

**TEACH FOR LIFE CHANGE:
HOW TO PLAN LESSONS THAT INTEGRATE THE
HEAD, HEART, HANDS, AND HABITS OF STUDENTS**

**Delta Cavner, Professor of Education, Pan Africa Theological Seminary
Julie Bryant, Professor of Education, Southwest Baptist University**

Introduction

The analogy of the head, heart, and hands has long been employed as a motto for both Christian and secular organizations. The head, heart, and hands have come to represent a way to show the complexities of learning in simple and more holistic, transformational ways than using the terms cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. However, not everyone who uses the three together, uses them for the same purpose or even recognizes the integrative possibilities of the head, heart, and hands (Singleton 2015). Particularly, this model is useful for helping teachers plan for students to not only learn the content with their minds, but also to learn deeply with their hearts and to develop skills. Whether teaching for Bible colleges or for church-related learning environments, there is a need to plan for effective learning that goes beyond the classroom--one that brings about lasting life change. Since we are created as spiritual beings having a spirit, soul, and body (1 Thess. 5:23), effective teachers look for a way to integrate the various domains of learning within a single lesson plan.

By planning lessons that integrate the various domains of learning, teachers help students recognize the need to study deeply, develop new skills, and apply it to their lives (Cavner and Bryant 2021). Yet the model is missing an important ingredient for promoting life change. Unless habits are formed and cultivated, a commitment to life change is often short lived. This article thus encourages the development of habits that spring from a heart desire to support a change in behavior, and recommends that the *head, heart, hands, and habits be integrated together as a guide for teachers who plan for life change from a biblical perspective*. The purpose of this paper is to provide teachers with resources to plan and teach for life change.

To successfully integrate the head, heart, hands, and habits in the classroom, teachers will want to plan lessons that give attention to the flow of learning. The flow of learning is when students are most focused on their task while learning (Wheeler 2016; Khare 2018). Brain research shows the need to shift the focus throughout a learning cycle (the class period) from getting attention, studying, practicing, and applying to finally bringing closure (Sousa 2017). The way Jesus helped His listeners learn also shows a flow of learning (Kuma and Cavner 2020). In Scripture, learning often begins first with observing before studying, practicing, applying, and choosing to use the new knowledge. Proverbs 2:2 challenges us to make our ears attentive and to incline our hearts to “knowledge, understanding, and wisdom.” This article introduces the flow of learning for teachers to better recognize when to focus on one domain or another during the learning cycle. Also, it analyzes each way of learning with the head, heart, hands, and habits. Finally, it proposes an integrated lesson plan designed for deep learning and life change. The

purpose of this paper is to provide teachers with a practical resource for how to plan lessons that promote deep learning and life change.

The Phases of Learning Flow Naturally through the Lesson

Learning phases have been discussed in education for many years. Bybe (2006) overviews various contributors of the learning cycle and its phases since 1901. Current brain research has confirmed these learning phases (Cavner and Bryant 2021; Goodwin and Dey 2020). The learning cycle represents the use of the instructional time in one class period with 3-6 phases within each cycle. When the cycle is well-planned, there is a natural flow to learning and an increased engagement of students. Using research on the phases of learning and contrasting it with examples in Scripture has contributed to the development of an integrated approach for life change introduced in this article.

Like the moon goes through phases, so does our learning. Visual 1 shows five phases of learning. Studying the phases of learning--as represented by the phases of the moon--represents the growth or progression of learning. It also shows the flow of learning. Looking beyond the second phase of learning in which teachers have explained the content and students have studied it, we see the importance of teachers not thinking that their job is done when they have explained the content. These phases are evident in a single lesson, and they are also evident throughout an entire course of study.



Visual 1: Phases of the Moon

The visual also shows how to incorporate heart responses integrated after each of the phases where learning is taking place. Teachers have an active role in leading students to demonstrate that they have inclined their hearts to learn by observing if students are desiring, imitating, valuing, integrating, or choosing to live what was learned. Proverbs 23:12 explains: “Apply your heart to instruction (discipline) and your ears to words of knowledge.” When students apply their hearts to what they are learning, they respond with their heart, learn deeply, and begin to develop a heart of wisdom.

