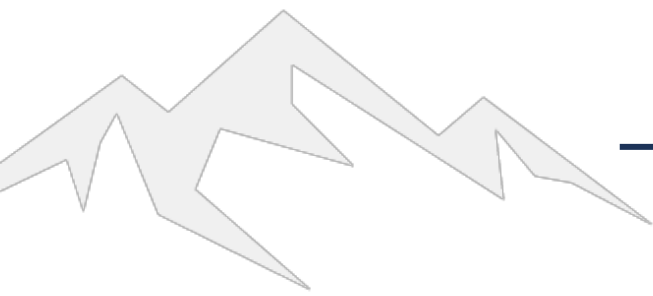


Developing the Educated Child

July 2026



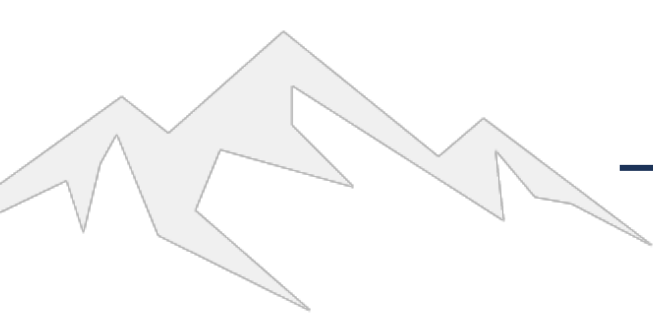


About the Author

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Dr. Debora Scheffel serves as the CUS Dean of the School of Education, at Colorado Christian University. She earned a PhD in Communication Sciences and Disorders from Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, and completed a National Institutes of Mental Health post-doctoral fellowship in cognitive science at the University of California, San Diego. Her research interests are in education reform policy, reading, and oral language development and disabilities in children. She is formerly a member of the Colorado State Board of Education representing Colorado's 4th and 6th Congressional Districts. She is passionate about quality education and providing a range of available educational options for all children.

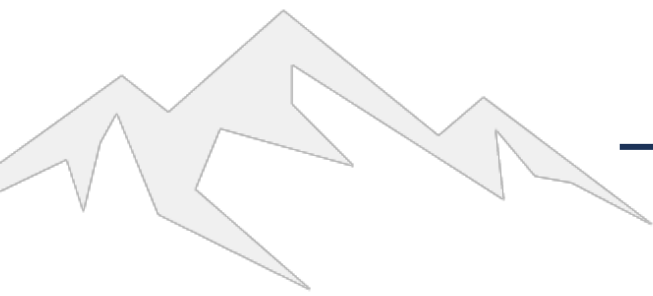


History of Childhood

What is childhood? For centuries, this question has been pondered by psychologists, historians, educators, parents, and political administrations. The thin line between childhood and adulthood is one that continually fluctuates. After much debate, many modern scholars, including Allison James, William Corsaro, Chris Jenks, and Neil Postman, argue that, while childhood has always existed, its definition is and always has been socially and historically constructed. In layman's terms, while childhood has existed biologically with young children, what counts as a "child," how long childhood lasts, and the rights, roles, and expectations of children shifts based on historical and social circumstances over time. (1)

Ancient philosophers, like Aristotle, believed childhood was a natural and necessary stage of life, mainly biological. Children were young, immature, imperfect beings, dependent on adults, namely, the male head of their household. They were not capable of purely rational decisions and were to be guided, disciplined, and educated by adults in order to imbue "good" habits into their routines that would lead them into rational adulthood. Children were valued for future economic and social roles, like improving or maintaining familial status, but otherwise, they were mainly viewed pragmatically as non-adults. Childhood didn't seem to be addressed as anything other than a stepping stone to adulthood. (2)(3)

This thought-process was carried into the medieval period as well. In fact, the medieval period kept some similar values of childhood from the ancient world, but it did differ slightly. With the increased importance of religion in society, children were often viewed as morally incomplete, sinful beings needing discipline before entering adulthood. Schooling for children was limited since formal education wasn't wide-spread and schools were often comprised of different ages combined. Children entered adult society (work, dress, play, and social roles) as soon as they were physically capable, suggesting that children were viewed as miniature adults. Ariès argued that "in medieval society the idea of childhood did not exist;" however, historians suggest that "people in the Middle Ages were well aware of childhood as a phase of life." This argument implies that childhood did exist, but it was seen as a short transitional phase instead of a development stage within a human being's life as it is now. (4)(5)



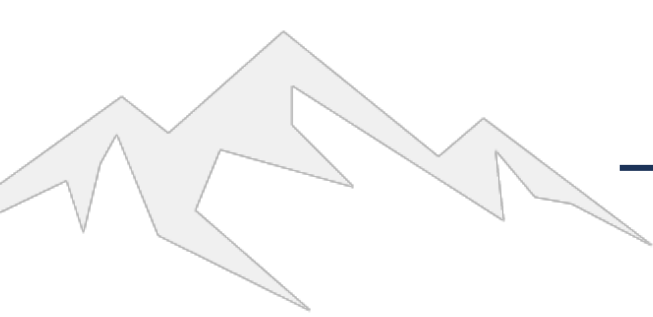
The definition of childhood became clearer in the early modern period, more characterized as a formative and malleable life stage. There was a distinct shift toward the responsibility of parents in charge of shaping a child's perspective, character, and views on morality.



Camille Monet and a Child in the Artist's Garden in Argenteuil (6)

At the same time, the importance of education was emphasized in childhood development, which furthered the idea of childhood as a preparatory phase. John Locke described a child's mind as "white paper, void of all characters," requiring structure and guidance through education and their own experiences. In another view, Jean-Jacques Rousseau thought that "childhood has its own ways of seeing, thinking, and feeling," following the individual child's natural development in education. While these views may be different, they both reflect a belief that children needed some type of guidance and protection during their growth, thus indicating a shift in the modern early period away from children being viewed as incomplete, miniature adults to childhood as a distinct stage. (7)(8)

The Industrial Revolution brought stark contrasting views of childhood into the picture based on the class system. Middle- and upper-class families saw children as dependents who were vulnerable and needed protection. For working class families, the view of childhood seemed to regress, seeing children as economic contributors, such as laborers and artisans. Their income was integral to family income and industrial production, which also meant that schooling became secondary to work. During this time period,

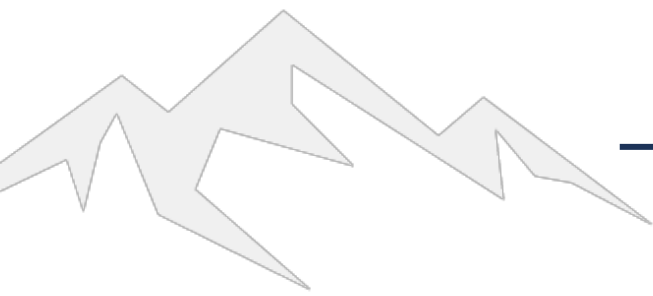


child labor was noted as “the most widespread and least regulated form of exploitation.” (9)



