

A young man with dark hair and black-rimmed glasses is focused on writing in a spiral notebook. He is wearing a light blue button-down shirt over a dark blue and white striped t-shirt. The background is softly blurred, showing a desk with a laptop and some bokeh light effects. The text is overlaid on the image in a white, bold, sans-serif font with a thin black outline.

# A Framework for Creating Reformatioal Education Environments

## *Loving, Leading, and Learning*

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## Introduction

### **A Reformational Education Environment**

Every child has a story. Each child's story has significance in the plan of God. And while there are basic things to learn, unique giftings to uncover, and future areas of specialization, there is a path of discovery that all children are designed to walk through. From being loved and cared for as an infant to launching into their God-directed mission, there is a relational process of learning and growth that prepares them.

How was Moses prepared for his assignment? How were Joseph, David, Daniel, and Esther prepared for theirs? How about the prophets like Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel? What was the preparation of reformers like Hezekiah, Ezra, and Nehemiah? And what about the great men and women of God in the New Testament and throughout the history of the Church?

Also consider men and women from modern history who shaped culture for the better: George Washington Carver, Harriet Tubman, and William Wilberforce; Nikola Tesla, Albert Einstein, and Amelia Earhart. There are so many examples to choose from. So, it begs the questions, "What is God's story for your son or daughter?" And "How should these next generations of revivalists and reformers be taught in preparation for their destiny?"

*A Reformational Education Environment* recognizes the reality that every child has a God-given assignment, and that this assignment is an expression of their relationship with Him. They are called to further the work of His Kingdom as they exercise His will on Earth as it is in Heaven.

### **The Pathway of Loving, Leading, and Learning**

Based on the multitudinous of research and experience of many educators, pressed against the collective knowledge of God's word found in Scripture and testimony, there is a pathway that is to be traversed. This pathway can best be described as loving, leading, and learning.

1. The pathway as Loving
2. The pathway as Leading
3. The pathway as Learning

These elements of the pathway and their attending pathfinders are described in the sections that follow. Each pathfinder has descriptions of markers to watch for and examples of what they might look like in teaching and learning.

Walking in the pathway of loving, leading, and learning is not linear. One element of the pathway does not singularly lead to the next. Rather these pathway elements are interrelated and traversed simultaneously as one path. As we love, we lead, and learning is facilitated. Loving is the path. Leading is the path. And learning is the path.

## **Why a Reformational Education Environment?**

In a reformational education environment, “loving, leading, and learning” is the intentional pathway we walk in. Within this environment, a variety of subjects and age-specific methods can be employed, all the while nurturing the God-designed sense of wonder, exploration, and creativity.

The following description of a reformational education environment is not meant to be a script. Rather, it is intended to be the characterization of a space where you—a parent, teacher, or administrator—can exercise, learn, move, and grow in a way of being. It is not given to you as a prescribed format, but as a path to traverse. So, we are not attempting to cater to our tendency of “needing to know,” but shifting to learning that embraces mystery and raises up a generation of reformers that can do the same.

A reformational education environment is not a new system of learning. Rather, it is a way of being that fills the educational space (be it in the home, school, or church). And, within this way of being, a variety of subjects and age-specific methods can be employed, and curriculum chosen that best fits the learning style of each child.

We believe the pathway of creating reformational education environments is integral to restoring and achieving kingdom educational outcomes (i.e., the purpose of God in education). Therefore, the description of this reformational education environment on the following pages is meant to equip parents, teachers, and administrators with a framework as they embark upon educating children in the presence of God, knowing that each child has a unique story to unfold

and a future contribution to make in the furtherance of God's kingdom. And raising up a generation of reformers is the task of this generation's parents and educators.

The following are some of the Scriptures that illuminate our path.

Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature; a wisdom, however, not of this age nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away; but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God predestined before the ages to our glory (1 Cor 2:6–7).

For nothing is hidden, except to be revealed; nor has anything been secret, but that it would come to light (Mark 4:22).

He reveals mysteries from the darkness and brings the deep darkness into light (Job 12:22).

