



Effective Upper School Teaching & Leadership with Dr. Christopher Schlect

Lesson 1: Teaching is about Students

Outline:

Teaching is About Students

How to distinguish capable teachers from mediocre teachers?

- Great Teaching cannot be condensed into a basic, measurable system of steps and criteria

Paradox of teaching

- Teachers are limited - they don't know everything.
- Yet expected to lead students to surpass their prowess
- Question to ask: 'How to achieve this'

Teaching is about students (key principle)

- Students compared to the fruit of a tree; quality of a classroom education judged by students (analogy: a tree's health judged by its fruit)
- Teaching is about student's growth, not the subject of lesson (e.g Math, Philosophy)
- Mediocre teachers train students to reach their level of understanding
- Great teachers drive students to go beyond that checkpoint
- Students must actively learn, teachers can only galvanize them to learn
- Questions to ask: What students take away from a classroom, what habits have they cultivated, what values do they derive?

How to 'read' (evaluate) students in 3 tiers

- Information
- Habit formation
- Character formation
- **Information**
 - Two kinds of information:
 - Straightforward facts
 - Summary of a lesson/reading/narrative
 - Pros: Easiest way to measure students' depth
 - Cons: most students don't retain information long term
- **Habit formation**
 - Behavior repetition, developing instinct



- Can students recognize patterns of intellectual challenges? Can students apply their intellectual/cognitive/creative habits to these patterns?
- **Intellectual habits to accomplish**
 - **Rhetoric:** Ability to communicate clearly with structure, strategically persuasive
 - **Dialectic:** Ability to compartmentalize, make connections, analyze, calculate, induce
 - **Perspective:** Self-understanding, understanding of challenge, self-limits recognition
 - **Observation:** Ability to notice micro detail and view the grand picture
 - **Process:** Ability to discover solutions for problems
 - **Imagination:** Intellectual copiousness, exercise of ingenuity to apply knowledge differently
- **Character formation**
 - Focuses on students' inclination and affection, direction of their love, what sort of people are they becoming, etc.
 - **Traits**
 - **Courage** (conviction that the right action/words must be done/said)
 - **Toughness** (intolerance of self-indulgence, perseverance, readiness to accept responsibility)
 - **Initiative** (Ability to dive into ventures without prompt)
 - **Intellectual integrity** (intolerance for inconsistency)
 - **Zeal** (godly passion for expanding God's kingdom)
 - **Evangelical loyalty** (faithfulness to God and His Gospel, commands, and people)