

SCHOOL LIGHT LINES



CHRISTIAN LIGHT
EDUCATION



Volume 45 | 2024-2025 | Number 3

Jesus' School . . .

“My [School] Is Easy, and My Burden Is Light” | Ken Kauffman

*O' then come, children do go on
Into Jesus's school.
Here, learn and follow his teaching,
The lessons are not hard. Sit down
here.
On the chairs of his wisdom.*

*How good it is, how fine and beautiful,
Lovely to behold,
When children are right obedient
And gladly alone
Go to Jesus's school.*

—Verses 4 and 5 of
“Encouragement for the Children,”
Christopher Dock, *Colonial Schoolmaster*,
Gerald C. Studer, 1967

I was delighted to learn that Christopher Dock, (1698?–1771), the notable early Mennonite schoolmaster in Pennsylvania,

obviously had a conception of Jesus' school when he taught (possibly *penned*) this song to his students. Note especially “The lessons are not hard” and the invitational tone of the song that reflects the gracious words of Jesus to “take my yoke upon you, and learn of me” (Matthew 11:29). As we learned in earlier issues of *LightLines*, this was school language — that is, “Take my SCHOOL upon you . . .”

Now we turn to the Teacher's pedagogy. We note that He declares with invitational authority that His school is *easy*. Should you tell your students or patrons that your school, classroom, or curriculum is *easy*? You'd be underselling yourself, wouldn't you? And besides, we're taught not to try to make school easy, but stretching and challenging.

Rest easy, teacher. Jesus' *easy* doesn't mean “not challenging” or “not strenuous.”

It does not imply fun and games or a dumbed-down curriculum. Rather, the *easy* of Jesus' school means *serviceable* or *fitting*. Jesus' instructions and pedagogy fits His students' needs. Even His C students can declare with glad enthusiasm, “His school FITS!”

Jesus' school, as well as the Teacher Himself, addresses and meets all basic human needs. Does your school or classroom reflect that element of Jesus' school? Does it fit the needs of every student, expressed or unexpressed, recognized or not? Does your classroom and your character express the personality and heart of Jesus — “My school fits!”? No student feels left out; no student is left behind. Every student matters and is deeply cared for — loved, affirmed, appreciated.

Students notice and feel if their teacher really cares for them. They also



Forgive Before Sunset

A teacher earns the forgiveness of a rambunctious student. Page 2



Objects and Illustrations

Tips on using concrete objects to enhance learning. Page 5



The Teacher's Dream

A glimpse into the impact of a teacher. Page 9

It's That Time of Year 4

Cold or Hot?

Outdoor Classroom 6

Pedagogical Meanderings

11

Ask Another

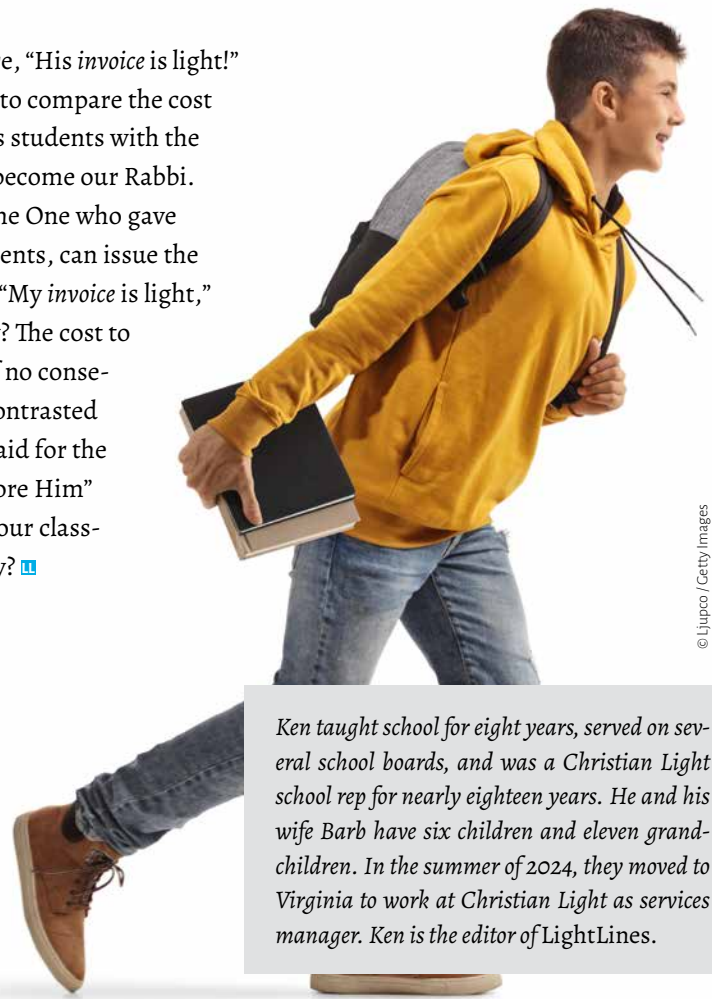
12

notice and feel if the teacher is more concerned with the motions and methods of teaching and doesn't really care about the students. May it be said of us teachers as we learn from Rabbi Jesus and genuinely care for students, "Her/his school FITS!"