When teaching students, a knowledge-based curriculum, teachers need to plan for heart responses. They can use the moon phases in Visual 1 to move from one phase of learning to the next by responding at a heart level. Teachers can be looking for students to experience an increased desire as the lesson unfolds. Gradually, teachers need to draw students to use or internalize the content in some way into their lives for more lasting learning to take place. By focusing on heart responses, teachers can help students learn more deeply and challenge them to use what they have learned.

In the first phase, before teachers start explaining the content, the listeners need to be drawn into the learning (Kuma and Cavner 2020). In the visual of the phases of the moon, we call this *observe* since the students' main role is to observe. Teachers provide an introduction by showing a model or role playing a problem that helps students recognize why they need to know the content. In response, when students are aware of how they feel enough to desire that knowledge, it is the beginning of learning with their hearts. Students need to see something modeled before they can take the first step to build a knowledge base. Proverbs 23:26 explains, "My son, give me your heart, and let your eyes observe my ways" (ESV). Observation is clearly seen in Scripture and is often the initial phase of learning that Jesus used as He would begin with a story or ask a startling question. Jesus used objects such as a mountain or a tree as examples before beginning His teaching. Thus, to develop a biblical model of leading students to life transformation, this initial starting point is important to alert students' minds for the need to study the content.

Some teachers do not consider the importance of observation and experience that need to come before knowing and studying, yet it is a biblical principle stressed in Scripture. Think about Proverbs 6:6-8, "Go to the ant, O sluggard, observe her ways and be wise, which, having no chief, officer or ruler, prepares her food in the summer and gathers her provisions in the harvest" (NASB). Notice that this verse stresses the need *to see* and *to consider* before learning takes place. In class, this initial observation can be a challenging question written on the board, a demonstration, or an object lesson. Telling a story or leading a discussion about a problem is also a way for teachers to begin the lesson. This initial part of the lesson is short but prepares the hearts of students to receive and *desire* the lesson.

In the second phase, students *study* the content and biblical truths followed by a heart response. When someone imitates a behavior, it shows the beginning of the value placed on a behavior. Paul reminds the Thessalonians to imitate him (1 Thess. 3:7-9). Hebrews 11-13 shows the importance of imitating the example of Christ. After students study the content, they should *seek to imitate* it more in their hearts. Sometimes that response is simply a reflection of what the teacher says. Imitation prepares the students to take their learning effectively to the next level.

In the third phase, students *practice* the new knowledge in a variety of ways. They will gradually *value* it deeply in their hearts. Placing value on new learning shows that the deep-heart response is growing stronger. When we value something, we treasure it. Proverbs 2 extols the value of wisdom. It exhorts people to treasure the understanding and application of God's law more than gold (Ps. 119:92-104). As students practice, they begin to value and treasure their knowledge so that it should be a natural response to personally apply it to their lives in the next

phase. Ways to demonstrate valuing is through reflection or drawing students personally into a discussion or giving personal examples. These will touch the heart to influence change toward life application.

In Phase 4, students take a variety of ideas and *integrate* them together or *apply* them in their lives for deeper understanding. When students take their new knowledge and *integrate* it with other knowledge or into their lives, they have applied it to their hearts. Just like Hezekiah did his work “with all his heart” (2 Chron. 31:21), both teachers and students alike should approach their work with all their hearts. At this level, students already value the learning and begin to apply and prioritize it in their lives. By helping students integrate the content into their own culture and experiences, teachers see that the behavior has merged into existing behaviors and patterns. At this level, heart learning is merging more closely with learning with our minds. This is because after application of knowledge, a reorganization and integration must occur as the heart responds to the new knowledge. Proverbs 22:17 reminds students to “incline your ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply your heart to my knowledge, for it will be pleasant if you keep them within you...” (ESV). Application can begin in the mind, but it moves to the heart as seen in Proverbs 23:12, “*Apply your heart* to instruction and your ear to words of knowledge” (ESV).

It is in the fifth phase that students make a choice to apply the learning daily in their lives by *choosing to live out* what they have learned. Learning with the heart motivates students to change attitudes and develop habits. Closure is a teaching strategy that allows students a few minutes at the end of class to mentally revisit what they feel is most important to remember (Sousa 2011, 445). This is not necessarily a reminder of their application that was made but is instead a value that students place on the main thing they want to remember as they leave. Closure can be a quick review of the main point of the lesson or the major points that the students recall. Students can respond to the prompt: “The most important thing I learned today was ____.” Closure can also be memorizing a verse together as a class. Or the teacher can lead students to sing a song using a familiar tune but changing the lyrics to help review the concepts studied. Closure helps students choose to live what they have learned. For learning to be complete, there must be some kind of change in the learner. It is heart learning that truly changes students’ values to bring about life change. When studying many different lesson plans, one quality is consistent with many of them--the importance of closure.

