

Pastor: Apt to Teach



by Dr. Mark Blanke

Post-Seminary Applied Learning and Support (PALS) is a collaborative effort of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod’s Pastoral Education department and LCMS districts to help pastors and their wives in the transition from seminary to congregation. To learn more, visit lcms.org/pals.

Made possible by a grant from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans.

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Pastoral Education
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Contents

Introduction	4
Session 1: What is education?	5
Session 2: What is adult education?	7
Session 3: How can I present effective adult education?.....	9
Session 4: First steps to take in effective, adult education.....	11
Addendum: The four truths that (should) shape adult education in the church	13
Appendices.....	14

Introduction

Why a study on Adult Education?

1. Adult Education has an impact on
 - › Faith Development
 - › Congregational Health
 - › Assimilation
2. Pastors spend up to _____ of their time in education related matters.
3. There is room for growth in adult education.
 - › Only _____ – _____ percent of members participate in adult Bible class.
4. Pastors are expected to teach, but may not have a background in education.
 - › Less than _____ percent of pastors have any training in how to educate effectively.

What can I expect to gain from this course?

1. I will better understand the unique aspects of effective education.
2. I will appreciate the importance of effective education in helping my congregation fulfill its mission.
3. I will increase my capacity to evaluate and implement effective educational practices with adults.

Mark Blanke's operational perspectives shaping aspects of this course:

1. Teaching is not the same as preaching.
2. Content knowledge, while important, is not the only qualification for one to be a good teacher.
3. Learning can happen without a teacher, but if learning doesn't happen, you didn't teach ... talking isn't necessarily teaching.
4. While it is true that God can work miracles in the heart of believers through the study of His Word, it is wise for us to plan as if He will do His work in less miraculous ways through the processes that He has designed and set up in how people naturally learn.
5. The content of this course is designed to help participants become more effective at teaching people who are already a part of the body of believers. The differences between teaching Christian truths to believers versus unbelievers are subtle, but employ foundational differences that impact teaching methods, especially for adults.

Session One: What is education?

1. Why is teaching NOT the same as preaching?

Review James Michael Lee's "Teaching is ..." summary (See Appendix A).¹ Determine how the summary aligns with your perceptions of homiletics and how it differs. What parts of Lee's definition do you agree with and what parts don't align with your perception of "teaching"? Share with the other PALS participants.

2. What is the difference between learner-centric and teacher-centric education?

3. Describe the learning outcomes associated with education. What changes in the learner should occur during effective education?

Cognitive:

Affective:

Lifestyle (Conative):

Session One Homework:

1. As a group, see if you can develop outcomes associated with a lesson for adults on the Beatitudes (Matthew 5–7). Outcomes are always to be written from the perspective of the learner, not what you would do as a teacher. So, an incorrect outcome would be, "I will teach a lesson that balances Law and Gospel and appeals to the needs of the learners." An outcome that focuses first on the learner would be, "As a result of this lesson, the learner will be able to summarize what it means to be blessed by God."

Try to develop an outcome that is cognitive (knowledge), one that is affective (relates to feelings or attitudes) and one that is conative (relates to lifestyle behavior or capacity to do something)

a. Cognitive:

b. Affective:

c. Lifestyle (Conative):

d. Evaluation: What will you be able to observe to indicate that one or more of your outcomes have been met?

¹ James Michael Lee, *The Flow of Religious Instruction* (Birmingham, Religious Education Press, 1973).

Session Two: What is adult education?

1. Andragogy:

Pedagogy:

2. What are the characteristics of the adult learner? (Malcom Knowles)

a. Self-directed:

b. Prior experiences (basis for continued learning):

c. Adults learn when they want to and when what is to be learned relates to current life situations.

d. Application is key. Adults are concerned with the usefulness of the content.

e. Adults learn best when what is taught is on their level of development.

3. Needs vs. Wants:

Session Two Homework:

Review the findings from the 1995 study of active members of LCMS congregations, *Congregations at Crossroads*³ (See Appendix B).

The study found that only 16 percent of the respondents to the survey in 1995 were identified as having Indicator #9 — “Acts and Serves” (defined as “serving humanity, consistently and passionately through acts of love and compassion”).

Imagine that you are a pastor of a congregation where only 16 percent of your congregation showed the “Acts and Serves” faith indicator. You decide that the church’s educational efforts should prioritize enhancing that indicator.

