



American Heritage School FOUNDATION GUIDE

2023-2024



Welcome to the Foundations Guide

This Foundations Guide will help you as a teacher to align your practices with the mission of American Heritage School. This guide will help you understand the foundational principles and culture of American Heritage School that set it apart as an institution in which teaching nurtures students who “seek learning, even by study and also by faith” (Doctrine & Covenants 88:118). This guide will help teachers who are new to the school to gain a vision for their assignments. Specific guidance on your curriculum and methodologies for your grade level will be provided to you during new teacher and ongoing in-service trainings. Seasoned AHS teachers will also use this guide to regularly revisit the foundational principles and vision for their work throughout their careers at AHS. May you be richly blessed as you seek further understanding in the pages of this guide and through personal inspiration to guide your service as an American Heritage teacher.

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American Heritage School

Mission Statement

American Heritage School assists parents worldwide in developing the hearts, minds, and bodies of students to realize their divine potential by:

1. BEING USEFUL IN THE HANDS OF THE LORD IN BUILDING THE KINGDOM OF GOD ON EARTH;
2. INCREASING FAITH IN AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE PLAN OF SALVATION;
3. DEVELOPING A LOVE, UNDERSTANDING, AND APPRECIATION FOR AMERICA AND THE FOUNDING FATHERS;
4. DEVELOPING THE ACADEMIC KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS NECESSARY TO BE ABLE TO MAKE SELF-EDUCATION A LIFE-LONG PURSUIT;
5. LEARNING TO REASON AND DISCERN BETWEEN RIGHT AND WRONG, TRUTH AND ERROR;
6. DEVELOPING CHARACTER AND SELF-GOVERNMENT OF MIND AND BODY; AND
7. CONDUCTING THEMSELVES IN ALL ASPECTS OF LIFE AS CHRISTIANS.

All activities, teaching, governance, and administration are to be accomplished in light of the above objectives and in so far as possible in harmony with revealed principles of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ and laws of the land. All teachers, staff, administrators, and trustees shall strive to be living examples of the values, principles, and skills taught at the school.



American Heritage School assists parents worldwide in developing the hearts, minds, and bodies of students to realize their divine potential...

American Heritage School History



School History



School Song



School Song: Children of Liberty

Children of liberty, learn from the past;
Truth, honor, charity, this is our task.
Our fathers gave to us this land unwall'd.
To grow and joy therein and serve our God.

Children of liberty, now visions come.
Live your life carefully, obey the Son.
Be to your brothers a measure that's true.
Give to them willingly God's love through you.

Children of liberty, day-light is low;
Darkness and storm converge, let your ray glow.
Present and past are yours to live a-new;
Prepare for Christ to come in all you do.

Assisting Parents, The Chief Educators

THE FAMILY: A PROCLAMATION TO THE WORLD

Parents have a sacred duty to rear their children in love and righteousness, to provide for their physical and spiritual needs, and to teach them to love and serve one another, observe the commandments of God, and be law-abiding citizens wherever they live. ...[M]others and fathers...will be held accountable before God for the discharge of these obligations.



“Parents have the primary responsibility for the education of their own children, and the school exists only to assist them in performing their duty. Parents are their children’s primary teachers and role models. Teachers at American Heritage School are tasked with supporting parents in their (the parents’) divinely appointed roles as the first and most important teachers in their children’s life.

– Taken from the writings of H. Verlan Andersen, a founder of American Heritage School

Most contemporary schools of thought conclude that education is comprised of a basic relationship between teachers, students, and content. (See Figure 1 below.) We believe that the family, and especially parents, are an essential relationship in the teaching and learning process, and that the influence of the Holy Ghost and the Light of Christ are at the very core of all transformational learning in life, illuminating and magnifying the other essential relationships as the student comes to a clearer understanding of truth. (See Figure 2 below.)

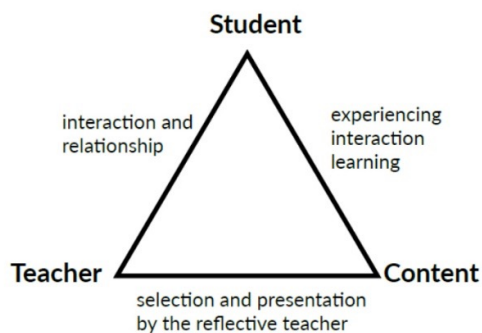


Figure 1. The didactic triangle model of education.

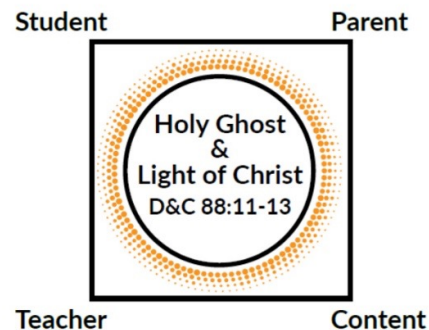


Figure 2. The AHS model of education. The square-encompassed circle is also reflected in the design of the school.

Teachers are valued by students and parents not only for their expertise in substantive areas of content, but also for their desire and ability to help students and families realize their divine potential. Teachers support parents in helping students learn some of the most important lessons in life, “that [they] may be prepared in all things when I shall send you again to magnify the calling whereunto I have called [them], and the mission with which I have commissioned [them]” (D&C 88:80).

As assistants to parents, teachers should consider these questions:

- How can teachers develop a relationship with parents so that they can support parents in the education of their children? What types of communication (timing and manner) will facilitate this relationship?
- What types of support do parents desire from AHS teachers?
- How can teachers appropriately advocate for both students and parents? When might it be important to defer to parents?



Educating the Whole Child: Heart, Mind, and Body

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

– Luke 2: 52

American Heritage School seeks to help children and youth follow the pattern of Jesus when he developed all aspects of his being.

The school strives to help students develop in a balanced manner that integrates the whole being: heart, mind, and body. In planning all aspects of the AHS experience for students, we seek balanced development. While students are encouraged to excel in all aspects of their education, no single component should dominate other aspects. Intellectual rigor should not overshadow the development of the heart and spirit, nor vice versa. Health and wellness of the body should be a priority alongside academic progress. All educational components have a role in developing character: arts inspire, academics inform, and athletics test character. For this reason, we strive to have students exposed to all three areas, and we pursue policies of broad participation in school activities. We recognize that when the heart, mind, and body align, students will develop toward their divine potential.

Teachers should consider the following about this development:

- How does the education of the whole child differ from other models of education?
- How does balanced development create synergy?
- What types of experiences transform the heart? The mind? The body?
- What is the role of students themselves in that development?
- What is the role of parents?
- What is the role of teachers?
- How can teachers model balanced development of heart, mind, and body?

Divine Identity and Potential of Students

The most vital knowledge a student can acquire is an awareness of who he is—that he is a child of our divine Father who loves him, watches over him and wants him to become as He is. Only with such understanding of his self-worth and unlimited potential can the student be properly motivated and aspire to the most worthwhile goals.

– Taken from the writings of H. Verlan Andersen, a founder of American Heritage School



I am not saying that other designations and identifiers are not significant. I am simply saying that no identifier should *displace, replace, or take priority over* these three enduring designations: “child of God,” “child of the covenant,” and “disciple of Jesus Christ.”

– President Russell M. Nelson, “Choices for Eternity,” May 2022



The Lord Jesus Christ had a striking view of children that surprised even those closest to Him. From the account of the New Testament, we see Him welcoming children to Himself, healing children, holding up a child to teach His followers what the Kingdom of God is like, then exhorting Peter in His parting instructions to, “Feed my lambs.” From the account of the Book of Mormon, we see Him calling the little children to Himself, one by one, praying for each, and weeping. It is then that he exhorts the parents to, “Behold your little ones.” This is a profound charge for all parents, teachers, and administrators over children. In former Primary General President Michaelene P. Grassli’s words, “When the Lord instructed the Nephites to behold their little ones, I believe he told them to give attention to their children, to contemplate them, to look beyond the present and see their eternal possibilities.”

Christ sees each child’s divine, infinite potential, and He knows each has a specific divinely appointed purpose and mission in this life. Through latter-day prophets, Christ calls on the youth to join the Lord’s battalion, help gather Israel, and prepare the world for His Second Coming. The divine identity and lofty potential of each student is at the heart of all pedagogical principles at American Heritage School.

The divine identity and potential of students call for a unique approach to education at American Heritage School. This education is not test-driven, content-centered education focusing on covering material and presenting facts in blocks, bits, and blurs. Nor is the education child-centered with methods governed by gratifying the child sensorially and temperamentally. Rather, the education is Christ-centered, principled-based, focusing on the fulfillment of each child’s development and God-given purpose in Christ. We don’t seek for exposure to facts, but “mastery” of content through careful study, drawing out of principles, making connections, and experiencing growth by applying truths learned. Teachers embody learning and teaching that is “living,” with the intent to inspire and enlighten understanding, while developing Christian character in form, manner, habits, and temper (see Noah Webster’s definition of “Education,” in the 1828 Dictionary).

The divine identity and potential of students influence every aspect of teachers' interactions with them. Teachers prayerfully strive to have eyes to see and hearts that feel what Christ sees and feels for their students. Because of their students' identity, teachers think and speak with a growth mindset. They praise effort rather than ability. They teach students that their skills are malleable and that they can increase their ability in any area. They focus on process, the things students can control: their effort, courage, work ethic, strategies, and diligence. They also teach students to reach out to a loving Father in prayer for divine assistance and strength. Essentially, teachers follow the Savior's pattern of providing a safe environment in which failure is part of eternal progression.

Teachers may want to ponder these questions:

- How does understanding the divine identity and potential of each student influence how teachers carry out their work of—
 - correcting or disciplining students?
 - praising students?
 - supporting struggling students?
 - planning instruction?
 - assessing progress and giving feedback to students?
- How does Christ think about failure? How can teachers emulate Him in ensuring that failure is not fatal?
- How can teachers come to see and know their students more like Christ?



1. BEING USEFUL IN THE HANDS OF THE LORD IN BUILDING THE KINGDOM OF GOD ON EARTH

Teaching and Learning as Stewardship

Why we do what we do really matters. The aim of an AHS education is, first and foremost, to become useful in the hands of the Lord in building the kingdom of God on Earth. This statement orients us, both students and teachers, as stewards. A steward is one who takes care of a property (or talent) on behalf of the owner or master. A steward strives to maintain and enhance that property for the benefit of the master. The famous musical Composer Johann Sebastian Bach lived with a deep sense of stewardship over his talents on behalf of God. When he completed one of his compositions, Bach would often add to the musical score the acronym *SDG*, *Soli Deo Gloria*, or “For the Glory of God Alone.” He did not view his talents as his personal property for his own aggrandizement; rather, he recognized himself as a servant of God, the true owner and rightful beneficiary of his talent.

“And whoso is found
a faithful, a just, and a
wise steward shall
enter into the joy of his
Lord, and shall inherit
eternal life.”

(Doctrine & Covenants 51:19)

Teachers at American Heritage School should help students understand the personal principle of stewardship. Parents, donors to the school, and ultimately God have lent them their educational opportunities. Teachers can explain to students, “[Y]e are not your own ...for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). As God’s stewards, students can show their love to God by dedicating their efforts and individual talents in academics, athletics, and arts to glorifying Him.

Teachers can help students explore how they can have their eyes “single to [His] glory” (Doctrine & Covenants 4:5). As students mature, they engage in processes of discovering their individual talents and life missions. Teachers can help students develop response-ability for their time and talents. As they act as wise stewards, their effectiveness in responding to the needs of others increases. Teachers can also help students understand the promise that when they act as true student-stewards of God’s gifts, with an eye single to His glory, “[their] whole bodies shall be filled with light, and there shall be no darkness in [them]; and that body which is filled with light comprehendeth all things” (Doctrine & Covenants 88:67). In other words, as they consecrate their stewardship to God’s glory, practicing being useful in the Lord’s hands, they can expect His help in their studies and other activities to give them additional light and understanding.

The principle of stewardship is practiced internally through prayer by teachers and students. They learn to see their days as sacred, and, like Bach, turn to God in prayerful supplication that their efforts at school will become holy, or consecrated. As Nephi taught, “But behold, I say unto you that ye must pray always, and not faint; that ye must not perform anything unto the Lord save in the first place ye shall pray unto the Father in the name of Christ, that he will consecrate thy performance unto thee, that thy performance may be for the welfare of thy soul” (2 Nephi 32:9). Students and teachers need to learn that personal, sincere prayer is an essential part of their seeking learning at AHS. This disposition and practice will help students and teachers become useful in the hands of the Lord in building the Kingdom of God on Earth.

From the Christian view of the child we don’t seek to have all children become Rhodes Scholars. We seek a fulfillment of their development and God-given purposes. We seek to give them the tools they need for the plan the Lord has for them. And then we seek to help them recognize their divine stewardship over all they have been given.



– Dr. Jenet Erickson, AHS Alumna
and AHS Trustee

DIVINE STEWARDSHIP

The principle of stewardship is practiced externally by the school community in how we care for our buildings and facilities. We understand that our buildings represent the financial sacrifices of donors, even the widow’s mite. Teachers and students practice caring for classrooms by taking a stewardship minute at the end of each class or each school day to clean up. Teachers also explicitly teach and model care for our facilities in unsolicited, private moments—picking up a piece of garbage from a hallway or using a paper towel to wipe water from a bathroom counter. Caring for our physical facilities is a shared external cultural commitment that reflects an internal commitment to be stewards for the Lord in deeply personal ways.

AHS teachers also understand that their positions are stewardships on behalf of their students’ parents and the school itself. Teachers remember that their classrooms, classes, and work are one piece of a larger puzzle, an important piece. Teachers remember the divine identity and potential of the students over whom they have stewardship and prayerfully consecrate their efforts. In turn, blessings of light, insight, love, and enabling strength are theirs to claim.

Knowing, Doing, and Becoming Useful





For students to become useful in the hands of the Lord in building the Kingdom of God on Earth, it is important that they acquire knowledge, gain proficiency in skills, and develop willing dispositions. Teachers plan curriculum by identifying the outcomes they desire for students in three areas:

Know: What are the essential concepts, facts, or principles students should know as a result of this instruction?

Do: What skills (cognitive, physical, or interpersonal) should students be able to do as a result of this instruction?

Become: What dispositions, attitudes, beliefs, commitments, or habits should students develop as a result of this instruction?

The following chart provides examples of Know, Do, and Become Objectives for grades 6-12.

