



Course 3: The Practice of Scholé with Kathy Weitz

Lesson 3: Reading Aloud

Outline:

“When she was hardly more than a girl, Miss Minnie had gone away to a teacher’s college and prepared herself to teach by learning many cunning methods that she never afterwards used. For Miss Minnie loved children, and she loved books, and she taught merely by introducing the one to the other.”

Wendell Berry, *That Distant Land*

“Reading aloud indelibly imprints your voice on your children’s hearts and minds. Your children think you’re beautiful.”

Kathy Weitz

Benefits of Reading Aloud to Your Children

- This gives access to ideas, sentence structure, and vocabulary to young students who would otherwise be limited by their reading level.
- Students hear words pronounced correctly.
- Reading aloud from the best literature helps develop your children’s ears, and naturally overflows into their conversation and writing.
- Most children’s comprehension level is well above their reading level.
- An imagination seeded with the best that has been thought and said is a primary component for development of writing skills.
- Worthy literature at the heart of your studies prioritizes the soul building stuff.
- Reading aloud as a family promotes a shared culture of what is Good and True and Beautiful.
- Reading aloud makes mom a better reader. You comprehend more because you have to slow down. Your mind cannot wander. It is good for your self-education.
- Reading makes you a better speaker and a better writer.
- Your growing skill in reading aloud will be matched in growing skill in articulation of ideas.
- Reading aloud indelibly imprints your voice on your children’s hearts and minds. Your children think you’re beautiful.

How did you avoid holes in children’s education?

- No matter what plan you follow, there is not enough time to cover every important thing they need to know.



- You need to plan for the most worthwhile things.
- Aim to create lifelong learners who have the resources to fill the holes.
- “The guiding principle for our history and literature studies should be fire kindling not vessel filling.” Plutarch, *On Listening to Lectures*
 - We should not throw out all learning by heart.
 - This gives a vision for activating the moral imagination.
 - This creates an impulse to think independently and an ardent desire for truth.
 - Rigid adherence to chronology or cycling has a tendency to sacrifice fire kindling to vessel filling.
- Tailor a plan (chronology/cycling) that fits your family.
- History reading and literature reading do not have to line up perfectly in chronology.

What should you read?

- Begin with the end in mind.
- Great Books Program (Humanities)
 - History, Literature, Primary Sources
 - What the people of a particular age thought and did in their own words.
 - Ancient and medieval epics, histories, plays
 - Writings of the Church Fathers
 - Study of philosophers, poets, and authors
- Knowing that your students will embark on this journey can help you plan what you are going to read now.
- Two guiding principles:
 - Scripture and doctrine must have a primary place. They need a solid foundation from which to observe texts, many of which are not Christian or anti-Christian.
 - Familiarity with storylines and people and places will smooth the way when they get to challenging reads they will get to in high school.
 - We do want to fill their hearts and minds with a store of stories.
 - We want to awaken their moral imaginations and order their affections.

What are these good books?

- Homer, Milton, Dante, Virgil, Lewis, Chesterton
- You might have to choose which ones you read, you cannot do them all.
- Avoid the books that sermonize and sketch out character lessons for your students.
- Give your children stories that make virtue attractive even as they portray vice.
- Choose books from authors that love their subjects.