

# Science Lesson #8

## *Why Can't Wishes Be Scientific?*

(Fire)

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### Introduction to Fables and Science

#### Today's Lesson

My lessons blend provocative ideas with scientific ideas - right brain Fables with left brain Science. I use critical thinking from left brain reasoning with character building intuition from right brain inspiration. Here's one ...

Why can't things like wishes be science? Some people feel in a gut intuition that there is something real about wishes. Take the act of lighting a flame in order to make a wish. Why do so many

people do this? Let's look at some of the science of a flame, of fire, and see if we find some inspirational ideas within that area of investigation.

## **Let's Mix Fables & Science**

I know, I know. There is a rule that science cannot include the supernatural. And, I guess things like wishes or intentions or prayers are supernatural. But isn't science the place where only the truth matters? And, doesn't the scientific method consist of showing the truth in repeated demonstrations? Isn't science supposed to show what causes what? Well, what if wishes got in there? What if we were to use the scientific method to see if things like wishes, intentions, observations, or consciousness cause things in the physical world? Many studies are being done as I speak to investigate these matters and I want to encourage science teaching to note these possibilities because they encourage students to push the boundaries of science to some very exciting and hopeful areas. So, I put it to you. Could it be that that things that start in the non-physical world ... cause things in the physical world?

## **Some Biology, Chemistry and Physics**

When people make a wish or a prayer, they sometimes light a candle. Why? Maybe fire is something that touches us in a deep way. The biology and chemistry and physics of fire is quite well known. But do we really know what fire is? Children believe fire is ALIVE. But most adults dismiss this on the grounds that children are naive and simply think anything is alive that moves and changes - especially if it breathes and grows. I am here to say that we should not be so tight on the definition of life. Any research into the characteristics of what science currently considers alive will reveal that a living entity must have cell structure and it must reproduce. Therefore, it will conclude that fire cannot be alive. But where did this arbitrary line in the sand

arise? Ancients and children have believed that much more of nature is alive. Could it be that they knew something that we have lost the ability to know? For instance, could they have been in some form of communication with the consciousness of entities that we consider inert or non-living?

## **My Story**

I loved these ideas so much that I often offered provocative ideas like these to my students over the years as a science teacher. The result was keen interest and even more critical observations and thinking. I often said, “How do you that the rocks are not alive?” My students would research definitions of life and then delineate characteristics of inorganic matter. Then they would ask who decided that the lines between *natural* and *supernatural* should be drawn. The ensuing discussions were always lively and fruitful.

More importantly, my provoking questions put them in touch with the way they looked at the world when they were children. This is what I am trying to do to you. I believe this always yields fruit! It not only helps you to get in touch with early idealism, it also re-opens your mind to a science that might have reduced the world - JUST TO EXPLAIN IT. Did you ever consider that we might settle on narrower ideas because it makes them easy to explain - not because they seem more true?

I loved these ideas so much that I went to get a Ph.D. as I was turning 60, so that I could study the ancient and the child and compare their views. I also studied how and why history has seen a slow movement away from them. My conclusion is not that we outgrew childhood, but instead, I think we simply LOST abilities to see things we used to see. Here is an excerpt from my Ph.D. dissertation, where among other child-like tendencies, I studied Piaget’s excellent body of child interviews. I disagreed with his conclusions, but I loved his excellent observations.

Note the specific example where this was done by Piaget:

Moreover, we shall see in studying child artificialism that to a child almost all bodies are born and grow; the sun and moon "are born and grow (poussent)," mountains, stones, iron "grow" etc. The facts clearly prove that the origin and growth of things cannot serve the child as criteria for distinguishing the living from the inert. From this point of view there is perfect continuity between all natural objects. (Piaget, 1929/2007, p. 229)

This is treating the child with deficit model thinking: Piaget has only noticed how the child did not see the logical answer. Re-analysis of this child interview would say that the child believes both paradoxical ideas, because to the child, things can be both inert *and* alive in some sense that does not fit some adults' common sense positivist definition of life. (Bickart, 2013, p. 57)

So, maybe fire is alive and maybe it isn't. Anyway, it's very cool (or hot). Check out the video on this lesson to see what I mean.  
[\[Play video here to see live demonstration.\]](#)

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### **Here's a provocative thought...**

Perhaps wishes DO cause physical changes. Perhaps fire represents - among other things - the transfer of something that appears to be solid, to a vaporous state. Perhaps it represents our desire to get back to the spiritual.