	KNOW	DO	BECOME
	Facts, Concepts, Procedures	Skills, Applications, Performances	Attitudes, Dispositions, Feelings, Beliefs, Habits
	Define control group and variable group.	Design a scientific experiment that controls for variables.	Humbly acknowledge that both scientific research findings and your own understanding of truth are tentative.
	Explain the five causes of World War I.	Evaluate bias in primary and secondary historical sources.	Practice the habits of an informed citizen who stays abreast of current events and relates them to principles from history.
	List the components of an effective essay introduction.	Compose an introduction that effectively hooks the reader's attention, introduces the author, summarizes the text, and states a thesis that takes a clear position and establishes a line of reasoning.	Communicate with empathy and clarity to advocate for truth.
	Solve a quadratic equation by factoring.	Calculate the selling price that will maximize profit for a business using quadratic equations.	Feel confident in math and believe in its relevance to real life.
	Conjugate irregular past tense verbs in Spanish	Conjugate irregular past tense verbs in Spanish in student-generated conversations.	Become sensitive to cultural differences and ready to celebrate the good in Latino cultures.

Intentionally identifying and planning instruction around these objectives will help AHS students have a transformational experience that will prepare them to be useful in the hands of the Lord.

Habits of the Heart and Mind

For students to become useful in the hands of the Lord in building the Kingdom of God on Earth, it is important that they acquire knowledge, gain proficiency in skills, and develop willing dispositions. Teachers plan curriculum by identifying the outcomes they desire for students in three areas:

While what students can know and do as a result of their experiences at AHS is important, ultimately we are most interested in what they become. Helping students to become useful in the hands of the Lord means helping them develop habits of the heart and mind. Educational researchers Arthur L. Costa and Bena Kallick have created a list of 16 habits of the mind that they argue should be the true objectives of education. Their list has been adapted and expanded to include habits that encompass the entire student—heart, mind, and body. Teachers should reference this list as they consider possible “become” learning objectives for their classes. Note that the descriptions of these habits are written in first-person so that students and teachers can affirm personally what they strive to practice.

GATHERING TRUTH THROUGH ALL SENSES

I pay attention to information and truth from all my God-given senses: both external and internal. I prepare, ask, and give thanks for inspiration through the Spirit in my academic and personal learning.

LISTENING WITH EMPATHY AND CHARITY

I listen to the person behind the words: my brother or sister. I pay attention to tone and body language. I believe I can learn something from each person, even if what I learn is how they see the situation and why they believe what they do. I verbalize my understanding of what I hear being said. I pray for the gift of charity.

PERSISTING WITH RESILIENCE AND HOPE

I lean into challenge, failure, and discomfort knowing that they are part of God’s plan for my growth. I focus my self-talk on the things I can control, including choices about which strategies I use, my persistent effort, my prayers of faith, and how I ask for help. I accept failure as a necessary part of my growth and ask myself what I can learn from it as I move forward with hope.

MANAGING IMPULSIVITY WITH SELF-GOVERNMENT

I think before I act. I choose to delay gratification, picturing what I want in the long-run. I consider different possible ways to act and the consequences of each. I identify true principles to help me decide how to act. I follow my conscience and the Holy Ghost.

THINKING HUMBLY AND FLEXIBLY

I keep an open mind and am willing to change my mind when presented with new information or reasoning. I can step back from a problem and try out a different perspective or problem-solving strategy.

THINKING ABOUT YOUR THINKING AND PONDERING

I think about my thinking. I mentally plan a strategy before problem solving, monitor my effectiveness, make course corrections, and reflect to evaluate my process. I notice when I stop understanding and get help. I notice the effects of my actions on myself, others, and the Spirit. I ponder on what I have experienced and search for patterns that may be helpful in the future.

STRIVING FOR ACCURACY AND PRECISION

I care about truth, accuracy, precision, and craftsmanship. I check over what I produce to see how well it matches the criteria and purpose. I'm not content with mediocrity, but I seek to imitate models of excellence. I also keep my commitments with exactness.

QUESTIONING AND PROBLEM-POSING

I take the time to try to understand a problem before rushing to identify solutions. I distinguish symptoms from root causes. I ask questions about evidence, reliability, and assumptions. I ask "what if" questions and ask about different points of view.

APPLYING KNOWLEDGE OF THE PAST TO NOVEL SITUATIONS

I look for "lessons learned" from my experiences, both successes and failures. When I face a new and perplexing problem, I think of what I learned in the past in different contexts. I make up analogies to help me adapt things I know to new situations.

THINKING AND COMMUNICATING WITH CLARITY AND PRECISION

I use precise language. I care about what words mean and how that meaning changes. I use correct names, labels, and analogies. I avoid overgeneralizations, deletions, and distortions. I support my statements with explanations, comparisons, quantification, and evidence. I check to see if I am being understood. I adjust my language to fit my purpose and audience.

IMAGINING, INNOVATING, CREATING

I believe that as a child of God I am creative. I imagine what could be rather than only what is. I look at things from many different angles. I use analogies. I start with a vision and then work backwards. I question assumptions about boundaries. I am open to criticism, seeking feedback from others. I enjoy beauty.

RESPONDING WITH WONDER AND REVERENCE

I find the world mysterious. I look for something interesting or valuable in almost any situation. I am curious and amazed. I look for God's hand in what I learn, see, and experience and express gratitude to Him.

TAKING RESPONSIBLE RISKS WITH FAITH

I assess risks by relying on good information, consideration of consequences, my conscience, and the Spirit. Then I take responsible risks with faith. I embrace uncertainty, set-backs, and vulnerability as opportunities. I care most about the big picture of who I am becoming. As I take responsible risks with faith in Christ, I let go of fears, trusting He will take care of me.

FINDING GENTLE HUMOR AND ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE

I value a kind sense of humor. I notice things that are funny. I am playful with words and validate others' humor. I avoid humor that is divisive, disrespectful, or irreverent. I use humor to keep challenges and human weaknesses in perspective.

ASKING FOR AND GIVING HELP TO THINK INTERDEPENDENTLY

I believe that we think better when we work together. I know that other people have access to other information and perspectives that will help me think more clearly. Together, we strive to justify ideas and test the feasibility of solution strategies. We give and receive help and feedback. We listen, give up ideas when needed, and seek consensus.

HUMBLY REMAINING OPEN TO CONTINUOUS LEARNING

I am always trying to learn. I look for new and better ways. I want to improve and grow. When I notice I am feeling complacent, defensive, or fearful, I humbly shift towards openness and curiosity.

GRATEFULLY CARING FOR THE TEMPLE OF YOUR SPIRIT

I believe my body is a temple for my spirit. How I treat my body affects my spirit. I care for my body with exercise, diet, and sleep and avoid addictions. I choose to think about my body with gratitude for what it can do. I listen to feedback from my body and respond appropriately.

LETTING VIRTUE GARNISH THY THOUGHTS UNCEASINGLY

I seek to think about and talk about things that are virtuous, lovely, of good report, and praiseworthy. I memorize things that are edifying. I do not dwell on thoughts that are dark or discouraging. I focus on the good in others. I look to Christ in every thought.



2. INCREASING FAITH IN AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE PLAN OF SALVATION

By Study and Also By Faith

Seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom; seek learning, even by study and also by faith.

– D&C 88:188

Dear brothers and sisters, God is the source of all truth. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints embraces all truth that God conveys to His children, whether learned in a scientific laboratory or received by direct revelation from Him.

– President Russell M. Nelson, “What is Truth?”
October 2022

John Donne penned, “Reason is our soul’s left hand, Faith her right, By these we reach divinity.” Seeking by study and also by faith is the American Heritage way. Although some people have misunderstood academics and faith as rivals—sometimes almost portraying academic scholarship as the pagan way—at American Heritage Schools we understand that God’s light is everywhere evident, as well in a textbook as in a book of scripture.

Academic Subjects Relate to Christ

All academic subjects can help us learn about Christ. To discover how their subjects relate to Christ, teachers are encouraged to write about or discuss these prompts.



Zoom out: Review the Plan of Salvation. How does the subject fit into this big picture? Consider the pillars of the Plan: the Creation, the Fall, and the Atonement of Jesus Christ. How might your subject relate to each of these?

Doctrine & Covenants 88

77 And I give unto you a commandment that you shall teach one another the doctrine of the kingdom.

78 Teach ye diligently and my grace shall attend you, that you may be instructed more perfectly in theory, in principle, in doctrine, in the law of the gospel, in all things that pertain unto the kingdom of God, that are expedient for you to understand;

79 Of things both in heaven and in the earth, and under the earth; things which have been, things which are, things which must shortly come to pass; things which are at home, things which are abroad; the wars and the perplexities of the nations, and the judgments which are on the land; and a knowledge also of countries and of kingdoms—

80 That ye may be prepared in all things when I shall send you again to magnify the calling whereunto I have called you, and the mission with which I have commissioned you.

Example: For a P.E. class—

- We know that Christ created our physical bodies to help us progress (Abraham 3:24-26). They are created in God's image and when combined with our spirits constitute our souls (Doctrine & Covenants 88:15). The body is a temple (1 Corinthians 6:19).
- Because of the Fall, our bodies are subject to pain, sickness, injury, and death (Moses 6:48). Because of the Fall, the natural man wants to indulge his appetites (Mosiah 16:3). Satan wants to entice us to indulge our carnal appetites and mistreat our bodies, dulling our sensitivity to the Spirit, or to worship our bodies (2 Nephi 2:29).
- Because of the Atonement of Christ, we can look forward to a day of Resurrection when our bodies will be perfected (Alma 40:23). Through the Atonement of Christ, we can obtain power to discipline our appetites to serve God's divine purposes (Mosiah 3:19).



Zoom in: Focus on Christ's character. Do we have any evidence showing his mastery of the subject? If He were teaching this subject, how would He teach it? Which personal characteristics would be demonstrated by how he taught it? If He were learning this subject, how would He learn it? Which personal characteristics would He demonstrate by how He went about learning it? How can students become more like Him through this subject?

Example: For an English class—

- Consider how Christ used language. The poetry of revealed scripture, such as the writings of Isaiah, demonstrates that Christ has developed the gift of figurative language. His parables illustrate His skills in composition and expression. His language is simple, yet it bears repeated readings to uncover additional insights. Christ shows us how He uses the gift of language to serve, teach, and love others. He is articulate, concise, and inspiring. For example, consider His concision with the incident of the woman taken in adultery (John 8:1-11).
- If Christ were teaching an English class, which works of literature would He select for students to read? How would He use literature to build empathy, invite faith and repentance, inspire love, and generate joyful pleasure? He might teach in a way that solicits insight and interpretation from his students, talking little himself and asking careful questions. He would delight in and celebrate his students' incremental gains. He would encourage struggling readers and writers, individually meeting them where they are and helping them see their own potential and identifying next steps.
- Imagining Jesus as a child or youth learning language, He would have had little focus on himself as he studied. Instead, he probably would have been thinking about how He could use his increasing language skills to glorify His Father and to help others. He would keep the two great commandments through his increasing language skills (Matthew 22:37-39).
- Students might be inspired to learn with this same outward-looking orientation. Writing assignments could be focused on using language to glorify God and to serve others. For example, students might be assigned to write a tribute to a parent or grandparent.



Look forward and outward: How might learning this subject be helpful to students in the future as they strive along the covenant path? How might it help them as they help gather Israel?

Example: For a computer science class—

- *Students might consider God's possible purposes for revealing the secrets of computer technology at this time in the world's history. He is helping them gain access to a vast array of spiritually strengthening resources through the Church's website that can help them understand and keep their covenants. He is helping them access incredible information for their education so they can provide for their future covenantal eternal families. He has given them tools to accomplish in seconds what might have taken hours in the past.*
- *As full-time missionaries, how will they use this technology? In doing family history and temple work, how will they use this technology? On social media, how will they use this technology to love, share, and invite? As future spouses, parents, bishops, Relief Society presidents, teachers, etc. how will they use this technology? What skills from this class will be helpful to them in fulfilling their personal life missions?*



Look backward and inward: How might learning this subject help students understand their divine identity as children of God? How might it help them understand and feel His love for them?

Example: For a biology class—

- *In reflecting on the incredible complexity and interconnection of life in an ecosystem, in considering the perfect balance of conditions on Earth to support life, in appreciation of the miraculous systems of the human body, students might understand how incredibly intelligent God, their Father, is. Being His offspring, they have His potential for intelligence and goodness.*
- *God not only created a world that is intricate but also beautiful and varied for their pleasure and joy. What incredible love they can experience as they reflect on His creations for them, both collectively and individually. If He notes even the fall of a sparrow, then how much more He must be aware of them individually. Perhaps he created this specific flower or that very insect just for their individual pleasure and joy.*



Identify unknowns: What, if anything, has been revealed about my subject? What is speculation or unknown?

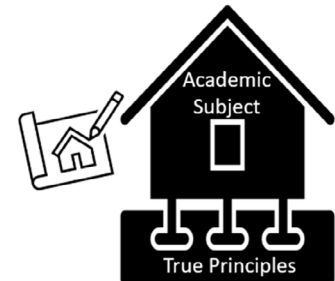
Example: For a history class—

Known	Unknown
God created the world and placed Adam and Eve on it (Genesis 1-2).	What dates did Adam and Eve live on Earth?
The Book of Mormon was written by ancient inhabitants of the Americas.	Where did the Nephites and Lamanites live in the Americas? Which tribes of Native Americans are descended from them?
God called Columbus to "discover" the Americas to Europeans (1 Nephi 13:12).	Which of Columbus' actions did God sanction?
God inspired the writing of the U.S. Constitution (Doctrine & Covenants 101:77).	Did God approve of every phrase in the U.S. Constitution? Does God approve of amendments to the Constitution?

Planning Gospel-Integrated Instruction

As teachers discover how their subjects relate to Christ, they can plan how to help students learn these truths. There are three basic models for integrating the gospel with academic subjects. Most learning will benefit from a blend of the three models.

MODEL 1 IS LIKE CONSTRUCTING A HOME. Teachers start by laying a gospel-oriented foundation for the topic. Teachers identify relevant gospel principles and teach them up-front. Once this foundation of true principles has been laid, all academic knowledge can then be “squared off” in relation to that foundation. The teacher might proceed to help students consider academic concepts, applications, exemplifications, and even non-examples of those foundational gospel principles.

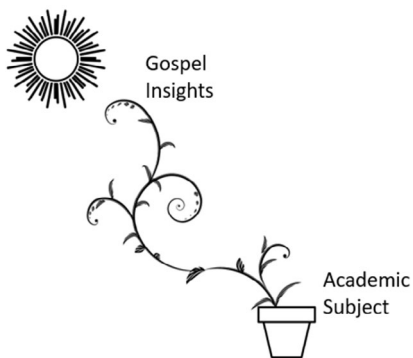


Lay the foundation in true principles. Then pre-plan how to construct an understanding of the academic subject to elaborate on and reinforce those principles.

