



Classical Teaching & Writing Symposium: Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing with Andrew Pudewa

Lesson 3: Reading

Outline:

Reading

Methods to help children learn to read

- Phonics based reading approach
- Look-say method of learning to read
- Until the Greeks got the idea of vowels from the Phoenicians there was no written language that could convey an idea from one generation to the next.
 - This allowed an explosion of science, philosophy, and politics. This is referred to by historians as the Greek miracle.
- In the early 1900s some adults thought that learning phonics was very tedious and possibly not even necessary since adults don't sound out words. They thought they could just show children words and tell them what they mean.
- They committed the “adult child fallacy”.
 - Children are developmentally different. Children have to go through stages to become adults.
- The human brain was able to overcome bad pedagogy because reading is more a brain function than it is an academic subject to be studied.
 - You can take a child and try to teach them to read and still fail. Their brain is not ready to read yet.
 - You cannot walk before you are ready. The brains of humans are all different. We all have imperfect brains. This gives us freedom to allow people to develop in different ways.
 - Reading requires more direct instruction than walking, but it is still a brain function first.
- Phonics helps children become independent faster. Children get tools to approach words that they have not seen before (word attack skills to sound out the letters).
- There is phonics for decoding that helps you read and phonics for encoding that helps you to spell.
- Multisensory approach to teaching phonics:



- Some children are visual, some are auditory, and some children are kinesthetic learners.
- A multisensory approach meets the needs of a broader range of children. What you show them, let them hear it too. If you can use manipulatives that is better.

What to do with reading problems

- Children who struggle with getting literature through their eyes, need to get great literature through their ears.
- Children can listen and narrate back.
- Children can read with their ears. Some people read with their fingers or their ears. Reading is the cognitive processing of words and concepts.
- Read to children at a level above their own decoding skills.
- How do you pull up comprehension?
 - Vocabulary – if you see a word and you know what it means your comprehension will be better.
 - Context, idiom, word combinations, allusions, references
 - Grammar – without a good understanding of grammar you can't adequately parse
 - If you don't understand grammar you can't think logically.

Higher order of reading and where do we want our students to be when they leave for the real world

- Thinking about what you are reading develops comprehension.
- How do we create engaged, active, thinking readers?
 - Strategies we can use:
 - Key word outlines – reading comprehension and measureable test scores go up with key word outlines
 - How do you think? It is hard to get people to a place where they can articulate the mechanics of thinking.
 - Thinking is getting something out of your brain. You can't get something out that isn't in their to begin with.
 - If you want to become a good thinker you want to become a master question asker to yourself.
 - You read something and you want to think about, so you need to ask some questions. When you make a key word outline, you have to read a sentences, stop, and ask yourself a question. "What are the key words?" Then ask, "Why did I choose these key words?"
 - Read, stop, and ask some questions. Have a dialogue.
 - If students read less in a day but thought more about what they are reading what would be the net gain?
 - Create the habit of mentally doing a key word outline.
 - Once you have the basic skill if thinking while reading, then you want to go to higher level reading.



- Tools available:
 - *How to Read a Book* by Mortimer Adler, read this together with a teenager.
 - When you get a book, look at the whole thing first so you know what's coming.

Questions & Answers

- If a child does read quality books, should you read aloud to them?
 - It is always good to be read to out loud above your reading level.
 - In some cases, children start decoding and everyone gets excited. They fall into the thinking that reading alone is better than being read to.
 - Children will start reading poor quality books because the children will read it. Children do lateral shifts in terms of sophistication. Children can't then go pick up *Jane Eyre*.
 - We should read to them above their own reading level.
- If you are a teacher or homeschool mom with standards, how would you help someone understand beyond the standard about the developmental issues that you are speaking about?
 - Relax.
 - Music teachers operate very differently from teachers. Music teachers don't care about age and speed of progress. All that matters is that you play well and make progress. Music teachers don't give grades.