Further, "My burden is light." Jesus' continuing invitation here likely was understood by His potential students as "My *invoice* is light." Not flippantly, Jesus was declaring that the cost of attending His school is way beyond worth it. "My *invoice* is light." We agree with Jesus when He says to other audiences that following Him was, and is, costly. However, the inner lightness, the joy of "graduation," and the inexpressible sense of wholeness when we discover that Jesus' school "fits," overwhelms any sense of costliness. The "graduates" from Jesus' school

unanimously declare, "His *invoice* is light!"

Let's not neglect to compare the cost of the invoice to His students with the price Jesus paid to become our Rabbi. Who else, besides the One who gave His life for His students, can issue the remarkable words, "My *invoice* is light," with such authority? The cost to Jesus' students is of no consequence when it is contrasted with the price He paid for the "joy that was set before Him" (Hebrews 12:2). Is your classroom part of His joy? [📖](#)



© Ujupco / Getty Images

Ken taught school for eight years, served on several school boards, and was a Christian Light school rep for nearly eighteen years. He and his wife Barb have six children and eleven grandchildren. In the summer of 2024, they moved to Virginia to work at Christian Light as services manager. Ken is the editor of LightLines.

Forgive Before Sundown | Lucy Martin

Peter is my tallest eighth grader. Peter is not only tall, but also burly. Furthermore, two of his shoes end to end would easily match three of mine. Should that threaten me?

One day at lunch Peter held up a strip of meat, clamped it in his teeth, yanked off a bite, and called, "Sister Lucy, know what this is?"

"Jerky?" I asked.

Peter nodded. "Sgood," he declared with a toss of his black hair. "George makes it. We do his butcherin' n he makes us jerky. Puts lots of pepper in it. Some of it's so hot. Has *big* hunks of red pepper in it. Tell you, about takes the skin off your tongue."

After lunch Peter strode to my desk, dangling a piece of "good" jerky. "Here, this is what it tastes like."

I thanked him profusely, turned my head on the side, and chawed off a piece. Delighted with my exaggeration, he asked, "Whatsa matter? Zit a little chewy?"

"Just a little, but it's scrumptious."

Yes, Peter is homespun and pioneer-ish and brimming with Peter, but how vital to our class!

Late one afternoon as the students gathered their lunches and caps for the homeward route, Peter sauntered up to me. He sighted along his nose under a lock of black hair. It was Peter's "gathering courage" stance. With a quick breath he dived in.

"Is it homeroom worship this Friday?" he asked.

"Yes," I said. "What would you like?"

"Well, could I lead the songs this time? For some reason the singing just doesn't seem to go as well when you lead." The breath he had drawn in shook out of his chest.

Thud! No student had ever told me *that* before. No, I'm not a man. I have a woman's voice, but I can safely navigate the accidents of "Sunset and Evening Star."

"Wait a minute," I responded. "Just step outside the door."

Peter turned obediently on his heel, sensing my displeasure. I finished writing the new science assignment on the board and followed him into the hall.

Pain had narrowed his bold eyes. Were they moist?

“You need to learn your place, Peter,” I explained.

His quick shrug said, “If you don’t want me to, I don’t have to. It’s okay.”

“I understand why you’re interested in leading,” I continued, “and I’ll admit singing goes best with the strong voice of a man, but we’re making out just fine.” I smiled and indicated that he could go.

Peter gestured in resignation and mumbled, “I just thought . . .” Then seeming to forget what he had thought, he hurried off for the boys’ coatroom, hastened by the throaty rumble of diesel buses preparing to leave.

I ached. I had wanted him to know I understood that he hadn’t meant to disrespect his teacher. But at the same time, I felt he needed help in showing proper respect.

The bell’s three dismissal taps rang, and I took my place by the door to say goodbye to each student by name. Peter shuffled in near the end of the line, his head tilted slightly back and his eyes pulled up under the safety of his eyebrows.

“Goodbye, Peter,” I called cheerfully.

The goodbye returned as a faded, embarrassed echo.

