

An Essential Skills Level Adult Sabbath School Teacher Enrichment Course

This Enrichment Training Course was prepared for the Adult Ministries Department  
of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America

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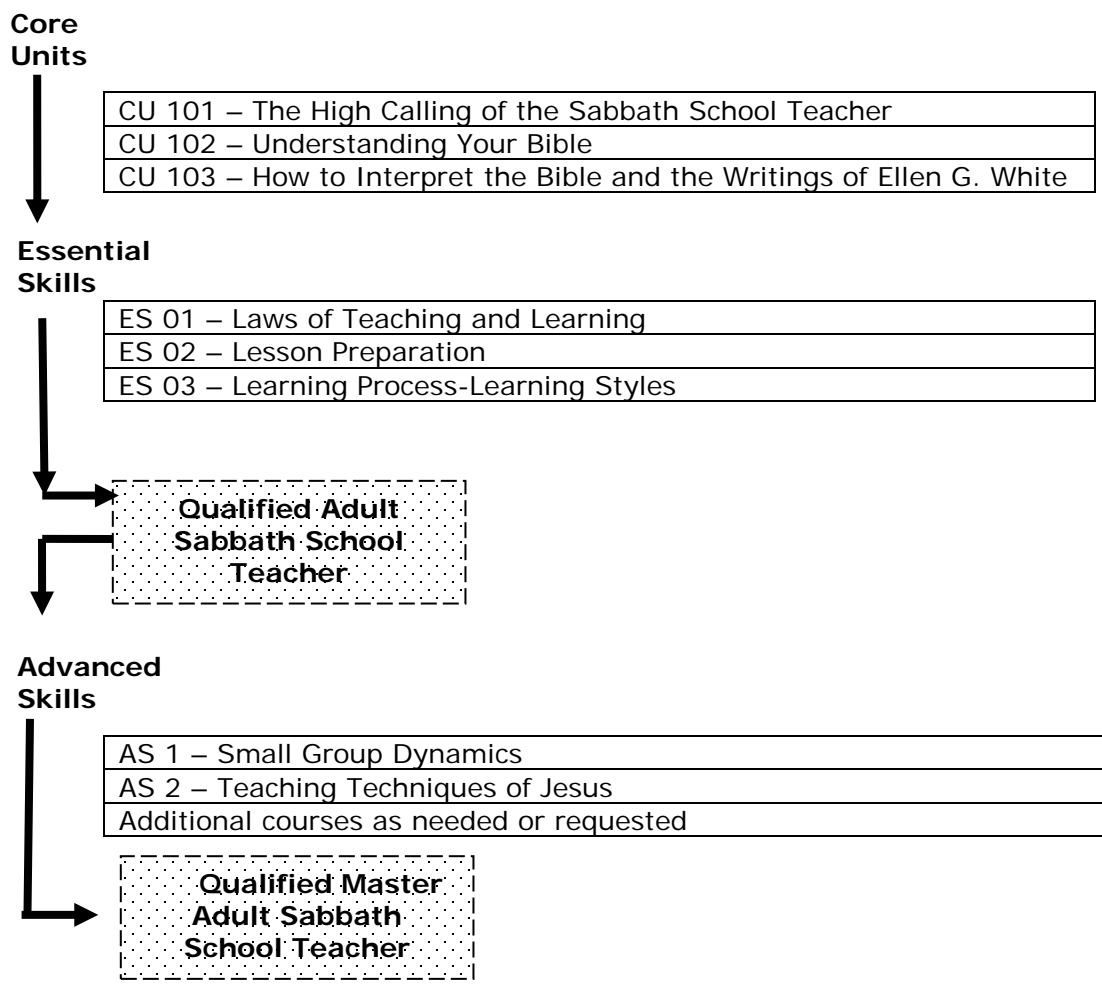
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## A North American Division Adult Ministries Sponsored Essential Skills Level Adult Sabbath School Teacher Training Course

The Adult Ministries Department of the North American Division sponsors a curriculum for the enrichment of Adult Sabbath School teacher/discussion leaders. This curriculum has three levels of teacher enrichment. All the courses are available online at [www.nadadultministries.org](http://www.nadadultministries.org).

These courses are all self-contained units and do not have to be studied in sequence. However, if you wish to obtain either the "Qualified Adult Sabbath School Teacher" or "Qualified Master Adult Sabbath School Teacher" *Certificates of Accomplishment* you must complete all the previous courses in the curriculum outline.

### North American Division Sabbath School Teacher's Qualification Process and Curriculum



# Laws of Teaching and Learning

## A North American Division Adult Ministries Sponsored Essential Skills Level Adult Sabbath School Teacher Training Course

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### Course Description

The mission of the adult Sabbath School teacher is founded on three cornerstones: being, knowing, and doing.

- “Being” means that an adult Sabbath School teacher must have a valid and perceptible Christian experience, and be prepared to serve as a spiritual guide for her or his class.
- “Knowing” means that a Sabbath School teacher must know what the Bible says and have a significant understanding of biblical history, doctrines, and teachings, and know how to study and interpret the Scriptures.
- “Doing” means that a Sabbath School teacher must have a knowledge of teaching methodology and be willing to invest the time and energy necessary to adequately prepare and lead a Sabbath School class.

This class on *Laws of Teaching and Learning* is a combination of knowing and doing. A teacher who knows his or her subject well, and follows systematic procedures in preparing the lesson, must also have the skills and knowledge about how to present the lesson effectively.

There are certain laws of learning that apply to Sabbath School classes. Adults learn in certain ways, but the basic principles of learning are the same for all age groups.

A key statement from Ellen G. White gives us a starting point. This statement is directed toward teaching children, but the principles stated apply equally to adults. (For “blackboards,” read PowerPoint®, etc.):

“Our Sabbath schools should be made more interesting. The public schools have of late years greatly improved their methods of teaching. Object lessons, pictures, and blackboards are used to make difficult lessons clear. . . . Just so may present truth be simplified and made intensely interesting”—*Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p. 114.

This statement tells us three things: (1) people learn when something is interesting and gets their attention; (2) people learn more when they can “see” or be involved in some activity than when information is just presented orally, and (3) it is worthwhile to study teaching technology.

## How to Study This Course

This is one of the online courses sponsored by the Adult Ministries Department of the North American Division. When you finish this course, you will receive an *Affirmation of Course Completion* indicating that you have satisfactorily finished this course.

This course is both theoretical and practical. It is composed of a course outline, selected readings, and assignment sheets.

You can download the material if you prefer to study from a printed copy. You can also study it directly on the screen if that is your preference.

This course includes a number of rather extensive Readings. It is suggested that you download these Readings, study them carefully, and underline or highlight salient points.

### Vocabulary

**Teacher/discussion leader.** In North American Division churches, it is customary to use two terms for the position traditionally known as a Sabbath School teacher: (1) "Teacher" and, (2) "Discussion Leader." The reason for the dual terms is that the title of "teacher" is too often taken to be a synonym for "lecturer." A Sabbath School teacher is supposed to be a facilitator who motivates class members to participate in the study and discussion of the lesson. Thus the use of the two titles as a motivating factor to help both teacher and class members understand the ideal role of this Sabbath School leadership team member. Both titles often appear in this course as "teacher/discussion leader."

Teacher enhancement training materials and reading assignments almost always use the term "teacher," so please remember that in terms of how the position is supposed to function, "teacher" and "discussion leader" mean the same thing.

**Church/district.** Many churches in the North American Division belong to an extended family known as a district. This is usually because the local conference can only finance one pastor for various churches. Because this type of arrangement is common, and often the churches in a district cooperate in sponsoring training programs, etc. the term "church/district" is used in this course.

### Textbook

There is no textbook for this course. Study carefully the included readings. The course is based on the book by John Milton Gregory, *The Seven Laws of Teaching* (New York: Pilgrim Press). This book has been reprinted many times by Baker Book House and is available in its original form for download [HERE](#).

### Student Fulfillment Card

At the end of this Study Guide you will find a Student Fulfillment Card. This is the record you will forward to the Adult Ministries Department of the North American Division) to receive your "Certificate of Completion" via the website [www.nadadultministries.org](http://www.nadadultministries.org).

### Types of Study Locations

- If you are studying this class on your own, this online Study Guide will indicate the readings and assignments that you should complete. These contain question-and-answer sheets you can print out. They identify the important points of the readings and units of study. It is very important to fill in these sheets. They are your way of knowing how you are doing in the class.

- If you are studying in a classroom-type setting, an instructor will lead you through various participatory activities.

- If you are studying in a small group, ideas are included for those studying in this environment.

- There are no examinations scheduled for this class, unless an individual instructor decides to use them.

## **Course Introduction**

This course, *Laws of Teaching and Learning*, is a combination of “doing” and “knowing.” It outlines the basic elements that need to be included in the presentation and application of the teaching and learning process. The course is based on a series of seven laws of teaching and learning developed by a Christian educator named John Milton Gregory. Gregory was a committed Christian educator in the nineteenth century. While these “laws” were articulated many years ago, they are still valid and useful because they cover the basic processes by which learning takes place. The course deals with how these laws are essential for both teaching and learning in Adult Sabbath School. The style of Gregory’s 1890s English is somewhat outdated, but the thoughts come through adequately.

### **Why Is This Class Important?**

- It is important to know and understand the teaching processes (methods) that enhance learning. The closer a teacher/discussion leader sticks to these essential processes, the more the class members will learn, regardless of the topic or Bible book being studied.
- It is important for the teacher/discussion leader to integrate these learning procedures in his or her teaching plan for the quarter so that the class members will learn, understand and retain the subject matter and application of the topic or Bible book being studied.
- It is important because when these processes are applied the class members will take much more interest in studying the topic or Bible book being studied.

### **Course Objectives**

- Review and comprehend the seven laws of teaching and learning in the Sabbath School class environment.
- Evaluate these seven laws of teaching and learning in terms of their application to an adult Sabbath School class.
- Develop a plan to use these laws in adult Sabbath School classes.

# UNIT 1

## Laws of Teaching and Learning Outlined

Like some other authors we have studied, the background sources for this course often focused on children and young people, but the principles of learning apply equally to adults.

In this Unit, we will see how they can be used in adult Sabbath School teaching. As we study these laws, ask yourself how you can apply them in your Sabbath School class.

The seven laws are:

1. The Law of the Teacher
2. The Law of the Learner
3. The Law of Language
4. The Law of the Lesson
5. The Law of the Teaching Process
6. The Law of the Learning Process
7. The Law of Review and Application

### The Learning Philosophy Behind the Laws

There are essential elements in every full and complete act of teaching. Whether the lesson be a single fact told in three minutes, or a lecture occupying as many hours, the seven factors are all present, if the work is effective. None of them can be omitted, and no others need be added. If there is a true science of teaching, it must be found in the laws and relations of these seven factors.

Teaching in its simplest sense, is the communication of experience. This experience may consist of facts, truths, doctrines, ideas, or ideals, or it may consist of the processes or skills of an art. It may be taught by the use of words, by signs, by objects, by actions, or by examples; but whatever the substance, the mode, or the aim of the teaching, the act itself, fundamentally considered, is always substantially the same: it is a communication of experience. It is painting in the mind of another the picture in one's own—the shaping of the thought and understanding to the comprehension of some truth which the teacher knows and wishes to communicate. Further on we shall see that the word "communication" is used here, not in the sense of the transmission of a mental something from one person to another, but rather in the sense of helping another to reproduce the same experience and thus to make it common to the two.

**Before you begin your study of these seven laws, study Readings 1 and 2 to get an Adventist perspective on some of the issues discussed in this course.**

## Reading 1

# Methods of Teaching

From Ellen G White, *Education*, chapter 26, pp. 230-239.

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For ages education has had to do chiefly with the memory. This faculty has been taxed to the utmost, while the other mental powers have not been correspondingly developed. Students have spent their time in laboriously crowding the mind with knowledge, very little of which could be utilized. The mind thus burdened with that which it cannot digest and assimilate is weakened; it becomes incapable of vigorous, self-reliant effort, and is content to depend on the judgment and perception of others.

Seeing the evils of this method, some have gone to another extreme. In their view, man needs only to develop that which is within him. Such education leads the student to self-sufficiency, thus cutting him off from the source of true knowledge and power.

The education that consists in the training of the memory, tending to discourage independent thought, has a moral bearing which is too little appreciated. As the student sacrifices the power to reason and judge for himself, he becomes incapable of discriminating between truth and error, and falls an easy prey to deception. He is easily led to follow tradition and custom.

It is a fact widely ignored, though never without danger, that error rarely appears for what it really is. It is by mingling with or attaching itself to truth that it gains acceptance. The eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil caused the ruin of our first parents, and the acceptance of a mingling of good and evil is the ruin of men and women today. The mind that depends upon the judgment of others is certain, sooner or later, to be misled.

The power to discriminate between right and wrong we can possess only through individual dependence upon God. Each for himself is to learn from Him through His word. Our reasoning powers were given us for use, and God desires them to be exercised. "Come now, and let us reason together" (Isaiah 1:18), He invites us. In reliance upon Him we may have wisdom to "refuse the evil, and choose the good." Isaiah 7:15; James 1:5.

In all true teaching the personal element is essential. Christ in His teaching dealt with men individually. It was by personal contact and association that He trained the Twelve. It was in private, often to but one listener, that He gave His most precious instruction. To the honored rabbi at the night conference on the Mount of Olives, to the despised woman at the well of Sychar, He opened His richest treasures; for in these hearers He discerned the impressible heart, the open mind, the receptive spirit. Even the crowd that so often thronged His steps was not to Christ an indiscriminate mass of human beings. He spoke directly to every mind and appealed to every heart. He watched the faces of His hearers, marked the lighting up of the countenance, the quick, responsive glance, which told that truth had reached the soul; and there vibrated in His heart the answering chord of sympathetic joy.

Christ discerned the possibilities in every human being. He was not turned aside by an unpromising exterior or by unfavorable surroundings. He called Matthew from the tollbooth, and Peter and his brethren from the fishing boat, to learn of Him.

