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Editor — John R. Isch

Editorial Board — Irma R. McLean, Mark J. Lenz, Gerald J. Jacobson

Editorial correspondence and articles should be sent to *The Lutheran Educator*, Editor, Martin Luther College, 1995 Luther Court, New Ulm, MN 56073. Phone 507/354-8221. Fax 507/354-8225. e-mail: thelutheraneducator@wels-mlc.edu

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Good Manners

Twelve-year-old Richard and his two sisters, nine-year old Isabelle and seven-year-old Cornelia, were extremely polite. Without any coaxing from their parents they each came to shake hands and express a word of greeting. As we visited with their parents the three children brought us cookies and something to drink. I don't recall that they were asked to do so. They just did it. When it came time to say good-bye, each of the children again shook hands. We saw them a couple more times during our visit. Each time we were impressed by their politeness and good manners. Richard delighted in trying out his newly learned "high" German on us (he and his sisters normally speak Swiss German), and his face lit up each time we were able to communicate. Each of the children had a special parting gift for us. Richard wrote some poetry, and Isabelle and Cornelia each drew us a picture.

Richard, Isabelle, and Cornelia had not read Miss Manners' Guide to Excruciatingly Correct Behavior. Nor had their parents. The good manners they displayed (yes, their parents were just as polite and courteous) are part of their culture. In other respects Richard, Isabelle, and Cornelia were much like children anywhere. They laughed. (They could even get a bit giddy at times.) They teased one another. They played. They talked excitedly about the things that were important in their world. But when it came to manners, they stood out like shining beacons. And it all came naturally because that was the way they had been trained.

American culture differs from Swiss culture. For one thing there's not as much shaking of hands. But it's just as refreshing to see good manners on the part of children in this country as it is in Switzerland. How delightful it is when children offer a word of greeting instead of a grunt because their TV watching is being interrupted. How pleasant it is when children initiate a conversation instead of dashing off to play their favorite video game. How great it is when children willingly help around the house—even without being told. How wonderful it is to see children who are polite and ingratiating, and for whom such behavior comes naturally.

Such behavior does come naturally to children trained in the gospel. Because they love their Savior they don't want to do anything "out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility (to) consider others better than" themselves. They want to look "not only to their own interests, but also to the interests of others." They want their attitude to be "the same as that of Christ Jesus... who... made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant" (Php 2:3-7).

MJL

Science As Process

Paul L. Willems

Science involves hypothesis, testing, and theory. These are a part of the methods of science which we use to explore our world. This is science as process. As such, science strides along a path different from the one followed by the other academic subjects taught in our schools.

The foremost difference separating science from English, social studies, Spanish, or other subjects in our curriculum is that science is falsifiable (Gall-Mann, p. 78). Everything in science is up for debate and question. Science investigates the world in which we live by guessing (hypothesizing) and then testing its guesses through experimentation. If the tests correctly predict phenomena which can be observed, the results become part of the body of knowledge we call science if they correctly predict phenomena which can be observed. When observation contradicts prediction, science turns along another branch of its path in its pursuit of knowledge. Only a single contradictory observation is needed to falsify a statement of science. The assumption then is that scientists will change their minds when confronted with evidence contradicting their ideas. Science thus differs from other areas of learning. Yes, debate may rage among the other academic subjects, but it is debate among practitioners who differ in their opinion or debate among practitioners over interpretation. When Isaac Newton and Thomas Young disagreed in their theories of how changes in light speed caused refraction—Newton claiming light speed increased in denser materials and Young claiming it slowed—experimental evidence of the actual speed of light in denser materials demonstrated Newton's theory was

wrong. This is the falsifiability of science. When a spelling rule in English (e.g. "i" before "e" except after "c" or when sounded as "a" as in neighbor and weigh) has an exception, such as in the word "science," the rule is not abandoned. When a single exception to a rule in science is found, the rule is deemed false and a search for a more correct explanation is begun.

Science also differs from other academic pursuits in that it is psychological. If several theories are able to explain the same observable phenomenon, a person is tempted to state the theories must be equivalent. However, theories that have reached an end in that they cannot move from explaining what is currently understood to what is unknown are different from theories explaining the same phenomenon but which allow new hypothesis to be generated that lead to new understandings and original ideas (Schweiber, p. xxiv). Such theories, richer in potentialities and possibilities, lead where no one has gone before. Aristotle's theory explaining how heavier objects fall faster than lighter ones was more correct after the first second of fall than was Galileo's theory and could be easily demonstrated by simultaneously dropping a coin and a feather (March, pp. 20-21). (See Figure 1.)

The value of Galileo's theory, which stated that all objects fall at the same rate regardless of their weight *in the absence of air*, was that it permitted humans to consider what the absence of air meant. This lead to research in meteorology as the barometer was invented. It foreshadowed Newton's laws of motion because it raised the thought that air might slow objects that

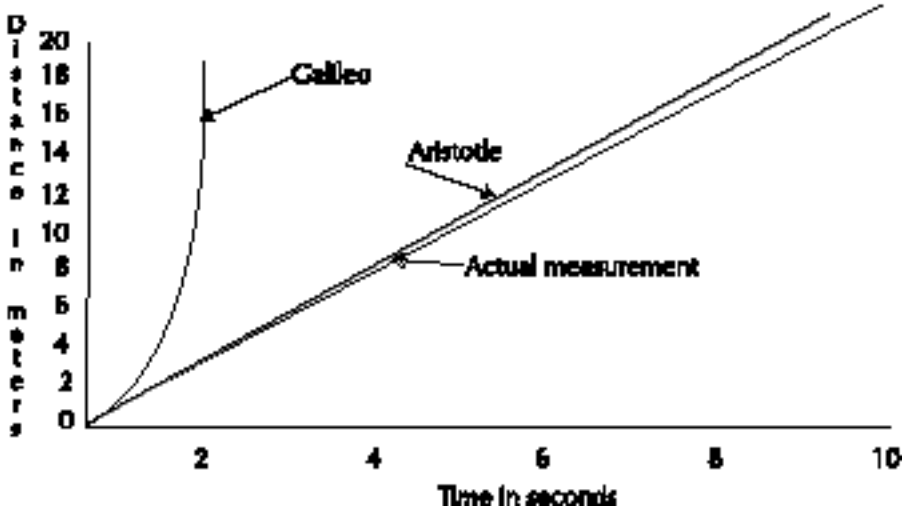

Figure 1 (March, p. 20, Fig. 5)

move through it. It also led to the chemical investigation of different gases, all of which had previously been assumed to be air. This psychological aspect of science is not often apparent nor appreciated by the casual student, but it is very real.

Since science is falsifiable and is psychological, then it follows that science can and does change. At times these changes in science appear to be as slight as changes occurring in a living language: "ain't" is now listed in the dictionary and "alright" has become a variant spelling of "all right." The general public has not yet recognized the change in gravity that Albert Einstein discovered in 1915. Isaac Newton's

$$F = G\frac{mm'}{d^2}$$

Figure 2: Newton

$$G_{\mu\nu} = 8\pi T_{\mu\nu}$$

Figure 3: Einstein

1616 theory that gravity was a force that acted at a distance in his equation (Figure 2) was replaced by Einstein's theory that gravity is space-time warped by the proximity of a large mass in his less-familiar equation (Figure 3) (Gell-Mann, p. 87-88). Science refuted Newton's theory. Gravity is not a force. However, because Newton's predictions were such close approximations to what can be observed, few people outside the fields of astronomy and physics comprehended or accepted this change. A second reason Einstein's theory of gravity remains obscure is that very few new ideas or improved technologies sprang from it during the 71 years since it replaced Newton's theory. Nevertheless, at other times, science changes abruptly and it becomes obvious to most people that the facts and laws framed by a new theory of science are different from the old. To the ancients it seemed the earth was stationary and the Sun, Moon and stars revolved around it. Claudius Ptolemy's

ARISTOTLE.—Museo Visconti.

theory of a geocentric system was held as science for almost two thousand years. But when the heliocentric theory of Nicholas Copernicus, who taught the earth was a planet moving around the Sun with the other planets, began to challenge the accepted geocentric views, people became involved with the debate. The Roman Catholic church and even Martin Luther and the famous contemporary astronomer, Tycho Brahe, took sides against Copernicus (Haber-Schaim, p. 106).