The March of the Mill, 1903, Kensington, Philadelphia (10)

Because of the vast exploitation of child labor, movements and legislation to reform the laws regarding children in the workplace began to take shape during the later years of the industrial revolution, such as the Factory Acts passed in the United Kingdom between 1833-1878 and the first hints of child labor laws in the United States passed by individual states (like the Massachusetts Factory Act in 1836). These laws redefined children as beings who needed to be protected under country/state regulations. There is also the start of an educational shift in the United Kingdom during the Industrial Revolution. The Elementary Education Act was passed in 1870, which created a foundation for compulsory elementary education for young children (5 to 13) as it was required for children to attend school where schoolhouses existed. However, as universal schooling was not widespread yet, many areas lacked the schooling facilities, funds, and materials needed. (11)

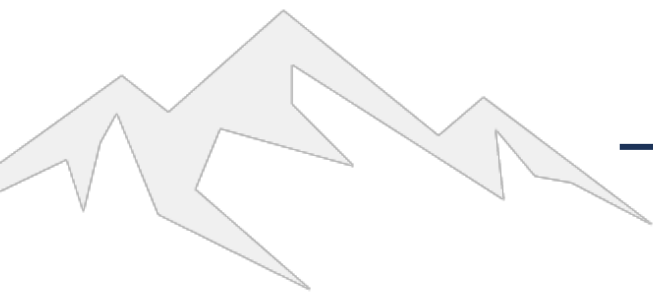


So, while government-regulated education was on the rise in the UK, schooling was still seen as more of an encouraged subject, rather than a needed requirement for children. This furthered the idea that childhood was a life stage requiring protection and education, not just under familial supervision, but also on a government-wide scale.

In the early 20th century, compulsory education became well-established in both the UK and the United States as childhood was defined as a universal developmental stage. The Elementary Education Act of 1880 in the UK had made school attendance mandatory, and compulsory school laws became nationwide in the United States by 1918. This time period saw childhood as a stage psychologically distinct from adults requiring education, protection, and moral guidance, combining the values of the industrial revolution and the early modern period. Hugh Cunningham explained that “by the early twentieth century, childhood had come to be seen as a time of dependence and protection.” (12)(13)

With the rise of compulsory schooling, the focus of childhood flipped from education as secondary and work as primary to the opposite. Childhood became institutionalized with work being limited. This view made one thing clear: childhood was a distinct, essential phase of life, undoubtedly separate from adulthood.

In continuation, the mid- to late-20th century definition of childhood became more refined. It was seen as a critical stage of emotional and psychological development with strong emphases on a child's cognitive growth, emotional attachment, and individual needs. Psychologists like Jean Piaget had emphasized that “the child is not a miniature adult.” As this thought-process spread, the idea that childhood required a different way of thinking and had its own developmental stage completely separate from adulthood was more prevalent. Furthering the thoughts of the early 20th century, childhood was to be protected, and children were rights-bearing individuals with laws that protected them from overwork and workplace exploitation. This perspective was reinforced even more when the United Nations passed the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which recognizes children as individuals with rights to protection and their own development. (14)(15)



In the 21st century, these laws are still in place, emphasizing childhood as a rights-based, protected developmental stage. Most countries now enforce compulsory education, requiring children to attend school. However, as time passes, psychologists, sociologists, educators, and the like see childhood more and more as a “social construct” that differs all around the world. Because of this, there is an increasing focus on mental health, identity, and digital environments. Childhood is still protected and seen as a separate stage of development, but it varies based on culture, societal conditions, and a child’s unique environment. (1)

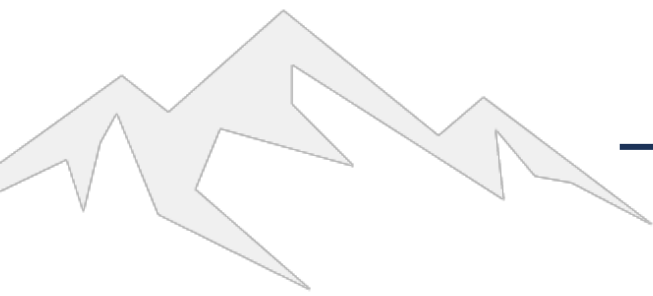
The Modern Education Environment

With the 1920’s seeing a near-universal expectation for children’s schooling, teaching as a profession evolved from more informal, localized education to a regulated, national profession. Certifications and credentials became a requirement, demanding the growth of university-based teacher preparation education programs, such as the Teachers College at Columbia University. Progressive education theories, like those associated with John Dewey, emphasized development, experience, and scientific approaches in schooling.

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“What was once a child’s subjective, individualized education became more bureaucratic and impersonal.”

However, while these ideas may have been accepted within the teaching profession, Dewey’s original intention of rooting learning in experience, inquiry, and a child’s individual interests were often reduced to prescribed methods and techniques, institutionalizing the theories leading to bureaucratic standardization instead of individualized learning. (16)



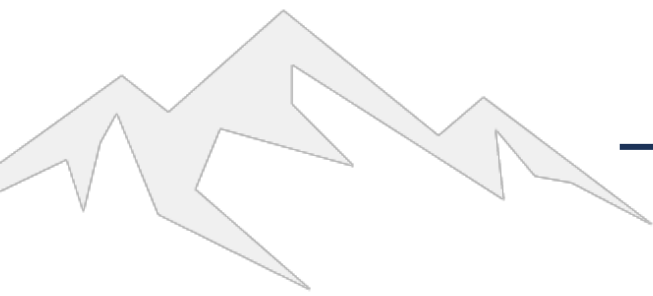
This standardization did help manage schools with large student numbers and teachers, but it also created tight reins from bureaucracies. The demand to test students and keep records of their scores to evaluate efficiency and expertise inhibited teachers in their ability to adjust learning to each child's needs.

As expected, the result of doing this changed the focus from seeing children as individuals with specific, unique needs to seeing children as indistinguishable students who learn at the same pace as each other. What was once a child's subjective, individualized education became more bureaucratic and impersonal.

As this concept grew, childhood was seen increasingly as a life stage requiring structured input from experts with students being viewed as passive recipients of knowledge, not active participants in their own learning. Schools transitioned into places solely meant to shape the intellect, morality, and citizenship of students into identical versions of each other based on the administration's own curriculum, instruction, and perspectives, which are often politicized in one way or another. All of these factors assisted in creating the view of childhood as something shaped by systems rather than being intrinsically meaningful in a child's growth as an individual on the verge of becoming an adult. Many scholars argue that this type of educational framework ignores individuality and the cultural variations of childhood in different situations. (17)

The Modern View of Childhood

This current view of childhood as a standardized stage of life neglects a child's distinct spirit and soul, favoring materialistic values over creative, unique experiences and originality. Students are *told* how to think and what to think by their schools and teachers instead of *learning* how to think and how to formulate their own conclusions. This perspective of childhood is also aligned to human capital theory. Human capital theory considers education as an investment in future productivity. Children are seen as future workers, taxpayers, and economic "assets," who should learn skills that will optimize their economic return once they become adults.