The same personal interest, the same attention to individual development, are needed in educational work today. Many apparently unpromising youth are richly endowed with talents that are put to no use. Their faculties lie hidden because of a lack of discernment on the part of their educators. In many a boy or girl outwardly as unattractive as a rough-hewn stone, may be found precious material that will stand the test of heat and storm and pressure. The true educator, keeping in view what his pupils may become, will recognize the value of the material upon which he is working. He will take a personal interest in each pupil

and will seek to develop all his powers. However imperfect, every effort to conform to right principles will be encouraged.

Every youth should be taught the necessity and the power of application. Upon this, far more than upon genius or talent, does success depend. Without application the most brilliant talents avail little, while with rightly directed effort persons of very ordinary natural abilities have accomplished wonders. And genius, at whose achievements we marvel, is almost invariably united with untiring, concentrated effort.

The youth should be taught to aim at the development of all their faculties, the weaker as well as the stronger. With many there is a disposition to restrict their study to certain lines, for which they have a natural liking. This error should be guarded against. The natural aptitudes indicate the direction of the lifework, and, when legitimate, should be carefully cultivated. At the same time, it must be kept in mind that a well-balanced character and efficient work in any line depend, to a great degree, on that symmetrical development which is the result of thorough, all-round training.

The teacher should constantly aim at simplicity and effectiveness. He should teach largely by illustration, and even in dealing with older pupils should be careful to make every explanation plain and clear. Many pupils well advanced in years are but children in understanding.

An important element in educational work is enthusiasm. On this point there is a useful suggestion in a remark once made by a celebrated actor. The archbishop of Canterbury had put to him the question why actors in a play affect their audiences so powerfully by speaking of things imaginary, while ministers of the gospel often affect theirs so little by speaking of things real. "With due submission to your grace," replied the actor, "permit me to say that the reason is plain: It lies in the power of enthusiasm. We on the stage speak of things imaginary as if they were real, and you in the pulpit speak of things real as if they were imaginary."

The teacher in his work is dealing with things real, and he should speak of them with all the force and enthusiasm which a knowledge of their reality and importance can inspire.

Every teacher should see to it that his work tends to definite results. Before attempting to teach a subject, he should have a distinct plan in mind, and should know just what he desires to accomplish. He should not rest satisfied with the presentation of any subject until the student understands the principle involved, perceives its truth, and is able to state clearly what he has learned.

So long as the great purpose of education is kept in view, the youth should be encouraged to advance just as far as their capabilities will permit. But before taking up the higher branches of study, let them master the lower. This is too often neglected. Even among students in the higher schools and the colleges there is great deficiency in knowledge of the common branches of education. Many students devote their time to higher mathematics when they are incapable of keeping simple accounts. Many study elocution with a view to acquiring the graces of oratory when they are unable to read in an intelligible and impressive manner. Many who have finished the study of rhetoric fail in the composition and spelling of an ordinary letter.

A thorough knowledge of the essentials of education should be not only the condition of admission to a higher course, but the constant test for continuance and advancement.

And in every branch of education there are objects to be gained more important than those secured by mere technical knowledge. Take language, for example. More important than the acquirement of foreign languages, living or dead, is the ability to write and speak one's mother tongue with ease and accuracy; but no training gained through a knowledge of grammatical rules can compare in importance with the study of language from a higher point of view. With this study, to a great degree, is bound up life's weal or woe.

The chief requisite of language is that it be pure and kind and true-- "the outward expression of an inward grace." God says: "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any



praise, think on these things." Philippians 4:8. And if such are the thoughts, such will be the expression.

The best school for this language study is the home; but since the work of the home is so often neglected, it devolves on the teacher to aid his pupils in forming right habits of speech.

The teacher can do much to discourage that evil habit, the curse of the community, the neighborhood, and the home--the habit of backbiting, gossip, ungenerous criticism. In this no pains should be spared. Impress upon the students the fact that this habit reveals a lack of culture and refinement and of true goodness of heart; it unfits one both for the society of the truly cultured and refined in this world and for association with the holy ones of heaven.

We think with horror of the cannibal who feasts on the still warm and trembling flesh of his victim; but are the results of even this practice more terrible than are the agony and ruin caused by misrepresenting motive, blackening reputation, dissecting character? Let the children, and the youth as well, learn what God says about these things:

"Death and life are in the power of the tongue." Proverbs 18:21.

In Scripture, backbiters are classed with "haters of God," with "inventors of evil things," with those who are "without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful," "full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity." It is "the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death." Romans 1:30, 31, 29, 32. He whom God accounts a citizen of Zion is he that "speaketh the truth in his heart;" "that backbiteth not with his tongue," "nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor." Psalm 15:2, 3.

God's word condemns also the use of those meaningless phrases and expletives that border on profanity. It condemns the deceptive compliments, the evasions of truth, the exaggerations, the misrepresentations in trade, that are current in society and in the business world. "Let your speech be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: and whatsoever is more than these is of the evil one." Matthew 5:37, R.V.

"As a madman who casteth firebrands, arrows, and death, so is the man that deceiveth his neighbor, and saith, Am not I in sport?" Proverbs 26:18, 19.

Closely allied to gossip is the covert insinuation, the sly innuendo, by which the unclean in heart seek to insinuate the evil they dare not openly express. Every approach to these practices the youth should be taught to shun as they would shun the leprosy.

In the use of language there is perhaps no error that old and young are more ready to pass over lightly in themselves than hasty, impatient speech. They think it a sufficient excuse to plead, "I was off my guard, and did not really mean what I said." But God's word does not treat it lightly. The Scripture says:

"Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words? there is more hope of a fool than of him." Proverbs 29:20.

"He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls." Proverbs 25:28.

In one moment, by the hasty, passionate, careless [BEGIN P.237] tongue, may be wrought evil that a whole lifetime's repentance cannot undo. Oh, the hearts that are broken, the friends estranged, the lives wrecked, by the harsh, hasty words of those who might have brought help and healing!

"There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is health." Proverbs 12:18.

One of the characteristics that should be especially cherished and cultivated in every child is that self-forgetfulness which imparts to the life such an unconscious grace. Of all excellences of character this is one of the most beautiful, and for every true lifework it is one of the qualifications most essential.

Children need appreciation, sympathy, and encouragement, but care should be taken not to foster in them a love of praise. It is not wise to give them special notice, or to repeat before them their clever sayings. The parent or teacher who keeps in view the true ideal of character and the possibilities of achievement, cannot cherish or encourage self-sufficiency. He will not encourage in the youth the desire or effort to display their ability or proficiency.

He who looks higher than himself will be humble; yet he will possess a dignity that is not abashed or disconcerted by outward display or human greatness.

It is not by arbitrary law or rule that the graces of character are developed. It is by dwelling in the atmosphere of the pure, the noble, the true. And wherever there is purity of heart and nobleness of character, it will be revealed in purity and nobleness of action and of speech. {Ed 237.4}

"He that loveth pureness of heart, for the grace of his lips the King shall be his friend."  
Proverbs 22: 11.

As with language, so with every other study; it may be so conducted that it will tend to the strengthening and upbuilding of character.

Of no study is this true to a greater degree than of history. Let it be considered from the divine point of view.

As too often taught, history is little more than a record of the rise and fall of kings, the intrigues of courts, the victories and defeats of armies--a story of ambition and greed, of deception, cruelty, and bloodshed. Thus taught, its results cannot but be detrimental. The heart-sickening reiteration of crimes and atrocities, the enormities, the cruelties portrayed, plant seeds that in many lives bring forth fruit in a harvest of evil.

Far better is it to learn, in the light of God's word, the causes that govern the rise and fall of kingdoms. Let the youth study these records, and see how the true prosperity of nations has been bound up with an acceptance of the divine principles. Let him study the history of the great reformatory movements, and see how often these principles, though despised and hated, their advocates brought to the dungeon and the scaffold, have through these very sacrifices triumphed.

Such study will give broad, comprehensive views of life. It will help the youth to understand something of its relations and dependencies, how wonderfully we are bound together in the great brotherhood of society and nations, and to how great an extent the oppression or degradation of one member means loss to all.

In the study of figures the work should be made practical. Let every youth and every child be taught, not merely to solve imaginary problems, but to keep an accurate account of his own income and outgoes. Let him learn the right use of money by using it. Whether supplied by their parents or by their own earnings, let boys and girls learn to select and purchase their own clothing, their books, and other necessities; and by keeping an account of their expenses they will learn, as they could learn in no other way, the value and the use of money. This training will help them to distinguish true economy from niggardliness on the one hand and prodigality on the other. Rightly directed it will encourage habits of benevolence. It will aid the youth in learning to give, not from the mere impulse of the moment, as their feelings are stirred, but regularly and systematically.

In this way every study may become an aid in the solution of that greatest of all problems, the training of men and women for the best discharge of life's responsibilities.

## Reading 2

# The Science of Teaching

Chapter 7 in *Teaching Teachers to Teach*  
(General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists)

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*The Adventist-produced book, Teaching Teachers to Teach, mentions the same laws of teaching as Gregory's book under different titles. It is designed for use by Seventh-day Adventist audiences. The principles are the same, but some elements of teaching are amplified. Gregory's book is quoted and/or referred to throughout the book. The author often focuses on children and youth, but the principles of teaching are the same for adults.*

"There are sacred responsibilities entrusted to Sabbath-school workers, and the Sabbath school should be in the place where, through a living connection with God, men and women, youth and children, may be so fitted up that they shall be a strength and blessing to the church. They should help the church upward and onward, as far as it lies in their ability, going from strength to greater strength."—*Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p. 11.

### **I—The Object of Sabbath-School Teaching**

Teaching is the science of imparting knowledge to cause to learn or to acquire skill. "This knowledge may be a fact, a truth, a doctrine of religion, a precept of morals, a story of life, or the processes of an art. It may be taught by the use of words, by signs, by objects, by actions, or examples; and the teaching may have for its object instruction or impression—the training of mind, the increase of intelligence, the implantation of principles, or the formation of character; but whatever the substance, the mode, or the aim of the teaching, the act itself, fundamentally considered, is always substantially the same: it is a communication of knowledge. It is the painting in another's mind the mental picture of one's own—the shaping of a pupil's thought and understanding to the comprehension of some truth which the teacher knows and wishes to communicate."—Gregory, *The Seven Laws of Teaching*, pp. 2, 3.

1. To TEACH THE BIBLE. Teaching the Bible involves the same pedagogical principles that are basic to academic instruction. Bible teaching, however, deals with the development of character through the impartation of Bible knowledge. Character is the product of interest and purpose intelligently created by information. Fundamental Christian ideals grow from spiritually intimate personal association. When these principles are implanted and spiritual impressions are transferred to the plastic soul and deepened by word and life, the pupil will be led to seek after knowledge.

The endeavor of all Sabbath-school teachers should be to know truth and the methods of imparting truth so thoroughly that the knowledge they hold and the methods of imparting may be so helpful that their work shall be done even better than the teaching of everyday subjects in day school.

2. To DEVELOP CHARACTER. The Sabbath-school teacher has as the supreme objective of his instruction the development of a life and character patterned after the character of Jesus Christ. The methods of teaching in the Sabbath school must, therefore, transcend those dealing simply with information or mental and manual training. Someone has said, "Teaching is taking one living idea at a time from one's own mind and planting it so it will grow in the mind of another." Teaching, however, cannot impart to the child a religious nature; it can only develop the religious nature which the child possesses. Every child is

born with certain elements which form the foundation of his intellectual, his social, and his religious natures. The inborn feelings of awe, reverence, and dependence are the foundations of his religious life. These elements can be developed into faith, hope, and love, which Paul says are the most permanent elements in the Christian character. While it is true that the child is thus naturally religious, *he is not by nature a Christian*. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." John 3 : 6. "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual." 1 Corinthians 15 : 46. It is the duty, therefore, of the teacher to train, instruct, and lead the child to Christ and to the development of Christian character.

3. To **INSPIRE TO SERVICE**. The teacher of a Sabbath-school class has a group ready-made, prepared, and waiting for instruction. None are compelled to be there. They have come to be instructed, guided, helped, and strengthened for Christian life and service. It is a group that will be found in no other department of the church. They are there not merely to listen, but to have an active part in the discussion of truth, to learn how to become better and more active Christians. The teacher, if he is alive to his responsibility, has in the membership of his Sabbath-school class a group of servants of the Master, men and women, young and old, who are seeking to find the most effective means of representing Him whose name they bear. Yet it requires tact to lead to a knowledge of truth, and still greater tact to enlist the service of one to whom truth has been taught in making known that truth to his fellow men.

4. To **RESULT IN REGENERATION**. Soul-winning teaching will result in regeneration. Sabbath-school teachers teach truth, but with the teaching there must be the appeal to respond to the truth's message. True Sabbath-school teachers, then, are at once educators and evangelists. It is their sacred privilege not only to make truth clear to the minds of the pupils, but also to instill that truth into their very lives, so that it becomes the fundamental principle of every activity. God has promised His Spirit to aid every teacher in this sacred task of teaching—this taking of the things of Christ and revealing them to the students. As an appeal to the pupils is made that they should allow the truth to work in their hearts, the Holy Spirit will carry conviction to their hearts and minds, and there will be joy in their salvation. As a rule, such an appeal will be personal rather than public, a heart-to-heart invitation to surrender the life to be molded by the Master Teacher.

Because of its spiritual character, the work of a Sabbath-school teacher is more outstandingly important than that of the day-school teacher. In dealing with spiritual matters, hearts are involved not alone for today but also for eternity. The teaching work done by the Sabbath-school teacher may become the holding force that will keep the soul of the pupil in the hour of temptation, of trial, persecution, or affliction; hence, the teacher should know truth not only practically, but also historically. He should know the best methods of imparting that truth to others, lest, through weakness or ineffectiveness, his work fall to the ground and a soul be eternally lost.