Strengths: Model 1 is particularly good at ensuring that a unit of instruction will consistently include a gospel orientation. It can be useful when the teacher feels inspired to teach a specific principle directly.

This model helps learners to first identify true principles and then to measure themselves against this standard of truth. It is thus powerful in helping learners to identify and feel motivated about their next step in daily repentance.

Limitations: This approach can sometimes produce gospel connections that feel forced or artificial. It can foreclose on true learning through the Spirit’s inspiration. Care should be taken to avoid insincere, formulaic uses of this model.



Nurture the growing understanding of the academic subject, encouraging gospel insights to organically emerge as the light of the Spirit infuses learning.

MODEL 2 IS LIKE GROWING A PLANT. Teachers start with the academic subject. As they nurture student understanding of the academic subject, they allow for gospel insights to emerge organically from the study of the subject. It is often the students who discover these insights and share them with the class.

Strengths: Model 2 is particularly good at helping students discover personally-meaningful gospel insights and connections. These insights have a ring of authenticity to them. Though helpful to all students at times, this model is often effective for older students who exercise a higher degree of influence on the learning process.

Limitations: Teachers who use Model 2 give up an element of control over the lesson. Students may not be cognitively capable of discovering meaningful gospel connections on their own, or the lesson may organically fail to arrive at a meaningful insight. Teachers should take care to preplan potential gospel insights and connections to support the development of understanding with this model. Gardeners know that many plants need pruning and training. Similarly, teachers need to pre-plan sufficient instructional scaffolding and key questions to increase the likelihood of success. The timeline for Model 2 gospel insights may be longer, arriving at gospel insights after several days or even weeks of instruction. With

this model, it is also possible that learners will engage in rationalization or justification when they begin their reasoning with an erroneous concept or position and then look for principles to support it. Thus, gardeners must strive to remain in the full light of Christ.

MODEL 3 IS LIKE LEARNING TO DANCE. Teachers identify aspects of Christian character that are put into practice in the context of the class. These are the dance steps. For example, while participating in group work, students might practice loving their neighbors as themselves by how they take turns, share responsibilities, and listen to one another. Or while working on a challenging task, students might practice principles of prayer and faith to persevere. The teacher guides practice of these gospel steps so that students can learn the dance of discipleship while engaging with learning activities.

Strengths: Model 3 goes beyond learning about gospel truths to actually living them. As an action-oriented approach, it is by definition faith-oriented. It also calls on the teacher to exemplify Christian character rather than simply tell about it.

Limitations: It is possible to practice the steps of the gospel dance mechanically or in a contrived manner that misses the real music. Teachers must invite students to also practice hearing the music. Teachers should avoid forced or contrived applications that focus more on the doing than on the Spirit of the principles involved. They should also ask students to reflect on the ways they are hearing the Spirit's music as they practice.



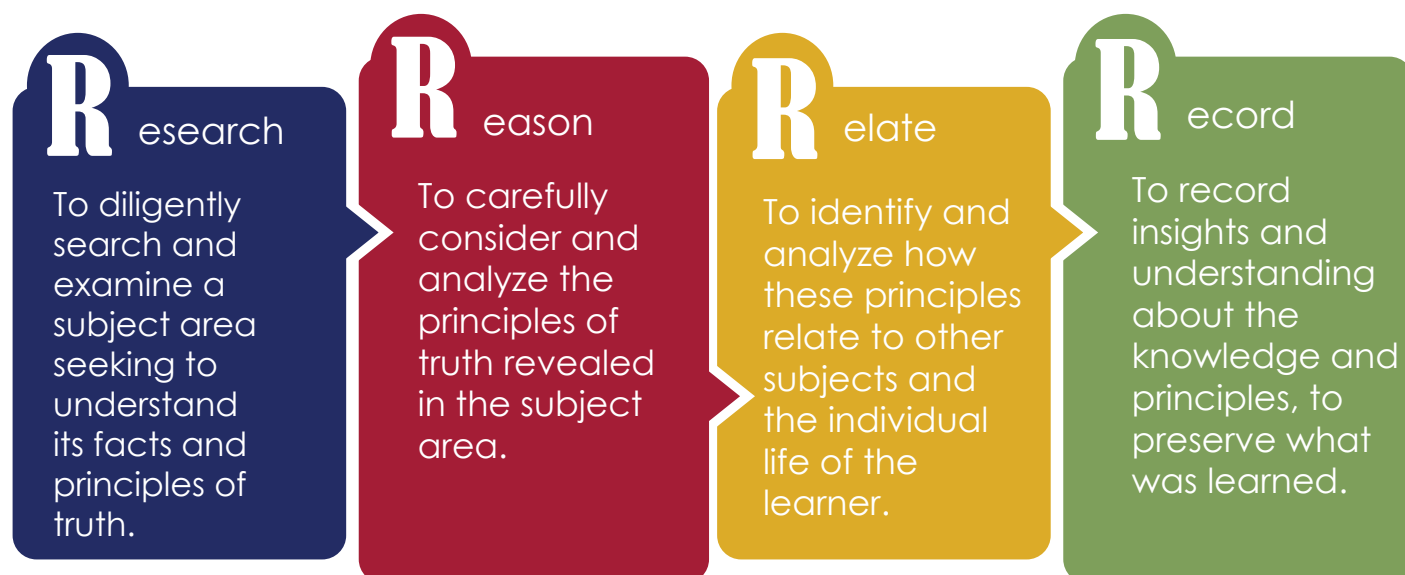
While learning the subject, practice living gospel principles. This model is less about gospel insights than it is about gospel doing. Practice the steps of living gospel principles and practice hearing the music of the Spirit.

We learn the dance steps with our minds, but we hear the music with our hearts. The dance steps of the gospel are the things we do; the music of the gospel is the joyful spiritual feeling that comes from the Holy Ghost. It brings a change of heart and is the source of all righteous desires. The dance steps require discipline, but the joy of the dance will be experienced only when we come to hear the music.

– Elder Wilford W. Andersen, “The Music of the Gospel,”
April 2015

4R-ing (pronounced "four-are-ing")

The 4R methodology is designed to facilitate transformational scholarship through a process of carefully examining a subject area, then identifying, analyzing, and applying principles of truth.



RESEARCH

Research involves diligent searching and examination of a subject area to acquire knowledge of the facts and principles that govern that subject area. This process is undergirded by careful study of the scriptures to learn the principles of truth revealed by God, that are inherent to every area of study. Noah Webster's 1828 Dictionary defines this term as, "To diligently inquire and examine in seeking facts and principles." Research draws on original sources as well as other appropriate sources, including the scriptures. Jesus taught, "Search the scriptures; in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me" (John 5:39).

Research Examples

- Guest speakers
- Listening
- Interviews
- Collecting items e.g.: rocks
- Experiments
- Observing
- Field Trips
- Skype/Virtual Tours of historic sites

REASON

Reason involves critically thinking to deduce and infer principles of truth from the knowledge obtained through Research. The revealed word of God provides the guide for identifying and discerning principles of truth in each subject area. Noah Webster's 1828 Dictionary defines the term as, "To deduce inferences justly from the premises. A faculty of mind by which it distinguishes truth from falsehood, and good from evil, and which enables the possessor to deduce inferences from facts or from propositions." This requires careful consideration, thoughtful pondering, and frequent reflection on the principles that govern and are demonstrated in the subject.

Reason Examples

- Critical thinking
- Discerning principles of truth
- Careful consideration
- Thoughtful pondering
- Reflection on principles

RELATE

To Relate involves drawing connections and applying the knowledge and principles learned in one context to other contexts, including and especially one's own life. In the process of relating, students both practice and experience the knowledge and principles learned, allowing them to have a personal relationship with the subject and its underlying principles. As defined by Noah Webster, to relate is to *"tell or recite, to apply fact and truth to life and knowledge; to lay open the meaning; to make clear to the understanding"* Any education is incomplete unless it includes the vital element of what a listener can and should do with the knowledge and principles learned. Relating is based in the truth that the purpose of education is to help students not just know, but to "become."

Relate Examples

- Relating to emotions
- Relating to experiences
- Relating to senses
- Comparing what you learn to what you know
- Thoughtful pondering
- Explain why two patterns match

RECORD

To Record means to account for and elucidate the knowledge and principles learned in a way that preserves the learning. As defined by Noah Webster, to record is, "To write a regular, authentic, official copy for preservation of what was studied." When students record the information learned, the understanding gained, and the insights developed in the process of learning about a subject area, they are able to make that learning their own possession. The process of recording develops thinking and communication skills while helping children to retain information longer. The Foundation for American Christian Education has described recording as "writing with the intent of preservation" and "etching with the intent of imprinting deeply on the mind, thus fixing on the heart and carving the character."

Record Examples

- Artwork
- Writing on paper/device
- Whiteboards
- Sing or compose a song
- Share impressions of the heart
- 3D model
- Text/email/blog
- Take photos/videos
- Poetry
- Play/puppet show

Priniples guide correct decisions. Spiritual moments will come...take a few moments to crystallize in a permanent record the sacred impressions of the Holy Spirit.

- Richard G. Scott



Inviting The Spirit Through Devotionals

Daily devotionals are a foundational practice that invites the Spirit to make learning by study and faith possible. In a daily devotional, students and teachers often sing a hymn, pray, pledge allegiance to the flag, recite a memorization, and then study and discuss various topics taken primarily from:

1. Current General Conferences
2. Come Follow Me
3. Scriptures

This daily practice strengthens students' capacity to research and reason from truth, then apply principles learned through that study. Most often, devotionals occur at the beginning of the day. For grades K-8, devotionals are held in the homeroom class. For high school, the first-period class begins with a brief devotional which could be as simple as singing a hymn, offering a prayer, and pledging allegiance. All other classes throughout the day are welcome to open with prayer according to teacher preferences. By middle and high school, students often direct devotionals and lead the research, reasoning, and relating discussions.

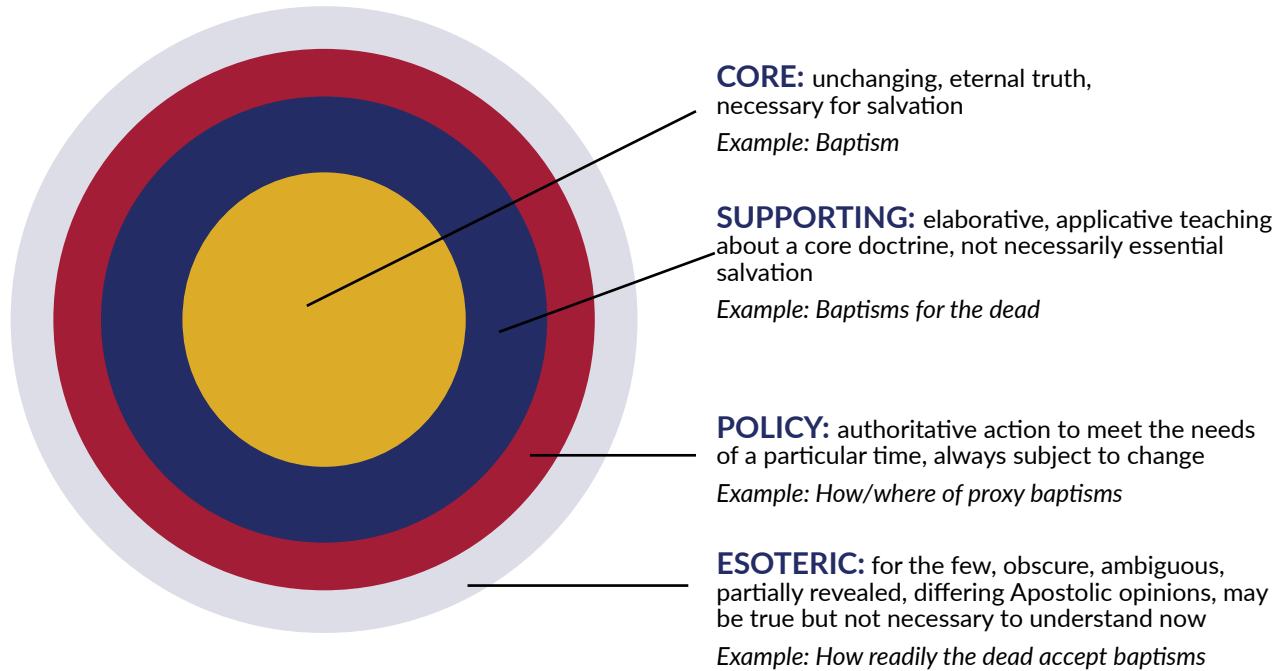
The “recording” process of the devotional is reflected in an annual Devotional Program in which students formally share the knowledge learned from their daily devotionals, including insights, memorizations, and factual learning in a program performed for the school community. All grades K-8 plan and perform one grade level/class devotional each year. In grades 9-12, devotionals take on less of a performance format in favor of presentations and displays. High school teachers are encouraged to look for opportunities to help students make visible their learning and becoming to the broader school community, including parents. For example, in the past, some history teachers have had students create a history museum, and English teachers have published an anthology of student writing. These become a precious method for imprinting truths and scriptural learning deeply in the mind and heart of each student.

Routines such as daily devotionals can be powerful or rote, depending on how they are implemented. Teachers are encouraged to regularly remind students about the purpose of devotionals: to invite the Spirit into their learning by preparing their hearts and minds each day. Teachers can encourage students to sing and pray with sincerity. Daily devotions are one way students can demonstrate their desire to seek learning by study and faith.



Focusing on Core Doctrine

Teachers seeking to bring their subjects into dialogue with revealed truth will be on safe ground when they focus on core doctrines.



When integrating revealed truths with human knowledge, it is crucial that teachers acknowledge occasional speculation and personal opinion as such. Teachers should use extreme caution when sharing speculation and personal opinion with students to present it as a possibility and “my personal opinion” or “my best thinking up until now leads me to believe...” Teachers explain that they leave such opinions open to future revision, relying on the principle of ongoing revelation and trusting that God reveals and withholds truths according to His wisdom.

“We believe all that God has revealed, all that He does now reveal, and we believe that He will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.”

Article of Faith 9

Agency and Faithful Seeking

As good as a teacher's lesson design may be for supporting gospel connections, to learn about Christ while studying academic subjects, AHS learners must "seek learning, even by study and also by faith" (Doctrine & Covenants 88:118). AHS learners must seek. This is not something the teacher does to students, but something the student must do for themselves, particularly as they mature. Teachers should instruct learners to exercise their agency in learning, to act and not be acted upon (see 2 Nephi 2:26).