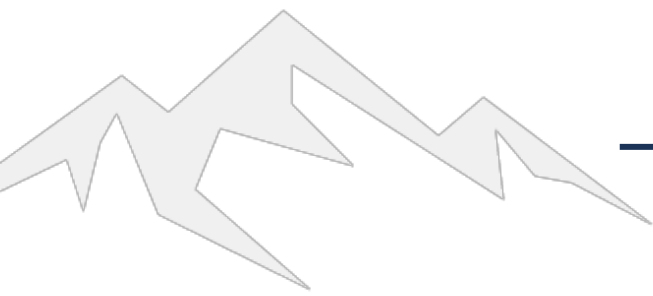


This perspective rendered schooling as a place to ready children for jobs and long-term productivity, no longer a place for a child to grow their intellectual curiosity, moral development, or civic engagement. In one sense, childhood is still viewed as a preparatory phase. However, this perception has subtly morphed the idea of children needing to be protected because they are in a meaningful phase of life, and instead, influencing children because they can become valuable, economic contributors later in life with a large capacity to produce and generate more. More and more, students are described as “assets,” “outputs,” and direct, moldable “pipelines” to be led into the workforce. Educational priorities shift toward subjects that have measurable economic value. Other subjects – like the arts, humanities, philosophy, and exploratory learning experiences – are sidelined because they do not directly add to potential economic gain.



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This kind of “workforce readiness” educational objective has become a dominant objective over the past few decades. There’s been an increased focus on career pathways, job skills, and employability metrics, especially over the last 10 years with schools being evaluated by how well they produce intelligent, “work-ready” graduates. Schools have become somewhat soulless, continuing to encourage standardization, efficiency over understanding, and compliance over imagination. Preparing students for work after graduating is necessary to some degree, and it is not inherently problematic. However, a singular concentration on this often makes education seem vacuous, prioritizing short-term utility instead of mastery and limiting a student’s adaptability in an everchanging society, especially when they are mostly trained for specific economy-driven roles.

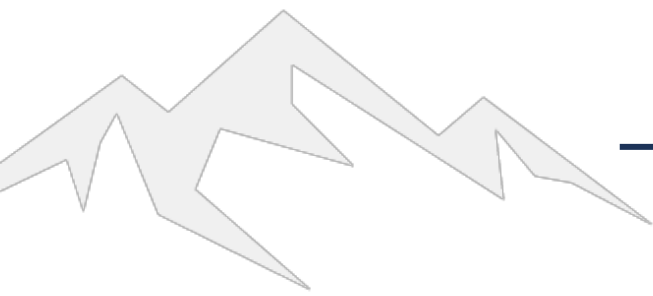


This framing of education further contributes to the dehumanization of children. Childhood is less about individual children with inimitable, personal lives and more about children becoming a source of data that should be coded, managed, and optimized for the greatest output. In reality, this can be seen with the technology boom over the last two decades. Devices like Chromebooks and iPads are frequently used in education now and have created classroom environments mediated by screens, apps, and games.

Technology is a great tool. It has the ability to enhance and enrich learning; but, overuse of technology can isolate students, distancing them from interpersonal, meaningful interactions and experiences. Excessive screentime reduces the opportunity for class discussions, imagination, and deep focus from students. Learning becomes more transactional and surface-level with knowledge of a subject being consumed as quickly as possible rather than purposefully and with the intent to gain mastery.

To emphasize the idea of childhood becoming more about production and efficiency rather than honed expertise, practices like “cold reading,” where students analyze short passages in isolation, have become a frequently used instructional practice. This type of method encourages students to quickly extract themes, identify techniques, and then move on instead of engaging deeply with a text. Literature no longer becomes an engaged experience, but a cipher to decode. While this may be helpful for the various standardized assessments students are required to take, it discourages immersion, emotional connection, and the natural, deliberate development of understanding that is derived from reading a text completely.

Standardized tests and strict curricula evaluate students on generalized, stereotypical metrics. There isn’t room for personality, imagination, or flexible thinking. In fact, flexibility in problem-solving can be penalized in some circumstances because a student didn’t use the “correct” or “standard” method to get the right answer. With these practices, success is defined by following narrow, unbending rules, and creativity outside of those rules is looked down upon. In the school system, students who don’t fit the mold are often overlooked and undervalued.



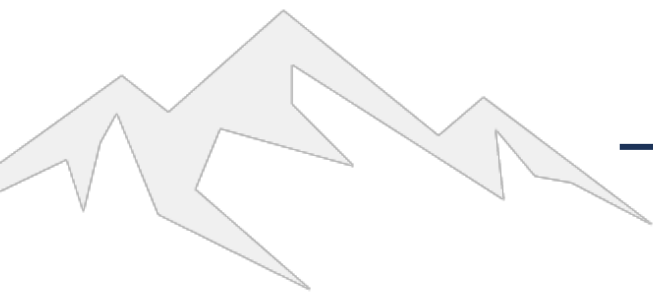
All of these trends factor into the loss of childhood as a meaningful stage of life. Furthermore, they reflect a cultural shift where childhood may be seen as a means to an end, a preparation period for adulthood. Play, imagination, and exploration, which are vital to a child's healthy development, are neglected in favor of work and economic contributions, and the concept of children already being whole people, not future adults, is disregarded. A perspective like this focuses on skills and the mind, but it neglects the body and soul. This kind of approach reduces the emotional and intellectual richness of childhood and abandons the intrinsic value childhood provides.



"Standardized tests and strict curricula evaluate students on generalized, stereotypical metrics. There isn't room for personality, imagination, or flexible thinking."

The Rise of Classical Education

Education must be reframed to align with a more holistic view of childhood and to prioritize a child's intellectual curiosity, inherent motivation, and deep learning. Students should be reading full literary works, discussing their points of view, and reflecting on lessons with their classmates and with themselves, while also balancing the use of technology with human interactions. Students should be regarded as individual beings with their own thoughts and perceptions, and it is essential that they are viewed as such and not viewed mechanistically. There is a reason for the rise of classical education over the last several years. Learning has diminished with the contemporary views of childhood. Children have limited expectations in their education – to learn what they are taught and be sent out into the workforce. However, classical education revisits previous perspectives on childhood, focusing on what a child is capable of understanding and teaches the importance of gathering knowledge and virtue with an emphasis on truth and beauty.

