

VOLUME 34
NUMBER 1
OCTOBER 1993

The Lutheran Educator

The WELS Education Journal



“...seedtime and harvest, cold
and heat, summer and winter,
day and night will never
cease.”

The Lutheran Educator

The education journal
of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod
edited by the faculty of Dr. Martin Luther College

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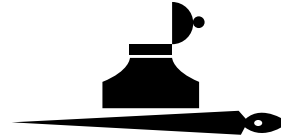
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“Welcome to the Real World”

One or two of the 80-some newly assigned teachers probably heard those words sometime during the last month. Older, and presumably wiser, colleagues spoke those words with a knowing smile to a somewhat frazzled looking young teacher.

Although the words are meant kindly, they are sort of a put-down. They are a put-down because the words suggest the person doesn't grasp reality. He or she lives in a fantasy world and believes in a utopia. What the person needs (we think) is a dash of cold water. Thus employers say it to new employees, ten-year olds say it to six-year olds, and college teachers say it to undergraduates. “Welcome to the real world, Mr. or Miss or Mrs. Beginning Teacher.”

Think about the so-called unreal world of the beginning teacher. Such a teacher believes children enjoy school and they come to learn. Parents are concerned and interested in their child's education and they frequently contact the school to inquire about their child and to encourage the teacher. The congregation willingly supports the Lutheran school and the members speak with and thank the teachers for their ministry. The teacher's colleagues are professional, helpful, and unfailingly positive. The pastor and principal are thoughtful, wise, and never make mistakes. Their college education has made them ready for anything that could happen in the classroom. The grass is always mowed, the basketball team always wins, and getting up in the morning and going to school to teach is one of the greatest things in the world.

How unreal. Perhaps, but these teachers also have the joy of the seventy-two who returned to Jesus and reported on the effects of their teaching. These “unreal” teachers believe they can make a difference, not because of who they are or because of the training they have received. They believe they can make a difference because of the Word they teach. They know that the message of Jesus' life and death has changed their lives. They believe with certainty that it will also change the lives of those they teach. They accept without question Christ's words, “Everything is possible for him who believes” (Mk 9:23).

One of the many pieces of advice a teacher-training college receives is that it should teach its students to be more realistic. Students should be more aware of the real world of classrooms and congregations. I'm not sure that's good advice. Our task as Christians is to make an unreal world. We have the means and the message.

Welcome to the unreal world.

JRI

The Beginning, the Middle, the End

Practical and simple suggestions for motivating children

Debra Heinz-Peterson

What happened?

Two sisters, five years age difference, living in an average-sized Midwestern town, attending a WELS School, U.S.A.

Sarah, the kindergarten student bounds home during November. With exuberance she shares enthusiasm about the beginning practices for the Christmas Eve service. Sarah proceeds to use short phrases while expounding upon the activities of the day, including praises for her beautiful, energetic, and wise teacher. Stumbling over her words, Sarah shares that tomorrow the class will learn about baby snow seals. The young student excitedly continues. Her teacher says that the class will visit a pet store next week.

Fifth grade Tammy picks over her meatloaf and grimaces as her younger sister chats with a mouthful of food. No longer can Tammy continue to listen as Sarah's stories promote smiles and positive responses from their parents. "You just wait, wait until you get into 'real school', you'll be sick of it just like I am."

Tammy's remarks are met with a nonverbal scolding from her parents.

Later that evening, Tammy receives a reprimand in the solitude of her bedroom.

Observations of teachers and parents support the scenario described above. They ask, "What happened?" "Why couldn't we keep him/her excited about school?" We see curiosity, enthusiasm, eagerness, and unbounded intellectual energy as children begin school. As the school years progress, we observe a less enthusiastic learner. Boredom, mediocrity, and poor grades may replace the behaviors observed in the same child only several years earlier. Parents begin to question whether they have done something wrong. They wonder if their child is lazy, learning disabled, a behavior problem, or a victim of poor teaching.

Parents and teachers have conferences and meetings. Plans are set into motion which may result in a temporary improvement by the student. When intervention, monitored study times, threats, and promises are removed, the same behaviors creep into the daily routine. What can be done to assist students in maintaining the enthusiasm and eagerness of the young learner?

Articles included in the previous issues of *The Lutheran Educator*

addressed the factors involved in motivating students to learn. The following pages will offer teachers practical suggestions for encouraging their students to become life-long learners who embrace intellectual challenges.

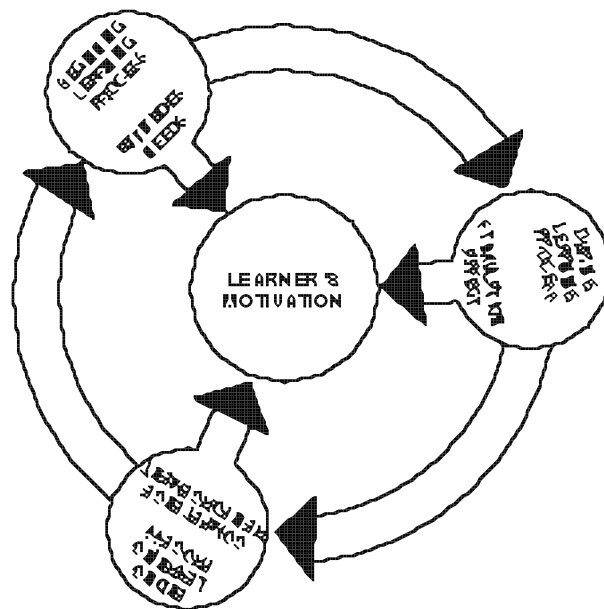
Teaching does not have to be excellent for learning to be enjoyable. But to be motivating, it must move along and demonstrate convincing progress and improvement. Planning lessons which address the beginning, middle, and end of the learning experience enhances the students' motivation and impacts upon learning outcomes (see Diagram A).

This planning requires forethought and time. Growth, whether it be student or professional, requires investment. Your investment as the teacher involves an added dimension of lesson planing. Yes, time is required. Yes, planning is necessary. Yes, initial learning on your part requires self-discipline and personal growth.

Just as lesson planning was extremely time consuming during student teaching, it proved invaluable and provided the foundation for a "behavior" which is now nearly automatic. Your investment in this component of planning for motivation will become nearly automat-

Diagram A

THE TIME CONTINUUM MODEL OF MOTIVATION



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ic as you incorporate it into your professional life. This approach of involving and encouraging people can readily be applied to daily living and interpersonal relationships, yielding positive results.

The following chart (Diagram B) is offered to assist you in planning. As you prepare a lesson, fill in each portion of the chart. Recall the beginning, middle, and end of your learning experience and the need to address the student at each level.

Plan for Motivation

Beginning

The following scenario involves the planning by a fifth grade teacher of twenty-four students. The specific lesson is teaching the alignment of the planets of the solar system. The students range in reading level from approximately a 3.5 to 7.5 grade equivalency. Several students have shown some interest in the topic of earth science. However, the majority of the class was extremely disinterested in the previous chapter on the theory of universal gravitation. Four of the students

Diagram B

Plan for Motivation	
Lesson: _____	
Beginning	Attitudes and/or Needs
Middle	Stimulation and/or Affect
End	Competence and/or Reinforcement

failed the chapter test, three others received D's.

