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THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE
ASSOCIATION OF CLASSICAL & CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

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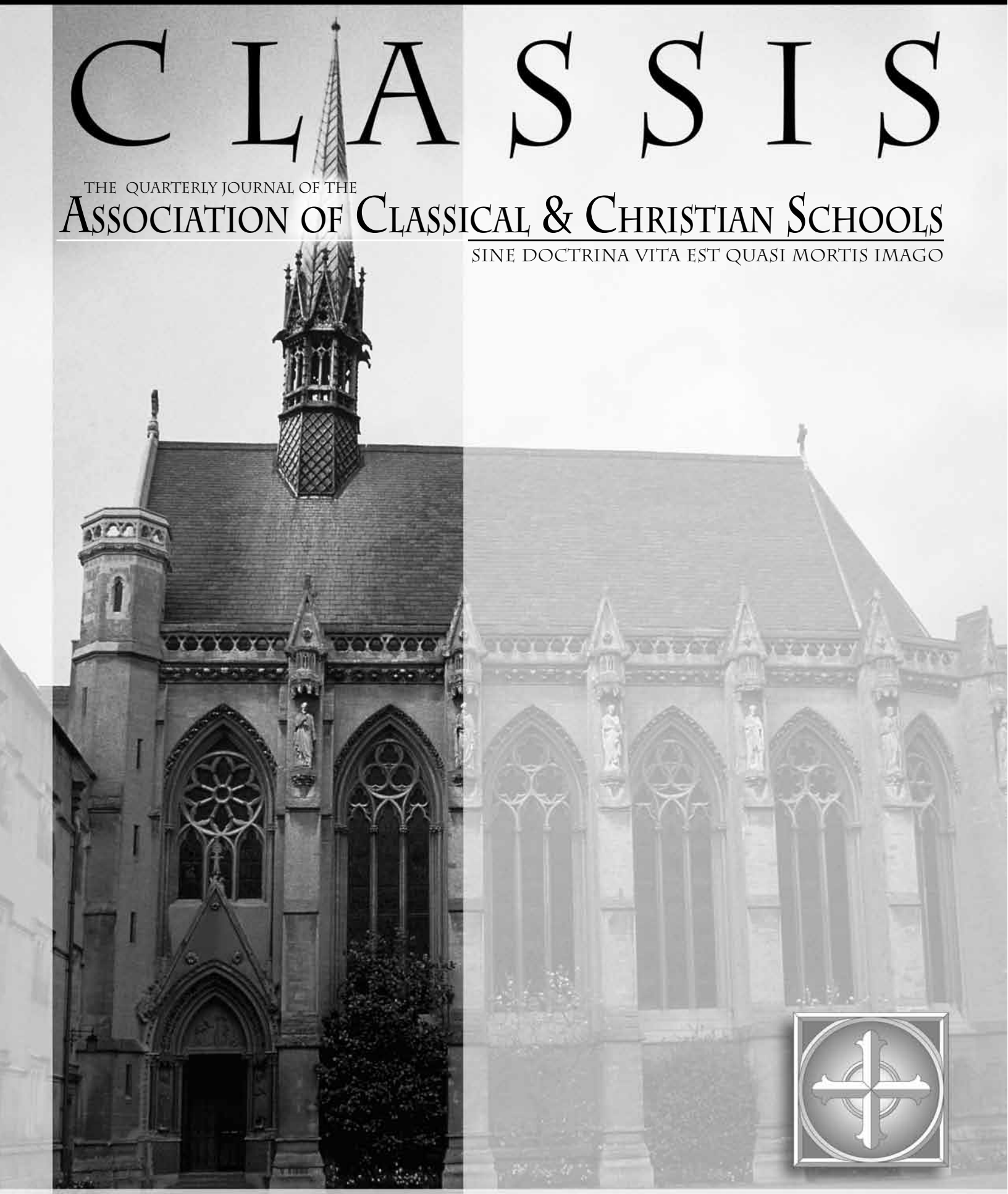

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CLASSICAL CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOR THE WORLD

CLASSIS IS A QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF ARTICLES AND BOOK REVIEWS DESIGNED TO SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE SCHOOLS AROUND THE WORLD WHICH ARE RECOVERING CLASSICAL CHRISTIAN EDUCATION. HARD COPIES ARE AVAILABLE TO ACCS MEMBERS AND BY SUBSCRIPTION.

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MISSION STATEMENT

THE PRIMARY MISSION OF THIS ASSOCIATION IS TO PROMOTE, ESTABLISH, AND EQUIP SCHOOLS COMMITTED TO A CLASSICAL APPROACH TO EDUCATION IN LIGHT OF A CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW GROUNDED IN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES.

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Integration

by Patch Blakey

Integration is often understood to mean the act of combining a broad array of things into a single whole. But this definition almost seems to imply that the separate, disparate parts are integral units themselves that are being actively synthesized into a new, yet unnatural, unit. Such may be the case in folding together the ingredients for chocolate chip cookies. This is not to suggest that chocolate chip cookies are unnatural, but that the ingredients are not naturally found mixed together apart from external intervention by the baker. However, this is not the direction I intend to pursue. Instead, I hope to show that there is a created order where all things are integrated by design from inception.

