



Gileskirk
20th Century
Modernity

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An Introduction to Gileskirk

All materials contained in this study, whether in print or in electronic media or audio or video cassette, are copyrighted. If you have not signed a license agreement, you should not use these materials.

Gileskirk curricula are designed to be complete, self-contained courses of study for individual students, a family, or a group. The goal of Gileskirk is to provide a strong liberal arts study surveying the disciplines of history, literature, philosophy, theology, civics, art, music, and architecture of a particular epoch. In our students, we hope to foster a love of learning, a passion for reading, and the ability to discern worldviews and to think critically. To that end, we hope this introduction will provide insight and instructions for using Gileskirk studies in your home or classroom.

This year the area of focus will be Modernity—an epoch composed primarily of the 19th and 20th centuries, but with roots extending deep into the 18th century Enlightenment. We will pay particular attention to the American experience—the 20th century has been, after all, “The American Century.”

Elements of the Course

Each Gileskirk study course is comprised of the following material:

Lectures

Each lesson is built around a lecture delivered by Dr. George Grant to the Humanities class at Franklin Classical School. These lectures are available as audio cassettes, video cassettes, or on CD-ROM. Each lecture is numbered to indicate its order within the series. As much as possible, Dr. Grant’s class instructions for projects, assignments, and readings have been included. You will need to allow for extra class periods during the year to accommodate project presentations, review sessions, and exam days for the midterm and final. You may also desire extra class periods for discussions of the literature texts. The numbered lessons in this book correspond to the numbered lectures. Tape #50 is an informational tape on the Classical School of the Medes by Pastor Yusif. There are no lesson plans for this tape. It is included for your information.

Lesson and Outlines

Each lesson gives the reading assignments, which should be finished before listening to the lecture. If a quiz is to be given it is listed at the beginning of the lesson, and the quiz should be given before the lecture. The quiz will cover information from the previous lectures and readings. Vocabulary assignments are due before the lecture. Additional homework assignments are due the next class period. If the homework assignment is a reading journal entry, it should be written that day. Each lesson includes an outline for the specific lecture. While students should certainly use the outlines as guides to help order their notes, the temptation is to copy the information and then relax. Students’ note-taking skills will improve throughout the year, but teachers and mentors should check notebooks occasionally to make sure students are getting the important

information. A series of bad quiz grades could be another indication that students are merely copying the outlines rather than taking substantive notes.

Reading Assignments

The primary texts, literature texts, and supplementary books are listed at the beginning of each grading period. Each lesson plan includes the specific reading assignments in the primary texts to be completed before listening to the lecture. The recitations from Common Roots or otherwise indicated are to be read before class and then recited aloud in class. Many of these will be memorized.

Literature Text

A specific literature text is assigned for each grading period. The literature text is also listed in each lesson plan as a reminder that the student should be reading through the text on a regular basis. Please note that specific page assignments are not given, so the student should plan a schedule of reading which will enable him to finish both the literature text and his own choice of a supplemental book during the grading period. The lectures essentially assume familiarity with the literature and then build upon themes within the literature. Additional literature assignments are given in *Appendix C*.

Supplemental Reading

A list of Supplemental Reading choices relating to the time period or topic being studied is given at the beginning of each grading period. . ***The student should choose one supplementary reading book each month, unless otherwise instructed.*** However, as with the literature text, the student must pace himself since no specific assignments of the supplementary readings are given.

Preceding each title is a symbol that classifies the level of each book. A Celtic cross (☩) indicates that the book may be chosen by either level of students. A crossed box (☒) indicates that the book is on the Upper Division level (grades 11, 12). A checked box (☑) indicates that the book is acceptable for Lower Division students only (grades 9, 10). Some examples are below.

