



Scholé Learning with Dr. Christopher Perrin

Lesson 1: Introduction to Scholé

Outline:

Introduction and Etymology of Scholé (0:00)

- Scholé has a rich history that reaches back to ancient Greece; it is the root word for the English word school.
- Scholé is defined as “an undistracted time to study the things that are most worthwhile...usually with good friends, in a lovely place, and with good food and drink.”
- Scholé involves wondering, gazing, and contemplating with good, likeminded friends in a beautiful, awe-inspiring setting.

Context of Scholé (2:38)

- Scholé finds its home in the classical tradition of education; to illustrate this, Dr. Perrin uses the Classical Education Puzzle Analogy (see PowerPoint).
 - This puzzle analogy represents a classical education model that we desperately need in the 21st century!
 - These 12 pieces are divided into the 4 major questions educators ask in the classical tradition: Who is the student? What do we teach that student? In what setting? To what end (why)? (5:00)
 - “Scholé Leisure” is one of the 12 puzzle pieces, residing in the Who is the Student? category. Scholé requires considering a student as a human being meant to contemplate and delight in what is true, good, and beautiful.

Modern/Progressive Education vs. Scholé (6:26)

- The modern, progressive model of education emphasizes active learning rather than the restful learning of scholé; this can cause anxiety, as well as copying and cramming information.
- Restful learning should accompany active learning, just as one day of rest on the Sabbath accompanies six days of active work.
- “Going Back to Go Forward” (8:26)
 - Looking at the past’s tradition of scholé allows us to move forward! Many teachers learned their skills in a modern school system filled with anxiety; in turn, they became teachers who use similar methods.
 - It is time to unlearn these ingrained habits and embrace a new (old) method of scholé!

Recovering Scholé (11:54)

- Recognize encounters with scholé in your present life.



- For example: Consider the last time you went to a lovely restaurant with close friends. Imagine candlelit tables, delicious food and wine, and deep and contemplative conversation. Together, you and a friend discuss an idea, a book, or a piece of art, and by the end of the conversation you sense a deeper understanding, or revelation, of the subject. This is an example of scholé.
- Exercises in Scholé
 - Exercise 1: *Psalm 1* (14:10)
 - Contemplate this famous passage. Consider the position of the human body or the passage of time while Dr. Perrin reads Psalm 1. Read it several times. How does the man move? How does he meditate?
 - Exercise 2: *“A Noiseless Patient Spider”* by Walt Whitman (21:40)
 - Listen and follow along to the poem. Pretend you do not know English and listen instead to the cadence and rhythm of the language. Listen to the line “measureless oceans of space.” What sounds do you hear?
 - Walt Whitman loved the Psalms. Can you see how “And you O my soul,” from the poem parallels “Bless the Lord, O my soul,” from Psalm 103?
 - Exercise 3: **Caspar David Friedrich’s *Wanderer above the Sea of Fog*** (26:00)
 - Observe this painting. What kind of geometric presence do you see? What shapes? What colors? How is light used? Is the man with red hair embarking on a journey, or is he at the end of a walk?

Concluding Thoughts (29:35)

- Take some time to review the Nine Principles of Pedagogy available on Dr. Perrin’s PowerPoint. “Scholé, contemplation, leisure,” is #8! While not all learning needs to be scholé, some of it should be.
- Remember, humans are designed for scholé. We need restful learning to be human, and it is what our students long for and deserve. We must bring it into our lives, and our students’ lives, so that all of us can contemplate the true, the good, and the beautiful.