The heliocentric system was neither simpler to understand nor easier in its ability to calculate planetary positions than was the geocentric system, but the Copernican view was ultimately accepted because it opened new doors to science, doors that were not even recognized by the Ptolemaic theory. Soon the newly invented telescope discovered mountains on the Moon, phases in Venus, and dim stars vastly farther away than previously conceived. Thus people became aware of a change in science (Kuhn, p. 154ff).

This changing nature of science is recognized and accepted by scientists, but the media often give the illusion that science is a continuous accumulation of knowledge always moving closer to the truth and always better today than yesterday. A study of the history of science will show this is not the case. The abandonment of the phlogiston theory of burning for Antoine Lavoisier's oxygen theory of combustion and the change from the caloric theory of heat to the kinetic theory are examples of science changing in revolutionary ways.

This description of science as process may be a new concept to some, but it is how science works and how science has been permitted by God to allow our society to experience and enjoy the many technological advances we have today. If we, as teachers, are to pass this science on to our students, science must be taught differently than we teach other subjects. Science cannot be taught as directed reading in a science textbook. Science as process must involve investigation and inquiry. Science teachers must make use of demonstrations and laboratory investigations (Wise, p. 337). Today's science teachers generally accept the advice that science should be a hands-on student activity. Beakers and balances have replaced peanut butter jars and soda straws. Although the cost of science equipment may be a barrier to science education in some schools, the major difficulty in teaching science as process is the reluctance of teachers to accept science as a different way of thinking. As such, science teaching requires a different approach or a different philosophy in its teaching than does the teaching of other academic courses.

Today science no longer accepts authority as a basis for proof. It relies on experimental evidence. When scholasticism, whose method was argument and not experiment, dominated Medieval education, science stagnated. Aristotle, the ancient Greek experimental scientist, became Aristotle, the revered and respected ancient science expert. The written word was venerated and memorized rather than investigated. Teacher-dominated lectures took the place of student-centered exploration. In a determined effort to step away from appeals to authority the Royal Society of London adopted the motto, "Nullius in verba" in 1661 (Gell-Mann, p. 275). An English paraphrase may be written, "Don't believe anyone's words." This attitude is often not an easy one for teachers to accept in their students. It encourages doubt and skepticism in the classroom which, in turn, requires confident educators sure of their place in the classroom and not

intimidated by curious and challenging students who may be more fluent in some point of science than they are.

Because opinion and interpretation foster debate and/or cooperative learning activities in which everyone's opinion has equal value or where consensus is considered more important than precision, objective judgment is sometimes sacrificed. If such debates allow students to see order where there is only randomness, an error in human thinking will take place. When photographs of the surface of Mars reveal a vague resemblance to a human face or tragedies in the sea and air near Bermuda are treated as evidences of some higher extraterrestrial intelligence operating on our planet, then science as process suffers. People are frightened by unpredictability and the unaccountability of what they see in their world. But to disregard the fact that randomness exists, which is predicted by the mathematics of chaos and the limitations of quantum physics, and to disregard our sinful human abilities, which limit our understanding, provides a false sense of reality. If clear evidence is shown to refute such superstitions and yet students are allowed or even encouraged to cling to their private and illogical interpretations, we as educators have failed to educate our students in science as process. Conversely, when order is presented by clear observations and when people choose to see only randomness, another error in human thinking takes place. Hundreds of years ago scientists refused to accept observations which indicated rocks fell from the sky. Today we speak of such rocks as meteorites and look on as NASA uses the evidence of meteorites to forge a program of exploration to the planet Mars. Although Dr. Arthur Lintgen could look at the grooves of a phonograph record and identify its musical composition, few scientists accepted such a claim. They denied such order could be seen in record grooves. It is easy to see randomness rather than order in phenomena which we do not understand (Gell-Mann, pp. 275-289).

Science as process must be ready to accept experimental evidence and use it as the basis for its theories and laws. Japan was bombed with atomic weapons during World War II. This is a true statement but whether this was acceptable to the people of the United States is debatable. What was politically correct yesterday is not accepted today, and may change again tomorrow. The virtues of a poem about stars, the interpretation of a novel's deeper meaning, or the arrangement of a musical composition are also debatable. While

music, social studies, English, and other disciplines can function with such diversities of opinion and differences in interpretation, science cannot. Its way of thinking is different. It is based on objective evidence.

Science also embraces mathematics. Mathematics forms the basis for measurement, comparisons, and the verification of cause and effect, so important in experimentation. Mathematics has also become the international language of science and the best way to describe and model scientific ideas. To communicate the way in which liquid helium, cooled to near absolute zero (-459 F), behaves as a super fluid, without viscosity, lacking resistance to flowing, and being able to move up the inside of a beaker and down its outside to a table top defies a simple explanation using the English language and "pictures" of atoms. But by using equations involving the mathematics of quantum mechanics, a logical explanation of the phenomenon is possible (Sykes, p. 149). While words and pictures are inadequate to communicate the phenomenon, mathematics is not. This suggests that instructors who have not developed some mathematical sense will not be capable of fully appreciating science as process. Without such a common reverence and joy for mathematics shared by the doers of science and the teachers of science, a close community between them is difficult. If mathematics is important to science, we and our students need to become more familiar with the use of mathematics if we are to understand better science as process.

No, science cannot give all of the answers to the wonderful questions of who we are, where we are going, or the meaning of the universe. It is not designed for that purpose. Science is a human effort trying to find out more about the world in which we live. But as God, through science. reveals more and more about his creation, the more we can appreciate his work and the more wonderful it can become for us and for our students. For this reason science should be viewed and taught as process.

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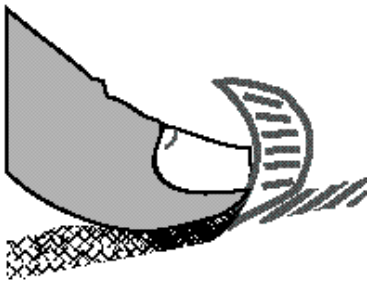
Paul L. Willems teaches at Minnesota Valley Lutheran High School, New Ulm, Minnesota.

Learning: Make It Stick

Patricia M. Grabitske



"Repetition is the mother of learning." How often this old adage pops into my mind as I teach and reteach a concept. Frequently, those words serve as a reminder to have patience. In today's busy, bustling, booming society there is so much to learn and so little time to learn it (or teach it), that everything we attempt seems to be to the rhythm of hurry, hurry, hurry. Wouldn't it be nice if Mother Repetition's labors could be shortened and made less painful? If only there were an easy way, a Velcro, to make learning stick in the brain and shorten the number of time-consuming repetitions.

Velcro is that wonderfully strong, flexible, adjustable material which fastens everything from shoes to spacesuits, from medical splints to suitcases. How wonderful it would be if we could use it to fasten lessons to the mind. Those lessons would stick tight for life, be flexible in their uses and applications, and adjust to any of a variety of situations to which they may need to be applied.

Ask yourself what it is that helps people to remember things. Mnemonic aids help. HOMES helps us remember the names of the five Great Lakes and ROY G BIV the colors of the spectrum. "My very educated mother just showed us nine planets" helps us remember the names and rankings of the planets in the solar system. Catechism students have long been taught the SOS of the Law and the gospel. Memory experts tell us to try to associate the names of people to whom we are introduced to some feature about that person. All these little memory tricks act like Velcro to make the learning stick.