³ Peter L. Benson, *Congregations at Crossroads: A National Study of Adults and Youth in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod* (Minneapolis: Search Institute: 1995).

Keeping Knowles' characteristics in mind, how would you go about modifying your educational offerings so that you could improve the presence of that indicator in the life of your members?

Using the *Congregations at Crossroads* data, discuss what you would prioritize in a six-week study of the Beatitudes that you believe would help enhance one or more of the nine "indicators."



Session Three: How can I present effective adult education?

1. Motivate adults to learn (See Appendix C).
According to Cyril Houle, adult learners fall into one of three categories:

- a. Learning Oriented (smallest group, but a JOY!):
- b. Social/Activity Oriented:
- c. Goal Oriented (largest group):

2. Remove barriers from education.

3. Assess needs of your congregation: Ascribed Needs vs. Prescribed Needs (See Appendix D).

Where do your adult learners want to be?
(ascribed need)

Where do you want them to be?
(prescribed need)

Session Three Homework:

1. What has motivated you to participate in this PALS experience? Was the motivation primarily extrinsic (district president, senior pastor, seminary, etc.) or intrinsic (personal goals to become a stronger pastor, felt need that you should be a lifelong learner, you just love learning, desire to connect with peers, etc.). Does whether the motivation was extrinsic or intrinsic change how you approach the learning experience? Share your analysis with your colleagues.

2. When was the last time you participated in a learning experience because you were self-motivated? This could have been something as simple as accessing an online tutorial for patching sheetrock, or taking scuba diving lessons. Which of Houle's "motivation categories" would you say describes your motivation to participate in that learning experience?

Session Four: First steps to take in effective, adult education

“Whoever is to teach others, especially out of the Holy Scriptures and rightly to understand this book, must first have learned to know the world.”
– Martin Luther⁵

Where to start?

1. “Move the needle.” Make it better.
 - › Where do you want members to be? (scope)
How are they going to get there? (sequence)
 - › How do you evaluate your adult education?
Talk to your members.
 - › Assess the needs of your congregation.
2. Skip the information “dump.” Learners in the information age do not seek a load of information.
3. Relevance is key. Encourage the learner to “go deeper.”
4. Move away from the “banking model” (teacher-centric focus) and toward a learner-centric style of teaching and use of questions.
5. Prescribe the needs of the adult learner while understanding his wants. Where are your learners — where do you want them to be?
6. Promote current educational offerings while highlighting the goals that the learner will achieve through attending.

Be deliberate in articulating to members that they have a role in carrying Christ’s Word to their homes and work places.

⁵ F.V.N. Painter, *Luther on Education* (Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society: 1889), 148

Session Four Homework:

1. After reading through the information on Bloom’s taxonomy⁶ (See Appendix G), develop questions for each of the taxonomies for a Bible study on the Beatitudes (See Appendix H).
2. Answer the question, “How do we expect a person who has attended our adult learning experiences for three years or more to be different (in what they know, feel or do) than another congregational member who doesn’t attend our adult learning experiences?”

If you have a description of a learner with a preferred condition, you will be better able to determine if a deficiency (relative to the preferred condition) exists and what remediation (classes, resources, etc.) would need to be introduced to eliminate the deficiency.

- › What should they know?
(Examples: how to differentiate Law and Gospel, how the Old Testament covenants point to Christ, the history of the Early Church, the history of the Reformation, key doctrinal differences between the Lutheran Church and Reformed churches, etc.)
- › What should they feel?
(Examples: a desire to evangelize non-believers, a sense of peace and confidence in the promise of salvation, empathy for the marginalized, a passion for the Gospel message, etc.)
- › What should they be able to do?
(Examples: easily navigate through the

⁶ B.S. Bloom; M.D. Engelhart; E.J. Furst.; W.H. Hill; D.R. Krathwohl, *Taxonomy of educational objectives: The classification of educational goals*. Handbook I: Cognitive domain. (New York: David McKay Company: 1956).

Addendum: The four truths that (should) shape adult education in the church

1. God’s plan for us is to be in study of His Word — no matter what our age. (Matt. 28:18–20; 2 Tim. 3:14–17; Deut. 6:4–9; Ps. 78:1–8; Acts 2:42; Eph. 4:11–16, etc.)

Therefore: 11–14 percent adult participation in the typical LCMS congregation is unacceptable.