- ☩ *The Great Evangelical Disaster*, Francis Schaeffer (Crossway)
- ☩ *Modern Fascism*, Gene Edward Veith (Concordia)
- ☒ *The Malakand Field Force*, W. Churchill (Barnes & Noble)
- ☒ *Fear God and Take Your Own Part*, T. Roosevelt (Nebraska)
- ☒ *The Southern Tradition at Bay*, Richard Weaver (Regnery)
- ☑ *The Panama Canal*, R. Stein (Sonlight)
- ☑ *On the Sommes*, Claire Hayes (Applewood)

Reading Journal

Dawson Trotman, founder of the Navigators, often said, "Thoughts tend to disentangle themselves when they flow over the tip of a pencil."

The reading journal is a book or notebook reserved only for writing reflections on one's reading, thus organizing and giving coherence to one's thoughts. The use of a reading journal also promotes good writing skills by providing the impetus to write daily.

Each student should keep a reading journal of some sort, a book or notebook reserved only for writing journal entries. At the end of each month the teacher/mentor should collect the reading journal for a class participation grade. For the purpose of the Gileskirk study, the journal entries should be reflections on readings in the textbook assignment, the literature selection, the *Stirling Bridge*, or the supplementary reading book. The student should discuss his thoughts on the ideas, themes, and characters in the books; journal entries should not be what he did that day, what TV show he is watching, or other "mental laundry." At Franklin Classical School, the literature assignments are coordinated with the Literature and Composition classes. *Appendix C* contains literature assignments related to the primary literature texts. These assignments include background information about the authors, book summaries, and other literary helps. Reading Journal Prompts are given at the beginning of each grading period. The Prompts were developed at Franklin Classical School to help students focus their journal entries on the literature being studied as well as to broaden their literary studies.

High school students are expected to write about a page, approximately two hundred to two hundred fifty words; junior high students should write one-half of a page. These amounts can be adjusted to the ability of the student, but each student should start slowly and increase in length and substance over the course of the year. Students should be required to make five journal entries a week, which gives them Sundays off and one other day of their choosing. A quick pop-check of journals, before their normal collection at the end of the month, reveals more accurately who keeps up with their journals and who is waiting until the night before journals are due.

Reading journals are excellent for integration, especially with English classes. Teachers in other classes can provide specific directions or assignments, such as discussing a particular style, character, event, idea, etc. Homework of this type can also help new or younger students learn how to write in their journals.

Recitations & Handouts

Recitations serve several functions in Gileskirk courses. Primarily, they provide an exercise in memorization. However, they also introduce students to important works of literature, notable prayers, significant ideas, etc.

Depending on the course, recitations are found either in the *Patriot's Handbook* or are provided in the information at the beginning of each grading period or in the appropriate lesson plans.

Other handouts, such as maps, are occasionally provided to reinforce a particular idea or topic. The instructions for and significance of the handout is explained in the lecture.

Vocabulary

Vocabulary words come from the reading assignments. Find the words as you read through the material. Then, define or identify the words according to the way they are used in the text. It is especially important to note the part of speech that the word plays in the sentence. Remember: some words may be used either as a noun or a verb, an

adjective or an adverb. Finally, write a sentence with each of the words demonstrating your mastery of its meaning or identity. Vocabulary assignments—with the location of the words in the reading, the definitions, and the sentences—are due at the beginning of the designated class.

Quizzes

Approximately every other lesson plan will include a quiz that should be taken before listening to the lecture which it accompanies. The quizzes reinforce important information from the previous lectures and reading assignments; therefore, a particular question may appear on three or four quizzes. Students should correct their old quizzes so they may use them to study for future quizzes and the exams.

In his classes, Dr. Grant always refers to quizzes as “opportunities” because they are opportunities for students to show what they know. Such a euphemism is usually greeted with groans, but students eventually use the new name. While you certainly don’t have to continue this tradition, don’t get confused if, during a lecture, you hear a reference to an “opportunity”—it simply means a quiz.