Sometimes we use rhymes to help us remember information:

In fourteen hundred ninety-two
Columbus sailed the ocean blue.

That little ditty has been chanted by thousands of children and helps them remember an important date in our county's history. Even phonemic rules are put to rhyme:

I before E
Except after C
Or when sounded as A
As in neighbor or weigh.
When two vowels go walking
The first does the talking

or

Consonant y
Change it to i

Translate that power of rhyme to

Eight times eight fell on the floor
Picked it up; it's sixty-four!

This particular rhyme was born when a flashcard bearing the multiplication fact did indeed fall on the floor. The impromptu rhyme printed 8x8 indelibly on the minds of that particular group of children and every group since has also learned it, laughing and loving it, even though they have no knowledge of its origin. Humor and rhyme act like Velcro to make the learning stick, each bit of humor, or each little rhyme forming a story sticks in the mind.

Where can we find a Velcro for a larger percentage of our lessons?

Believe it or not, such an item exits! It cannot be ordered from any supply catalogue or purchased from a "teacher store" for any amount of money. In fact, this priceless tool for teachers and students alike is invisible to the naked eye, but very apparent to the mind. As priceless as this Velcro is, it is available absolutely free at the public library. The Velcro for learning is a story. That story may be in the form of a rhyme, a bit of humor, or a more lengthy work such as a picture book or a novel.

Tell a story to illustrate a point and the message sticks. Jesus, the master teacher, used stories to make things stick in the minds of his listeners. When he wanted to teach us to be kind and compassionate to all people, he told a story about a traveler who was mugged and left for dead along the roadside. So powerful is the lesson held in this story that the secular world refers to a kind-hearted, helpful person as a Good Samaritan and our lawmakers have enacted "Good Samaritan Laws" to protect those offering assistance. The lesson in kindness "sticks" to the Velcro of the story.

Aesop also dressed his lessons in the Velcro of a story. He personified animals and gave them the human traits of greed, deceit, and pride to make people see themselves more clearly, to recognize the undesirable motivations of the heart without embarrassing the listener. Think about the fox and the grapes, the crow and the water pitcher, and the little mouse released by the great and powerful lion on the absurd notion that he would one day be helped. The race between the tortoise and the hare carries such a profound message that reference to it is common in everyday speech. All these stories have a lesson which sticks to them as the two sides of Velcro hold together.

When the pastor climbs into the pulpit to teach his parishioners the truths of Scripture, he often reinforces a concept with an illustrative story taken from his family life or something he has read. Certainly his purpose is not to entertain the listeners. He knows the story he tells will help clarify the message he is preaching and make it stick in the minds of the parishioners.

I tell my students the tale of a warm and windy Easter Sunday when I left the windows of my house open just a crack to let in some of that warm spring air and then left for an afternoon of celebrating with the relatives. Upon our return that evening we found the entire

house coated with a fine layer of black dirt. The story brings responses of "Yuck," "Gross," and "Ick," but the students always remember the effect of wind erosion. The story acts as Velcro to make the learning stick.

All teachers have their favorite stories to share with their students. It comes so naturally that we don't even realize the power these tales possess to help the learning stick. Obviously none of us has the variety of experiences in his or her life to make personal stories serve as the Velcro for learning in the wide variety of lessons that must be taught during a school year. Therefore, if we wish to make use of story Velcro, we will need to borrow from the wealth of stories recorded in good literature. Authors write their tales for our enjoyment. The same accounts may be used for our edification or instruction, for the Velcro to make a lesson stick.

Many studen
Little House bo
Wilder. Challer
ple machines u
door and latch
Stout Doors" ir
Prairie.

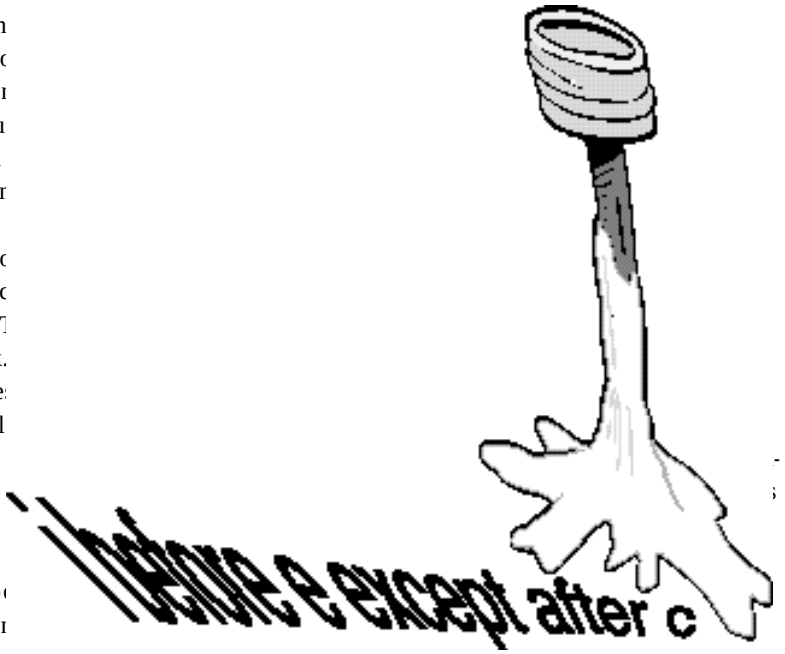
Read Lois Lo
and the injustic
mind forever. T
Velcro at work.

Eleanor Este
bears powerful
teasing and
the wisdom in
accepting all
people as indi-
viduals with sp
God-given taler

Primary teachers have long used the stories in big books and picture books to aid in the teaching of phonetic sounds, science concepts, and social studies units. They understand the power of the story in helping a concept stick in young minds. Older students may think they have outgrown picture books, but the alert educator will be able to find ways of using literature intended for the very young to teach a variety of lessons.

Pat Hutchins' *Rosie's Walk* is all of one sentence long, but it uses many prepositional phrases. The story is simple, but the concept of the prepositional phrase sticks in the learner's mind. It is unlikely that the author's purpose was to teach prepositions, but it can certainly be the instructor's purpose in using the book.

The Amelia Bedelia books make our children



> *The Velcro for learning is a story.*

intent. The teacher can expand that purpose to a study of idioms and use the stories as a Velcro to make the learning stick.

Cause and effect are sometimes difficult for the middle grade mind to grasp. Using the humor and story line of works such as Patricia Thomas' *"Stand Back," Said the Elephant, "I'm Going to Sneeze!"*, Lisa Westberg Peters' *When the Fly Flew In ...*, or *Because a Little Bug Went Ka-Choo!* by Rosetta Stone can utilize the added benefit of humor to the Velcro of the story. In each tale a humorous chain of events is set in motion by a seemingly inconsequential common occurrence. The causes and the hilarious effects stick like Velcro.

The list of lessons which might be taught through the use of the story is endless, and certainly there will be those concepts better learned or taught in other ways. Because the volume of knowledge available to people is expanding so rapidly and the time available in each day to master that knowledge remaining so constant, it seems only logical and a matter of good stewardship to make the best use of that time possible. If using the Velcro of the story makes the learning stick sooner or more durably, then we ought to use it whenever applicable.

Building a supply of story Velcro will undoubtedly take time, but if we keep this purpose in the backs of our minds as we read children's literature, the stockpile will grow steadily. Photocopies of the book cover with notes about possible applications are easily filed with manuals or unit plans for further reference. Many teacher's manuals now suggest titles of trade books which will help reinforce the lessons the text sets before the student. Normally both reference materials and picture books are included on these lists.

Repetition may be the mother of learning but if we are alert to the opportunities to use stories as the Velcro to make information stick, perhaps we can reduce the number of repetitions or the amount of time spent in the labor of learning and make that learning more enjoyable and memorable for the learner.