When we consider the nature of the Trinity, the Godhead, we find that the great Three-in-One is a fully integrated entity, comprised of three individual, but fully equal persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Father honors the Son and the Spirit, the Son honors the Father and the Spirit, and the Spirit honors the Father and the Son. They each have unique roles, but they all work together. The Father decrees, the Son speaks, and the Spirit acts.

Jesus Christ, the Son, is also an example of integration in that he is a man in whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwells. He is both wholly man and wholly God. His very purpose was to purchase and recreate a broken mankind to reintegrate it with its creator. One of Jesus' apostles, John, wrote, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ (1 John 1:3).

All that exists was created by God out of nothing. The result is that all of creation is integrated through its Creator. Indeed, the Apostle Paul, in his letter to the Colossian saints, said of Jesus Christ, "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist" (Colossians 1:16—17). Just as an artist creates a painting that incorporates many colors, lines, perspectives and forms, yet it is still one painting; even so Jesus Christ has created all that exists as an awesome piece of cosmological art.

While the creation is separate from its Creator, it is nonetheless all His singular creation. And as a consequence, it all points back to Him; His handiwork is evident in what He has made. And this is just what Paul wrote to the church at Rome arguing, "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse" (Romans 1:19—20).

Now, given that all of creation is from a single Creator, it should come as no surprise that all knowledge is consequently integrated in Him as well. Again in his epistle to the Colossians, Paul spoke of Jesus Christ as the one "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 2:3). All knowledge ultimately derives from the one who created it in the first place. All of knowledge therefore points back to Jesus Christ as its source. This is therefore what I mean by integration; it all ties together because it has a single unifying point of integration, the mind of Christ.

This issue of *Classis* is just a small start in exploring such integration. We are very thankful for those authors who have contributed to this issue in broaching this subject, and commend their articles to your reading and benefit. Yet at the same time, we are painfully aware that this singular publication of *Classis* leaves much yet to be said. What of the integration of math and rhetoric, or literature and science, or logic and art? How is logic integrated across the dialectic stage? How is Latin integrated across the Trivium?

These articles and many more have yet to be written and published, and we pray that they will be addressed soon in print, even if only as seminal thoughts to be discussed and expanded upon by others. ACCS hopes that there are many within the Association who will take up the challenge and contribute further to the development of this valuable discussion.

Patch Blakey *is the ACCS executive director.*

"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!"

> Do you often come across people for whom, all their lives, a subject" remains a "subject," divided by water-tight bulkheads from all other "subjects," so that they experience very great difficulty in making an immediate mental connection between, let us say, algebra and detective fiction, sewage disposal and the price of salmon, cellulose and the distribution of rainfall—or, more generally, between such spheres of knowledge as philosophy and economics, or chemistry and art?
>
> – Dorothy Sayers, *The Lost Tools of Learning*

Integration: Theology and Methodology

by Chris Walker, Veritas Academy

As a teacher of ancient history and literature, I have often been amazed at the seemingly unrelated questions that spring to the front of seventh grade students' minds as we discuss books written by Herodotus or Plutarch. My presbyterian urge for a decently ordered classroom discussion quickly clashes with my desire to respond and engage the questions of my students. In the face of this struggle, I have tried, whenever possible, to tackle any question that will help integrate two subjects into a discussion. I have made this effort partly for the educational advantages of a multidisciplinary discussion, but more so for the theological importance of studying subjects in relation to each other. In fact, the educational advantage of bringing subjects together in the classroom is actually rooted in a more fundamental theological truth: that all the subjects we study are inherently integrated with each other through the creative, sovereign power of God behind them.

Christian education is built on our responsibility to educate children biblically. Because we want students to understand all that they learn in light of their knowledge of God, the integration of learning plays an important role in fulfilling this responsibility. A truly Christian education can't be limited to a standard handling of grammar and math with a Bible class added on and a creation study substituted for the unit on evolution, for this leaves a large portion of what our children learn in the hands of the enemy. Rather, a truly Christian education must arise from the recognition that everything our children learn originated with the creative act of God, continues through the sovereign power of God, and is known through the revelation of God.

Rather, a truly Christian education must arise from the recognition that everything our children learn originated with the creative act of God, continues through the sovereign power of God, and is known through the revelation of God.

Scripture makes it clear repeatedly that God's creation, revelation, and sovereignty in the world are the foundation for true knowledge of God. God's word declares repeatedly that God created all things by the power of His word. He spoke, and all things sprang into existence. As a result, the psalmist finds the glory of God and His righteousness written in the heavens (Psalm 19:1; 97:6), while Paul takes for granted that God's power, divinity, and invisible attributes are so evident from the created world that all men are without excuse for failing to worship Him (Romans 1:20). History also proclaims the sovereign reign of a glorious God. The beauty of His sovereign, saving plan accomplished in Christ and continued in His church is a clear indication of His goodness and His glory. His sovereign governance over all things is the basis for Scripture's repeated call for us to trust in Him completely. But in addition to His awe-striking creation and His sovereign guidance of history, God has also chosen to speak. He spoke in creation, He spoke to His people, giving us His words in the Bible, and He spoke climactically in His Son, the *Logos*. In His speech, God has made it clear that all things hold together in Him, the One, True God who is the "revealer" of all knowledge.

