



More Than Math and Science – Caring for Students’ Emotional Needs | Part 1 | Anthony Hurst

Jesus “took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them” (Mark 10:16). What a beautiful picture! Mothers, confident of Jesus’ tender care, lined up with their little ones so He could bless them.

Jesus was a busy teacher. The beginning of the chapter says, “The people resort unto him again; and, as he was wont, he taught them again” (v. 1). But people knew that Jesus was much more than a teacher. They knew He saw beyond the thronging crowds to the individual needs among His audience. They knew Jesus noticed children and would pause to touch and bless them.

The disciples apparently thought Jesus’ teaching was too important to interrupt and rebuked the mothers. But Jesus, much displeased with their priorities, said, “Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God” (v. 14).

Is Jesus displeased with your priorities, or do you allow the children to “come to you?” You, too, are a busy teacher. But aligning your priorities with Jesus’ is paramount to a successful school term.

Teachers have differing gifts and strengths that often reflect their interests and personalities. Some are more academic-focused, others more relationship-focused.

Academic-focused teachers are studious and love to learn. They are well-read and have an ever-deepening well of

knowledge to draw from. They are usually excellent teachers and appreciate hardworking students. Academic-focused teachers believe students’ grades are important, for they reflect how well they are teaching. These teachers tend to find struggling or seemingly careless students quite challenging or even frustrating. They want to find a solution to these problems and move on.

But in it all, seek to win your students’ hearts. Look for ways to meet their emotional needs and be the arms and hands of Jesus.

Relationship-focused teachers can also be excellent teachers. They know school is about books and learning, but they thrive on building positive relationships with students. They want students to enjoy school and secretly hope their students like them. They care about struggling students, try to understand their problems, and are sensitive to students’ emotional needs. Both types of teachers can be effective as they learn to maximize their strengths and minimize their weaknesses.



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Academic-focused teachers should cultivate a sensitive heart toward students' emotional needs. They should seek to understand troubled students rather than ignoring or denying the problem.

Relationship-focused teachers should cultivate a passion for learning. They should discipline themselves to read and pursue knowledge. They need to develop good teaching skills so they can communicate the lessons well.

Jesus' example in teaching and ministering reveals that this is not an either-or issue. Teachers do not need to choose to be either an excellent teacher academically or an excellent teacher relationally. Rather, this is a matter of both-and. Teachers need to develop both academic and relational skills. Teachers that do well relationally create an atmosphere where learning can take place.

A common saying is "Students do not care how much you know until they know how much you care." Some students are self-motivated, but many do well mostly to please their teachers.

Likely your job description focuses mostly on academic issues. Understandably, most of your time and energy revolves around the academics of school. Prepare your lessons well and pursue ways to become a better teacher academically. But in it all, seek to win your students' hearts. Look for ways to meet their emotional needs and be the arms and hands of Jesus. It is vital to a successful school term. [u](#)

Anthony lives in Berks County, Pennsylvania, with his wife and seven children. He taught school for twenty-six years. He is currently employed with Christian Light as a school rep and in curriculum development. Special interests are gardening, honeybees, and Spanish culture and missions.

"You'll Never Amount to Anything" | Mary Dueck

You'll never amount to anything. Someday I'd like to talk to all the teachers who ever said something like that to a struggling boy or girl. Though losing my temper is not my greatest weakness, I did get quite upset when I heard of a case recently where a teacher told a student that he'd never amount to anything.

What did that teacher think he'd gain by saying that? What was the child supposed to learn from it? What are the results of those biting words in the lives of hundreds of grown-ups nowadays?

How many suffer a severe inferiority complex?

How many turn to alcohol or drugs to forget the disgrace?

How many doubt that God will accept them?

How many have considered suicide because *they are no good*?

Teachers, the words we say are important! Our words can affect crime statistics. The words we say may someday echo across a pulpit—or through a courtroom. Our words might make the difference between life and death.

Yes, I was momentarily angry and saddened when I heard how this teacher's words caused lifelong wounds and scars. But it goes deeper than that. I am grieved at the tragic lives of these

teachers—teachers who perhaps spoke cruel words because they themselves had been treated unkindly in their growing-up years.

Someday I'd like to talk to each one of them. I'd like to give them a hug and speak an encouraging word. Maybe if someone had done that in their childhood, *they would have amounted to something—maybe even become good teachers.* [u](#)



Mary Hein Dueck taught school in Belize. "I taught all grades from first to ninth in eleven years. Then I met Justin... and am now a happy stay-at-home wife. I wouldn't go back to teaching... but whenever I read LightLines, I find that the teacher in me is not dead, but sleeping." She and Justin and two children reside in Boley, Oklahoma.

To the First-Grade Teacher

Rosalie Martin



So . . . you just said yes to the school board, and now you're wondering if you were entirely bonkers. Or maybe you didn't say yes yet, but you'd sort of like to. Teaching school, and more specifically, teaching first grade seems so daunting many never dare try.

Well, here's the good news: It's not rocket science. You don't have to be an Einstein or a Webster. Actually, I'd say the number one requirement is flexibility. That, and humor.