A knowledge of the Scriptures is fundamental to Christian living and the development of a Christian character, but one may be a careful student of the Bible for years and never give allegiance to God or accept Christ as Lord and Master. Sabbath-school teachers must show their pupils the beauty and force of truth as revealed in the lessons from the Bible, so that the understanding of the pupil is enlightened; and then at the proper time an appeal for him to respond to the truth by letting its power operate in his own life will accomplish results hardly dreamed of by many Sabbath-school teachers.

## **II—LAWS OF TEACHING**

The same laws which are basic to academic pedagogy underlie Bible teaching.

1. **THE LAW OF ADAPTATION**. The mind can receive new knowledge only through ideas which are already known. Teachers must therefore adapt the lesson to be taught, so that it will connect with and be illustrated by the present knowledge and experience of the pupil.

This fundamental law requires the recognition of an equally basic principle, that is, "The language used in teaching must be common to teacher and learner."

Facts already known to the pupil form a vehicle in which some idea travels into a new mental development, so that the mind itself reaches forward to a larger attainment. Comparison and illustration also enter largely into the use of adaptation in the teaching art. New material may be compared to, or illustrated by, stories from Scripture, nature, geography, or secular history with which the pupil is familiar. New experiences may be compared or contrasted with past experiences in the pupil's life. The efficient teacher knows how useless it is to present new material which cannot be connected with, or illustrated by, something the pupil already knows. If the pupil has lived all his life in a great city, and has never had opportunity to learn the simple processes of agriculture, the lesson contained in the parable of the sower will mean little or nothing to him. If he is to learn that lesson at all, it must be interpreted to him through illustrations common to his own experience. Christ always framed His parables to meet the comprehension of His hearers. Thus the truths of the Bible were presented in terms of wheat and tares, sheep and shepherds, householders, vines and vineyards, wedding feasts and festal garments, pearls, treasure, etc. He implanted lessons of truth in the hearts of his hearers by adapting his truths to the things with which they were familiar. The Master Teacher based most of His teaching upon this law of adaptation. Successful Sabbath-school teachers will find it essential to do the same.

The law of adaptation provides the reason for dividing the Sabbath-school pupils into separate divisions. The law of adaptation gives the basis for grouping members in classes according to *mental ability* rather than according to age only.

In the kindergarten divisions the little folks are very sensitive to *suggestion* and imitation; therefore, the successful teacher *adapts* the spiritual lessons to the sand table [a once popular visual aid], where a few cutouts can suggest the lesson story, and to finger plays and motion songs that will suggest their response.

In the primary division the vivid *imagination* is one of the outstanding characteristics, so the successful teacher adapts spiritual lessons to blackboard illustrations, and uses plenty of stories that will appeal to the imagination and illustrate the truths he is teaching.

In the junior division the pupils are suddenly *literalists*. They crave literal facts. Concrete facts about people, things, and places, which would mean nothing to the younger divisions, are eagerly devoured by juniors. Teachers of juniors, therefore, adapt their lessons to include these literal things.

In the early adolescent period *doubt* is a prominent characteristic, "How do you know?" "Who told you?" "Can you prove it?" are the common demands, and successful teachers in the youth's classes, therefore, bring their proof and produce their witnesses. Instead of merely saying, "God often answers prayer in a miraculous way," the teacher could say, "Here's a book— *Keith Argraves, Paratrooper* [a book about a Seventh-day Adventist paratrooper during WWII] Some of you may have met him in person. He was on a mission to North Africa. One of the engines of his plane stopped when they were one hundred miles from shore. Keith Argraves prayed out loud, and while he was praying the engine started again and never stopped till they landed." The book, the person, the black-and-white account of the experience satisfy these adolescents. Wise teachers of juniors adapt their lessons to contain plenty of proof and witness.

In the older young people's classes, the pupils are more practical. Reasons and logic appeal to them. In the adult classes, the different vocations of life leave their marks on the thinking of the class members, and it is a wonderful art to be able to apply this law of adaptation to the farmers, the businessmen, the carpenters, the housewives, the doctors, and the nurses.

2. THE LAW OF APPERCEPTION. Apperception is the process of adding a new idea or a series of new ideas to an old one. The law of apperception very naturally follows the law of adaptation. Adaptation enables pupils to *understand* a new idea by comparison and by

illustration. Apperception *establishes* the new idea in the mind so that it in turn can be used to connect with and illustrate some other new idea.

For example, "God is love," is rather an abstract truth for the child mind, the child can, however, understand a mother's love. So, the teacher, following the law of adaptation, commences the lesson by talking of mothers and what they do for the children they love so much. They feed them and clothe them and make comfortable homes for them. Even if the pupils have not seen all the mothers of the children they play with, they know their playmates have mothers because they see what they do for their children, and they know their own mothers love them because they see what they do for them. Then the teacher asks: "Who makes the sun to shine, the flowers to bloom, the fruit to grow, the rain and the snow to fall?" Of course, "It is Jesus!" answer - the little ones. Then the teacher continues: "Jesus made the sun and the moon. Jesus made the fruit and the flowers. Are you happy when the sun shines and when you see the pretty flowers and fruit? Are you happy when mother gives you your food and when she dresses you in your pretty, clean clothes? Why does mother try to make you happy? Because she loves you. Why does Jesus try to make you happy? Because Jesus loves you, too. What do the little birds do when they are happy? Does Jesus love the little birds, too?"

Thus, by using the law of *adaptation*, the child can now *understand* "God is love." The teacher then follows on to *establish this new idea by the law of apperception*, and has the child repeat, "Jesus makes the sunshine. Jesus makes the fruit and the flowers. The sunshine makes me happy. The fruit and flowers make me happy. So, I know that Jesus loves me. Jesus loves mother; Jesus loves father; Jesus loves the birdies; Jesus loves everybody."

This new idea has now taken its place in the mind of the child, and in turn can be used as the connecting point or the point of contact for new lessons on reverence and obedience.

According to the law of apperception, teaching proceeds from the simple to the complex, from the concrete to the abstract, from the material to the spiritual, and from the known to the unknown.

3. THE LAW OF CORRELATION. Correlation is the process of placing truths and lessons which have already been learned in *proper relationship* to the new truths and lessons which are to be taught.

As the outline of Old Testament and New Testament history is being taught, the people and the experiences should be correlated with the location and the surroundings. Thus, history is correlated with geography. Later lessons will be taught on the law of God, and people and places already learned can be correlated with lessons on the worship of the true God, Sabbath-keeping, obedience to parents, patience, morality, honesty, truthfulness, and contentment. Thus, history and geography can be correlated with spiritual lessons.

The efficient teacher will carefully survey the lesson outline for a quarter, or, if a book study extends beyond a quarter, he will studiously consider the whole book as an approach to the teaching of the first lesson. He will make an outline of the aim to be achieved, and sketch the plan for the scriptural-knowledge structure he desires to build during the various lesson sessions. Around scriptural knowledge already fixed in the minds of his pupils, the teacher will assemble his new facts, and thus will apply the principle of correlation. Pupils in classes that are taught the graded lessons are familiar with a veritable catalogue of materials which may be correlated by the teacher in presenting the lesson week by week. Care will need to be exercised constantly that interesting details do not detract from the real lesson; some items may be interesting enough, but if they are not related to the lesson being taught they actually hinder rather than help the teaching of the lesson. As an experienced cook knows how to assemble and combine many ingredients into one tasty whole, so a teacher correlates facts of history, geography, literature, law, ethics, and philosophy to make the lesson interesting.

Here are a few suggestions to Sabbath-school teachers for using this law of correlation:

- a. Familiarize yourself with Bible history so that you can readily select experiences that are related to the geography or to the theme of the lesson.
- b. Teach Bible history and other lessons from a carefully prepared outline. Make a teaching outline of every lesson, itemizing those points to be correlated with the current lesson.
- c. Where consistent, correlate the Sabbath-school lesson with the lessons studied in church school, or day school. This will include geography, history, and the pupil's knowledge of current events.
- d. The use of a brief review of a previous lesson or lessons offers the teacher an opportunity of correlating truths and facts learned in the past with the lesson under consideration.
- e. Select hymns for the Sabbath-school program that have a relation to the events or to the application of the lesson.
- f. Use goal charts for your Sabbath-school offerings that are related to the special project which is to benefit from the Thirteenth Sabbath Overflow Offering.
- g. In the lower divisions, select room decorations that are related to the seasons of the year or the general theme of the lesson.

Here is an illustration of the use of these suggestions: If the lesson one day is on "The giving of the law," open the Sabbath school with the hymn, "Blessed Are They That Do His Commandments." Maybe some large picture giving a scene in Arabia could be put on the wall. When it is time for the lesson study, one pupil could give the geographical location of Mt. Sinai; another, the character of the country surrounding it; still another, the regulations as to cleanliness; still another, the bounds placed about the foot of the mount. Another could describe the scene as God descended on the mount; another, the awful solemnity with which God's words echoed through the mountain canyons, and the fear of the people; and yet another may recite a commandment which God wrote with His finger on stone, and so on until the commandments have been recited. The great central lesson is the eternal nature of God's law of love. Then to close Sabbath school, the hymn "God Is Love," or "How Much I Love Thee My Actions Will Show" could be sung.

The fundamental purpose of Sabbath-school teaching is to build into the pupil's character such principles of truth as will lead him to become a Christian. No matter what the theme of the lesson or the variety of interesting details, underneath and interwoven throughout is the scarlet thread that binds in one complete whole the story of God's loving plan for the salvation of sinners. No lesson outline is complete till it has been in some way correlated with Christ.

4. THE LAW OF CONCENTRATION. In the study of the laws of adaptation, apperception, and correlation, it has been shown that teaching is not simply the delivering of a mass of knowledge in wholesale quantities to the mind of the class, but it is rather the fitting together of new ideas with the old so that they can be used by the mind. Delivering groceries is not the same process as preparing a meal. To be enjoyed, food must be well selected, properly prepared, and appropriately served. Similarly, a vast accumulation of even Scriptural knowledge is not a guaranty of efficient teaching. The possession of brick kilns, lumberyards, and stone quarries does not insure the construction of a model residence. Good teaching must be selective. From the mass of available knowledge, the outstanding theme must be selected, and then emphasized. To place the same emphasis on every possible point in the lesson would be tiresome. The law of concentration requires that this central theme be selected and closely followed throughout the lesson study.

Not only will the teacher have a subject to teach, but he will have an object in view. There can be no effective teaching unless the teacher is working toward a well-planned objective. If there are unconverted pupils in his class, he will work to meet their needs; if all are Christians, he will prepare his teaching work in order to confirm them in the faith.

In harmony with this law of concentration, the teacher will use suitable illustrations and introduce the lesson in such a way as to bring out with clearness and power this central truth or principle. He must not allow irrelevant questions to turn him aside from this central truth, no matter how attractive the other truths of the lesson may be. Nor will aimless discussion be permitted. Such things are distracting, and might cause the teacher to miss his aim. For illustration: If the lesson is about Daniel in the lions' den, the outstanding theme is "God's jealous care over his own people." The envious statesmen, the king's decree, and Daniel's faithfulness will all be dwelt upon because they have a definite bearing on the theme. But if the discussion wanders to a difference between Jewish laws and Medo-Persian laws,

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Concentration corrects aimless methods of teaching. Each lesson will have a living connection with the vital lesson of the previous Sabbath or Sabbaths. There must be steady control of aim as well as concentration on major truth. The history of the past is useful today only as it provides a lesson of value in this present hour and as it prepares for future needs. There must be a definite aim in every lesson. Teaching will fail of its supreme objective if the central truths of a series of lessons do not all point in the direction of one great aim.



The lesson of each Sabbath-school period should build upon the previous week's lesson, and thus, week by week, each lesson, through stress on its principal truth, makes clearer the final aim of the quarter's lessons. The pupil who learns isolated lessons weekly, perhaps about "God's love" this Sabbath, "duty to parents" next Sabbath, "spiritual apostasy" the following week, and so on, is getting a variety of beautiful beads with no *thread* on which to string them. The law of concentration carefully followed provides the *thread* on which the beautiful gems of truth are strung.

### III—THE TWO GREAT PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING

The statement, "God cared for Daniel and protected him while he was in the lions' den," is a *particular* statement. So also are, "God cared for David and protected him," and "God cared for Elijah and protected him." These statements deal with particular people and particular circumstances.

On the other hand, the statement, "God cares for his faithful children and protects them," is a general statement. It includes the experiences of all such as Daniel, David, and Elijah. Every time we make a *general* statement that applies to more than one particular experience we are really expressing a *law*.

Thinking and reasoning lead to the expression of general statements, and thinking people delight in stating and examining general laws rather than particular cases; yet it is the particular examples that make the general law possible.

In teaching, the great object is to discover *general* laws by comparing and classifying particular experiences. There are *two great principles* of teaching by which this objective is reached, the principle of *deduction* and the principle of *induction*.

1. DEDUCTION. In deduction, the general law is first stated; then it is proved by particular examples. The teacher who uses this principle does most of the talking, and so it has been called the lecture method, the preaching method, or the "pouring in" method. It can be illustrated by the symbol of a funnel. If a teacher stood before his class and made the general statement, "We know that God cares for and protects those who faithfully serve him," and then went on to prove this general rule by giving the particular experiences of Daniel, David, and Elijah, that would be using the deductive principle of teaching. It is the easiest way for the teacher, and it is sometimes the only way to teach a large class, or to preach to a large audience. It requires less time on the part of the teacher to make his preparation, but it also requires less thought on the part of the pupil, and, therefore, results in less learning.

2. INDUCTION. In induction, the particular examples are first given; then these examples are studied and compared in order to discover the general rule which applies to all the particular examples. Induction is therefore the principle of discovery. The pupils take part in the discussion. The teacher, by skillful questions, draws out the general law from the pupils. The principle of induction can be illustrated by the symbol of a cork screw, which draws out.