Teacher Jones has identified the need for a modification of his lesson presentation. He has agreed to invest forty-five minutes of planning time for the upcoming day's lesson. The chart above will serve as the primary outline and is completed in Diagram C.

In planning for the beginning of the lesson, Mr. Jones was asked to consider how to "hook" his students into learning about planets. He shared that the students seem to enjoy contemporary music, fast food, Nintendo, sports of all kinds, and the latest movie fad, "Jurassic Park." Considering the students' areas of interest will assist Mr. Jones in determining which strategy will be effective.

Many possible alternatives are considered as a special way to introduce the lesson. Some of the "top choices" included the following:

- showing five minutes of "Star Trek" followed by a discussion
- sharing a story of the "Jetsons" television series
- bringing to the class two items: a baseball and a clipping from the morning's paper displaying a pitcher at work and showing the relationship between speed and objects
- swinging a bucketful of water over his head to introduce the concept of centrifugal force
- allowing students the use of his telescope (to be used in future lessons)

“
Teaching does not have to be excellent for learning to be enjoyable.
”

- "planting a student" to wear a headband with spring filled antennae with planets bouncing on the ends
- using the slide projector to display a picture of Mr. Jones and Pluto at Disneyland.

The development of this list will require time, creative thinking, brainstorming, and a sense of humor. Mr. Jones decided to use the telescope strategy to introduce the lesson and to plan closure

and reinforcing activities. Even though he is somewhat uncomfortable with the thought of "being unusual" in his teaching style, Mr. Jones is encouraged to demonstrate enthusiasm for the upcoming lesson.

Rather than "taking out their science books" at the appointed time, Mr. Jones unveils the object which has been covered by a blanket. A sense of curiosity was noted as soon as the children entered the classroom. Mr. Jones is pleased with their response.

The students are then presented with the objective of the lesson. They are encouraged to use the telescope to view the playground areas, estimate the approximate magnification of the tool, and list as many items which they viewed with the telescope.

Because he has twenty-four students and realizes the investment of time required for each student, Mr. Jones has a stop watch available and informs the students that they will each have 15

seconds to view. The student with the most interesting list will serve as a member of the set-up crew on the eve of star gazing. While one student is viewing, one is on deck, and the others are completing a pre-test to assess their knowledge of the content in the upcoming chapter.

Middle

Once the students have become invested in the initial stages of the lesson, the teacher should consider how to keep them moving. The “flow” of the presentation is critical. This flow not only involves the information itself, but the timing of presentation, the methodology, and the personal use of motivational strategies as needed in each learning setting.

Mr. Jones’ primary instructional outcome for the day’s lesson is to have the students list the first five planets of the solar system. He feels that this objective will serve as a measure of successful teaching. He must therefore consider how to maintain the interest of his class.

Because this is a task of rather low cognitive involvement, Mr. Jones finds himself challenged to engage each of the students in this rote task. He decides to combine questioning strategies with a challenge to his group.

The class members are divided into teams of five. On twenty-four 3x5 inch index cards, Mr. Jones has

placed the name of one of the five planets. The teams are directed to organize themselves by finding and forming a correct “planetary team.” Each team member is assigned the textbook reading on his/her planet and is to share three facts about the planet. The assignment of the team is to share the information and develop a creative mnemonic device for recalling the order of the planets. Each team will present the facts on the planets in a creative fashion and then share the mnemonic device of recall. The most creative strategy will be used in memorizing future planets and will be incorporated into Mr. Jones’ lesson the following year. This strategy will be written into his teacher’s guide and shared with next year’s class.

End

To be successful, each lesson should enhance student learning. The students need to be aware of their

acquired knowledge and competence. Mr. Jones has decided to assign the students the task of group work. The groups are assigned to

- build a clay model of the five planets which is scaled to size,
- use a drawing format to include the knowledge facts of each planet, or
- begin to build a model of paper maché of the solar system.

“
*Establishing a
plan for
motivation is a
blueprint for
achieving
success.*
”

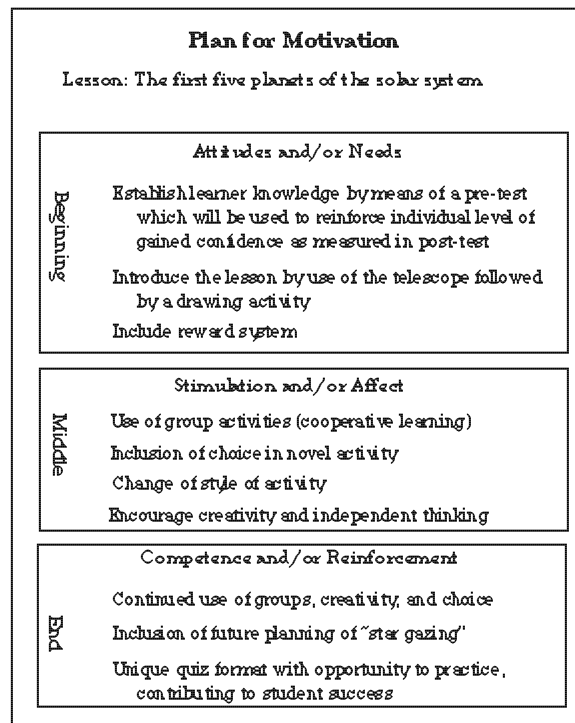
A thirty minute time frame is allowed for the group activity. The students are then informed that they will be quizzed on the material presented. Mr. Jones also distributes information regarding an upcoming "star gazing" night which will include hot chocolate and pizza. The date of the event follows the chapter test.

The following day the lesson is introduced with a quiz. The format is such that the groups continue to work together to produce a ten question quiz which is given to another team. To his surprise, Mr. Jones finds that the class does well on the test and is eager to

engage in the coming lesson.

Diagram C summarizes the motivational plan for the lesson. This diagram is an outline for and example of a teacher who has made a concerted effort to improve his style of planning and teaching while simultaneously increasing student learning and interest. The change will not always result in a successful lesson, but Mr. Jones can be assured that his students will attend, persist, and conclude this lesson in a manner which is different from his typical presentation style. The results should include enhanced student interest, increased time on task, improved

Diagram C



retention of information, decreased level of student misbehavior, and encouragement of a positive student-teacher relationship.

Conclusion

The information presented above is a sample of the variety of planning which may be used for any learning experience. Most critical is the attitude of the teacher towards the students. As the teacher senses the importance of his role in planning for student success, continued enthusiasm is fostered in teacher and students alike. Establishing a plan for motivation is a blueprint for achieving success. Such a plan may not be met with, "Wow! What an interesting lesson," but it can serve as a source of growth, encouragement, and future planning. An approach of exploration and problem solving for student motivation will likely be ongoing. It will prove very rewarding and empowering for teacher and students alike.

The responsibility for instilling students with the desire for lifetime learning is a complex one. Adults in the

child's life are in a strong position of developing and nurturing the love of learning. The process is continuing involves experimentation, and includes many activities. Periods of discouragement and limited progression will be experienced. The need to develop a "never-give-up-attitude" is critical.