This last phase of learning occurs when the learning is internalized so deeply in the heart that students choose to use it as a guiding factor in their lives and they can more effectively synthesize what they have previously learned. This is evident when your students go out from your class passionate about using what they have learned or having resolved previous misconceptions. When students continue to do what they have learned beyond your classroom, they have been transformed.

Strategies for Teaching the Head, Hands, Heart, and Habits

Recognizing the phases of learning will help teachers know when in the lesson plan they should emphasize one of the areas of learning----the head, heart, hands, or habits. This section

studies each of the ways of learning separately to reveal strategies that are effective when focusing on one specific way of learning.

Help Students Learn with their Heads

The teaching of content helps students learn with their heads. This often takes place in the second phase of learning. In educational terms, learning with the brain is called *cognitive learning* because it takes place in the *cognitive domain*. This paper simply refers to it as learning with the mind or the head. From a Christian perspective, our minds are more than the organ that resides in the head--the brain. In the Bible, the brain is not even mentioned. Yet, the *mind* is referred to over 100 times depending on the translation. Some translations in a few references choose to use the word heart instead of mind; yet that does not diminish the importance of thinking and learning with our minds. The mind is important in Scripture.

Without going into philosophical discussions of the brain vs. the mind, researchers concur that there are mental processes that bring about learning and knowledge when people use their minds (Nobel 2015). Our brains have neurons that help with learning. Our minds facilitate our thoughts and thinking processes. A study of the mind in Scripture shows that Paul challenges people to be “transformed by the renewal of your mind” (Rom. 12:2). Colossians 3:2 explains that our minds should be centered on God--“on things above.” Isaiah 26:3 exclaims that God gives “peace whose mind is stayed” on Him. “Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 1:13). From these verses, it is evident that people can manage their thoughts, prepare their minds, and stay focused on eternal things. Each of these concepts impact learning--managing, preparing, and staying focused--and demonstrate the involvement of learners in the process of learning. Scripture clearly indicates that learning is an active process! Learning is not automatic, but instead requires students to interact with knowledge, manage their thoughts, prepare for understanding, and stay focused. Learning is not regurgitating what the teacher says--that would just be repeating back without a true understanding of the information. Because learning is not passive, students cannot just sit back and let the words of the teacher pour over them.

Scientific brain research reveals how the brain learns best. In the 21st century, using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), scientists have been able to study the brain while it is in the process of learning. Brain research allows scientists to see what is actually happening in the minds of students while learning. Although neuroscience focuses only on the physical function of the brain, many of these scientific discoveries confirm effective ways to teach and learn for lasting memory just by seeing how the brain learns (Kuma and Caver 2020; Sousa 2017). The more teachers understand about how people learn, the more effectively they can plan. It is important for teachers to recognize that the idea of once taught does NOT equal learned. This means that just because the teacher taught something does not mean that students learned. For learning to take place, teachers need to help students be *active in their learning*. The compelling argument in favor of active student involvement is that the “brain doesn’t just receive information--it processes it” (Rasmussen and Rasmussen 2005). Think back to how Jesus, even as a boy, sat with the spiritual leaders, listening to them and asking questions (Luke 2:46). As a youth, Jesus took responsibility to learn. He took advantage of the opportunity to ask questions

and discuss with teachers. He was active in the learning process. Likewise, teachers who encourage students to be active learners, help them interact with their learning. They invite them to search, study, practice, and apply themselves to learning. There will be times that teachers explain, but there will also need to be times for students to be involved through study and discussion. Because of this understanding, teachers will be able to plan ways to help students learn better. Kuma and Cavner (2020) analyzed how Jesus taught and compared their discoveries with current brain-based research. They recommend strategies that help get students' attention and engage them in the learning process, help students understand, and help students remember and apply. The article recommends 12 specific teaching strategies, which are useful for planning lessons and training faculty. Although these strategies are not repeated here, this article builds on those concepts to develop an integrated plan that includes learning with both the mind and the heart, and that also develops skills and habits based on deep heart learning.