In teaching by induction, the teacher would stand before his class and introduce the lesson by saying, "Today let us discover what God's attitude is toward them that faithfully serve him." He would then proceed to ask the pupils to give the particular facts in the lives of Daniel, David, and Elijah. He would then ask them what attitude on God's part was common to all these particular experiences, and the answer would be the general statement, "God cares for and protects those who faithfully serve Him."

It takes more time for the teacher to prepare an outline of questions leading to the discovery of the general underlying principle, but the pupils do more thinking, and the thrill of discovery combined with the thinking leaves its mark in more learning.

3. AN EXAMPLE OF DEDUCTIVE TEACHING. "This morning, class, I want to prove to you from the Word of God that the soul cannot exist apart from the body. I turn to Genesis 2: 7 and read, 'And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his

nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.' You notice that the Lord at the creation of man used dust and the breath of life to produce a living soul.

"In speaking of death, David tells us in Psalm 146: 4, 'His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.' Here we find that the things that combined to make a living soul have been separated, and where is the soul? I take some dust, mix a little water with it, and I have mud. I hold the mud over a fire to evaporate the water, the water disappears, and the dust remains. Where is the mud? The mud cannot exist unless the water and dust are together. Even so the soul cannot exist unless the body and the breath of life remain together."

4. AN EXAMPLE OF INDUCTIVE TEACHING. *Teacher:* "This morning, class, I want you to discover the law which governs the existence of the soul. A, will you please read Genesis 2: 7 and tell me the substances God used to make a soul?"

*A reads and replies:* "Dust and the breath of life form the living soul."

*Teacher:* "B, will you please read Psalm 146: 4 and tell me what happens when a man dies?"

*B reads and replies:* "His breath goes out, and his body returns to dust."

*Teacher:* "Where does the soul go?"

*B:* "The text does not mention the soul, sir, but wouldn't it have to go somewhere?"

*Teacher:* "Well, let us see. What is this I have in my hand, class?"

*Class:* "An electric light bulb."

*Teacher:* "I screw the bulb into the socket and turn on the switch. What do I get?"

*Class:* "Light."

*Teacher:* "So electricity plus a bulb equals light. Is that right?"

*Class:* "Yes, sir."

*Teacher:* "All right. Now I turn off the electricity, and what do I have left?"

*Class:* "A bulb."

*Teacher:* "Where is the light?"

*Class:* "It's just gone out, sir."

*Teacher:* "Very well, what have you found out about the relationship of light to this bulb?"

*Class:* "Light cannot exist without electricity going through the bulb."

*Teacher:* "Now, B, where did the soul go?"

*B:* "Yes, sir, I see it now. The soul just cannot exist without the combination of the body and breath."

Thus, deductive teaching begins with the general law, and ends with particular examples; while inductive teaching begins with the particular examples and discovers the general law. In the deductive teaching the teacher did the "pouring in"; while in inductive teaching, questions require the pupil to take part and "draw out" the general law.

There is a place and a time for both principles of teaching, but all must agree that the principle of induction results in more thinking on the part of the pupil, and, therefore, in more learning. Where there is the most learning, there has been the best teaching.

#### IV—METHODS OF TEACHING

The method to be used depends upon which principle of teaching is to be followed, the given lesson, and the age of the pupils. Higher mathematics is not taught in the kindergarten or in the first grade; neither do children learn to analyze sentences before they have learned to spell; nor does a teacher teach a group of two or three hundred in exactly the same way as he would teach seven or eight pupils. Teaching methods, therefore, must be adapted to the lesson, to the pupil, and to the circumstances.

1. THE QUESTION METHOD. In the hands of the experienced teacher, the question method becomes the needle that strings together the pearls of truth on the lesson's thread. It places in the hands of the teacher a distinct advantage right from the beginning. As Jesus led His class through the countryside, He asked them, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" They replied by giving various interpretations that were extant concerning this ancient prophecy. Then Jesus asked them, "But whom say ye that I am?" Matthew 16: 13. Peter responded with the inspired answer: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Verse 16.

The question here uncovers "the point of contact." They already knew quite well what people were saying about Christ. How easily the question "drew out" from Peter the response which Christ was aiming at! It is therefore evident at once that the question-and-answer method, also called the discussion method, is the very fiber of the inductive principle of teaching. Careful preparation of the questions from the first to the last will enlist the whole class in the continuous progress of the lesson from point to point, until the climactic conclusion. The first question should arouse interest. The final question should clinch and apply the lesson. Such questioning is an art, and every teacher should become an artist in asking questions. The Gospels give many examples of questions so forceful that they were remembered for many years. "What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?" Matthew 17: 25. "The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?" Mark 11: 30. "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" John 9: 35.

"By a wise use of the question the teacher may unfold the subject under consideration systematically. He controls the order of the topics, and can give proper emphasis to important matters, as all good teaching should. It also enables the teacher to give incidental instruction under the most favorable conditions. Sometimes the question reveals the fact that a little side remark, turning to the blackboard to make a diagram, the introduction of concrete incidents, or the restatement of a forgotten fact, will help the pupil to move on through the subject to clear conclusions."—Brumbaugh, *The Making of a Teacher*, p. 175.

And one conclusion may be the answer to some such question as Christ propounded to Peter, "Lovest thou Me?" and like Peter, the pupil may reply "Yea, Lord." (John 21: 15.)

"It is not the best plan for teachers to do all the talking, but they should draw out the class to tell what they know. Then let the teacher, with a few brief, pointed remarks or illustrations, impress the lesson upon their minds"—*Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p. 115.

2. THE SPECIAL-RESEARCH METHOD. This method is also called the "Seminar Method." Basically, it is a plan whereby the class members are given definite assignments covering a certain part or feature of the lesson. Investigation is required before a report can be presented at the class session. Occasionally this method may be utilized in any division. Care should be exercised not to consume an undue amount of time with this feature, but time necessary to receive the report should be allowed. Skill will be required also in fitting in these reports so that the lesson recitation is a connected whole. Obviously there is a variety of subject material for such research. People, customs, geography, etc., offer interesting and profitable fields for assignment of topics. In such investigation, the pupil's interest will grow as he seeks information on his own responsibility. Such reports as may thus be prepared can be made to serve a helpful purpose in occupying the pupils in the pre-session period of the Sabbath school as well as a welcome variation in the regular classwork.

The distinct effort on the part of the pupil in searching for information and thinking through his subject makes this method a decided asset to the principle of induction.

3. THE LECTURE METHOD. A blunt definition of this mode of teaching would be "the talking method." In some instances, it is the preaching method without the orderly preparation which a minister makes. It is the useful story form when applied to the children's divisions. For adults and youth, it is wholly a verbal explanation and application of the lesson.

A well-trained teacher may be able so to conduct the recitation by the lecture method as to edify the class as well as to entertain them. The inherent weakness of the method lies in the danger that the class will make no real preparation for the class recitation. Certainly, it encourages a neglect of daily lesson study, or study of any kind. If the teacher asks no questions there will be no necessity to prepare answers. Some teachers reveal a superficial preparation in their lecture method of teaching the lesson.

The General Conference Sabbath School Department does not recommend the lecture method; it should not be used except in the rare instances in which there is a large visitors' class, or in which an evangelist or pastor is conducting a Bible class for those newly baptized or preparing for baptism. Even in such classes a judicious use of the question method, choosing questions that can be answered in unison by a name, a place, or a simple verse will be very helpful. The lecture method is the very fiber of the deductive principle in teaching, which stimulates less thinking and therefore results in less learning.

4. THE RECITATION METHOD. This method could also be called the catechism method, for in it the pupil merely masters the answers to the questions in the lesson quarterly. He does not know the lesson, he knows only the answers to the questions in the lesson outline. Even daily lesson study does not relieve this method of its objectionable features. Unfortunately, many Sabbath-school teachers use it, and it is exerting a deadening influence on Sabbath-school interest.

In the recitation method the teacher merely reads the questions, and the class members recite the answers. Both teacher and class become slaves to the lesson quarterly. The teacher begins with question one, and runs through consecutively until the last one has been answered. Often such teachers complete their recitation five or eight minutes before the regular lesson time is closed. The memory work connected with the recitation method is of value, but this method develops indolent habits in both teacher and pupils, and it makes the lesson study of the members so stereotyped that there are few, if any, original ideas outside the lesson sheet. It is the poorest method of teaching.

The teacher will need to guard against confusing the recitation method with the question method. They are as far apart in scientific principle as are dynamics and perpetual motion. The question method makes use of carefully prepared questions which elicit from the pupil his knowledge, or lack of knowledge, of the study topic. The recitation method merely catechizes the pupil according to the routine questions in the lesson sheet.

Successful Sabbath-school teachers will be quick to recognize the need of combining the use of all of these methods as the needs of the lesson and the ability of the class members dictate. They will, however, lean more and more toward the use of the question-and-answer, or discussion, method and the special- research method, for these are the distinct factors of the inductive principle in teaching which stimulates more thinking and therefore results in more learning.

No thinking, no learning, no real teaching.

Little thinking, little learning, little teaching.

Most thinking, most learning, best teaching.

## **The Basics of Gregory's Laws**

There are essential elements in every full and complete act of teaching. Whether the lesson be a single fact told in three minutes, or a lecture occupying as many hours, the seven factors are all present, if the work is effective. None of them can be omitted, and no others need be added. If there is a true science of teaching, it must be found in the laws and relations of these seven factors.

Teaching in its simplest sense, is the communication of experience. This experience may consist of facts, truths, doctrines, ideas, or ideals, or it may consist of the processes or skills of an art. It may be taught by the use of words, by signs, by objects, by actions, or by examples; but whatever the substance, the mode, or the aim of the teaching, the act itself, fundamentally considered, is always substantially the same: it is a communication of experience. It is painting in the mind of another the picture in one's own—the shaping of the thought and understanding to the comprehension of some truth which the teacher knows and wishes to communicate. Further on we shall see that the word "communication" is used here, not in the sense of the transmission of a mental something from one person to another, but rather in the sense of helping another to reproduce the same experience and thus to make it common to the two.

## **The Value of These Laws**

The aim of this course is stated in the concept of *The Seven Laws of Teaching*. Its object is to set forth, in a certain systematic order, the principles of the art of teaching. It deals with mental capacities only as they need to be considered in a clear discussion of the work of acquiring experience in the process of education.

It is an attempt to group around the seven factors, which are present in every instance of true teaching, the leading principles and rules of the teaching art, so that they can be seen in their natural order and relations, and can be methodically learned and used.

These laws follow the natural laws of the universe: They are not obscure and hard to reach. They are so simple and natural that they suggest themselves almost spontaneously to the careful observer. They lie embedded in the simplest description that can be given of the seven elements named.

They underlie and govern all successful teaching. If taken in their broadest significance, nothing need be added to them or taken away. No one who thoroughly masters and uses them need fail as a teacher.

Each law varies in its applications with varying minds and persons, although remaining constant in itself; and each stands related to other laws and facts till it reaches the outermost limits of the art of teaching.

It is significant that there may be many successful teachers who never heard of these laws, and who do not consciously follow them; just as there are people who walk safely without any theoretical knowledge of gravitation, and talk intelligibly without studying grammar. Like the musician who plays "by ear" these "natural" teachers have learned from practice the laws of teaching, and obey them from habit. It is nonetheless true that their success comes from obeying the laws, and not in spite of laws.

These laws are not obscure and hard to reach. They are so simple and natural that they suggest themselves almost spontaneously to the careful observer. They lie embedded in the simplest description that can be given of the seven elements named, as in the following:

1. Know thoroughly and familiarly the lesson you wish to teach—teach from a full mind and a clear understanding.
2. Gain and keep the attention and interest of the pupils upon the lesson. Do not try to teach without attention.
3. Use words understood in the same way by the pupils and yourself—language clear and vivid to both.
4. Begin with what is already well known to the pupil upon the subject and with what he has himself experienced—and proceed to the new material by single, easy, and natural steps, letting the known explain the unknown.

5. Stimulate the pupil's own mind to action. Keep his thought as much as possible ahead of your expression, placing him in the attitude of a discoverer, an anticipator.
6. Require the pupil to reproduce in thought the lesson he is learning—thinking it out in its various phases and applications till he can express it in his own language.
7. Review, review, review, reproducing the old, deepening its impression with new thought, linking it with added meanings, finding new applications, correcting any false views, and completing the true.

### **Gregory's Laws and Sabbath School Teaching**

The most serious objection to systematic teaching, based on the laws of teaching, has sometimes come from pastors, teachers of religious education, and others, who have assumed that the principal aim is to impress rather than to instruct; and that skillful teaching, if desirable at all, is much less important than warm appeals to the feelings and earnest exhortations on the proper occasions.

But what exhortation will have such permanent power as that which is heralded by some clear truth? If the choice must be between the warmhearted teacher who makes gushing appeals, and the cold-hearted one who stifles all feeling by his indifference, the former is perhaps to be preferred; but why either? Is there no healthful mean between steam and ice for the water of life? The teacher whose own mind glows with the truth, and who skillfully leads his pupils to a clear understanding of the same truth, will not fail in inspirational power.

These questions may be left to call forth their own inevitable answers if they convince Sabbath school leaders that the laws of teaching are the laws of mind, which must be followed as faithfully in studying the Word of God as in studying His works.

## UNIT 2

### The Seven Laws Explained

#### 1. The Law of the Teacher

The law of the teacher is very simple: *The teacher must know that which he or she would teach.*

Ellen G White very clearly affirms this law:

Teachers should feel their responsibility, and make use of every opportunity to improve, that they may render the best kind of service in a manner that will result in the salvation of souls. Both teachers and pupils should awake to the importance of manifesting industry and perseverance in the study of God's word. They should be much in communion with God, petty temptations will not control them, and indolence and apathy will be successfully resisted. No idleness, no self-indulgence should be allowed by those who profess to be Christian workers—*Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, pp. 94, 95.

The necessary knowledge comes through a four-step progression: (1) faint recognition; (2) the ability to recall for ourselves, or to describe in a general way to others, what we have learned; (3) the power readily to explain, prove, illustrate, and apply it; and (4) such knowledge and appreciation of the truth in its deeper significance and wider relations, that by the force of its importance we act upon it—our conduct is modified by it. It is this last form of knowledge, or experience, which must be read into the law of the true teacher.