As Christian educators, we must continually turn to Christ as the model teacher. His knowledge of human nature, rich teaching style, and patience continually are demonstrated through Scripture. Through the use of the parable, Jesus gained the attention of his learners, stimulated them through the middle, and assured them of forgiveness and life everlasting. May we ever use Christ as The Example as we grow in knowledge about dealing with children.

Debra Heinz-Peterson, a practicing school psychologist, resides in Casa Grande, AZ. Her teaching experiences include pre-school through high school. She has completed advanced studies in areas of special education and school psychology.



Try Using Rubrics

A solution to the Lake Woebegone Effect

Paul L. Willems

How I hated to have a new teacher. I never outgrew the dread that accompanied me into that first day of kindergarten.

Interaction with an unfamiliar person can be traumatic. In a classroom setting the unknown can be especially unsettling. You don't know what the teacher expects from you. Should you parrot teacher talk or express your own thoughts? Does spelling count? Does a 300 word essay have to contain 300 words? Can you divide by repetitious subtraction, add by counting on your fingers, or use a calculator on a test? New teachers, new lessons, new schools can all be scary because you are not sure of what is expected from you.

Good teachers explain their expectations to their students. Often punishments or rewards are given to reinforce proper student outcomes. Gradually, over some period of time, students learn and adapt to a new teacher, a new lesson, or a new school. The price of such learning can be costly. It may cost time. It may cost self-esteem. It may cost creativity and curiosity. These are priceless commodities to be spent for performance which is merely acceptable. Yet instructors and students appear willing to accept this rate of exchange. Year after year the largest

group in the classroom is "average."

The bell-shaped curve dominates education except in Lake Woebegone where all the students are above average. How can we get to Lake Woebegone?

Rubrics can be the vehicle that can take your class there, at least in classroom achievement. The rubric can do this without exacting the price of student curiosity, creativity, self-esteem, or inordinate amounts of time.

A rubric is a rule, a method, an algorithm, or a pattern for performing an outcome that is shared and known by everyone concerned before the task is performed. What an extraordinary idea! Share trade secrets? Give away tricks of the trade? Teach survival skills for academia-land? Let the students in on what is expected of them? How original! How novel! The term rubric is from the Latin *rubrica*, meaning red earth for coloring. It was used in the early Christian worship manuals to give liturgical directions to the people participating in the worship service. When the liturgy was spoken in an unfamiliar language, how were the people to know when to stand, sit, kneel, or pray? The red lettered words, or rubrics told them! When they were assured of what was expected of them, the people could worship without confusion, without the fear of losing their self-esteem, and

without the fear of committing a faux pas. They could relax and get on with the task at hand. Classroom students can accomplish the same thing if we tell them exactly what is expected of them before they begin.

You may argue, "I already do that." But do you print out this list of instructions and share it with everyone in your class? Do parents see it? Do you post the directions for a task on the wall of your classroom? Do you abide by your instructions? Do you ask your students

to help each other accomplish what you expect from them as they work at the task? Are your requirements helpful in assisting your students to improve their classroom work?

In one situation, a teacher taught the writing of a simple paragraph with the mnemonic LOAD: List what you want to say under the theme. Open with a sentence that addresses the theme and catches the reader's attention. Address the theme of the paragraph. Finally, add interesting Details. A rubric for

Diagram A

Paragraph Writing Rubric			
Name_____		Date_____	
Peer Evaluator _____		Date_____	
E=excellent G=good S=satisfactory I=incomplete			
Assessment			
	self	peer	instr
	EGSI	EGSI	EGSI
A. Mechanics			
1. The student's name, course, and date are in the top right hand corner	☐	☐	☐
2. The paragraph is titled	☐	☐	☐
3. The paragraph is written in cursive in ink	☐	☐	☐
4. Words are spelled correctly	☐	☐	☐
5. Punctuation marks are appropriate	☐	☐	☐
B. Style			
1. The opening sentence addresses the theme	☐	☐	☐
2. The opening sentence catches your attention	☐	☐	☐
3. Complete sentences are used	☐	☐	☐
C. Content			
1. The sentences do not wander aimlessly, but address the theme	☐	☐	☐
2. Details add to the paragraph's theme	☐	☐	☐
3. Contradictions, ambiguities, and redundancies are absent	☐	☐	☐
Include this rubric as the last page of your library research report.			
Final grade: A B Incomplete Instructor's initial_____			

writing such a paragraph might look something like the one in Diagram A.

Space is provided for the student, peer, and instructor evaluation with the opportunity of rewriting at each level until quality work is achieved. Since only good work is acceptable for the final draft, grades of *A*, *B* or *Incomplete* are the only grades that appear on the rubric. The student continues to rewrite until an acceptable draft is written. Please notice students know what is expected before the assignment is begun. They also realize a struggle awaits them when the emphasis is placed on excellence and only good work is accepted. Below average "achievement" is not an acceptable performance. The student also knows a friend will help check over the assignment before it is submitted so an objective view can be used to help in rewriting toward excellence. Failure is permitted in the process of writing so learning can take place, but failure is no longer assumed as an acceptable performance.

Rubrics can be used for many tasks. Kindergarten teachers may wish to compose a shoe-tying rubric. Caution: this is a complex task! Typing rubrics, laboratory rubrics, book report rubrics, and research report rubrics can be used in the classroom to help make the atmosphere less threatening and less costly to the student's self-esteem, creativity, curiosity, and time. Gradually the quality of work will improve

because all students will know exactly what is expected and will be aware of the need for revision as they strive for better quality in their final product. A spirit of Christian concern and help can be fostered as students help each other produce a better final product. Cooperation, not competition, is the key.

Yes, some students will need time to adjust to the use of rubrics; so will

some teachers. Yes, a few students will fail, and the use of rubrics, like the use of other methods, will not reach them. Rubrics are not a panacea. They are an instructional tool. Becoming adept with them will take time for both the student and the teacher. However, I am convinced rubrics can be used effectively in most classrooms to improve the quality of most student's work.

I began using rubrics in a quiet, simple way. I gave my students a rubric for writing a summary of a magazine article. The first year we (students and teacher) struggled with this new idea. After doing three or four summaries on which they received either an A or a B, most students enthusiastically welcomed the rubric. During the second year of use, one amazing goal was reached. All students handed in their summaries on time! Some students were still somewhat uncomfortable with peer evaluation and resisted rewriting. But when they began to realize an *Incomplete* and an A did not "average out" to a grade of C or D (only the final

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*Good teachers
explain their
expectations to
their students.*
”

accepted product is graded), rewriting and peer evaluation became second nature. Using rubrics was something students learned to use because they wanted to produce a quality product and receive a good grade.

I have used a rubric for skill outcomes, such as a leaf collection, with similar results. (See Diagram B.) Another teacher in the building has

found vague, short, pen-scribbles are no longer handed in as book reports.

