



Introduction to Classical Education

with Dr. Christopher Perrin

Lesson 6: Tracing the History of Classical Education

Outline:

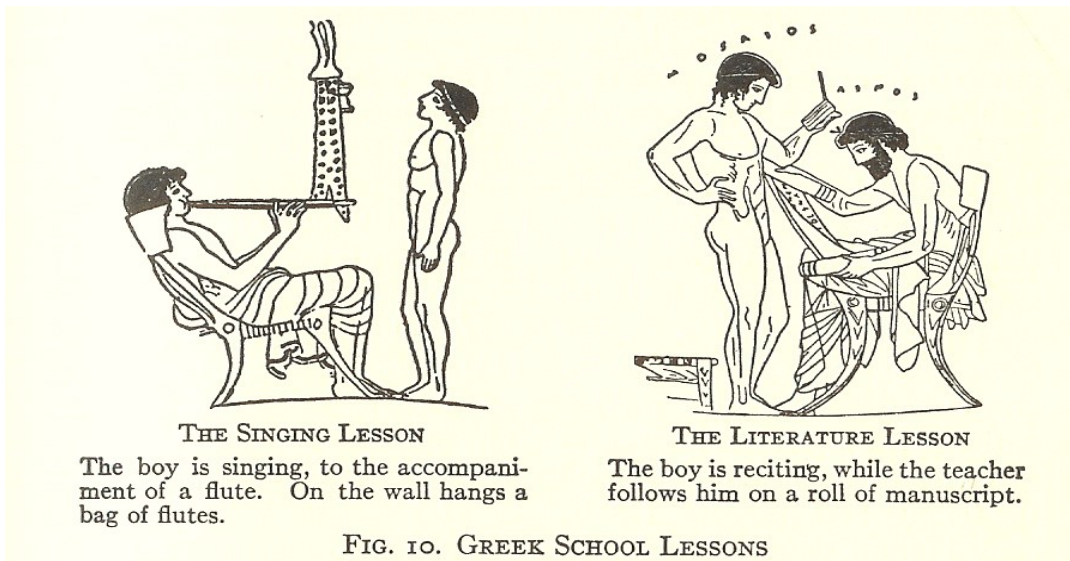
The Greeks

- The Golden Age of Greece was about the 5th century, when Plato and Aristotle were alive. Western thought and educational thought is influenced by these thinkers (Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle).
- The Greeks were thinking of cultivating a human being who was filled with excellence and goodness.
- Physical strength was going to correspond with what they were going to cultivate in their intellectual capacity.
- Music meant more than learning to play an instrument, it was the entire education of wonder: literature, poetry, choral singing, and dance.
- Gymnastic was a training of the body.
- Part of training the body was preliminary military training.

Age	Level	Aim	School and Teacher	Subjects
18 to 20	Military School	Defense of Athens	Ephebic Training (Military Officers, Soldiers)	Military Training
15 to 18 - privileged	Advanced Secondary	Training in citizenship, leadership	Civic and Cultural Observatio and Participation (Supervision of Elders)	Participation in civic and cultural life
10 to 14	Secondary	Arete, skills that made for military excellence	Gymnasium (Paidotribes, gymnasts, supervised by a Gymnasiarch)	Wrestling, boxing, running, discus, javelin, long jump
7 to 14	Secondary	Arete	“Music” school (Grammatistes, Citharistes)	Reading, recitation, writing, arithmetic, practicing the lyre and aulos, singing, some dancing

7 to 14	Elementary	Thee good and beautiful man: arete. Individual and political excellence	Palaestra (Paidotribes)	Wrestling
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- Greek school setting:





Greek Curricula: Making of the Man

School Name	Aim	Subjects	Teacher
Various academies	Arete changes into personal political ambition; the leadership of other men	Dialectic and Rhetoric as practical skills to achieve success and influence; oratorical tricks, short cuts, mnemonic devices. Other subjects also taught in greater depth: literature, philosophy, mathematics, astronomy; rhetorical exercises	Pythagoras, Prodigus, Gorgias, Isocrates
Influence on primary and secondary education	Increasing emphasis on linguistic skill and readiness of speech. Education takes a “vocational” and “technical” turn.		
Influence on civic and cultural life	Students and citizens became more interested in personal success and the “talker and stylist” than for the right ordering of civic affairs		
Protagoras	Political success, via personal ambition. Man the measure of all things.		
Isocrates	Practical orientation but for the good of the city, not mere personal success. Wanted moral purpose and practical success.	Emphasized study of literary classics; astronomy, geometry, dialectic; chief subject was rhetoric: training of the orator	
Plato	Opposed the sophists and argued for philosophy over rhetoric.	Philosophy	