Pat Grabitske teaches at Trinity Lutheran School in Belle Plaine, MN.

> *We can make learning more enjoyable and memorable for the learner.*

Computer Curriculum K-8

Dawn J. Ferch

Rationale

A Lutheran elementary school has the mission to carry out the Lord's great commission to make disciples of all nations. In order to continue to make disciples of all nations, we must communicate effectively. Technology has advanced to a point where computers have become an integral part of effective communication.

Educators must also consider what is known about the learning process and investigate the tools and techniques available for assisting students in their learning. Just as we have moved from chalk and slates for each child to pencil or pen and paper, we must take the next step to computer-enhanced education.

Future demands on students and the community make it essential that an educated person be familiar with computer use and application. Graduates must be proficient at accessing, evaluating, and communicating information. Technology can enable the student to use resources that exist outside the school. For example, up-to-date maps and demographic data can be accessed inexpensively and instantly.

Computer technology can administer individualized lesson sequences that can serve students' individual needs. Other computer-based tools enable teachers quickly to generate individualized notes to parents, create lesson plans, keep records, and select instructional materials from a rich resource database.

A word of caution is necessary. Technology is never neutral. Its values and practices either support or subvert those of the organization into which it is placed. Computers are not necessary to improve the school, but to acquaint children with tools used at work or in the home. Computer education is part of their preparation for life-skills.

The model for computer use discussed here is the infusion model. In the infusion model, computer content is taught as a supplement relevant to material being covered in the regular curriculum. In the infusion model the computer seems to be most beneficial when ways are found to use it to support an existing curriculum.

Software by grades

The particular software to be used should determine the hardware which the school purchases. The software should also be tied directly to the curriculum of the school. The school should consider the availability of lab packs, site licenses, and network capability.

The computer software inventory is going to change and new programs will be purchased and others will be discarded. Any infusion curriculum of the

Kindergarten

Familiarity with terms–monitor, keyboard, disk, keys, mouse
Introduce directions–top, bottom, left, right
Introduce arrow keys and cursor movement
Simple games to improve eye-hand coordination
Simple games to practice skills of letter recognition, number recognition
Introduce word processing

Grades one and two

Review terms–monitor, keyboard, disk, keys, mouse
Reinforce Directionality–top, bottom, left, right
Use commercial software–word processing, math, phonics, reading, science, desk-top publishing, painting, drill and practice

Grades three and four

Introduce proper use of disks
More complex software
More sophisticated use of basic tools (collaborative software, spreadsheets)
Continue use of word processing
Spelling practice
Language practice–finding main idea of paragraph, grammar
Continue use of math software–basic facts of addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, money, fractions
Keyboarding
Retrieval of information on a disk/program
Geography skills
Interactive activities in any subject area

Grades five and six

Continue keyboarding skills
Introduction to a foreign language
Word processing–writing and editing reports
Geography–states, capitals, countries
English–grammar
Science–body parts
Problem-solving software
Computer ethics
Use of simulation software
Continue a more sophisticated use of tools
Begin using the Internet

Grades seven and eight

Keyboard understanding–able to type 20-25 wpm
Mastery of a word processing system
Mastery of a spreadsheeet
Mastery of a database
Writing a research paper on the computer
Integrating media into text
Research using the Internet
Understanding basic components of the computer hardware
Developing a school newspaper using the computer
Creative writing
Learning a foreign language

type described here would be out-dated as soon as it was written. Therefore the existing curriculum needs should determine the software. Individual classroom teachers and the coordinator should decide on the specific computer activities.

When teachers set up monthly, weekly, and daily lesson plans for computer-use strategies and when they make specific connections from the classroom to the computer lab, an infusion model of computer curriculum is in place. The teacher or coordinator will probably want to use a data-base to keep an inventory of software. Such a data-base could be updated easily.

Software will continue to change both in title and format. Naturally, the teacher and computer coordinator need to keep current on software.

The person choosing the software must always be aware of a possible "hidden curriculum" in the presentation of the software. Software should always be previewed by the teacher/coordinator before children are allowed to use it.

Kindergarten

The software selected should reinforce the concepts and skills developed at the kindergarten level.

Grades one and two

Word-processing will be very popular and useful for children to practice writing skills, reading skills, spelling, and creativity. Math software should be both concept and drill/practice oriented. Games will help develop critical thinking skills.

Grades three and four

Choose software that goes with the content of the curriculum. Continue to use word-processing, drill/practice. Collaborative software can be introduced for group projects.

Grades five and six

Content-based software will continue to be useful. Word-processing, drill/practice, collaborative software, and multi-media would be good choices.

Grades seven and eight

Use of the Internet, projects in subject-matter areas (those that are supported with general or specific software), electronic publishing, and multimedia are good choices for this level.

Staff Development

One of the first items on the staff development agenda will be to lay to rest the tendency to contrast the teaching effectiveness of a teacher with the effectiveness of a computer. There is no competition between computers as teachers and human beings as teachers. Computers are tools. They can enhance education. A good learning environment is active and self-directed. Teaching is not just telling. Technology has the potential to make such learning environments possible and practical. A computer is only one example of technology. Technology is a way of doing things. Before pencils, there was coal or chalk. Ballpoint pens represented new technology.

Teachers should be aware that the introduction of technology with its own built-in assessment will not just provide them with another tool; it may also force them to tailor the content and style of their teaching to suit the technology. The inclusion of technology education into teacher education will

require altering mind-sets. A series of sessions should be held to show the value of preservice and inservice training and workshops. This could include discussions of definitions of technology, past assumptions about technology, implications of a more comprehensive understanding of technology, and understanding what technologies as physical products really are.

One-shot inservice programs have very little effect on classroom practice. Staff development must be a continuous process and available to all teachers. It is necessary to begin with a minimum of 20 hours of training to start them off.

Teachers must have ready access to software and hardware that supports the curriculum in everything they teach. Teachers must have someone to model who will provide feedback and be available on an ongoing basis. In other words, they must be well-supported.

Teachers must consider what is known about the learning process as they investigate the tools and techniques available. Teachers have been using computers for creating puzzles, delivering instruction, assessing student progress, and producing reports. Computer technologies in the classroom may have increased, rather than decreased, the teachers' workloads. It is not surprising that many have the computer turned off most of the time. Changing this attitude and perception will take time.

A paradigm shift must occur. The question, "How can these new tools contribute to a more powerful educational experience?" must be asked. Teachers can begin using technology to determine the needs and design appropriate solutions for their students. Modern technology allows teachers to fulfill an age-old dream. We can indeed individualize instruction! We can also create simulations through which students can discover important relationships and construct new knowledge.

Acknowledgments

This curriculum was not a solo effort. I would like to thank the faculty and administration of Calvary Lutheran School; Jon Winkel, Kathy Baumann, Kathy Collyard, Sue Bivens, and Patty Bintz worked with me to establish the curriculum.

I also made contact with area high schools, both public and Lutheran (Mequon-Thiensville, Cedarburg, Grafton, Kettle Moraine Lutheran High School, Wisconsin Lutheran High School) who receive graduates of our Lutheran elementary school. I also discussed with their computer coordinators regarding computer use and skill levels which they expected of students entering their system.

I also researched the Internet, Concordia University Library, and periodicals available by subscription.

The rationale for the curriculum was adapted from secular curricula and integrated into the philosophy of Calvary Lutheran School.

Dawn Ferch teaches at Calvary Lutheran School, Thiensville, Wisconsin.