When a rubric is used to show students what the teacher expects, when they are shown examples of excellent work, when they are helped to improve their product, and when a positive atmosphere toward learning and achievement is accepted classroom procedure, everyone becomes more enthusiastic,

Diagram B

Leaf Collection Rubric			
Name _____	Date _____		
Peer Evaluator _____	Date _____		
	Excellent Good Satisfactory Incomplete Assessment self peer instr EGS I EGS I EGS I		
A. Content			
1. At least ten broad leaf tree leaves are included	☐	☐	☐
2. At least five evergreen tree "needles" are included	☐	☐	☐
3. Each leaf's front and back are both displayed	☐	☐	☐
4. Compound broad leaf samples are intact and complete	☐	☐	☐
5. Each leaf is labeled with its Latin name	☐	☐	☐
6. Each leaf is labeled with its common name	☐	☐	☐
B. Mechanics			
1. Each leaf is pressed and dried	☐	☐	☐
2. Each leaf is securely fastened in the booklet	☐	☐	☐
3. Each leaf is correctly identified	☐	☐	☐
4. Words are correctly spelled	☐	☐	☐
5. The booklet is adequately bound	☐	☐	☐
C. Format			
1. The booklet is attractive	☐	☐	☐
2. The booklet is not "overstuffed" with leaves	☐	☐	☐
Please include this rubric as part of your leaf booklet either at the front or back page. Be sure you and a peer evaluator complete and sign the rubric before the booklet is handed in.			
Final grade A B Incomplete Instructor's initial _____			

and the quality of student work improves. When the classroom atmosphere is geared toward accomplishing a task well rather than toward competing to see who can do the task first or best, many negative classroom attitudes and threats can be eliminated.

As with any new method or technique, introducing rubrics should be done gradually. Yes, redoing work will require more time at first, but soon students will become adept at the use of rubrics and their tasks will be accomplished faster than with other methods. Reteaching or reinventing the wheel each year will also be eliminated. Soon students will feel comfortable accomplishing what the rubric asks and will try to become more creative. Their spirit of natural curiosity will permit them to go beyond the basics the rubric requires because they have mastered the formula for a “good” grade. They will be confident in producing acceptable, quality work, and will be willing to

take risks to improve what they know how to do. Remember, they know they can always revise without penalty and do not have to face failure as a final grade.

Are you apprehensive when an adult—principal, parent, peer—visits your classroom? What are they looking for? Would a rubric from them allay your fears? Would you be more comfortable if you only could “do it over” until you got it right? Your students have these same feelings. We all want to work to our God-given abilities. We all want our students to help one another in Christian love and concern. We all want our students to move from dependence toward independence. Why not introduce rubrics and see if they also work in your classroom.

Paul Willems teaches at Minnesota Valley Lutheran High School, New Ulm, Minnesota.



The Lutheran Elementary School in Crisis

Who should pay for Christian education?

Joyce E. Loeck

Two ideas seem to be prevalent concerning our Lutheran elementary schools. I believe these ideas have put our schools in a state of crisis. One is the idea that our schools have lost their effectiveness and are not worth the money it costs to run them. The other is that in order to run them, tuition should be charged to help take care of the cost and to get the parents more involved in the school's support. These ideas are expressed in statements like the following:

"We must charge tuition in our schools. The cost of education is too high."

"Our schools are a financial burden to our congregation."

"Monies must be used for gathering adults into the fold. That's what evangelism is all about."

"Our schools have not done the job, and the church dropout rate is so high among young adults."

"Parents have the responsibility to educate their children. Let them do it. Why should the whole congregation do it?"

"If parents pay tuition they will feel an ownership and give more readily."

"We must maintain kingdom balance in our budget. The children shouldn't get such a big share."

Luther, however, tells us that

Christian schools definitely do benefit the church and are absolutely necessary for the propagation of the gospel:

Schools help the church by imparting a Christian training to children, by preparing useful teachers and heads of families, and by fitting ministers to preach and defend the Gospel. "When schools prosper," says Luther, "the Church remains righteous and her doctrine pure. ...Young pupils and students are the seed and source of the Church. If we were dead, whence would come our successors if not from the schools? For the sake of the Church we must have and maintain Christian schools. They may not appear attractive, but they are useful and necessary ... the Church is wonderfully aided through the primary schools" (Painter n.d., 132-133).

As we all know the Lutheran elementary school is not a mere private school that teaches a religion class every day. It is a religious school where the Word of God is taught all day, in and with all subjects, and permeates the very atmosphere with Jesus' love. God directs parents to teach their children God's Word. He says, "Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the

road, when you lie down and when you get up" (Dt 6:7). As children must go to school and parents have jobs, the Lutheran elementary school assists the parents in this command. Therefore, reading, mathematics, social studies, and science and all the curriculum is designed to teach Jesus' lambs to be good citizens "in the world but not of the world."

Today as we look at the alternative to the Lutheran elementary school, what do we see? The corrupt philosophies of the world are pushed and stuffed into the minds of the young ones. Sexual immorality is glorified. Children are taught to respect and even revere as heroes people who practice illicit sex. Books on alternative life styles are on required reading lists in some public schools. Values are recognized as being necessary but teachers flounder over what values to teach. One thing is certain, however; teachers should never offend anyone by



mentioning a Christian God. Good behavior is encouraged for the pride of self, and choices of behavior are designed to do what results in a better situation for "me."

Some feel that the Lutheran elementary school has become a financial burden on the congregation. This then provides a reason for assessing tuition to parents with children in the school. God's Word tells us, "Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Co 9:7). Waldo J. Werning says that the church over the years has gone through cycles in attitudes toward giving. In some cycles contentment and commitment to God's Word makes the church willing to work with what is given. In other cycles people become impatient and choose other methods.

In many areas churches employed forms of taxation for raising funds. There were various methods; some were outright, while others were quite subtle. Sometimes families were assigned arbitrary quotas according to their holdings, or they were asked to raise a certain amount per family, disregarding variations in their incomes. Even in recent years such forms of taxation have been practiced in some congregations" (Werning 1965, 12).

One idea is that with tuition there will be more money for mission outreach. But children are gifts of God, not only to the parents but to all of us. All adults have a responsibility for training all the children in the congregation. If we fail to train our children, we have

certainly failed in any other mission outreach.

But in our ardor for missions, let us not lose our balance. Let us not lose what we have in our effort to get what we have not. ... We cannot afford to win souls one by one through missions and lose them by the scores because we fail to educate. We must do the one, but we cannot dare to fail in the other. Education and missions must ever go hand in hand. In the one we win, and in the other we keep. (Repp 1947, 669)

Tuition may become a stumbling block to parents with school age children as the schools become institutions for the rich or force the poor among us to take charity. Tuition sets a double standard of giving in our churches. Tuition is a law that states that you must give a certain amount per child plus whatever you can according to the gifts God gives you. Those without children in school, however, are free to give as they are blessed. We all know that it is only the Gospel that motivates a believer's sanctified life.