Teaching first grade is not at all what it appears to be. If you thought your job was to study textbooks and teacher's manuals, put neat little red marks on their papers, fill out the report cards, teach them to say the alphabet in unison, and guide their fingers as they shape their first letters, you were partly correct.

Teaching is all those things, but a whole lot more. It's saying good morning fifteen times every day without losing enthusiasm; it's listening respectfully to more "my cat had kittens" stories than you could ever imagine; it's praying for a sprained wrist twenty-seven mornings in a row; it's picking up trash, rationing glue sticks, passing out tissues, and tying shoes.

Being a first-grade teacher means you must be able to understand what is a big deal. A smudged pencil drawing of a space shuttle that you find lying under your stapler at first recess is not an accident—it is a big deal. Don't slip it in the trash can; rather, show it to the entire class and ask who the artist is. Expound on your love of flying. This is as important as learning the next letter of the alphabet. A bouquet of flowers, a card, a story about the new baby, or the trip to Arkansas—these are big deals. Give such things appropriate attention.

You must also be able to understand what is *not* a big deal. If a student announces that he's fasting today, and has only saltines in his lunch, don't act surprised—it is not a big deal. If there's

a thunderstorm or the electricity blinks or there are semis and dump trucks going past the window, it is not a big deal. And if anyone ever rattles about anything great or small, the happening is never, ever a big deal. (Until, of course, the tattler is out of earshot and you can approach the unfortunate offender.)

You must be able to keep a straight face. When your student of the day picks an unusual song for morning worship, and when a student tells you that his five-foot mother weighs two hundred pounds, you must not bat an eye. Laughter, specifically delayed laughter, is an art. No, you must not laugh *now* at that remark, but how about saving it for the after-school discussion with your co-teachers? Delayed laughter is a tonic that can turn a bad day into an epic tale.

You must be able to multitask to degrees you never knew existed. You must be able to tell the Creation story with energy and conviction, while teaching Johnny to sit still, telling Jesse to close his desk lid, and shaking your head at Anna who is sucking loudly on her water bottle. And should you happen to forget which day God made the sun, you must be able to omit that part for the moment and weave it into the next story, or look it up in the teacher's manual while expounding on the fishes and plants, or state what you think is right and correct your mistake in the next class. You must be able to tell Johnny with your eyes to "stop squeaking your seat" while with your mouth you tell the class the correct way to write an M is by going down first, not up. And, you must always keep an eye on Douglas to make sure his pencil is moving. If eye contact fails, you must walk over to his desk and tap his shoulder while you hold your teacher's manual in the other hand and give the second graders their next spelling word.

I hope you find enjoyment in it; for there will scarcely be a moment from when the first child walks into the room until the

last one walks out and perhaps even awhile after that, that you will not be multitasking. Pack high-protein, easy-to-eat lunches, and even then you are likely to end the school year a few pounds lighter than you started. I know they never told you this at teacher training, but lunchtime is not your time. Lunchtime is when you pull splinters out of thumbs, dole out extra spoons, settle arguments, and steer discussions onto profitable paths.

You must be persistent—even stubborn. How stubborn? Always a little more stubborn than the students. That means you must erase sloppy words every bit as often as they write sloppy words. You must correct one thousand misspellings and still not stop. You must drill the subtraction facts till they are coming out your ears and say the books of the Bible two hundred times till they know them. And though they should offend till seventy times seven, you must be consistent until seventy-one times seven. Being stubborn is plain hard work some days.

You must never, never, never give up! You must not give up even when Johnny flunks his spelling test for the third time, George cheats on his, and Ann gets 100 percent and lords it over both. You must not give up even when your first graders lose hard-earned ground over the summer or when reading a five-page story takes fifty minutes. In the words of Winston Churchill: “Success is the

ability to go from one failure to another with no loss of enthusiasm.”

You must understand that children are unpredictable. Karen flunked her math test simply because she was worried about her mom’s fever. George couldn’t remember any vowels because he was thinking about the pizza in his lunch. The child crying in his seat this morning will bounce into it all rosy-cheeked tomorrow. Your problem student today might be an angel tomorrow, and your angel today. . .

So long, ye eager teachers! May God be with you as you embark on this adventure. With Him, you will have everything it takes, though as the saying goes—it will take everything you have. So give it your all!

Rosalie Martin is currently taking a break after four years of teaching at Center Christian School, a community school in Versailles, Missouri. “Since I started teaching, I’ve had an average of thirteen students every year. I wanted to share this article especially for those who teach large classes of elementary students. I love the sound of twenty voices in song or a dozen students cheering on the ballfield. Nothing beats the enthusiasm of a room teeming with first graders!”



Guidelines for Oral Reading

A new brochure from Christian Light about oral reading is included with this mailing. Read it for ideas and guidance for developing both a quality oral reading program and confident, competent readers. You can also download the brochure at christianlight.org/guidelines-for-oral-reading-brochure.