Each quiz has a corresponding key (see *Appendix B*) with all of the answers for each question. The best possible answer is provided. Deduct points according to an answer’s proximity to the ideal answer. On discussion questions, the salient points that are required for full credit are listed, but the answer still needs to be in correct, full sentences and/or paragraphs—not bullets or a list. Many quiz questions have two parts: list and describe or list and identify. If a student does not do both, he loses half of the points. For more information on grading quizzes, see *Grading the Material* below.

Exams

Two major exams, the Midterm and the Final, are given for this study. *Appendix E* is comprised of the exams, exam keys, and the study guides for these major tests. See *Grading the Material* for information on how to average the midterm and final exam scores into the grades for the year.

In the lesson plans, there are instructions for giving the study guides to the students for test preparation. Students are to find the definitions, answers, etc. from the opportunities and class notes. Encourage the formation of study groups so that students can share knowledge and study together. Set aside class time to answer students' questions in the event they are unable to locate all of the information. Also, plan to discuss the main ideas in the literary works itemized on the study guides.

The midterm exam is given after the first semester of study. It is comprehensive. Allow 2 to 4 hours for students to complete the exam. After grading the midterm, return it to students as it will be a valuable study guide for the final exam. The final is given at the end of the year and is also comprehensive. Again, allow 2 to 4 hours for the exam.

Projects

Projects, whether monthly or quarterly, are an important part of the course. They are not only a significant portion of students’ grades, but also they engage the more creative side of the students, which is especially important for students who are less academically inclined. The required projects are described at the beginning of each grading period and again in *Appendix D*. The 40 Hour Project synthesizes all of the different areas and ideas

which have been studied during the course of the year, but each student should also design this project along the lines of his own interests. Projects should always be presented before an audience, even if it is a family and some friends; such an atmosphere makes the students do a better job and gives them an opportunity to work on their oratory skills

Grading the Material

Grading Percentages

The course grade breaks down according to the following percentages:

25% Class participation	Homework and class participation
25% Tests	Opportunities and Tests
25% Projects	Projects and their presentation (See <i>Appendix A</i>)
25% Reading Journal	Journal entries for Humanities and Literature classes

Exam scores at Franklin Classical School are figured in to the grades according to the following policies: each quarter in a semester counts either 40% or 45% and the midterm and final exams count 20% or 10%. You are free to create you own percentages on the exams, but we strongly encourage you to keep the other percentages for participation, quizzes, and projects intact. The ratios ensure the proper emphasis, and in particular, they prevent the quiz scores from becoming the majority of the grade.

Grading Quizzes

The quizzes are an important part of the course, but they are a means to an end. Students should be graded fairly severely on the quizzes, especially after the first quarter, as an impetus to study and memorize the material well. Students are forced to ingest the information; however, the real goal is to get the students to digest it - to think through the material critically. Therefore, discussion questions are almost always weighted more than questions that ask students merely to identify or define a word.

Some students consistently fail quizzes because they do not put the necessary effort into studying. Other students try but have more difficulty performing well on written tests. Unless a student has a problem memorizing or a disability, he should be allowed to have poor quiz grades if he is not willing to exert the effort to learn the material. Most students will improve and should be encouraged in that goal, yet the students that typically do poorly on the quizzes usually do very well on projects and journals. Some of that higher quality work is out of necessity, but it generally occurs because less academic students shine during projects and in their journal writing, which is another reason why journals, projects, and quizzes are weighted equally. Students who do well on quizzes usually get slightly above average marks on projects and in journals, at the very least. Therefore, be as lenient as possible within strict standards for quiz grades, give partial credit as much as possible, and encourage students that the quizzes are conquerable, although it may take the better part of the year for some.

Adapting Material for Junior High Students

All of the lectures and quizzes in this curriculum come from the high school version of Franklin Classical School's Humanities course. However, the course can be adapted to a junior high level. The reading lists choices for Lower Division can be used by junior high students, and the quizzes can be adapted. Parents will need to take a more active part with the younger students: helping them read and understand the selections, making sure the students take good notes, helping the students manage their study time, reviewing major points for discussion questions. This increased participation is especially true at the beginning of the course.