Confusion in motivation is created and the Gospel loses its centrality when artificial and fleshly devices are contrived to get action from people. Pleas of loyalty, cries of emergencies,... and organizational claims have a detrimental effect when used as motivation. (Werning 1965, 59)

We can depend on the devil to sow the seeds of neglect and indifference in congregations so that he might continue to effect the terrific

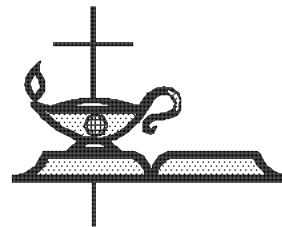
toll which he so highly prizes. Yet the congregation that is aware of its divine responsibility and the enormous opportunities offered in the parochial school, will regard its school as its dearest possession and its crowning glory in spite of the obstacles and labors. (Repp 1947, 669)

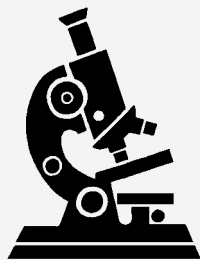
Let's take a second look at our Lutheran elementary schools. Let us pray to Jesus to help us to do his work in a way that will benefit all, and not at the expense of our children. Let us pray that he will show us paths to new ways to take advantage of our resources to make them work for him. Let us pray for patience and restraint to keep our minds and lives focussed on him and his work as he guides us to our heavenly home.

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The Use of Discrepant Events in Teaching Science

Upsetting the intellectual equilibrium

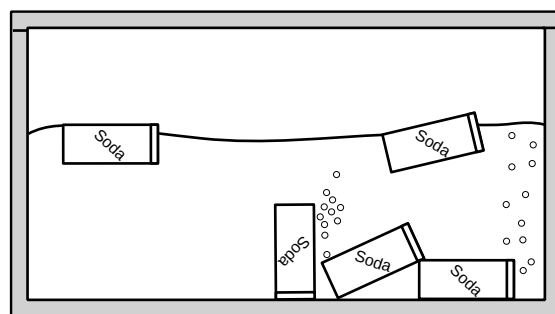
Steven R. Thiesfeldt

It's a hot summer day at the beach and you've worked up a thirst. Fortunately, you brought along a cooler filled with your favorite soft drinks immersed in ice water. Opening the cover of the cooler, you prepare to reach for refreshment. As your hand eases into the icy water, you discover a few of the aluminum soft drink cans floating at the top; the others, completely submerged at the bottom.

Such a situation is an example of a discrepant event. Discrepant events are described as surprising, counter-intuitive, unexpected, paradoxical, and intuition-offending. They have the tendency to arouse strong feelings within the observer or participant (Liem 1987, xxxv). Exploratory behavior is a natural follow-up to observation of a discrepant event. An apparent contradiction like the top-floating and bottom-submerged soft drinks creates a conflict in the mind which is bound to arouse curiosity in the students. That arousal of curiosity creates an increased motivation to learn and a mental puzzle whose pieces need to be put into place. Piaget

states that such mental puzzles are excellent sources for learning because they unsettle the mind, upset the intellectual equilibrium, and incite the learner to change or adapt his existing intellectual scheme (Piaget 1974). The learner who meets such a challenge develops and assimilates new skills that make her a cognitively richer person.

So much for the theory of discrepant events. Let's get back to those soft drinks in the cooler. Why do some of the unopened soft drink cans float while others sink? Upon closer examination, we find that the floating cans contain a diet soft drink with artificial sweetener; the cans at the bottom contain regular soft drink sweetened with sugar. Even though all soft drinks are mostly water, the regular soft drink contains enough dissolved sugar that the combined contents and aluminum can make it more dense than water. On the other hand, since the artificial sweeteners used in the diet drink are hundreds of times sweeter than natural sugar, much less is used to sweeten the drink. The resultant drink with its container is less dense than water. This is just one example of a discrepant event which can be used to illustrate and



explain the wonderful world which God has created for us.

The most effective discrepant events are demonstrated using simple and familiar materials. There are some excellent books available (see the list at the end of this article) which keep teacher preparation time to a minimum. The activities suggested in these books are easy on the science budget because they utilize materials readily available in the local grocery or hardware store. The books also contain simple but complete explanations of the underlying concepts and suggestions for simple follow-up activities.

Discrepant events are easily used as part of a science lesson. In fact, an entire lesson may often be developed around a single discrepant event. Ideally, the student would experience the event as a hands-on activity. Since this is often not practical, a teacher may introduce the lesson with a demonstration. Throughout the demonstration, the teacher describes what is being done and what materials are being handled but avoids offering an explanation of why something is happening. At the same time, the teacher questions the

students to lead them in observation, measurement, hypothesizing, and other scientific processes. Once the students discover the concept illustrated by the discrepant event, their learning should be reinforced with other examples and applications from daily life.

The soft drink activity is an excellent way to introduce the concept of density at almost any grade level. One approach to using such activities is to have an area in the classroom where discrepant events may be prominently displayed and changed as needed. The discrepant soft drinks could be placed in a fish tank or some other large, transparent container filled with water. As soon as students see the contradiction of the floating and submerged cans, their curiosity is aroused, questions arise, and they form hypotheses to explain their observations. When the time for science class arrives, you won't need to get the attention of the group. You've already got it!

The use of discrepant events in teaching science is not done without a strong dose of courage. Sometimes even experienced teachers are reluctant to deviate from the textbook to venture into

new and unfamiliar territory in the complex and ever-changing world of scientific discovery. While such reluctance is understandable, it often prevents some very creative and effective teaching. With so many excellent resources available, the teacher can turn with confidence to the clear explanations of the activities they describe.

You will be encouraged by your own professional growth as you investigate new material and approaches to teaching. Even if you don't have the answers to all the questions which will inevitably arise, there is still much you can offer the inquisitive young student as you encourage her to do investigation and research on her own.

Studies by Suchman, Marlins, and Liem provide empirical evidence that an interactive teaching style which uses discrepant events increases student motivation, understanding, and retention of scientific concepts when com-

pared with methods in which activities are only discussed or read about (Liem 1987, xxxvii). The next time you teach a science lesson, try a discrepant event—your students will enjoy it, you will enjoy it, and it will be the start of a new chapter in the teaching of science for your classroom!

Resources

Adventures with Atoms and Molecules, Books I, II, III and IV by Mebane and Rybolt (each containing 30 experiments for young people)
Adventures with Rocks and Minerals by Barrow (30 geology experiments for young people)
Enslow Publishers, Inc.
Bloy St. and Ramsey Ave.
Box 777
Hillside, NJ 07205
Invitations to Science Inquiry, Second Edition by Liem. (400 discrepant events for teaching science classes)
Science Inquiry Enterprises
505 W. Madison Ave. No. 12
El Cajon, CA 92020

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Steven Thiesfeldt serves as an instructor of science and English at Martin Luther Preparatory School, Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin.

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The Case of the Missing Volunteers

You want me to do what?

Ramona Czer

Dear Teachers:

"Why don't more parents volunteer?" a school board member lamented to me the other day. "Is it because more mothers are working or is it just plain indifference?"

I started thinking about that, and I tried to make it personal: Why don't I volunteer more at school? Yes, it's time mostly. I work, but usually part-time, so it's certainly still possible. Am I indifferent? Resoundingly no! And I venture few parents are who care enough to send their children to a Lutheran elementary school. However, since I juggle many activities and responsibilities, the idea of spending an hour at school cutting out letters or drilling math facts does not inspire me to pick up the phone and say, "Use me as you wish."