AHS learners seek through study and also by faith. They bring their whole beings to the process of education. It is not just a function of cognition or reasoning. It is effortful, integrated work of the heart and mind and body. At its best, it can be a revelatory experience for learners who seek both intellectually and spiritually. This type of learning depends on dialogue, not only with members of a classroom, but also with God through prayer.

While faithful seeking depends on how learners use their agency, teachers can do a lot to influence how learners approach faithful seeking:

- Teachers ask thought-provoking questions that prompt faithful seeking. They can also point out questions raised by individual students which deserve additional faithful seeking.
- Teachers extend frequent, heartfelt, and Spirit-guided invitations to students to exercise their faith in their learning. Students can be invited to pray about their academic studies.
- Teachers can model faith-filled inquiry, explicitly thinking aloud to share their faith-filled process as they learn academic topics.
- Teachers can plan experiences and assignments where students are likely to be receptive to promptings and invitations.
- Teachers can help students recognize and express gratitude for inspired experiences when learning has been evidently enlightened by the Spirit. Returning and giving thanks is a practice the Savior taught.
- Teachers can create opportunities for students to record enlightened insights. Engaging in regular recording can help students demonstrate to the Lord that they value what they are learning and intend to keep and act upon it.



Because all truth comes through the light of Christ, seekers of secular truth must follow the Lord's requirements for discovering gospel truths. Diligence or mental exertion is one of the requirements that must be followed by seekers of secular truth. Scientists study the problem, saturate their minds with it, puzzle over it, and dream about it. ...What about obedience? What is the level of obedience required for the discovery of secular truth? Again, the answer is that everyone must live according to the light they have.

– Merrill J. Bateman, former BYU President
"Secular Learning in a Spiritual Environment,"
BYU Studies, 1995

Teachers are encouraged to study the principles of personal revelation, both for themselves and to help their students learn how to seek revelatory learning in their academic subjects. Consider conducting a word study on the word “revelation,” using the following resources:

- Entry for “revelation” in Webster’s 1828 Dictionary
- “To Acquire Spiritual Guidance” by Elder Richard G. Scott, October 2009.
- “The Spirit of Revelation” by Elder David A. Bednar, April 2011.
- Doctrine and Covenants section 88

AHS graduates who have been mentored to seek learning by study and also by faith will be prepared to be lifelong learners who integrate their academic learning with their spiritual learning. They should be able to frame academic learning within a growing understanding of the Plan of Salvation. They will experience their study of academic subjects as part of their process of becoming more like Christ.



3. DEVELOPING A LOVE, UNDERSTANDING, AND APPRECIATION FOR AMERICA AND THE FOUNDING FATHERS

Seven Principles of Personal and Civil Liberty

Underlying the purposes of American Heritage School is the foundational understanding that the great cause of Christ is the eternal liberty of the children of God. This is clearly described by the prophet Lehi in 2 Nephi 2:27:

“And the Messiah cometh in the fulness of time, that he may redeem the children of men from the fall. And because they are redeemed from the fall they have become free forever, knowing good from evil; to act for themselves and not to be acted upon...And they are free to **choose liberty and eternal life, through the great Mediator of all men**, or to choose captivity and death...”

In President Gordon B. Hinckley’s words, “There is another war that has gone on since before the world was created... It is the war between **truth and error**, between **agency and compulsion**, between the **followers of Christ and those who have denied Him**. His enemies have used every stratagem in that conflict...to thwart the work of Christ.” From this description we learn that the cause of Christ is the cause of truth over error, agency over compulsion, enabling our eternal liberty. Jesus Christ is the Author of Liberty.

American Heritage School recognizes that in the grand story of liberty, Jesus Christ ordained that the United States of America become a nation wherein eternal principles of liberty could be enshrined in its creation. In Doctrine and Covenants 101:77-80, the Lord speaks of “the laws and constitution of the people, which I have suffered to be established, and should be maintained for the rights and protection of all flesh, according to just and holy principles; . . . And for this purpose have I established the Constitution of this land, by the hands of wise men whom I raised up unto this very purpose.”

Those principles established a government which “derives its just powers from the consent of the governed.” The “just powers” of this government exist to secure the God-given rights of life, liberty, and property, so that each can exercise moral agency, and be accountable before God for their decisions and actions. Religious freedom was established as the first freedom, the freedom which relies upon and reinforces all other core liberties essential to protecting the moral agency of each person. In a nation protecting the God-given rights of all, the house of the Lord could be “established in the top of the mountains,” and the gathering of Israel through the restoration of the Gospel could proceed.

John Quincy Adams, our 6th President, articulated this very purpose in a speech commemorating the 4th of July, in 1837:

“Why is it that, next to the birthday of the Savior of the world, your most joyous and most venerated festival returns on this day [the Fourth of July]? Is it not that, in the chain of human events, the birthday of the nation is indissolubly linked with the birthday of the Savior? That it forms a leading event in the progress of the Gospel dispensation? Is it not that the Declaration of Independence first organized the social compact on the foundation of the Redeemer’s mission upon earth? That it laid the cornerstone of human government upon the first precepts of Christianity, and gave to the world the first irrevocable pledge of the fulfilment of the prophecies, announced directly from Heaven at the birth of the Savior and predicted by the greatest of the Hebrew prophets six hundred years before?”

At American Heritage School, The Seven Principles of Personal and Civil Liberty are principles focused on across the curriculum to inculcate an understanding of liberty through Christ, and the legacy of “just and holy principles,” that are part of our American heritage. Teachers should collaborate with their peers to determine how best to integrate these principles into their curriculum.



Seven Principles of *Personal and Civil Liberty*

DIVINE IDENTITY AND PURPOSE

God is our loving Heavenly Father. He has endowed each of His children with the gifts of life, the freedom to choose, and a divine identity and purpose. Civil liberty is founded on the truth that these are inalienable, God-given rights.

LIBERTY THROUGH CHRISTIAN SELF-GOVERNMENT

God has given us the freedom to choose liberty and eternal life through Jesus Christ, or captivity and death. As we seek to obey the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ, and receive His grace, we will experience liberty. Civil liberty can exist only when there is widespread adherence to moral law by self-governed individuals.

CHRISTLIKE CHARACTER

Jesus Christ is the standard of character and the model of all virtues. Through His Atonement, we can become like Him. America's heritage provides examples of men and women who were liberated by obedience to the teachings of Jesus Christ, and who sought freedom to develop and express Christian character. America became the seedbed of civil liberty because of inspired reliance upon Christian principles.

CONSCIENCE, THE MOST SACRED OF ALL PROPERTY

God has granted each of us stewardship over our individual souls, labor, and possessions. The most sacred stewardship God has given us is our conscience. We experience liberty as we follow our conscience, which is the light of Christ within us. In the civil realm, liberty depends upon protection of the rights of property, including the property of conscience.

THE FAMILY, RELIGION, AND CIVIL GOVERNMENT

Personal and civil liberty depend upon the protection and vitality of three realms: the family, religion and its expression, and civil government. Internal restraints within civil government, such as representation, separation of powers, and federalism, are necessary to temper the exercise of governmental power. These internal restraints protect individual accountability, the rights and responsibilities of families, and religion and its expression.

CULTIVATING SELF-GOVERNMENT IN OTHERS

Individuals who experience liberty through Christ seek to bless others with liberty. Christ's followers are obligated to cultivate and protect the right of self-government for all mankind. Civil liberty is best protected when the decision-making authority of government resides at the level that is closest to those affected by its decisions.

FULLNESS OF LIBERTY THROUGH UNITY WITH GOD AND MAN

The ultimate purpose of God's plan of happiness is to enable us to experience a fullness of liberty. This is possible only through unity with God, our families, and our fellowmen as we experience the atoning power of Jesus Christ. Uniting as self-governed individuals enables and strengthens civil and personal liberty, and magnifies the potential of all.

Using A Timeline To Teach “His Story” of Agency

Timelines are a methodology used at American Heritage School to help students visualize and internalize the sequencing of historical events, and the providential hand of God in history, “His-story.” In every K-8 classroom, a timeline of key historical events is placed where students can easily see it, so that it may be referred to in the teaching of all subjects. Children first learn the idea of chronological sequence of events as a preliminary step for the understanding of and memorizing of dates later. Learning and visualizing the sequence of events strengthens children’s capacity to reason from cause to effect and distinguish between the important and the inconsequential.

Timelines reflect the creativity and focus of the teacher, but all include the same 21 links or “memory guideposts” represented. This allows teachers to highlight the unique characters and events that are part of their particular curriculum within the sequence of 21 key events with which the students are already familiar.

These twenty-one major events, characters, or links on what is termed “The Chain of Liberty through Christ” have been selected to study and illustrate God’s dealings with His children from premortal existence to the present. They highlight the ways God supports His children in exercising their agency. These links become “pockets” into which children deposit their growing knowledge of history. For example, when the children study Jamestown, the first permanent English colony in America, they are taught that its founding lies within the same time frame as the American Founding, a major link in America’s Christian history. Therefore, children quickly learn the significance of events in God’s timetable and then grow in their sense of time and chronology in relation to Christ, His Story. The condescension, mortal life, and resurrection of Jesus Christ are the focal point of all history and are highlighted in some way on each timeline.

As teachers introduce new material, they are encouraged to have students quickly draw a timeline in their notes with key links and place the character or event being studied on the timeline in a different color.

Across the years of K-8 education, students master the chronology of the “Chain of Liberty through Christ” and are able to place all other historic information within those “memory pockets,” discerning how they contributed to or hindered the spread of God’s liberating truths. God’s plan for internal and external liberty is visually and permanently recorded in their brains!

In high school, the purpose of timelines is to highlight for students two truths:

- 1) Amidst the grand scope of God’s divine plan, they have been reserved to come forth in the latter days to fulfill their part in preparing for Christ’s Second Coming.
- 2) God influences history by inspiring individuals who use their agency to fulfill their small but significant parts in moving along His work.

To communicate these messages in high school, timelines are publicly displayed in common areas. AHS has commissioned artwork representing each of the shared AHS timeline links which will be on display in a gallery in the high school building. Individual high school teachers may display a classroom timeline that highlights their specific curriculum if desired.

The academic departments will also create and maintain displays in their hallways to highlight significant historical figures from their disciplines who illustrate aspects of fulfilling their individual roles in God's plan. Departments select images of historical figures and create signage that provides biographical sketches showcasing the choices those individuals made that allowed them to bless and serve humanity. Signs might include inspiring quotations or anecdotes from the lives of these historical figures. Signs might highlight moments when these individuals experienced the influence of the light of Christ in their work or when they chose to exemplify Christ-like character. High school students will be blessed by these visual reminders of their place in God's plan and their power to choose to be influenced by Him to fulfill their mortal missions.



"His" story TIMELINE LINKS

Pre-Mortal Existence

"The organization of the spiritual and heavenly worlds, and of spiritual and heavenly beings, was agreeable to the most perfect order and harmony: their limits and bounds were fixed irrevocably, and voluntarily subscribed to." (Joseph Smith)

Dispensation of Adam and Eve

"The greatest desire...of Father Adam...is to save the inhabitants of the earth." (Brigham Young)
"By revelation, Eve recognized the way home to God. She knew that the Atonement of Jesus Christ made eternal life possible in families." (Henry B. Eyring)

Dispensation of Noah

"It was Noah's faith that enabled him to build an ark, and as a result of obedience to the commandments of God he and his household were saved, while those who lacked faith were buried in the great flood." (George Albert Smith)

Joseph of Egypt

"And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand." (Genesis 39:2-3)

The Nephites

"Lehi went down by the Red Sea to the great Southern Ocean, and crossed over to this land...and improved the country according to the word of the Lord, as a branch of the House of Israel." (Joseph F. Smith)

The Creation

"The worlds were made by him; men were made by him; all things were made by him" (D&C 93:10)
"When I laid the foundations of the earth . . . the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." (Job 38:4, 7)

Dispensation of Enoch

"The Lord gave that good old prophet Enoch, president of the Zion of God [which was taken up into heaven], who stood in the midst of his people three hundred and sixty-five years, a view of the earth in its various dispensations." (Wilford Woodruff)

Dispensation of Abraham

"The Lord made a special covenant with [Abraham] that through him and his posterity all nations of the earth should be blessed." (Joseph Fielding Smith)
"From Abraham sprang two ancient races represented in Isaac and Ishmael." (Joseph F. Smith)