School Name	Aim	Subjects/Means
Socrates	Opposed sophists even though he resembled one himself (he traveled about Athens teaching and talking as the sophists did).	Careful analysis about the meaning of words to discover our own ignorance; then a careful pursuit of truth and knowledge guided by reason (which should overcome our irrational impulse). Such a reasoned pursuit would bring discipline, order and life to Athens. Wrote no books.
Plato	Opposed the sophists and argued for philosophy over rhetoric. 3 aims: to lead the mature man to the vision of the Good; to bring this vision down to earth in a ordered society; to make the men who are capable of this.	Started his own academy in competition with Isocrates. Constructed an ideal educational system in his book <i>The Republic</i> , which though never fully realized has had great influence to the present time. He proposed an education of an elite class (Guardians, including philosopher-kings) who after 50 years of education and preparation would lead and administer the city.
Aristotle	Modified opposition to sophists; approved or rhetoric when used well. Educational aims: educate citizens in those qualities of character that will sustain democratic way of life; should be the same for all; good persons as well as good citizens.	Children are turned into good men and good citizens by forming the right habits under the direction of the rational principle within us. Goodness of intellect comes from good instruction; goodness of character comes from habit formation—making a practice of acting in the right way, and by pursuing moderation, the mean between extremes of excess and defect (e.g., courage is the mean between rashness and fear). Approves traditional curriculum of reading, writing, gymnastics, music, and add drawing. Not all subjects are to be pursued for their usefulness: But to always be seeking after the useful “does not become free and exalted souls.” Some subjects (like music) are pursued because they ennoble. Intellectual happiness the greatest happiness and is even higher than service to the state.
Paideia	Originally the means of preparing children for adult life (from pais, child). Came to mean the end which this process sought: culture, the sum of aesthetic, intellectual and moral qualities that make a complete man.	Chief work of art to the Greeks: the making of Man. Greeks the first to try to mold man according to an ideal (arête). Education (paideia) is the making of men not training men to make things. Technical or vocational instruction is useful but is not the education of the whole man. Romans chose to translate paideia with their word <i>humanitas</i> .



- Individual important educational leaders
 - **Protagoras:** A Greek thinker who argued for political success via education, “Man the measure of all things.”
 - **Isocrates:** He was a rival of Plato. He thought education should be for the good of the city, not just mere personal success. He wanted a moral purpose that informed practical success (dominant in America).
 - **Plato:** He was so focused on seeking the truth that he was suspicious of rhetoric as manipulation and trickery. He had three aims:
 - Lead mature man to the vision of the good.
 - To bring vision down to earth in an ordered society.
 - To make the men capable of this vision.
 - **Aristotle:** We can seek truth without rhetoric turning into manipulation. He has a more expansive view of education. He thinks all of the citizens should be educated rather than just a few Guardians.
 - In Athens, 25% of the population consisted of slaves. Slave labor enabled Aristotle to imagine that the free citizens could have such a life. He allowed that possibly machines could replace the labor of slaves. There is a fundamental injustice in this system.
 - **Socrates:** He opposed the Sophists even though he resembled one himself. Plato was his student.
 - **Sophists:** Went about offering courses of study in Athens, for pay, to equip them to successes in the civic world.
 - **Paideia:** Paideia means a full bodied education that takes the child and matures the child until he is a fully functioning adult able to vote in the Greek assembly. Taking the child and making them into the man, who is able to serve in a dozen different ways. The Church will embrace, transform, and extend this idea (ratified in Ephesians 6:4).
 - Aristotle is the tutor of Alexander the Great, who conquers the Mediterranean world (he dies in 323 B.C). This is when the Greek culture (Hellenistic) spreads throughout the known world. The Romans conquered Greece, and they brought many elements of Greek culture to the Roman Empire.



