the external world. Establishing an aesthetic relationship with beauty paves the way for understanding and appreciating the sublime later on" (Wafaa Ibrahim, 1997 : 15).

According to this perspective, a child's interaction is not limited to the surface level of a text but extends to a broader horizon of questioning and critical reflection. These inquiries, though seemingly spontaneous, contribute to refining behavior and regulating emotions with awareness and responsibility. The child then realizes that they are not merely a passive recipient of information but a thinking and active being. "Just as emotions unite us, they also separate us. If someone feels strongly about something and tries to convince us to

feel the same, we may not agree. The force with which someone presents their arguments is not a true indicator of their validity. Suppose that a person does not completely trap us with their eloquence and rhetoric, allowing us to maintain an independent critical stance. In that case, we will undoubtedly feel the need for a good logical reason to agree with them. Good logical reasons are what constitute valid arguments." (Chris Horner & Enrys Westacott, 2011: 208).

In conclusion, deepening critical thinking in children is not merely about testing their direct comprehension of a text. It involves both the active intellectual aspect and the subjective emotional response—bringing together reason and feeling. From this perspective, a narrative text becomes a dual cognitive tool that enriches imagination and deepens thought. In *Kalila and Dimna*, particularly in *The Lion and the Bull*, we will explore the topic by examining the extent to which children can engage in reflection, contemplation, and concentration, ultimately benefiting both intellectually and spiritually. First, we will investigate the mechanisms of critical thinking based on analysis and reasoning. Second, we will discuss the role of the surrounding environment in guiding the process of inference. Finally, we will present ways to guide young children in evaluating actions according to principles of justice and ethical standards.

3. Modes of Critical Thinking in the Story of "The Lion and the Bull"

The allegorical narrative in *Kalila and Dimna* begins with the decisions of King Dabshalim, the leader of the Brahmins, who is distant from the philosopher Bidpai. The latter states: "Give me an example of two friends whose relationship was destroyed by a deceitful liar, leading them to hatred and enmity" (Ibn al-Muqaffa', 2014: 74). Here, we encounter the first practical lesson, which manifests through the use of humorous storytelling and narratives designed to convey values and consolidate wisdom. This is achieved through two rhetorical approaches: one that exalts reason as a means to achieve positive ends and another that employs it in strategies of cunning and deception. While reason is a tool for construction and development, it can also be an instrument of destruction and manipulation something represented in the characters of *Kalila* and *Dimna*. One symbolizes wisdom, while the other embodies deceit and cunning: "Both were intelligent and well-versed, but *Dimna* was the more malicious, the more ambitious, and the least content with his situation" (Ibn al-Muqaffa', 2014: 75).

It is only natural that narrative punning should manifest itself through the use of elements of the uncanny "And what is more astonishing than granting wisdom and eloquence to animals and birds? Strangeness lies in that which defies the ordinary" (Abdelfattah Kilito, 1988: 40). In this context, the narration adopts a multi-

branching structure: each story within *Kalila and Dimna* gives rise to smaller sub-narratives, such as *The Three Fish*, *The Louse and the Flea*, *The Duck and the Reflection of the Star in the Water*, *The Wolf, the Crow, the Jackal, and the Camel*, among others. These narrative transitions, which interconnect symbolic worlds through animals, function as narrative programs with a specific purpose and a well-defined strategy to foster critical thinking in young readers.

Within these narrative frameworks, *Shatraba* (the bull) appears as the loyal ally of the lion, reinforcing the value of faithfulness and loyalty in the story. However, this privileged position is temporarily diminished due to an unexpected behavior that contradicts the ideal model. *Dimna*, upon realizing "that the king had brought *Shatraba* closer than himself and his companions, that he was his advisor, his confidant, and his source of entertainment, became deeply troubled by it" (Ibn al-Muqaffa', 2014: 83), perceiving it as a threat to his ambitions and aspirations. Thus, *Dimna* embarks on a manipulative journey within the narrative, using deception and misrepresentation to convince the lion that *Shatraba's* loyalty had wavered and that he was now plotting to seize power and dethrone him.

Dimna represents a complex character that combines intelligence and cunning on the one hand, and deceit and treachery on the other. These negative traits undermine the role of a sincere advisor who should be close to the lion. Between these two dimensions, the power and rhetoric of speech are defined—elements that are crucial for educators in fostering critical thinking among students. *Kalila* and *Dimna* thus assumes an educational role, reinforcing the pedagogical use of storytelling and argumentation as tools for intellectual and ethical development. Children do not merely engage with the stories through listening or reading; they actively participate in interpreting and understanding them.

Dimna had no qualms about setting traps of suspicion between the lion and the bull. She explicitly stated: "If I succeed in this, I will regain my position with the lion" (Ibn al-Muqaffa', 2014: 85). Indeed, she succeeded in her scheme, fabricating a false claim that the bull had told his troops: "I have tested the lion, examined his intelligence, strategy, and strength, and I have found him weak in all aspects" (Ibn al-Muqaffa', 2014: 88). Although the lion initially hesitated to act unjustly, he ultimately succumbed, as this behavior was imposed upon him rather than being a deliberate action. *Dimna* had manipulated sensory perception—where truth and falsehood intertwine—leading the lion to succumb to illusions, culminating in an inevitable confrontation: "The lion looked at him and recognized everything *Dimna* had told him, so he attacked him, and they fought fiercely, shedding much blood" (Ibn al-Muqaffa', 2014: 99).