By using active learning methods, teachers can avoid *surface learning* which is knowing without understanding (Wiggins and McTighe 2011). An example of surface learning is just listening to a lecture. Instead, teachers who use interactive lectures ask open-ended questions during the lecture and stop for discussion of the principles based on the topic. There are various ways of organizing discussions and selecting questions that either the teacher or students have asked. A favorite activity is "go to one of the four corners." Students respond to each other while standing together in each corner, then share with the other groups. Think-pair-share is a brief question where each student thinks of a response on their own; then, on cue, they pair up with a partner and take turns discussing their thoughts to the question. The teacher can then hold students accountable for their thoughts by calling on students to share with the entire group. Another idea is for either the teacher or the students to draw pictures to go with the points of the lesson. These strategies help students to better understand and remember with their minds and help them begin to learn more deeply.

Some teachers who begin to use active learning think that they are just planning fun and games. Unfortunately, some teachers who begin to introduce active learning strategies in their classroom spend more time looking for the activities than preparing the content. This is backwards. However, active learning should not replace deep Bible training or foundational knowledge of content. If that happens, students will miss the serious emphasis on content. Not all interactive fun activities lead to good learning (Newton 2012, 13). To include active learning in the lesson plan is not for the purpose of keeping students busy. Rather, it is a way to help students interact with the content to increase memory and understanding. Active learning helps students open their hearts for life change.

Teachers should first plan for strong content, then plan ways to engage students actively to help students remember and apply biblical truth to their lives. First, teachers must determine the important principles of the lesson and ask the Holy Spirit to guide them in helping students relate to the content, understand the biblical principles, and apply it to their lives (Newton 2012, 10).

Help Students Learn with their Hearts

Many educators focus primarily on learning with the mind; yet, if teachers want to help students make life changes, they need to plan for the heart response as well. Heart learning is not just about feelings, but is also about values, passion, motivation, and attitude. Teaching for deep-heart learning is about helping students approach new learning wholeheartedly and to desire to learn deeply. When students have a moment of understanding, teachers can plan for an emotional response, a decision, or a personal application. This response promotes deep heart learning.

The word *heart* is used in Scripture about seven times more often than the word *mind*--although sometimes it is used interchangeably with the word *mind*. When Moses said: "These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts" (Deut. 6:6), he used the term *heart* not in order to distinguish it from soul and strength, but rather to emphasize that our love for God should be at the core of our being. *Heart* in this passage was used to show the deepest part of who we are (Newton 2012, 19). Remember David exhorted his son, Solomon, to "know the God of your father, and serve Him with a whole heart and a willing mind" (1 Chron. 28:9). It is not with only our minds that we serve God, but with our hearts as well.

Scripture reveals our multifaceted heart. The heart can have *knowledge*: "Thus you are to know in your heart..." (Deut. 8:5). The heart *understands*: Solomon asked for "an understanding heart" (1 Kings 3:9). The heart has *memory*: "So that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them fade from your heart as long as you live" (Deut. 4:9). The heart can also *think*: "Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts" (Ps. 139:23).

The heart represents who a person is at the core of their being. Thus, the heart is the place where learning from the mind needs to lead students so that it is understood and applied (Newton 2012). The heart is where life change begins to happen. Proverbs 24:32, declares, "I applied my heart to what I observed and learned a lesson from what I saw." In this verse, the heart is who a person is at the core of their being--the innermost part of the whole person (Newton 2012, 17). Students learn better and remember more when their hearts and emotions are involved. Thus, the heart is the place where learning with the mind needs to lead students so that it is understood and applied. Teachers sometimes wonder why students' behavior does not change as a result of teaching. The heart may not have been prepared to receive knowledge or learning may have happened only in the mind. The content may not have seemed valuable enough to cause students to receive it, desire it in their hearts, or respond to it enough to change attitudes and actions. Teachers need to pray that God stirs their students' hearts to learn, change, and develop lifelong habits.