Truth must be clearly understood before it can be vividly felt. Teaching must be uncertain and limping when characterized by an inadequate knowledge of the material to be taught.

There is a very practical list of steps for acquiring and applying the necessary knowledge:

1. Prepare each lesson by fresh study. Last quarter's knowledge has necessarily faded somewhat. Only fresh conceptions inspire us to our best efforts.
2. Find in the lesson its analogies to more familiar facts and principles. In these lie the illustrations by which it may be taught to others.
3. Study the lesson until it takes shape in familiar language. The final product of clear thought is clear speech.
4. Find the natural order of the several steps of the lesson. In every science there is a natural path from the simplest notions to the broadest views; so, too, in every lesson.
5. Find the relation of the lesson to the lives of the learners. Its practical value lies in these relations.
6. Use freely all legitimate aids, but never rest until the real understanding is clearly before you.
7. Bear in mind that complete mastery of a few things is better than an ineffective smattering of many.
8. Have a definite time for the study of each lesson, in advance of the teaching. All things help the duty done on time. One keeps on learning the lesson studied in advance, and gathers fresh interest and illustrations.
9. Have a plan of study, but do not hesitate, when necessary, to study beyond the plan. The best mnemonic (memory) device is to ask and answer these questions about the lesson: What? How? Why?
10. Do not deny yourself the help of good books on the subject of your lessons. Buy, borrow, or beg, if necessary, but obtain somehow the help of the best thinkers, enough at least to stimulate your own thought; but do not read without thinking. If possible, talk the

lesson over with an intelligent friend. In the absence of these aids, write your views; expressing your thoughts in writing may clear them of obscurities.

### **Some Wrong Uses of This Law**

There are also erroneous uses of the Law of the Teacher. Gregory outlines three that apply equally to a Sabbath School class:

1. Some teachers look hastily through the lesson, and conclude that though they have not thoroughly mastered it, or perhaps any part of it, they have gathered enough to fill the class period, and can, if necessary, supplement the little they know with random talk or story.

2. Lacking time or heart for any preparation, they dismiss all thought of teaching, fill the hour with such exercises as may occur to them, and hope that, as the school is a good thing anyway, the pupils will receive some benefit from mere attendance.

3. A more serious fault is that of those who, failing to find stimulation in the lesson, make it a mere framework upon which to hang some fancies of their own. There is a meaner wrong done by the teacher who seeks to conceal lazy ignorance with some pompous pretense of learning, hiding a lack of knowledge by an array of high-sounding phrases beyond the comprehension of the pupils, uttering solemn platitudes in a wise tone, or claiming extensive study and profound information which has been laid properly before them. Who has not seen these shams practiced upon pupils?

### **2. The Law of the Learner**

The law of the learner is also very simple: ***The learner must attend with interest to the material to be learned.*** How is the learner different from the teacher? What are the essential elements that make her or him a learner?

Let us place before us a successful student, and note carefully his actions and qualities. His intent look and absorbed manner are signs of his interest and attention. Interest and attention characterize the mental state of the true learner, and constitute the essential basis on which the process of learning rests.

This law was utilized and explained in a number of Seventh-day Adventist instructional books for Sabbath School teachers. All are valuable, but are no longer in print. You may find them in your church or school library or on the Internet:

- Mary S. Ogle, *You and Your Sabbath School* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1948).

- General Conference Sabbath School Department, *Teaching Teachers to Teach* (Nashville, Tenn.: Southern Publishing Association, 1949).

- Harry W. Lowe, *Handbook for Sabbath School Teachers* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1956).

- Stanley S. Will, *Teach* (Nashville, Tenn.: Southern Publishing Association, 1974).

### **The Value of Attention**

This section on attention is an application of Gregory's Law of the Learner as outlined in *Teaching Teachers to Teach*.

Attention is the direction of the mind to a given subject. Who has not read a whole page, and at the bottom found himself unable to recall a single idea that it contained? The sentences were complete, and they logically followed one another, but the mind had been busy with other thoughts. Your class may be looking at you and at the same time have their minds on some other subject. Teaching is arousing the class member's mind to grasp the desired thought. The teacher's beginning point in a class period is to get the attention of the class. Do not teach without attention.

Stanley Will tells the story of a mischievous little boy, who, Sabbath after Sabbath, disturbed the other children in the Sabbath School class and distracted the teacher. On one particular Sabbath, he was suddenly engrossed, quiet, and attentive. The teacher was pleased. She wondered what she had done that day to cause his fixed attention: "You



listened today, and you did not disturb the other boys and girls. Please tell me what I did today to help you listen."

He replied, "Oh, it went up and down five times."

The teacher asked, "What are you talking about?"

"The fly on your arm. It went up and down five times." The boy had sat quietly through the Sabbath School class, but he had not been listening to what the teacher was saying.<sup>1</sup>

Sabbath School class is of little use if a person is sitting quietly and watching us as we teach, but her or his mind is thinking of something a thousand miles away. According to the Law of the Learner, the teacher should not proceed in teaching while some in the class are not listening. Their inattention is likely to encourage the same in the others.

### **Inattention Causes a Lack of Learning**

If the teacher does not have the attention of the class, the members will not learn. The vigor of mental action, like that of muscular action, is proportioned to the stimulus that inspires it. The pupil's mind may not at once respond to the command of the teacher, nor to the call of a cold sense of duty. It is only when we begin our work "with a will"—that is, with interest in our work—that we are working with maximal effectiveness. Unexpected reserve powers come forth when the demand is strong enough. With growing interest, attention grows, and we are enabled to accomplish more.

Stanley Will tells another story that illustrates the point. A certain boy had trouble with his grammar, especially the use of verbs. He had a habit of saying, "I have *went*" when he should have said, "I have *gone*." The teacher assigned him to write on the blackboard, many times over, "I have *gone*." He apparently was not interested in learning why he had to do that. When he finished writing "I have gone" the required number of times, he left the teacher a note that read, "I have *went* home."

### **Types of Attention**

Attention is the direction of the mind, but there are varying degrees of absorption. The psychologist speaks of the direction of the mind as the act of bringing the object into the focus of consciousness. This absorption or focus of consciousness may be involuntary or voluntary.

*Involuntary Attention.* Involuntary attention is spontaneous. It is given without conscious effort. For instance, a class member is so interested in the subject that he or she naturally pays attention. Even if someone walks into the room or sits down on the pew, the person is so absorbed in the subject that he is unaware of the other's presence. Involuntary attention stems from interest in a subject and the eagerness of the mind for more information about it. A teacher may use an illustration, tell a story, show a picture, and become conscious that the class members are quiet and listening without effort. This is involuntary, spontaneous attention.

The aim of the teacher is to develop involuntary attention that can be sustained because of interest. It's not always easy to develop the desirable conditions of involuntary attention, but it is always more effective. It takes diligent effort by the teacher to make the subject interesting.

There are two categories of involuntary attention: *primitive* and *apperceptive*:

#### **Primitive attention**

This type involuntarily attracts one or more of the five senses—sight, smell, taste, hearing, or touch. For instance, when a baby suddenly cries in Sabbath School or church, some people automatically turn toward the disturbance. The attention they give to the sound they heard is primitive. Their response is unplanned.

A teacher might use what is sometimes called a "hook" (some action to get attention). She might take something out of her purse and look at it intently without saying anything.

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<sup>1</sup>Stanley S. Will, *Teach* (Nashville, Tenn.: Southern Publishing Association, 1974), p. 89.

The class will suddenly become quiet and attentive. They are giving primitive, spontaneous attention to what they see. A teacher may lift a box to the table, cautiously look inside, then hurriedly close the box again. No matter how inattentive or noisy the group is, they are now quiet and attentive. They are giving primitive spontaneous attention to what they saw.

### **Apperceptive attention**

When one is interested in conveying new knowledge and facts to people and things about which he has already learned, this process, born of interest and given without effort, in psychology is called building up the apperceptive masses of the mind.

For instance, the class is studying about the Sabbath. The teacher has the keen attention of the class, not because they have seen or heard anything unusual, but because they are deeply interested in the subject of the Sabbath and in knowing what the Bible says about it. They already know some things about the Sabbath, and now they are adding to this knowledge. They therefore sit and listen involuntarily. This addition of knowledge to knowledge is the process of *apperception*; spontaneous attention born of interest and given without effort.

### **Voluntary attention**

Voluntary attention is forced attention. It is a momentary kind of attention that may be called "active" only because it requires an action of the will to respond to whatever is going on. The teacher may secure voluntary attention with commands like: "Stop reading," "Look at me," "Now listen to me;" but it is only temporary. A few seconds later the same mind may flit to some other subject or object.

Very often people may force themselves to give attention, not because of any interest, but because they feel they must. It is temporary; there is no real interest in the subject. Voluntary attention is not very effective in a Sabbath School class.

### **Interest Gives Birth to Attention**

Interest is the thirst or the desire of the mind for knowledge. It is the power or the force that makes class members and teachers alike assume an attentive attitude so that the mind can be satisfied with knowledge. A Sabbath School class will give attention to things it is interested in. Interest must be aroused, and the more interest the teacher can create in the subject, the better the attention.

If there is only a partial interest, the perceptions gained will be faint and fragmentary. "What a blessing it would be," Ellen G White wrote, "if all would teach as Jesus taught! . . . In your teaching, be as near like Him as possible. Make your exercises interesting." — *Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p. 182.

There are two kinds of interest: *mediate* and *immediate*.

### **Mediate interest**

This kind is given as a means to an end. A Sabbath School division promised an evening of social entertainment if the youth would study the lesson daily, know the memory verse each week, and attend Sabbath School each Sabbath. The young people were interested in the proposed social. If they met the requirements only because of the reward, theirs was *mediate* interest.

History tells us that the world Sabbath School department once offered a gold-colored bookmark to everyone who would study the lesson every day and attend Sabbath School on time every week for a year. The idea was very successful, but in the beginning of the plan, the interest in the daily lesson study was *mediate*. It was a means of obtaining the bookmark. Only later did it begin to generate *immediate interest* in the Sabbath School lessons themselves.

### **Immediate interest**

When there is interest in the subject itself for the sake of what one gets out of it, it is called *immediate* interest. The class is interested in studying the Bible because of the satisfaction that comes to them when they understand more of its teaching.

Someone once told the story of his daughter, who was not interested in playing piano. It was a very distasteful task for her to take piano lessons and to practice. Then she became acquainted with a boy who was studying to be a minister, and they began to date. One day he remarked "I hope you will take piano lessons. This would be such a help to me in my ministry." Suddenly, she took real interest and began to practice enthusiastically, not having to be coaxed or forced from then on. It doesn't take a lot of imagination to analyze why her mediate interest turned into immediate interest.

Forced attention is useful for a moment, as is primitive attention, but to arouse an interest, the teacher must produce something interesting that will change the attention of the class to apperceptive attention. It is one of the chief purposes of the teacher to stimulate and create involuntary attention. This is done by helping the students establish an interest in the subject under consideration. It is difficult for the teacher to do much good until he has acquired this interest.

### **Four Ways to Create Interest**

Here are four things that help create interest:

1. *Interest is developed by understanding the class members' viewpoint.* How the teacher and the other class members treat the comments of whoever makes a contribution to the discussion makes a difference in the level of interest of that person. By understanding the learners' viewpoint, the teacher can adapt his or her teaching material to the interest and need of the pupils.

2. *Enthusiasm inspires interest.* To establish immediate interest, the teachers must themselves be interested in the subject. Enthusiasm begets enthusiasm. Someone said, "You cannot start a fire with an icicle!" A teacher who is lifeless cannot create interest in others. Enthusiastic teaching helps.

3. *Curiosity arouses interest.* A strong trait in humanity is curiosity, and a way to develop immediate interest is by arousing the curiosity. He who is curious about something is ready to give attention. Attention traps have been a means of capturing the interest through curiosity. While this is most effective with children, the teacher may also successfully employ this tactic in teaching youth and adults.

Stanley Will tells about a Sabbath School workshop where the instructor suddenly held out a string in his hand. The string had a box on it that slid up and down as the instructor moved his hands from one position to another. He would begin at the top and the box would go to the bottom. After demonstrating this a number of times, he changed the position of his hands and the box slid about half way down the string and stopped. How could that happen? Always before it had moved down to the end of the string, but now it was hanging more or less in midair in the middle of the string.

Obviously, the instructor had everyone's attention. Curiosity took possession of the minds of the adults who were watching, and everyone was keenly interested.

4. *Visual aids stimulate interest.* Any kind of visual aid will encourage interest. Illustrations, pictures, maps, a whiteboard, PowerPoint® presentations, videos—all generate and hold interest. Things that appeal to the senses catch the imagination, hold the interest, and are easily remembered.

### **Holding interest**

Involuntary attention may be maintained just as long as the class members are interested in knowing more about the subject being considered. The mind, however, may still wander to some other subject, because it must be trained to concentrate on a given subject for a prolonged time. If the teacher sees that the mind is wandering, she must do something to regain the attention. What can the teacher do to regain attention?

- *Pause.* A pause whenever the attention is interrupted or lost is helpful in bringing the mind back to the subject.
- *Silence.* A brief period of quiet is generally all that is needed to regain attention.
- *An earnest gaze.* When the class awakens, you will have their collective thinking.

- *An uplifted hand.* This will often bring back the thought of the wandering mind.
- *Changing your position.* A different posture sometimes helps to get attention and adds variety to the presentation.
- *Speech variation.* Changing rate or tone of speaking also helps to make your presentation stand out.
- *A movement.* Going toward the source of inattention may make that person heedful of what you are saying.
- *Writing.* A whiteboard or a tear off sheet on which the teacher uses felt markers will reactivate the interest.

If you have to use a whiteboard or a tear off sheet, pick up a felt marker and move toward the board as if to write something. Note the degree of interest by the class members. Do this a few times as you talk. Then write something on the board, or just draw a line. It will help you keep the interest of the class.

