

graduation; after-graduation career. If the pupil removes, does the record show that he has been introduced into another school?

So, also, the career of each teacher and officer.

Do the records show the actual state of the school—the live enrolment, attendance by sex and grade each Sunday, lateness by grade and sex each Sunday, all organizations and activities, attendance and promptness of teachers, social and other events, confirmations, detailed account of income and expenditures?

How often and to whom does each officer and teacher render a report of his work? What is done with these reports?

Is there an annual exhibit? What is included in it? What persons, and how many of them, see it?

What is the method of keeping the records? Loose leaf system? Card catalogue system? Are the records accurate, orderly, and convenient?

Conclusions. In the light of these data, what are the strong points of this school? The weak points? What can be done to improve it within the limits of its available resources in men and money?

BEST RESULTS FROM GRADED LESSONS

GETTING RESULTS IN MODERN SUNDAY SCHOOLS THROUGH GRADED LESSONS

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We are all using graded lessons and getting excellent results from their use; the real question is, How shall we use the available graded material so as to get from it the *best possible* results?

Let us think for a moment of what we have already achieved. I venture to say that every one of you in your adoption of graded courses has had experiences like those which I am about to quote.

Only a few days ago the pastor of a typical suburban church told me enthusiastically that he had succeeded in putting graded lessons into his school. "Well," I said, "what results do you get?" "Why, already the *home work* is improving immensely," he replied. There is one result.

The same day I had a conversation with another man who has recently taken a city school of 300 or 400 members under his charge. About Christmas time he persuaded the teachers to use graded

material in one of the departments, just as a beginning. "And it is a remarkable fact," he said, "that the attendance of the teachers has become almost perfect. They don't dare to stay away." He added also that the spirit of the class work was better and the pupils were far more attentive. Here are two more results.

Finally, I asked a man, who is working in an east-side school in New York, how he was getting along with the graded lessons. They had been adopted by his school about Christmas time, and it was found that instead of the usual severe falling off of pupils after Christmas, their regularity and numbers had both *increased*. A fourth result.

But we are not satisfied to stop here. And as a matter of fact, what we have been just now calling "results," are, after all, only means, tools, to the great result in Christian character that the school itself is trying to achieve.

We must keep before our eyes the purpose of the Sunday school, and the purpose of any particular course of lessons. It saves us many a fruitless discussion about the suitability of any lesson material if we can rule it in or rule it out according to its capacity to help particular pupils to *grow* in spiritual mastery, toward the Christian ideal. If it fails to help them to interpret their present experiences at home, or at school, or on the street; if it fails to help them solve their inevitable moral problems on the Christian basis; if it satisfies no childlike interests, then we may be sure that whatever other virtue such a course may possess, at least it is not *graded*.

But to get results in Christian character we need more than lessons. We need worship, training in Christian living, the contagion of noble personality, as well as good instruction; and no school has a right to expect that its pupils will make great progress Christward as a result merely of thirty minutes of instruction on Sunday morning.

With the unity of instruction about, and training in, Christian life in mind, then, let us consider a little further the meaning of *grading* in the curriculum

From the point of view of the educator, religious education consists in providing a series of controlled situations, real and imaginary, which will tend to call forth from the child the type of response in action and attitude that we desire to become habitual. Naturally the child's capacity to respond varies with his developing instincts and his accumulation of habits and attitudes. Hence the situations with which we confront him must change so as to encourage a response which from year to year approaches more nearly

the Christian ideal. A part of the child's response consists in the gradual formation of ideals and motives, and it is the purpose of the educator to see to it that these ideals are so united with the child's actual experience that they will operate as the controlling stimulus to Christian action; for example,—

The other day a small German boy was observed to refuse to fight an Italian who had just landed, and who had struck him. He clenched his fist and squared his jaw, saying over and over, "I will not; I will not." When an explanation was demanded he said, "I learned in Sunday school that a Christian won't hit back." Here was an ideal that functioned!

Now graded lessons are supposed to supply from year to year an ascending series of situations in response to which the pupil, with the teacher's help, will gain an interpretation of his present experience, and will actually achieve the ideals and ideas which will, in controlling his daily life, constitute him a Christian according to his years.

With these results in mind, allow me to make three very general propositions as to the method of getting results.

1. Learn how to teach.
2. Teach how to learn.
3. Unite instruction with training in the things taught.

1. *Learn how to teach.* The best teachers are those who are always learning how to teach better. The greatest difficulty in the way of larger Sunday school success is the difficulty of getting teachers to study how to improve their own work. We have not yet attained a *professional consciousness*. Teaching is too often regarded not as a *profession* in which one may become continuously more proficient up to the very last day of his life, but as a *trade*, easily practiced by following a few rules, and not important enough to warrant the expenditure of much energy outside of the minutes of teaching.

But as the teacher is the subject of the next paper, I will make only three or four suggestions about teaching which apply right here.

(1) Vary your method. Once the trick of a good method is caught one sometimes falls into a rut, feeling that there is only one way to teach. Yet nothing is so deadly to successful teaching as monotony of method. Try new things. Make experiments. Test results. Master many methods so that you may be free to use whatever the occasion may demand. This is the first step toward professional skill.

