



## Course: The Seven Liberal Arts with Christopher Perrin and Andrew Kern

Lesson 1: Why the Seven  
Liberal Arts are “Liberal”  
and “Arts”

### Outline:

#### Liberal Arts as Freedom (1:15)

- Gardens represent the freedom that Liberal Arts provide; just as creating a garden is a free act, it takes freedom to cultivate Liberal Arts.
- In turn, the skills emphasized in the Liberal Arts set educators and students free.

#### Classical Christian Education: Definitions (2:35)

- “CCE is a **traditional** approach to education rooted in western civilization and culture, developed by the church, grounded in piety and governed by theology, employing the historic curriculum and **pedagogy** of the seven **liberal arts** in order to cultivate men and women characterized by **wisdom, virtue and eloquence**.
  - Dr. Perrin’s quick definition: “CCE is the Liberal Arts and the great books!”
  - **Origin** of CCE: Western culture
  - **Content** of CCE: The 7 Liberal Arts & the Great Books
  - **Method** (pedagogy) of CCE: Historic curriculum
  - **Purpose** of CCE: To cultivate human being in wisdom, virtue, and eloquence

#### The Liberal Arts: Ways They’ve Been Illustrated (12:08)

- “Philosophy at the Center of the Seven Liberal Arts” (12<sup>th</sup> Century)
  - This image, from the 12<sup>th</sup> Century, depicts a classic Liberal Arts education.
  - Lady Philosophy sits in the middle of the 7 Liberal Arts, all depicted as different women; at the bottom, poets sit with their great books.
- “Tower of the Seven Liberal Arts”
  - This image, from 1508, is an example of an educational diagram.
  - Lady Philosophy enters the Tower of Learning, home to the different Liberal Arts and their famous supporters, including Aristotle, Priscian, Boethius, and Seneca.



The 7 Liberal Arts—The Trivium & Quadrivium (17:00 and 30:00)

Trivium	Quadrivium
Grammar, Logic, Rhetoric	Arithmetic, Geometry, Astronomy, Music
“The Threefold Way”	“The Fourfold Way”
Mastery of language	Mastery of numbers & physical creation by measurement & assessment

What makes the Liberal Arts “Liberal” and “Arts”? (19:33; 25:40)

Liberal Arts

- Liberal
- *Liber*: inner bark of a tree, book
- *Liber*: free
- *Liber / Liberos*: child, children
- *Libertas*: freedom, liberty
- Liberty, Library, Deliberate
- At liberty to read
- At liberty to deliberate
- Liberty/Freedom: Freedom from, Freedom to
- *Capax*, Capacity
- *Humanitas*, Humanity

Liberal Arts

- Arts
- *Ars, Artis*
- Make a human
- A made human who can make culture
- Rooted in Creation (what humans have always done)
- Agricultural Arts
- Human Arts
- All Speak, All Reckon

- The Liberal Arts are called “liberal” because *Liber*, the inner bark of a tree, became paper and books; those who could read and write were free! Those who were free had a *Capax*, or capacity, to discover, which led to *Humanitas*, a capacity to fulfill humanity and recognize truth.
- The Liberal Arts are called “arts” because an *art* is something that is made; just as humans make things, the Liberal Arts actively make, or shape, human beings. Grammar, Logic, Rhetoric, etc. allow human beings to make poetry, arguments, novels...all of which prepare them for every good work.

Etymology Activity (31:30)

In the recovery of Classical Education, vocabulary is essential—etymology can open our eyes to classical education’s roots.



