



Charlotte Mason: A Liberal Education for All with Jason Barney

Lecture 15: Life-giving Studies: Nature Study, Artist Study, Composer Study and Poet Study

Outline:

Life-giving Studies: Nature Study, Artist Study, Composer Study, Poet Study, & Common Arts (Handicrafts)

- It is important to distinguish between a skills based class and appreciation in life-giving studies.

Artist Study, Poet Study, Composer Study Methods

- These lessons may occur 1-2 times per week.
- The practices of picture study:
 - Children learn to look at a picture.
 - We are dealing with reproductions that the students can see themselves from one artist for the term. This way the student can develop a relationship with the great artist.
 - Have the student look at the picture and take in everything that they can.
 - Turn the picture over. And then have the students begin to tell what they saw in detail. This forms a mental image in our minds through retrieval. Students develop a relationship with the piece.
- Music:
 - Play music for students to listen to.
 - They could record what they heard, pictured, or imagined.
 - They can tell specific details of musical literacy and analysis.
 - Children will develop a relationship with a great composer through this process.
- Keep one artist, composer, or poet for a long time (a whole semester) so that students can develop a relationship with it.
 - Listen, view, or read the piece.
 - Narrate it.
 - Discuss it.
- We could align these sorts of life-giving studies with our history curriculum. We don't have to make arbitrary relationships, but all of the great works come from within a time period.

Nature Study Methods



- Nature study involves observation and journaling in a nature notebook.
- Charlotte Mason wanted children to develop relationships. The critical apparatus will come later.
- They are expected to do a great deal of outdoors work.
- Keep records and drawing in a nature notebook.
- Keep drawings and notes for a particular season.
- Science is not just utilitarian. It is about developing a relationship with this part of the universe.
- Make nature study a living part of the curriculum.

Handicrafts (Common Arts Methods)

- Charlotte Mason felt that we should give children many different handicrafts.
- Suggestions for restoring handicrafts:
 - Involve members of the community. Have a practitioner of the arts come into the community.
 - Have someone teach cooking, sewing, or woodworking (practical arts).
- We want students to develop in the virtues of artistry and the enjoyment of beauty.