Gracious Uncertainty

Ramona M. Czer

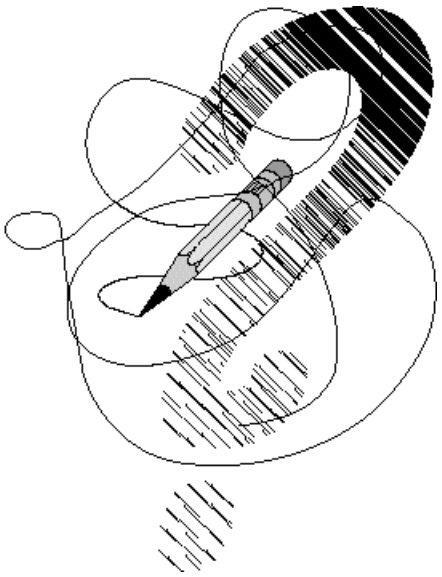
Dear Teachers,

Recently I watched a documentary on how Paul Simon created the songs on his *Brazil* album. It was a real struggle for him, trying to fit words and music to the drum patterns he heard. They didn't make any sense; they seemed so foreign and it frustrated him. But then he said to his interviewer, and to me thousands of miles away, that he realized "The act of discovery becomes what the work is about." Those simple words felt like a blow to my stomach. Yes, that's all it is, what I've been saying for years to my students, and what I still don't always "get" myself.

For years I've taught freshmen composition students how to write. I pump them up to believe they have something to say; yes, they can manipulate the English language, and, no, "correct" writing does not equal powerful writing. I lead them to scribble and mind-wander on paper, to explore ideas only half born with a sense of playfulness, and to throw out whole reams of junk that won't be immediately useful but were vital as a means of getting where they needed to go. It's funny how one has to tromp through forest undergrowth, get all scratched, muddy, bitten, and even lost, before you can hope to reach that sunny meadow of clarity and meaning hidden deep inside. Sure, you can play safe in parking lots and shopping malls, say what everybody else already knows, or you can become a real explorer of new places. "The act of discovery becomes what the work is about."

With their research papers, I also try to convince them they can be true researchers, not just parrots of somebody else's ideas. I long for them to believe it's okay to search and wonder and not know for most, if not all, of the time. They look at me like I'm crazy. "Don't you have to look smart, have all the answers, preferably before even reading the first article?" their whole demeanor implies. But I tell them over and over in as many different ways I

can muster, "How are we going to reach new heights if we don't climb on the shoulders of old thinking and theories and so get beyond them? We have to find new connections, make new guesses, think for ourselves." Sometimes, if it's a particularly bright group, I even tell them, "For me a paper where you don't prove your thesis, but struggle with all the complexities and contradictions honestly and imaginatively, is far better than a pat, focused, clear paper where you are so abundantly sure you're right." "The act of discovery becomes what the work is about."



My students are so uncomfortable or even hostile with this idea of mine, it occurred to me I should appeal to you. Maybe if they were exposed to it earlier, practiced it more down in the grades and in high school, they wouldn't take so long to convert. They wouldn't be so afraid of risk. This way of writing is risky. You may end up with something far different than you imagined, perhaps more honest or less conventional in form and tone than you or your teachers expected or like. You may turn out a less polished product, one ragged on the edges with new thoughts half formed. I say that's wonderful. The world doesn't need more polished but boring books, articles, lesson-plans, and committee reports that say the same old same old.

However, if you come to believe process matters over product, risk over sureness in writing, beware. That belief may filter down into your whole life. You may begin to let go and trust more in other realms, giving up the ambition to be perfect before you'll try anything new, giving up the need to lesson plan your whole day because the students' needs may lead you in a new direction, giving up your super-organized life for a little serendipity.

Oswald Chambers had a great thing to say about this philosophy as it applies to the spiritual realm:

> Certainty is the mark of the common-sense life: gracious uncertainty is the mark of the spiritual life. To be certain of God means that we are uncertain in all our ways, we do not know what a day may bring forth. This is generally said with a sigh of sadness, it should be rather

an expression of breathless expectation.

When I write, I love not quite knowing where I'm going. I love the feel of ideas being born one right after the other, naturally proceeding to a conclusion in a way I could not have reached until I reached it, bit by bit. I can always reorganize, focus, prune later—and I do—but the spirit of "breathless expectation" I feel as I write in this way is intoxicating. And my students rarely come to college having ever experienced it.

In fact, they think they not only have to plan their papers, but their whole futures as well. They want two cars, a house with a wrap-around deck and three VCRs, a spouse, a job—with unlimited income, month-long vacations, and no overtime—and two children, one male and one female. Yes, I realize this is partly youthful naiveté and the need the define their dreams, but it also reveals an overly strong desire to control their destiny, to bask in certainty, and never to have to live "the act of discovery becomes what the work is about." Faith isn't just a convenient accessory like a handbag. It's not even a whole outfit we can change out of when we begin to be fearful again. It's a new skin, a way of facing the world, an attitude of gracious uncertainty that believes in the God of grace to direct us.

I don't pretend I've got all this worked out yet myself. Sometimes I treat my own life like a poem that needs to fit a certain rhyme scheme perfectly or who would want it? But is it God-pleasing to be so focused on my longing to look perfect and seem wise when that means I never get around to true struggle and confusion and the search for deeper truths?

So here's a major research question I challenge all of us to explore: How can we learn to live and teach with gracious uncertainty, with not knowing where we're supposed to turn at each juncture, and absolutely not sure what the final destination should be? Then maybe we'll create projects and papers for our students that help them experience that kind of exploration too. The act of creation is wonderful adventure to bestow on students.

Let them delight for long periods of time in process over product, to feel the joy of discovering ideas, wordings, emotions they didn't know existed in their heads and hearts before, and then let them toss all this together in surprising ways, having a picnic of jumbly, rousing fun throwing food and Frisbees instead of the planned game of volleyball they'd envisioned. "The act of discovery becomes what the game is about." Life, and writing, doesn't have to be predictable and dull, a 40-hour work week. It can also be uncertain and playful, like that month-long vacation of their dreams.

A fellow-adventurer

Ramona Czer teaches at Bethany Luther College, Mankato, Minnesota.

The WELS Synodical Structure: Transparent Service

John R. Freese

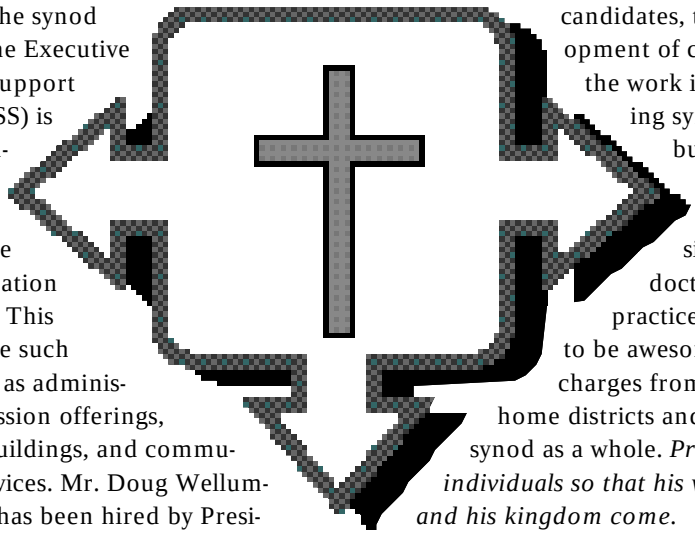
It is not the purpose of this article to discuss a new teaching technique, or to consider a new application of Scripture in our daily work as servants in the Kingdom of God. Instead, the purpose of this article is to inform our WELS teachers of the new structure adopted at the 1997 synod convention in Watertown, Wisconsin. Since the organizational structure of synod has an impact on all called workers, as well as generally all members of the synod, it is important to know how this structure is organized and what it is intended to accomplish under the blessings of God.