2. The church is an “open system” — that is, it is influenced by factors outside of the church doors.

Therefore: One must adapt actions to better respond to the variables influencing how adults learn ... while still remaining true to the mission of the Church.

3. Adults have a different approach to learning than children. Knowles identified five unique characteristics:

- a. They are self-directed.
- b. They have a reservoir of experiences that they draw upon to help them learn.
- c. They learn best when they want to and when what they learn is related to their current life situations.

d. Application to life is crucial, adults are concerned with the usefulness of what they are about to learn.

e. Adults can only learn what is on their level of development.

Therefore: Adult education must consider an adult’s motivation, and learning must be aimed at relevance.

4. Cyril Houle found that adults are motivated from three possible orientations — and that most adults have one prime motivator:

- a. Learning orientation: they just like to learn.
- b. Activity orientation: they like being in a social setting — choice of learning is based upon the degree of human interaction available.
- c. Goal orientation: they use education to achieve clear-cut objectives.

Houle and subsequent researchers feel that the goal-oriented learner is the largest single population, comprising 40–60 percent of adult learners.

Therefore: Adult learning experiences should clearly state the overall goals for the learning experience ... those with learning- and activity-orientations will be attracted regardless, but goal-oriented learners need clarity regarding the desired outcome from the class.

Blanke (2007)

Appendix A: Teaching Is ...

TEACHING IS ...¹

AN ORCHESTRATED (as in orchestra) in which the four major independent (causative) variables: the learner, the teacher, the environment, the instructional materials are brought together by the teacher into a balanced harmony of experiences, not unlike a symphony. The richness of each variable is given its opportunity to be featured or highlighted, yet it is also carefully blended with all the others toward a rich learning experience.

PROCESS (as in onward movement, an ongoing flow, a dynamic activity) Teaching is a continuous multifaceted activity through which the learner is enabled.

WHEREBY ONE PERSON (the teacher) sometimes directly in a one-to-one encounter with the learner or indirectly in a prepared environment (such as with other learners, materials, or resources), enacts the teaching.

DELIBERATELY (intentionally) Teachers are fully aware of what they are doing in the teaching/learning situation. This requires anticipating what will happen and planning for it as a lesson is structured. It's the opposite of a "happening." Specified learning outcomes are predictive based upon one's pedagogy.

PURPOSIVELY (goal-directed) Teachers target their own behaviors so that they contribute to the learner's attainment of a specified outcome.

EFFICACIOUSLY (as in effective) Teachers choose a procedure or a method that predictably will help the learner attain that specified learning outcome.

STRUCTURES Teachers consciously arrange the variables and conditions that are predictably the most productive for the learner. To teach is to create situations in which students learn what is intended for them to learn.

THE LEARNING SITUATION (settings, activities, experiences) A learning situation is one which by its very character and composition sets up and strengthens all the conditions for learning.

IN SUCH A MANNER The way that the elements and conditions of a learning situation are put together should have the potential to bring to pass the learning outcome.

THAT SPECIFIED Teaching is directed toward producing readily identifiable learning outcomes. These outcomes may be highly generalized such as, product learning, process learning, cognitive learning, affective learning, or they may be more specific bits of behavior that will actually be performed by the learner. Performance outcomes require three conditions: the desired outcome is identified and described, the principal conditions under which the outcome is to occur are indicated, the criterion of acceptable performance is stated.

DESIRED (What is it that the teacher wants to happen to _____?) This is related to a religious concept or a theological doctrine for which the learner is READY and the instructional materials are appropriate. The "flow" of the instructional process is geared to the kind of learning outcome desired.

LEARNING OUTCOMES This is the target of teaching. There is no teaching apart from learning outcomes.

ARE THEREBY Implies that it is the teaching act that brings the learning outcomes to pass.

ACQUIRED The teacher's plans and strategies are the direct cause of what happens to and in the learner. Teaching is the degree and extent to which the outcomes are in fact learned.

BY ANOTHER PERSON Teaching is a two-party contractual relationship in which each party expects something of the other to be delivered over a specified period of time. The learner is *central* in the teaching act as the take-off point, as the constant focus of the instructional activity, as the one in whom the learning outcome is acquired. The student, not the teacher, is the primary agent in effecting the desired outcomes. The student is the integral partner and active co-participant in the teaching/learning act.