### 3. The Law of Language

The law of language is also very simple: ***The language used in teaching must be common to teacher and learner.***

The sense organs are parts of material bodies, and can be touched and impressed only by matter and material phenomena. Out of these phenomena persons must construct the symbols and signs by which they can signal to one another the ideas which they wish to communicate. A system of such symbols or signs is a language. It may consist of the picture writing of the ancient races, the alphabet systems of civilized peoples, the manual signs of the deaf, the oral speech of the hearing; but, whatever its form, it is language—a medium of communication between minds, a necessary instrument of teaching, and having, like all other factors in the teaching art, its own law. This is not only referring to the fact that both teacher and student speak the same mother tongue, it means that what they say and how they say it must be understood, and have the same meaning for both.

#### Language a Vehicle of Thought

The vocabulary of a teacher may be larger than that of many class members, but the people's ideas are represented by their vocabulary. The teacher must come within this sphere of language level if he or she would be understood.

Many words in our language have more than one meaning. For example, consider the following expressions: "mind and matter"; "what is the matter?" "What does it matter?" "It is a serious matter;" "the subject matter." The same word, "matter," carries several meanings. This variety of meanings may enrich words for the use of the orator or the poet, but it may also present difficulties for class members.

Having mastered a word as the sign of a familiar idea, the person is suddenly confronted by it with a new and unknown meaning. He has learned, perhaps, to tie a horse to a post, when he hears the strange text, "My days are swifter than a post," or reads the warning, "Post no bills," and hears of a "military post." The teacher, knowing all the meanings of his words, and guided by the context in selecting the one required by the thought, reads on or talks on, thinking perhaps that his language is rich in ideas and bright with meaning; but the class members, knowing perhaps only a single meaning for each word, are stopped by great gaps in the sense, bridged only by sounds without meaning which puzzle and confuse them. It would often amuse us if we could know what ideas our words call up in the learners. So, too, words often come to be liked or disliked for the ideas they suggest.

This issue of language has significance for Seventh-day Adventist Sabbath School teachers. Any religious group, ours included, has its own set of vocabulary words. We know what they mean, but class visitors often have no idea. They may be totally confused by the vocabulary used in the class. Expressions like "the pen of inspiration" confuse people. Is that a special brand of ballpoint pen? Does some inventive person in the church have an idea

(inspiration) for a new kind of writing instrument? Or did someone come up with an “inspiration” on how to pen up some animals that were on the loose? What do people visualize when they hear about the “spirit” of prophecy. Is that a phantom or ghost-like “spirit” that flies around at night? Are Seventh-day Adventists some kind of spiritistic religion that believes in “spirits” that prophecy—whatever that means?

### **Language Is an Instrument.**

Words are tools by which the mind reduces the mass of impressions into clear and valid conceptions. Ideas become incarnate in words; they take form in language, and stand ready to be studied and known, to be marshaled into the mechanism of intelligible thought.

#### **Talking turned into thinking**

There must be independent and original effort, not a mere parrot-like repetition of the words of other people. The pupil himself must do much of the talking.

“Every human being, created in the image of God, is endowed with a power akin to that of the Creator—individuality, power to think and to do. The men in whom this power is developed are the men who bear responsibilities, who are leaders in enterprise, and who influence character. It is the work of true education to develop this power, to train the youth to be thinkers, and not mere reflectors of other men’s thought.” — *Education*, p. 17.

#### **Language is the storehouse of knowledge.**

All that we know may be found laid up in the words concerning it. Thus, words are not only the signs of our ideas, but they are clues by which we recover and recognize those ideas at will, and in the manifold derivative forms and combinations of these words, we store up the modifications and relations of the notion of which the simple word is the symbol. A group of words like “act,” “acted,” “acting,” “actor,” “actress,” “action,” “actionable,” “active,” “actively,” “actual,” “actually,” “actualize,” “actuality,” and “actuate,” suggests a large volume of facts concerning persons, movements, relations, qualities, etc.

### **How to Use Language in Learning**

There are eleven ways language can be used in learning situations like a Sabbath School class:

1. Study constantly and carefully the language of the pupils, to learn what words they use and what meanings they give to these words.
2. Secure from them as full a statement as possible of their knowledge of the subject, to learn both their ideas and their modes of expressing them, and to help them to correct their knowledge.
3. Express yourself as much as possible in the language of your pupils, carefully correcting any errors in the meaning they read into your words.
4. Use the simplest and the fewest words that will express your meaning. Unnecessary words add to the child’s work, and increase the possibilities for misunderstanding.
5. Use short sentences, of the simplest construction. Long sentences are difficult to attend to and are frequently confusing to learners.
6. If the pupil obviously fails to understand you, repeat your thought in other language, if possible with greater simplicity.
7. Help the meaning of the words by illustrations; natural objects and pictures are to be preferred for most learners. Take illustrations from their own experiences whenever possible.
8. When it is necessary to teach a new word, give the idea before the word. This can be done best by simple illustrations closely related to the learner’s own experience.

9. Try to increase the number of the class members' words and at the same time improve the clarity of meaning. Real enlargement of a class member's vocabulary means an increase of his or her knowledge and power.
10. As the acquisition of language is one of the important aims in the process of education, do not be content to have your pupils listen in silence very long at a time, no matter how attentive they are. Encourage them to talk freely.
11. Test frequently the pupil's understanding of the words that he or she uses, to assure that incorrect meanings are not being used.

The misuse of language is one of the common faults in teaching. Not to mention those teachers who attempt to cover up their own ignorance or indolence with a cloud of verbiage which they know people will not understand, and omitting also those who are more anxious to exhibit their own wisdom than to teach others.

### Reading 3

## ***Messiah: An Easy Reading *Desire of Ages****

- ***Be sure to record on your Student Fulfillment Card that you have completed this assignment.***

*Messiah* is the title of a book published by the Pacific Press Publishing Association that updates the language in Ellen G White's book, *The Desire of Ages*. This Reading presents a chapter from the two editions side by side. Notice the similarities and the differences. Which of these two editions might be of most value if you were teaching a Visitor's Class in Sabbath School?

### ***Desire of Ages***

#### **Chapter 24 - "Is Not This the Carpenter's Son?"**

Across the bright days of Christ's ministry in Galilee, one shadow lay. The people of Nazareth rejected Him. "Is not this the carpenter's son?" they said.

During His childhood and youth, Jesus had worshiped among His brethren in the synagogue at Nazareth. Since the opening of His ministry He had been absent from them, but they had not been ignorant of what had befallen Him. As He again appeared among them, their interest and expectation were excited to the highest pitch. Here were the familiar forms and faces of those whom He had known from infancy. Here were His mother, His brothers and sisters, and all eyes were turned upon Him as He entered the synagogue upon the Sabbath day, and took His place among the worshippers.

In the regular service for the day, the elder read from the prophets, and exhorted the people still to hope for the Coming One, who would bring in a glorious reign, and banish all oppression. He sought to encourage his hearers by rehearsing the evidence that the Messiah's coming was near. He described the glory of His advent, keeping prominent the thought that He would appear at the head of armies to deliver Israel.

When a rabbi was present at the synagogue, he was expected to deliver the sermon, and any Israelite might give the reading from the prophets. Upon this Sabbath Jesus was requested to take part in the service. He "stood up to read. And there

### ***Messiah***

#### **Chapter 24**

#### **"ISN'T THIS THE CARPENTER'S SON?"**

"The Lord has put His Spirit in me, because he appointed me to tell the Good News to the poor" (Luke 4:18).

As Jesus was growing up, He worshipped with His neighbors in the synagogue in Nazareth. He had been away since He started His ministry, but the people of Nazareth heard all the stories about Him. They heard about all the miracles that He had performed.

Now that Jesus was traveling in Galilee, He visited Nazareth on Sabbath morning and joined His family at the synagogue. He sat among people who had known Him since He was a child, and they were all watching Him.

It was a typical service that morning. The local elder read a passage from the Scriptures and reminded the listeners of the signs that the Messiah was coming soon. He promised that the Messiah would appear in glory to lead the armies of Israel to victory over their enemies.

Any Israelite who visited a synagogue might be asked to read from the Scriptures. On this Sabbath, Jesus was asked to be a part of the service. He was given a scroll from the prophet Isaiah and He read:

"The Lord has put his Spirit in me, because he appointed me to tell the Good News to the poor. He has sent me to tell the captives they are free and to tell the blind that they can see again. God sent me to free those who have been treated unfairly and to

was delivered unto Him a roll of the prophet Isaiah." Luke 4:16, 17, R. V., margin. The scripture which He read was one that was understood as referring to the Messiah:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To preach deliverance to the captives, And recovering of sight to the blind, To set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

"And He closed the roll, and gave it back to the attendant: . . . and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on Him. . . . And all bare Him witness, and wondered at the words of grace which proceeded out of His mouth." Luke 4:20-22, R. V., margin.

Jesus stood before the people as a living expositor of the prophecies concerning Himself. Explaining the words He had read, He spoke of the Messiah as a reliever of the oppressed, a liberator of captives, a healer of the afflicted, restoring sight to the blind, and revealing to the world the light of truth. His impressive manner and the wonderful import of His words thrilled the hearers with a power they had never felt before. The tide of divine influence broke every barrier down; like Moses, they beheld the Invisible. As their hearts were moved upon by the Holy Spirit, they responded with fervent amens and praises to the Lord.

But when Jesus announced, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears," they were suddenly recalled to think of themselves, and of the claims of Him who had been addressing them. They, Israelites, children of Abraham, had been represented as in bondage. They had been addressed as prisoners to be delivered from the power of evil; as in darkness, and needing the light of truth. Their pride was offended, and their fears were roused. The words of Jesus indicated that His work for them was to be altogether different from what they desired. Their deeds might be investigated too closely. Notwithstanding their exactness in outward ceremonies, they shrank from inspection by those clear, searching eyes.

Who is this Jesus? they questioned. He who had claimed for Himself the glory of the Messiah was the son of a carpenter, and had worked at His trade with His father Joseph.

announce the time when the Lord will show his kindness" (Luke 4:18, 19).

As Jesus explained the words He had read, He talked about the Messiah as Someone who would help them, heal them, and show them the truth about God. His words, His expressions, His voice thrilled the listening people like nothing they had ever heard before. The Holy Spirit broke down the barriers of their hearts and the idea that God cared so much that He would send this Messiah left them praising Him out loud.

Then Jesus said, "Today, the One these Scriptures promised has come to you."

In an instant, the mood in the synagogue changed. As the people realized that Jesus was claiming to be the Messiah, their happiness turned to anger. "Who does this Jesus think he is?" they asked. "How can he claim to be the Messiah when we all know that he's just a carpenter's son? We've known him since he was a baby! We watched him grow up and become a man. Don't his brothers and sisters still live here with us? Sure, Jesus is a good person, but the Messiah? I don't think so!"

The more they thought about it, the angrier it made them. None of His talk about the Messiah included driving out the Romans and becoming the new power in the world. In fact, this Messiah sounded like someone who would want to look in their hearts and change them. This made them pull back from His deep, searching eyes. He intended to heal them, as if they were not already the children of Abraham, the people of God, the greatest people in the world! Unseen to their eyes, Satan was working feverishly to turn them against Jesus.

Jesus then gave them proof of His divinity by reading their thoughts. He reminded them of two stories from their history. "A prophet is never accepted in his own country. There were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah. But when the famine came, God sent Elijah to stay with a widow in another country. There were many lepers in Israel during the days of Elisha, but only Naaman of Syria was healed."

Even though both prophets had given God's messages to the people, very few believed them. So God worked with those who did believe—wherever they were from—



They had seen Him toiling up and down the hills, they were acquainted with His brothers and sisters, and knew His life and labors. They had seen Him develop from childhood to youth, and from youth to manhood. Although His life had been spotless, they would not believe that He was the Promised One.

What a contrast between His teaching in regard to the new kingdom and that which they had heard from their elder! Jesus had said nothing of delivering them from the Romans. They had heard of His miracles, and had hoped that His power would be exercised for their advantage, but they had seen no indication of such purpose.

As they opened the door to doubt, their hearts became so much the harder for having been momentarily softened. Satan was determined that blind eyes should not that day be opened, nor souls bound in slavery be set at liberty. With intense energy he worked to fasten them in unbelief. They made no account of the sign already given, when they had been stirred by the conviction that it was their Redeemer who addressed them.

But Jesus now gave them an evidence of His divinity by revealing their secret thoughts. "He said unto them, Doubtless ye will say unto Me this parable, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done at Capernaum, do also here in Thine own country. And He said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is acceptable in his own country. But of a truth I say unto you, There were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when there came a great famine over all the land; and unto none of them was Elijah sent, but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman, the Syrian." Luke 4:23-27, R. V.

By this relation of events in the lives of the prophets, Jesus met the questionings of His hearers. The servants whom God had chosen for a special work were not allowed to labor for a hardhearted and unbelieving people. But those who had hearts to feel and faith to believe were especially favored with

even if they didn't know as much about God as the Israelites did.

### **JESUS CUTS TO THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM**

Jesus' words cut like a knife to the root of -the problem—the people's pride. It forced them to consider that maybe they had stopped listening to God, that maybe they were no longer His special people. The faith Jesus' words had stirred in their hearts turned to contempt. Their anger and jealousy allowed Satan to push them to violence. The congregation became an angry mob. They grabbed Jesus and rushed Him out of their synagogue, and out of their city.

With shouts and curses, the crowd forced Jesus toward the edge of a nearby cliff, planning to shove Him off to die on the rocks below. There, in the middle of the angry mob, while some were grabbing rocks to hurl at His head, something unexpected happened. Jesus disappeared.

The angels who stood by Him in the synagogue were still with Him in the middle of the angry mob. When His life was in danger, they spread their protecting wings around Jesus and led Him to a place where He would be safe.