Through the grace and guidance of our heavenly Father, the former administrative structure of the WELS was a blessing to the synod. Workers who loved the Lord and cared for souls bought by Christ labored faithfully to fulfill the great commission. However, there were some gaps between and some areas of overlap among the Board of Trustees, the Coordinating Council, the Conference of Presidents, and the synod president. This sense of gap and overlap on occasion created uncertainty, resulting in time and other resources not being managed as efficiently and effectively as possible.

The new format dismisses with thanks the Board of Trustees and the Coordinating Council, clarifies the work and responsibility of synodical officers, and creates a Synodical Council to help guide and direct the work of the synod between conventions. It is the prayerful desire of all concerned with the faithful and pru-

dent guidance of the synod that this new structure be a blessing to the Wisconsin Synod and Christ's Kingdom.

Two administrative positions were reorganized to enhance the work of the synod president. The Executive Director of Support Services (EDSS) is asked to manage faithfully all matters relating to the physical operation of the synod. This would include such diverse areas as administration of mission offerings, budgeting, buildings, and communications services. Mr. Doug Wellumson recently has been hired by President Karl Gurgel to assume this responsibility. The second reorganized position is that of Vice President for Mission and Ministry (VPMM). Pastor Richard Lauersdorf recently has been called to this new position through the synod in convention. Pastor Lauersdorf is asked to manage faithfully all matters relating to the spiritual operation of the synod. This would include such diverse areas as administration of home and world missions, ministerial education, and parish services. Both men are charged with heavy responsibilities, the duty to report to and work with synod president Gurgel, and the need to facilitate Christ-centered communication throughout the synod. *Pray for these individuals, and all working in the synod administration, so that his will be done and his kingdom come.*



The Conference of Presidents, made up of the twelve district presidents, is still called upon to perform its crucial responsibilities. The assignment of preaching and teaching candidates, the development of call lists, the work in meeting synodical budgets, and the supervision of doctrine and practice continue to be awesome charges from their home districts and the synod as a whole. *Pray for these individuals so that his will be done and his kingdom come.*

The new Synodical Council also is given significant charges of responsibility. This group of twenty-one synod members from around the nation has the duty to help direct the work of the synod between the biennial conventions, to hear and react to the reports of synodical administrators and the Conference of Presidents, and to make necessary decisions regarding overall synod programs. While it certainly is not to "micro-manage" the work others have been hired and called to perform, this Synodical Council is to help support, coordinate, and pray for the God-pleasing labors of the WELS. *Pray for these individuals so that his will be done and his kingdom come.*

Significant adjustments have been made from the old Board of Trustees

and Coordinating Council to the new Synodical Council. As mentioned above, the Board of Trustees and the Coordinating Council have been dismissed with thanks. A layman from each of the twelve synodical districts will be among the twenty-one Synodical Council members. These men are to be selected by each district in regular district conventions. In this manner each district, and not the synod in convention, selects its own representative. Find out who your district representative is. Contact him with questions or concerns or encouragements. Listen for his reports at every possible opportunity (e.g., circuit meetings, conferences, and district conventions). *Pray for these individuals so that his will be done and his kingdom come.*

The chairmen of the four synodical boards for mission and ministry are also members of the new synodical Council. These would be the chairmen of the Board for Home Missions (Pastor Kenneth Gast—Madison, Wisconsin), the Board for Ministerial Education (Pastor Donald Sutton—Watertown, Wisconsin), the Board for Parish Services (Pastor Thomas Zarling—Sterling, Virginia), and the Board for World Missions (Pastor William Meier—Phoenix, Arizona). *Pray for these individuals so that his will be done and his kingdom come.*

Three members of the Conference of Presidents are selected, by that body, to be members of the Synodical Council. These men help facilitate information and communication between the Conference of Presidents, the districts, and the Synodical Council. These men are Pastor Joel Frank (Nebraska District), Pastor Douglas Engelbrecht (Northern Wisconsin District), and Pastor Warren Widmann (Pacific Northwest District). *Pray for these individuals so that his will be done and his kingdom come.*

Finally, two "at large" called workers are elected by the synod in convention. Pastor William Gabb (Watertown, Wisconsin) and Teacher John Freese (Wauwatosa, Wisconsin) were elected in the 1997 synod convention in Watertown. *Pray for these individuals so that his will be done and his kingdom come.*

By the grace of God, this new structure will be a blessing to the work Christ has set before his church. A priority that has been mentioned repeatedly in regard to the work of the Synodical Council is that this is to be transparent service. There are to be no hidden agendas, no special axes to grind, or any other such short-sighted endeavors. Transparent service means that this body will strive to communicate with the members of the synod, listen to input and suggestions, and consider concerns. Above all this Council is charged to work faithfully in the service of God, his called workers, and the precious lambs and sheep of his Kingdom. *Please, pray that through the faithful labors of all God's people his will be done and his kingdom come.*

John Freese teaches at Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Accommodating the Student With Special Needs

Alan M. Spurgin

When Jesus met with people throughout his public ministry, he did so with a particular openness. He did not set expectations, which was the custom of the Pharisees, rather he met the people where they were—at their place on the continuum of understanding and sanctification. He took the p
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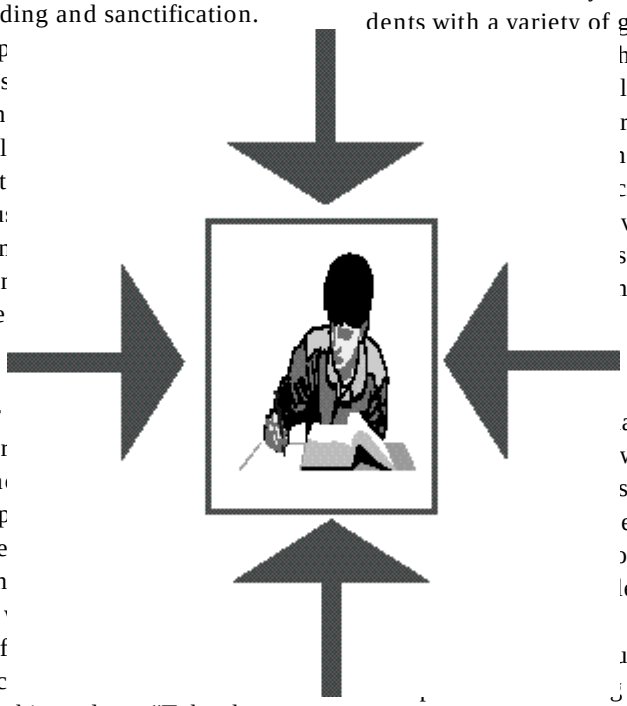

The same c
in the old teaching adage, "Take the child where he is and move him along as far as you can in his education." This presupposes that all children are at varying levels on the continuum of learning and abilities. Coupled with this is the philosophical viewpoint that all children can learn, but learn at different rate. The teacher must then make adjustments in the learning environment to meet the needs of the individual. Accommodations must be made to ensure each student is successful in learning.

Just as all people are unique, Lutheran elementary schools have students with a variety of gifts and abili-
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son to define what support the student will need. Teachers should (1) get to know the child and how he learns, (2) determine what is to be taught, and (3) know how they will teach the lesson. Additional factors to be considered when accommodating the student are (1) academic considerations (i.e., the

objectives or the test-taking time), (2) social skills assessment (whether the student works well individually or in groups), and (3) whether the accommodations were acceptable. After determining what are the best accommodations for the student with special needs, the teacher must have the time and money to implement those accommodations.

Accommodations take on different forms with four different options. The first option is changing the instructional grouping or arrangement. Often students with special needs have difficulty working in large groups or doing independent seat work. They find more success in small group work or with individualized instruction. The second option is changing the lesson Traditional lesson formats of lecture, demonstration, practice, or whole class instruction are difficult for the student with special needs. Students with special needs do better in experiential learning with active participation. The third option is to change the goals. For the child with special needs, the teacher may need to make the content less complex or change the sequence of the lesson. The teacher may alter the pace of the lesson, provide a variety of activities, and make shorter assignments. The fourth option is changing the teaching style. The teacher may need to give more prompts or cues to the student with special needs as well as providing verbal and written instructions. Teachers need to be very specific in giving directions and may need to use more physical guidance.