It is these three great acts of God, His creation, His sovereignty, and His revelation, which form the basis for all areas of study and hold them together. Science, math, and logic are rooted in His creation of an ordered world, which includes a humanity capable of reasoning; history is a demonstration of His sovereignty; and our study of language–grammar, literature, Latin, Greek–is our effort to image our God who has spoken. As Vern Poythress argued, "The Bible reminds us, precisely in John 17, that what we call 'human' languages are not merely human, but shared with God, who speaks and listens."[1] Thus, each subject of study that makes up our curriculum is not an independent area of knowledge, but a different aspect of God's character revealed in creation, in sovereign history, and in divine revelation.

It should be evident, if all subjects flow from the creative, sovereign revelation of God, that

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Integration . . .

each subject must be studied in light of our knowledge of God. Theology, the *regina scientarum*, ought to illuminate each subject we study. But if all subjects not only flow from God, but are also bound to each other by the fact of God's creative, sovereign revelation, then each of the "secular" subjects also has much to say to the others. If science, philosophy, history, and language are all different means of studying reality as created and revealed by God, then each subject will by nature speak, not only about the author Himself, but also about what He has said in other aspects of His revelation. For instance, bringing our knowledge of history to bear on literature, or our knowledge of science to bear on history, is not just methodologically sound teaching, but theologically sound teaching if we recognize God's word and work as the foundation for each of these areas of study. Just as three books by the same author speak to each other and deepen our understanding of what that author is trying to say in each one of the books individually, so different subjects of study, rooted in God's revelation of His character, both strengthen our understanding of God's character *and* help us understand each subject He has revealed more thoroughly.

Of course, subjects ought to be studied in a rational way, which calls for some organization, direction, and focus. Our classes should be more than one long rambling discussion about whatever happens to wander through our minds. But as we teach each area of knowledge, we must draw upon what the student is learning in other classes, not just because this is good pedagogy, but because each subject is inherently integrated as a result of God's revelation.

If subjects are inherently integrated, it shouldn't surprise us that even secular educators have seen the value of integrated learning. One of the trends in secular education today is to unify learning so that students are able to connect what they are learning in various classes. Of course, for secular educators, integration of math, science, history, and literature cannot be done for theological reasons or on the basis of God's character revealed across disciplines, so they are left to search for other unifying themes that can speak to every area of life and learning. Respect for the environment has, not surprisingly, been a popular theme. Mt. Rainier Elementary School used the theme of peace, beginning each week with each student promising to be peaceful and respectful, recording the number of "peace days" (days with no fights) on each blackboard, learning the importance of cultures getting along, and analyzing the positive characteristics of peaceful characters in literature.[2] But, to return to God's creative, sovereign revelation, God has, thankfully, given us a deeper and far more significant unifying theme to our education.

In the end, the glory of God should motivate the Christian educator to integrate learning in the classroom. The greatest danger in failing to integrate our classrooms is that segregated learning will impoverish our understanding of the fullness of God's glory. God's glory will awe our hearts most when we train our minds to look for it in all that we learn. A philosophical study of God's revelation, or a theological, scientific, historical, or linguistic perspective on His creation all present new dimensions to our understanding of who God is. Of course, we could be content with just letting theology speak to each of our other subject areas. A student will certainly get a glimpse of God's glory by studying science, history, and literature separately, but through a biblical lens. But this approach remains incomplete, like examining all the parts of a car individually without bothering to assemble them into a complete vehicle. Our understanding of each subject and its contribution to our vision of God's glory will be greatest as we let each area of knowledge speak to the others.

One of my teachers in high school summarized his view on integration in the classroom by reminding us at the end of many class discussions that "the rabbit trails *are* the point." And why not, for a rabbit trail done well is nothing less than a chance to gaze at God's glory, walking around it and examining it from as many angles possible so that we might gain the fullest understanding of His character.

NOTES

1. Vern Poythress, *God-Centered Biblical Interpretation* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 1999), 23.

2. Susan M. Drake and Rebecca C. Burns, "Meeting Standards Through Integrated Curriculum", http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/103011/chapters/What-Is-Integrated-Curriculum%C2%A2.aspx.

Latin . . . Beyond the Four Walls of Your Classroom

by Amber Burgin, Regent Preparatory School of Oklahoma

Adore words

Latin is a subject that frequently makes parents cringe, students tremble, and principals desperate to find a teacher. So, when one starts talking about integrating Latin, people will often give me a blank stare. It can be quite a struggle to have a Latin program at all, much less an integrated one. I know that we do not dream of students who merely recite Latin vocabulary, nor is our only goal for Latin class that students improve their SAT score. (I hope.) I believe that integration can make the difference between an average Latin class and an extraordinary one. Integration can come in two different forms. First, we can integrate into Latin class the pedagogy of other areas of the curriculum. Second, we can integrate content between Latin and the other subjects.

Integrate Latin pedagogy

Because of a fear of Latin, we often do not treat Latin pedagogy as we do the other areas of curriculum. I find that many otherwise excellent books on classical education reach the chapter on Latin and simply say something to the effect of "just do it." Latin is part of our curriculum. It is not outside of it. Latin is more than something to "check off" in the curriculum. To expect a Latin teacher to teach classically, without any guidance, is as foolish as expecting any other teacher to teach classically, without any guidance. Sadly though, that is what happens to many Latin teachers.