Teacher and Student Morale in Public Education

It seems obvious that the pandemic has severely affected public education. A survey late last fall of 1,630 public school teachers indicated that teacher morale fell substantially after a year and a half into the pandemic. Job applications for teaching also plummeted. The teachers surveyed also indicated that student morale fell. They reported that masks were almost universally required. Eighty-four percent said their students were engaged in remote (live) learning at least part of the time.

Source: Education Week, November 4, 2020

Bulletin Boards, Wall Posters

Busy teachers sometimes struggle with designing and changing bulletin boards on time. We recently learned about where you can “borrow” bulletin boards of different sizes for up to

three months. Find out more at borrowbulletinboards.com or email Arlin Strickler at borrowbulletinboards@gmail.com.

Also check out the Language Arts wall posters available from Christian Light. They are offered in sets of eight in two sizes. Order online at christianlight.org, by mail from the catalog, or call 800-776-0478.

Kindergarten—in a Nursing Home

Tabatha Rosprov from Winfield, Kansas, was the first early childhood educator in nearly seventy years to be named National Teacher of the Year (2020). She teaches pre-K in a schoolroom housed inside a nursing home. She feels that the children have a profound impact on the lives of the residents and vice versa.

Tabatha works closely with the nursing home’s activities director and their objectives often overlap. When asked, “What’s your number one goal as a teacher?” she replied, “I want [students] to understand that it’s important to take care of yourself, but you also have a responsibility to do that for others. That teaching of selflessness, I think, is missing from society.”

Source: Reader’s Digest, April 2020

Eternal Perspective

“A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops.” —Henry B. Adams

Making History

Come Alive

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Atomic Bombs, Morals, and Questions: The Importance of Teaching History | Part 1 | Deana Swanson

History is an amazingly important subject to teach for one main reason: it is the only subject that consists mostly of material that we can evaluate, make moral decisions about, and apply to our lives today.

Reading, writing, and math are skill-based. Students learn how to perform a task; they repeat it and get better at it. Science is largely fact-based. Students learn how science works and about how God created the universe and everything in it.

History, though, is different. And it has much farther-reaching effects. When we teach history, students not only learn facts about what happened in the past, but they can directly apply those facts to what is going on in the world today. More importantly, we can compare that knowledge with what we know God's Word says about it, and then apply it to our lives today. That's exciting!

For example, when we study Prohibition—the period of history in the United States when the sale and consuming of alcohol was prohibited—we look at the effects of what happened during and after it. We can then discuss how in our own day the sale and use of marijuana is becoming legal in some places. We can ask questions like, “How will that affect our society long-term?” “In what direction is society headed?” “What does God think about it?”

History comes alive when we do this, and it makes a difference to our students because just about everything in the past has some parallel to something that is going on today. History tends to repeat itself: “There is no new thing under the sun,” (Ecclesiastes 1:9.)

Every issue society is dealing with now has been dealt with in the past, just in a different situation or form. It is exciting and interesting to pull those facts out, relate them to now, see what

happened back then, which decisions were made, and then apply those to current issues.

History is a study of choices and consequences, good people and bad people, super-smart decisions and decisions that we can look back on and wonder, *Why on earth did they do that?* And we get to *talk* about these things in history class.

As teachers, we can have in-depth discussions with students and cause them to **think**. It's easy to do this if we start with easy concepts such as *good vs. bad*. Here are a few more examples of questions teachers could ask students in order to get some discussions started.

Sin vs. righteousness—Was what happened in this period of time (or specific instance) good or bad?

Selfless or selfish? Was this person trying to serve others or was he being selfish?

God or greed? While much of history would be in the “greed” category, there were also people who sacrificed greatly to do what was right in God's eyes. It's excellent to point out those positives.

What does God think about that? What does the Bible say about it? It's amazing what verses students can recall. These will help start class discussions.

Discussing topics such as these can help students to look at situations long-term, and hopefully cause them to think about the next decision they have to make, and what the effects of that decision could be. Every choice has a consequence, and every decision has an effect. Students can see and learn this through history.

It's also challenging to ask students how things could have turned out differently. *What if the United States had not dropped atomic bombs on Japan? How and when might the war have ended?*

Continued on page 10.

How a Freshwater Lake Became Salty (and Much Deeper) | Sara Nolt

Lake Peigneur in Louisiana used to be a 1,300-acre freshwater lake averaging about eleven feet deep. Today, the lake is brackish, 200 feet deep at its deepest spot, and hosts marine life. The change happened because of an accident on November 21, 1980.

At 4:30 that morning, a Texaco oil rig built in the shallow lake pressed its 14" drill bit 1,230 feet below Lake Peigneur. Suddenly, the bit jerked to a stop, thoroughly stuck. Loud popping sounds came from below the surface, and the oil rig tilted. The operators, realizing their troubles were far greater than a lodged drill bit, abandoned the drilling platform and boated to shore. From there, they watched in astonishment as the platform with its 150-foot-tall derrick disappeared beneath the surface of a shallow lake. But where had it gone?