Adapt quizzes for junior high students by reducing the number or length of answers required, for example, by allowing junior high students to skip five answers. *Please note that skipping five answers is very different from skipping five questions, since the quiz questions almost always consist of multiple answers, usually three to five points that must be listed and described.* Each answer point skipped counts as one skip. If students skip a question asking for the name of the Axis countries, three skips are used. Discussion questions cannot be counted as a skip; however, if a question ask for a one-page answer then junior high students need only write a one-half page answer. If the senior high students are supposed to answer four questions with a one-half page each, junior high student should only answer two with a one-half page each.

One final note on grading quizzes for junior high students is that the answers given on the keys should be viewed differently. If the student gives the main idea, full credit is usually given.

20th Century Modernity Book List

Primary Texts:

Modern Times, Paul Johnson (Revised Edition)
Patriot's Handbook, George Grant
Stirling Bridge Literary Journals, George Grant
Never Give In, Stephen Mansfield
Carry a Big Stick, George Grant

Literature Texts:

☒ *Pride and Prejudice*, Jane Austen
☒ *Silas Marner*, George Eliot
☒ *The Antiquarian*, Walter Scott
☒ *Heart of Darkness*, Joseph Conrad
⊕ *Hard Times*, Charles Dickens
⊕ *The Norton Anthology of Poetry*
OR
The Portable Romantic Poets
⊕ *Greenmantle*, John Buchan
⊕ *The Great Gatsby*, F. Scott Fitzgerald
⊕ *The Lord of the Rings*, J. R. R. Tolkein
⊕ *Short Stories*, Flannery O'Connor

OR

Twenty-One Great Short Stories

◆ *The Innocence of Father Brown*, G. K. Chesterton

Supplemental Reading

Lower Division (grades 9, 10) Upper Division (grades 11, 12) ◆ Both Lower and Upper Division

Lessons 1 - 9

- The Ancient Regime*, Alexis de Tocqueville (Everyman)
- Robespierre*, Otto Scott (Reformer Library)
- The Secularization of the European Mind*, Owen Chadwick (Cambridge)
- Reformation to Industrial Revolution*, Christopher Hill
- Orley Farm*, Anthony Trollope (Penguin)
- Huguenot Garden*, Douglas Jones (Canon)
- A Tale of Two Cities*, Charles Dickens (Penguin)
- A Piece of the Mountain*, Joyce McPherson (Greenleaf Press)
- The Last Crusader*, George Grant (Crossway)
- Napoleon of Notting Hill*, G. K. Chesterton (Dover)

Lessons 10 - 15

- Recollections of 1848*, Alexis de Tocqueville (Transaction)
- The Sentimental Education*, Gustave Flaubert (Penguin)
- Nations and Nationalism Since 1780*, E. J. Hobsbawm (Cambridge)
- Middlemarch*, George Elliot (Penguin)
- The Story of 1848*, Raymond Postgate (Cassell)
- The Corsican Brothers*, Alexander Dumas (Penguin)
- The Return of the Native*, Thomas Hardy (Penguin)

Lessons 15 - 21

- John Brown*, Robert Warren (Sanders)
- None Shall Look Back*, Caroline Gordon (Sanders)
- Stonewall Jackson*, Allen Tate (Sanders)
- Destruction and Reconstruction*, Richard Taylor (Bantam)
- The Servile State*, Hilaire Belloc (Liberty)
- Trial and Error*, George Grant (Legacy)
- Escape from Reason*, Francis Schaeffer (IVP)
- Trilogy for Young Readers*, Mary Williamson (Sprinkle)
- A Wake for the Living*, Andrew Nelson Lytle (Sanders)
- The Problem of Poverty*, Abraham Kuyper (Baker)
- Life on the Mississippi*, Mark Twain (Penguin)