“I think he regretted his rashness,” I told my fellow teachers as we stood alone in the exhaust of departed diesels.

Brother Kenneth chuckled. “Oh, he doesn’t think singing goes poorly when you lead. He just wants a chance to lead. He was at it last year.”

The afternoon stillness enclosed my tumbling thoughts. *Did I handle the situation right? What had motivated me? Insult? Shock? Or concern for Peter’s recognition of authority? Did I respond in defense? Why hadn’t I just laughed and said, “Oh, there’s plenty of time for you to lead when you’re a little older”?*

“No,” my sister replied that evening as I recounted the event to her. “You weren’t wrong. He was disrespectful to you, and you needed to let him know it.”

I found rest in her assurance and returned the next day determined to prove to Peter that I had forgiven him. No embarrassment could stop Peter from answering in class, but it took several hours to lift his eyebrows and completely open his slit-ted eyes.

The bell rang in another day. Peter passed me on his way to his desk. “Does my hair look okay?” he asked. “Didn’t get it combed ‘smorning.”

“Oh, yes,” I assured him. “It looks fine.” My heart sang. Peter had accepted my forgiveness.

Friday evening closed the week. I sat at my desk that night, plying my red pen when the phone rang.

“This is Abigail Rupert,” said a voice after an introductory sigh. “I just wanted to tell you that Peter broke his leg this evening. Skid loader accident. Fell off and broke his leg just above the knee.”

As I left the phone, I pictured our class, sans Peter for several days. *Hurry up and get well*, I thought.

Saturday morning Peter called. “We’ll miss you,” I assured him, after he had described his hip-to-ankle cast.

Pause of silence. “I’ll miss you all too,” he replied, husky-voiced. “The doctor said maybe I can come back next Friday.”

I left the phone, savoring the delight of sharing forgiveness. *Must this be the way the heavenly Father feels*, I wondered, *when His lambs have erred?* He retrieves them, chastises them, and forgives them. And then when they accept His forgiveness, what a delight that must be to Him!

Sometimes, they say, the mended fracture is stronger than it was before. ■

This year is Lucy’s 36th term of teaching eighth graders at Paradise Mennonite School in Hagerstown, Maryland. In addition to eighth-grade subjects, she enjoys teaching high school home economics and art classes. This article is a reprint of one published in LightLines, October 2000.

In which Teacher Elizabeth, an experienced teacher, writes letters to Teacher Julia, who is not so experienced . . .

It's That Time of Year

February 9

Dear Julia,

It's that time of year. The second graders are halfway through their second reading books, and their handwriting is deteriorating. I don't expect it to be perfect. I don't write perfectly. But this has gone too far. I can't accept it.

One term especially stands out in my memory. Emmanuel's penmanship was awful. So, I laid down the law. "You must write neater," I warned.

The reminder helped for one day. The next, it was as bad as ever. I erased the whole lesson. "Please rewrite this." I meant business, and Emmanuel would find it out. His second try was, um, a shade better, but not good enough. I erased it again.

My neatness campaign lasted a week. Sometimes Emmanuel's lessons passed inspection. Often, they didn't. I erased and scrutinized and erased and scrutinized, my frustration mounting. Could he not slow down? He had spare time. What could I do to make him be neat?

One evening I was fed up. "Look at this book!" I marched over to Leanna and held it up. "Isn't it terrible?"

"Whose book is it?" she wondered.

"Emmanuel's."

"For a second grader, that's not too bad."

She may as well have pulled the floor from under my feet. I took the book back to my desk and stared at it silently. I was defeated.

Even if second opinions aren't confirming, they are instructive. Maybe I did need to take a fresh look. I closed my eyes, held the book at arm's length, and then opened them. I pretended I had never seen it before. She had a point. It could be worse.

Exactly what was wrong with it? Which mistake did he consistently make? I drew it very close again and reassessed. Points

to his credit: he did not write too big, he stayed on the line, his tails hung at a proper length. Ah, I see. He did not use his eraser. He did not close his circles. His letters were irregular heights.

I told him—what he did right, and what he did wrong. "How can this letter be an *i* and an *e*?"

"It can't."

"Right. Erase the *i* before you make the *e*. Also, notice your *a*'s and *g*'s are open at the top? What if your head were open at the top? It would rain on your brains! You don't want that to happen."


After those problems improved, I addressed his letter height. "Which letters should be short and which ones tall? This *s* is capitalized. See that it's taller than the *t*? Is your name *Stone*?"

"No!"

"Okay, then make the *s* half as tall; make the *t* a little taller too."

