



## The Teacher's Playbook: Practical Pedagogy for Classical Educators with Jerilyn Olson

### Lecture 6: Instruction Introduction

#### Outline:

In preparing for instruction, we must examine our goals and how these goals and lessons contribute to towards the development of the student.

#### Instruction

- Instruction is the crucial work of the teacher attending to the student's learning and the development of the student's relationship to the content.
- Instruction breaks down to preparation, engagement and reflection

#### Preparations for the lessons

- The goal is to lay a path allowing our students to travel along side us through guided observation and questions in order to discover truths of our discipline.
- When designing the lesson, you should start with the end goal in mind and then use backwards design in creating the lesson.
- Every discipline has something unique that is important for the human soul and that should be considered when planning.
- Great Hearts created a set of documents providing guidance to the various disciplines. The documents include these questions:
  - What is our understanding of the nature of the discipline?
  - What is our general approach to studying the discipline?
  - How does this discipline fit into a liberal arts education?
  - Generally, why do we study the discipline at Great Hearts?
  - What curriculum choices have been made based on the notes above? Is there a path/progression to study in this discipline?
  - What pedagogical considerations should we make in accordance with this information?
  - What big questions will students be asking in their course of study?
  - What skills and habits should students develop in their course of study?
- Teachers should be laying out these ideas relating to the philosophy of the particular discipline to the teachers own class and their goals.
- Many schools have the end point goal as a test or standardized assessment which is not always ideal.
- It would be better to have the end point serve some type of higher purpose.

#### Hierarchy of Discipline

- We should be teaching to a hierarchy of our discipline.
  - The nature/core of a discipline
  - Subject area/course/grade level
  - Localized concept, set of skills
  - Basic and immediate content (isolated skills, facts)



- The hierarchy of a discipline recognizes an orderedness of knowledge and being within a discipline
  - How ideas in a discipline relate and point to each other?
  - What is essential to the nature of study?
- The hierarchy of the discipline should inspire the hierarchy of instruction which then ends in the hierarchy of assessment.
- With items that are lower on the hierarchy, we might demand mastery of fact to create a fluency and build on.
- There are a few reasons why you teach something at the bottom of the hierarchy. Reasons include:
  - The concept or skill might provide a more general idea.
  - Be a particular skill or concept that is needed to understand what comes later.
  - Some things taught at younger levels may train intellectual and moral habits that build a foundation for the student.
- The building of content knowledge or skills may take most of a teacher's instruction time and practice prior to understanding occurring which is ok.
- Seemingly simple skills can be an act of philosophy and soul formation.
- Master teachers will always be asking what is it that I am really teaching in this moment.
- You should be able to trace their activity up the hierarchy to the nature of discipline.
- On the hierarchy, above the nature of the discipline is the very formation of the human soul in virtue.
- Teacher forms soul through their particular content they teach.
- Teachers should connect the education we offer to the formation of the soul.
- New teachers should ask school administration or another veteran teacher what the goal of the courses are and how that tie to the soul formation. This is so you can see the patter of how and when ideas are presented.