

Reading Questions for September 1

These questions cover an article by Joseph Kupfer called “Can Parents and Children Be Friends?” The answers do not have to be turned in. You will probably have to read more than once to get the answers.

*Background:*

In this article, Kupfer criticizes the article we read for last class. I think Kupfer’s article is pretty difficult to read, so I’m going to use these reading questions to give you some guidelines in how to read a difficult philosophy article.

*Questions:*

1. Typically, in the first section, a philosopher will tell you what their main point is. So as you read the beginning any philosophy article, is it good to ask yourself: “what is the main point of this piece?” Sometimes you have to read it over a couple of times to figure out the answer – it can be hard, because sometimes the author does other things besides telling you the main point. Look at beginning of this article (i.e. everything before section I on page 290), and try to answer the question: what is Kupfer’s main point?
2. Philosophy articles typically give arguments to defend their main points. It’s often a good idea to figure out what the main idea behind an argument is before you go into the details. Kupfer tells you the main structure of his argument in the first three sentences of the first paragraph of section I on page 290. What is the main structure of his argument?
3. Once you understand the main structure of the argument, it’s good to get the details. A good first step in starting to understand the details is to read quickly through an article, skimming most of it while reading the beginning and ends of sections, topic sentences, and anything else that looks important, including definitions of key terms. Do that

for this article. What do you take to be the key details of Kupfer's argument? Insofar as you understand his argument, do you agree with him? Why or why not?