Strengthen Learning with Practice of Skills and Strategies (Hands)

Skills are important in Scripture. When Moses recruited people to work on the tabernacle, the Lord told him: "And I have given to all able men *ability* [skill], that they may make all that I have commanded you" (Exod. 31:6). Also, "and all the women *who were willing* and had the *skill* spun the goat hair." (Exod. 35:26). Notice the connection between the willingness and the skill. Additionally, Moses told the Israelites, "See, the Lord has chosen Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, and He has filled him with the Spirit of God, with wisdom, with understanding, with knowledge and with all kinds of skills" (Exod. 35:30, NIV). Notice the connection of knowledge, understanding, skills, and wisdom.

Although this article uses hands to represent *skills and strategies*, it is far more than psychomotor skills discussed in the field of psychology. Teachers and students alike need to develop a variety of skills and strategies. For example, in school, students need thinking skills and study skills. The more students use good learning strategies to study for classes, the more their study skills will improve. Students need other skills such as computer skills and research skills. Writing a good paragraph, and then good papers, is also a skill. Writing is a skill that is learned through *practice*. To write better, students need to practice writing.

Skills do not just happen. They must be developed through practice. Practice is repeating a skill so that it becomes automatic and smooth. As the practice takes place, gradually students develop their own style and value the skill. Most importantly, practice helps students deepen their understanding and ensures that they can use their understanding in various ways. The phases of learning in the illustration of the moon shows that there is a time for practice. Skills must be practiced to become or to stay skillful. For the skill to be useful, students must apply skills in a variety of situations and integrate those skills together.

The benefit of using current brain research for lesson planning can specifically be seen when planning for the practice. For example, teachers can discern if *rote practice* or *elaborative practice* is needed. An example of rote practice is memorizing definitions. To determine if rote practice is needed, teachers need to remember that when students *use* a concept, not just define it, it is a higher level of skill. If rote practice is not needed, then teachers can choose from a variety of ways to accomplish elaborative practice. Elaborative rehearsal strategies are ways to practice using complex thinking skills rather than drill to support the transfer of the memory from short-term to long-term memory (Marzano 2007; Jensen and Nickelsen 2008). Examples of elaborative practice are students teaching each other, researching a complex problem in small groups, writing a song based on the lesson, debating opposing concepts, or drawing a visual of the content being learned. Students can also be invited to share stories about the topic or to use drama or role play to dramatize the principle.

Brain research makes it clear that people learn better by doing something with the learning. The brain does not change very much through just reading or listening. What changes the brain more is *doing something* such as writing a reflection, sharing it with others, or giving illustrations and examples (Kuma and Cavner 2020). Elaborative practice has the potential to lead students to learn more deeply and to promote a deep heart response. Plus, it is more helpful in forming long-term memory. When people practice using interesting strategies, it promotes an emotional response and extends the learning more meaningfully. Without this way of continuing to process knowledge, students' understanding will likely fade or be lost entirely (Sousa 2012).

Every year periodicals carry articles about skills that people need for being successful in the new year (see e.g., Bauer 2021; Beckford 2018; Stauffer 2020). Some of the skills they recommend are creative thinking, curiosity, complex problem solving, planning with colleagues, and other skills that will not be developed with a *lecture and test* style of education. When teachers help students develop skills, it is helpful for students to first *observe the skill* in an example and desire to acquire the skill. Next, they can study the knowledge needed in order to visualize the skill, then imitate what they see. This is followed by practice until it can be performed accurately or comfortably. Finally, students at the application level can apply the skill

in more complex situations. Before long, the skills become easier, and habits begin to form. This is a good example of using the flow of learning to develop skills and then habits.

Jesus gives us examples of how He valued developing skills. Notice the progression of how He helped His disciples develop skills: (1) Jesus spent time with the disciples, and they *observed* Him minister to the people and observed Him slipping away to pray. The disciples observed Jesus praying before He taught them to pray. (2) When Jesus *taught* His disciples how to pray, He gave them a *model* that they could *imitate*. Jesus taught His disciples many other things and they often *responded* by asking questions. Sometimes Jesus taught them by having them *solve a problem*. For example, when the people needed food, Jesus said, “You give them something to eat” (Mark 6:37). (3) Jesus also sent His disciples out to do what He had done. They were to *practice* ministry with the people such as healing the sick and casting out demons (Matt. 10:1). (4) Afterward, they returned to Jesus for feedback and additional understanding (Matt. 17:20). They wondered why they could not cast out one particular demon. Through that feedback, they recognized the need for more prayer. (5) On the day of Pentecost, we find the disciples praying together in one accord. It was now a habit.