It is helpful periodically to evaluate the classroom practices to discover potential difficulties. Evaluation of accommodations should lead to the enhancement of learner participation and teacher interaction with the students.

Following are specific suggestions for accommodations for students with special needs. The suggestions are in categories of increasing student participation in large group instruction, textual accommodations, sequencing or assignment completion, following instructions, and test-taking skills.

Increasing student participation in large group instruction:

- Think, Pair, Share—After posing a question in class, ask the students to find a partner, make eye contact, share their response to the question, and remember their partner's response.
- KWL—What kids know, what they want to know, and what they've learned)_At the beginning of a unit, students travel to charts posted around the room and write or draw their current knowledge on the subject on the charts. There can be resources by the charts for easy reference guides. At the end of the activity, students can again use the charts to record new knowledge and change incorrect information.
- Free-write, free-tell, or write alongs—Stop an activity for five minutes and have students write or tell you about any item that confused them, what they've learned, and their questions.

Textual accommodations:

- Give students an advanced organizer. This is also used for review or

for homework.
- Preteach students vocabulary words in the context in which they will be read.
- Tape record the text. Recorded text segments should be clear and short. Your may want to provide an overview of the selection. Also, give the reader page numbers, and summarize important information periodically.
- Teach textbook structure (heading, subheadings, differing print, introductory and summary paragraphs).
- Teach active reading—The student reads a paragraph, covers it, and recites the main point and important information in his or her own words.
- Highlight important information.
- Give students a partial outline, which is to be completed while reading, of important information, .
- Pair question numbers from a study guide with page numbers on which the information is found.

Sequencing or assignment completion:
- Break up tasks into workable and obtainable steps and include due dates.
- Provide examples and specific steps to accomplish the task.
- List or post requirements necessary to complete each assignment.
- Check assignments frequently.
- Arrange for the student to have a "study buddy" in each subject area.
- Define all requirements of a completed activity.

Following directions:
- Get the student's attention before giving directions.
- Use alerting cues.
- Give oral and written directions.
- Give one direction at a time. Quietly repeat the directions to the student after they have been given to the entire class.
- Check for understanding by having the student repeat the directions.
- Place general methods of operation and expectations on charts displayed around the room or on sheets in the student's notebook.

Test taking skills;
- Allow extra time for testing.
- Teach test-taking skills and strategies.
- Give alternative forms of the test: oral, essay, short answer, multiple choice, fill in the blank.
- Use clear, readable, and uncluttered test forms.
- Provide a scribe.
- Allow students to take tests on the computer.
- Give students the opportunity to practice with the accommodations before the test.

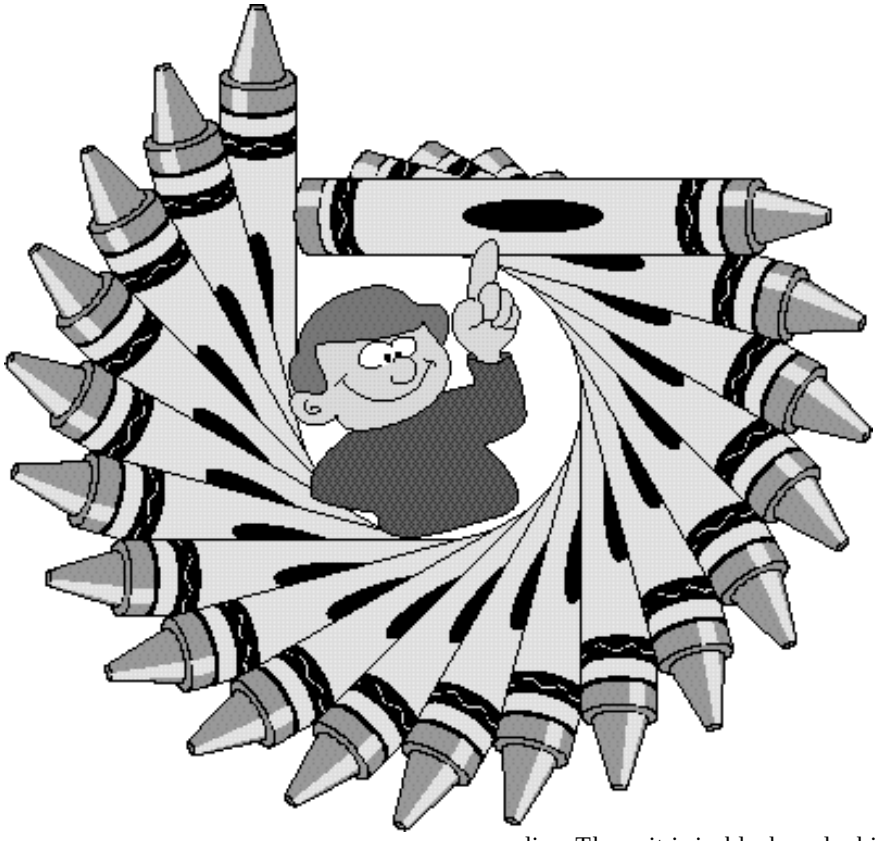
More accommodations are found at the Council for Exceptional Children's web site: http://www.cec.sped.org/nwmenu.htm.

Much of the information in this article was taken from the September 1997, *Council for Exceptional Children Today Newsletter.*

Alan Spurgin is currently on leave of absence from Martin Luther College to pursue doctoral studies at the University of South Dakota at Vermillion, S.D.

Consider the Value of Coloring

Rachel Tacke



I just received my daughter's first grade school supply list. I can't think of anything that sparks the excitement for school as much as that list. I wonder what kinds of images spin through her head as she scans the list for exciting supplies. Pens and notebooks grab attention. Eyes settle on art supplies. There it is in black and white: glue and crayons.

Remember the smell of a fresh box of crayons? And all those colorful tips: smooth, round, circles all lined up in perfect rows. As a parent and teacher I appreciate the renewed excitement that a single box of crayons can produce. But as tips are worn down and paper

wrappings are peeled away by need, the excitement diminishes. Next thing you know it's two o'clock on a rainy fall afternoon and the directions of the next assignment are to color the seven objects that look alike.

As a teacher one of my goals is to make the continuing learning process exciting and meaningful. This can be accomplished by expanding on the teaching process. How does this work on a rainy fall afternoon when there are still three first grade worksheets to get through?

Expectations and variety are two ways you can deal with the coloring dilemma. Let your students know your coloring expectations. Do you expect neat penmanship? Coloring should hold the same expectations. When I consider "doing all to the glory of God," it takes me beyond how I dress, speak, and act. It shines through in paper tasks also. Neatness counts.

Neatness takes time. Take a moment as a teacher. Color the Bible history assignment yourself. Then do the reading enrichment worksheet followed by the math coloring page. A typical morning in a first grade classroom can include all of these. How long was your moment? How neatly were you coloring by the time you reached the math page? Expectations should be monitored by the teacher so crayon overload isn't experienced. Consider changing the directions on the assignments to accommodate your neatness expectations.

Variety can add life to the commonplace. Teach coloring as an art. Outlining, layering colors, and using the edge of a crayon are typical variations. Add the options of pointillism and coloring in patterns. Take a look at impressionists like Monet and Degas. Discuss how small short strokes of varying color placed side-by-side add excitement. Find a portrait by Chuck Close and try his approach to color. Show how you can make instant patterns by "drawing" stripes and designs heavily with a light color. Then color over these patterns very lightly with a darker color. Teach how values exist in coloring. Take several very light, neatly colored pictures and put them on one side of the room. Have your class view them, squinting, from the opposite side of the room. The pictures all but disappear. Show them how the pressure they use when coloring changes the intensity of the resulting picture. Learn how "value" and "tone" add a touch of realism to pictures. In other words, open up the possibilities.