Fifty-five men beneath the lake knew. An electrician in a salt mine deep under the lake heard a strange noise and saw barrels bobbing in a rush of knee-deep water. Flowing water in a salt mine is bad news. When salt is mined, pillars of salt are left in place to support the roof. When water dissolves those supports, the mine collapses. The electrician immediately gave the emergency signal. Men hurrying to higher levels of the mine had to wait on an agonizingly slow elevator that could handle only eight men at a time. As flowing water dissolved supports in the shafts beneath them, all fifty-five miners made it to safety.

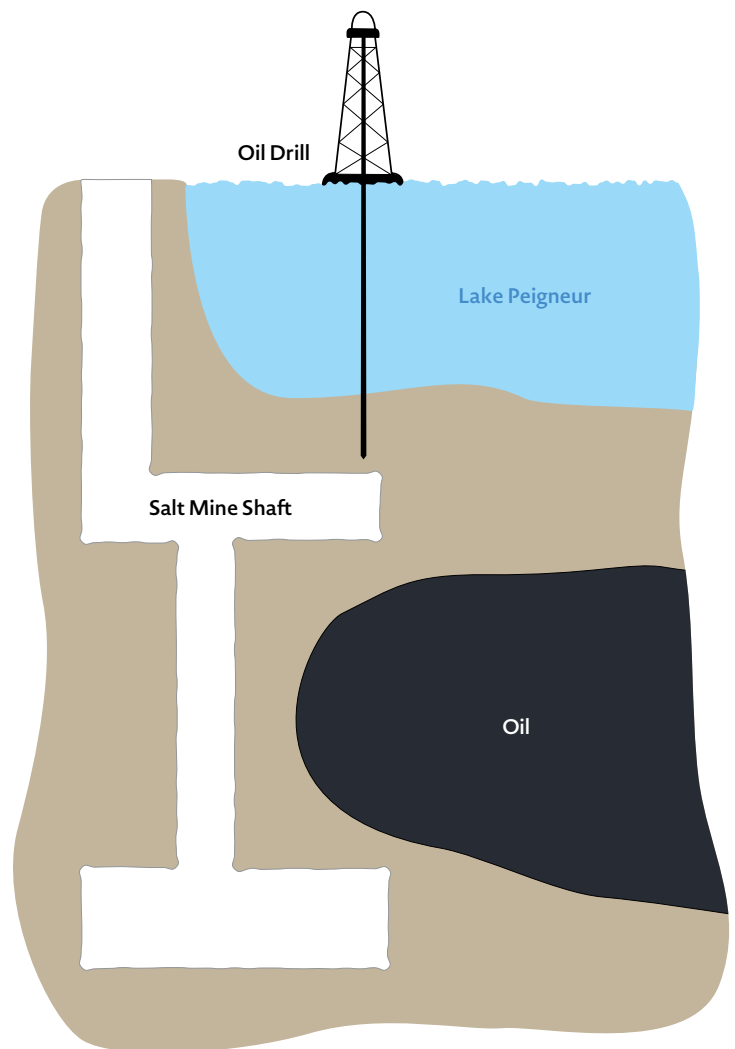
The drill bit had punctured the dome of the salt mine, and Lake Peigneur began draining down the hole. Water swirled down a whirlpool that measured a quarter mile wide and had ten times the force of a fire hydrant. Docks, buildings, trucks, a parking lot, eleven barges, and one tugboat were flushed down the drain.

A fisherman on the lake reached shore with just minutes to spare. He tied his boat to a tree and ran to safety. Looking back, he saw both tree and motorboat disappear in the whirlpool. Air pockets escaping from the mine created a 400-foot tall geyser. "I thought it was the end of the world," he said.¹

Meanwhile, another phenomenon was taking place: waters of a canal reversed the direction of flow. A twelve-mile long canal connects Lake Peigneur to the Gulf of Mexico. As the lake swirled down the hole, the force of the drain sucked the canal waters toward the lake. The water flow reversed, and for two days the water from the Gulf of Mexico flowed north, thundering into the lake in a spectacular waterfall, and refilled the lake with salt water.


Once the lake and the mine were full, the water pressure equalized, and nine barges bobbed back to the surface. But two barges, the tugboat, and oil drilling equipment remain in the mine. Remarkably, the only lives lost in this catastrophe were three dogs.

Experts believe the lake drained because someone read mapping coordinates incorrectly. Texaco engineers thought they were a safe distance from the salt mine. The mistake happened because there were two non-interchangeable systems of measuring latitude and longitude: Transverse Mercator and the Universal Transverse Mercator. Coordinates for the drilling site