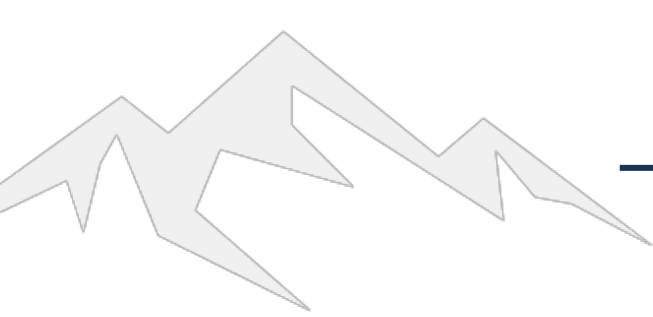


Puss-in-Boots (18)

Truth, Goodness, and Beauty

Classical education repeatedly returns to “truth” and “beauty” because it is founded on an older vision of what it means to be fully human. In that vision, education is not just about skills or information, it is about forming the intellect and character toward what is real and meaningful. Classical education includes the “transcendentals”: truth, goodness, and beauty. Thinkers like Plato and Aristotle treated these not as preferences, but as objective features of reality. Later, medieval philosophers such as Thomas Aquinas wove them into a broader philosophical and theological framework. In classical and medieval thought, “goodness, truth, and beauty along with unity are considered the transcendental properties of being,” meaning they are the ways in which reality can be understood and appreciated. (19)

Truth is about aligning the mind with reality. Classical education prioritizes disciplines like grammar, logic, rhetoric, mathematics, science, and philosophy because they train students to think clearly and discern what one experiences. This reflects the classical assumption that truth is objective and discoverable, not constructed or a matter of interpretation. Generally, classical models of education regard the pursuit of truth as foundational to intellectual and moral development because “liberty and knowable truth are interdependent.” (20)(21)



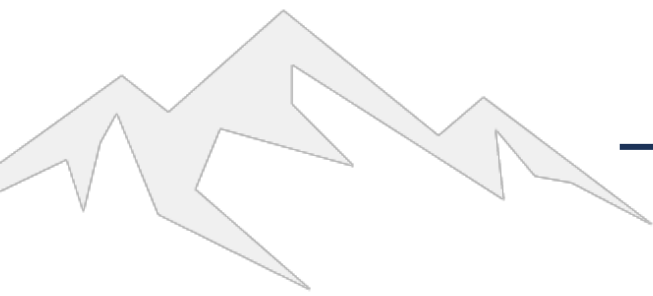
"A key theme across classical education scholarship is that education aims at the formation of the whole person."

Meanwhile, beauty plays a different but equally important role. It draws the viewer in. Students are often initially drawn to a subject through the beauty they experience in it – whether in music, poetry, or mathematics – which has potential to expand their intellectual knowledge of the subject. Beauty motivates attention and admiration, which in turn can lead to deeper understanding. Scholarly discussions of classical education emphasize that beauty motivates the desire to learn – it draws students toward truth and goodness.

In his 2015 study, Gramenz states that even educators from outstanding universities “will find their lives hollow and their effectiveness stunted without a deep and profound motivation for the good – a motivation that is generated by experiences with beauty. [...] Beauty motivates, beauty inspires, beauty ‘gets’ to us in ways that nothing else can. In short, beauty can ennoble the soul and provide the impetus for greatness.” (22)

A key theme across classical education scholarship is that education aims at the formation of the whole person. It seeks to cultivate “wisdom and virtue by nourishing the soul on truth, goodness, and beauty,” not just a focus on technical competence. This is why classical education emphasizes engagement with great works of literature, philosophy, and art. Works such as these are seen as enduring expressions of truth and beauty that shape judgment, encourage independent thinking, and inspire learning and imagination (Liberty Classical Schools, 2026). When students read great works, they are not just analyzing texts; they’re being shaped by them. (21)(23)

Truth and beauty are essential in classical education because they correspond to two essential human attributes: intellect, which seeks truth



and understanding rooted in knowledge, and imagination and/or affections, which correlate to one's view of beauty. The hope is that encountering beauty and truth together will cultivate good judgment, humility, independence, and a lifelong desire to learn. In contrast to many modern educational models that focus heavily on usefulness (job skills, measurable outcomes), classical education asks: what kind of person should education form? Its answer is someone who can recognize truth, appreciate beauty, and ultimately live wisely.

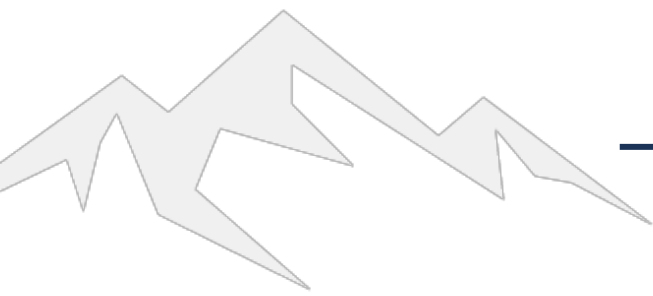


Lessons (24)

Paideia & Practical Application

Paideia is the Greek word indicating an ancient concept and has no exact translation in the English language. The word *paideia* is linked to ideas and assumptions about humanity and enculturation that drive how, why, and what we teach our youth. In truth,

“Paideia is at one level, the transfer of a way of viewing the world from the teacher to the student. At another it shapes and forms the child in terms of his or her desires, passions, and loves. It is essentially the part of upbringing and education that forms the soul of a human being — and it is key to the formation of a culture. Put yet another



way, *paideia* is a description of the values we actually love, the truth we actually believe, and what we assume about the nature of our world.”
(25)

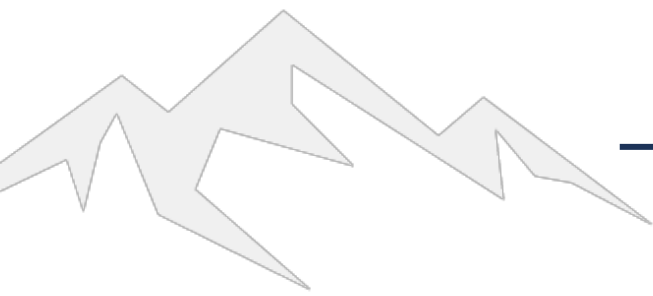
To see how “truth and beauty” actually show up in a classroom, the key is the trivium.

The Trivium

The trivium is the three-part structure of learning that classical education inherited from antiquity and the Middle Ages. It’s often associated with writers like Dorothy Sayers, who helped popularize it in modern classical schools. However, its roots go back to educational systems originally shaped by Aristotle and other ancient philosophers, and it was later refined in medieval universities. The trivium isn’t merely a sequence of subjects – it’s a progression in how students relate to truth and beauty as they grow. The purpose of the trivium is not just to obtain content knowledge, but to train how a person learns, reasons, and communicates.