A new box of crayons, a familiar smell at an exciting time of year! Keep that excitement alive with the possibilities that coloring can bring. Remove the idea that there is a "correct" way to color. Instead, with high expectations, open a box yourself. Spice up your classroom with a little variety. Color with your kids.

Rachel Tacke teaches art at Evergreen Lutheran High School in Des Moines, Washington

Sunday School—
Who's Going to Do Something About It?

Gerald F. Kastens

The wheel is about to fall off. But, since it is not squeaking, nobody is paying any attention. The silently failing wheel of WELS ministry is the Sunday school.

Sunday school has always been a ministry conducted mainly by dedicated and faithful lay members. As men and women spend more and more time working and covet their shrinking leisure time, volunteerism has plummeted. Sunday schools are hurting for the lack of full time teachers.

As pressure mounts on pastors to be public relations experts, counselors, adult teachers, ministry trainers, and outreach gurus, they have increasingly less time to devote to preparing Sunday school teachers. Sunday school gets a low priority.

Along with the lack of pastoral attention, Sunday school gets less and less ownership from church leaders. It does not get on the agenda.

Also, owing in part to the lack of pastoral attention, there is a declining commitment to solid curricular materials. As supervision falls almost entirely into the hands of untrained lay people, concern about doctrinal integrity gives way to affordability and glitz.

Because Sunday school teachers are unwilling to give up time in addition to classroom teaching time, there is less attention paid to teaching methodology, law/gospel division, and discipline.

Less than a third of our Sunday school educated children remain with the church past their early 20s. Because the pastor and leaders divert their attention from youth nurture and teachers are not personally involved, recruitment and follow-up of delinquent parents are not happening in most of our parishes.

Poor learning environments greet many of our Sunday school children. Room dividers separate children's classrooms. Sunday school teachers compete for equipment and space in Lutheran elementary schools. Others share balcony lofts and damp basements. Good teaching materials are lacking.

Congregations with a Lutheran elementary school give almost no administrative or budget attention to Sunday school.

Lutheran elementary schools fail to view Sunday schools as a partner in Christian education.

Most congregations expect their Sunday schools to fund their own bud-

gets. Sunday school classrooms and equipment are not figured in church budget or building plans.

Dedicated parents are satisfied that their children merely attend Sunday school and confirmation instruction. They are not a part of the teaching process and have not looked closely at why their Sunday school exists.

Less dedicated parents do not want home visits or closer scrutiny of their worship habits. They are happy with the spiritual status quo.

To parents and the church God has given a charge; a millstone awaits those who offend (Lk 17:2).

A spiritual call to revitalize the Sunday school

Who's going to do something about it? The welfare and importance of the Sunday school's ministry are everyone's business, especially Lutheran elementary school teachers. Our Savior's words found in the Great Commission (Mt 28:18-20) are at the heart of this spiritual call. It was also Jesus who said "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them" (Lk 18:16).

As disciples of Jesus Christ, we have the means to solve our problems. We have the gospel. Sharing the gospel is the task of every believer. It's our task as Lutheran teachers to see to it that the gospel is clearly proclaimed in every nurturing endeavor of our congregations.

Sunday school opens many ministry doors in Lutheran congregations.

- It addresses a large majority of WELS children (59%).
- Sunday schools work within existing structures and draw on known and proven concepts of children's ministry.
- It is a key entry point for members into part-time public ministry.
- Sunday school provides a natural approach to dealing with weak members.
- It opens new doors to adult spiritual growth.
- It provides an entry point for new members.
- When done well, it creates an interest in full-time Christian education.
- Sunday school is central to continuity with cradle roll, preschool, catechism, and ministry to teenagers.
- Christ-Light will get parents on board through greater involvement.
- It offers an avenue for enriching family and devotional life.

Today's families are looking to the church for assistance in nurturing the faith of children. In past generations it was the norm for spiritual training to take place primarily in the home, then to be supplemented by the church. Today we cannot make that assumption. The majority of this generation of parents are dual income or single parents who have more demands made on their time than ever before. They feel stressed and they lack time and experience for nurturing faith. Parents may want to teach God's Word to their children, but they don't know how. Still others do not know Jesus Christ as their Savior. It is imperative that the church respond by creating strong programs of spiritual training for all children and their parents. The implication for WELS churches is that they must inten-

tionally plan for ministry to children, and provide programs and staff to develop a variety of strong ministry programs which reach children and assist parents.

What are the starting points?

Review what God says about the nurture of children.

Begin with personal, ongoing commitment to the mission and role of Sunday school in the ministry of your congregation. The current situation didn't happen overnight. See the long view. Realize that turning things around requires a commitment for the long haul.

Work within existing structures.

Most congregations have the key people and basic resources to get the job done. Above all be sure that there is a board of governance dedicated to planning and carrying out the ministry of the Sunday school. Secure a superintendent who is fully committed and equipped for the task. Tie into the cradle roll, preschool, Lutheran elementary school, catechetical instruction, and teen ministry of the congregation. Pray about it.

Know why your Sunday school exists.

Develop a vision for Sunday school that is based upon careful, prayerful planning. Begin by knowing the mission. A mission statement is a purpose statement which defines the nature of your work and the people it serves. Everyone who shares your mission should have a part in studying and formulating a mission statement. Begin by discussing the underlying spiritual values. Discuss Christ's commission to his church then define the role of Sunday school in carrying out Christ's command. Your mission statement should be distinct enough so that it could be used by no other ministry group. Sometimes objectives are attached to a mission statement. Objectives outline the mission with categories for major ongoing efforts. A well-written mission statement directs and prioritizes ministry planning for the Sunday school.

Know where you are at.

Establish a starting point for determining how your Sunday school is doing. Determine where you are in carrying out your stated mission. (1) What ministry has God enabled us to do in line with his mission? (2) What blessings do we have from God for carrying out his mission? (3) What gifts do we lack? Where have we sinned or failed? (4) How may the world, the devil, and my own sinful flesh oppose our mission for the Lord? (5) What opportunities has God placed before us for future ministry to children and parents?

Know where you are going.

Set long range goals for your Sunday school. Long range goals indicate what, under God, we intend to do or be at some defined future date. A list of long range goals specifies (Specific) what (Measure) we intend to do (Attainable) by the grace of God (Realistic) without dictating how God must bless our efforts. They should be both challenging and realistic. Setting a priority (Timed) among your long range goals for Sunday school will avoid the mistake of trying to do more than our God given resources and energy can accom-

plish. Also, examine your goals for cause and effect. Which must come first because they are basic building blocks for subsequent goals?

Plan how to get there.

Plan to attain your goals. Divide the time between your starting point and your long range goals into equal parts. Set an overall strategy for strengthening Sunday school by determining what and how much must be done during each segment of time in order to attain the goals that you have prioritized. Then, within each segment of planning prepare a detailed short range plan for the activities through which you will carry out the congregation's strategy.

Meet the challenge head-on.

In spite of the many unanswered questions that haunt the issue at hand, we cannot afford to simply mark time with the wonderful blessings in Christian education that God has seen fit to bless us in the past. Rather it is time for congregations to focus on their nurturing efforts through the Sunday school and determine what is. And ultimately, create a vision for the future and what can be.

There are no "quick fixes" to the problems. Ours is a ministry of the Word; that finally is the divine strategy which God would have us carry out faithfully so that every child and family might have the assurance of eternal life.

Gerald F. Kastens is the Administrator for the Commission of Youth Discipleship in the Division of Parish Services.

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