¹ *The Telegraph*, page 2, November 21, 1980

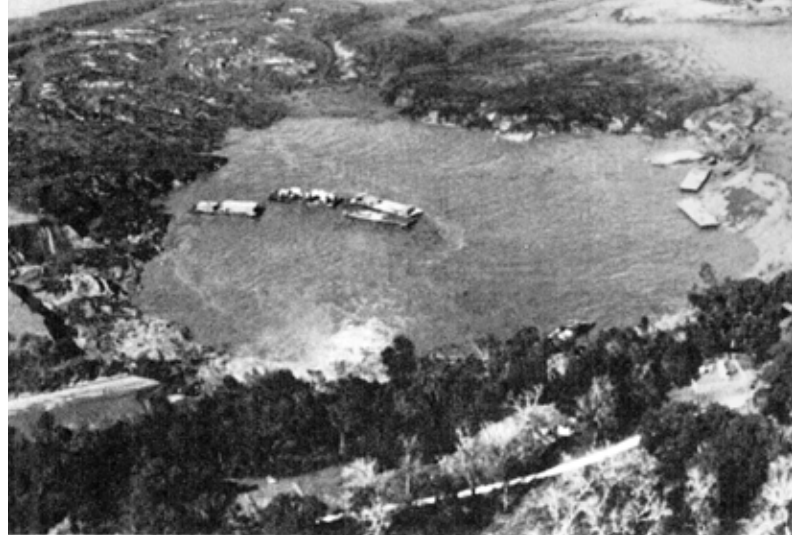
were given in one system but read in the other, resulting in a different placement on the map. Improved systems have been developed since, reducing the likelihood of similar catastrophes.

But nothing can change the effects caused by a 14" drill bit. Fishermen on Lake Peigneur now see triple-digit readouts on their depth finders and catch saltwater fish. Jefferson Island Gardens lost sixty-five acres, including a glass conservatory. Oil drilling equipment and two barges still rest at the bottom of a water-filled salt mine. Nothing will change the past, but going forward, a salty Lake Peigneur stands as a reminder that little things make a big difference. 

Source: Adapted and reprinted from Christian Light's *Homeschooler's Friend*, Summer 2021 issue

Sara is a homeschooling mom who lives near Lancaster, Pennsylvania, with her husband John and their three children. She loves libraries, children's artwork, homemade bread, and successful science experiments.

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Learning Box

- There are a number of salt domes in the area of Lake Peigneur. How are salt domes formed?
- Check out how to pronounce *Peigneur*. Which language gave us the word? What does it mean?
- Do you think the lake became salty from the mines below the lake or from the gulf waters that flowed into it? Hint: There wasn't *that* much salt left in the mines.
- The caverns formed from mining salt since 1919 were enormous. This accounted for the huge whirlpool and the swallowing of _____ gallons of water, muck, and debris. (Sources differ as to whether or not it was completely drained.) Hint: an acre-foot contains 325,851 gallons of water. The other necessary figures are in the story.
- Lake Peigneur is Louisiana's deepest lake today!

When Students Groan | Nathan Yoder

For as long as I can remember, writing has felt comfortable for me. My worst enemy in high school was spelling; but today, armed with a cup of coffee and a super-smart, spell-checking computer, my last foes are gone. But teaching my students to write is another challenge altogether. Why do my students hate it so much? They groan and furrow their brows each time a new writing assignment appears. Inwardly, I'm doing the same. This is *not* fun.

In life, recognizing there is a problem is the first step in solving it. The second step, the one we tend to procrastinate on, is getting serious about finding a solution. As I began my fourth year of teaching, I determined to tackle this issue of writing in some way. In my research, I came across Deana Swanson's *Journal Writing 101*. In it, Deana describes how she has her students write every day! Her words resonated with me:

"I believe that there are four parts of a good English curriculum: grammar, literature, spelling/vocabulary, and writing. Most of the first three are covered extremely well in our schools by our textbooks; however, the writing is usually lacking, at least in my opinion. It is rarely covered until we get to the research paper section or the writing unit, which honestly just isn't much fun."

"I believe that my students should have the opportunity to write a little something everyday, and that it should be low-pressure, creative, and even a little fun."¹

This was precisely my problem put into words, and so I decided to give it a try. I took Deana's ideas and adapted them broadly for my classroom. Finding five minutes a day to devote to low-pressure writing is significantly easier than finding fifteen. Now my students were pulling out their writing notebooks every day. They weren't too sure about this at first, and there were some groans.

They say that practice makes perfect—but older students need to also understand why communication through writing is so important. Otherwise the groaning will continue. Why should students care about writing?

Writing is a practical application of what students have been learning in language since first grade. A common complaint among older students is that their studies "don't apply to real life"—an argument with its own set of answers. But writing is very applicable in "real life." Not being able to write is like having an arm that we have never learned to use. It's important because it's an effective means of communication. How effective? How about *supremely effective*? Consider that God chose His written

Word as His primary means of communication with His people.

Students can enjoy writing because they can often choose what they are going to write about. This is a student's chance to learn about something that really fascinates them. Most of the work of a research report is actually in the research. Why would students spend time studying a topic that is of little interest to them? Yet, students often choose these sorts of topics. I began questioning my students about their topic choices and steering them away from topics that didn't intrigue them.

Sometimes students need to be told simple truths bluntly. Here's one: Writing a paragraph isn't actually that hard. They don't need to groan about it. In fact, I don't allow it. My students grumbled because *it was status quo to grumble about writing!* But after months of writing paragraphs on a daily basis, it began to dawn on them that they were no longer scared of paragraphs.

