



## Charlotte Mason: A Liberal Education for All with Jason Barney

### Lecture 13: Applying Narration across the Subjects

#### Outline:

#### Applying narration to many different subjects, including skill based subjects:

- Narration as a global tool of learning:
  - Narration is the foundation stone of all that Charlotte Mason expressed.
  - Narration has a rich history in the classical tradition.
  - Docendo Discimus, by teaching we learn.
  - Students could be called upon to narrate, such that they assimilated it.
  - When you test something, that's when the brain sends resources to secure that knowledge in long term memory.

#### How can we narrate in content based subjects? How does this practice change our goals for those subjects?

- **Bible and theology**
  - Approach the Bible as one grand narrative.
  - As we are attempting to think God's thoughts after him, we can retell the story of the Bible (retell the grand narrative piece by piece).
  - Retelling God's story and God's instructions is God's way of passing on the covenant.
  - Charlotte Mason endorsed using the Bible as the text itself.
  - Give students a poetic insight into Scripture, and narration helps with that.
  - We want students to have a heartfelt connection with the Bible.
  - Might we get more heartfelt convictions from students if we use narration? Would we have better results if we raise our students in this way?
- **Literature and poetry**
  - We want the students to live in these worlds in their imagination, and not just use them for literary analysis.
  - Goals of studying literature and poetry that are separate from the analytical intellect:
    - The goal of literary studies and poetry is the cultivation of imagination that children would live in the living pictures that the great poets and writers have painted for us.



- Education is for the student's life and leisure time. It is also to instruct their conscience.
  - We want to develop students who have prudence, to have just and fair judgement.
  - We need to foster the moral imagination of a child.
- **History and discovering distant lands**
  - Charlotte Mason had a rich way of engaging with history through narration.
  - Our knowledge of history should give us more than opinions and impressions, rather than the real stuff of knowledge.
  - Charlotte Mason is commending her practice of narration.
  - Students are enormously interested in learning about history.
  - Her method quadruples time. Go slowly but surely, page by page, having students narrate in a spoken format or written essay.
  - Focus our attention on a valuable book of history.
- **Art and music**
  - There must be some reverent knowledge of what has been produced.
  - We should give students art and music as books for them to read and encounter.
  - There should be a time for art and music appreciation where students read the great pictures of art and pieces of music themselves through observation and then telling them back.
- **Science**
  - Students should observe God's grandeur.
  - Scientific principles, if expressed well, will create an emotional response in students.
  - Books dealing with science should be well written, in beautiful language.
  - We should probably be more scientific as a people if we scrapped all the textbooks.
  - An approach to science should respect the child, and to give the mind what the mind clings onto.
  - A well written textbook that tries to capture the principles of science that we have discovered would lead the child on.
  - If we had a literary treatment of science, students would readily narrate.

### **How we might use narration in the disciplines, skill based subjects.**

- Charlotte Mason would recommend the standard methods of pursuing those subjects.
- Using narration as a tool for having students tell back instructions or the steps in a process that they might follow for a skill based subject.
- We can check in through having students narrate, showing us what they know.
- Partner narration tactics gives teachers real time feedback.