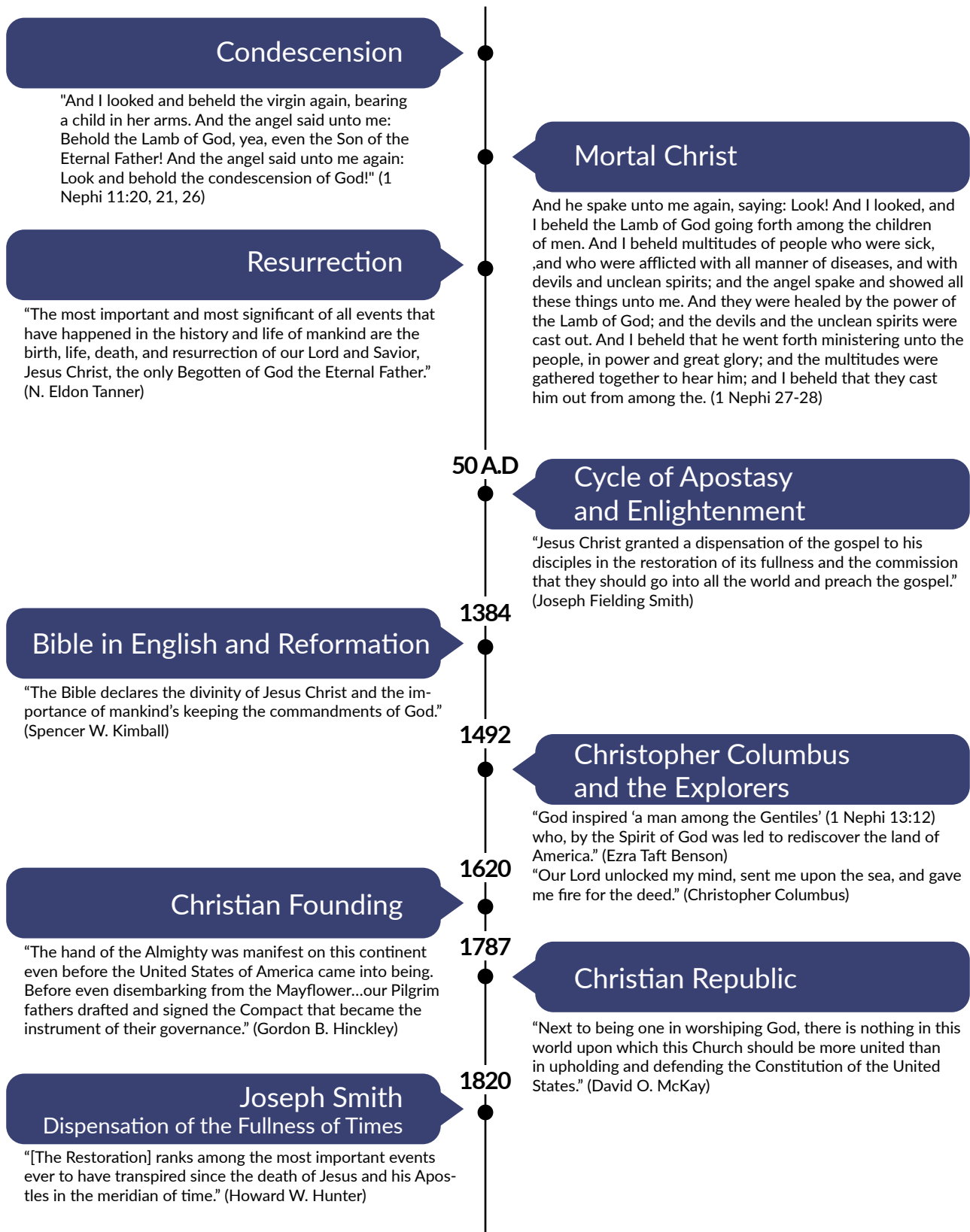
Dispensation of Moses

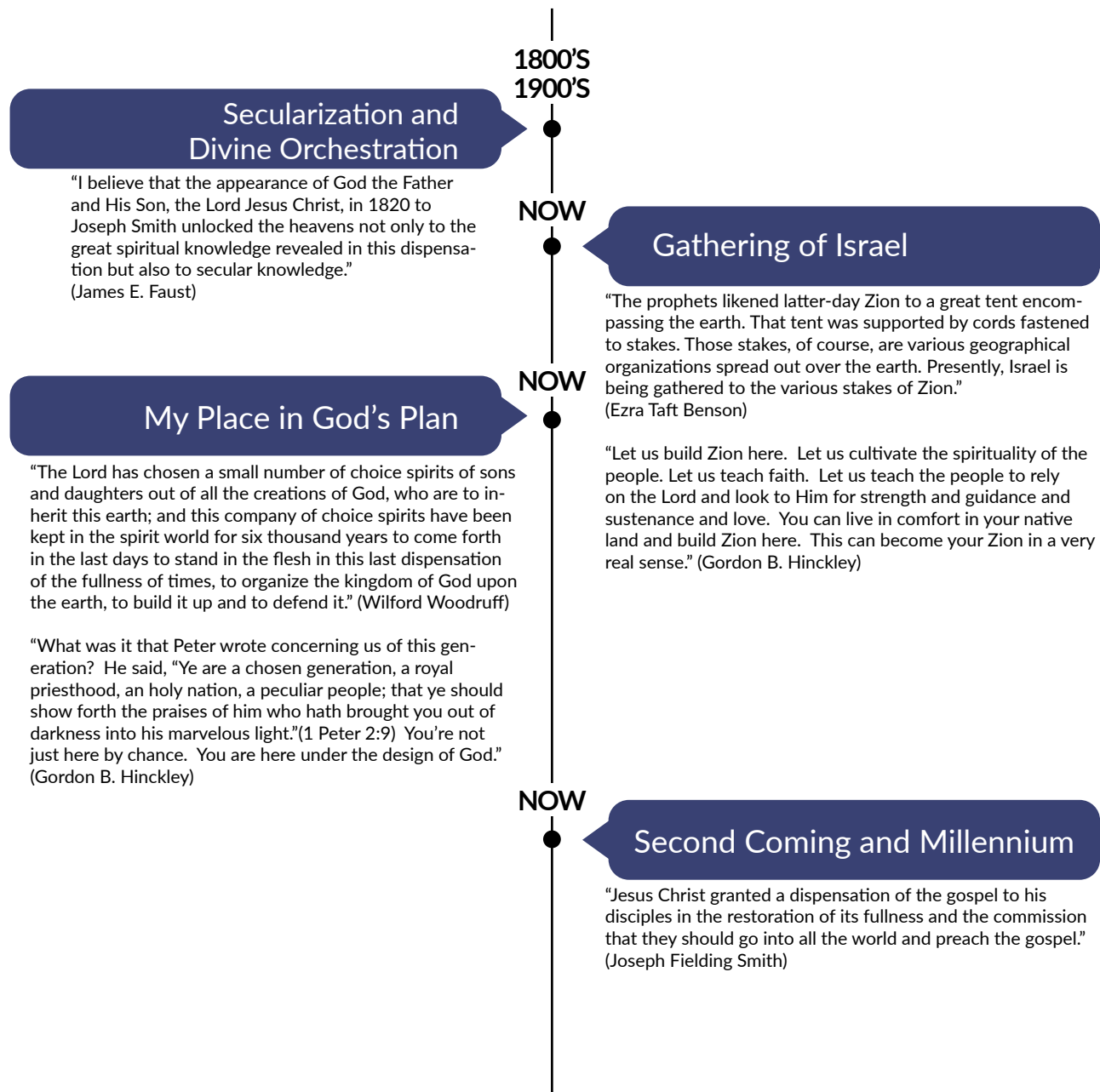
"Moses was given a dispensation of gathering and led Israel from Egypt to their promised land." (Joseph Fielding Smith)

Esther

"Esther, at the peril of her own life, pled with the king that her people should be spared. The king listened to her entreaty, and they were saved. One woman can make a great difference, even for a nation.
These are challenging times. I believe your spirits may have been reserved for these latter days; that you, like Esther, have come to earth 'for such a time as this.'" (James Faust)

600 B.C.





Patriotism vs. Politics In The Classroom

AHS staff members are encouraged to be active, contributing citizens and are free to support the measures and candidates that best reflect their principles and values as long as their political activity is not conducted on campus and does not adversely impact the reputation of the school. Teachers should not actively involve students with their political views and practices. This does not mean that political views may not be expressed in the classroom (which is an impractical and arguably impossible request to make of any teacher or student) – but rather that extensive involvement of students in partisan agendas, activities, or debates should be avoided.

While AHS is strictly non-political, it encourages patriotism. The school's mission statement clearly indicates that one of the school's goals is to develop students who “have a love, understanding, and appreciation for America and the Founding Fathers.” This patriotism is expressed outwardly through the display of the American flag, patriotic artwork, singing of patriotic music, presentation of patriotic programs, and other expressions of respect supported by the curriculum. True patriotism comes from a humble appreciation for our heritage, and the obligation that rests on each generation to live in a manner that freedom under the Constitution might be preserved.

The AHS curriculum is richly imbued with patriotism. Students learn about the providential hand that has guided America from its earliest days through the study of writings and speeches of the Founding Fathers' generation. Teachers of all subjects are encouraged to understand and teach American and world history, focusing particularly on the blessings of liberty under government systems of Judeo-Christian morality and laws, and also focusing on the consequences of abandoning the moral principles upon which America and other Judeo-Christian nations were founded. Respect for all religions is taught. Teachers emphasize to students that the most important government is Christian self-government. Although necessary attention is given to successful and unsuccessful institutions of civil government throughout history, teachers are cautioned that an overemphasis on civil governments and political platforms can distract from our primary focus on Christian self-government, and even lead to an unhealthy cynicism toward civil governments in general.

“Some principles compatible with the gospel may be found in various political parties, and members should seek candidates who best embody those principles. Members should also study candidates carefully and vote for those who have demonstrated integrity, compassion, and service to others, regardless of party affiliation. Merely voting a straight ticket or voting based on ‘tradition’ without careful study of candidates and their positions on important issues is a threat to democracy and inconsistent with revealed standards (see Doctrine and Covenants 98:10).”

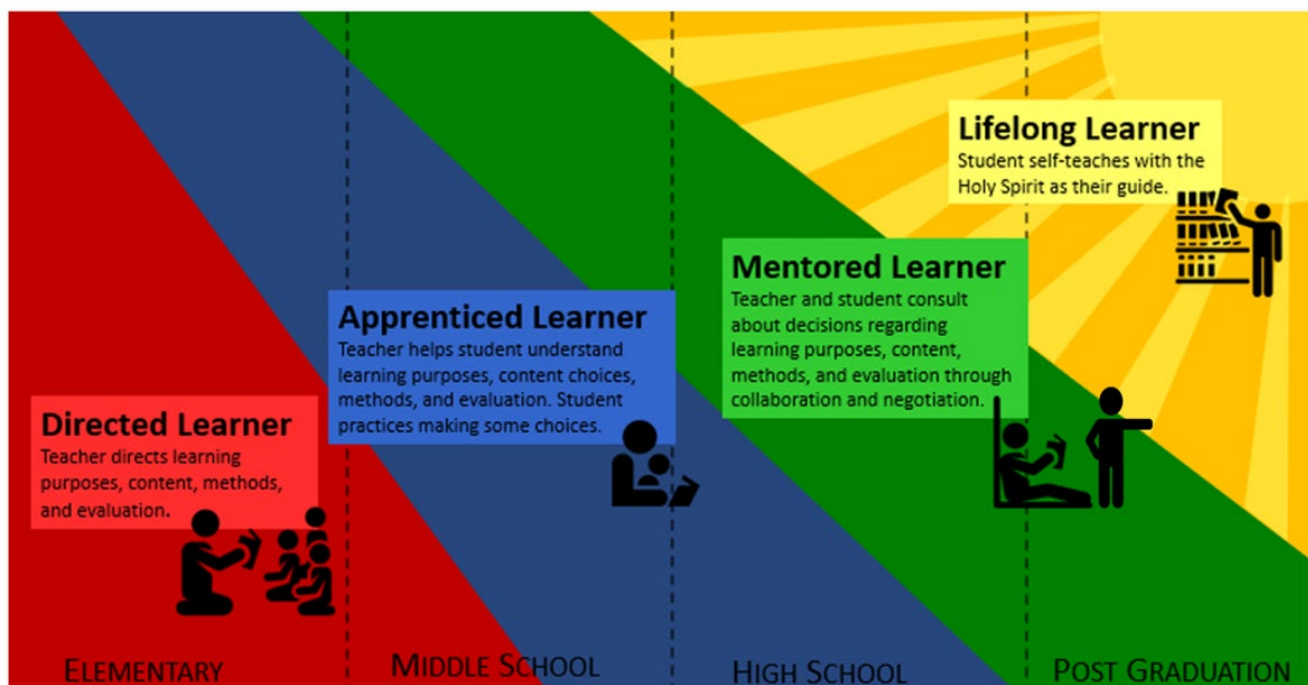
June 1, 2023 Letter from the First Presidency regarding US citizenship responsibilities

4. DEVELOPING THE ACADEMIC KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS NECESSARY TO BE ABLE TO MAKE SELF-EDUCATION A LIFE-LONG PURSUIT

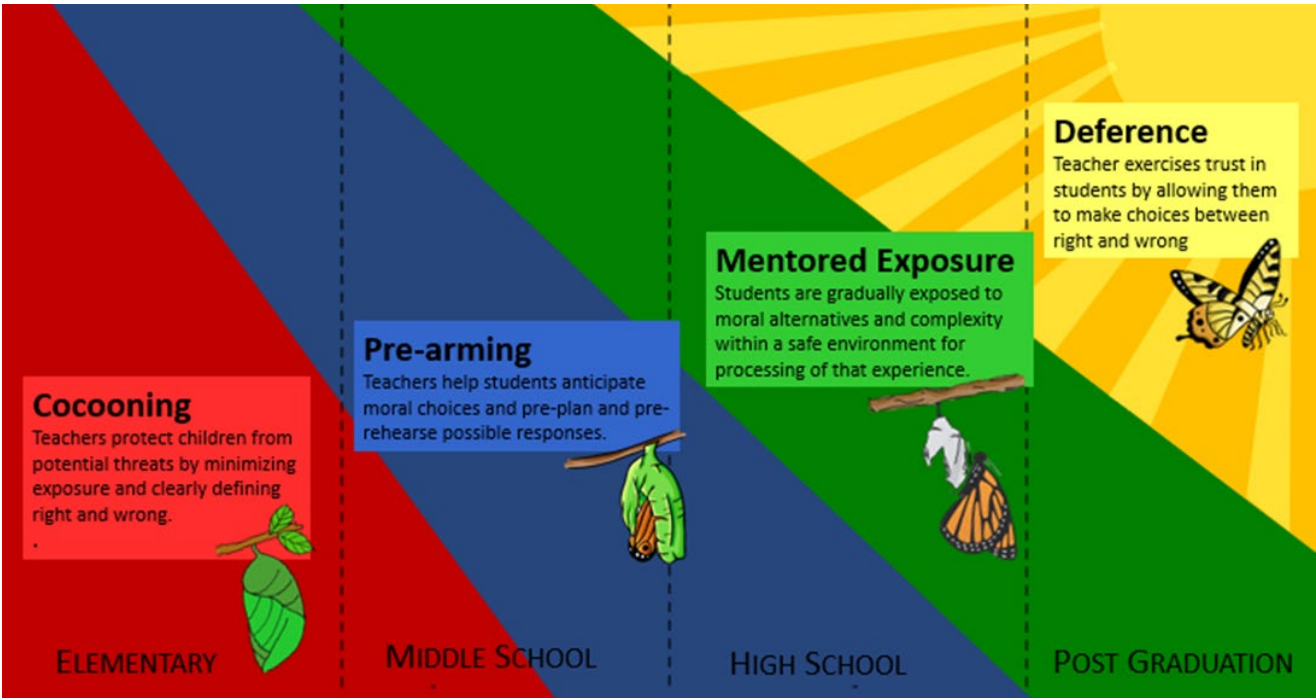
Developing Agency as Learners

Developing into life-long learners is a process of individual progression. Individual progression is a principle of eternal consequence and duration. The Lord has affirmed a point at which his children “begin to become accountable before [Him]” (Doctrine & Covenants 29:47). The doctrine of accountability teaches us not only to distinguish between an era when we are innocent followed by an era when we are responsible but also that during the era of responsibility, responsibility grows by degrees as we become accountable. Due to the developmental needs of our students as they grow and become during their progression from kindergarten to twelfth grade, our methods must adapt to optimally facilitate their changing needs. The two graphics that follow illustrate how—in helping our students to become lifelong, independent learners of excellent moral character—faculty coordinate for student progression along the course of being dependent passengers, to navigators, to co-pilots, and ultimately to independent pilots of their learning.