This simple approach to supplemental writing has been an incredibly positive experience for me and my students. Perhaps most significantly, it is easy. Any teacher can do this. Although I do try to read everything that's written, there's no grading since it's purely creative in nature. It takes virtually no time to prepare for. It gives students regular practice expressing themselves creatively through writing. I don't stress too much about format. Instead, I give a wide variety of writing prompts that I hope will stretch students in different ways. Giving directions, telling stories, informational mini-reports, and descriptive writing are just a few of the things I try to incorporate.

I don't know what the long-term results of these efforts will be. So far the results have been rewarding. When students grow confident that they can put their thoughts on paper, it allows them to focus on the methods being taught in their curriculum. It's not a magic bullet. Most students still don't *love* writing, and many never will. But at least they've proved to themselves that they *can* write. And the sighing is almost gone. *This feels rewarding.*

(In the next issue of *LightLines*, we'll learn more about how Nathan implemented this practice in his classroom and how it worked out.) [L](#)

Nathan Yoder completed his fourth term of teaching at Ozark Mennonite School in Seymour, Missouri, where he also serves as principal. Besides teaching, Nathan enjoys running, recording music in his closet studio, reading (goal is fifty books a year), and spending quality time with his wife Jessica (a former teacher) and their two children.

1 Swanson, Deana. "Journal Writing 101" [www.thedockforlearning.com, https://theplainprofessors.blogspot.com/](http://www.thedockforlearning.com/https://theplainprofessors.blogspot.com/)

I Am a Teacher | Heidi Hege

Interesting how teaching is a lot like parenting, and vice versa. Both require wisdom and patience.

I show my students how 2 crayons + 3 more crayons = 5 crayons. The next day I show them again, because they forgot.

I teach my students that a circle with a little prop is called an *a*, and a squiggly line that looks like a snake is called an *s*. The next day I teach them again because they forgot.

I am a teacher.

I listen to dreams retold and examine holes where teeth fell out. I hand out Band-Aids for skinned knees. When they don't cry, I tell them they are brave.

I teach my students that one day is twenty-four hours and one year is three hundred sixty-five days. The next day when they write that one year is twenty-four hours, I do not cry. I tell myself that I am brave, and I teach them again that one year is three hundred sixty-five days.

I am a teacher.

I wipe up spilled soup, sweep up spilled popcorn, soak up spilled tea, and pick up a shattered light bulb after someone threw a ball and broke it. I wash chocolate milk out of carpets, glitter glue out of white sweaters, and pink lemonade out of hair.

I am a teacher.

I teach my students about money—how much a dime is worth, how to write a dollar sign, and how to line up the decimal points when we are adding dollars and cents. I teach them

about earning money, what money is used for, and things money can buy. Then I teach them that money cannot buy happiness.

I am a teacher.

I teach my students not to be offended when someone calls them a camel when they took a long time at the water fountain. I teach them about camels and what amazing creatures they are. I tell them, "If someone calls you a camel, be happy, because camels are amazing, and so are you!"

I am a teacher.

I am a teacher, but more often I am a student. Most of the subjects I study are not taught in college. My most challenging subject is patience.

When I first started teaching, I prayed that the Lord would give me patience. I prayed for barrels of it, then for truckloads of it. Then one day I read a poem that said when we ask God for patience, He doesn't just hand it to us like a bottle of pills. He *teaches* us patience through everyday circumstances.

So I started putting this all together. Every time I asked the Lord for patience, He gave me an opportunity to practice it. He gave me a child who will not learn that two plus three equals five, no matter how many times we count crayons. And in those days when I felt as though every drop of patience had been squeezed out of me, I learned that the Master Teacher would walk with me and give me grace to speak gently.

So, I stopped praying that the Lord would give me patience, and I started praying that He would *teach* me patience. I'm a very slow learner, but the Lord is patient—He doesn't give up on me.

Am I a student or a teacher? [📖](#)

Heidi taught grades one and two for four years at Riverside Christian School in Grove City, Minnesota. She lives with her husband Delbert in Shippensburg, Pennsylvania.

Source: This article was printed in *Seasons of Grace*, a history of Believers' Fellowship Mennonite Church in Grove City, Minnesota. Revised and reprinted with permission.

History is also full of interesting and true stories that really happened.

- Shipwrecks and mutinies
- Buried treasure
- Lost civilizations
- Magnificent buildings
- Brave and heroic missionaries
- Natural disasters
- Epidemics
- Incredible feats of engineering

Almost every page of a history book has a fantastic little nugget inside it—an exciting story waiting to be uncovered. Rather than viewing history as a necessary subject to be covered, we teachers can present it as meaningful stories that really happened to real people.

It is also important to view history from a Biblical standpoint. How has God been involved in Biblical history? What did He allow? When and how did He intervene? God intervened to keep the Hebrews from being wiped out in Queen Esther's day. Why didn't He intervene when millions of Jews lost their lives during the Holocaust?

It's okay to wonder about these things and discuss them in class even when you don't have all the answers. Often I am amazed when a student asks a really good question or has a really good answer. It is good for you, and them, to think about and ponder questions about history. It's also all right to tell them that you don't have the answer, but that you will research it or ask someone else about it and give them an answer later.

