

WHAT IS CHARLOTTE MASON EDUCATION?

CHILDREN ARE BORN PERSONS.

Children are born persons. Each child should be treated as a whole human being with individual personality, gifts, and needs. Children are not "products." A child needs help and support in growing into a mature individual. A child's personhood should be respected and cherished, while also being challenged toward growth.

EDUCATION IS THE SCIENCE OF RELATIONSHIPS.

All people develop relationships with the world around them. We strive to develop relationships with God, our families, community, and even ourselves. Furthermore, we also develop relationships with nature, musical compositions, books, works of art, and ideas. We seek to form positive relationships with these things, beyond just "skills building." Education should be highly relational. The teacher should form good relationships with his/her students and know them very well; thus, class sizes should be small.

EDUCATION IS "THE WAY OF WILL AND REASON."

Humans fight a regular battle with the difference between "want" and "ought." Sometimes we get what we want. Sometimes, we must will ourselves to do what we ought. This involves an inner struggle as well as the help of the Holy Spirit. Sometimes we rely on our reason to help us through a situation, and sometimes we rely on the Holy Spirit to help us through a struggle. It is important that we allow our children to experience some struggle so that they can grow.

Children should be provided with opportunities to relax as well as to struggle. We view struggle as an integral part of the growing process.



EDUCATION IS AN ATMOSPHERE, A DISCIPLINE, A LIFE.

Atmosphere

A school environment should be beautiful and home-like. Children should be exposed to art, music, and poetry, in addition to history, math, literature, and science. The atmosphere should be peaceful, secure, and joyful. Children should interact with lively and interesting items or books of high quality which will spark thought and creativity.

Discipline

People are creatures of habit. Our life skills are an important aspect of who we become. Habits, both mentally and physically, should be formed thoughtfully and definitely. Physiologists tell us of the adaptation of brain structure to habitual lines of thought (neuroplasticity). Thoughtful attention should be given to the development of a child's natural response toward kindness, diligence, respect, organization, creativity, memory, joy, self-control, attention, peace, punctuality, etc.

Life

The mind feeds on ideas. Children should be given a generous and varied curriculum that is rich in living ideas. Living ideas are taken into a person's mind, wrestled with, and then assimilated into that person. Facts should be presented within context of informing a child's ideas.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Education Series Volumes 1-6 by Charlotte Mason
- Ambleside International
amblesideschools.com
Suggestions: The series of short videos (5-6 minutes each)
- When Children Love to Learn by Elaine Cooper

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