



## Principles of Classical Pedagogy

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Introduction: An Overview of the Principles of Classical Pedagogy

### Outline:

What is Classical Education?

- Definition of classical education: Classical Christian education (CCE) is a traditional approach to education rooted in western civilization and culture, employing the historic curriculum and pedagogy of the seven liberal arts in order to cultivate men and women characterized by wisdom, virtue, and eloquence.
  - Four essential elements: Community, Curriculum, Pedagogy, and Practices
  - Classical education is multi-faceted: Pedagogical, Cultural, Religious, Historical, Theoretical, Curricular
  - The Trivium: Grammar, Logic, and Rhetoric.
  - Wonder → Worship → Wisdom (Josef Pieper)
  - PGMAPT: The curriculum starts with piety, gymnastic, musical education. The liberal arts are followed by philosophy and theology, which cap off the curriculum (Jain and Clark).

Why is Education an Art?

- Principles lead to practice.
- Teaching requires artistry.
- Education involves leisure. Teachers are at leisure to focus and teach great ideas effectively.

A fully-trained student will like his teacher

- Our teachers have a great influence on us.
- Our pedagogy is going to become important in transformation and conformity.

Eight Essential Pedagogical Principles (and two more)

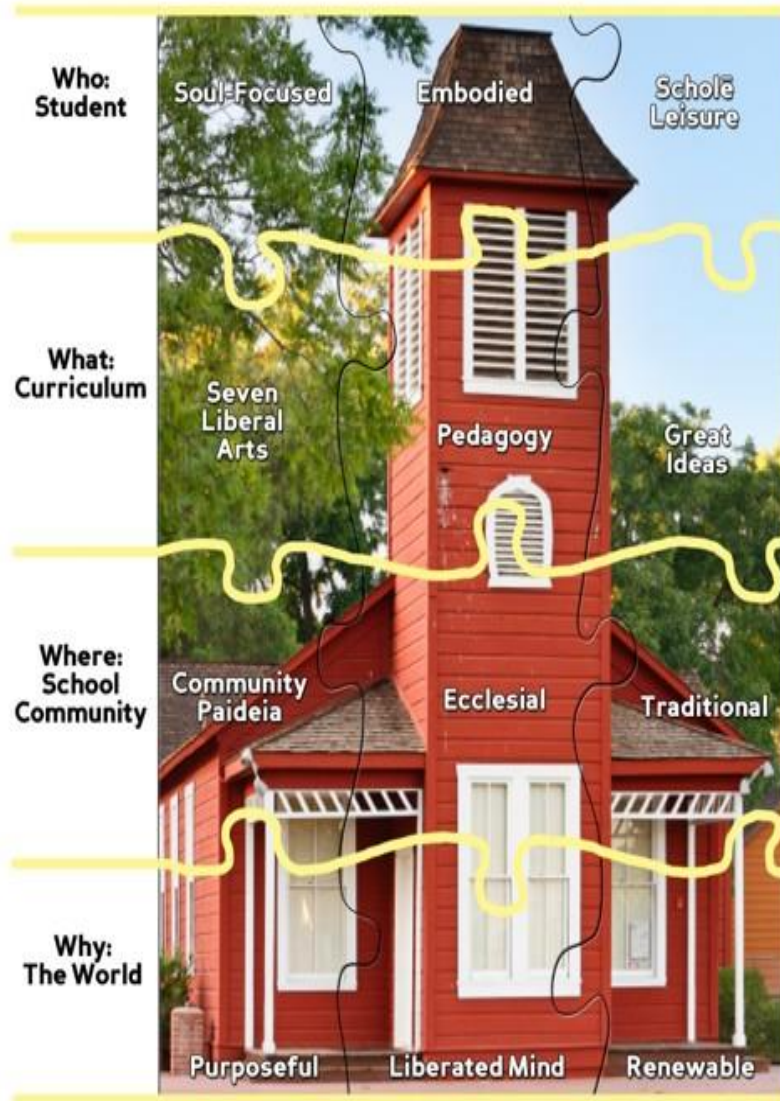
- Festina Lente - make haste slowly
  - Make haste slowly. Master each step.
  - Carpenter's dictum, measure twice, cut once
  - According to contemporary studies, to become the best at something, we need to practice something for about 10,000 hours.
  - During the 13 years with students they have a chance to master something.
  - You lose time when you try to rush.



- Multum non Multa – much not many
  - You grow deeper when you possess something by giving it ample time for reflection.
  - It is better to master a few things than to cover content.
  - Lewis describes the three years that he spent with the Great Knock in *Surprised by Joy*. He studied Latin and Greek. Through these he studied history, literature, argument, dialectic, debate, and clarity of thought, and expression.
    - We should study fewer subjects and study them better (Lewis).
  - If you enable a student to master something (or even to get close to mastery), they are more likely to master the next thing (Lewis).
- Repetitio Mater Memoriae – repetition, the mother of memory
  - Good repetition is a re-seeking.
  - Lively, meaningful review makes learning permanent.
  - This assumes Multum non Multa, because these principles are siblings.
  - The Great Books are not just to be covered, they come back to us and we re-read them.
- Songs, Chants, and Jingles
  - This is generally aimed at lower school students, when children love to sing.
  - Important content can be linked to a song.
  - Students can help create songs.
  - Various curricula have songs built-in (e.g. Song School Latin, Greek, Spanish).
- Wonder and Curiosity
  - Education for lower school students is largely an education in wonder.
  - Teachers are seen as muses who inspire students to be at wonder.
  - Children are born with wide eyed wonder.
  - We need to protect it so they are enchanted by the world.
  - Teachers need to impart a love for truth, goodness, and beauty.
- Educational Virtues
  - We are cultivating the humanity of the child as they grow into a man or a woman.
  - Student or intellectual virtues require cultivation and modelling by educators.
  - Virtues: Love, humility, diligence, constancy, courage, temperance
  - Contra vices: pride, sloth, inconstancy, irregularity, capriciousness, fear, excessive ambition
  - A good lower school teacher knows how to cultivate some of these virtues almost instinctively.



- Embodied Education
  - We have to pay attention to our bodies really well.
  - We are enfleshed minds, enfleshed souls.
  - We feel our way around the world more than we think our way around the world.
  - We should think about how we appeal through the five senses (beauty).
  - What kind of classroom would best set students to study and to enjoy studying?
  
- Scholé/Contemplation/Leisure
  - We need to create space for undistracted, unassessed time to study with friends the things that are most important.
  - We need to do this both with and without students
  - Scholé seminars bring a restful engagement of the true, good, and beautiful.
  
- Docendo Discimus - by teaching we learn
  - To teach is to learn twice.
  - Why don't we require students to teach back what they are learning?
  - In a one room school house, the older students would teach the younger students, and they mastered the learning themselves.
  - Older students can teach younger students in a variety of ways:
    - Reading buddies, history cycles, unit studies, classes are a few examples.
  
- Optimus Magister Bonus Liber Est – the best teacher is a good book
  - The study of the Great Books deeply is at the heart of what a classical education.
  - A Great Book can become the teacher.
  - How do we determine how to give the right book to the right student at the right time, and to read it with the right teacher?
  - We have to teach students to read well.
  - We have to set aside time in class for them to read and discuss together.
  - We should provide a means for the students to acquire their own library of books.
  - Are we providing students ample time for them to have the space and time to deeply read two hours a day.





**Purpose: A Fully-Trained Student Will Be Like Her Teacher**

