

### 3. The Principle Approach®

American Heritage School bases the majority of all instruction in every subject on an educational method called the Principle Approach®, which was developed by the Foundation for American Christian Education (FACE).

The following summary of the Principle Approach® has been taken with permission from a FACE model school faculty manual.

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Samuel Adams, Father of the American Revolution, admonished his peers with, “the importance of educating their little boys and girls by inculcating in their minds the fear and love of the piety; of instructing them in the art of self-government; and in leading them in the study and practice of the exalted virtues of the Christian system.”

In twenty-first-century America we live in a leisure-oriented society—an era of “amusement,” desiring and seeking the constant stimulation and tickling of our senses which leaves little time to think reflectively and enjoy a fellowship with our minds. The root of amusement is the French word “amuser” meaning to stand idle, detain, to loiter, or trifle—the opposite of “muse” which means to roll over and over, to ponder, examine, consider. As modern educators we have the responsibility of redirecting the course of our nation, held in bondage to amusement and mediocrity, by challenging our children to muse and by teaching them how to reason from the Word of God. However, in the tradition of American independence, it is up to the individual—it must begin with each one of us for, “as a man thinketh, so is he” (Proverbs 23:7). Come, let us reason together, let us restore America to the place of honor that it once held—“that excellent school in which to learn Christ.”

The Principle Approach® is the Biblical method of education derived from our heritage as American Christians. It has the power to produce independent thinkers, ennobled Christian character, self-government within individual learners, Christian scholarship, a spirit of enterprise, and a Christian view in all subjects of knowledge. The architects of the Principle Approach are Miss Rosalie J. Slater and Miss Verna M. Hall. In their extensive research into America's Christian history, they gleaned seven basic principles from Scripture which were ingrained in the character of our American forefathers. By using a Biblical method that furnishes the learner with the tools of research, reasoning, relating the knowledge to self, and recording it, they have laid a foundation for the contemporary Christian educator to develop inspiring and challenging curriculum for every subject that is foundationally both Christian and American. Through the mastery of these tools the learner becomes skilled in independent study and thought, thus liberating him from dependency upon pagan ideologies and philosophies. Just as in the colonial period, the key to liberty is independent Christian thinking. One must be solidly rooted in the principles of Scripture and possess the ability to reason and formulate conclusions that are born out of and energized by the knowledge of God's Word in combination with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Then the body of knowledge becomes the property of the individual. It is a product of his labor and he is able to exercise dominion over its applications in his environment. This is the essence of true Christian scholarship producing the model of Christ for every walk of life.

It is foundational to the American Heritage School teacher to become actively engaged in a self-taught program in the Principle Approach®. But we, as a generation of learners, are products of progressive classroom methods which utilized pre-planned curriculum supplying nearly everything and requiring no individual mastery, scholarship, or permanent record of the labor of learning. We have been

robbed of the opportunity to Biblically reason and trained to respond in a non-reflective way. Sadly, we are in bondage and dependent as Christians upon the philosophy and theology of socialism. Current progressive methods of instruction in the classroom presume no absolutes and teach as fact that all things have happened “by chance.” As Christians we know that the Creator has designed and planned for everything in His universe, undergirded and held together by His immutable laws and principles as revealed in His Word. In order to be liberated and to model Christian scholarship, curriculum, and methodology in the classroom, we must assume the responsibility of our own re-education. Simply attaching a religion class to the students' curriculum and memorizing Scripture verses will not forge the ennobled Christian character needed for leadership. Therefore, we must master the Christian philosophy through a re-education process that begins with the FACE syllabus, “The Providential Teaching of America's History.” This in-depth study of the Pilgrim story is basic to the understanding of America's Christian history of government, education, and character.

Our role as educators is to provide each learner with the educational tools and to encourage their mastery for a lifetime of learning producing the spirit of enterprise in each individual, not only in an exclusive number of “talented and gifted”; to inculcate the principles of Christian self-government; to unlock the treasure chest of the many bodies of knowledge; and to inspire the learner to achieve his fullest potential in Christ by assuming his God-ordained place on the Chain of Christianity.