Dimna's fate places the reader—especially young learners—before an intellectual experience that goes beyond

mere compliance with moral standards. It introduces the concepts of justice and the consequences of deception. A child's reception of the story is not limited to its surface-level narrative; rather, it develops through an accumulation of events, encouraging them to trace the mechanisms of deception as they unfold and to observe the patterns of accountability emerging within the story. This process enhances their critical foresight and ability to distinguish between the apparent and the hidden aspects of social interactions.

The allegorical storytelling in *Kalila and Dimna* is characterized by dual meanings, requiring a unique cognitive transition from the reader when deconstructing its narrative structure. On one hand, it serves as a narrative that stimulates a child's imagination by entertaining them with animal tales. On the other hand, it functions as a form of logical and educational reasoning that engages the reader through a series of intellectual challenges, prompting them to reconsider their assumptions about human relationships. This encourages children to ask fundamental questions such as: "Should I believe everything I hear? How can I verify the truth? What are the consequences of my decisions?"

Within this context, children turn their focus inward, and here, I will introduce simplified cognitive strategies that align with their developmental level, using practical examples that help them acquire essential critical thinking skills.

3.1. Dialectical Thinking: The Conflict Between Appearance and Reality

The symbolic structure of the narrative world presented in *Kalila and Dimna* is based on the narration of semantic values, which contribute to developing a child's ability to distinguish between what is apparent and what is hidden. This means that the child begins to learn how to look at information from multiple perspectives, questioning the validity of what they perceive through their senses and vision in their reality. From this perspective, it is crucial to provide children with the necessary cognitive tools to develop dialectical thinking by fostering their skills in constructive skepticism and verification rather than accepting information at face value.

From this point of view, the features of critical thinking emerge through the act of questioning, which encourages the learner to differentiate between appearance and reality in various life situations. For example, what is presented as good is not necessarily so in all contexts. To illustrate this issue practically, one can use examples derived from the learner's daily experiences, such as a social situation between peers where one child tells another that a third child dislikes them. In this case, the child may initially accept this statement as a fact, even though reality could be entirely different. Hence, it

becomes necessary to develop their ability to verify and self-investigate, relying on their cognitive tools rather than adopting opinions based on others' statements without scrutiny.

Following the same logic, the symbolic dimension in *Kalila and Dimna* becomes evident, and the allegorical characters take the stage. The lion initially appears as a wise ruler who listens carefully to others' arguments and grants them his trust. However, his attitude toward the bull (Shatraba) quickly changes after he brings him close and "senses his wisdom and intelligence" (Ibn al-Muqaffa', 2014: 83). The deceptive eloquence of Dimna seems to have shaken the trust between friends. In this context, an analytical question can be posed to children: "Have you ever trusted a friend based on a positive experience, only to change your perception of them because of what others said? How did you eventually discover the truth?" This question strengthens the child's ability to think critically and verify information based on an analytical approach characterized by validation and logical reasoning.

Thus, the process does not stop at uncovering appearances but extends to analyzing the psychological impact of deceptive behavior. Through these activities, the child realizes that information can be distorted for various reasons, such as malice or influence over others. Therefore, it is important to encourage the child to verify information independently and think critically before forming any judgments, recognizing that everything is relative and that personal judgment is key to determining what is beneficial.

3.2. Inferential Thinking: Argumentation and Logical Manipulation

Inferential thinking is one of the fundamental skills that educational literature helps develop. It revolves around "analyzing or internally examining the content of a subject or a given educational situation to draw inferences about it" (Hassan Shehata & Zeinab Al-Najjar, 2003: 90). Through this type of thinking, the child becomes capable of distinguishing between logical reasoning supported by evidence and flawed conclusions based on inaccurate interpretations or ambiguous contexts. In the story of the lion and the bull, the child encounters various arguments, the most prominent being the linguistic deception employed by Dimna. She relies on arguments that appear logical on the surface but lack sound inferential foundations, using biased interpretations and context manipulation to instill unfounded fears in the lion, leading him to make irrational decisions.

Understanding this type of thinking requires enabling the child to recognize linguistic strategies used to influence others, thereby enhancing their awareness of persuasion and communication mechanisms. In most of

Dimna's dialogues with the lion, she relies on implicit analogy and storytelling to shape his convictions, using the argument by example technique, which is based on "establishing a resemblance between two distant domains in reality, allowing the characteristics of one to be transferred to the other" (Philippe Breton, 2003: 119). This lends legitimacy to the argument presented. In this sense, Dimna creates a parallel between the assumed situation of the bull and other examples drawn from past experiences, attempting to convince the lion of her claims, regardless of the accuracy or logical coherence of these comparisons.