What would inspire me? Maybe making volunteering more rewarding and more flexible. Often the traditional mother-helper program tried to relieve teachers from some of the busywork of teaching. Its goal was to serve teachers' needs—without considering the needs of the volunteers. That may have worked fine years ago, but unfortunately parents today no longer have time

for that. We want to give of ourselves at school, to serve God by serving his called workers; we want to feel involved, to know our children's daytime environment, and to hear a young voice squeal in the hall, "That's my mom!" But because we are fragmented, we must be very discriminating.

Maybe you're thinking, "So how can I make it more rewarding and more flexible?" Tap into our talents and interests, think of it as an enrichment program for your students rather than a way to minimize busywork, and hold off giving us a list of "Jobs I Need Help With" right away. It tends to stop us from thinking creatively.

Here's an idea. You might try inviting parents and interested members to a forum early in the year. Advertise it as brainstorming session for a Parent Enrichment Program. Your purpose that night would be to listen even more than to explain. Ask us about our jobs, our hobbies, our passions. Push a little so the most modest among us have to admit to knowledge or skills.

Then give us a few examples of how people could use their talents in inno-

vative ways: a nursing assistant sharing her experiences in a nursing home once a year, a pianist coming in weekly on her lunch break to play sonatinas, a computer buff tutoring a gifted student at home in the evenings.

Ideas like these will get us thinking and jabbering. Soon we'll be suggesting ideas to each other, expanding and combining them, and then asking you, "Hey, would this work?" Now would be a good time to hand us your list of suggested jobs. Some of us may want to help you with exactly that kind of thing, such as reading to children or drilling math facts. Some may want to be unobtrusive, others more vocal. Some may want to come in regularly, others only once a year. Now we understand what you mean by flexible, and we're imagining tasks that would be both rewarding and fit into our busy schedules.

Next please ask us to write down the idea that most interests us and give it to you. That makes us think it through. Tell us you'll get back to us to fine tune it and to see if we're ready to make a commitment. I suspect that with this approach, you'll make us feel that our talents and time are valued, and we will volunteer.

I also suspect you'll have your needs met more than you realize. Time may even be freed up for lesson planning, correcting, or a well-deserved cup of coffee. When a parent is passionate and committed to his time with the children, you won't need to offer much direction. He'll also be dependable. He'll keep the children's attention more easily and cut down on the need for intervention. He may even motivate

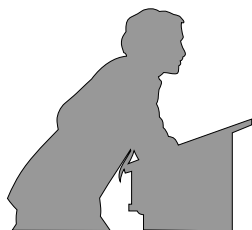
some of those hard-to-reach students just because he's "out of the system." (And if you'd still like your letters cut out, ask the children to do it after school. They'll be thrilled and do it with a passion that will make up for the jagged edges.)

It's not such a mystery that we aren't volunteering. We're afraid you won't take us on our own terms. We're afraid you have no need or interest in our specialties. Will you? Do you? Then ask us. Not only will you find your missing volunteers, but your students' lives may be enriched as well.

A Mother

Ramona Czer is a wife, mother, student, and writer living in New Ulm, Minnesota,





Profiles of Ministry: Ministry of Discipleship

Frederick J. Horn

Founded over 140 years ago, Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church is located in a non-transcultural, downtown Milwaukee neighborhood on a main East-side thoroughfare. The area of the city surrounding the beautiful and well-maintained church is undergoing a revitalization program including expensive apartment buildings, new office buildings, restaurants, hotels, and the theater district. With the freeway access, one can easily drive to Grace's front door.

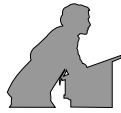
While 50% of the membership of Grace come from the immediate parish area, the remaining members commute to church from across the city, from the suburbs, and even from cities as far as 30-40 miles away. Because of the distance and the location, some members choose not to drive downtown in the city of Milwaukee for church activities which are offered at night.

Not only is the location of Grace Lutheran Church unique, but the Lord has seen fit to shower abundant blessings on Grace congregation throughout its history. Of the 545 baptized members, 15% are ages 0-18, 55% ages 18-46, 15% ages 46-69, and 15% ages 70+. The average Sunday attendance is 56%

with approximately 35-50 visitors per Sunday. While most are not first-time visitors, these new faces give promise for future growth at Grace. In the last several years, Grace has experienced rapid growth. From 1986 to 1992 there has been a 200% increase in Bible Class attendance, a 41% increase in total membership, and a 47% increase in average Sunday attendance.

Along with growth, existing needs of the congregation became more obvious and new needs were recognized. With today's world presenting more and more challenges for the Christian family, the members at Grace felt they must become stronger in the area of family ministry. Member ministry, that is members in volunteer ministry, also needed additional guidance and support. Anticipating further membership increases by the grace of God, the congregation saw a need to alleviate the increased workload of the pastor. Desiring a called worker with a teaching background, Grace began calling in January of 1991 for the position of Minister of Discipleship, a position that is unique in the WELS.

The main areas of responsibility for the minister of discipleship at Grace are five-fold.



First, he is responsible for monitoring and promoting a program of fellowship groups, organizations activities, and events such as church picnic, Easter breakfast, new member brunch, singles group, talent show, Advent and Lenten suppers, Grace German Fest, sporting events, tours, and senior outings. In these ways all members may enjoy a support network of Christian love and fellowship.

Second, the minister of discipleship is responsible for developing and maintaining a planned, integrated, and well-balanced program of family ministry. This includes the supervision of the Sunday school, teaching the youth group and public school children's instruction classes, and the development of opportunities to assist parents in the spiritual nurturing of their children and in their marriage and parenting skills. These are the keys to a balanced program of Christian growth in family ministry.

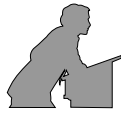
Third, the minister of discipleship participates in Grace's adult education program. He does this by offering an elective course during the Sunday morning adult Bible class hour and a course on Wednesday morning for seniors.

Fourth, he is responsible for coordinating the members in a volunteer ministry program which includes administration of the spiritual gifts and interest inventories of new and existing members. This involves maintaining a current list of volunteer roles and tasks available in the congregation. The minister of discipleship advises the council and committees in identifying and

recruiting volunteers for ministry roles and tasks and he develops position descriptions for each area. He maintains a current record of member involvement in these congregational activities. Volunteer ministry roles available to members of Grace include the following: recording and delivering taped worship services, maintaining a taxi squad for those unable to get to church, providing wheel chair assistance at Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Service, and serving as a Sunday school teacher, office helper, greeter, or on the altar guild. Fifty-eight such ministry opportunities are available to our members.

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*A ministry of
discipleship is a
special blessing
of God to the
church.*
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Finally, the minister of discipleship is an advisory member of the church council and all committees which are appropriate for his ministry emphases. He also assists the pastor with the distribution of the Lord's Supper and makes hospital calls and shut-in visits when the pastor is unavailable.