This section focused on the phase of learning that allows for students to practice skills and strategies (hands). Learning something just once does not ensure that it will be remembered, much less applied. Thus, when teachers plan for practice, they move students closer to a personal application. Clearly, this is an important step to learning that follows studying foundational knowledge. Most importantly, the practice needs to be clearly connected with the content.

Deepen Learning with Application (Habits)

Both the fourth and fifth phases of learning involve application and commitment. When doing God’s will, there are choices involved. John 7:17 reminds us to *choose to do* the will of God even before knowledge and understanding. If we want to have a habit of obeying God, reading His Word, and praying, we must ask the Holy Spirit to convict us and direct our choices. Then, we need to pray that these choices become habits. This section addresses habits of the mind, habits of the heart, and how to plan for new habits within each course of study.

The Bible does not have people learn just so they can have knowledge. Learning has a purpose--to be used. For example, God told Moses, “I will help you speak and will teach you what to say” (Exod. 4:12). God did not say “I will teach you to know.” Biblical knowledge is applying knowledge to our daily lives (Benson 2001; Yount 2010). Fink (2012) reminds teachers of the importance of understanding certain foundational knowledge before being able to apply it, but that application is an essential component to learning. Students can directly apply a learning concept to their own lives. Certainly, teachers and students alike need to *use* their knowledge and understanding through application.

Applying a biblical principle to your life is the beginning of life change. Teachers can plan to have small groups work together to analyze and develop ways to apply the principle being studied, then to share with the rest of the class. Another way to apply is to simulate a situation requiring students to use discernment. The teacher defines a situation--such as a church business meeting--and invites students to interact and participate as if they were actually part of

that situation. Students must apply what they know about the content within the parameters of the context. Other ways to apply learning is to evaluate something based on a standard, create something new or have students work together to resolve real-world problems. Finally, students can write a plan for personal application or change of habits then share with the class from their hearts. Explaining how to integrate a new habit in daily life is a heart response that follows a decision of the mind.

Recognize habits of the mind. Habits of the mind influence student learning. For example, students' habits affect the way they choose to spend their time thus impacting the depth of learning in their classes. Educators often discuss habits of mind because it is these habits that influence students' depth of knowledge. Ways of thinking affect *choices*, so it is important to be transformed by the "renewing of our minds" (Rom. 12:2). Teaching students good habits of mind helps students become better students. If teachers want to promote permanent change in students, their thinking and action have to change (Hendricks 1987, 43). If students change their behavior for only the semester, later they may not remember why they made that change and return to old habits.

Although teachers need to examine good habits of mind that students need from a Christian perspective, secular teachers also recognize the importance of habits of mind and offer many ideas that are consistent with Scripture. One list that teachers use that can be found with a quick internet search, is Costa's 16 habits of mind (Costa and Kallick 2008). These habits are not about having perfect behavior or getting all the answers correct on a test. Habits of the mind are about the value students place on qualities that lead to long-term success. For example, students who think flexibly, strive for accuracy, ask questions, respond to new learning with wonderment, take risks with new ideas, and seek to connect new learning to Scripture (or to what they have learned before) are more likely to be successful in their study habits than those who do not have those kinds of habits or ways of thinking. These, and many others, are habits that can be learned through teacher encouragement.

One of the habits of mind that Costa addresses is persistence. To be a successful learner, students must have persistence to push beyond their previous understanding and to discover hidden treasures of knowledge. Persistence helps students first risk being wrong about something and then have a willingness to start all over. Some students think that learning just comes to them, but they need to be willing in every course to seek it out in persistent pursuit. However, some students lack persistence to keep studying because they do not think that the learning is meaningful. Others get by with as little work as possible--which means they get by with as little learning as possible. Still, other students are so impulsive with their time that they never have time to prepare for class--at least they do not think they do. They may have good intentions, but though they do not have time to study, they always have time to sit in coffee shops visiting with classmates or scroll through social media. Students need to develop good habits of mind to be more successful learners.

Another habit of the mind is to manage impulsiveness. To be successful learners, students need to be goal-directed. They need to learn to manage themselves and control impulsive behaviors to focus on their goals and say no to themselves. This means choosing to go to class prepared instead of doing more enjoyable or easier things. When students develop a plan of

action to better understand course content, this is a habit of the mind. Additionally, once students have completed their study plan, they should evaluate how their plan worked. In this way, students become their own teacher, coaching themselves, and thinking how they can improve. As students master this, they will be on a path of good habits of mind.

