



Sapientia et Scientia

Samuel Fuller School

“...Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”
Colossians 2:2b-3

February 4, 2019
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Upcoming Events

February 8 –

City State Day

February 18-22 –

No School: Winter Break

February 27 –

9AM-2PM: Open House

February 28 –

6PM: K-2 Dinner Theater

March 7 –

End of Term 2

March 14 –

**Noon Dismissal: Parent
Teacher Conferences 4-8PM**

Westminster Shorter Catechism

Q17: Into what estate did the fall bring mankind?

A: The fall brought mankind into an estate of sin and misery.



Monday Missive

Professional development days provide the SFS faculty with an opportunity for good fellowship and encouraging collaboration. This Friday we particularly enjoyed a lecture by Andrew Pudewa, the founder of Institute for Excellence in Writing, on the importance of reading aloud. Below are excerpts from an article that summarize the important ideas in that lecture.

“One Myth and Two Truths,” by Andrew Pudewa
from homegrownlearners.com

One simple and immutable fact about the human brain is that you can’t get something out of it that isn’t there to start with. Supernatural inspiration notwithstanding, human beings in general—and children in particular—really can’t produce thoughts or concepts that they haven’t first experienced and stored. In other words, we cannot think a thought we don’t have to begin with. Even the most unique, creative and extraordinary ideas can only exist as a combination and permutation of previously learned bits of information. What does this mean for the writing teacher who desires to nurture competence? If, what we need is a student who is able to produce “understandable, reliably correct, and appropriately sophisticated language patterns,” then what we must put into the brain are those same reliably correct and sophisticated language patterns.

What activity will allow children to store these complete, reliably correct and sophisticated language patterns in their brains?

Probably the two most important and but least practiced of all “school” activities: Listening (being read to out loud) and Memorization. These two are perhaps the most traditional of all language acquisition activities, and yet in our modern educational culture, they have become the orphan children of the progressive parents of psychology and pedagogy.

One of the biggest mistakes we make as parents and teachers is to stop reading out loud to our children when they reach the age of reading faster independently.

In doing so, not only do we deprive them of the opportunity to hear these all-important reliably correct and sophisticated language patterns, we lose the chance to read to them above their level, stretching and expanding their vocabulary, interests and understanding. We begin to lose the chance to discuss words and their nuance, idioms, cultural expressions and historical connotations. And they lose something far more valuable than even the linguistic enrichment that oral reading provides; they lose the opportunity to develop attentiveness, the chance to experience the dramatic feeling that a good reader can inject, and even the habit of asking questions about what they’ve heard. Tragically, because of our hectic, entertainment-saturated, individualistic, test-obsessed, and overscheduled lives, few of us take sufficient time to read out loud to our students, even into their early teens—a sensitive period when understanding of language and understanding of life are woven together and sealed into the intellect.

Because linguistic information is best stored in the brain auditorily, children who have had read to them reliably correct and sophisticated language patterns for many years are much more likely to develop competence in written (and verbal) communication skills. However, there is another not-so-secret weapon in the sagacious parent’s arsenal: Memorized Poetry.

There is perhaps no greater tool than memorization to seal language patterns into a human brain, and there is perhaps nothing more effective than poetry to provide exactly what we want: reliably correct and sophisticated language patterns. Although rote memorization and recitation went out of vogue when the great god of Creativity began to dominate ideology in the Schools of Education, it has stood for centuries, even millennia, as the most powerful way to teach, to learn, to develop skills and to preserve knowledge. By memorizing and reciting, you practically fuse neurons into permanent language storage patterns. Those patterns are then ready to be used, combined, adapted and applied to express ideas in a myriad of ways. Additionally, because of the nature of poetry, poets are often compelled to stretch our vocabulary, utilizing words and expressions in uniquely sophisticated—but almost always correct—language patterns. A child with a rich repertoire of memorized poetry will inevitably demonstrate superior linguistic skills, both written and spoken, because of those patterns which are so deeply ingrained in the brain.



Announcements and News

TEACHEREASE FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS

Updated TeacherEase statements are attached to this newsletter. **Please look over your statement and pay any owing balance.**

PROGRESS REPORTS

Term 2 progress reports are attached to this newsletter. Please look over your child's report and contact his for her teacher with any questions.

OPEN HOUSE

We had several families visit our Open House this past Wednesday. Thank you to everyone who helped publicize the event! If a friend or family member could not make it in January, our next Open House will take place on the **last Wednesday in February**. Keep spreading the word!

6th-8th SPRING PLAY

As your child may have already told you, the 6th through 8th grades will be performing "Mark Twain's Tom Sawyer" as this year's annual spring play. Students have been auditioning for roles over the past two weeks and are looking forward to preparing this comical play. Mrs. Rivers is looking for one or two parents to coordinate costumes and props for the play. Please let her know if you are interested in helping in this way.



HIGH SCHOOL BASECAMP

We are so thankful for God's provision and for the way that we are seeing his hand working in our plans and preparations for our SFS High School, set to launch this coming fall. Mrs. Rivers and the board are making many plans and preparations for this momentous year. The success of Samuel Fuller School K-12 depends in large part on the efforts and commitment of our school community. Without committed parents who are willing to serve and make our school a success, we would have a much more difficult road ahead. We praise God for the families he has brought to our school and are so thankful for each one of you.

To share updates and receive input on these preparations, a High School Basecamp project has been created. There will be updates about our MIAA membership and sports co-ops, clubs and activities, high school specific events already being added to next year's calendar, plans for curriculum and staffing, information about scholarships and standardized testing options for college preparation, etc. Please let Mrs. Rivers know if you would like to be **added to the High School Basecamp project**. The project is open to parents of full and part time students at any grade level. We look forward to collaborating during this exciting time in the school's life!