Roman Curricula: Making of an Empire

- The Romans were an active people. They knew how to organize and keep things in a good organized place. They got and kept things working.
- They were focused on the individual excellence of the man.
- They thought contemplation (idleness) was neglecting their duty.
- Education does not begin until 6-7 years old.
- Some of these subjects are still taught, and we are seeking to recover others (dialectic).
- The great masses in these societies did not get this education. They were not studying the arts of the free, they had to learn a trade right away.
- We need to be careful about glorifying this education as slavery was involved and it was not made available to very many people.

Age	Level	Aim	School and Teacher	Subjects
18 or 19 to 21	University	Professional career in law, medicine, architecture, professor	Greek Universities University of Rome (Professor)	Law Medicine Architecture Mathematics Grammar Rhetoric
16 to 18 or 19	Collegiate		Schools of Rhetoric (Rhetor)	Grammar Rhetoric Dialectic Law
12 to 16	Secondary		Latin Grammar Schools (Grammaticus)	Grammar and Literature
6 or 7 to 12	Elementary	Good citizen; cultivation of habits that create character: piety, Constantia, fortitude, industry, gravitas, modesty, frugality, duty.	Ludi or Primary Schools (Ludi Magister)	Reading Writing Reckoning

- Roman School Settings
 - Severe and austere learning environment.



FIG. 19. A ROMAN FATHER
INSTRUCTING HIS SON
(From a Roman Sarcophagus)

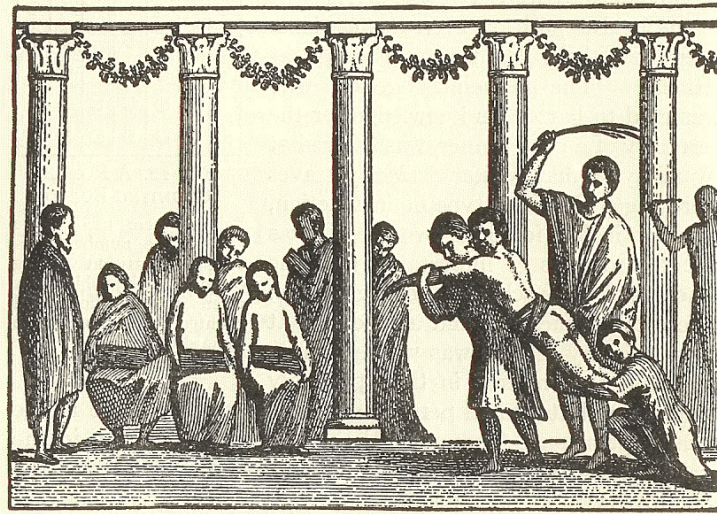


FIG. 23. A ROMAN PRIMARY SCHOOL (*Ludus*)
(From a fresco found at Herculaneum)
This shows a school held in a portico of a house.

The Catechism Lesson, by Jules-Alexis Muenier

- The ancient Christian approach to education were catechumenal schools.
- The parents and the church needed to educate their children to understand the scriptures.





How many liberal arts are in the curriculum?

- The seven liberal arts include the trivium and the quadrivium.
- This was not always clearly established.
- **Varro**: 116 – 27 BC (Nine “disciplines”)
- **Seneca**: 8 BC – 65 AD (Lacks logic and rhetoric)
- **Quintillian**: 35 – 96 AD (No logic, possibly included within rhetoric)
- **Augustine**: 354 – 430 AD (Substitutes philosophy for astronomy)
- **Martianus Capella**: 5th or 6th Cent. AD (Pagan contextualization of seven arts)
- **Cassiodorus**: 546 – 569 AD (Seven arts are a “complete and perfect” number)
 - He is the first Christian writer to set the number at seven (Proverbs 9:1)