Since I have not been able to find an excellent book on classical Latin pedagogy, what I do instead is read through any of the well-known books on classical education as though they were exclusively about Latin. I take the advice given for history, science, math, or logic classes and substitute in my head–Latin. Therefore when these books discuss the use of songs in teaching grammar students history, I ask myself the question, "How can I use songs in Latin?" When I read that chants are an excellent way to practice the multiplication tables, I think, "How can I use chants in Latin?" A book mentions coloring as a means of focusing students' attention during a history lecture. "How can I use coloring in Latin in a similar way?" Debate is discussed for logic-aged students. "How might I include debate in Latin?" Discuss the great books in literature classes. "What great books of Latin literature should I be discussing in my classes?" Use presentations to practice rhetoric skills. "How can I include presentations in Latin class?" I make a list of these types of questions as I read. I also reflect on what methods I have observed other teachers using. Next, I sit down with my curriculum and consider which methods would work most effectively for my curriculum and students. Reflecting on these types of questions changed how I taught Latin.

After considering how other grammar teachers used songs in their curriculum, I began writing songs for concepts that confused my grammar Latin students. My students struggled to remember the genders of third declension nouns, so I wrote a song on this topic. If you make a list of the basic content your students need to know, it is not that difficult to rearrange the words and put them to a public domain tune. Remember that such tunes should be published in 1922 or earlier. Lists of such tunes are available online from sites such as the Public Domain Information Project. If writing a song is outside of your comfort zone, you might look at songs available for purchase through Classical Academic Press, Memoria Press, and Issachar Press. You might also ask another teacher who is gifted in this area for help.

I read about and saw other teachers using chants in their classrooms, so I tried using chants for pieces of information that students needed to learn verbatim. A simple hand motion or increase in volume on certain words can make an otherwise "vanilla" recitation memorable to younger students. I created such

The integration of Latin (whether through pedagogy and/or content) can lead to an extraordinary Latin class because it incorporates into our study an aspect that we often miss – beauty.

***Amber Burgin** teaches elementary Latin at Regent Preparatory School of Oklahoma. Regent is a candidate for ACCS accreditation.*

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a chant for the principal parts of verbs. My students used their fingers to denote first, second, third, or fourth conjugation and suddenly a rather tedious piece of information was exciting to them.

Last year I introduced drawing to my Latin classes after observing another teacher using coloring in history class. Yes, we color in Latin class, but always with a purpose. I found a stained glass window in our town that included a Latin phrase my students had memorized. I took a picture of the window and projected its image on the board. While I discussed the origin of the art and its meaning, my students sketched the image in their Latin notebook. In this way that art and the Latin saying will always be linked in their minds. Plus, when they are in that section of town, I guarantee that they will be asking their parents to go see the original stained glass.

Depending on the age group that you teach, singing, chanting, and drawing may or may not be effective. If your students are older, you might try incorporating debate and discussion in your Latin class. Topics of debate can stem beyond discussing translation exercises. You might host a debate/discussion around a grammatical concept or irregularity in a text. Allow students to work together to create definitions in addition to translation. Give them the responsibility of presenting a topic. This works especially well if the topic is one that has been introduced in past years but which students have not yet mastered. By forcing them to put the concept into their own words, they have to process the peculiarities and verbalize them to others. Student work could be used as the summary of information instead of referring to a textbook.

All of these ideas are a form of integration. They came from considering Latin as part of the overall curriculum and borrowing pedagogical techniques from other areas. Utilize books and articles that are outside of the Latin scope and observe other teachers around you who are teaching the same age group. The more our Latin classes are presented in a uniquely classical way, the more integration of the content will flow.

Examples of Latin integration

There are endless ways to integrate Latin and the rest of the curriculum. Use your school's scope and sequence as a guide. If some sort of overview document does not exist, then interview teachers and create an informal scope and sequence. Once you have an overview document, highlight various points of overlap that can be capitalized through Latin studies. Be mindful of all parts of the curriculum.

History

If a class is learning American History, then sprinkle sayings from that era of time into their study of Latin. Look for applicable sayings from monuments, primary source documents, or the arts and sciences of the time period.

Phonics

Integrate phonics by borrowing markings from the phonics program used at your school. Many phonics programs mark long and short vowels. Help children relate these markings to macrons if your Latin program utilizes them. This will help students see the relationships between their grammar and spelling in both English and Latin.

Art

One might integrate art by tying historically famous Latin phrases to a work of beautiful art. For example, a phrase such as *sola fide* could be discussed while the students look at a painting of a Christian they have been studying in history, Bible, or science.

Science

Tie scientific Latin terms to the areas of science that students are studying. The constellations, periodic table, and binomial nomenclature are some aspects of science that lend themselves to integration.

Field trips

Field trips are another way to integrate Latin and "find" it outside the Latin classroom. Many churches, government buildings, and museums will have Latin inscriptions in them. If you find clusters of Latin in your area, a Latin scavenger hunt might be an energetic ending to an already scheduled class field trip to the museum or capital. Even as an informal "scavenger hunt," students should be encouraged to find Latin outside the classroom. They might present their findings through Latin "show-and-tell" at appropriate times during the school year.

Latin integration isn't just for Latin teachers

One does not have to be a Latin teacher in order to integrate Latin. Yes, Latin can be scary. Perhaps some of the fear might be waylaid through a Latin in-service or a Latin-focused staff meeting. It would be helpful for general education teachers to understand the major differences between Latin and

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English syntax, grammar, and pronunciation. Teachers could also be directed to Latin dictionaries and translators available online as well as in mobile applications. With such tools at hand, the fear of Latin can be abated. You do not have to know Latin in order to help your students look for Latin throughout the curriculum.