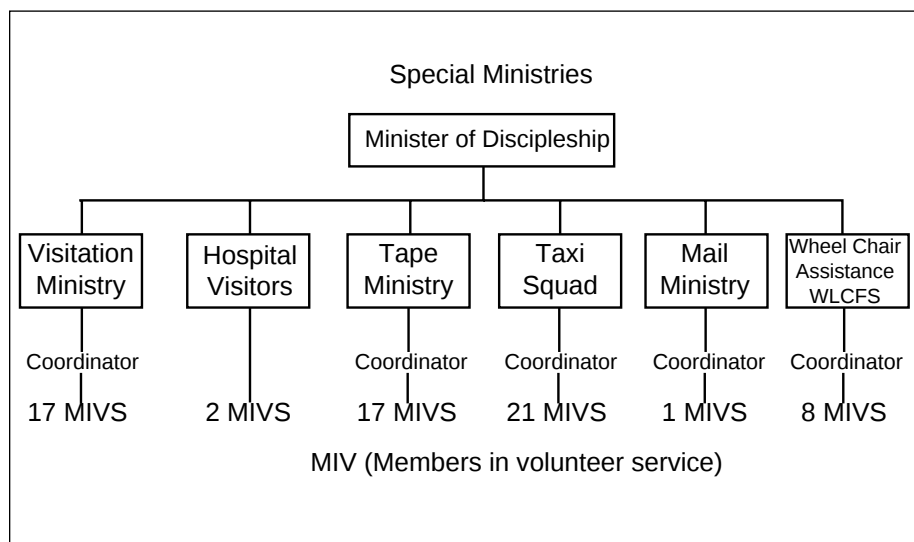
A typical Sunday for the minister of discipleship might be assisting with the Lord's Supper, presenting an adult Bible class between services, and supervising the Sunday school and tape ministry program. Weekdays are spent performing a variety of duties, some of which are seasonal. For example, during the Advent/ Christmas season, the minister of discipleship is responsible for church decorating, Sunday school Christmas Eve service and practices, Advent suppers and church "undecorating." Regular duties during the week include preparation of two Bible classes in addition to a special weekly class for a blind member, public school instruction classes, assimilation meetings with members, training members for service positions, organizing youth group activities and meetings, and planning for upcoming events. There really is not a

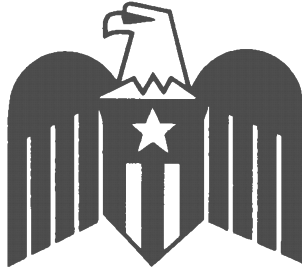
"typical" weekday such as a school teacher might have.

A ministry of discipleship is a special blessing of God to the church because it provides a special opportunity to serve many different kinds of people in a congregation, old and young, new members, and long-time members, in all kinds of settings. Such a ministry also emphasizes that the ministry can take different forms, all of which build up the church, the body of Christ.

The future, with God's help, does look bright at Grace. It is our hope and prayer that our gracious God will continue to use all ministry positions, both lay and called workers, for continued growth and expansion of his kingdom by the Means of Grace.

Frederick Horn has been the Minister of Discipleship at Grace Ev. Lutheran Church, Milwaukee, WI since August, 1991.





A Good Social Studies Textbook

A special review

Frederick H. Wulff

Text *The Story of America* by John Garraty (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1991)

Grade level: seventh and eighth grades

Scope: the first Americans to the present (1219 pages), divided into 10 units and 30 chapters

Ancillary Materials:

The Story of America Audio Program (11 tapes for student review); Annotated Teacher's Edition *Voices of America: Speeches and Documents* (1 tape); *The Story of America Workbook* (126 pages); *The Story of America Assessment Book* with tests and evaluation; *Creative Strategies for Teaching American History* (360 pages); *The Constitution: Past, Present, and Future* (114 pages); American History Map Transparencies (22) with thematic overlays and teacher's discussion guide; Art in American History Transparencies (49 transparencies); Art in American History Teacher's Discussion Guide with Worksheet (126 pages); Time line posters (2) illustrating important events in history

When the Social Studies Department of Dr. Martin Luther College hosted a symposium "Equipping the Saints for Citizenship through the Social Studies," we considered the concern for more substantive teaching of the social studies as advocated by the Bradley Commission. We also addressed ourselves to the various ways the objectives of social studies might be better achieved. After the New Ulm symposium, members of the division took mini-symposiums on the road to the various districts in the Synod. At one of these mini-symposiums in Wisconsin I was asked the question: "If we are to upgrade our teaching of social studies as advocated by the Bradley Commission, what would be good textbooks that would help us to meet those high standards?"

As I began my answer to that question, I started with the assumption that

the Bradley Commission was on track when they expressed dismay "that many school districts now allow optional classes, some called 'area studies' and with little history content, to substitute for the 8th grade course" (Commission 1988,3). I personally feel the eighth grade curriculum should meet stiff criteria. I also believe that to attain these criteria the selected text should lead to learning that reaches beyond the acquisition of useful facts to nurturing such habits of thought as are essential to the discipline of history.

To start off my quest for a "substantial text," I turned to the state of California. California has been in the forefront of the process to improve the social studies curriculum and encourage textbook reform. The Table of Commissioners who oversee the state curriculum and textbook adoption process accepted the recommendation of a state review panel which recommended

the Houghton Mifflin series for the lower and middle grades and Holt Rinehart's *The Story of America* for grades seven and eight. Sixteen other books, submitted by seven different publishers were rejected (Sewall 1990).

Other state commissions have come to the same conclusion. Among the six books adopted by Texas in 1991 was *The Story of America*. The South Carolina adoption was the most selective. Fourteen books were submitted to the state, including most of the major U.S. histories developed and introduced in the last two years. Among those adopted was *The Story of America* (American Textbook Council 1992).

What most distinguished *The Story of America* is its author, John Garraty. John Garraty of Columbia University has a national reputation as a historian and his college text has been used by more than five million college students. WELS teachers who have attended DMLC recently used his *The American Nation* (Seventh Edition) for the American Scene course. He also knows how to put together a text for the eighth grade. When the Organization of American Historians met in Reno, Nevada, in 1990, John Garraty was asked to present a major address on what makes a good history textbook. John Garraty is an Advisory Board member of the American Textbook Council, "a national consortium to advance the quality of textbooks and all instructional materials." He is also a member of the Organization of American Historians which has endorsed the efforts of the Bradley Commission.

Since a primary consideration for choosing a social studies textbook is scholarship, authorship and the use of

historians as consultants are very important. What we teach is more important than how we teach. John Garraty himself made use of 20 specialists who read portions of *The Story of America* in manuscript. Among the American history professors acknowledged are John Morton Blum, Arthur Link, Edmund Morgan, and Robert Remini.

The author as educator

The Story of America is not only scholarly, it is highly readable. Garraty's narrative is filled with anecdotes that will catch the students' interest. Throughout the book students are often asked to use their historical imagination and to place themselves in the roles of others. I believe that the liberal use of primary source quotes which bring students authentic voices from the past is a noteworthy strength that stirs the historical imagination. Garraty not only helps students understand America's past, he helps students develop basic study skills, critical thinking skills, and social participation skills. To this end he has 32 "Strategies for Success," each placed at a point in the text where it may be most appropriately applied. Strategies include map reading, reading a time line, and interpretation. Many of these strategies involve cooperative learning and student involvement.

The textbook is attractive with many beautiful and functional illustrations in color. Maps are uncluttered. Charts, tables, diagrams, and graphs have been designed for simplicity and clear presentation of new information.

The Annotated Teachers Edition has wide margins which surround a slightly reduced student text. Conveniently located here are many worthwhile sug-

gestions, including teaching resources, strategies for students with special needs, multimedia materials, chapter objectives, motivational activities, closure options, suggested homework assignments, and much more.