History is a great place to discuss doctrinal issues such as nonresistance or the headcovering as well. Have you ever noticed how many ladies throughout history have had their heads covered in some way? Look at the pictures in the history books. You can point that out to your students and ask questions. Why was it practiced in general society then and not now? Why do we practice it?

History is a fascinating subject full of true stories. History is an important subject to teach because we can learn from the past and apply it to our current situation or to the future. History gives us opportunities to ask our students questions and make them think. History is truly an important subject that needs to be taught.

(In the following issues of *LightLines*, Deana will be covering

specific historical accounts and giving examples of ways to use these stories in class to keep students interested and involved. Different projects that can help history come alive for students will also be presented.) [LE](#)

Deana lives with her husband Jeff (a teacher) and four of her children (two of whom are teachers also) in Terre Hill, Pennsylvania. She has taught in the classroom for twelve years and homeschooled her children for eleven years. Her favorite leisure activities are going on walks and playing board games with her family.

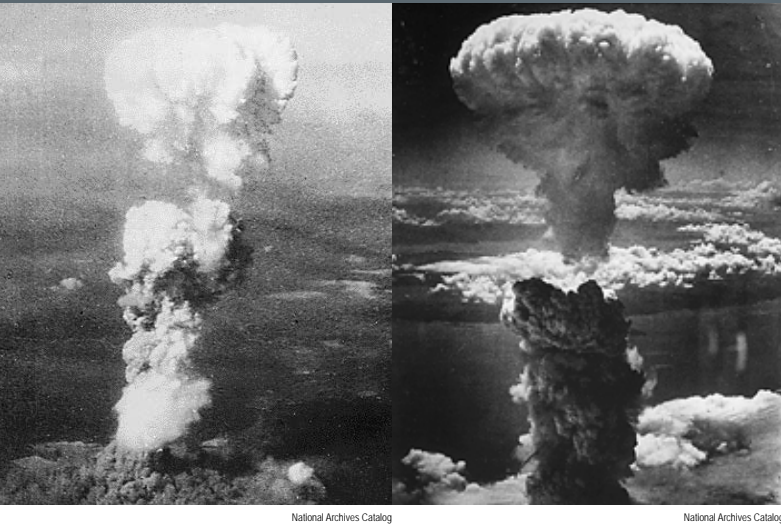
Prohibition



Library of Congress/Prints and Photographs Collection

From 1920 to 1933, drinking or selling alcoholic beverages in America was a crime according to the 18th Amendment of the Constitution. However, the problem only got bigger since many people still wanted to drink alcohol. This led to smuggling, illegal "speakeasies" (bars), and greatly increased organized crime and gang activity. After thirteen years, Congress repealed the amendment, and drinking and selling alcohol became legal again.

World War II Atomic Bomb Facts



On August 6, 1945, the United States dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan. After Japan refused to surrender, America dropped a second bomb on Nagasaki, Japan, three days later on August 9. The two bombs killed an estimated 140,000 people on impact, and tens of thousands more died from the effects of radiation following the attacks. These were the first and second (and only) atomic bombs used in war.

Holocaust



Approximately six million Jews (two-thirds of the Jews in Europe) were systematically murdered at the hands of the German Nazis during World War II. Many more people deemed undesirable by the Nazis such as gypsies, disabled persons, and political prisoners met the same fate.

Cold War Atomic Bomb Facts



Castle Bravo, the largest atomic bomb tested by the United States, was set off on one of the Marshall Islands in 1951. While scientists had designed a 5 to 6 megaton bomb, a miscalculation caused the bomb to be much more powerful than intended. The 15 megaton explosion was 1,000 times more powerful than the bomb dropped on Hiroshima. It left a crater more than 6,000 feet wide and 250 feet deep. That's the size of about twenty football fields placed end-to-end.

The *Castle Bravo* detonation contaminated a large area, part of which included a nearby Japanese fishing boat whose crew suffered the effects of radiation poisoning. An area roughly one hundred miles long was highly contaminated with radiation. Because of the miscalculation, the entire native population of three nearby islands also had to be relocated.

Tsar Bomba, the largest atomic weapon ever to be tested in the world, was detonated by Russian scientists on an island in the Arctic Ocean in 1961. *Tsar Bomba* destroyed everything within a radius of about twenty-two miles and was approximately 3,800 times the strength of *Little Boy*, the bomb dropped on Hiroshima. *Castle Bravo* and *Tsar Bomba* make *Little Boy* look little, indeed.



“Ask Another” is a question-answer space for teachers. Teachers are invited to pose questions on school-related subjects, offer responses to questions, or reply to responses. (LightLines will occasionally assign questions to experienced teachers for their qualified response.) Send questions or responses by e-mail to lightlines@christianlight.org or by mail to LightLines Editor, P.O. Box 1212, Harrisonburg, VA 22803. (Try to limit responses to fewer than 400 words.)

Ask Another

Question (From Ask Another–Spring 2020): I have two students in grades four and five who don’t sing on key. They can match my voice, but in general classroom singing they just drone or sing in a different key. How can I help them to learn to sing on key?