The best thing you can do for your fellow,  
next to rousing his conscience is --  
not to give him things to think about,  
but to wake things up that are in him; or,  
make him think things for himself.

GEORGE MAC DONALD  
“Fantastic Imagination”

The Principle Approach<sup>®</sup> is more than a method for education—it is a way of thinking. It requires time to master the Principle Approach<sup>®</sup> because it is developed through the disciplined study of Scripture. God's principles must be internalized before they will find expression in the many external channels of the soul. Restoration must begin in our thinking. In Romans 12:2 we have a mandate: “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind; that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

### **The Principle Approach<sup>®</sup> Defined**

“PRINCIPLE” is defined as the source, the origin, the first cause, that from which a thing proceeds. Principles are SEEDS, the INTERNAL CAUSES for external conditions.

“APPROACH” is defined as the act of drawing near; in fortification the works erected to protect one against the enemy.

- I. The Principle Approach<sup>®</sup> is expansionary, not evolutionary.
  - A. It gives the whole from the beginning rather than building as in evolution. Kindergarten students are given all the seeds, rudiments, and tools for reading from the beginning. As the reasoning ability enlarges, the child's skills and abilities expand.

- B. Against the backdrop of a whole and complete creation, separate elements unfold.
- II. The Principle Approach<sup>®</sup> is reflective learning as opposed to rote learning which produces no mastery. "Reflect" means to bend back, to throw the thoughts upon past operations of the mind or upon past events, to consider attentively.
- III. The Principle Approach<sup>®</sup> uses God's Word to illumine and bring form to each subject.
- A. The light of God's Word appears in every subject. Every subject of knowledge can be taught by using the Principle Approach<sup>®</sup>.
  - B. God's Word is the standard for discerning truth from error.
  - C. The basic elements and principles of each subject are clearly identified and defined.
- IV. The Principle Approach<sup>®</sup> develops curriculum based upon the Christian idea of man and government not the pagan idea. (See chart below.)
- A. Christian liberty provides a different foundation, development, and use of a subject than the bondage of the pagan view. There are only two origins for any subject:
  - B. Knowledge of the westward move of Christianity to America and the individual links on the Chain of Christianity provide an excitement within the teacher and learner to fulfill their places in God's plan for their lives.

## Christian and Pagan Views Of Education Contrasted

CHRISTIAN	PAGAN
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Internal is seen as causative and primary</li> <li>2. God is the source and answer</li> <li>3. Expansionary</li> <li>4. Educational by definition is liberty oriented</li> <li>5. Biblical /Scriptural</li> <li>6. Reflective—internally oriented; individual action and expression inspires, consecrates, instructs</li> <li>7. Conscience is causative, cause and effect is internal to external</li> <li>8. Teaches exact knowledge of God in all subjects</li> <li>9. Expression of ideas</li> <li>10. Develops “critical faculties”: discernment, judgment, evaluative skills</li> <li>11. Provides for character growth</li> <li>12. Uses aids and visuals to verify, amplify, and clarify exact knowledge</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. External only is understood</li> <li>2. Man is the source and answer</li> <li>3. Evolutionary</li> <li>4. Political by definition and control oriented</li> <li>5. Psychological/behavioral/Pavlovian</li> <li>6. Non-reflective—environment oriented; group action, stimulus, response, motivate, indoctrinate</li> <li>7. Environment is causative; student responsive to environmental stimulus</li> <li>8. Depends upon external motivation</li> <li>9. Impression through sensory avenues</li> <li>10. Imposes “socially approved” opinions</li> <li>11. Provides for changing behavior</li> <li>12. Uses visuals to provoke and stimulate</li> </ol>
THE FRUIT:	THE FRUIT:
<p>Liberty  Independence  Wholeness  Individuality  Productive purposefulness  Dominion  Discipline  Fulfillment/Happiness</p>	<p>Slavery  Dependence  Fragmentation  Uniformity  Socialism  Indiscriminate submission  Rebellion  Restlessness</p>