How Teachers Support the Development of LEARNING AGENCY.



How Teachers Support the Development of MORAL AGENCY.



Methodologies for Developing Agency as Learners

They have become free forever ... to act for themselves and not to be acted upon.

– 2 Nephi 2:26

Teachers select instructional methodologies that will help students develop agency as learners, gaining the ability to make self-education a life-long pursuit. Instructional methods are tools teachers select to accomplish particular objectives. Like tools in a woodworking shop, they accomplish unique tasks. A hammer is terrible at drilling holes but excellent for driving nails. The Methods link below takes you to a list of methodological tools which teachers have found helpful for accomplishing some of our mission-oriented objectives. Our teachers first identify what they want students to be able to know, do, and become and then select the instructional methods that will best accomplish those ends.



While a given teacher will use some of the methods outlined in this list, they may not use all of the methods, and they will certainly employ additional methods not included. Certain grade levels, subjects, departments, or professional learning councils (PLCs) may decide to focus on developing particular expertise in one or two key methodologies that fit their subject areas and students. For example, science teachers might agree to lean heavily on the problem-based learning methodology.

As teachers work with students from kindergarten through graduation, the tools they use may change. For example, an elementary literature class might use character T-charts regularly, whereas a high school literature class might rely on Socratic Seminar discussions. Some methodologies are more directive—limiting the complexity of a task down to a few bite-sized steps; other methodologies are more exploratory—giving more latitude to students to determine what they learn and how they will do it.

As students age and mature, they need to exercise increasing agency in their learning. They need to be doers who actively explore and construct their understanding, determine more of their learning goals, and direct their learning processes. They are on the path of becoming learners who make self-education a lifelong pursuit. They need teachers to use instructional methods that honor this increasing individual ownership of their learning. By analogy, in elementary school students are largely passengers and teachers are drivers; in middle school the teachers still drive, but the students are practicing navigation; and in high school, students are copilots with teachers. This shift in student and teacher roles often means a shift in instructional methods.



Methods

5. LEARNING TO REASON AND DISCERN BETWEEN RIGHT AND WRONG, TRUTH AND ERROR

Faithful Reasoning and Inquiry

As students gain knowledge of and faith in the Plan of Salvation, it is important that school be a safe place to learn about and engage with faithful processes of inquiry. They need to be able to ask questions, even uncomfortable ones. Teachers need to be intentional about communicating that AHS is a place for open inquiry, and avoid any inclination to react defensively or critically when students ask questions about religion. Students who ask religious questions are in excellent company with the likes of Joseph Smith whose faithful inquiry opened the Final Dispensation of the Fulness of Times.

AHS should be a place where students see many models, through teachers and peers, of faithful reasoning and inquiry. As students age and mature, upper-grade teachers should intentionally plan opportunities to introduce complexity. For example, science teachers can reason aloud about how they approach topics where science and religion appear to conflict. History teachers can model how they approach challenging topics in Church history. Coaches can model how they distinguish between what has been revealed and what is human interpretation in different applications of the Word of Wisdom. Art teachers can model how they think about modesty in artistic depictions of the human body. English teachers can model their faithful thinking about literature that represents sinful behavior. These models of faithful reasoning will provide a storehouse of vicarious experience that will help students navigate their own processes of inquiry.

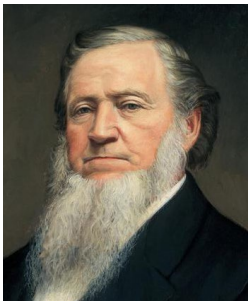
These experiences will be particularly valuable to AHS graduates when they encounter academic or secular voices that seem to conflict with divinely revealed truths. Graduates will have experience responding in these faithful ways:

- trusting revealed truth and prophetic direction and priorities
- prayerfully seeking additional light and understanding
- recognizing the limits of their own and other human understanding
- remembering and treasuring all that has been revealed, collectively and to them individually
- trusting that in the Lord's time more will yet be revealed, collectively and individually
- prayerfully and with gratitude recognizing all that the Lord is currently revealing, collectively and individually
- promptly recording what is being received and asking for confirmation that the record is accurate and complete
- exercising faith that ultimately all truth is Christ's

Prioritizing Sources

An important component of faithful processes of inquiry is prioritizing potential sources of knowledge. The world sends each of its human inhabitants a multitude of messages over the course of a life span. There are many voices competing for attention that are perhaps not unlike the “contest about opinions” and “the contests of these parties,” which caused “extreme difficulties” to a young Joseph Smith searching for answers to his very important questions (Joseph Smith History 1:6, 11). As children of God search to understand the world, themselves, and the choices they should make in the world, they are wise to carefully discern the messages and messengers that would influence the direction of their choices.

In younger grades, teachers can help children understand the difference between truth and opinion. Children can understand that the words of living prophets tell us the truths we need most. They can learn that scriptures are like a compass that we can use to make decisions. Scriptures can be used to determine if an opinion is true or false.



SAMPLE ELEMENTARY LESSON FOR DISCERNING TRUTH FROM OPINION

“Read good books, and extract from them wisdom and understanding as much as you possibly can, aided by the Spirit of God.” —Brigham Young

Activity 1 - To begin the study of literature, we will go on a treasure hunt to help us understand what good literature is. The first clue gives us the definition of good literature which is “Words of truth and beauty that talks about life. *Why do you think it is important to learn truths about life? (To aid us in knowing how to live righteously.)*”

The second clue gives us the definition of truth. (a real fact) *Illustrate the definition by showing your student a spray bottle filled with water and ask the question: If I spray this water on my hand will my hand get wet? You are right. No matter how many times I spray my hand with water it will always get wet is a truth.*

The third clue tells us the definition of opinion. (The judgment that the mind forms of people or events.)

If I told you that pink is my favorite color, so it is everyone’s favorite color, would that be true? Opinions are not necessarily true for everyone.

The last clue helped us find a treasure chest or box filled with good literature selections. As we read these together we will look for the truths that are contained in them.

Truths can be found even in make-believe stories. For instance in the fairytale of Cinderella, we can see that Cinderella was a kind and good person, whereas her stepmother and stepsisters were cruel and mean. So you can ask yourself. How would Heavenly Father want me to be?

Let's read a scripture that tells us what Heavenly Father wants us to know about truth.

Read: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32)

In this scripture, our Heavenly Father is telling us that if our mind is filled with truth then we are free to choose the right. If we choose the right, then we will stay on the path that will lead us back to him. But if our mind is cluttered with other people's opinions which may not necessarily be true then we may become confused in choosing the right.

Activity 2 – Now we will play the Truth or Opinion Fish Game. This game will help you understand the difference between a truth and an opinion. Catch a fish and I will read what is written on the back and you will tell me whether it is the truth or an opinion.

Older elementary students create their own statements of truth or opinion and they could discuss it as a class.

Discuss and reason the following principles with your student:

Do you think it would be better to read books that were filled with truths or opinions?

1. Good literature tells about life in a true and beautiful way.
2. Heavenly Father uses literature to teach eternal truths.
3. Truths help us see clearly the path that leads us back to Heavenly Father.

In upper grades in particular, students should have opportunities in class to practice distinguishing between revealed knowledge and human knowledge. Revealed knowledge will take priority over human knowledge: "But to be learned is good if they hearken unto the counsels of God" (2 Nephi 9:29).

Teachers should also help students understand that within the realm of human knowledge, there are different levels of reliability. Consider this example of the prioritized strata of knowledge claims about the Word of Wisdom:

Knowledge Source	Category	Example
Revealed Knowledge	Revealed Truth	<p>"[I]nasmuch as any man drinketh wine or strong drink among you, behold it is not good..."</p> <p>Doctrine & Covenants 89:5</p>
Human Knowledge	Observable Law	<p>"Alcohol interferes with the brain's communication pathways, and can affect the way the brain looks and works. These disruptions can change mood and behavior, and make it harder to think clearly and move with coordination. Drinking a lot over a long time or too much on a single occasion can damage the heart... Heavy drinking takes a toll on the liver, and can lead to a variety of problems and liver inflammations... Alcohol causes the pancreas to produce toxic substances that can eventually lead to pancreatitis, a dangerous inflammation and swelling of the blood vessels in the pancreas that prevents proper digestion."</p> <p>—"Alcohol's Effects on the Body." National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, 2023</p>
	Prevailing Theory	<p>"The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends that adults of legal drinking age can choose not to drink, or to drink in moderation by limiting intake to 2 drinks or less in a day for men or 1 drink or less in a day for women, on days when alcohol is consumed. The Guidelines also do not recommend that individuals who do not drink alcohol start drinking for any reason and that if adults of legal drinking age choose to drink alcoholic beverages, drinking less is better for health than drinking more."</p> <p>—"Alcohol Use and Your Health." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, April 2022</p>
	Emerging Opinion	<p>"[I]f you already enjoy a glass of red wine with your evening meal, drinking it in moderation may improve your heart health."</p> <p>"Red wine and resveratrol: Good for your heart?" Mayo Clinic, Jan. 2022</p>
	Unfounded Error	<p>"This is why I believe it's time to call time on the war on booze. By all means do as the doctors advise and have a day or two off the sauce each week. It's good to let the liver have a break. Don't forget to go for run or a brisk walk too. ... But don't feel obliged to give up booze for the sake of it."</p> <p>—Alec Marsh, "In Defense of Booze." The Spectator, Oct. 2022</p>



Not all truth is of the same value or importance. Some truths are greater than others. The greatest truth, or the greatest truths, we find in the fundamentals of the gospel of Jesus Christ. First of all, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world, who came into this world to die that men might live. That truth we should know. It is far more important to know that Jesus Christ is our Redeemer, that he has given unto us the principles of eternal life, than it is to know all that can be obtained in secular education.

So far as the philosophy and wisdom of the world are concerned, they mean nothing unless they conform to the revealed word of God. Any doctrine, whether it comes in the name of religion, science, philosophy, or whatever it may be, if it is in conflict with the revealed word of the Lord, will fail. It may appear plausible. It may be put before you in language that appeals and which you may not be able to answer. It may appear to be established by evidence that you cannot controvert, but all you need to do is to abide your time. Time will level all things. You will find that every doctrine, every principle, no matter how universally believed, if it is not in accord with the divine word of the Lord to his servants, will perish. Nor is it necessary for us to try to stretch the word of the Lord in a vain attempt to make it conform to these theories and teachings. The word of the Lord shall not pass away unfulfilled, but these false doctrines and theories will all fail. Truth, and only truth, will remain when all else has perished."

—Joseph Fielding Smith, *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*

Discernment In Evaluating Religious Sources

As teachers seek to help students learn by study and by faith, it is important to approach the integration of religious doctrine with great caution. Teachers should themselves practice discernment by consistently evaluating religious sources they use in class. They should also help students practice evaluating religious sources.

The Five C's should be used to reason about the appropriateness of religious sources:

SOURCING Doctrine

CURRENT
When was it taught? Has it been taught consistently over time?

CAPACITY
Did Elder Bednar say that at your family reunion or during General Conference?

COLLECTIVE
Is it being taught by all general authorities or only one?

CONSISTENT
Is it taught often and is it easy to find?

CORE
Is the teaching core doctrine related to salvation and exaltation through Christ's Atonement or is it peripheral?
Is it core doctrine or policy/application?

CURRENT **CAPACITY**
COLLECTIVE **CORE** **CONSISTENT**

Not all viable religious sources will meet all five of these criteria. However, in general we give more deference to sources which meet more of these standards and exercise greater caution and restraint in using sources which meet fewer of them.

"As you endeavor to increase in learning, please remember that the doctrines and principles of the restored gospel should be considered in their totality. In other words, attempting to understand a doctrine or principle by examining a single scripture or prophetic statement in isolation from all else that has been revealed on the subject is generally misguided. True doctrines and principles are emphasized repeatedly in the standard works, by the prophets and apostles, and through the illuminating and confirming power of the Holy Ghost."

- Elder David A. Bednar, "Increase in Learning: Spiritual Patterns for Obtaining Your Own Answers"

Discernment In Evaluating Secular Sources and Arguments

Learning by study and by faith also requires teachers to bring their best rational discernment to evaluating secular or academic sources. This is particularly true in the Information Age. Teachers should themselves practice discernment by consistently evaluating secular sources they use in class. They should also help students practice evaluating academic sources.

The following criteria should be used to evaluate sources:

- » **Current:** Does the source reflect an up-to-date understanding of the field?
- » **Credentials:** Is the author a recognized expert on the subject which they are addressing?
- » **Agenda and Funding:** Does the author have an agenda? Where does their funding come from?
- » **Scholarly Consensus:** Has the source has been peer reviewed and is it consistent with the findings of experts in the field?
- » **Objective Reasoning:** Does the source avoid sweeping generalizations, acknowledge opposing views fairly, and support claims with appropriate logic and evidence?
- » **Consistent with Revealed Truth:** Do the values and assumptions underlying the argument contradict revealed truth?
- » **Sources Verified:** Are the sources legitimate and well-rounded? Does the information pass a cross-check test?

Not all secular sources that are appropriate and needful for a balanced education will meet all of these criteria. Sometimes teachers will intentionally use sources that are not credible to help students practice evaluating them. For example, in upper grades a history teacher might have students evaluate propaganda. However, teachers must use increased caution when using sources that fail to meet these standards. (They may also want to give advance notice to parents to prevent misunderstandings.) Teachers should collaboratively evaluate sources with their grade-level teams or Professional Learning Councils (PLC). This is particularly important when teachers want to use sources that contradict the scholarly consensus.

When students are developmentally ready for complexity, teachers can guide them through the process of identifying partial truths and partial errors. Teachers help students use scriptures and the words of living prophets to evaluate academic assertions. At AHS, teachers should also help learners use the “Seven Principles of Personal and Civil Liberty” as a standard against which ideas can be measured.