Lessons 22 - 28

- Modern Art and the Death of Culture*, H. R. Rookmaaker (IVP)
- Escape from Reason*, Francis Schaeffer (IVP)
- Fear God and Take Your Own Part*, T. Roosevelt (Nebraska)
- The Path to Rome*, Hilaire Belloc (Penguin)
- Two Contents Two Realities*, Francis Schaeffer (IVP)
- Made in America*, Michael Horton (Baker)
- Art and the Bible*, Francis Schaeffer (IVP)
- Art Needs No Justification*, H. R. Rookmaaker (IVP)

- ☒ *Not a Tame Lion*, Terry Glaspey (Highland)
- ☒ *Perelandra*, C. S. Lewis (Macmillian)
- ☒ *The World Crisis*, (1 vol. Ed.), Winston Churchill (Barnes & Noble)
- ☒ *Orthodoxy*, G. K. Chesterton (Penguin)
- ☒ *The Aftermath*, Winston Churchill (Barnes & Noble)
- ☒ *The Incredible Father Brown*, G. K. Chesterton
- ☒ *The Growth of America*, Clarence Carson (ATC)
- ☒ *The Lead Disk*, LeRoy Snell (Grosset)
- ☒ *The Jungle*, Upton Sinclair (Signet)
- ☒ *A Puritan in Babylon*, William White (HarperCollins)
- ☒ *The Heart of Darkness*, Joseph Conrad (Random)
- ☒ *The Gold Cord*, Amy Carmichael (CLC)
- ☒ *All the King's Men*, Robert Penn Warren (Signet)
- ☒ *The Servile State*, Hilaire Belloc (Liberty)
- ☒ *Three Who Made Revolution*, Bertram Wolfe (Stein and Day)
- ☒ *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn (Pocket)
- ☒ *I'll Take My Stand*, Donald Davidson (LSU)
- ☒ *A Wake for the Living*, Andrew Nelson Lytle (J. S. Sanders)
- ☒ *The Gathering Storm*, Winston Churchill (Houghton Mifflin)
- ☑ *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, C. S. Lewis (Macmillian)
- ☑ *The Hobbit*, J. R. R. Tolkien (Bantam)
- ☑ *Sergeant York*, Sam Cowan (Grosset & Dunlap)
- ☑ *Nansen*, Anna Hall (Harcourt Brace)
- ☑ *The Sound of Chariots*, Mollie Hunter (Hall & Davis)
- ☑ *After the Dancing Days*, R. Rostkowski (Sonlight)
- ☑ *Hold On to Love*, Mollie Hunter (Landmark)
- ☑ *Pollyanna*, Eleanor Porter (Signet)
- ☑ *Freckles*, Gene Porter (Doubleday)
- ☑ *Andrew Carnegie*, Clara Judson (Landmark)
- ☑ *When the Sirens Wailed*, Noel Streatfield (Collier)
- ☑ *This Above All*, Eric Knight (Syndicate)

Lessons 29 - 38

- ♣ *The Old Man and the Sea*, Ernest Hemingway (Scribners)
- ♣ *The Good Earth*, Pearl Buck (Dell)
- ♣ *The Old Man and the Sea*, Ernest Hemingway (Scribners)
- ♣ *The Good Earth*, Pearl Buck (Dell)
- ♣ *The Welfare State*, Clarence Carson (ATC)
- ♣ *Economics in One Easy Lesson*, Henry Hazlitt (Liberty)
- ♣ *And Quiet Flows the Don*, Mikhail Sholokhov (Houghton)
- ♣ *Seven Days that Shook the World*, John Reed (Dell)
- ♣ *An Outline of Sanity*, G. K. Chesterton (Sheed and Ward)
- ♣ *Economics for Helen*, Hilaire Belloc (Sheed and Ward)
- ♣ *The Hiding Place*, Corrie ten Boom (Zondervan)
- ♣ *War, Peace and All That Jazz*, Joy Hakim (Oxford)
- ☒ *The UN Conspiracy*, Robert W. Lee (Western Islands)
- ☒ *The Aftermath*, Winston Churchill (Barnes & Noble)
- ☒ *The World Crisis*, (1 vol. Ed.), Winston Churchill (Barnes & Noble)
- ☑ *Sergeant York*, Sam Cowan (Grosset & Dunlap)
- ☑ *The Commandos of WW II*, Hodding Carter (Landmark)
- ☑ *The Story of D-Day*, Bruce Bliven (Landmark)