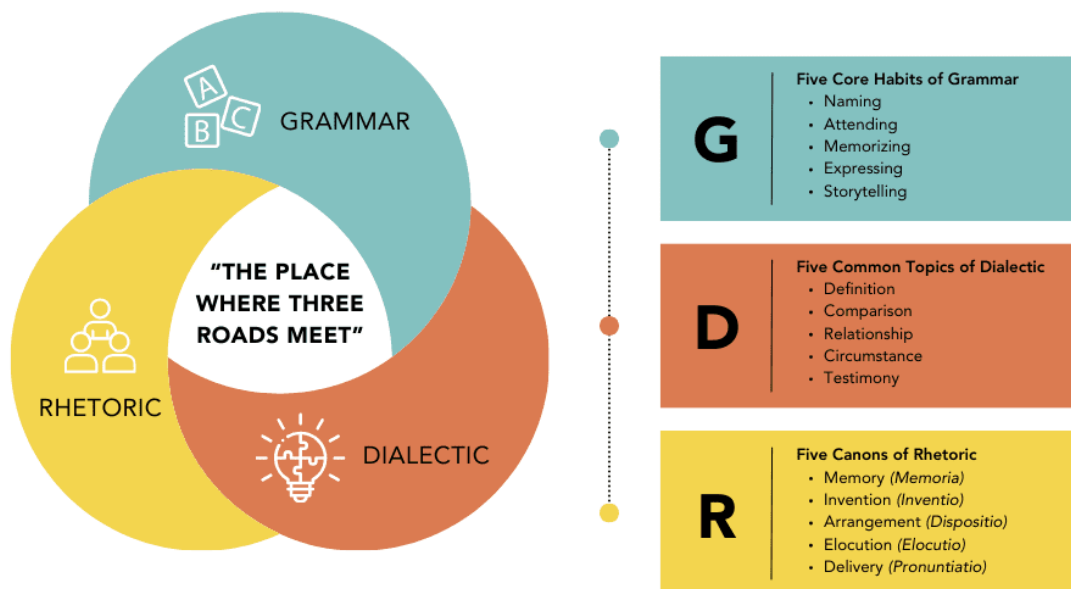
The trivium method is a three-part structure that focuses on the progression of learning from general grammar to formal logic (also referred to as “dialectic”) and then to classical rhetoric. In the grammar step, “discovering and ordering facts of reality comprises basic systematic *Knowledge*.” Grammar is an information stage, answering the who, what, when, and where of a subject, that is usually introduced and developed in elementary school within the modern classical education system. Students concentrate on memorizing facts, language, and basic information, and learn vocabulary, definitions, and foundational knowledge that lead them to the second part of the trivium: logic. (26)

Logic is the reasoning stage, focusing on thinking, analysis, and relationships between ideas, which begins in middle school. This part “answers the *Why* of a subject” and is about “developing the faculty of reason in establishing valid [i.e., non-contradictory] relationships among facts [which] yields basic systematic *Understanding*.” Logic helps students evaluate arguments, detect fallacies, and build reasoning. After reaching a solid understanding, students move forward to rhetoric, which is the communication stage, in high school. (26)



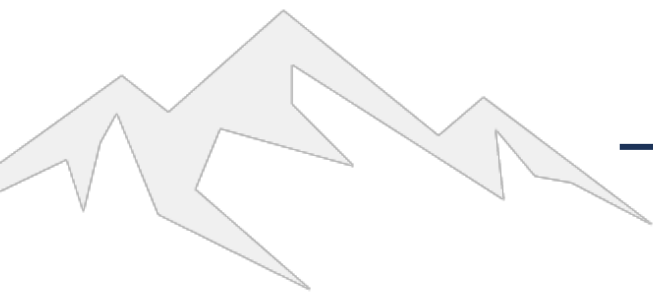
Rhetoric focuses on expression and persuasion, finally answering “the *How* of a subject.” This assists students in learning to communicate ideas effectively in both their speech and writing. In this stage, “applying knowledge and understanding expressively comprises *Wisdom* or, in other words, it is systematically useable knowledge and understanding.” These three stages make up the trivium. It is considered the foundation for classical education because it focuses on the acquisition of knowledge (grammar), develops critical thinking (logic), and cultivates effective communication (rhetoric). (26)

WHAT IS THE TRIVIUM?



The Trivium (27)

The trivium is founded in the basic progression of childhood and logical developmental steps. Since education lays the groundwork for how children make decisions, it is important to recognize the purpose behind the trivium

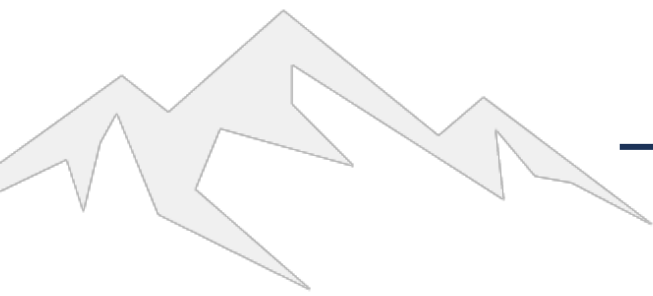


and why it works well. The focus of long-term goals in education should be the flourishing of humans and the tools to help them find happiness. Childhood is a foundational stage of life that needs guidance, discovery, and wonder, not blind following or blatant, bland answers. The more a child can discover and experience, the richer and more abundant their knowledge and character will grow.

This belief underlies the purpose of classical education, which seeks to create the conditions for great decision making that allows for a human to flourish. The classical view of childhood education focuses on cultivating wisdom and virtue by nurturing the whole child – mind, body, and soul – through a rigorous, holistic curriculum. Teachers who are versed in the trivium, even outside of a classical school, can utilize its methods to help their students thrive academically. In the current education system, teaching often focuses on what a child wants instead of what a child needs at each stage.

Most children need to be guided, especially during the grammar stage, as they are not able to make fully rational, logical decisions based on their existing understanding and experiences. The trivium gives educators a clear outline of instruction, focused on content and skill development, for children to cultivate deep knowledge and see children through the whole of their childhood.

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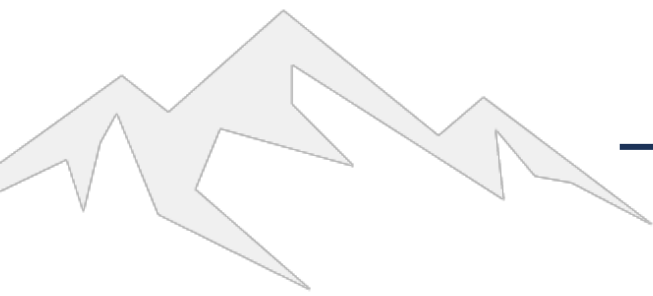
In consideration of how to nurture a well-educated child in modern society, the relevance of the trivium becomes difficult to ignore. The attention it provides regarding the natural stages of cognitive and moral development offers a practical framework for aligning education with the way children actually grow and learn. However, the question persists how such a concept could be thoughtfully recovered and applied within the contemporary educational setting. It takes careful reflection, adaptation, and shared inquiry rather than a simple adoption of classical education notions.

With this in mind, the insights of various educators – like Dorothy Sayers, Karen Glass, Bill Bennett, and Charlotte Mason – can offer inspiration to and challenge current teachers. Each distinctly invites teachers to reconsider what it means to educate the whole child within the confines and realities of modern society.

Helping Teachers Teach with Development in Mind

To move toward the renewal of education in line with childhood development, a potential step would be to promote faculty book studies to help educators make connections between childhood development and their curricula. By engaging the voices of well-known, successful educators in sustained, communal dialogue, teachers can move beyond mere agreement with the authors into practical discernment that could assist them in making mindful decisions for their classroom and the development of their students on their own. This cultivates an environment where both students and educators alike are always learning, growing, and adapting.