Literature

Encourage students to look for derivatives and Latin roots during their individual and classroom reading. Even the youngest students should be able to use their Latin to help them decode unfamiliar words. If your class encounters a word whose origin is questionable, encourage the students to bring up the word in Latin class. This will put the job of "remembering" on the students. In such a way, the Latin teacher can dialogue with students on vocabulary from their regular classroom. Students naturally and eagerly will report back to their other teacher what they have learned. Such dialogue takes only a little prompting from the teachers, and the students will do the work of relaying information between teachers.

Math

Obtain a basic list of Latin numbers from your school's Latin curriculum. Keep this in your math curriculum for easy access. These numbers will be a helpful tool when students study the metric system and geometry. Reminding the students that *centum* means one hundred and *mille* means one thousand takes a lot of the confusion out of the metric system.

Science

Science and Latin afford almost innumerable opportunities for integration. You might provide students with a specific section of their journal or binder for Latin integration. Such a section could be as simple as a list of Latin terms encountered in science class. The student who understands that the abbreviation for gold (Au) is derived from the Latin for gold (*aurum*) will be far less likely to forget this information than one who sees this abbreviation as arbitrary.

Revel in the beauty of Latin

The integration of Latin (whether through pedagogy and/or content) can lead to an extraordinary Latin class because it incorporates into our study an aspect that we often miss – beauty. Drills, details, and derivatives are all necessary and good, but do not forget to give students time to revel at how amazing this God-created language is. By integrating history, science, art, phonics, etc., you lead your students in appreciating how information is connected. Latin is a beautiful language. Consider it outside of the four walls of your classroom. Teach it with beauty.

The Difference God Makes

by Douglas Wilson, Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning

I was once instructing our seventh grade Bible class when I was interrupted by an objection from one of the boys in the class. "But that's a universal statement!" It turns out that in the previous science class the students had been taught about universal statements, and this student regarded with suspicion the appearance of one in Bible class. The student was attempting to apply in one class what he had learned in another. I answered the objection in class, but when the class was over, I took the student aside and praised him for attempting the application. Obviously, educators want to get the students to think in class. But the real goal should be to get them to think in the hallways *between* classes as well.

God is the Light in which we see and understand everything else. Without Him, the universe is a fragmented pile of incomprehensible particulars. Indeed, the universe can no longer be understood as a universe; it has become a multiverse. Christian education must therefore present all subjects as parts of an integrated whole with the Scriptures at the center. Without this integration, the curriculum will be nothing more than a dumping ground for unrelated facts. When God is acknowledged, all knowledge coheres. It is obvious that all aspects of this coherence cannot be known to us–we are finite creatures. But as the late Francis Schaeffer would put it, while our knowledge cannot be exhaustive, we can grasp what is true. We can understand that God knows what we do not, and therefore, the universe is unified *in principle*. Where God is not acknowledged, the pursuit of knowledge is just "one damn thing after another," and the ultimate exercise in futility. The French existentialist philosopher Sartre understood this when he said somewhere that without an infinite reference point, all finite points are absurd.

Selection from:

Douglas Wilson, *Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning*

(Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1991), 59.

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Classical Education

From its beginning, ACCS has advocated as its definition of "classical" the form of education that Dorothy Sayers described in her 1947 essay, *The Lost Tools of Learning*, and subsequently popularized in *Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning* by Douglas Wilson. Both of these authors advance the pedagogical methodology of the Trivium, which includes three aspects: grammar, dialectic, and rhetoric. Further, ACCS advocates, along with Miss Sayers and Mr. Wilson, that children tend to grow through developmental stages that generally coincide with the three areas of the Trivium. Children that are taught with these developmental stages in mind are receiving an education using classical methodology.

But there is another aspect to this, and that is to teach children their Western heritage through reading the great works of the West. These books provide the classical content. Such books are necessary to appreciate the arguments that have formed the way we think. This is so that our children can adequately provide the Christian antithesis to the humanistic arguments of our heritage that are still being advocated by our godless culture today. ACCS willingly acknowledges that it has a defined understanding of what constitutes a classical education and seeks to encourage that concept without apology.

ACCS

Excerpt from the ACCS Position Paper: "What Constitutes 'Classical & Christian' for ACCS?" The entire paper is available at www.accsedu.org > About.

The Renaissance Man and the Blue-Colored Bird

by Jeffrey Johnston, Bradford Academy

John James Audubon observed and made beautiful paintings of the birds he saw. Henry Vandyke Carter illustrated the influential medical text, *Anatomy: Descriptive and Surgical*, popularly known as *Gray's Anatomy*. Both of these men made significant and lasting contributions to their respective fields of science. Both of these men expressed their scientific observations in beautiful, detailed, and accurate sketches, illustrations and paintings. Their work has been a blessing to those that came after them because they looked or observed carefully and could draw accurately the things they saw. The question some may ask is: are they are scientists or artists?

During a science excursion a student approached me. "What do you think it is?" he asked. I was looking at a sketch of a bird in the student's field notebook. The sketch was adequate but lacking in detail.

"Are the colors accurate?" I replied.

"I think so," he said without conviction. The young scientist had drawn his sighting in the shape of a common song bird, with a round head and colored it entirely blue. The only bird in my experience that had that much blue coloring was a jay.