Pursue habits of the heart. There are also habits that change our passions. These can be called *habits of the heart*. People who want to follow Christ with a whole heart want habits of the heart that encourage passionate obedience to God's Word. They want to put God's Word into practice with all their hearts. Teachers can link the passion of the heart with life change that is needed. Students need to connect with issues emotionally because life change is the process of addressing habits of the heart first (Henricks 1987, 35).

The habits of the heart are biblical virtues and spiritual qualities for knowing God. These include the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23) and other Scripture passages that show Christians how to live. Both teachers and students should be quick to apply passages from the Bible to their lives. Unfortunately, worldly thinking may push us into the world's habits, blinding our eyes to inconsistencies between our habits and scriptural principles. To open the way for heart change and the development of habits, we have to turn away from the way the world thinks. We must reject anything of the world that is in conflict with Scripture. When we open our hearts and minds to change into the image of Christ, we let the living Truth of God touch our minds, our hearts . . . and our habits. Both the habits of our mind and the habits of our hearts can either hinder or support deep learning and life transformation.

Recognize the complexity of cultivating new habits. Whether it is physical exercise, spiritual disciplines, or stopping a bad habit; new habits are hard to develop. Consider New Year's resolutions! When each New Year is celebrated, many people commit to changes such as to exercise more or to pray more. New Year's resolutions can be short-lived because it is hard to be diligent with the new commitment.

Habits begin when several things happen based on the phases of learning: (1) First, we *feel the need* for a quality we may have *observed* in another person or in Scripture. After that, we *desire* to have that quality. (2) Next, we *learn* more about the need and ways to develop the quality. We begin to *imitate* the quality. (3) *Practicing* the habit further helps us *appreciate* it. (4) Eventually, we *set goals* and *integrate* the habit into our lives. (5) *Determination* and *priority* turn the application into a habit. Notice that at each phase of developing a habit, a heart response is necessary.

Making a New Year's resolution or adding a habit to our lives without going through the phases of learning and corresponding heart responses may not be effective. It would be like jumping to Phase 5 without going through the other learning phases. To be successful, the mind must be *prepared* to establish that habit and the heart must be in agreement. Gradually, through first observation, study, and practice, the change becomes integrated in the lifestyle of the person. If habits are continued over a long period of time, they become a natural part of a person's lifestyle.

Another complexity of establishing new habits is that some new habits require you to have already established other habits. For example, some people want to lose weight, but they know nothing about a healthy diet, or they may have unrealistic ideas about exercise. Eating healthily and exercising are two important life habits that need to be combined to lose weight. If people have not developed good lifestyle choices, any weight that is lost is often gained back. Plus, having developed a habit of self-control and not giving in to the “I deserve it” attitude further strengthens the habit. To make life-changes, students may have to change several other habit patterns. Yet, if people are able to do something once, then they should be able to do it the second time, then the third time (Henricks 1987, 35). If someone can do it three times, it could possibly become a habit.

An Integrated Plan for Deep, Whole-heart Learning

Although, in the previous section, we analyzed each of the learning areas separately, it is unwise to teach a whole class session using only one way of learning or teaching to only one domain of learning. The more integrated the learning is, the more students will think deeply, understand more fully, and desire to grow and change. The deeper the learning goes, the more that whole-hearted learning takes place (Newton 2012, 46). Also, as learning continues to deepen, it begins to merge together within the heart so that whole-heart learning brings together all the ways of learning. From that deep learning experience, skills and choices for habits emerge.

I once spoke in a chapel to a group of African students. The chapel started out with worship. These Africans loved to worship through song and dance! They would hold their hands over their hearts and gently, quietly love Jesus. So, when I got up to speak, I told them how much I loved worshipping together with them. Then I asked them if they worshiped with their heads or their hearts. “Oh, our hearts!” they responded, placing their hands over their hearts. Then I asked, “When you go back to class, will you learn with your hearts or your heads?” “Oh, our heads!” they responded quickly, placing their hands on their heads. Then I challenged them to learn with their hearts in class as well as their minds, and in chapel, to worship the Lord with our whole beings--our whole heart, soul, strength, and mind (Luke 10:27). That is the challenge for Christian schools--for both teachers and students. That is also the challenge for Sunday schools and discipleship programs.