Throughout earth's history, evil forces have threatened Jesus' followers. But armies of angels have protected them. Only in heaven will we learn how many times God's angels saved us from Satan's plans.

Jesus wanted to save the people of Nazareth. He wanted them to join His kingdom. But they would not listen. Near the end of His work in Galilee, Jesus visited His hometown one last time. Since His first visit, the stories of His teachings and His miracles in Galilee had been told everywhere. Not even the people of Nazareth could deny that He had more power than any human. Near them were whole villages where not one person was sick or hurt, because Jesus had passed through and healed them all.

And even though they had tried to kill Him, Jesus wanted to do the same for the people in His hometown. As He preached to them again, their hearts wanted to respond to His love. But they could not admit that this Man who had grown up with them was any better than they were. They would ask, "Where did he get the power to heal and the

evidences of His power through the prophets. In the days of Elijah, Israel had departed from God. They clung to their sins, and rejected the warnings of the Spirit through the Lord's messengers. Thus, they cut themselves off from the channel by which God's blessing could come to them. The Lord passed by the homes of Israel, and found a refuge for His servant in a heathen land, with a woman who did not belong to the chosen people. But this woman was favored because she had followed the light she had received, and her heart was open to the greater light that God sent her through His prophet.

It was for the same reason that in Elisha's time the lepers of Israel were passed by. But Naaman, a heathen nobleman, had been faithful to his convictions of right, and had felt his great need of help. He was in a condition to receive the gifts of God's grace. He was not only cleansed from his leprosy, but blessed with a knowledge of the true God.

Our standing before God depends, not upon the amount of light we have received, but upon the use we make of what we have. Thus, even the heathen who choose the right as far as they can distinguish it are in a more favorable condition than are those who have had great light, and profess to serve God, but who disregard the light, and by their daily life contradict their profession.

The words of Jesus to His hearers in the synagogue struck at the root of their self-righteousness, pressing home upon them the bitter truth that they had departed from God and forfeited their claim to be His people. Every word cut like a knife as their real condition was set before them. They now scorned the faith with which Jesus had at first inspired them. They would not admit that He who had sprung from poverty and lowliness was other than a common man.

Their unbelief bred malice. Satan controlled them, and in wrath they cried out against the Saviour. They had turned from Him whose mission it was to heal and restore; now they manifested the attributes of the destroyer.

When Jesus referred to the blessings given to the Gentiles, the fierce national pride of His hearers was aroused, and His words were drowned in a tumult of voices.

wisdom to speak like he does?" They would not believe that He was the Messiah.

Because of this, Jesus could not do the many miracles in their town. Only a few hearts were willing to be blessed by Him. Their sick loved ones remained sick; their crippled friends were not given the ability to walk. Finally, Jesus left, never to return.

Just as the people of Nazareth and the Sanhedrin rejected Jesus, the nation of Israel finally made the same choice. They rejected the Holy Spirit and put Jesus on the cross. This led to the destruction of Jerusalem and the scattering of the Jews to nations all around the world. Jesus wanted so much to show Israel the precious treasures of truth.

But they desperately held on to their pointless laws and empty ceremonies. If they had honestly studied the Scriptures, the destruction of their city and nation could have been avoided. Jesus' teachings also demanded repentance. They would have had to change their behavior and give up on their hopes of national greatness. They would be forced to go against the opinions of the great thinkers and teachers of their time.

The Jewish leaders didn't understand Jesus at all. Their spiritual pride led them to expect honor at every turn. Their jealousy protected their customs and ceremonies. But Jesus, with all His power, was so humble! If He was truly the Messiah, they argued, why didn't He want honor and glory and an army to destroy His enemies?

But for more than any of these reasons, the Jews rejected Jesus because His pure life of love showed up their sinfulness. They could live with disappointed plans for national glory, but they couldn't live with the spotlight of His purity shining on their unclean lives.

This chapter is based on Luke -1: 16-30.

These people had prided themselves on keeping the law; but now that their prejudices were offended, they were ready to commit murder. The assembly broke up, and laying hands upon Jesus, they thrust Him from the synagogue, and out of the city. All seemed eager for His destruction. They hurried Him to the brow of a precipice, intending to cast Him down headlong. Shouts and maledictions filled the air. Some were casting stones at Him, when suddenly He disappeared from among them. The heavenly messengers who had been by His side in the synagogue were with Him in the midst of that maddened throng. They shut Him in from His enemies, and conducted Him to a place of safety.

So angels protected Lot, and led him out safely from the midst of Sodom. So they protected Elisha in the little mountain city. When the encircling hills were filled with the horses and chariots of the king of Syria, and the great host of his armed men, Elisha beheld the nearer hill slopes covered with the armies of God,--horses and chariots of fire round about the servant of the Lord.

So, in all ages, angels have been near to Christ's faithful followers. The vast confederacy of evil is arrayed against all who would overcome; but Christ would have us look to the things which are not seen, to the armies of heaven encamped about all who love God, to deliver them. From what dangers, seen and unseen, we have been preserved through the interposition of the angels, we shall never know, until in the light of eternity we see the providences of God. Then we shall know that the whole family of heaven was interested in the family here below, and that messengers from the throne of God attended our steps from day to day.

When Jesus in the synagogue read from the prophecy, He stopped short of the final specification concerning the Messiah's work. Having read the words, "To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord," He omitted the phrase, "and the day of vengeance of our God." Isa. 61:2. This was just as much truth as was the first of the prophecy, and by His silence Jesus did not deny the truth. But this last expression was that upon which His hearers delighted to dwell, and which they were desirous of fulfilling. They denounced

judgments against the heathen, not discerning that their own guilt was even greater than that of others. They themselves were in deepest need of the mercy they were so ready to deny to the heathen. That day in the synagogue, when Jesus stood among them, was their opportunity to accept the call of Heaven. He who "delighteth in mercy" (Micah 7:18) would fain have saved them from the ruin which their sins were inviting.

Not without one more call to repentance could He give them up. Toward the close of His ministry in Galilee, He again visited the home of His childhood. Since His rejection there, the fame of His preaching and His miracles had filled the land. None now could deny that He possessed more than human power. The people of Nazareth knew that He went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed by Satan. About them were whole villages where there was not a moan of sickness in any house; for He had passed through them, and healed all their sick. The mercy revealed in every act of His life testified to His divine anointing.

Again as they listened to His words the Nazarenes were moved by the Divine Spirit. But even now they would not admit that this Man, who had been brought up among them, was other or greater than themselves. Still there rankled the bitter memory that while He had claimed for Himself to be the Promised One, He had really denied them a place with Israel; for He had shown them to be less worthy of God's favor than a heathen man and woman. Hence though they questioned, "Whence hath this Man this wisdom, and these mighty works?" they would not receive Him as the Christ of God. Because of their unbelief, the Saviour could not work many miracles among them. Only a few hearts were open to His blessing, and reluctantly He departed, never to return.

Unbelief, having once been cherished, continued to control the men of Nazareth. So it controlled the Sanhedrin and the nation. With priests and people, the first rejection of the demonstration of the Holy Spirit's power was the beginning of the end. In order to prove that their first resistance was right, they continued ever after to cavil at the words of Christ. Their rejection of the Spirit culminated in the cross of Calvary, in the

destruction of their city, in the scattering of the nation to the winds of heaven.

Oh, how Christ longed to open to Israel the precious treasures of the truth! But such was their spiritual blindness that it was impossible to [BEGIN P.242] reveal to them the truths relating to His kingdom. They clung to their creed and their useless ceremonies when the truth of Heaven awaited their acceptance. They spent their money for chaff and husks, when the bread of life was within their reach. Why did they not go to the word of God, and search diligently to know whether they were in error? The Old Testament Scriptures stated plainly every detail of Christ's ministry, and again and again He quoted from the prophets, and declared, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." If they had honestly searched the Scriptures, bringing their theories to the test of God's word, Jesus need not have wept over their impenitence. He need not have declared, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." Luke 13:35. They might have been acquainted with the evidence of His Messiahship, and the calamity that laid their proud city in ruins might have been averted. But the minds of the Jews had become narrowed by their unreasoning bigotry. The lessons of Christ revealed their deficiencies of character, and demanded repentance. If they accepted His teachings, their practices must be changed, and their cherished hopes relinquished. In order to be honored by Heaven, they must sacrifice the honor of men. If they obeyed the words of this new rabbi, they must go contrary to the opinions of the great thinkers and teachers of the time.

Truth was unpopular in Christ's day. It is unpopular in our day. It has been unpopular ever since Satan first gave man a disrelish for it by presenting fables that lead to self-exaltation. Do we not today meet theories and doctrines that have no foundation in the word of God? Men cling as tenaciously to them as did the Jews to their traditions.

The Jewish leaders were filled with spiritual pride. Their desire for the glorification of self-manifested itself even in the service of the sanctuary. They loved the highest seats in the synagogue. They loved greetings in the market places, and were

gratified with the sound of their titles on the lips of men. As real piety declined, they became more jealous for their traditions and ceremonies.

Because their understanding was darkened by selfish prejudice, they could not harmonize the power of Christ's convicting words with the humility of His life. They did not appreciate the fact that real greatness can dispense with outward show. This Man's poverty seemed wholly inconsistent with His claim to be the Messiah. They questioned, If He was what He claimed to be, why was He so unpretending? If He was satisfied to be without the force of arms, what would become of their nation? How could the power and glory so long anticipated bring the nations as subjects to the city of the Jews? Had not the priests taught that Israel was to bear rule over all the earth? and could it be possible that the great religious teachers were in error?

But it was not simply the absence of outward glory in His life that led the Jews to reject Jesus. He was the embodiment of purity, and they were impure. He dwelt among men an example of spotless integrity. His blameless life flashed light upon their hearts. His sincerity revealed their insincerity. It made manifest the hollowness of their pretentious piety, and discovered iniquity to them in its odious character. Such a light was unwelcome.

If Christ had called attention to the Pharisees, and had extolled their learning and piety, they would have hailed Him with joy. But when He spoke of the kingdom of heaven as a dispensation of mercy for all mankind, He was presenting a phase of religion they would not tolerate. Their own example and teaching had never been such as to make the service of God seem desirable. When they saw Jesus giving attention to the very ones they hated and repulsed, it stirred up the worst passions of their proud hearts. Notwithstanding their boast that under the "Lion of the tribe of Judah" (Rev. 5:5), Israel should be exalted to pre-eminence over all nations, they could have borne the disappointment of their ambitious hopes better than they could bear Christ's reproof of their sins, and the reproach they felt even from the presence of His purity.

## Assignment 1

### Language Problems in Your Sabbath School Class

➤ ***Be sure to record on your Student Fulfillment Card that you have completed this assignment.***

1. Make a list of expressions or figures of speech commonly used in Seventh-day Adventist churches. You might want to visit some Sabbath School classes and make notes of expressions used that you feel visitors or new members might not understand.
2. Make a list of problems that could arise from the use of this in-house vocabulary.
3. Under each expression on your list, write out an alternative that expresses the same idea, but in language a visitor or new member would probably more easily understand.
4. Read the two versions of *Desire of Ages* in Reading 3. What is your impression? Does the change in language in *Messiah* affect the theology or teachings in *Desire of Ages*? When might you use the version titled "Messiah" and when the original "Desire of Ages?"

#### 4. The Law of the Lesson

The law of the lesson is that ***the truth to be taught must be learned through truth already known.***

All teaching must begin at some point of the subject or lesson. If the subject is wholly new, then a known point must be sought by showing some likeness of the new to something known and familiar. Often pupils in the schools explain their inability to understand the lesson by the simple statement: "I did not know what the teacher was talking about." The fault lies distinctly with the teacher in such a case. *True learning begins with simple and concrete things and moves to the abstract.*

Teaching is not just an outpouring of facts. That does not lead to real learning.

The philosophy of this law goes deeper still. It must be remembered that knowledge is not a mass of simple, independent facts; it is made up of the experience of humanity crystallized and organized in the form of facts together with their laws and relations. Facts are linked together in systems, associated by resemblances of one sort or another. Each fact leads to, and explains, another. The old reveals the new; the new confirms and corrects the old.

*Focus on the learner.* The teacher is not the center of the educational equation. The learner is the center of attention. A blunder analogous to this is that of the teacher who hopes by the mere urgency of his manner, and by his carefully chosen words, familiar to himself, to convey his ideas to the understanding of his pupils, with no reference to the pupils' previous knowledge of the subject.

*Focus on the solution to problems.* This, of course, is vital for Sabbath School teachers, because every class is a bundle of all kinds of problems—personal, theological, relational, health-oriented, etc.

The word "problem" is a familiar one to the teacher. Let us think of the process of learning lessons as akin to the solution of problems, as a process in which the learner faces a real situation, the mastery of which will involve the application of his power of thought. How is he to think? Too often teachers believe that their pupils think only in a symbolic way—that they react only to artificial situations in which their task is to do what the teacher wishes, rather than to do real independent thinking for themselves. This is not necessarily true, and if true in some instances, the fault very likely lies with the teacher himself. The power to think is part and parcel of the original mental equipment of the learner, and develops gradually, as other capacities do. The situations that call out this power in children are simple, but they are nonetheless real.

It is incumbent upon the teacher to know what the problems of the class members are and to utilize these problems in making the instruction as rich and meaningful as possible. A common fault is the failure to show the connections between parts of the subject that have been taught and those that are yet to come.

A teacher can make applications of this law in various ways:

- Find out what the class members know about the subject; this is the starting point. This refers not only to textbook knowledge, or what they have read in the *Adult Bible Study Guide* notes, but to all information that they may possess, however acquired.
- Make the most of the pupils' knowledge and experience. Let them feel its extent and value, as a means to further knowledge.
- Encourage the class members to clear up and freshen their knowledge by a clear statement of it.
- Begin with facts or ideas that lie near your pupils and that can be reached by a single step from what is already familiar; for instance, geography would naturally begin with the hometown, history with the pupils' own memories, morals with their own conscience.