Treatment of Constitutional history

The Bradley Commission states, "Most obviously, an historical grasp of our common political vision is essential to liberty, equality, and justice in our multicultural society" (Commission 1988, 6). *The Story of America* meets that standard. Garraty gives appropriate attention to our western heritage and the development of the Constitution. He notes the connection of the contract theory of government, the separation of powers, and other political developments as having roots primarily in western Europe.

According to Professors Paul Cline and Anthony Eksterowicz (James Madison University), one of the most important topics covered in both American history and government textbooks is the struggle for and debate over the ratification of the Constitution. A major criticism of leading textbooks is that they devote very little attention to Antifederalist arguments and positions. These two professors wondered how historians would approach coverage of this debate in their textbooks. To answer the question, they examined 17 American history textbooks on the college, high school, and middle school level. The books studied included John Garraty's *The Story of America*. Others used in the comparative study were James Davidson and John Batchelor, *The American Nation* (Prentice Hall, 1990), Robert Divine, et

al. *American: The People and the Dream* (Scott Foresman, 1991), William Jacobs et al. *America's Story* (Houghton Mifflin, 1990), and Clarence Ver Steeg, *American Spirit* (Prentice Hall, 1990). The methodology of the study included looking at both manifest and latent content in the comparisons. Manifest content was determined by the number of citations included in sub-headings, captions, pictures, and cartoons. Latent content involved coding the quality of textbook treatment of Antifederalist arguments. In areas of comparison by paragraphs, pages, and balance, John Garraty's *The Story of America* outranked all of the others. The authors believe that "the failure to present in-depth coverage of both sides of the ratification debate is important because this debate largely defines our nation" (Cline and Eksterowicz 1992, 70-71). John Garraty's book had nine paragraphs with Antifederalist treatment and 12 paragraphs of Federalist treatment. I believe this study brought out a strength in Garraty's work.

Relating geography to history

The Bradley Commission states that students should "understand the relationship between geography and history as a matrix of time and place, and as context for events" (Commission 1988, 9). John Garraty draws upon the wisdom of Phillip Bacon, Professor Emeritus of Geography and Anthropology, University of Houston, as his geography consultant. Garraty can boast that in his text the vital influence of geography on the growth of the United States is a dominant theme. Every unit includes a two-page essay called "Linking History and Geography." These essays integrate

the themes of location, place, relationships within places, movement, and regions. There are more than 80 maps that are clear and colorful. Each map includes a learning from the map section. The set of transparencies has excellent maps, especially those that show the physical features of America.

Relating religion to history

The Bradley Commission sees as a “vital theme” for study “the several religious traditions that have contributed to the American heritage and to contemporary American society” (Commission 1988, 12). There can be no doubt that Christianity has played a major part in our nation’s story. I believe Garraty has not overlooked this in his text. Among American professional historians there is a striving for historical truth, a desire to make the narrative more faithful to the past we share. Recently historians have been encouraged to tell the “whole truth” with respect to the role of women and minorities. Yet, publishers and teachers of history have often been timid in attention to the sensitive area of religion—often no action at all has been the easier course.

When religion is excluded from American history the factual content is lost, says historian Edwin Gaustad: “With respect to chronicle of the past, religion is a datum and point of reference as omnipresent and inescapable as the rivers and the mountains, the laws and the courts, the trade routes and the labor unions, the political parties and the national presidents” (Gaustad 1992, 17). I believe Garraty shows balance and fairness in his treatment of religion in our history in *The Story of America*.

The treatment of women and minorities

The Bradley Commission resolved “That history can best be understood when the roles of all constituent parts of society are included; therefore the history of women, racial and ethnic minorities, and men and women of all classes and conditions should be integrated into historical instruction” (Commission 1988, 8).

The Story of America transparencies on works of art and worksheets on artists both incorporate the contributions of women and minorities. Besides good integration of material about minorities into the narrative of the text itself, there are special portfolios depicting the ethnic diversity of American society. The American Indian, West African, Hispanic, and Pacific heritages are all represented, each with four page illustrated essays. Women’s history and literature is woven into the narrative of the unit or lesson. Prominent women are also featured. As do virtually all textbooks, this one follows the guidelines for non-sexist language.

Creative strategies

The auxiliary materials are quite impressive. Teachers will find the manual “Creative Strategies for Teaching American History” very valuable. Obviously one may not use all 80 teaching strategies, but a teacher can incorporate wisely from the wide range of topics and activities. Most of the strategies involve cooperative learning in which students work toward a common goal. In his introduction Garraty does note that teachers should stress personal responsibility and individual accountability when making assignments.

Usually each worksheet, which may be duplicated for class use, provides historical background, a list of materials required, and suggested procedure. I was especially impressed with the liberal use of primary sources.

Another supplement is the manual "Art in American History" with a teacher's discussion guide and worksheets. This manual is to be used in conjunction with a set of beautiful transparencies depicting representative art works throughout our history. The quality of the transparencies is very good, capturing the colors well. The selections include not only the better-known artists like Homer and Remington, but also works of women and artists from various cultural backgrounds. Each worksheet gives essential background information on the artist and the work of art. An "Interdisciplinary Connections" section enables the teacher and students to place a piece of art in a historical context between art and social or historical development. These art lessons would work well integrated into the regular social studies class periods, since art reflects the physical, social, political, and cultural changes of a nation.

The time element and grade placement

If a Lutheran elementary school were to adopt this textbook with its rich resources and varied teaching/learning strategies, would the teacher need to allot a great deal of class time to the teaching of history? Yes! Social studies must have a prominent part in our daily schedule. The National Council for History Education, carrying the message from the Bradley Commission

and the National Commission on the Social Studies, is pressing for all teachers to be given the chance to teach quality history classes. In the chronological narrative of our country, the Council states there must be "frequent pauses for studies in depth," time to deal with "significant, compelling themes," and opportunities to "demonstrate the interdependence of history and the humanities." Garraty's text should be used over the course of seventh and eighth grade rather than just eighth, so we don't find ourselves "madly rushing from the Ice Age to the spring prom" (Gagnon 1991, 43).

Despite all the good features of this text, I do not advocate that the WELS school have an official text book for eighth grade. *The Story of America* has much to offer but each school should go through a curriculum review and textbook selection process. The American Textbook Council has announced it will release in late 1993 a standard of review for social studies textbooks. This guide to quality will review issues of content, style, and design. It will also include ratings of the major textbooks in history, geography, and civics. The guide will be distributed free of charge to subscribers of *Social Studies Review*¹ and it will be available for sale.

You may also wish to consult the *Data Book of Social Studies Materials and Resources*, edited by Leslie Hendrickson.² I also recommend *Current Directions in Social Studies*.³ Both will help you in the task of textbook selection. But without question, *The Story of America* merits a most careful consideration in your selection process.

Notes

¹ American Textbook Council, 475 Riverside Drive, Room 518, New York, New York 10115.

² Social Science Education Consortium, Inc., 855 Broadway, Boulder, Colorado 80302.

³ C. Frederick Risinger. *Current Directions in Social Studies*. Houghton-Mifflin, 1992.

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