Segmenting the learning of head, heart, hands, and habits into different programs is not as effective as integrating the ways of learning into courses and lessons. This is because when the different ways of learning are integrated, student learning is deeper and transformational. The goal of Christian teachers should not be for their students to just learn the content long enough to pass a test, but to see their lives transformed and to know they are prepared for work and ministry. Our passion is for students to experience learning that endures--learning that promotes skills and godly habits. So, whether planning Sunday school lessons, discipleship training, or college courses, teachers can plan what students need to learn with their heads, hearts, hands, and habits within the same lesson and with the goal of life change. This kind of approach to learning leads to deep, whole-heart learning.

Teaching in this way requires teachers to develop lesson plans. Using the phases of learning discussed earlier, teachers can develop integrated plans that have an effective flow leading students to learning deeply. As teachers study their content to determine what is essential-to-know, they may use the textbook as a resource, but the textbook is not their lesson plan. As teachers plan the learning experiences for the content, they can use the phases of learning in the Integrated Plan to guide their decisions (See Visual 2 and the entire lesson plan in the Appendix).



Visual 2: Integrated Plan for Deep Learning

The Bible shows that knowledge is for the purpose of *using it in life*. In the Psalms, God says, “I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go” (Ps. 32:8). God wants to teach us His ways “so that we may walk in His paths” (Isa. 2:3; Mic. 4:2). Teachers do not teach knowledge merely for students to know something, but rather so they will become skillful at it and use it wisely. Proverbs 1 reminds us of the importance of wisdom, instruction, discernment, understanding, and wise behavior. Wise behavior is a part of learning. Clearly, it is important to cultivate the skillful and wise use of knowledge and understanding.

As teachers, we look to the Holy Spirit to create that flow of learning from observing and desiring, to the understanding of foundational knowledge, to practicing and illustrating, and finally to making practical applications that move in the direction of life change. The Holy Spirit illuminates the minds and hearts of teachers to know how to plan, giving teachers a heart of wisdom (Dickason, 1991; Keener, 2001). The Holy Spirit reveals life-changing lesson plans to teachers. He empowers teachers to make plans that help students learn deeply with the heart. Teachers need to lovingly draw students into learning deeply from their hearts and pray for the Holy Spirit to bring about life changes that are needed in students.

Recommendations for Future Study

To realize the full benefit of this Integrated Plan for Deep Learning, teachers and administrators should train faculty how to convert old lesson plans to using the Integrated Plan learning format. Teachers can develop action research projects that make note of improvements in student interest and choice for life change.

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Appendix: Integrated Plan for Deep Learning

<h1 style="color: red; margin: 0;">Integrated Plan for Deep Learning</h1>					
Teachers	Show it	Explain it	Illustrate it	Apply it	Challenge to Use it!
Students	👁️ Observe ❤️ Desire	🧠 Study ❤️ Imitate	👋 Practice ❤️ Value	🔵 Apply ❤️ Integrate	❤️ Choose to Live it!
Become aware	Define	Do	Apply	Adapt / Revise	
Focus	Identify	Dramatize	Analyze	Creatively apply	
Notice	List	Draw	Classify / Rank	Customize	
Perceive	Quote	Explain	Compare / Contrast	Design / Compose	
Ponder	Read	Experience	Discuss / Debate	Evaluate	
Question	Recall	Follow	Distinguish	Formulate	
Reflect	Recite	Illustrate	Examine	Organize	
See	Repeat	Personalize	Probe	Propose	
Watch	State	Rehearse/Perform	Prioritize	Self manage	
Take notes	Tell / Retell	Role play	Search / Solve	Synthesize	
❤️ Accept/Receive	❤️ Pattern after	❤️ Appreciate	❤️ Reorganize	❤️ Internalize	

Topic / The Big Idea
Passage: Essential questions and/or guiding principles:
Purpose: Goals: Objectives: The students will...
Materials:
Assessment Strategies (select one): _____ Observation, Checklist, Peer assessment, Presentation or performance, Anecdotal notes, Focused questions, Rubric, Work samples/Portfolio, Self-assessment, Learning log or journal, Interview/Conference, Other
Show it/ Observe it
Explain it/ Study it
Illustrate it/ Practice it
Apply it
Challenge to use it Choose to live it