¹ This is a summary of the fifteen elements to be found in James Michael Lee's definition of teaching as found in *The Flow of Religious Instruction*, 1975.

Appendix B: Congregations at Crossroads

This research from *Congregations at Crossroads* was completed in 1995.¹ The respondents were active members (regular worship attendees) of LCMS congregations.

Nine Indicators of Faith Maturity (The number following each indicates the percentage of adult respondents who had that indicator):

1. Trusts and Believes (89)
2. Experiences the Fruits of Faith (40)
3. Integrates Faith and Life (71)
4. Celebrates the Good News (68)
5. Seeks Spiritual Growth (45)
6. Nurtures Faith in Community (52)
7. Holds Life-Affirming Values (55)
8. Advocates Social Change (47)
9. Acts and Serves (16)

The “horizontal dimension” indicates a consistent devotion to serving others in the world. The “vertical dimension” indicates a life-transforming relationship with a loving God. When brought together, these two dimensions create four experiences of faith (or “faith types”). Using statistical analysis, each person’s self-description fits one of these four types:

FAITH TYPE	Horizontal	Vertical
Undeveloped Faith	Low	Low
Horizontal Faith	High	Low
Vertical Faith	Low	High
Integrated Faith	High	High

The active adult members of the LCMS congregations that were studied exhibited the following faith types:

- › Undeveloped Faith 29%
- › Vertical Faith 17%
- › Horizontal Faith 12%
- › Integrated Faith 43%

¹ Benson, *Congregations at Crossroads*.

Appendix C: Motivation and Barriers

Motivation ...

... to participate — Adults are self-directed learners who choose to participate in those learning opportunities that have immediate application to their life situations. Cyril Houle identified adult learners as being motivated to participate from one or more of three orientations:

1. goal-oriented learners are those who seek to achieve a specific outcome from their learning experiences;
2. learning-oriented learners are motivated by the simple desire to gain knowledge for the sake of learning;
3. activity-oriented learners are motivated by a desire to interact with others, for the social interaction that comes with the learning experience.

Participation can be enhanced by involving the adult learners in the development of the learning objectives and learning methods.

... to learn — Motivation to learn is closely related to the motivation to participate, but varies slightly based upon a more in-depth understanding of the nature of the learner.

Raymond Wlodkowski, Ph.D., is a psychologist and global consultant in adult and professional learning. He identified six motivators that were necessary for adult learners to have at some level:

4. Attitude (a satisfying experience in prior learning situations);
5. Needs (experience must focus on the perceived needs);
6. Stimulation (must feel challenged);

7. Affect (a sense that one is progressing);
8. Competence (needs must be satisfied); and
9. Reinforcement (positive feedback regarding personal accomplishments).

Adult learners have a rich reservoir of prior experiences that should be used as a basis for future learning and to help enhance the learning experience for others.

Barriers ...

... to participation — Participation barriers are those things that keep the adult from attending the learning event. These barriers may be external to the learner, such as inadequate transportation or not having the financial resources to participate; or they may be internal such as personal fears associated with the learning experience, dislike of the facilitator or negative experiences in prior learning events.

... to learning — Learners can participate in a learning experience but still fail to gain any new insights. As with the barriers to participation, some of these learning barriers are intrinsic and some are extrinsic. Adults can only learn at their level of development, therefore a learning experience that doesn't effectively target the learner's developmental level can be a barrier to learning. Ineffective teaching strategies can also be a barrier to learning. Room conditions, such as uncomfortable chairs, poor lighting, inadequate sound system, room temperature and other environmental concerns can provide barriers to learning. Existing biases of the learner can stall the learning of new concepts.

Appendix D: Needs Assessment for Adult Education

Purpose: To provide data for making informed and responsive programming decisions.

Definition of “needs”: “Gaps between what is and what should be, and the placing of those gaps in priority order. Needs can deal with desires, interests or deficiencies. They can be specified for an individual or can be aggregated for groups, organizations or the society.”

(adapted from Kaufman/Pennington)

Operating assumptions:

- 1.** Felt need or wants alone are inadequate for defining educational objectives.
- 2.** Prescriptive needs alone are also inadequate.
- 3.** The term need always implies, more or less directly, some standard or valued state of affairs or certain social norms against which need is measured.