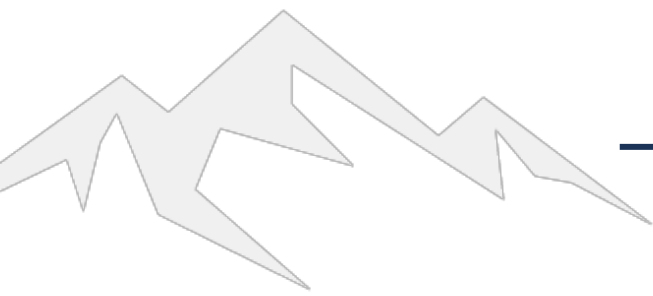
If we want our students to become well-rounded morally, imaginatively, and intellectually, our educators must also strive to continue learning what it means to be well-rounded, well-educated adults as well. Book studies create space to mull over lasting questions like: What knowledge is most worth knowing? How can educators honor developmental readiness without sacrificing rigor? And, how could classical concepts be interpreted into the classroom without losing their integrity? This shifts the conversation from simple theory into applied practice because the exploration of texts within a group setting deepens one's understanding and creates a more unified vision among faculty.



Both of these are needed for any type of educational reform. In order to develop well-educated youth in a way that touches on the whole of a child in the changing world around us, educators must be willing to learn, question, and imagine together what an educational setting like this would actually require and what growth and adaptations would be needed to make those imaginings reality. For a potential faculty reading list, see *Suggested Reading for Faculties and Staff* at the end.

In addition to engaging in book studies together as an education staff, teachers and leadership should also visit classical schools to observe various models firsthand. One third of Colorado's charter schools, roughly 90, use classical or related curricula. Characteristics interested education leaders should look for in their observations include:

- A focus on oral language: Students are often asked to memorize extended texts and recite texts from memory, especially in the grammar stage. This builds personal ownership of knowledge. For example, memorizing poetry and famous speeches, naming and describing major rivers across the United States, memorizing the "[Classical Conversations Timeline Song](#)," and the like. For more information on the importance of memory, read [Remembering: Building a Memory Palace](#).
- A focus on written language: During the grammar stage, students are taught to master the skill of how to read. This means they are explicitly taught to master phonics, academic vocabulary, morphology (word structure - prefixes/suffixes/root words), and reading comprehension strategies. They are taught to understand complex texts as assessed by lexiles ([The Lexile & Quantile Hub](#)). Finally, they are taught to read with automaticity, hitting [fluency targets](#) for words correct per minute based on age and grade.
- Once students have mastered learning to read, they must read to learn. Students are compelled by living texts, which touch spirit, soul, and body. A living text, or living book, is a text where the writing feels vivid, engaging, and meaningful. They bring ideas to life rather than just listing facts or events. Usually, living texts integrate these qualities to bring vibrancy to their work:
 - Living texts are often written in a narrative of expressive style. They are not dry or mechanical, like most textbooks.

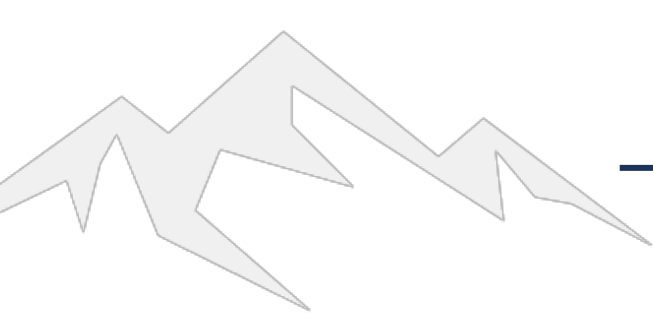


- Living texts are created by an author who cares deeply about the subject they are writing about. There is emotion in their writing that resonates with their reader.
- Living texts help the reader *experience* an idea, not just read about it.
- Finally, living texts connect to real human thought, emotions, and stories.

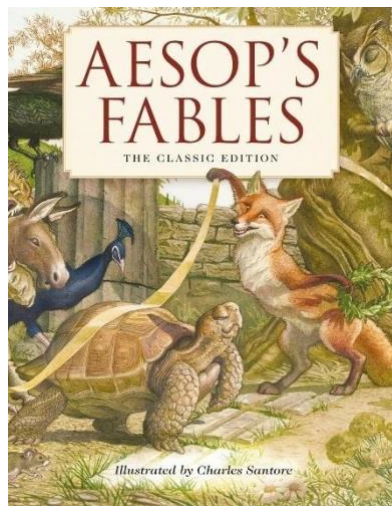
Deliberate reading of living texts affects all, from children to adults alike, and helps us to reflect on the question of what it means to be human. If life is personal and unique to oneself, what we read should touch us personally as well. Publishers often employ bias and sensitivity committees to vet literature and what students are reading, and thus thinking about, to conform superficially to texts free from content that is stereotypic or offensive to some; in so doing, they eliminate many living texts.

"Once students have mastered learning to read, they must read to learn."

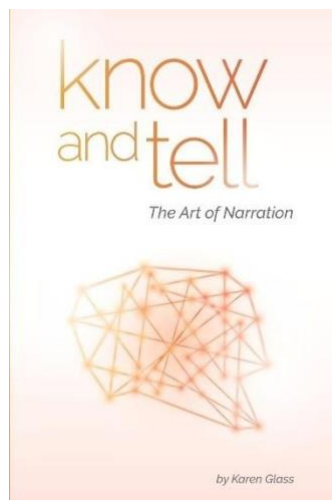
For examples of expansive lists of living books, see the [Four Square Community Living Book List](#) for American History and [Living Books Library Book List](#) for a more generalized living books list. Veritas Press also publishes [comprehension guides](#) to assist teachers in helping students understand complex and living texts. Furthermore, reading living texts contributes to the child developing a rich mind life, reflecting on life's seminal questions that we all as humankind ask



related to human identity, human significance, and human destiny. Pedagogical techniques that help students parse complex and living texts include: narration, close reading, and annotation. (*Know and Tell: The Art of Narration* by Karen Glass and [*A Close Look at Close Reading: Scaffolding Students with Complex Texts*](#) by Beth Burke)

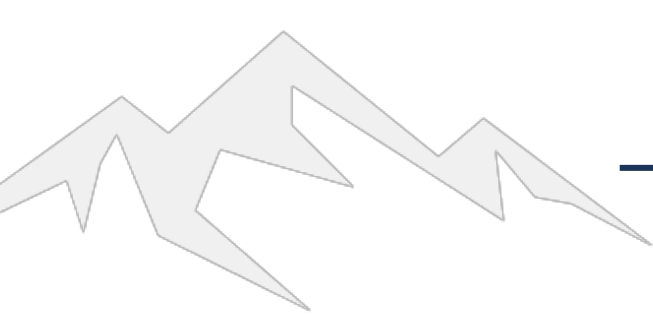


Cover of *Aesop's Fables: The Classic Edition* (28)