Now that I clearly knew how neat I wanted him to be, I circled any offending letter with a highlighter and laid his workbook open on my desk. He must correct it before he could take it back to his seat and begin the new assignment.

It's that time of year—time that teachers step back and take a look at the term with fresh eyes. It's not so bad, but what exactly should improve?

Sincerely,
Teacher Elizabeth 

Elizabeth Riall is a member of the Old Order Amish church in Humansville, Missouri. After homeschooling her siblings for two terms, and teaching in Ontario one winter, she has taught in the local one-room school since 2004.



Objects and Illustrations

Carolyn Martin

Once, long ago and in a faraway place a group of men stood, continuing an argument that had consumed their thoughts. “Which would be counted the greatest in the kingdom of God?” These men approached the Great Teacher, for they were His followers, with their question.

The Great Teacher looked at His followers and then He looked at a group of children playing nearby. Calling one of the little children over, He picked him up and said, “Unless you become like this little child, none of you shall be part of the kingdom of Heaven.”

A good teacher knows the value of objects and illustrations in teaching. As the saying goes, “A picture is worth a thousand words.” An object, picture, or illustration provides a hook for the learner to latch on to. It provides a point of recall. It provides sensory detail to help one remember and understand. Objects and illustrations communicate where words may not.

In math

Use of manipulatives in math is vital in teaching young students math concepts. Use blocks or crayons or even fingers to learn to count, add, and subtract. Count real money and tell time on real clocks.

Drawing out story problems, especially in some higher levels, is also helpful.

Draw out Farmer Jones’ barn floor plan to see how much space he has for storage. Illustrate the route Bobby took as he went from point A to point E to see how far he traveled. Quick sketches can make what’s foggy clearer.

Math usually deals with concrete details. Make use of concrete items to help students learn.

In science

Science, when possible, is best taught through experience. Science experiments and demonstrations not only liven up a class but are valuable teaching and learning tools. Don’t skimp the hands on/concrete objects part of science. Observe the process of metamorphosis from egg to adult. Dissect a seed and a flower to find the various parts. Count the annual rings of a slice of tree trunk. Experiment with gravity and jet propulsion. Watch blood pump through a goldfish tail under a microscope. Test your own blood type. Handle samples of rocks and ores.

Illustrations and pictures are also helpful to understand science. Pictures from the Hubble or James Webb telescopes bring us an experience that we could never handle or observe on our own. Charts labeling the parts of a cell or

details of various biomes help students remember the information.

In history

History books as well as science books are filled with pictures and illustrations that complement the text. Make good use of them. Discuss the content. Read the captions. Use them as teaching tools. Maps are often underused objects. Put them to use and give students a sense of place. I remember my upper-grade teacher bringing a three-dimensional map of our county to school. We enjoyed seeing the big picture of the valleys, hills, lakes, mountains, and roads where we lived.

Artifacts about historical happenings lend interest to the lessons you are teaching. Arrowheads found along the local river bottoms and Civil War cannon balls found in the walls of an old house that had been used as a hospital during the war help students realize that “real history” happened right where they live.