4. Need might best be defined from the educator’s perspective, that is to say, as prescription. The term want might best replace need as motive. Particularly in adult education, the educator must take full account of the motivational force of the wants of the learners.

5. As individual and organizational needs are defined, educators and institutions must continually review operational paradigms and philosophical “lenses.”

(adapted from Monette)

Appendix E: Effectiveness in Christian Education for Adults: The Ideal¹

Research findings based on both the survey and site visit methods show that the way Christian education is done matters as much, if not more than, any other area of congregational life. The following are some characteristics of Christian education programming for adults, each of which is positively associated with growth in mature faith for those who participate in Christian education activities.

Teachers:

- › Are high in mature faith
- › Know educational theory and methods for adults

Pastor:

- › Has a high commitment to educational programs for adults
- › Devotes significant hours to adult Christian education programs
- › Knows educational theory and practice of Christian education for adults

Educational Process:

- › Emphasizes building understanding of faith applied to political and social issues and understanding of oppression and injustice
- › Emphasizes life experiences as occasion for spiritual insight
- › Creates a sense of community in which people help each other develop faith and values
- › Emphasizes the natural unfolding of faith and recognizes each person's faith journey as unique
- › Strongly encourages independent thinking and questioning

Educational Content:

- › Emphasizes biblical knowledge and understanding
- › Emphasizes multicultural awareness
- › Emphasizes global awareness and understanding
- › Emphasizes moral decision making

Peer Involvement:

- › Has a high percentage of adults active in Christian education

Goals:

- › Has clear mission statement for adult education
- › Has clear learning objectives

¹ Benson & Eklin, *Effective Christian Education*.

Appendix F: Assessing a Congregational Commitment to Adult Education

Systemic

The use of adult education (A.E.) is an integral part of the congregation's perception of how it will achieve its goals.

- A paid staff person with specific preparation in adult education has a significant portion of his/her responsibilities focused on A.E.
- Adequate financial resources are consistently designated towards the A.E. program (at \$10 per communicant member per year, not including salaries.)
- Adequate facilities are designated for A.E. opportunities and effort has been made to make the facilities adult-friendly.
- Clear goals have been articulated for the program and are shared regularly with the adult attendees.
- Training exists for all adult educators regarding the unique aspects of adult learners.
- A.E. programming is regularly evaluated relative to the overall goals.
- Participation exceeds 30 percent of members in a given week.
- A "scope and sequence" has been designed for members.
- Multiple formats are used regularly.
- Needs assessments are completed on a regular basis.

Significant

Adult education is promoted as a key congregational priority.

- A key leader has been designated as the point person for adult educational programming.
- There is significant public support from the senior pastor.
- Financial resources are regularly available for A.E. ministries.
- The congregation has a strong history of active A.E. programs.
- Facilities include A.E. spaces.
- 20 percent or more of members regularly participate.
- Program evaluation takes place regularly.

Supplemental

Adult education is perceived as a positive and important priority, but as one which is supplemental to the overall congregational mission.

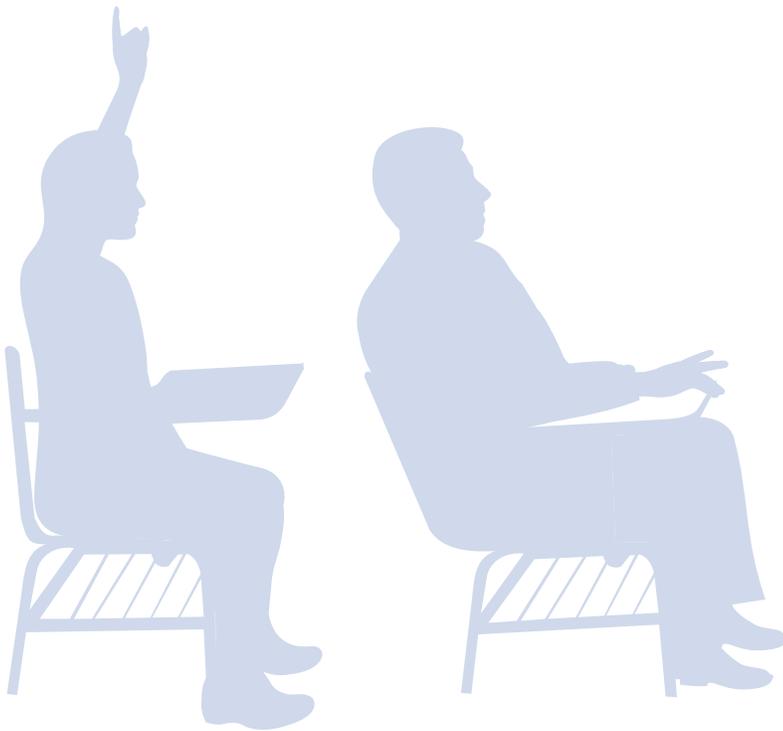
- A.E. is not formalized in any one person's job description and is seen as one component of a loosely structured educational effort.
- The senior pastor is supportive of A.E., but seldom takes the opportunity to publicly promote the programming.
- Less than 20 percent of the congregation regularly attends.
- No specific budget line item exists for A.E.
- Learning opportunities are delivered using one primary format.
- Educational efforts have primarily a cognitive focus.
- Facilities may present some barriers to participation.

