

I. Philosophy of Language Arts

The teaching of language arts includes: reading, spelling, speech, English, handwriting and literature. These subject areas provide experiences in: phonetics, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing as integral parts of the reading process. Language arts instruction provides a multitude of experiences which deepens students' literacy and develops biblical truths.

II. Instructional Goal and Biblical Truths

It is God's desire that we communicate with one another and be understood. It is through God's spoken word that creation came into being. It is through God's written word we grow and become like him. Therefore let us delve into these truths that are evident through language.

1. The ability to communicate with one another and with God is part of His plan for our lives.¹

Moses said to the LORD, "O Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue." The LORD said to him, "Who gave man his mouth? Who makes him deaf or mute? Who gives him sight or makes him blind? Is it not I, the LORD? Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say." (Exodus 4:10-12)

The word of the LORD came to me, saying, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations." "Ah, Sovereign LORD," I said, "I do not know how to speak; I am only a child." But the LORD said to me, "Do not say, 'I am only a child.' You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you," declares the LORD. Then the LORD reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, "Now, I have put my words in your mouth. (Jeremiah 1:4-9)

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. (Colossians 4:2)

2. We must evaluate the truth of all other communication by the Bible, since it alone is absolute truth.²

For your love is ever before me, and I walk continually in your truth. (Psalm 26:3)

¹ Haycock, Dr. Ruth C. Encyclopedia of Bible Truths for School Subjects. 1993. Association of Christian Schools International. 137

² Haycock, Dr. Ruth C. Encyclopedia of Bible Truths for School Subjects. 1993. Association of Christian Schools International. 137

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

3. God is concerned that communication be clear and easily understood.³

They read from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people could understand what was being read. ... Then all the people went away to eat and drink, to send portions of food and to celebrate with great joy, because they now understood the words that had been made known to them. (Nehemiah 8:8,12)

For God is not a God of disorder but of peace. (1 Corinthians 14:33)

But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way. (1 Corinthians 14:40)

4. It is God's plan that people should be able to read well.⁴

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Take a scroll and write on it all the words I have spoken to you concerning Israel, Judah and all the other nations from the time I began speaking to you in the reign of Josiah till now....So Jeremiah took another scroll and gave it to the scribe Baruch son of Neriah, and as Jeremiah dictated, Baruch wrote on it all the words of the scroll that Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire. And many similar words were added to them. (Jeremiah 36:2, 32)

5. To be effective, reading must include understanding.⁵

Let me understand the teaching of your precepts; then I will meditate on your wonders. (Psalm 119:27)

They read from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people could understand what was being read... Then all the people went away to eat and drink, to send portions of food and to celebrate with great joy, because they now understood the words that had been made known to them. (Nehemiah 8: 8,12)

³ Haycock, Dr. Ruth C. Encyclopedia of Bible Truths for School Subjects. 1993. Association of Christian Schools International. 138

⁴ Haycock, Dr. Ruth C. Encyclopedia of Bible Truths for School Subjects. 1993. Association of Christian Schools International. 142

⁵ Haycock, Dr. Ruth C. Encyclopedia of Bible Truths for School Subjects. 1993. Association of Christian Schools International. 146

6. Effective writing demands careful research, documentation, and wise expression.⁶

Not only was the Teacher wise, but also he imparted knowledge to the people. He pondered and searched out and set in order many proverbs. The Teacher searched to find just the right words, and what he wrote was upright and true. The words of the wise are like goads, their collected sayings like firmly embedded nails—given by one Shepherd. Be warned, my son, of anything in addition to them. Of making many books there is no end, and much study wearies the body. (Ecclesiastes 12:9-12)

7. Man's writings reflect his inner thoughts and desires: therefore we study literature to understand people.⁷

The words of a man's mouth are deep waters, but the fountain of wisdom is a bubbling brook. (Proverbs 18:4)

But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these make a man 'unclean.' For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. (Matthew 15:18-19)

8. Our minds must be constantly filled with that which is pure and wholesome. We are responsible for those things with which we fill our minds.⁸

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked....But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. (Psalm 1:1-2)

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. (Philippians 4:8)

9. God will enable us to speak as we submit ourselves to him⁹

The Sovereign LORD has given me an instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary. He wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being taught. (Isaiah 50:4)

⁶ Haycock, Dr. Ruth C. Encyclopedia of Bible Truths for School Subjects. 1993. Association of Christian Schools International. 156

⁷ Haycock, Dr. Ruth C. Encyclopedia of Bible Truths for School Subjects. 1993. Association of Christian Schools International. 165

⁸ Haycock, Dr. Ruth C. Encyclopedia of Bible Truths for School Subjects. 1993. Association of Christian Schools International. 165

⁹ Haycock, Dr. Ruth C. Encyclopedia of Bible Truths for School Subjects. 1993. Association of Christian Schools International. 171

But the LORD said to me, "Do not say, 'I am only a child.' You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you," declares the LORD. Then the LORD reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, "Now, I have put my words in your mouth. (Jeremiah 1:7-9)

10. Our speech is an index of our inner attitudes and our spiritual journey.¹⁰

A wise man's heart guides his mouth, and his lips promote instruction. (Proverbs 16:23)

You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. (Matthew 12:34-35)

¹⁰ Haycock, Dr. Ruth C. Encyclopedia of Bible Truths for School Subjects. 1993. Association of Christian Schools International. 174