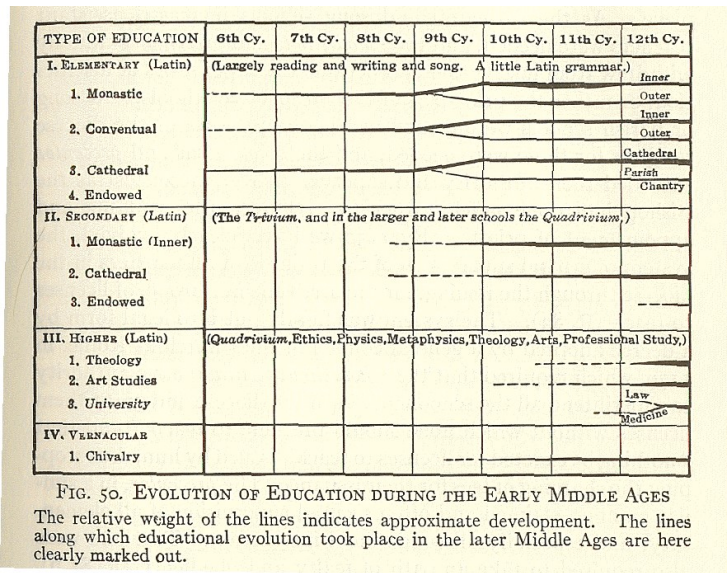
Early Christian and Early Middle Ages

- By the time we get to Augustine, the answer that stands for the ages is that these arts are good, but they need to be studied in the service of the gospel.
- Catechumenal Schools in Alexandria, Caesarea, Antioch (**Clement**, **Origen**)
 - The Christians wanted to prepare the people who were coming into the church by teaching them (by word of mouth instruction).
 - The study of grammar was important.
- Cathedral schools and homeschooling would start. Christians also sent their children to pagan tutors and schools to be taught (they would filter).
- **Martianus Capella**, *The Marriage of Mercury and Philology* (c. 414 AD)
 - He sets up the seven liberal arts.
- **Boethius** (475), **Cassiodorus** (490), *On the Liberal Arts and Sciences*; fixes the number of arts at seven by scriptural authority
 - He translates the Greek into Latin.
- **Isidore**, Bishop of Seville (570), *Etymologies* or *Origines*: encyclopedia of ancient learning for monks and clergy.
 - Forbade use of Greek and Roman literature.
 - The light of learning was growing dim due to the Barbarian invasions, he represented a preservation of learning.
 - Christian men preserved pagan learning (Chesterton).
- **Alcuin** (781), educational reformer in Charlamagne’s court (treatises on the Trivium and astronomy)
 - He comes to serve in the Holy Roman Empire. He begins to reform the palace school, but also the monastic schools in the Holy Roman Empire.
 - He is extending the training of the seven liberal arts.
- **Maurus** (819): *On the Instruction of Clergy, De Universo*
 - Follows closely after Alcuin, and he advocates the study of the seven liberal arts for the preparation of church ministry.
- One volume manuscripts composed of brief extracts, bits of miscellaneous information, lists of names.
- Some books were in question and answer form.
- Teachers had a copy, and pupils did not have texts.

- The purpose was to transmit a modicum of secular knowledge needed for the service of the church and a preparation for the study of theological writings

Extent of Liberal Arts Study in the Early Middle Ages

- This shows us that there was a twilight (darker) period in the earlier centuries, but it was preserved and grew brighter.
- 11th and 12th centuries there was a revival of Greek learning in scholasticism. Aquinas synthesizes Aristotle's rediscovered writings with Christian teaching.
- The monastic schools, palace schools, and cathedral schools become the basis for the medieval university.



Tower of the Seven Liberal Arts

- Lady Wisdom is ushering a young scholar into the tower of learning.
- Grammar is studied at the first level → Logic → Rhetoric (poetry)
- A theologian is at the top of the tower. Philosophy and theology crowning the study of the seven liberal arts.

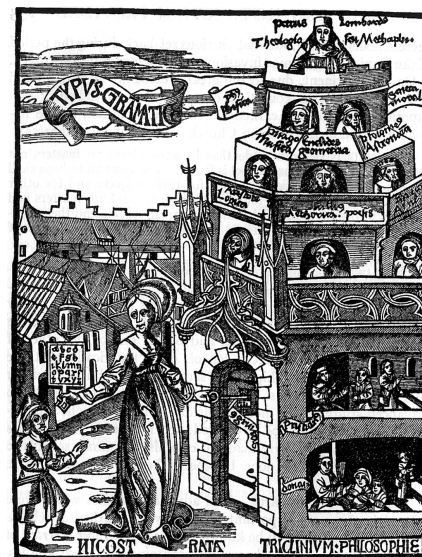


FIG. 44. THE MEDIEVAL SYSTEM OF EDUCATION SUMMARIZED



Final Form of the Curriculum at the Time of the Renaissance

Trivium Arts	Grammar	A preparatory path leading to greater goals, abilities stemming from the mastery of language.
	Logic	
	Rhetoric	
Quadrivium Arts	Arithmetic	A preparatory path leading to greater goals, abilities stemming from the mastery of number and measurement.
	Geometry	
	Music	
	Astronomy	
“Philosophy”	Natural Philosophy	Wisdom, Interpretation of Scripture
	Moral Philosophy	
	Theology	
Sciences	Law	
	Medicine	
Fine Arts		