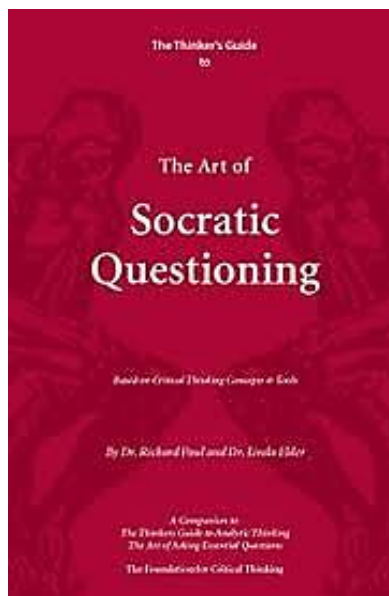


Cover of *Know and Tell: The Art of Narration* (29)

- Teaching based on Socratic questioning: Since thinking is dialogic, a child's thinking is developed in dialogue. A Socratic model of

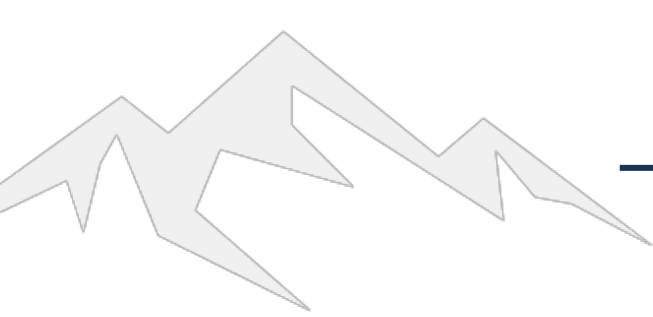


questioning and pedagogy is essential to helping children and adolescents begin to think critically. Good education is about questions and answers. Dr. Richard Paul and Dr. Linda Elder have produced two helpful, distilled resources outlining models for Socratic questioning and sound reasoning: [*The Art of Socratic Questions*](#) and [*The Thinker's Guide to Intellectual Standards*](#). Socratic circle is a pedagogical technique that uses Socratic questioning and engages students in the thinking process ([Teacher Magazine Classroom Teaching Techniques](#)).

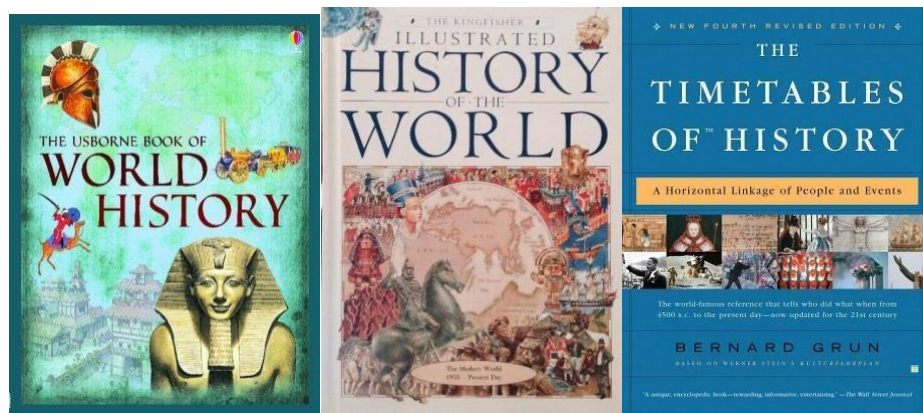


Cover of *The Art of Socratic Questioning* (30)

- Weaving history into every subject: History gives meaning by contextualizing every subject in its past and development, thus framing the content of any subject around its historical context. For example, the history of maths, English, arts, science, etc. should be included in any subject (For useful references, watch *The Story of Maths* on BBC and *A to Z: How Writing Changed the World* on PBS). The inclusion of history prompts content in an integrated way so students see the connections between all the subjects at any given point in time. In addition, the teaching of history itself should be a focus, preferably, in a linear, chronological, and story fashion. Bauer suggests spending a year on each time period, starting with the Ancients and then moving on to

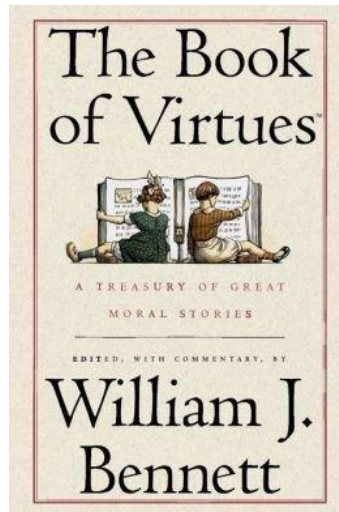


the Medieval/Early Renaissance, then to the Late Renaissance/Early Modern and finishing with Modern/Present times, starting in the first grade to the fourth, cycling over again in greater depth from fifth to eighth and again in high school. Bauer recommends, “For elementary students, [their] favorite history survey is *The Usborne Book of World History*. Middle-grade students can use *The Kingfisher Illustrated History of the World*, while high schoolers should use *The Timetables of History*.” (31)



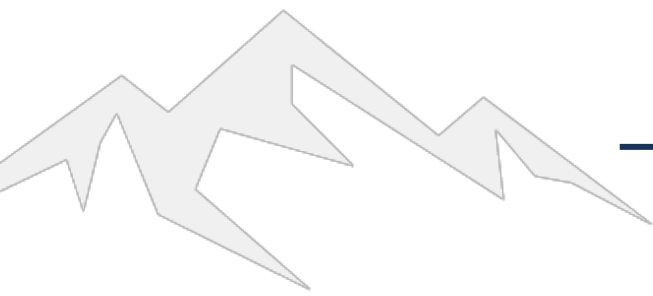
From left to right: Covers of *The Usborne Book of World History*, *The Kingfisher Illustrated History of the World*, and *The Timetables of History*. (32)(33)(34)

- Recognizing the importance of teaching virtues and values in the instruction of children and adolescents: Virtues and values for life may stem from classically recognized virtues, theological virtues, or personal strengths and positive character traits. Schools embracing the importance of values and virtues often point out examples within literature or history or depict examples in art.



Cover of *The Book of Virtues* (35)

- The content of the curricular scope and sequence comprised of the seven liberal arts: grammar, logic, rhetoric, arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy. The visual arts (like painting and sketching) are integrated throughout the curriculum as a core discipline reflecting virtue, beauty, and wisdom. When visiting one of these classical schools, ask for the curricular scope and sequence. For example, [Hillsdale's K-12 Curriculum Overview](#) scope and sequence overview is a good benchmark for quality. For math, “Veritas Press recommends Saxon Math for K–6th, Jacobs for Algebra I and Geometry, Foerster for Algebra II and Pre-Calculus, and Larson for Calculus.” (36)
- A recognition of a strong experiential base underlying all learning: This is sometimes referred to as procedural learning, also known as know-how. It is the performance of a task versus just a knowledge of the task. This implies children and adolescents will be engaged in activities such as acting out historical events, doing experiments, engaging in nature studies, building miniatures to illustrate a concept, and the like. Education is not solely about the transfer of information to children, it's about helping them shape their desires, habits, and affections. As James K.A. Smith says, “You are what you love because you live toward what you want” (p. 13). (37)