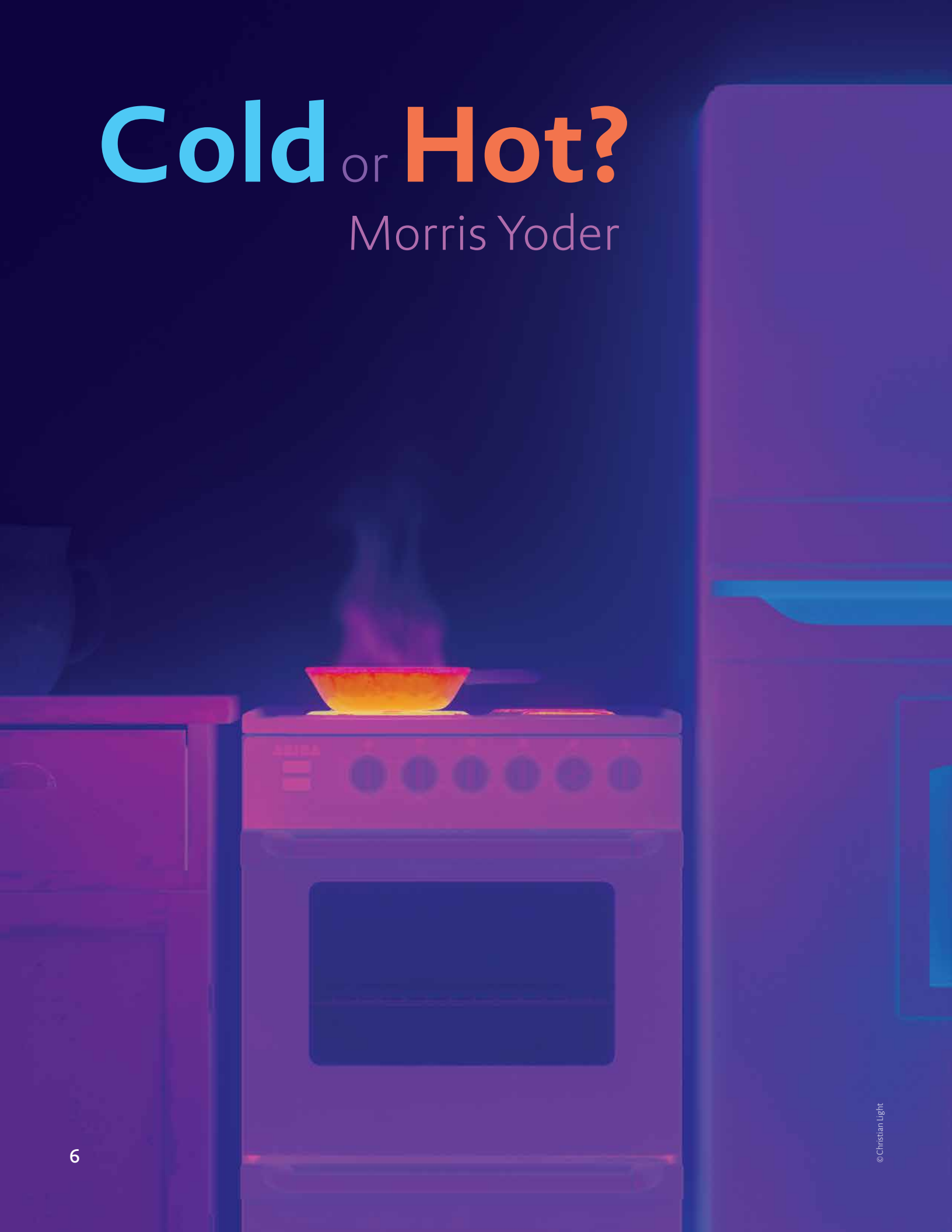
Geography becomes more relevant when ethnic foods are shared, currency is examined, and real photographs are discussed.

In vocabulary, reading, and literature

Use concrete objects to teach vocabulary words, or illustrations of objects if the actual object is not available. Vocabulary

Cold or Hot?

Morris Yoder



When you pick up a cube of ice, does the cold seep into your hand? Interestingly, the answer is “no.” What’s happening is the heat from your hand is rapidly escaping into the cool ice, causing your hand to feel a cold sensation. We tend to think of coldness as something of substance that can spread into other objects, but that is a misconception. Coldness is simply a lack of heat, just as darkness is only a lack of light. All objects, whether we call them cold or hot, merely have varying degrees of heat. Even an ice cube has lots of heat in it. We perceive it as cold only because it is cooler than our skin. If we could remove all heat from the ice cube, it would settle to -459.67°F (absolute zero). This means our ice cube is actually basking in hundreds of degrees of heat above absolute zero, so it’s not really cold after all!

Energy Exchange

Everything around us is made up of spinning particles called atoms. Particles in liquids and gases, like water and air, zip around and bump into their neighbors. Particles in solids like iron basically vibrate in place, bumping against other particles next to them. As the particles within an object move or vibrate faster, the object feels hotter. Microwave ovens heat food quickly by causing water molecules inside the food to rapidly spin. Conventional ovens heat the outsides of food, which is slowly conducted into the center.

Back to the ice cube. When the fast vibrations of the particles in your warm hand bang into the slower moving, cooler particles of the ice, it causes the kinetic (moving) energy to be transferred into the ice and those particles start vibrating faster while the ones in your hand vibrate slower. Since the ice is stealing heat energy from your hand, your hand begins to feel cold and the ice melts into water. This energy exchange will continue until both the water and your hand reach the same temperature.

Consider the Heavens

Stars show a shift in color according to their temperature. The stars with the least amount of heat are called red dwarfs; they appear red and are

What Would Happen if You Were Exposed to Space? (without a space suit)

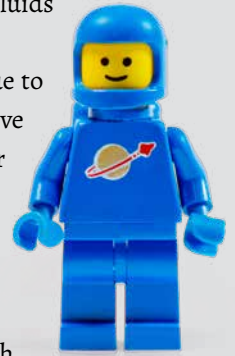
You might surmise that with temperatures so extreme a person left to drift alone in space would experience a super-quick freeze.