Accordingly, the child must be able to balance Dimna's statements with their consequences, using available facts and tangible realities. For instance, Dimna claims that the bull is no longer favored by the lion due to his distance from him, without providing concrete evidence for this assertion. This prompts the child to question: "Does everyone who distances themselves from you necessarily stop liking you? Are there other possible reasons for the bull's distancing?" Such questions enhance the child's critical thinking skills, teaching them patience before accepting conclusions and distinguishing between rational arguments supported by evidence and manipulation based on subjective interpretations.

The child's ability to differentiate between facts and fallacies is considered "a mental exercise based on reviewing arguments and counterarguments in a way that fosters a critical spirit and enables intellectual discussion and debate with others" (Abdullah Al-Bahloul, 2013: 56). The child learns that claims must be based on real evidence and accurate information. Another question can be posed, drawing from the child's daily life: "How would you react if a friend told you that one of your classmates was speaking ill of you, without you having heard it yourself? Would you immediately believe them, or would you investigate the matter?" These questions strengthen a critical thinking methodology, contributing to the child's ability to conduct objective analysis and make decisions based on independent assessment.

3.3. Moral Thinking: The Dialectic of Good and Evil

Moral thinking is reflected in a child's ability to make conscious decisions about what is right and what is wrong, contributing to their social integration and harmonious coexistence in their environment. But how does this process unfold? The American psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg proposed a theory of moral development, which suggests that children progress through sequential stages, starting with a level of awareness based on avoiding punishment and culminating in a more mature stage where they grasp abstract moral values such as justice, freedom, and fairness, regardless of external circumstances. Meanwhile, John Dewey argues that there is a strong connection between critical

thinking and moral reasoning, as reflective thinking serves as a fundamental tool enabling children to distinguish between right and wrong based on rational criteria rather than blindly conforming to prevailing beliefs.

As we will see later, the text reveals a semantic shift in the story of *The Lion and the Bull*, where Dimnah's use of cunning and persuasive rhetoric ultimately exposes the falsehood of his reasoning, making his elimination necessary to restore moral balance in the narrative. This point becomes evident when the lion's mother testifies to differentiate between truth and falsehood. She is no longer a passive recipient of arguments but assumes a conscious critical role, initially contemplating Dimnah's discourse before ultimately taking a decisive stance against him. She declares: "His execution is the punishment for his crime and a means to protect your soldiers from his evil, for he cannot be trusted with matters of such gravity" (Ibn al-Muqaffa', 2014: 110). Dimnah thus falls victim to his own deceptive rhetoric, affirming that argumentative persuasion based on fallacies cannot withstand rational scrutiny.

Morality should not be understood as an abstract set of rules but rather as a reality embodied in speech acts that serve persuasive functions. These moral values become more defined through their active invocation, refinement, and ethical evaluation. To illustrate this practically, one could pose a moral question to a child: Have you ever believed false information that led to the unjust treatment of an innocent person? How did you handle the situation? This question not only prompts the child to recall a personal experience but also carries profound ethical implications. It fosters critical awareness, cultivates a sense of responsibility in verifying information before making judgments, and reinforces the principle of fairness, helping to prevent injustice.

These fundamental values are not constructed through predetermined intellectual stances but rather emerge within the narrative strategy itself. The self (ego) cannot fully grasp itself objectively; if it attempts to do so, it requires another self to describe the first. Kalila and Dimna presents two opposing perspectives: one rooted in determinism, represented by the lion as a symbol of unyielding authority, and the other embodied by Dimnah, who relies on rhetorical flexibility and intelligent persuasion to achieve his goals. Through this rhetorical conflict between the two models, the book becomes a battlefield between persuasion based on ambiguity and insinuation, and persuasion supported by clarity and rational argumentation.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, children's stories emerge as an effective tool for fostering critical thinking skills by addressing educational and moral issues that expand a child's cognitive abilities and deepen their awareness of reality. The key findings of this research paper can be summa-

rized as follows:

- The rapid digital transformations in contemporary societies, characterized by an unprecedented influx of information, pose complex challenges—chief among them being the shaping of human behavior according to predetermined patterns. This underscores the need to cultivate critical thinking skills in children by equipping them with tools to verify and systematically analyze information before making decisions.
- Educational literature, exemplified by *Kalila and Dimna*, is not merely a vehicle for reinforcing authority and its rituals; rather, it serves as an effective instrument for developing children's critical awareness. By attributing wisdom and moral lessons to animals, the text stimulates thinking through contrast and debate.
- These stories contribute to the development of dialectical reasoning and logical inference in children, enhancing their ability to engage in independent analy-

sis and formulate critical stances based on methodological awareness and reflective knowledge.

- They also enable children to distinguish between reliable knowledge and intellectual fallacies, enriching their capacity for objective evaluation and fostering decision-making grounded in sound rational principles.

A child who attempts to understand a story merely by appreciating the world it portrays and the ideas it presents is akin to a man building a wall without knowing anything about the strength of wood, clay, or stone. Here, the role of the teacher is to guide the child through a multi-layered reading process that goes beyond the superficial events of the narrative to uncover the deeper meanings embedded in literary texts. We will continue our efforts to explore the rare insights of human attention in future studies.

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