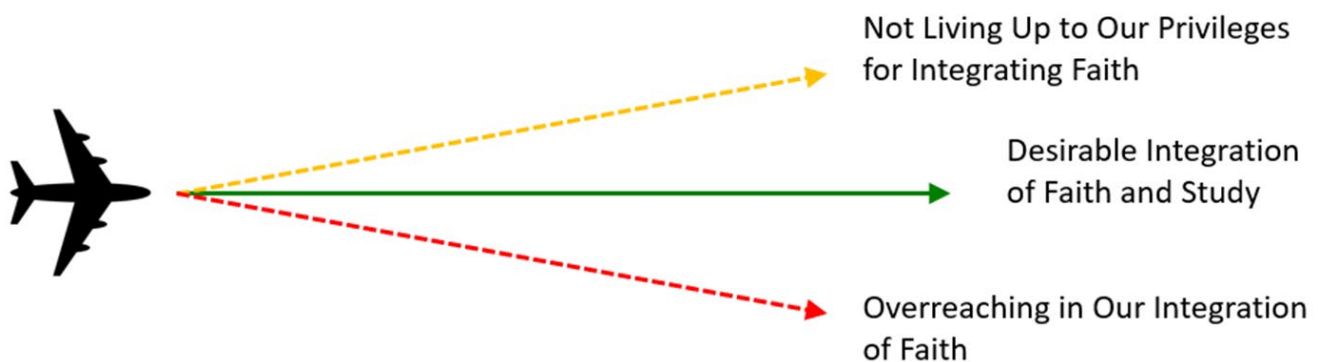
Discernment In Evaluating Secular Sources and Arguments



Even small errors over time can make a dramatic difference in our lives. Let me share with you how I taught the same principle to young pilots. Suppose you were to take off from an airport at the equator, intending to circumnavigate the globe, but your course was off by just one degree. By the time you returned to the same longitude, how far off course would you be? A few miles? A hundred miles? The answer might surprise you. An error of only one degree would put you almost 500 miles (800 km) off course...”

—Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “A Matter of a Few Degrees,” 2008

As teachers practice faithful study of academic subjects, they run two risks that could get them off course. First, teachers might live beneath their privileges, missing opportunities to invite faithful integration of religious principles, values, and practices with their subjects. They might lean so heavily on academic voices that they fail to consider divinely revealed priorities and principles relevant to the subject. Second, teachers might overreach in their integration of religious ideas in a way that is cheesy, forced, or that leads to unsupported speculation or extrapolation. Overreaching might also neglect the fundamentals of the subject, giving too much time to gospel discussions at the expense of the subject itself.



Teachers will know they are approaching the appropriate integration of faith and study when gospel integration is natural and meaningful. This integration will bring divinely revealed truths into dialogue with academic voices, listening carefully to academic voices while prioritizing authorized revelation.

Like an airplane pilot, teachers will find that they are rarely perfectly on course. Rather, they will be constantly making adjustments to bring their overall trajectory into alignment with the desired destination. Teachers should counsel together and with administrators as they encounter questions about gospel integration.

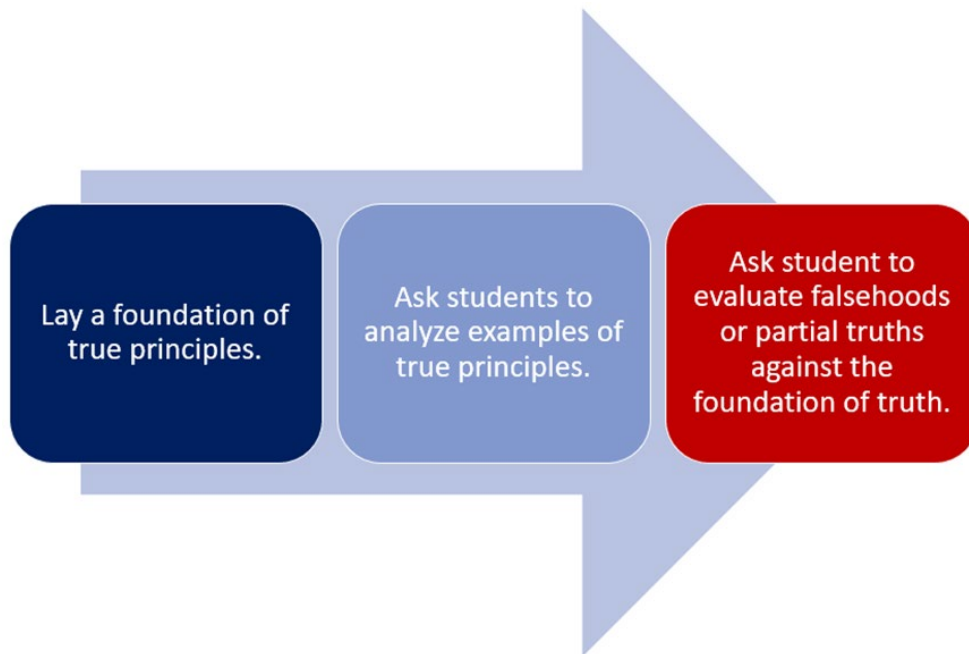
Teaching Discernment Amidst Increasing Complexity

As students mature, particularly in older grades, they become increasingly aware of and ready to practice discerning right from wrong and truth from error amidst increasing complexity.

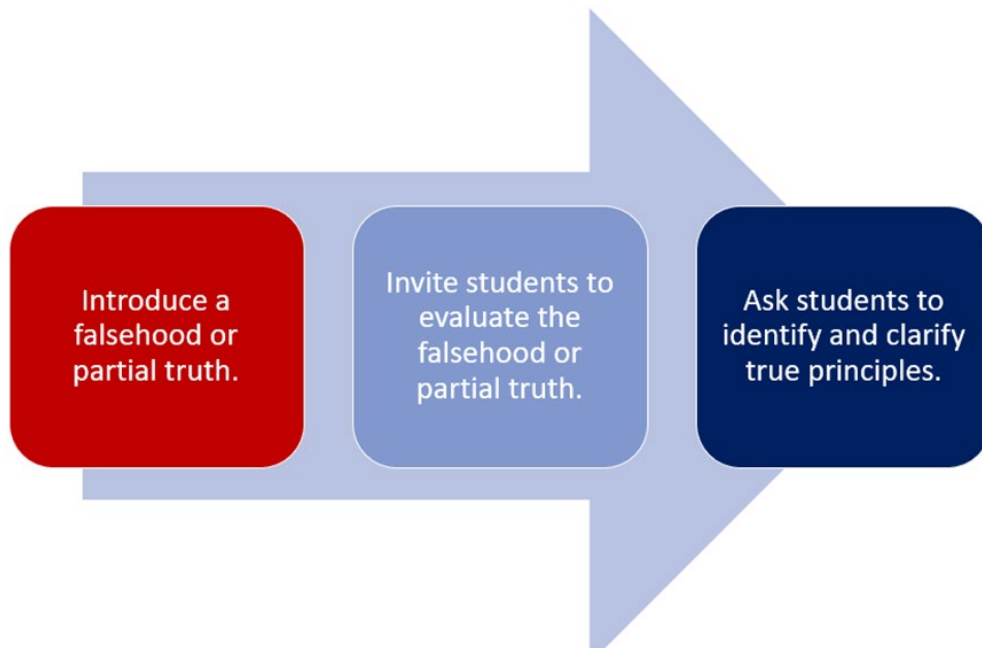
Supreme Court Judge Oliver Wendell Holmes is quoted as follows: "I would not give a fig for the simplicity this side of complexity; but I would give my life for the simplicity the other side of complexity."

Intellectual, social, and spiritual maturation involves the movement from initial simplicity to increasing complexity. Teachers of upper grades can help students continue to move through complexity toward simplicity. This is a process.

There are a couple of approaches to lesson progression teachers can use:



First, Start with Truth, then Examine Falsehood.



6. DEVELOPING CHARACTER AND SELF-GOVERNMENT OF MIND AND BODY

Developing From Validation to Integrity

American Heritage School seeks to facilitate the development of character and self-government in each student. This focus is woven into our philosophy, curricula, methodology, and approach to discipline, undergirded by an understanding of children's developmental needs.

Across the elementary grades, students are developmentally oriented toward learning what is acceptable and unacceptable, right and wrong, through the teachings and examples in what they study and observe. Children naturally function from within a "validation framework" where their behaviors will be shaped by what is validated and rewarded by others around them. Across this stage of development, instruction and guidelines play a very important role in helping them experience goodness and rightness and know its effects and fruits. This process is strengthened by having them tune in to what they are feeling about what they are experiencing, to develop an awareness of their "inner knowing" through the light of Christ that is within them.

But as they grow, it is critical that they learn to operate from an "integrity framework," rather than a "validation framework." An integrity framework is built upon and defined by the development of character and self-government. It requires deepening awareness and honesty with themselves about what is right and their intent for doing what they are doing, with the goal of aligning themselves with what is true through the light of Christ within them. That will require developing the courage to do what is right, for the right reasons, whatever the perceived cost. From this place of integrity, they develop the capacity to be good, not just appear good, independent of validation. The development of a solid sense of self, acting with integrity, will be grounded in a strong awareness of how God feels about them, an awareness of their highest desires and divine capacities, and the deepening desire to bring goodness into the lives of those around them.

This means helping students work beyond a validation framework where they will tend to:

- conform to what others want because it is easier than doing what they feel is right,
- accommodate what others want as a way of feeling okay with themselves,
- develop perfectionistic tendencies out of fear of being exposed to one's self or to others,
- rebel against what others want in order to assert personal validity,
- or disinvest from relationships and from development.

All of these are forms of self-serving dependency that inhibit development of the character and self-respect that comes from doing good for the right reasons.

Pedagogically, this requires teachers to move from a behavioristic and compliance-based orientation that may celebrate obedience over integrity. The goal of teachers will be to help students develop the wisdom and confidence to be effective moral actors in a complex world with a deep sense of their value, goodness, and self-respect. Across development teachers will move from a didactic “this is the way things are” form of instruction to pedagogical approaches that require students to engage in deep personal reflection, draw moral conclusions for themselves, and engage faithful processes to find answers based in truth.

As children develop, the purpose of assignments will not be to grade their acceptance of certain beliefs but to strengthen their honesty in engaging faithful processes for coming to truth. This will require creating an environment where students can actively share beliefs as well as questions, and be strengthened in faithful inquiry and increased integrity.



Self-Government

The principle of Christian Self-Government is the guiding approach to all classroom management at American Heritage School. The principle recognizes that liberty is the result of choosing to be self-governed by the truths of Christ. In the classroom, this is reflected in how children and youth are taught to behave, as well as students developing a sense of responsibility for their own learning and productivity. Students are likely to become responsible for their learning and self-government as they recognize their divine nature as children of God, His desire for them to become like Him, their dependence on Christ's Atonement (which allows us to be redeemed through repentance and faithful obedience), the blessings that are unlocked through sincere prayer, and the privilege of diligent obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel by which we can qualify to receive heaven's grace. Self-government in a nutshell is "doing the right thing because it is the right thing to do." This principle provides the foundation for classroom management and discipline.

The principle of self-government is the underlying purpose for the Honor Code to which students commit when admitted to the school. Adherence to the Honor Code is based in the truth that the ability to self-govern (or, in Restored Gospel terms: to exercise our agency) is directly correlated with our inward allegiance to correct governing principles. According to Jefferson and Locke, the principles taught by Jesus of Nazareth are the most correct governing principles known to mankind. When a love for these principles is developed through practicing them, and developing a love for Him, they can become the governing guide for a student's life, and the source of increased liberty and capacity. Christianity is the religion of liberty, preserved by self-government.



Honor Code

The Honor Code is founded in the two great commandments articulated by the Savior. Self-government void of agape (love for God) and caritas (charity for others) is no self-government at all. It is merely compliance and lacks that which God requires most: “the heart and a willing mind” (Doctrine & Covenants 64:34).

The two great commandments, to love the Lord and to love our neighbors, are the two most important principles that we learn at American Heritage School. Students and employees are expected to live according to the standards and commitments set forth in the Honor Code and to keep these standards and commitments on campus and off campus “at all times ... and in all places” (Mosiah 18:9). Students and employees who are not members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are also expected to maintain the same standards of conduct, except for church attendance.

The school’s Honor Code incorporates the principles and guidelines found in the Church publications, “For the Strength of Youth” and “My Gospel Standards.” AHS stakeholders also commit themselves to the standards set forth by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in its publication, “The Family: A Proclamation to the World.”

All faculty, staff and students are expected to “conduct themselves in all aspects of life as Christians.” Thus, the school’s Honor Code is expected to be kept on and off campus. With limited exceptions (such as certain uniform policy and dress code requirements that apply only while at school), any personal activity or behavior away from school that contradicts the principles, policies and mission statement of the school may constitute grounds for dismissal from the school.

“Master, which is the great commandment in the law?
Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt *love the Lord* thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt *love thy neighbor* as thyself.”
(Matthew 22:36–39)

Classroom Management

Developing students do not yet have the ability to consistently govern themselves correctly. They need support to help them understand what is expected in their behavior and how to focus their attention while learning. AHS teachers use the “Big Eight” classroom management skills. As teachers consistently practice these skills and receive professional coaching, they will be more efficacious in helping students achieve their know, do, and become objectives.

Because the goal of classroom management is not simply compliant behavior, teachers must simultaneously teach principles of self-government and employ the “Big Eight” strategies. For example, if a teacher uses physical proximity (standing beside) to help a student redirect their focus during class, the teacher might also have a private conversation with that student after class reminding them about how their focus affects themselves and their classmates. She might extend an invitation to take action during the following class to self-govern without the teacher’s reminder. On subsequent days, appropriate praise (cueing) could then be used to acknowledge that student’s progress in self-governing their focus. Students who consistently practice self-government within these classroom management parameters will be empowered to make greater progress.

The infographic is titled "The BIG EIGHT Engagement Skills for Instruction". It features a dark blue background with a red border. The title is in white and yellow text. Below the title, there are eight numbered items, each with a yellow header and a white description box.

- 1. Expectations**
Teacher ensures that students know what to do and when and how to do it.
- 2. Attention Prompts**
Teacher uses verbal or visual prompts to focus students' attention for instruction to follow.
- 3. Proximity**
Teacher moves purposefully around the classroom for maximum effect.
- 4. Cueing**
Teacher uses positive, clear, and effective verbal cues to clarify, maintain, or redirect activity.
- 5. Signals**
Teacher employs signals to give students ways of showing kinesthetically when they have completed a short task and are ready for the next step.
- 6. Time Limits**
Teacher identifies and communicates specific times for beginning and completing tasks.
- 7. Tasking**
Teacher focuses and sharpens students' engagement through questioning strategies, purposeful and thought-provoking activities, and other tactics to direct learning.
- 8. Voice**
Teacher uses voice to maximum effect: pitch in lower registers, tone geared for situations, diction appropriate to students' ages, voice modulation to maintain interest.