Robert Lea, in an article published on *space.com*, suggests this person would die from other problems. *Remember that cold is a transfer of heat.* There are three ways for heat to transfer: conduction, which occurs through touch; convection, which happens when fluids transfer heat; and radiation.

Conduction and convection can’t happen in space due to the lack of matter, and heat transfers slowly by radiative processes alone. In other words, heat doesn’t transfer quickly in space.

Therefore, a person left to drift in the frigidness of empty space, losing heat via radiative processes alone, would die of decompression due to the lack of atmosphere much more rapidly than he would freeze to death.

— *space.com*, July 6, 2022



about $5,000^{\circ}\text{F}$ on the surface. Betelgeuse, the bright star in the constellation Orion’s left shoulder, is about $6,900^{\circ}\text{F}$ and appears orange because of this extra heat. The Sun is even hotter at about $10,000^{\circ}\text{F}$, which gives it a yellow-white color.

The Sun transmits its heat energy in the form of infrared radiation 93,000,000 miles across space to the Earth in about eight minutes. In that time, the radiation crosses the frigid emptiness of space where the temperature is hovering only a few degrees above absolute zero. That the Sun doesn’t heat space around it seems to be a violation of heat’s tendency to transfer into cooler areas. However, there is practically nothing in space to absorb the Sun’s energy. So, this energy is not wasted, but conserved, as it passes freely through space until it reaches the Earth. When the Sun’s rays strike the Earth and its atmosphere, they instantly begin exciting billions of particles into faster spins, vibrations, and darting motions, thereby keeping this planet at a balmy average temperature of over 500°F above absolute zero! It all works according to the grand plan that’s laid out by our great Creator. [u](#)

Morris, his wife Beth, and their six children live in Montezuma, Georgia. He has taken a keen and well-studied interest in the heavens since he was a little boy coping with the death of his father. He is the author of The Celestial Message, published by CAM Books and available from Christian Light. You can learn more at createdheavens.com.

is best learned through experience and context when possible.

Objects can also be used to invite interest in a reading story. A new shiny dime and an old dull one spark participation with the story “Whose Dime Was Lost?” in first grade reading. Using either an object or an illustration is a good way to familiarize students with things they may not have experienced. A story about storks will not mean much if students don’t know what a stork is. A Dutch windmill is different than the farm windmill or wind turbine that our students are commonly familiar with.

In memory work

Create a quick sketch flowchart of memory passages. For younger students, Bible memory can be filled with vocabulary and ideas that are beyond their comprehension. Even the Lord’s Prayer can be a jangle of syllables, sounds, and “jelly bread.” A series of quick sketches done in sequence can aid their understanding and memory.

Photographs, quick sketches, illustrations, and concrete objects help hold the attention of students. They clarify thought by giving a student more sensory input than just text. Objects and

illustrations are tools that a good teacher uses to his advantage. ■

— First published on *thedockforlearning.org*. Reprinted with permission.

Carolyn calls the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia home. She’s taught first grade at Hickory Hollow Christian School in Dayton, Virginia for over thirty years. Carolyn enjoys reading books, taking photos, and exploring history. If time travel were possible, she’d go back to twelfth-century England and the high middle ages, but only for a brief visit, and with the ability to take along a modern camera.



© aniakus / Getty Images

Scholarly Snickers

Can’t argue with that

Teacher: How old is your father?

Tina: Six, same as me.

Teacher: How is this possible?

Tina: He became a father when I was born.

Ouch!

Teacher: Harold, what do you call a person who keeps on talking when people are no longer interested?

Harold: A teacher.

Auditory Learner

Teacher: Donald, what is the chemical formula for water?

Donald: H I J K L M N O.

Teacher: What are you talking about?

Donald: Yesterday you said it’s H to O.

Map Skills

Teacher: Maria, go to the map and find North America.

Maria: Here it is.

Teacher: Correct. Now, class, who discovered America?

Class: Maria.

This poem, written 150 years ago, projects the influence of a teacher into the future. We hope it can be an encouragement to a “weary teacher.”

The Teacher’s Dream

W. H. Venable

The weary teacher sat alone
While twilight gathered on;
And not a sound was heard around,
The boys and girls were gone.

The weary teacher sat alone,
Unnerved and pale was he;
Bowed ’neath a yoke of care, he spoke
In sad soliloquy.

“Another round, another round
Of labor thrown away, –
Another chain of toil and pain
Dragged through a tedious day.

“Of no avail is constant zeal,
Love’s sacrifice is loss,
The hopes of morn so golden, turn,
Each evening, into dross.

“I squander on a barren field
My strength, my life, my all;
The seeds I sow will never grow,
They perish where they fall.”