So, to further science while building our human character, perhaps we could investigate ideas and intentions becoming physical realities. That would be fun - and very helpful!

If we used the scientific method to include wishes, intentions and prayers, perhaps we could conduct experiments with large numbers of us to see if we can repeatedly cause the same results.

Here are some fables that deal with the non-physical: [\[Fable #126\]](#) [\[Fable #1\]](#) [\[Fable #2\]](#) [\[Fable #3\]](#) [\[Fable #32\]](#) [\[Fable #42\]](#) [\[Fable #45\]](#) [\[Fable #47\]](#) [\[Fable #57\]](#) [\[Fable #67\]](#) [\[Fable #71\]](#) [\[Fable #124\]](#) [\[Fable #125\]](#) [\[Fable #146\]](#) (Bickart, 2020a, Volume 1; 2020b, Volume 2; 2020c, Volume 3).



## *#126 A Modern Visits the Future*



*Step into my time transport. We are going to the future. You will get to visit a school. And by luck, they still speak your language, so you can ask some questions. And if you like science, you are in luck again, for today they are discussing the Scientific Method, Version II. You are sitting next to a student in this future class and he opens the conversation with you.*

*Student: Hi. We are studying the Scientific Method, Version II. Did you ever learn about it in your time?*

*You: I only know one Scientific Method, so I guess you would call it Version I.*

*Student: Oh, cool. Remind us what it used to be.*

*You: Well, I don't know if I can describe it perfectly, but I think the main thing is that you test if something is true by seeing if you*

*can repeatedly do it. Like gravity, for example. If you repeat an experiment of dropping a ball - anyone, anywhere, anytime - and it always falls, then you conclude that gravity is a true Law.*

*Student: I see! I think I remember that from history class! Well, Version II - we call it SM2 for short - is similar. Just take out the anyone, anywhere, anytime, then add a few parts.*

*You: I don't understand. What has changed? I thought we had a universal truth, good for all time.*

*Student: Well, get ready for a surprise. Two things changed that your time did not see coming. One is that there was a bias in your thinking; you really were not doing CRITICAL THINKING. The other was that human beings themselves have evolved!*

*You: Whoa! This is hard to take. Try giving me one thing at a time.*

*Student: Ok. With our critical thinking we realized that the old scientific method tested the cause of PHYSICAL things by only looking for PHYSICAL causes. We call that circular reasoning. They categorically ruled out SPIRITUAL causes of PHYSICAL things.*

*You: I never thought of that. Go on.*

*Student: With our superior science measurement, we found that different people doing the same experiment cause different results. We also measured that the time and place you do things also changes everything. Your scientists probably suspected some of this through the theories of relativity and quantum effects.*

*You: Wow! To tell the truth, I actually did suspect that a person could change a result. But, what are the new additions to the Scientific Method?*

*Student: Well, hold your hat! Since your time, human beings have evolved. While we were learning to sharpen our abilities to change experiments in minor ways, we also increased our abilities of perception.*

*You: Perception of what? And what does that have to do with things that cause scientific laws?*

*Student: Perception of the SPIRITUAL WORLD. Did you know that there are all kinds of beings that we can now see and work with? They not only tell us secrets about nature; they show us how they have always been causing the physical world to be what it is. We learned that weather is a product of the combined state of the intentions of humans with all the other beings. And as soon as we started experiments of participating in nature, science got really fun! It turns out, the cause of all things are not things. It's us. Us with all other beings, that is.*

*You: I think I'm beginning to see the parts you had to add to the Scientific Method. I guess it's about the INTENTIONS of beings. And I guess you have to include every being from the lowest to the highest to see the cause of science in our world.*

*Student: Exactly!*

*You: So, what is this next version, SM2?*

*Student: It became quite simple. It goes like this: 'IF IT BE YOUR WILL'.*

***FUTURE SCIENCE MIGHT BECOME GREAT FUN!***



# *A Modern Visits the Future*

## Why Use Fables to Teach Science?

### **Conversation Starters**

- What is one of your favorite things to repeat? What do you wish would happen again and again?
- Why do you think the scientific method looks for something to be repeatable? What is something you do where you get different results each time you do it?
- What do you think you would feel if someone could not be counted on to tell you the truth? Would you continue to be friends with that person?
- Why do you think the future person said that some scientific experiments might come out with different results according to which person does it?
- What do you think is the meaning of “*IF IT BE YOUR WILL*”? What is “*YOUR WILL*” in that statement?

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### **References**

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