Substandard

Adult education is an afterthought. If it happens at all, it is often done because it is an expectation.

- No significant resources are specifically designated towards A.E.
- The primary format used is lecture-style.
- 10 percent or fewer members regularly participate.
- There are no stated goals, no evaluation, little content application and attendance records seldom kept.

Blanke (2007)



Appendix G: Using Bloom's Taxonomy

Bloom's Taxonomy¹ Sample Questions

KNOWLEDGE: remembering, memorizing, recognizing, recalling identification and recall of information — Who, what when, where, how, ... ?

COMPREHENSION: interpreting, translating from one medium to another, describing in one's own words, organization and selection of facts and ideas

APPLICATION: problem solving, applying information to produce some result, use of facts, rules and principles — How is ... an example of ... ? How is ... related to ... ?

ANALYSIS: subdividing something to show how it is put together, finding the underlying structure of a communication, identifying motives, separation of a whole into component parts — Classify ... according to ... , How does ... compare/contrast with ... ?

SYNTHESIS: creating a unique, original product that may be in verbal form or may be a physical object, combination of ideas to form a new whole — What would you predict/infer from ... ? , How would you create/design a new ... ?

EVALUATION: making value decisions about issues, resolving controversies or differences of opinion, development of opinions, judgements or decisions — Do you agree ... ? What criteria would you use to assess ... ? What is the most important ... ?

1 B.S. Bloom; M.D. Engelhart; E.J. Furst.; W.H. Hill; D.R. Krathwohl, *Taxonomy of educational objectives: The classification of educational goals*. Handbook I: Cognitive domain. (New York: David McKay Company: 1956).

Question Model For Cinderella²

KNOWLEDGE:

- › Name the characters in Cinderella.
- › What time did Cinderella have to leave the ball?
- › Identify the object Cinderella left behind as she quickly left the ball.

COMPREHENSION:

- › Briefly retell the story of Cinderella.
- › Explain why it was important for Cinderella to leave the ball at midnight. Describe the fairy godmother.

APPLICATION:

- › Briefly dramatize the scene where the Prince is trying to find the owner of the glass slipper.
- › Demonstrate the fairy godmother performing her magic to help Cinderella get ready for the ball.

ANALYSIS:

- › Compare Cinderella with her step-sisters and tell how they are alike and different. Examine three different problems in the story.

SYNTHESIS:

- › What would you have done if you were Cinderella and found out that you couldn't go to the ball?
- › What else would you have added to the entourage that accompanied Cinderella to the ball?
- › Change the ending to Cinderella and rewrite it.
- › Create a poster advertising the story of Cinderella.

EVALUATION:

- › Judge whether the characters in Cinderella were like real people and support your answer. Decide how the step-sisters and Cinderella each benefit in the story.
- › If you could be a character in Cinderella, who would you choose? Why?
- › Pretend you are selling this story to a publisher, convince her to buy the story.

2 This is one of those things that I have had in my file for many years. I received it from someone else without knowing the source. I would like to acknowledge whoever first wrote this, but I do not know who they are.

Appendix H: Bloom's Taxonomy and the Beatitudes

After reviewing the list of Bloom's different taxonomies and questions, and after reviewing how these taxonomies might be applied to the Cinderella story, try to develop one or two questions for each of the taxonomies that you could pose to a class in a study of the Beatitudes.

Knowledge:

Comprehension:

Application:

Analysis:

Synthesis:

Evaluation:



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