He sighed, and low upon his hands
His aching brow he pressed;
And o’er his frame erelong there came
A soothing sense of rest.

And then he lifted up his face,
But started back aghast, —
The room by strange and sudden change
Assumed proportions vast.

It seemed a Senate hall, and one
Addressed a listening throng;
Each burning word all bosoms stirred,
Applause rose loud and long.

The 'wildered teacher thought he knew
The speaker's voice and look,
"And for his name," said he, "the same
Is in my record book."

The stately Senate hall dissolved,
A church rose in its place,
Wherein there stood a man of God,
Dispensing words of grace.

And though he spoke in solemn tone,
And though his hair was gray,
The teacher's thought was strangely wrought —
"I whipped that boy today."

The church, a phantasm, vanished soon;
What saw the teacher then?
In classic gloom of alcoved room
An author plied his pen.

"My idlest lad!" the teacher said,
Filled with anew surprise —
"Shall I behold his name enrolled
Among the great and wise?"


The vision of a cottage home
The teacher now descried;
A mother's face illumed the place
Her influence sanctified.

"A miracle! a miracle!
This matron, well I know,
Was but a wild and careless child,
Not half an hour ago.

"And when she to her children speaks
Of duty's golden rule,
Her lips repeat, in accents sweet,
My words to her at school."

The scene was changed again, and lo,
The schoolhouse rude and old,
Upon the wall did darkness fall,
The evening air was cold.

"A dream!" the sleeper, waking, said,
Then paced along the floor,
And, whistling slow and soft and low,
He locked the schoolhouse door.

And, walking home, his heart was full
Of peace and trust and love and praise;
And singing slow and soft and low,
He murmured, "After many days." 

William Henry Venable was born in Warren County, Ohio, on April 29, 1836. He began to teach at seventeen years of age, and during his vacations he attended teachers' institutes. He had an illustrious career in education and literary work and wrote at least twenty-two books. This poem was published in 1875.

*"I was and am greatly pleased with 'The Teacher's Dream.' The teachers should thank the author for making their task lighter and the pupils should thank him for lifting the curtain of a bright possible future for them."
— Oliver Wendell Holmes*

Pedagogical Meanderings

We've Been Asked . . .

. . . about daily lesson grades when using Christian Light's Math textbooks. We acknowledge that what we say in the *Grading* section in the front of the Math *textbook* Teacher's Guides conflicts with the standard way of scoring Christian Light materials, as shown in the Math *LightUnit* Teacher's Guides. We apologize for the confusion.

Here are a few things to consider. First, Christian Light believes that requiring students to correct mistakes greatly reduces or eliminates the need for daily grades. This is why only quiz and test scores are included in the final grade. Secondly, the design of Christian Light curriculum does not provide structure for daily lesson grades. For example, we do not assign points to exercises to help calculate a grade. However, schools are free to develop their own grading system and may choose whether or not to include daily grades.

Honesty Gap—“Apples to Apple Juice”

Wisconsin, along with a few other states, has been called out for lowering its bar for student proficiency and recalibrating and renaming performance levels. This was in conjunction with the unveiling of new standards last year. Below basic is not “failing” but “developing” and basic, “approaching.” The new markers made it look like the number of students scoring at the lowest levels in the Green Bay, Wisconsin, school district had dropped over 12 percent from 2023 to 2024. However, David Johns, an associate superintendent, told the school board that the reality is complicated. “Comparing 2023 to 2024 is challenging,” he said. “It’s not exactly apples to oranges, but it’s like apples to apple juice.” As states deal with the realities of post-pandemic norms, changes like Wisconsin (and other states) implemented have renewed criticism of a testing “honesty gap” and sparked calls to level with parents about student performance.

ON THE OTHER HAND . . .

A few states have taken significant measures to level with parents and the public and bring more transparency and honesty to their testing systems. In the wake of COVID-19, researchers

found that Virginia students declined academically more than those in almost any other state. For some time the state purposefully obscured the data and hid the results of lower performing student groups. But then, in late August, Virginia adopted a tougher but more honest school accountability system. The new measures exposed the dishonesty and provided more clear-picture accountability. The state is to be commended for its efforts to be humbler and more honest.

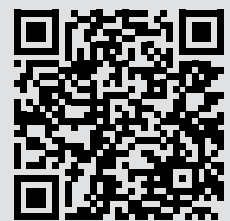
—*the74million.org*

LET'S CONSIDER . . .

One reason we choose to publish accounts like this is to point out that many state education systems are clearly guilty of messing with academic norms and standards. Another reason is to spur us to consider: Who sets our parochial and private schools' norms and academic standards, perhaps by osmosis? What will happen if we continue to “norm” to state systems?