It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search out a matter (Prov 25:2).

That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints (Eph 1:17–18).

At that time Jesus said, "I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants" (Matt 11:25).

As we walk with the Lord, there is a sense of wonder as the revelation of His love and purpose unfold in our lives. And for each child, of whom we are stewards, God has designed a wondrous journey. Therefore, He has instilled within them a desire to explore, to learn, and to contribute—all within the relational context of love and belonging. Kingdom focused educational outcomes connect children with the significance of their story, equipping them to know the Lord, walk with Him, and work together with Him in His love and creativity to bring the peaceable wisdom and rule of God into every nation and every realm of existence.

## The Pathway as Loving

Love in learning is a *restorative and welcoming* atmosphere where students and families recognize the *intentionality* in which the learning space has been created and understand the importance of its *stewardship*.

The pathway as **loving** has three pathfinders: (1) restorative and welcoming, (2) intentionality, and (3) stewardship.

### Restorative and Welcoming Atmosphere

A restorative atmosphere has a sound and a frequency. It is based on a tangible and sustained encounter of God's love through parents and teachers. This love looks like something: love covering a multitude of sins, mercy reigning over judgment, grace chasing people down. It is welcoming and draws children into a relationship of belonging.

Can you hear it? Can you feel it? Can you see it? People who emanate and manifest this sound and frequency are a people who commit and recommit to their own internal heart work, pressing in first to their own restoration, and only then being able to offer it to others. A restorative and welcoming atmosphere is the fruit of the first commandment lived out—loving God, loving yourself, and loving others.

#### Relational

A restorative and welcoming atmosphere is relational. Why? Because relationships are the foundation for learning. And love is the foundation of relationships. From a child's earliest days, the love they receive impacts their future cognitive, social, and emotional development. And throughout a child's learning career unconditional love from parents and teachers continues



to be a key that unlocks their potential. And especially for children who have suffered trauma, consistent and unconditional love experienced through relationship is restorative, liberating, and empowering. Therefore, we take the time to truly relate to our children—to foster a relationship based on love expressed through care, support, comfort, listening, instruction, play, and celebration.

### **Future Focused**

Love sees the gift and potential that a child is. Therefore, it is focused on building up, training, and equipping that child to walk with God and fulfill His purpose. For there is no greater sense of joy and meaning in life than this. Every child has a story to unfold in the heart of their Heavenly Father, and parents and teachers are privileged to be stewards of this tremendous gift. So, while love is expressed in the present, it also looks forward to the future. It gives significance and context for each relational moment of teaching, discipline, and celebration.

### **Hope Filled**

Love believes all things, hopes all things, and never fails (1 Cor 13:7–8). Throughout the ups and downs of a child’s journey, and through the challenges and successes of their education, hope for the child remains as a burning torch in the heart of the parent and teacher. When children steps into the learning space, they are encouraged within an atmosphere of hope. They knows that their parents and teachers love them and believe in what they can become and accomplish in life.

## **Intentionality**

Laying the foundation and doing the work of hosting a restorative environment requires intentionality. It does not just happen. It is a sustained intentional work that is motivated from the heart. Consider what God has said to you about you. What is the story written about you? Why do you put two feet on the floor in the morning? What is in your heart? Paul said that the love of Christ motivated everything he did (2 Cor 5:14). Your intentionality speaks to your why. When you understand who you are and why you are, then intentionality toward a restorative atmosphere will be a responding flow.

### **Clear Communications**

Intentionality leads to clear communications. What does it take to provide a restorative and welcoming environment for your child, for your student? What does this mean for you, for

your family, for the school? Clearly communicate expectations and listen for feedback. Clarity of purpose also leads to clear communication with the student. Love, hope, and expectations are communicated in ways that are clear, directive, and impactful. The instructions of father and mother and teacher are to be clear. As Proverbs says, intentionally train a child in the way he should go, and even when he is older, he will not depart from it (Prov 22:6).