Student Discipline

Establish relationships of high love and high expectation with consistent boundaries, but make sure that students feel safe to respectfully challenge you as the teacher and inquire about the boundaries. Explore their challenge with curiosity and appreciation. Let them know that you are grateful that they had the courage to express a different opinion. This is the essence of free, open, and faithful inquiry. Avoid dismissing a different opinion.

When a student expresses a different opinion from the class or the teacher, they are at their MOST VULNERABLE and, if you validate them, their MOST TEACHABLE place.

"There are times when you ask questions or challenge ideas, but if you've got a teacher that doesn't like that or the other students in the class make fun of people who do that, it's bad. I think that most of us learn that it's best to just keep your head down, your mouth shut, and your grades high."

- (Middle School student quoted by Brené Brown in Daring Greatly)

With reverence for the divine identity and potential of students, avoid SHAMING a student:

- Shame is the intensely painful belief that there is something about us that makes us unworthy of love and belonging. Instead of saying, "I did something bad," (guilt) shame says, "I AM bad."
- In grade school (through 5th grade approximately) shame is experienced as trauma because you are dependent on others for food, clothing, and your survival.
- Shame is the threat of being unlovable.
- Shame prevents learning.

Do we shame students without realizing it?

Less Effective (Potentially Shaming)	More Effective
A teacher has students pull a red card when they misbehave.	Make efforts to preserve student dignity by doing one-on-one coaching or conferencing. Practice private conversations instead of public discipline.
A teacher writes names on the board of those students who are misbehaving.	Correct a student kindly and consistently. Note the correction and deduct from the self government grade. If needed, pull them aside after class and let them know that they received reduced points for class participation today.
A student publicly disagrees with a classroom policy or an opinion the teacher has shared in class. The teacher corrects them and points out their error publicly.	If possible, try to find areas of agreement with the student. Empathize. If needed, privately address the student's disagreement with policy.
A teacher routinely has students grade one another's papers or shares grades aloud in class.	Always keep grade information private. Create a classroom culture that celebrates growth rather than traditionally good grades.
A teacher speaks and conducts class in a way that signals clear favorites among students.	Make an effort to highlight positive aspects of all students – things they do well, areas of growth, etc.

7. CONDUCTING THEMSELVES IN ALL ASPECTS OF LIFE AS CHRISTIANS

Student Commitments

Christ teaches us to follow Him by entering into a covenantal relationship with each one of us. Similarly, we help students practice conducting themselves as Christians by helping them make and keep commitments. Students at AHS make three commitments in addition to the Honor Code. Teachers commit to helping students learn about and keep these commitments.



Commitment Forms



Technology Use

Students commit to use technology as a tool for learning while at school, not as a toy. They commit to prioritize face-to-face connection with others and quiet moments of personal inspiration and revelation over technological distraction. Students also commit to use technology in a safe, clean, transparent, and respectful manner. Students commit to using technology appropriately both at home and at school, in private and in public.



Uniforms

Students commit to properly wear the uniform for their gender and grade level. They recognize that the uniform helps display unity, modesty, neatness, and dignity. It demonstrates respect for self, education, teachers, and fellow students. It also facilitates focus on learning and service. Students agree to abide by the spirit of the uniform dress and grooming standards, understanding that the uniform serves as a reminder to live by the Honor Code.



Building Stewardship

Students commit to thinking, feeling, and acting like stewards over the spaces they use in the AHS buildings. They agree to help maintain, preserve, and even enhance their learning environments. In making this commitment, they recognize the sacrifices of the school's benefactors who make their educational experience possible. This is a commitment to demonstrate gratitude daily by how they treat school facilities. Teachers support this commitment by holding a "stewardship minute" at the end of a class, activity, or day during which students help clean up their space.

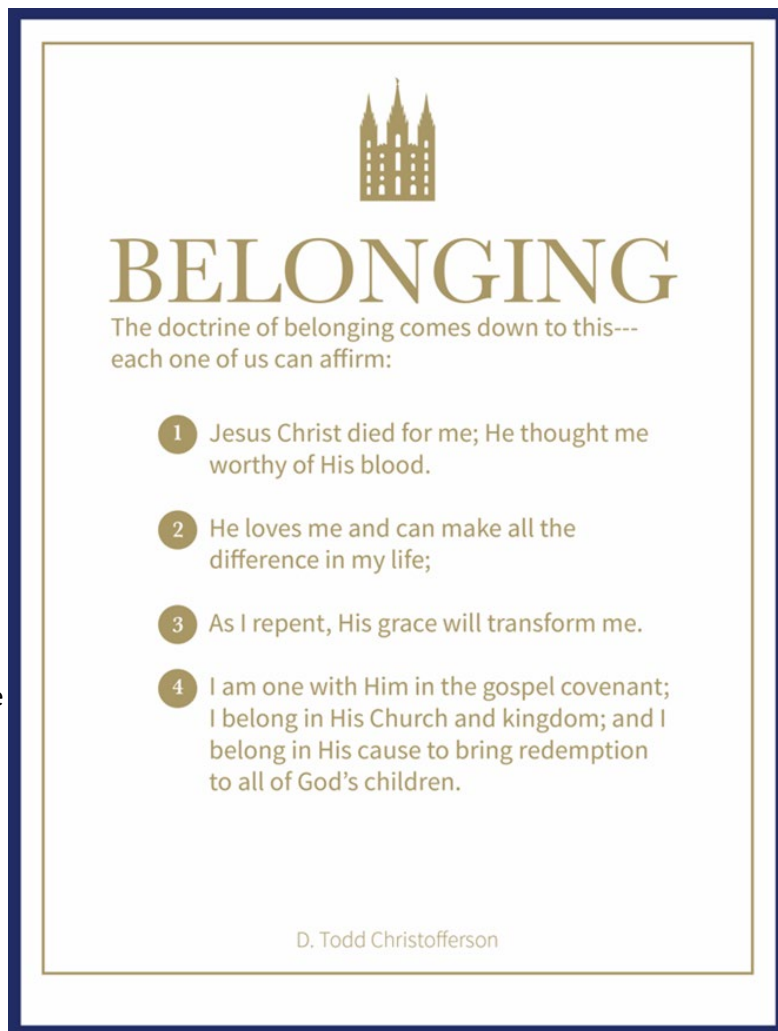
Commitment To Care and Belonging

Our AHS community actively strives to keep the two great commandments, including the charges to love God and love our neighbor. We are intentional about exercising empathy to understand the perspectives of those who have different life experiences from our own. We care about one another, whatever our life circumstances and challenges, and we strive to make AHS a place where everyone belongs as a beloved child of God.

We are each children of God, created in the image of Heavenly Parents, endowed with divine identity and purpose. “All are alike unto God,” with inherent dignity, deserving not only respect, but charity, which is the pure love of Christ and the highest form of love. The divinely designed diversity of the human family enriches the educational experience for all while strengthening our interdependence and unity. Our work is to help each individual realize their divine potential in a learning community where we are “no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints,” knit together in unity and love.

Teachers proactively help students understand and appreciate differences. Teachers help students understand how to use language and behavior that uplifts, and also how to avoid language and behavior that is even unintentionally harmful to others.

All members of the school community are required to comply with the American Heritage School Honor Code, which requires chastity outside of marriage, and fidelity in marriage, as further defined in *The Family, A Proclamation to the World* (“The Family Proclamation”), issued by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The school affirms the centrality of doctrines in The Family Proclamation relating to human sexuality and gender, as well as the sanctity and significance of marriage as the union of a man and a woman. American Heritage School also affirms that all people are equally beloved children of God and deserve to be treated with love and respect, and we recognize the critical importance of a safe campus environment for all students and employees.



The graphic features a gold-colored border and a gold temple icon at the top. The word "BELONGING" is written in large, gold, serif capital letters. Below it, the text "The doctrine of belonging comes down to this--- each one of us can affirm:" is in a smaller, gold, sans-serif font. Four numbered affirmations are listed in gold, each preceded by a gold circle with a number. At the bottom, the name "D. Todd Christofferson" is written in a small, gold, sans-serif font.

BELONGING

The doctrine of belonging comes down to this---
each one of us can affirm:

- 1 Jesus Christ died for me; He thought me worthy of His blood.
- 2 He loves me and can make all the difference in my life;
- 3 As I repent, His grace will transform me.
- 4 I am one with Him in the gospel covenant; I belong in His Church and kingdom; and I belong in His cause to bring redemption to all of God's children.

D. Todd Christofferson

Commitment To Civility



As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are to be examples of how to interact with others—especially when we have differences of opinion. One of the easiest ways to identify a true follower of Jesus Christ is how compassionately that person treats other people.”

—President Nelson April 2023, “Peacemakers Needed”

Civility is about more than politics.

It is a habit of the mind and heart that permeates how we interact with others: civility in the home, in the classroom, at Church, in the community, etc. When someone exercises this habit, they settle the impulse to contend. Instead, they pause. Next, they choose an increase

of curiosity. They seek to understand before being understood. They understand that their brothers and sisters who express different ideas have different life experiences, so they look for the personal story behind the other person’s opinion or stance.



TURNING TOWARDS THE OTHER PERSON

- Pause
- Choose curiosity
- Look for the personal story behind the stance

AHS teachers help students practice civility. They explicitly teach how to respond to differences of opinion with compassion, empathy, and curiosity. They remind students about the dangers of contention. Teachers seek to model civility in their interpersonal relations parents, other faculty, staff, and students.

“Make no mistake about it: contention is evil! Jesus Christ declared that those who have ‘the spirit of contention’ are not of Him but are ‘of the devil, who is the father of contention, and [the devil] stirreth up the hearts of men to contend with anger, one with another.’ Those who foster contention are taking a page out of Satan’s playbook, whether they realize it or not. ‘No man can serve two masters.’ We cannot support Satan with our verbal assaults and then think that we can still serve God.

My dear brothers and sisters, how we treat each other really matters! How we speak to and about others at home, at church, at work, and online really matters.

- President Russell M. Nelson,
April 2003, “Peacemakers Needed”

ALL ACTIVITIES, TEACHING, GOVERNANCE, AND ADMINISTRATION ARE TO BE ACCOMPLISHED IN LIGHT OF THE ABOVE OBJECTIVES AND IN SO FAR AS POSSIBLE IN HARMONY WITH REVEALED PRINCIPLES OF THE RESTORED GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST AND LAWS OF THE LAND. ALL TEACHERS, STAFF, ADMINISTRATORS, AND TRUSTEES SHALL STRIVE TO BE LIVING EXAMPLES OF THE VALUES, PRINCIPLES, AND SKILLS TAUGHT AT THE SCHOOL.

Statement of Non-Affiliation With the Church

American Heritage School is not sponsored by, endorsed by, or affiliated with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints or any other denomination. Nevertheless, respect for all religions is taught. The school's mission establishes and encourages an environment that is oriented toward the Church of Jesus Christ, where principles are taught in the light of the restored gospel, and where faith in Jesus Christ is felt and demonstrated by each child and adult at the school.



*Employee
Dress & Grooming*

Living Examples of Becoming



Jesus called his disciples: “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men” (Matthew 4:19). To become teacher-fishers, we must follow Him, the Master Teacher. As we strive to follow Him, we will be prepared to have the Spirit influence our teaching.

In our daily walk, we should be guided by the Seven Principles of Personal and Civil Liberty. We can remember our divine identity and purpose, exercise Christian self-government, strive for Christlike character, and follow our consciences. As we do so, our influence for good will ripple outwards to our

students and school community. We will be better positioned to cultivate self-government in our students, and we will experience the liberty that comes through greater unity with God and one another.

Teachers should be living examples of becoming. Just as we expect our students to grow in what they know, do, and become, so should we. We should be living examples of what it means to learn by study and also by faith. We should keep our commitments and live with increasing integrity, and by so doing become more influential in inviting students to live by the AHS honor code and keep their commitments. We should strive to become disciples who keep the two great commandments to love God and to love our neighbor, and thus we will become teachers who are committed to care and to help all students feel that they belong. We should strive to reason and discern between right and wrong, truth and error in our own lives, and thus become models for students of disciplined reasoning and discipleship. We should, through daily personal devotional, become prepared to help our students increase faith in and knowledge of the plan of salvation. We should strive to be grateful, engaged citizens so that we can speak with authenticity about our love and appreciation for America and the Founding Fathers. We should strive to exemplify Christian character in all aspects of our own lives, so that we can teach our students that discipleship is an always-and-everywhere commitment.

Clearly, the path of becoming an AHS teacher is just that, a pathway, a journey. It will require daily self-reflection and efforts to better align what we do with what we know. The joy of this educational journey for teachers is that we become co-travelers with our students. We, with them, heed the Savior’s call to “Follow me.”



Thus, when Jesus asks you and me to “repent,” He is inviting us to change our mind, our knowledge, our spirit—even the way we breathe. He is asking us to change the way we love, think, serve, spend our time, treat our [families], and even care for our bodies.

Nothing is more liberating, more ennobling, or more crucial to our individual progression than is a regular, daily focus on repentance. Repentance is not an event; it is a process. It is the key to happiness and peace of mind. When coupled with faith, repentance opens our access to the power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ.”

—President Russell M. Nelson, “We Can Do Better and Be Better,” April 2019

CHARACTER

Developing Hearts



SCHOLARSHIP

Inspiring Minds



LIBERTY

Choosing Moral Self-government





ALL AHS EMPLOYEES

FACULTY COMMITMENT

Why Have a Faculty Commitment?

“All teachers, staff, administrators and trustees shall strive to be living examples of the values, principles, and skills taught at the school.”

—American Heritage School Mission Statement

My Understanding

I understand that American Heritage School, my employer, has the following expectations of me:

- Live in accordance with, and be an exemplar of, the Honor Code
- Live in accordance with, and be an exemplar of, the Dress and Grooming standard
- Live in accordance with, and be an exemplar of, the Stewardship standard
- Live in accordance with, and be an exemplar of, the Technology Usage standard
- Be consistent and unified with all faculty in upholding the four above standards among the student body
- Read the employee handbook during my first year of employment
- Become sufficiently familiar with all updates to the employee handbook each year of my employment
- Comply with all policies contained within the employee handbook
- Make reasonable efforts to attend all training relevant to my role
- In all ways, reinforce, advance, and personally honor all ideals expressed in the American Heritage School Mission Statement

My Commitment

As a representative of American Heritage School, I acknowledge my employer’s expectations of me, and I commit to continually strive to meet those expectations. In instances where I find myself falling short of those expectations, I will act quickly to remedy the situation and bring my conduct into proper alignment.

Faculty Name

Faculty Signature