Lessons 39 - 43

- ✦ *Tortured for Christ*, Richard Wurmbrad (Spire)
- ✦ *Marco Polo If You Can*, William F. Buckley (Cumberland)
- ✦ *The Kennedy Aura*, James Lawler (Arlington House)
- ✦ *The Kennedys*, Peter Collier & David Horowitz (Warner)
- ✦ *The Fords*, Peter Collier & David Horowitz (Warner)
- ✦ *A Texan Looks at Lyndon*, J. Evetts Haley (Midland)
- ☒ *The Fifties*, David Halberstam (Villard)
- ☒ *Architects of Conspiracy*, William Hoar (Western Islands)
- ☒ *American Caesar*, William Manchester (Dell)
- ☒ *A World Torn Apart*, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn (HarperCollins)
- ☒ *Execution by Hunger*, Miron Dolot (Norton)
- ☒ *Gulag Archipeligo*, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn (HarperCollins)
- ☒ *Stalin's Secret War*, Nikolai Tolstoy (Holt)
- ☑ *Number the Stars*, Lois Lowry (Yearling)
- ☑ *Clouds of Death*, Mishimo Myaga (Landmark)

Lessons 44 - 49

- ✦ *Hunt for Red October*, Tom Clancy (Naval Institute)
- ✦ *Taming the Tiger*, Witold Rybczynski (Penguin)
- ✦ *Our Character, Our Future*, Alan Keyes & George Grant (Zondervan)
- ✦ *The Great Evangelical Disaster*, Francis Schaeffer (Crossway)
- ✦ *Modern Fascism*, Gene Edward Veith (Concordia)
- ✦ *Christian Manifesto*, Francis Schaeffer (Crossway)
- ✦ *What I Saw at the Revolution*, Peggy Noonan (Bantam)
- ✦ *Blood of the Moon*, George Grant (W&H)
- ✦ *The Lost Heart of Asia*, Colin Thubron (HarperCollins)
- ✦ *On Remaking the World*, Harry Shultz (ICDWN)
- ✦ *Bringing in the Sheaves*, George Grant (Reformer Library)
- ✦ *The Dispossessed*, George Grant (Crossway)
- ✦ *Grand Illusions*, George Grant (Adroit)
- ✦ *Postmodern Times*, Gene Edward Veith (Crossway)
- ✦ *The Quick and the Dead*, George Grant (Crossway)
- ✦ *The Sensate Culture*, Harold O. J. Brown (Word)
- ✦ *Norstrillia*, Cordwainer Smith (DelRey)
- ✦ *The Next Civilization*, Alvin & Heidi Toffler (Turner)
- ☒ *Deconstructing the Left*, David Horowitz (Heterodoxy)
- ☒ *Destructive Generation*, Peter Collier & David Horowitz (Summit)
- ☒ *Amusing Ourselves to Death*, Neil Postman (Penguin)
- ☒ *The Sovereign Individual*, J. Davidson & W. Rees-Mogg (Simon & Schuster)
- ☒ *The Conservative Crack-Up*, R. Emmett Tyrrell (Simon & Schuster)
- ☒ *The Mortal Danger*, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn (HarperCollins)
- ☒ *The Tragedy of American Compassion*, Marvin Olasky (Regnery)
- ☒ *Balkan Ghosts*, Robert Kaplan (St. Martins)
- ☒ *Patriot Games*, Tom Clancy (Putnam)
- ☒ *The Southern Tradition at Bay*, Richard Weaver (Regnery)