- Relate every lesson as much as possible to former lessons, and with the pupils' knowledge and experience.
- Arrange your presentation so that each step of the lesson leads easily and naturally to the next.
- Proportion the steps of the lesson to the ages and attainments of your pupils. Do not discourage them with lessons or exercises that are too long, or fail to rise to the expectations of class members by presenting lessons that are too simple.
- Find illustrations in the commonest and most familiar objects suitable for the purpose.
- Lead the pupils themselves to find illustrations from their own experience.
- Make every new fact or principle familiar to your pupils; try to establish and entrench it firmly, so that it will be available for use in explaining new material to come.
- Urge the pupils to make use of their own knowledge and attainments in every way that is practicable, to find or explain other knowledge. Teach them that knowledge is power by showing how knowledge truly helps to solve problems.
- Make every advance clear and familiar, so that the progress to the next succeeding step will in every case be on known ground.
- As much as possible, choose the problems that you give to your pupils from their own activities, and thus increase the chances that they will be real and not artificial problems.

Remember that your pupils are learning to think, and that to think properly they must learn to face intelligently and reflectively the problems that arise.

### 5. The Law of the Teaching Process

The law of the teaching process ***is to excite and direct the self-activities of the pupil, and as a rule tell them nothing that they can learn themselves.***

This is a law of action, of application, of putting learning into action. The law of the teacher was essentially a law of qualification; the law of the teaching process is a law of function.

The actual work of the teacher consists of the awakening and setting in action the mind of the pupil, the arousing of his self-activities.

As a Sabbath School teacher, think seriously about the following statement. What system can you devise to make sure this happens in your Sabbath School class?

“Let the teachers enter, heart and soul, into the subject matter of the lesson. Let them lay plans to a practical application of the lesson, and awaken an interest in the minds and hearts of the children [students] under their charge. Let the activities of the scholars find scope in solving the problems of Bible truth. The teachers may give character to the work, so that the exercises will not be dry and uninteresting.”— *Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, pp. 113, 114.

Knowledge cannot be passed from mind to mind like objects from one receptacle to another. It must always be recognized and rethought and relived by the learner. All explanation and exposition are useless except as they serve to excite and direct the pupil in his own thinking. If the pupil himself does not think, there are no results of the teaching; the words of the teacher are falling upon deaf ears.

True teaching, then, is not that which *gives* knowledge, but that which stimulates pupils to *gain* it. One might say that he teaches *best* who teaches *least*; or that she teaches best whose pupils learn most without being taught directly. But we should bear in mind that in these statements two meanings of the word “teaching” are involved: one, simply telling, the other creating the conditions of real learning.

This moral consciousness finds its fuller sphere in the recognized domain of duty—the higher realm of the affections and the other moral qualities. From these come the highest and strongest incentives to study and also the clearest understanding. The teacher should constantly address the moral nature and stimulate moral sentiments, if he or she wishes to achieve the greatest measure of success.

This moral teaching is the leading characteristic of the work of all great teachers. Love of country, love of one's fellows, aspirations for a noble and useful life, love for truth—these are all motives to which appeal should be made. If these motives are lacking in pupils, the teacher must build them up.

### **Implementing the Law of the Teaching Process**

There are a variety of ways to implement this law:

- Adapt lessons and assignments to the ages and attainments of the pupils. The more mature will be attracted to reasoning and to reflective problems.
- Approach lessons in a way that relates to the environment and needs of the pupils.
- Consider carefully the subject and the lesson to be taught, and find its point of contact with the lives of your pupils.
- Excite the class members' interest in the lesson when it is assigned, by some question or by some statement that will awaken inquiry. Hint that something worth knowing is to be discovered if the lesson is thoroughly studied, and then be sure later to ask for the truth that has been revealed.
- Place yourself frequently in the position of a pupil among your pupils, and join in the search for some fact or principle.
- Repress impatience that cannot wait for the pupil to explain himself and that tends to take his words out of his mouth. He will resent it, and will feel that he could have answered had you given him time.
- In all class exercises aim to excite constantly fresh interest and activity. Begin questions for the pupils to investigate out of class. The lesson that does not culminate in fresh questions ends wrong.
- Observe each pupil to see that his mind is not wandering so as to forbid its activities being bent to the lesson in hand.
- Count it your chief duty to awaken the minds of your pupils, and do not rest until each learner shows his or her mental activity by asking questions.
- Repress the desire to tell all you know or think about the lesson or subject; if you tell something by way of illustration or explanation, let it begin a fresh question.
- Give the pupil time to think, after you are sure that his mind is actively at work, and encourage him to ask questions when puzzled.
- Do not answer too promptly the questions asked, but restate them, to give them greater force and breadth, and often answer with new questions to secure deeper thought.
- Teach pupils to ask What? Why? and How? — the nature, cause, and method of every fact or principle taught them; also, Where? When? By Whom? and What of it? — the place, time, actors, and consequences of events.
- Recitations should not exhaust a subject, but leave additional work to stimulate the thought and the efforts of the pupils.

### **6. The Law of the Learning Process**

The law of the learning process is: ***The pupil must reproduce in his own mind the truth to be learned.***

It may seem that the Law of the Teaching Process and the Law of the Learning Process are actually two aspects of the same thing, but they are actually two processes: The *law of the teaching process* involves the means by which the self-activities are to be awakened;

the *law of the learning process* determines the manner in which these activities shall be employed. So, the learning process deals with application, not just figuring out how best to get the learner to think. Ellen G White comments:

“Every youth should be taught the necessity and the power of application. Upon this, far more than upon genius or talent, does success depend. Without application the most brilliant talents avail little, while with rightly directed effort persons of very ordinary natural abilities have accomplished wonders. And genius, at whose achievements we marvel, is almost invariably united with untiring, concentrated effort.” — *Education*, p. 232.

Several phases of the learning process should be carefully noted for the full meaning of the law to be recognized and understood.

- A pupil is sometimes said to have learned the lesson when he has committed it to memory, and can repeat or recite it word for word. This is all that is attempted by many pupils, or required by such teachers as consider their work done if they can secure *verbatim* reproductions. Education would be cheap and easy if this were real learning.
- It is an evident advance over the memorizing of words when the pupil has also an understanding of the thought. It is so much better that many teachers are tempted to care only for the thought, and so to inform their pupils. There is a danger here, for in many cases, as in the teaching of the lessons in the Bible, it is important to know and to remember the words.
- It is still better when the pupil can translate the thought accurately into his own or other words without detriment to the meaning. The one who can do this has advanced beyond the work of mere learning, and has placed himself in the attitude of a discoverer. He has learned to deal with his own thoughts as well as the thoughts of others. The capable teacher will recognize this, and will pardon possible crudeness of expression, while he encourages the pupil to more accurate thinking as a means to more accurate language.
- The pupil shows still greater progress when he begins to seek evidence of the statements which he studies. The one who can give a reason for the things he believes is a better student as well as a stronger believer than the one who believes but does not know why. The real student seeks proofs, and a large part of the work of a student of nature is to prove the things which he discovers. The student of the Bible ought to seek to find out for himself if these things are so. Even the youngest pupils will take a stronger hold of the truth if they can see a reason for it. In searching for proof, the student encounters much knowledge on the way, like the mountain climber who finds the landscape always widening around him. The particular problem with which he is engaged is seen to be a part of the great empire of truth.
- A still higher and more fruitful stage of learning is found in the study of the uses and applications of knowledge. No lesson is fully learned until it is traced to its connections with the great working machinery of nature and of life. Every fact has its relation to life, and every principle its applications, and until these are known, facts and principles are idle. The practical relations of truth, and the forces which lie behind all facts, are never really understood until we apply our knowledge to some of the practical purposes of life and of thought.
- The learning process is not completed until this last stage has been reached. The other steps aid in illumining the understanding of the pupils as they progress in their work, but our law of the learning process demands this final stage, and to this purpose the efforts of the teacher and the pupils must constantly be directed.

- The earnest student will be enabled, by means of these steps, to watch his own progress with his work. He can ask these questions: What does the lesson say? What is its meaning? How can I express this meaning in my own language? Do I believe what the lesson tells me, and why? What is the good of it—how may I apply and use the knowledge which it gives?

It is true that many lessons are not learned with this comprehensive thoroughness, but this does not change the fact that no lesson is truly learned until so understood and so mastered.

Here is how to use the previous laws and to turn the results into practical activities:

- Help the pupil to form a clear idea of the work to be done.
- Warn him that the words of his lesson have been carefully chosen; that they may have peculiar meanings, which it may be important to find out.
- Show him that usually more things are implied than are said.
- Ask him to express, in his own words, the meaning of the lesson as he understands it, and to persist until he has the whole thought.
- Let the reason *why* be perpetually *asked* till the pupil is brought to feel that he is expected to give a reason for his opinions. But let him also clearly understand that reasons must vary with the nature of the material he is studying.
- Aim to make the pupil an independent investigator—a student of nature and a seeker after truth. Cultivate the habit of research.
- Help him to test his conceptions to see that they reproduce the truth taught, as far as his powers permit.
- Seek constantly to develop in pupils a profound regard for truth as something noble and enduring.
- Teach the pupils to hate shams and sophistries and to shun them.

### **Misusing the Law of the Learning Process**

The violations of this law of the learning process are perhaps the most common and most fatal of any in teaching. If this law is not followed, the attainments will fall short of their mark. "Always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth," (2 Tim. 3: 7, NASB) is a sad comment on many a Sabbath School class. If that class is taught as our law prescribes, the results will be very different.

### **7. The Law of Review and Application**

The Law of Review and Application ***is that the completion, test and confirmation of the work of teaching must be made by review and application.***

Let us suppose the process of teaching to be completed. The teacher and the pupils have met and have done their work together. Language freighted with ideas and aided with illustrations has been spoken and understood. Knowledge has been thought into the minds of the pupils, and it lies there in greater or less completeness, to feed thought, to guide and modify conduct, and to form character. What more is needed?

The teacher's work seems ended. But difficult work yet remains, perhaps the most difficult. All that has been accomplished lies hidden in the minds of the pupils, and lies there as a potency rather than as a possession. What process shall fix into active habits the thought-potencies which have been evolved? What influence shall mold into permanent ideals the conceptions that have been gained? It is for this final and finishing work that our seventh and last law provides.

The statement of this law seeks to include the chief aims of the review: (1) to perfect knowledge, (2) to confirm knowledge, and (3) to render this knowledge ready and useful. These three aims, though distinct in idea, are so connected in fact as to be secured by the same process. It would be difficult to overstate the value and importance of this law of review. No time in teaching is spent more profitably than that spent in reviewing. Other

things being equal, the ablest and most successful teacher is the one who secures from his pupils the most frequent, thorough, and interesting reviews.

A review is an important aspect of all learning. Someone has remarked that you have to teach something at least three times before it even penetrates the thinking processes.

A review is more than a repetition. A machine may repeat a process, but only an intelligent agent can review it. The repetition done by a machine is a second movement precisely like the first; a repetition by the mind is the rethinking of a thought. It is necessarily a review. It is more: it involves fresh conceptions and new associations, and brings an increase of facility and power.

A true review always adds something to the knowledge of the person who makes it. This is especially true of the Bible. It is surprising how Bible teachers and preachers bring out new meanings they discover in old and familiar texts. These meanings are clearly present in the text, but which we had not found in our own reading. Sometimes these meanings are hidden in a word; sometimes they are apparent. But only appear by some sidelight thrown skillfully upon them by the text."

The well-known influence of maxims and proverbs comes from the readiness with which they are remembered and recalled, and the power which they gather by repetition. The scriptural texts that most influence us are those that have become familiar in use, and which arise in mind as occasions demand.

### **Useful ways to use repetition**

Among the many practical rules for review, the following are some of the most useful:

- Have set times for review. At the beginning of each period review briefly the preceding lesson.
- At the close of each lesson, glance backward at the ground which has been covered. Almost every good lesson closes with a summary. One way to do this is in a Sabbath School class is to ask a class member to summarize the lesson at the end of the class period.
- After five or six lessons, review what has been studied so far. The best teachers give about one-third of each period to purpose of review. Thus they make progress slowly but progress surely.
- Refer to former lessons as often as possible to keep the perspective of the quarter in view.
- All new lessons should be made to bring into review and application the material of former lessons.
- To make reviews easily and rapidly, the teacher should keep in mind large units or blocks, ready for instant use, what has been learned. The class members will tend to emulate the teacher or discussion leader and review the lesson for themselves.
- New questions on old lessons, new illustrations for old texts, new proof for old statements, new applications of old truths, will often send the pupil back with fresh interest to his old material, thus affording a profitable review.
- The final review, which should never be omitted, should be searching, comprehensive, and masterful, grouping the different topics of the subject as on a map, and aiding the pupil to a familiar mastery of the material which he or she has learned.

### **Course Summary**

The laws of teaching that have been explored in this course are valuable tools for the adult Sabbath School teacher/discussion leader. Study them well and see how their use can improve the learning ability of your Sabbath School class.

# Student Fulfillment Card

## Laws of Teaching and Learning

This Student Fulfillment Card is the record that you have successfully completed *Laws of Teaching and Learning* course at the Essential Skills level of the North American Division Sabbath School Teacher's Qualification Process and Curriculum. When all the items are completed, have the Fulfillment Card signed by the appropriate person (your class instructor, your Internet instructor, a Sabbath School superintendent, person in charge of Sabbath School teachers in your church/district, your pastor or someone from the conference in charge of Sabbath School teacher training).

Check the items completed.

1.  I have read the two Units of the Study Guide.
2.  I have read the following:
  - a. Reading 1: "Methods of Teaching"
  - b. Reading 2: "The Science of Teaching."
  - c. Reading 3: "*Messiah: An Easy Reading Desire of Ages.*"
3.  I have completed Assignment 1: "Language Problems in Your Sabbath School Class."

\_\_\_\_\_ (Name) has satisfactorily completed the course *Laws of Teaching and Learning*.

(Signature) \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Please submit at [www.nadadultministries.org](http://www.nadadultministries.org)