



Narration: A Classical Guide with Jason Barney

Lecture 8: The Narration Lesson and the Trivium

Outline:

Training students in the arts of the trivium (grammar, dialectic, and rhetoric):

- Pre-Grammar – 1st Little Talk
- Grammar – Reading a Rich Text
- Pre-Rhetoric – Narration
- Dialectic – 2nd Little Talk
 - Ask great questions.
 - Find arguments, follow questions, and demonstrating reasons.
- Rhetoric – Response
 - Students create their own rhetorical discourse.

Aristotle defined the intellectual virtue of art as “A state of capacity to make or produce something with a true course of reasoning involved.”

- In accordance with reason, an artist makes something.
- A poem is the product of human language.
- Basket weaving:
 - **Art** – Innovation after a many years of practicing basket weaving.
 - **Science** – A professor who has studied and written articles on basket weaving. He has never actually woven a basket himself. He has focused on learning the science of basket weaving.

Grammar, Dialectic (Logic), Rhetoric

- What is the art meant to produce?
- **Grammar**: reading and interpretation
 - The production has something to do with letters.
 - Reading itself was an act of interpretation. Students needed to learn to gather the letters together.
 - The product was a spoken interpretation of the letters on a page.
- **Dialectic**: the art of discussion, dialoguing toward the truth
 - Socrates favored dialectic as the more primary way to get at truth, through that inquiry.
- **Rhetoric**: The product is some form of spoken or written persuasive discourse.

You teach an art and a science in a different way.



- If you want to teach someone an art, they need to imitate a practitioner of that art, and have lots of coached practice in the art.
- Are we focused on training students in arts or are we trying to teach them the science of a particular area? These do not exclude one another.
- Get students speaking about the material.