### **Toward Action**

Intentionality leads to action. For example, God told the children of Israel to prepare an atmosphere of learning and to diligently (intentionally) teach their children. Love leads to action. God's love led to the sending of His Son. Likewise, our love is to be expressed in actions. It is through actions motivated by love that parents and teachers intentionally create a restorative and welcoming educational environment. Likewise, through love, they intentionally guard and maintain this environment in their hearts, homes, and classrooms.

## **Stewardship**

A commitment to a restorative environment and the intentionality that it takes to maintain it is an act of stewardship. Stewardship is required of all stakeholders, not just the leaders and the educators, but the students and their parents/families.

### **Response-Able**

Stewardship for a welcoming and restorative educational atmosphere is the responsibility of parents and teachers. When a stewardship is given, there is the provision to become responsible. We grow in and through our responsibilities. Parents grow in their love for their children and in the stewardship of their lives. Teachers grow in their ability to instruct their students. Whether a child learns at home or in a school, the caring adults can reach into the heart of the God who is Love and Who provides all good things for His children, they can partner with their Heavenly Father who cares for each child, and they can learn to be stewards of an atmosphere of love and learning.

### **Empathetic**

Our stewardship is not just for the systems and physical spaces of education. These are tools to assist in the higher stewardship of the life and formation of each child. So, it is essential that the atmosphere remain empathetic. Through empathy we are able (response-able) to step outside of ourselves into another's world. In other words, there is a relational atmosphere where

the student knows she is seen, heard, and known. Even more than the learning space or the curriculum, this atmosphere of empathy allows the student to personalize learning and blossom in who God has created him to be. For to train up a child in their path, parents and teacher must first allow themselves to enter the child's world and truly know them. And this atmosphere of partnering with God to know as we have been fully known must be stewarded (1 Cor 13:12–13).

**Example 1: Classroom standards facilitating a welcoming and relational atmosphere for student learning.**

## Classroom Standards



- How do our classroom standards empower students to be who God created them to be?
- Is there an alignment between classroom standards/expectations and God's standards?
- How do our expectations impact the atmosphere/environment?



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# 3

## The Pathway as Leading

Leading is in the context of understanding the *kingdom* and our *authority* in it, walking it out in a spirit of *honor*.

The pathway as **leading** has three pathfinders: (1) kingdom, (2) authority, and (3) honor.

### Kingdom

When the disciple asks Jesus “How then should we pray?” or, in other words, what should we be asking God for, the answer was to bring His Kingdom in Heaven to Earth. For us that means to get rid of what is standing in the way and allow Him to work through you and me. The full expression of our “who” and “why” fills the Earth with His Glory and is represented on the different mountains and spheres of influence.

#### Kingdom of Heaven on Earth

Children are called by God to participate with Him in His kingdom work. This is a relational endeavor with their Heavenly Father (as seen in the example of Jesus and the Father). It is led by Jesus and empowered by the Holy Spirit. This is our true calling, and it is also our children’s calling. Therefore, education must be Kingdom oriented to have a proper context. There is nothing greater that our children could live for or lay down their lives for than to participate in God’s eternal plan of bringing His kingdom and His will on Earth as it is in Heaven.

Jesus confronted the teachers of his day for failing to enter the Kingdom of God and hindering others from entering (Matt 23:13). As parents and teachers, we allow the Holy Spirit to remove those things in our own hearts that oppose Jesus’ Lordship. We submit to His Kingdom

dominion in us and exercise it through us. We show the way into the Kingdom and cause our children to enter in. We teach them to be sons and daughter of our King and to represent Him well.

### **Seek and Operate in Spiritual Gifting**

Representing Jesus well is through His nature and through His giftings. These are expressions of the Holy Spirit demonstrating God's nature of love. Teaching is a spiritual ministry that is effectively administered through the nature and giftings of God. Allow the Holy Spirit to be the Teacher and work with Him in leading and teaching. The promise is that all our children will be taught of the Lord. This can happen as we yield to the Holy Spirit and operate in spiritual giftings.

