



THE WISE UNCLE

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*I told my Uncle as he drank his tea
That our class is doing Philosophy.
'Is that wise?' he said, frowning down at me.
'Wise is what philosophy's supposed to be'
I replied, helpfully.
'It's dangerous' he said, 'actually'.
I was stunned. How could this be?
My uncle murmured: 'You'll soon see.
They'll ask you if the sky is really blue.
What will you say, if they ask you?'
I said 'I don't think it's true.
It can be other colours – quite a few.
But then it kind of is blue too.
I haven't got one answer, but two.'
'There's the danger,' he said, 'it's what they do,
Those philosophers, confuse you through and through.
Stick to Maths, Science and History,
Subjects where the only difficulty
Is storing facts up in your memory.'
'Facts like what?' I said, just to see
If he could give an example to me.
'Well, he said, here's a little fact for free:
Thinking makes your brain go funny
And it'll never earn you any money.
Forget about philosophy'.
Then he picked up his tea
And carried on drinking.
I wonder if it's wise for me
To carry on thinking.*

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Task Questions

- ✓ Who is wiser, the child or the uncle?
- ✓ Is it wise to think?
- ✓ Are thinking and doing philosophy the same?
- ✓ Can thinking earn you money?
- ✓ Can philosophy earn you any money? What about other subjects?
- ✓ Do you store facts in your memory? Why?