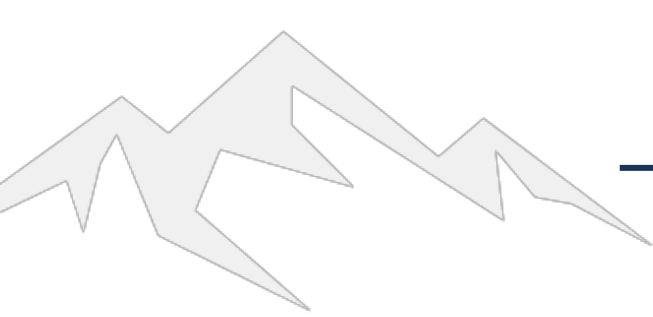
Final Thoughts

For those reflecting on how to develop an educated child and what educational practices best foster a flourishing environment for children educationally and personally, it is first necessary to determine central ideas around what childhood is and what its focus should be. One might consider a model emphasizing the importance of developing a rich mind life, mastering the tools for seeking truth, and experiencing beauty throughout childhood and adolescence. This view of childhood may be most consistent with that of the 18th century, with adjustments to address modern societal needs.

Secondly, visit schools whose models of education you find admirable and identify effective pedagogical practices. Third, consider the tenets of classical education as consistent with this view of childhood and explore implementing its key features, delineated under *Paideia & Practical Application*. Finally, assess implications and impact in each local educational setting (See Hoover Institute's "[A Nation At Risk +40 Self-Assessment](#)" and "[Renewal, Revenues, and Rationales: A Survey of Views on "Classical Education"](#)" by Eric Wearne).

"Education is the deliberate attempt to form human character in terms of an ideal. The chaos in education with which we are familiar is an infallible sign of the disintegration of civilization; for it shows that ideals are no longer commonly held, clearly understood, or deliberately pursued."

-Robert Maynard Hutchins, University of Chicago, mid-20th century (25)



Suggested Reading for Faculties and Staff

"The Lost Tools of Learning," Essay by Dorothy L. Sayers

Consider This: Charlotte Mason and the Classical Tradition, by Karen Glass

The Book of Virtues, by William J. Bennett

The Moral Compass: Stories for a Life's Journey, by William J. Bennett

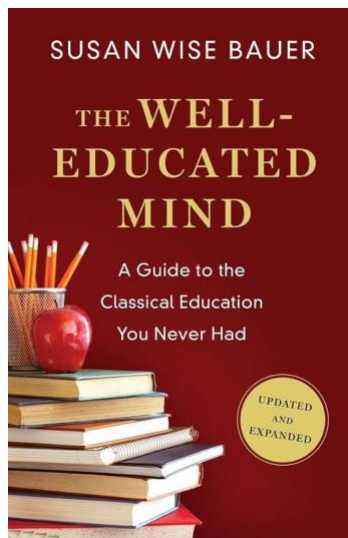
A Philosophy of Education, by Charlotte Mason

Formation of Character, by Charlotte Mason

The Ourselves Book, by Charlotte Mason

The Classical Education You Never Had, by Harvey Bluedorn and Laurie Bluedorn

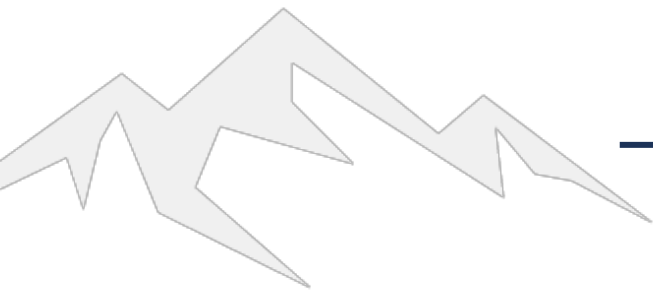
The Well-Educated Mind: A Guide to the Classical Education You Never Had,
by Susan Wise Bauer



(38)

The Paideia Program, by Mortimer J. Adler

The Paideia Proposal, by Mortimer J. Adler



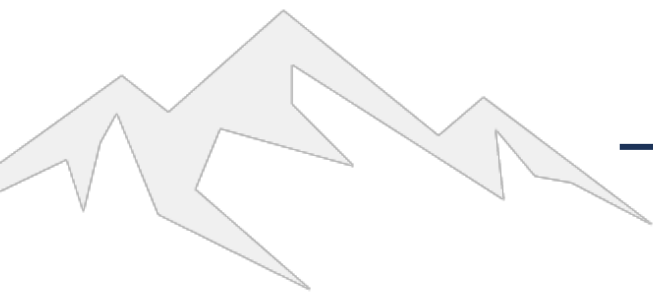
Paideia Problems and Possibilities, by Mortimer J. Adler

Norms & Nobility: A Treatise on Education, by David V. Hicks

Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning: An Approach to Distinctively Christian Education, by *The Abolition of Man*, by C.S. Lewis

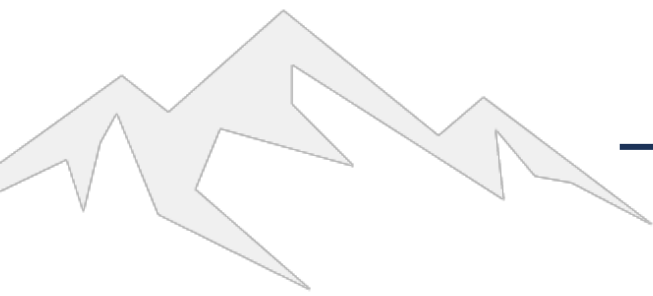
[“Renewal, Revenues, and Rationales: A Survey of Views on “Classical Education,”](#) by Eric Wearne

** Thank you to Ms. Sara Magruder, BS, for her able help on research and writing of this document.

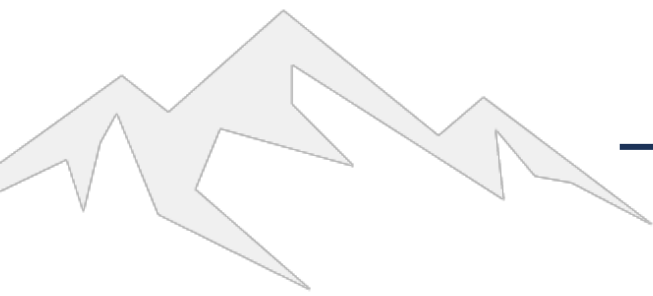


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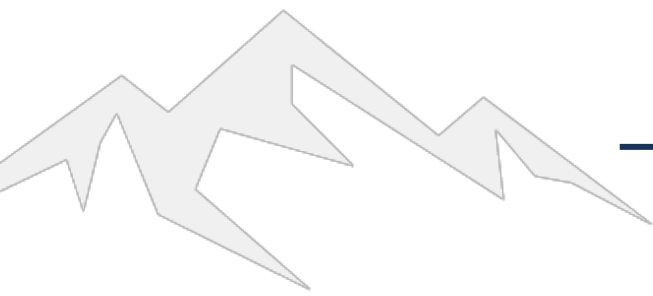
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