"Did the bird have any black or white marking?" The student wasn't sure. "Was the head round on top or crested?" Again, the student wasn't sure. I suspected that the bird he had seen was a blue jay but that he probably hadn't noted the details. I told him to keep a good lookout for that same bird and try to observe some more of the details.

As he walked away he turned and said, "Mr. Johnston, I think it might have had orange on it." Although I am not an avid bird-watcher, I was sure I had never seen a blue and orange bird here in this small town in central North Carolina. I am embarrassed to admit that if it had been another student, I may have been more interested. I dismissed the comment because I was certain the student was mistaken. Unfortunately, this particular young fellow had struggled with accuracy in some of his other classes. I repeated the mantra of the last few weeks, "Look carefully. Only draw what you see."

We had been bird-watching as part of our second grade science class in the lovely wooded property behind our school. So far, we had seen a falcon, a cardinal, a robin, a Canada goose, an American crow, a tufted titmouse, a chickadee, a sparrow of some sort, and a few other birds still to be identified. The students had been doing a wonderful job watching for birds and then sketching and coloring their observations. We had been studying the Logos School *Guide to North American Birds* to memorize and sound-off bird facts. We had also listened to some of the common bird songs we would expect to hear in our area. Now we were testing our knowledge in the woods. We had also been using *Drawing with Children* during art class to learn how to draw. I thought that keeping a field notebook would be an excellent point of integration for art and science.

Previously we had observed various leaves and had to make observations on the shape of the leaf (rounded or sharp angles), its vein pattern (parallel or netted), and how it grew from the stalk or branch. By requiring the students to answer a few simple questions about the leaves, we were training them to look at them carefully. We were essentially training the eye to observe, to see what was really there in front of them. We had then compared our observations and drawings to various field guides. If we were uncertain, we would go back to the leaf and look for other clues to help us identify the plant or tree. Sometimes this involved correcting our drawings. We had then moved on to birds. All of these lovely drawings filled a notebook to be graded for science class. I wrestled with the question, "Should I also add the drawings to their art portfolios?"

In our highly specialized world of academic pursuits, we have fallen into the trap of excessive categorical isolation. That is, we make a category to better help us understand something and then never adjust our category or admit any connections to other categories. Perhaps too often we ask, "Is it art or is it science?" For whatever reason, our academic fathers have trained us to think in rational pigeon holes, avoiding the forest in order to study the tree. However, in the examples illustrated, I have already hinted at the reality that sometimes art and science are not entirely separated.

Essentially the scientist and the artist do the same thing: they observe. It is certain that both do more than just observe; however, if they lack this common skill, they will be crippled in both scientific and artistic advancement.

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The Renaissance Man . . .

Sadly, the tendency to isolate science from art has also led to the categorization of humans into inescapable stereotypes. Teachers and parents will announce to anyone who will listen that a student is more of a math type, or an artist type, or an athletic type. Students can latch on to those types in a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy. We allow students to foster an interest in an area that comes easily to them while allowing them to neglect another because that is work. While students may have natural strengths in an area, we should not let them disregard those studies and skills that challenge and stretch them. We have created in our minds a category, then placed the student in it and never dare them to move beyond that category.

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Sadly, we have forgotten the idea of the Renaissance Man. Perhaps the manufacturers of modern educational theory feel it is too hard to teach science guys to draw or art guys to do science? Maybe we believe that they are too different. We have convinced ourselves that the only common trait among our imaginary caricatures of the art types and the science types is the pale skin. Maybe we have convinced ourselves that the multi-talented men of the past should no longer serve as examples to emulate. Perhaps Leonardo Di Vinci, Ben Franklin, and Blaise Pascal are examples of mere oddity, like a sideshow freak.

We can imagine the scene: "Look ladies and gentlemen, the amazing and slightly grotesque RENAISSANCE MAN! He can paint and do physics!" The crowd lets out a collective "OOOOh!" The carny continues, "But wait, watch him excelling in botany and philosophy!" The crowd gasps. One elementary teacher whispers to another, "I'm glad he wasn't in my class, I'd never figure out his learning style." An education professor shudders, "It's like he's not left brained OR right brained. He's like a two-headed monster."

The goal for our students should be to allow and encourage those areas of natural integration. The art teacher and the science teacher should work together to develop the skills of accurate and detailed observation. The art teacher should say often, "Draw what you see." She should challenge a child's drawing. "Does that line really meet that line in that spot?" "Can you see that part of the curve or is it hidden behind that object?" "Isn't that color lighter on this side of the object?" These kinds of challenges and questions should be made to all students so that they all learn to see what really is before them. The self- proclaimed math student may say he's not good at art until he learns that a little shading in the right place can make a circle look like a sphere. He can add a couple curved lines and some shadows and a rectangle becomes a column.

The wise teacher will also underscore the integrated virtue. Accurate and detailed observation is a form of truth telling. While making measurements the students must learn how to look carefully and report what really is. We don't fudge our measurements to get the results we expect. A scientist reports what is true. When the young artist draws a face he needs to learn the correct proportions– that the eyes are really half way between the top of the head and the chin. We don't draw them in the place we might expect; we draw them where they are in reality. An artist draws truthfully.