(2) Grade your work to individuals. It is already graded according to the general stage of development. That is a suggestion of the process of adaptation which must be carried right on down through adaptation to nationality, to social environment, whether city or country, to school life, to home life, to gang life, and finally, to the individual life itself.

(3) As an aspect of this individual adaptation of material, try to assign to the pupil the sort of problems to which his interests naturally lead. Secure his co-operation by giving him something to do that requires the kind of activity he already enjoys. Instead of "assigning a lesson"—and the same lesson to all—let each do a part of the work of preparation or review, and so contribute some item for which he is alone responsible.

(4) Give the pupils a chance to choose and decide things. Trust them. A woman of very wide experience with all sorts of children recently said, "I never knew of a case where a matter involving a moral decision was left to the pupils in which they did not decide the question rightly." And they will decide other things according to their capacity, but their capacity for making choices cannot be developed without exercise. Graded material affords plenty of opportunity for the pupils to exercise their initiative—in the choice of questions, in the handling of sources, in the selection of pictures, in the accumulation of illustrations or cases, and so on.

First, then, keep learning how to teach.

2. *Teach how to learn.* Show your pupils how to study. I almost believe that some people imagine that children are born with a well-developed instinct to read the Bible or examine an atlas or search an encyclopedia! How much time do *we* spend in showing our pupils how to look up references, to find and read interesting sources of information and place the results of their investigation before the class?

I venture to say that those of you who are teaching in day school have found your study of a subject to be far more vital than it seemed to be when you were a pupil. Why? Simply because you have a real live problem confronting you which demands your whole interest. Show the pupils the real problems, and how to *find* the real problems, and how to estimate the value of what he reads or sees in solving just these problems. Take him to the imposing looking reference books and show him how full they are of fascinating descriptions of places and people. Stir his intellectual curiosity. Show him how magazines and papers are rich in illustrations of the ethical problems the lesson deals with. Help

him to see the Bible not as a collection of texts, but as a record of *life*, a book of splendid stories. I often regret the great waste of time among even college and graduate students through an incapacity to read wisely and take usable notes, mental or pencil. I think this is largely because they have no immediate use for such material, and because they have not been taught the art of reading for a purpose. They have been given an assignment—Take the next 2 chapters; instead of a problem—What happened to Jacob?

Besides studying how to teach better, teach your pupils, then, how to study better.

3. *Unite instruction with training in the subject taught.* I wish to speak here of three types of activity: (1) That concerned with the learning of the lesson; (2) that concerned with the application of the lesson; and (3) miscellaneous forms of activity related to the general purpose of the whole course of study or the pupils' class life.

(1) The first type is so familiar that I need not dwell on it more than to suggest its importance. The "point of contact" is so old a story that perhaps we occasionally overlook its vital relation to the process of learning. The real meaning of a "point of contact" is not that we have a bait to catch the pupils' attention, but that we have available the particular experiences of the child which the particular lesson to be taught is to interpret to the child in the light of the Christian ideal.

And in the class session itself, how much the dramatic impersonation of the story helps to make it vivid to children! The study of pictures, the pasting of pictures, the drawing of pictures—these and many other familiar acts help to round out a new *idea* in the minds of the children, and are useful only as they actually do so.

(2) The application of the lesson. So wide is the application of lesson material that only a suggestion or two can be made here. If we are to have more than mere automatons in conduct, it is essential that conduct be lifted to the level of self-motivated activity. It must be understood in its relation to *principles* of conduct. The German boy did not simply drop his arm like a mechanical doll. He *understood* that it was not *Christian* to hit back. The application of the moral lesson to daily life must be understood in relation to the moral principle of which it is the expression. The advantage of having graded material lies in just this close correlation between the Christian conduct of which the child is capable and the ideas which interpret that conduct to himself.

It is not enough, therefore, to keep Christian activities going.

They must be brought into close association with the discussions of the class lessons.

(3) This large body of miscellaneous forms of activity might occupy us the rest of the day. I will mention only a few.

First, there is class organization with all its possibilities of training in co-operation. The class must have some purpose. Hence it must have officers and a statement of their duties. There is the class treasury and the business of wisely gathering and expending funds. This involves the investigation and discussion of causes and institutions and special cases, which may seem worthy or needy.

And there are the class or club meetings, with parliamentary procedure, and the training in public speech and self-control and working with others. Individuals do things for the sake of the class that they would not do alone. They begin to feel that it is a Christian's business to take an active, aggressive part in the world's work. They are training for membership in the church.

One of the forms of class work which contributes as much as any to the lesson itself is the Class Book, containing an account, by the secretary, of class doings; the treasurer's reports; essays by the members; a chart or graph showing the attendance record; the autographs of the teacher and members and so on.

In getting the best results from graded lessons, then, remember that the grading itself is your ally and not your enemy. Improve your teaching. Vary your methods. Grade your work to individual needs and interests. Assign problems instead of lessons and let the pupils exercise their own initiative.

Teach the pupils how to study—how to look up references and make reports. Cultivate their intellectual curiosity.

Finally, unite instruction with training; for the process of education is a unified process moving steadily onward toward the unified, wholesome, unselfish life, of which our cherished example and ideal is Jesus Christ.