Advice to the Teacher

Practical Tips & Wisdom for Gileskirk Teachers

Start Slowly

Gileskirk Humanities Curricula are challenging because of the reading requirements, the amount of information, and an approach that radically differs from most classes students have taken. Adjusting to all of these characteristics at once can be overwhelming for students. Therefore, we suggest that you spend extra time on the first few lectures and reading assignments. After listening to the tape, go over the main points yourself, and make sure the students understand them. Discuss the reading to ensure their comprehension. If necessary, decrease the amount of writing required in their journals during the first few weeks. If possible, give an early quiz a second time. Be patient with students who are using Gileskirk materials for the first time. While you should certainly expect them to improve, help your students make the adjustment as smoothly as possible. Try to find the balance between keeping the standard high and realizing that anything worthwhile takes time to develop. What you students can handle at the beginning of the year is not as important as what they can accomplish at the end.

Persevere

Since this course is much more challenging than most, many students will be overwhelmed. They will complain; they will refuse to do their work; some may shut down. The beginning of a new school year always means that we literally have students in tears every night for the first few weeks. We even have parents in tears at the start. Teachers, you may receive anxious phone calls from parents. Your course will not be any different.

What students need most is encouragement and confidence. Most have never had to do this amount of work for any one class; some have never had to do it in all of their classes combined. Students will be quite earnest when they say they cannot do it. Parents will be earnest when they say their students cannot do it. The students truly believe that they cannot because they have never had to.

But they are wrong.

The students may need to be shown step-by-step how to complete some of the assignments, just to prevent them from becoming paralyzed by not knowing where to begin. A special class on study skills or time management can help tremendously. Keep the students working, encouraging them to do as much as they can, and they will eventually surpass your expectations.

One final word of caution: Some students who really try may not do well the entire year, especially ones that are a little less mature or that are slower readers. However, if they can persevere, our experience has been that they do well the next year.

Avoiding Burnout

The intensity of this course causes most students to burn out at some point during the year—your students are not immune to it. How can you minimize burnout? Every few months, try to vary the pace a little. Lighten the homework. Take a day off from the tapes and get a guest lecturer to cover some related topic. Or if you can find a good film adaptation of one of the literature texts, watch it in class or go to the theatre (Teachers must carefully screen anything before they show it to the class or take a field trip—we speak from experience). In 1998, Franklin Classical School has switched to a minimester schedule, which has several two-week periods scattered throughout the year in order to break up the pace. Projects are not usually required during minimesters, so the academic load is lightened.

Adapting This Course

Just as every student is different, so schools and classes are different. Each has its own peculiar make-up. Consequently, you may have to alter this course. Adding a ten or fifteen minute literature discussion period, so students can ask questions about the reading assignments (primary texts, literature or supplemental reading) can be helpful. You may want to require all students to read the same supplementary reading book, so you can discuss it in class. Do they need to take a quiz home for homework? Do they need to take a quiz over, or correct the wrong answers for a grade? You know your students best; this is your course—adapt it to your students’ weaknesses and strengths. Maintain the high standards, but wisely have compassion when necessary. Always encourage them, and tell them they can make it.

Mentoring & Discipleship

No matter how good the teaching, a tape or video is never an adequate replacement for a real person. Why? Biblical education is passed from one generation to the next, person to person. We believe that for students to care about education they must have a teacher who cares about them. As G.K. Chesterton said so well, “The most important fact about the subject of education is that there is no such thing. Education is not a subject, and it does not deal in subjects. It is instead the transfer of a way of life.”

Although Dr. Grant is the taped lecturer, parents and teachers are the primary mentors or disciplers. You are attempting to inculcate a love of learning, a passion for books and reading, and a particular worldview, one that recognizes Christ’s Lordship over all of Creation.