Rudimentary →	Latin →	Erudite
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rude</li><li>• Rudiments</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Rudimentum</b>: first attempt, beginning</li><li>• <b>Rudarius</b>: retired gladiator</li><li>• <b>Rudis</b>: unwrought, unworked, raw; course, rough, badly-made, uncultured, unskilled, clumsy; ignorant, inexperienced</li><li>• <b>Rudo, -ere</b>: to roar, bellow, bray; to creak</li><li>• <b>Rudus, -eris</b>: rubble, rubbish, piece of copper</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Ex</b>: Out of (preposition)</li><li>• <b>Erudio, ire</b>: to educate, instruct</li><li>• <b>Eruditus</b>: learned, educated, accomplished</li><li>• <b>Eruditulus</b>: somewhat skilled</li><li>• <b>Eruditio</b>: education, instruction; learning, knowledge</li></ul>

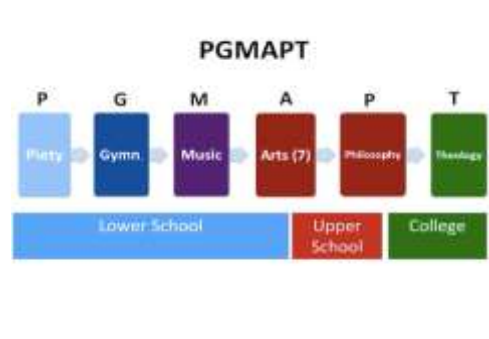
- The etymology of the word *rudimentary* shows us how *Ex + Rudis* means “out of rough or badly-made beginnings.” The Liberal Arts, taught through teachers, bring students from rough, unskilled beginnings, to the next steps of their education.
- The Liberal Arts set humans free—they bring them out of “mere rudiments or beginnings” and into the liberty of creation.

### Progression of Classical Education (37:05)

- Elementary: Preparatory, young
- Liberal: Intellectual, maturing
- Professional: Practical, mature
- In the 1800s, students who left for college did not choose a major—they had a Liberal Arts, classical education; now, though, *progressive education* is different than a *classical education*.



## PGMAPT (39:16)



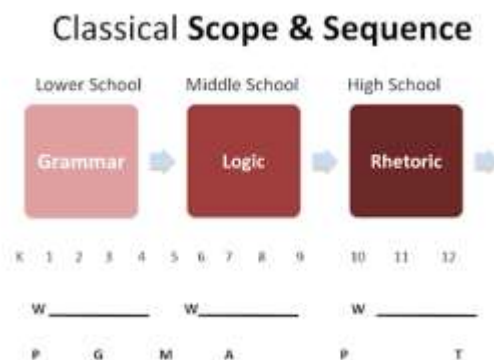
- In *The Liberal Arts Tradition: A Philosophy of Christian Classical Education*, Kevin Clark and Ravi Jain provide an acronym to illustrate what aspects of a classical education are appropriate for each grade.

## A Deeper Look at the Trivium & Quadrivium (42:00)

- Grammar is emphasized in K-6 because it is an art applicable to all future studies.
- Each art is emphasized at a different point in a student's journey.

## Classic Scope & Sequence of a Classical Education (45:06)

- While public, American education emphasizes “K-12 Academy,” or “K-6 Schools,” *classical education uses Grammar, Logic, and Rhetoric* to chart students' progress through lower, middle, and high school.
- Similarly, Grammar, Logic, and Rhetoric correspond to “*Wonder, Worship, and Wisdom*,” the different stages of a student's learning in classical education.



## History of Liberal Arts in the Classical Education Tradition

- *Greeks: Making of the Man* (48:08)—Greek curricula emphasized raising children to be fully cultured, educated, and prepared for voting in the Greek Assembly and serving in the Greek military; Greek education emphasized *the*



*true, good, and beautiful*, learned through grammar, logic, and the great books.

- ***Romans: Making of an Empire*** (50:41)—Roman curricula emphasized learning the rudiments (letters & grammar) alongside *ludus*, or school/game/play, followed by grammar, Latin literature, and rhetoric; Romans emphasized ***organization, structure, and leadership*** in law and military.
- What comprised the standard “7 Liberal Arts” changed over 5 centuries, from Varro in 116 BC to Cassiodorus in 569 AD (see chart at 51:54).
- The final form of Liberal Arts in the classical tradition appeared in the Renaissance (see chart at 52:50).
- Grammar has always been emphasized first in the classical tradition, although different Liberal Arts were favored at different times throughout history.