Opportunities Abound

At Christian Light we have a high regard for the teaching profession. So, if you're teaching and are asked to continue, please consider it! However, if you, or someone you know, is not teaching and would be interested in joining our team at Christian Light to serve families, schools, and churches around the world, we'd be happy to talk with you. Christian Light currently has openings in IT, order department, education support, production, and more. For more information scan the QR code or contact Ken Miller at ken.miller@christianlight.org or 540-236-3317.



Little Things Matter

There are approximately 20 quadrillion ants on our planet. (That's 20 thousand million millions, or in numerical form, twenty with 15 zeroes.) Together, their mass exceeds that of all the world's wild birds and mammals combined. [📄](#)

—*theconversation.com*



“Ask Another” is a question-answer space for teachers. Teachers are invited to pose questions on school-related subjects, offer responses to questions, or reply to responses. (LightLines will occasionally assign questions to experienced teachers for their qualified response.) Send questions or responses by email to lightlines@christianlight.org or by mail to LightLines Editor, P.O. Box 1212, Harrisonburg, VA 22803. (Try to limit responses to fewer than 400 words.)

Ask Another

Question:

What should I do with a student who races through her work and then fails quizzes and tests? How do you deal with a hasty student who is motivated merely by speed? —questions from *LightLines*, 2024–2025 #1 issue

What should I do with a student who races through her work and then fails quizzes and tests?

If the student is not already required to do all corrections in daily work, I would highly recommend it. This makes the student face the consequences of careless work and keeps him/her busy for more class time. Doing corrections also encourages the student to figure out concepts rather than just “getting it done.”

How do you deal with a student who is motivated merely by speed?

I would suggest evaluating why speed is so important to the student. Are there spare time privileges or maybe rewards for completing work on time? Is the student competitive, always trying to finish his/her work before the other students?

Spare time privileges can be helpful; they can also magnify problems if you have a student who races. One way of working with this is to balance the privileges with a grade requirement. I have used a system where students got a special ticket every time they scored 100 percent on a quiz, self check, or test. They had to use one of those tickets to access the spare time privilege.

Rewards can be given as either prizes or praise. In working with a speedy student, give prizes for quality rather than quantity. Also be careful with compliments. “Finished already? Good for you!” would be a great compliment for a slow, careful student who finished early one day, but not for the speedy, careless student who finishes early every day. For that student, a compliment such as, “You only have five corrections in that lesson; well done!” would be more appropriate.

Speeding because of competition can be very difficult to work

with. I think it’s important to talk with the student(s) about what’s happening. Once they understand the negative impact of the competition, reminders will be much more effective. I have often handed out a quiz or a test with the words, “Remember, this is not a . . .” The students quickly learned how to finish the sentence: “. . . this is not a race!”

If a group of students is doing a quiz/test at the same time, there are several things you can do to discourage the competitive attitude. Be aware of the seating arrangement; if you have the option, seat competitive students so they can’t easily watch what the others are doing. At the beginning of the test time, explain to students that, when they finish, they should proofread the test, then wait quietly at their seats until you collect the papers.

These are just a few ideas for ways to promote excellence rather than haste!

—Suzann Unrau, Austin, MB, Canada

Next Question: I have understood that the Jewish way of teaching young boys was to have the students ask questions. When Mary and Joseph found Jesus in the temple, He was both “hearing them and asking them questions.” I would like ideas on how to teach my students to ask questions. How can you start them well in first grade? Also, how can adolescents be made comfortable with asking questions? —Teacher from OH

Please respond by March 2, 2025. We’ll print responses to questions (or new questions) in a future issue of *LightLines*. Please respond to lightlines@christianlight.org, fax to 540-433-8896, or mail them to LightLines, P.O. Box 1212, Harrisonburg, VA 22803.

LightLines is published four times each year by Christian Light, P.O. Box 1212, Harrisonburg, Virginia 22803-1212. (540) 434-0768. Ken Kauffman, editor.

Two copies of *LightLines* are sent free to schools who are active Christian Light curriculum customers. Other schools and individuals may request a free subscription. To request a subscription, or to change mailing addresses or quantities received, call (800) 776-0478 or email subscribe.lightlines@christianlight.org. *LightLines* is also available by email. Please indicate your preference when subscribing.

Copyright © 2024 Christian Light Publications Inc. For permission to reproduce any material in this publication, contact us at the above address. Comments and materials being submitted for publication can be mailed to LightLines editor, P.O. Box 1212, Harrisonburg, VA, 22803-1212, faxed to (540) 433-8896, or emailed to lightlines@christianlight.org.