(LightLines asked Jeff Swanson to address this question. Jeff teaches music at Shalom Mennonite School and Terre Hill Mennonite School in Terre Hill, Pennsylvania, where he lives with his wife and four children.) LL

- At an early age students should learn to sing songs that are in a very narrow range (not too low and not too high). This trains them to focus on easily sung pitches that they can manage. When teachers give students super high songs (such as “Silent Night”), they are unable to navigate the wide range. They make up pitches and many don’t recover and . . . enter the monotone.
- In the Kodaly technique, teachers spend a lot of time on songs that only contain Sol and Mi; then Sol and Mi and La. It really works! If the Sol - Mi only, and then Sol - Mi - La technique is used consistently, it is claimed that by the third grade all students should be able to keep on pitch, unless they are learning disabled. I am finding this to be accurate. Note: Even after the initial training of songs that only contain Sol, Mi, and La, I try to keep the pieces for kindergarten, first, and second grades within a major sixth range and the range of the notes they sing from about a middle C up to an A.
- Use a plumbing elbow phone. This simple device allows students to clearly hear themselves in the ear using the phone, while clearly hearing the others with their other ear. They love to use this, and it helps them to sing better.
- Encourage the students that struggle with singing to sing softer. This is much less destructive to their psyche than telling them to stop singing or telling them that they are not trying. This will help the teacher and class to feel better about the

situation because the monotone will be blending better. It can also encourage the monotone student to back off and listen, instead of giving up and never singing again.

- Find that high head voice. Students need to find that high voice by the third grade. I sing with the kindergarten and first and second graders in my falsetto/head voice almost all the time. We do high voice/low voice exercises, we do low-to-high sirens often, and just plain talk about singing in that voice. I also tell them pretty regularly that they must be singing in that voice by the third grade.

Next question: *How can teachers assure that students learn math facts, excel at speed drills, memorize weights and measures, etc.? Do you encourage or discourage counting on fingers? Why?*

Please send your responses to LightLines by October 10, 2021. ■

Answers will appear in the Spring 2022 issue of LightLines.



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2021

UPDATES & INFO



Curriculum Development Update 2021

This page details what is new in this school term and what is projected in curriculum development.

New Courses and Materials

- > Reading 800 Sunrise 2nd edition
- > Sunrise Algebra 1 Light Units
- > Readiness Test

New High School Electives

- > Charting a Course
- > Accounting, 11th edition
- > Auto Fundamentals, 12th edition
- > Auto Upkeep, 4th edition
- > Computer Service & Repair, 5th edition
- > Apologia Physical Science, 3rd edition
- > Apologia Biology, 3rd edition

Charting Sunrise Development This chart outlines the progress of Sunrise Edition. For each letter on the chart, refer to the matching letter below the chart for notes about future development.

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th
Bible												
Language Arts							A	B				
Reading												
Math							C	D				
Social Studies												
Science												

 Sunrise Levels Completed
  Sunrise Second Edition
  Ongoing Work
  Plans for the Future

- A.** Language Arts 700 Sunrise 2nd Edition is being refined. Projected availability is the 2023-2024 school term.
- B.** Language Arts 800 Sunrise 2nd Edition is being field tested during the 2021-2022 school term.

- C.** Math Grade 7 textbook is projected to be refined and available for the 2022-2023 school term.
- D.** Math Grade 8 textbook is projected to be available for the 2023-2024 school term.



Christian Light's 2021 Fall Workshops

When the 2020 Christian Light Fall Workshops were canceled, some school communities hosted smaller local events that drew considerable interest and support.

Because of the uncertainties that remain, we are working toward facilitating similar events for 2021.

Would your school like to host a local/regional Christian Light workshop this fall or winter?

Details

1. School communities interested in hosting a one-day workshop should respond as soon as possible. We will give priority to school communities who had committed to hosting workshops in 2020.
2. Christian Light has prepared a workshop program based on the 2020 program that was planned. However, we are open to incorporating alternate topics and speakers if the hosting community wishes. If this is the case, however, the local community would “take ownership” of the event, with Christian Light speakers functioning as guest speakers.
3. Christian Light will work with the hosting community to set the date and advertise the event. The hosts can determine the size of the venue, as well as which schools to invite, in consultation with Christian Light.
4. Your Christian Light school rep will be available to support and assist the hosting community.

The 2021 Program Christian Light Can Provide

Theme: Principles of Teaching (based on *The Seven Laws of Teaching*)

Main Sessions:

1. The Teacher and the Learner
2. The Language and the Lesson
3. The Riches of Review

Workshop Sessions:

1. The Teacher and the Learner: Demonstration and Application
2. The Teacher's Influence
3. Home and School Partnership
4. The Language and the Lesson: Demonstration and Application
5. Classroom Disciplines
6. Developing Students Who Read
7. The Teaching and the Learning Process

Evening Session:

1. Encouraging School Subjects Through Stories (family-oriented)

How to Respond:

If interested in hosting a workshop or for an itinerary of workshops already planned, contact Lyndon Hartman by phone at (419) 236-8944 or by email at lyndon.hartman@christianlight.org.

You may also contact the Christian Light school representative for your area listed in the catalog.