Overview of the Middle Ages to the Present

- Middle Ages: Emergence of the University
- PGMAPT → Piety, Gymnastic, Musical, Liberal (A)rts, Philosophy, and Theology (Kevin Clark and Ravi Jain, *The Liberal Arts Tradition*)
- Renaissance: Latin and Greek Literature, the focus was on Rhetoric (not so much dialectic)
- Reformation/Counter Reformation: Extension (Both reformers and Catholics were starting schools in large numbers).
- Enlightenment: Scientific Empiricism, Rationalism
- Victorian England, Romanticism (some schools were severe, we don’t want to emulate all of these aspects)
- Colonial American, Pre and Post-Civil War (education often emulated what was happening in England, classical curriculum was education)
- Modern Postmodern: Politicized Ends and Aims (education begins to change its ultimate aims from wisdom and virtue to skill training for tasks in an industrialized democracy)
 - There was a focus on method, and applying the scientific method to education.
 - Education becomes politicized to prepare people for a particular agenda for what a nation should be. In the United States of America the focus becomes job training via mental testing.
- Present Recovery

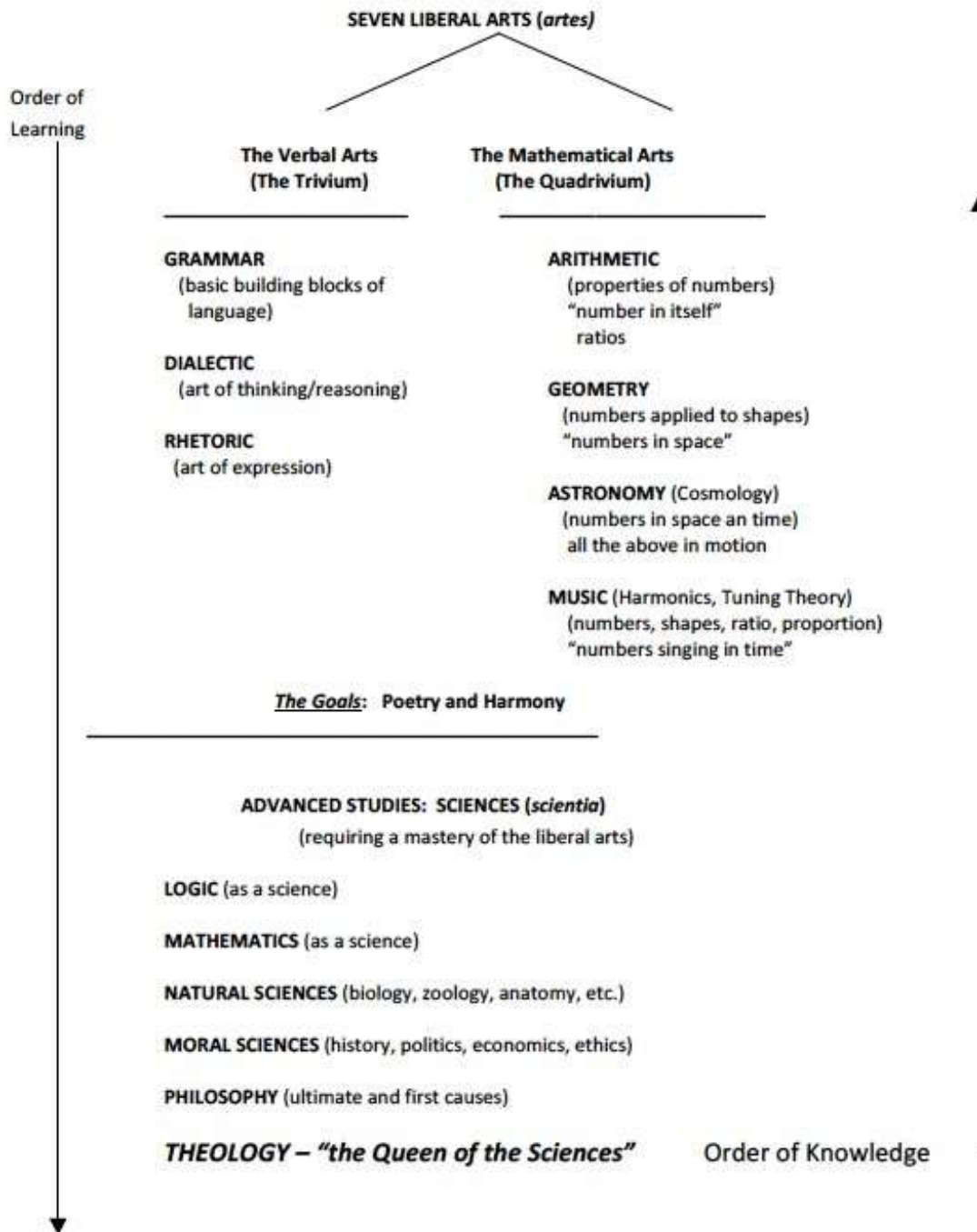


Outline of Educational Approach

<i>Greeks</i>	<i>Romans</i>	<i>Christianity</i>	<i>Early Middle Ages</i>	<i>Middle Ages</i>	<i>Modern Period</i>	<i>Present Period</i>
Education	Culture	Emergence	Extension	Magnificence	Complexity	Challenges
<i>Telos</i>	<i>Civitas</i>	Paul in Corinth	Rise of Monasteries	Codification of the Liberal Arts	De-throning of the Queen: Spec. Ph.	Fragmentation
<i>Paideia</i>	Culture-Educ.	3 Models: Tertullian (Antithetical) Philo (Synthetical) Clement (<i>Paideia</i> of Christ)	Taking on the Mind of Christ	Rise of the Universities	Removal of Philosophy: Rise of Rationalism	Cycles of Progressive attempts at change
<i>Psuchekon</i>	Encyclopedia			The Medieval Model	Denial of Universals: Rise of Empiricism	School Choice: Advocates and Adversaries
				Synthesis	Emergence of Mechanization: Rise of Engineering	Remedies from Past Wisdom
					Focus on the Immediate: Rise of Pragmatism	Varieties of Classical Renewal



Medieval Model of Education