On our next field study opportunity, the student returned to me with a corrected drawing. Sure enough, he had spotted the eastern bluebird, whose population has been greatly diminished in our area. I had never seen one before. The orange-breasted songbird with the brilliant blue head, tail, and wings became the highlight of our bird-watching. Each sighting from then on was met with squeals of excitement. My young scholars were becoming artistic scientists or perhaps scientific artists. Either way, they were learning to observe more carefully and report truthfully what they saw.

An Integration of Subjects: Twenty-First Century or Inherently Classical?

by Toni Lynn Barto, Calvary Classical School

As scholars and experts in the realm of public education pursue methodology that will close the "global achievement gap" in education, they aim to use an integrated curriculum as just one of several crucial pillars for the recent emphasis on *twenty-first century* skills. According to Metiri Group, twenty-first century skills also include helping students develop technological literacy, higher-order and inventive thinking, collaborative learning skills, and real-world/project-based assignments, just to name a few.[1] While mainstream public educators gaze into the twenty-first century, classical Christian educators peer into antiquity to accomplish some of the same goals. Could it be, however, that in some ways, the advocates of twenty-first century skills are taking a page from the book on the classical education movement? While it remains to be seen whether or not twenty-first century skills in America's classrooms will succeed or simply become a passing pedagogy, it would appear that classical education can take a bit of the credit for at least one twenty-first century pillar—the integration of subjects. The classical Christian model of education suggests a natural framework for this integration due to the chronological presentation of history (including biblical and church history) and the consistent application of strong language skills across the curriculum.

Our modern-day, classical, Christian model of education emphasizes teaching history chronologically with events of the Bible and church history woven into the approach. Merging biblical and Christian events into the overall teaching of history—this is the beginning of course integration. Since history occurs in time, it seems rational that students can and should learn history this way, and they should learn about other disciplines assimilated into this chronologically constructed series of events. Marlin Detweiler of Veritas Press and Veritas Scholar's Academy in Lancaster, PA, writes of the need to integrate history with biblical events and church history:

> Few grammar school teachers have enough knowledge of Egyptian culture and its impact on the Israelites or can adequately teach the Reformation period. Additional tools were needed to effectively and memorably teach the timeline of history. Thus, the birth of this model of learning and integrating these two disciplines.[2]

The twentieth century, however, witnessed the rise of child development as a psychology all its own, and this tremendously impacted—for better or for worse—our approach to teaching history in America's public schools. For example, according to the International World History Project (history-world.org), up until the nineteenth century, the concept of childhood as we understand it today did not exist. In the mid-twentieth century, Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget cultivated his constructivist theory of cognitive development in children. This was the inspiration behind several studies in Great Britain in the 1970s and 1980s regarding how children learn history. The studies explored many aspects including children's understanding of the past and their ability to empathize with people from the past. Based on his own research during this time, Roy Hallam argued that children do not understand historical reasoning until Piaget's fourth and final stage of development, which isn't until the middle teen years. This suggested a contradiction to earlier studies by Jerome Bruner and more recent studies conducted in the United States. Thankfully, the more recent studies, which are not necessarily connected to classical education, uphold the notion that younger children do learn history through storytelling and literature integration.[3] But for a season of time, the experimental application of various theories adversely affected the teaching of history to elementary-aged children.

In classical Christian education, there is no question that the chronology of history as a "story" is celebrated as a theme to embed other subjects. God created the concept of time, and God created humans (including children) with the ability to understand time. Therefore, history stands strong as a mighty tool in the hands of the educator. The child studying the Middles Ages

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An Integration of Subjects . . .

and the Renaissance can learn about the worldviews, religious thought, artistic approaches, scientific discoveries, literary masterpieces, and mathematics of the time period and the historical implications associated across these disciplines. Clearly, one area affects another, and it is the duty of the teacher to help the student see the connections. For even an elementary school child can learn how the medieval church affected ideas concerning government, science, art, and literature. An art teacher can teach about Michelangelo, DaVinci, one-point perspective, and vanishing points. A math teacher can talk about the mathematics behind one-point perspective. A science teacher can help students explore Copernicus, Galileo, and the discovery of a heliocentric solar system. And, last of all, the language arts teacher can coach students through reading, writing, and speaking about these historically themed topics. Jacques Barzun, the French born American history professor of Columbia College, stated in an essay:

> Teachers of English who assign stories to read, and teachers of science as they come to great principles, should be asked to make historical points about authors and discoverers and should say something about their lives and works, reinforcing the idea that the consequences of history are with us still, present all the time; we not only make history but are bathed in it.[4]

In essence, the historical time period provides a point of reference for all of these subjects to shine with context and relevancy as they are learned. **As a result, the child does not walk away with a disjointed arsenal of mere facts and topical information, but rather a timeline of learning to which more knowledge and skills are added throughout his/her lifetime.**

If the study of chronological history plays the role of a backdrop to which one can embed subjects, then language arts plays the role of an overlay or an application to the same subjects. Language arts is not merely a subject in itself. Rather, it is a series of skill sets acquired and practiced in order to be able to manipulate and comprehend subjects. Once classical students develop the ability to listen, read, comprehend, write, and speak, they spend the rest of their educational careers fine-tuning these verbal muscles and applying them to numerous branches of knowledge. In a classical curriculum, the cornerstone of grammar, logic, and rhetoric supplies the rigors of communication through the written and spoken word. A ninth-grade geometry teacher, for example, can assign his students to use their math skills and computer software to design a bridge that will not fall down under prescribed conditions. As part of the assignment, the students can also write essays to explain and defend why their bridges will not fall down. Perhaps, in the essays, they cite historical discoveries that contributed to the knowledge we have about bridges today. With this approach, it is not always necessary to separate the school day into short blocks of time designated to various subjects. Instead, a school day can be spent applying language skills to a given theme over a longer period of time.