What Is Really Important?

The following is an excerpt from one of Dr. Grant's King's Meadow Study Center brochures concerning classical education—it will provide an overview of what should be our approach to this course:

“Somehow, our whole approach to teaching and learning has gone awry. Do you sometimes have an uneasy suspicion that the product of modern educational methods is less good than he or she might be at disentangling fact from opinion and the proven from the plausible? Although we often succeed in teaching our pupils subjects, we fail lamentably on the whole in teaching them how to think. They learn everything except the art of learning.” Dorothy Sayers

A commitment to an integrated Humanities curriculum is the foundation upon which all the [courses] are built. In other words, our courses of study are examinations of our culture emphasizing the basic classical scholastic approach of moral philosophy—thus equipping students with the tools for a lifetime of learning: a working knowledge of the timetables of history, a background understanding of the great literary classics, a familiarity with the sweep of art, music, and ideas, a worldview comprehension of basic geography, a principle approach to discerning the significance of current events, and an emphasis on a Christian life paradigm. The idea is to study human achievement in context—both in terms of its historical and societal sequence and in terms of its providential and cultural importance. Out of this integrated understanding of God's world every other subject and discipline is informed.

In practical terms, what does this mean? The most crucial information a student can learn from a lecture is not the multitude of facts—neither the names, the dates, nor the events. All of these derive their importance because they are a means to an end. The crucial part of the lecture is the big picture, the point of which is usually listed or discussed briefly at the end of the lecture. As much as Dr. Grant admires Bonnie Prince Charlie, Teddy Roosevelt, and G.K. Chesterton, he does not want students to learn all of the details of their lives. Instead, he tells stories about those people so students may understand their principles, their beliefs, and their worldviews.

Therefore, questions on quizzes focus more on the significance of individuals' lives, the fundamental characteristics of philosophies, the key points of a document. Dates and peoples' names are pegs to help order all of the information so the students have a general understanding of the flow of time; what is more important is how the event on that date changed Europe or how a particular person altered the culture.

Some will argue that details are important. Some will say that students need to know these facts. True, and Gileskirk students will learn many facts, but secondary students need to be moved beyond just facts; they need to learn about worldviews and how to read critically. If they forget a fact, they can look it up; when they do, they will be able to determine the bias of the book they are using and the worldview of the author. Such skill in discerning and understanding will not be forgotten.

Understanding Humanities & Moral Philosophy

The 20th century modernist approach to history is reflected in the name that their historians give it: Social Science. The modernist, to whom science is god, views people as machines. However, the philosophical view of history that under-girds all Gileskirk curricula is Moral Philosophy. It treats history more like an art or philosophy in that both require judgement, wisdom, and moral beliefs, not mere data. Moral philosophy recognizes that people are not reducible to a set of scientifically quantifiable laws and formulas. Humanity is more complex than that; therefore, history is, too.

Moral Philosophy teaches us lessons. We can see that unaided human efforts can create a Roman Empire but cannot sustain it. We can see the reflection of a leader's disobedience to God in the culture and society of the nation as a whole. We can learn how the Church throughout the ages has served her Lord. We gain a perspective removed from our own time, which helps us discern the faults and false philosophies of the culture around us. History does repeat itself only as much as there is nothing new under the sun, for Man has not changed.

Moral philosophy provides heroes, not celebrities; it proclaims men evil and guilty, not troubled in their youth. Moral philosophy is a substantive examination from whence we have come, so we can see where we are and where we will be. It is an attempt to learn from the sins and accomplishments of our forefathers just as the Israelites were to learn from the monuments made to God and from the Feast of the Passover. God has done great things for His people throughout history. His Hand brings events to pass as He works out the salvation of His children. Moral philosophy views history in light of this great Truth.

Note: Appendix F provides several articles by Dr. Grant to explain further the fundamental principles to which this curriculum adheres.