A Comparison: The Modern and Medieval Grammar School

The Modern Grammar School	The Medieval Grammar School
"science"-based (<i>scientia</i>)	"art"-based (<i>artes</i>)
Focused gaining knowledge in broad range of subjects	Primarily focused on languages and literature ("subjects" later)
Emphasized the particulars of various subjects	Emphasized the universals of subjects through literature
Embodied through Rational Propositions ("word" or <i>logos</i> – based)	Embodied mythologically (<i>mythos</i> to <i>logos</i> [emphasis on great stories])
Reasoning Goal: deductive reasoning	Reasoning Goal: inductive reasoning, then deductive
Leading toward Formal Logic as next step	Leading toward ability to see similarities and differences (generalizing) as next step before formal study in logic
Dogmatic	Dialectic
Rigor found in memorizing specific facts and propositions from various subjects	Rigor found in developing language and understanding universal elements of stories and poetics
Emphasizes analytics (dissecting/breaking down)	Emphasizes seeing differences, but synthesizing
Goal in expression: Rhetorical Eloquence	Goal in expression: understanding poetics and metaphor
Information introduced more "data"-based	Information introduced in context (of literature)
Little room for fiction and story-telling	Makes much of fiction, fables, parables, story-telling
Uses spelling "lists"	Spelling emphasized in context of prose and poetry
Focus is on teaching the student to give the right answer – the "what"	Focus is on teaching the student to ask the right question – the "why"
Trivium seen as set levels	Trivium seen as an overlapping flow



Present Recovery of Classical Education

- Paideia Movement of Mortimer Adler
 - Bring Socratic teaching into public schools.
- Classical Prep School/Low Integration
 - Focused on grammar, logic, and rhetoric, but not with a high degree of integration.
- High Integration, Sayersian Stages
- Homeschool Communities (CC, SG, et al)
- Cottage Schools
 - Schools that are small that might have emerged from a homeschooling communities.
- University Model Schools (NAUMs, et al)
- Charlotte Mason Hybrid
- Paradigm Disciplines/Trivium Integration
- Classical Charter Schools