Tragically, over time, much of what was effective in education was tossed out because of what was ineffective in education. While America speeds ahead into the twenty-first digital age, classical educators are the ones who are at an advantage because they know the importance of how to draw out the effective methodologies of the past and merge them with the best of what is new. Integration of subjects, in a sense, is not new. In the ancient world, there was a natural overlap of basic courses to suit the practical needs of the government and society. In the twenty-first century, there are so many areas of specialization that there is often a disconnection. Therefore, in the twenty-first century, whether we are *twenty-first* century educators or *classical educators*, we are revisiting ways to bring integration and wholeness to learning once again.

NOTES

1. Metiri Group, "Twenty-First Century Skills," http://www.metiri.com/21st%20Century%20Skills/PDFtwentyfirst%20century%20skills.pdf.

2. Marlin Detweiler, "History and Bible Tools in an Integrated Approach: History and Bible in Grammar School," (essay, 2002).

3. Jere Brophy and Bruce VanSledright, *Teaching and Learning History in Elementary Schools* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1997).

4. Jacques Barzun, *A Jacques Barzun Reader*, ed. Michael Murray (New York: HarperCollins, 2002).

Read Any Great Books Lately?

by Margaret St. Jean, Oak Hill Christian School

80-year-old biologist E.O. Wilson has just published his first novel, *Anthill*,[1] the most recent development in a long career. Though Wilson has won the Pulitzer Prize for his non-fiction articles on the life of the ant, he felt it was important to use fiction as a vehicle for scientific information. Why, after a lifetime of serious science and writing about it factually, would Wilson waste his time on a novel? "People will pick up a non-fiction article and put it down after a little while. But if you can get them interested in a good story, you've got them 'til the end," said Wilson in a recent interview with Diane Rehm on her popular NPR talk show.

Great stories have the power to get our attention and hold it like no other medium. At Oak Hill, we retain a focus that other schools have sacrificed: through the Omnibus curriculum our students still read whole books, from start to finish. No anthologies, no excerpts. The power of a good story to educate while entertaining can move students to discover worlds they have not dreamt of. And, unlike the storytelling power of video, the mind is the stage on which the story unfolds. The student's imagination is essential to the process of storytelling, and it is also possible for students to learn to write by imitating the author they are reading.

Earlier this year, my middle school Omnibus class read Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*. Though this is hefty reading for this age group, I was delighted with all they learned. In addition to learning about Dickens himself and the French Revolution, they added to their writing skills. The boys and girls imitated Dickens' "larger than life" style (maximalism) by writing a paragraph of pure, and purely exaggerated, description. They also practiced the art of writing parallelisms in imitation of that famous, and famously lengthy, opening sentence, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times . . ." More than any textbook, the memorable *Tale* has added to the stock of the children's imagination, knowledge, and skill.

Concern is developing that the precocious specialization of American education is actually preventing all students, including the most capable and talented, from being able to think across disciplines. There is some evidence that narrowing to a specific field too early is keeping students from developing mature thought, especially concerning the implications of decision making in their intended field of endeavor.

In a *Washington Post* article[2] dated Sunday, January 23, 2011, Heather Wilson, former representative of New Mexico in the U.S. House, Air Force Academy graduate and Rhodes scholar, writes about her experience interviewing undergraduates who are Rhodes scholar candidates:

> Our great universities seem to have redefined what it means to be an exceptional student. They are producing top students who have given very little thought to matters beyond their impressive grasp of an intense area of study.
>
> This narrowing has resulted in a curiously unprepared and superficial pre-professionalism.
>
> Perhaps our universities have yielded to the pressure of parents who pay high tuition and expect students, above all else, to be prepared for the jobs they will try to secure after graduation. As a parent of two teenagers I can understand that expectation . . . .
>
> I detect no lack of seriousness or ambition in these students. They believe they are exceptionally well educated. They have jumped expertly through every hoop put in front of them to be the top of their classes in our country's best universities, and they have been lavishly praised for doing so. They seem so surprised when asked simple direct questions that they have never considered.
>
> We are blessed to live in a country that values education. Many of our young people spend four years getting very expensive college degrees. But our universities fail them and the nation if they continue to graduate students with expertise in biochemistry, mathematics or history without teaching them to think about what problems are important and why.

Above all, at Oak Hill students are being taught "to think about what problems are important and why" by engaging their minds with some of the best books ever written. My favorite moment with each class is the day we start a new book. Everyone is delighted to dive in. The classroom is filled with kids

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silently and eagerly absorbed in great ideas expressed in prose and poetry crafted by great writers. Perhaps their college educations will not be in the liberal arts; perhaps they will major in a career-specific discipline. But at least for twelve years they lived with the great stories, and had the luxury of time to think broadly and deeply about them.

NOTES

1. Learn more about ants here: http://www.amazon.com/Anthill-Novel-Edward-Wilson/dp/0393071197).

2. Read Wilson's article in its entirety here: http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2011/01/21/AR2011012104554.html.

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