### **Embrace Mystery**

The Scriptures teach us that we walk by faith and not by sight. That those who are led by the Holy Spirit are children of God. Therefore, we do not seek to control our lives, but yield to the will of our Father. We embrace the mystery of God's unfolding plan and our family's place in that plan. We teach our children to embrace this mystery. And while we have the promises of God regarding our faithfulness to teach our children, we do not know what the outcome of this will look like. We don't know what His blessing on our children will look like, except that they will walk with God and work with Him to accomplish His will in their generation. So, we give them a rich heritage of walking by faith and embracing mystery as they learn and grow. Embracing mystery fuels inquiry and a desire to learn. Embracing mystery allows parents to learn with their children.

### **Lens of Nations**

Jesus gave two commissions. One to proclaim the gospel to all peoples, and the other to disciple nations. Having a lens of nations gives significance and context for teaching and learning. Having a lens of nations gives context for the gifts and the calling of a child, and it therefore provides a context for learning. Where will they serve, what will they create, what problems will they solve, and into what spheres of influence will they bring the Lordship of Jesus Christ? As part of the Body of Christ, how will they bring His blessings to the families of the earth (Gen 12:3; Gal 3:8). With a focus on blessing others, God will give our children dreams of their future significance.

## **Authority**

Christ did not overcome death, hell, and the grave to redeem what was lost in the garden and destroy the works of the devil so that we would walk around absent from the truth of who we are and Who we represent. If we are going to manifest the Kingdom, bring Heaven to Earth, then the awareness and confidence of the Christ—King Jesus in us will have to show up.

### **Teachable Spirit**

The pathway to authority is found in our submission to the Lord. It is to disciples that Jesus promises His authority to disciple nations. For disciples are teachable. They humbly allow themselves to be taught and formed by their Master. Jesus tells us that every disciple, when they are fully trained, will be like their Master. Therefore, as we teach our children, we model a teachable spirit. Then learning is truly effective as we allow the Holy Spirit to also be engaged in the process of teaching and learning.

We teach our children to embrace the lifelong adventure that is learning within a relationship of devotion to God. Then, God can entrust them with the mysteries of the Kingdom and give them the authority to employ these on Earth (as it is in Heaven).

### **Knowledgeable of God's Word**

God's Word is Jesus Christ. To truly know Scripture is to know Him. His words are the basis for life and the foundation for understanding creation. All wisdom and knowledge have their origins in the Word of God. Knowledge of God's Word is the centerpiece of effective education. For student and teacher, God's Word is the ultimate authority and provides the proper context for learning. For the teacher, abiding in His Word brings the enabling of God in their role and responsibility of teaching. Like the promise to Joshua, meditate day and night on the Word of God and you will have success.

### **Confidence**

We approach our stewardship with faith. There are many passages in the Bible that tell us to be confident in God. Jesus says, "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me" (John 14:1). When Jesus commissioned His disciples, He told them not to fear, but to go out in His authority and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Parents and teachers are called by God and are therefore equipped by Him. He is with each one as they step out in faith to teach their children.

## Exercises Reciprocity

Jesus tells us the Father has given all authority to Him, and that we are to exercise that authority in His name as we disciple nations, teaching them to observe all Jesus instructed. True authority is not exercised in the control of others. Rather it is exercised in serving and instructing those who will themselves learn to carry the same authority in serving the will of the Father. Authority is therefore reciprocal in its mutual dependence on the relationship of Father and Son, the relationship of parents and teachers with Jesus, and the relationships of children with their teachers.

Reciprocity means the practice of exchanging things with others for mutual benefit. It is also a state of mutual dependence, action, or influence. In teaching, it empowers students to take on the role of the teacher. Reciprocal teaching makes students active participants. It teaches students the skills of independent study, lifelong learning, and the ability to exchange ideas and find solutions with others.

### Example 2: What teacher leadership might look like in the classroom.

# Leadership



How do we teach and cultivate an atmosphere with these standards?

## Teachers are Leaders in their Classrooms

- Lead by Example
- Transactional vs. Transformational
- Motivation for a purpose (Incentives)
- Communication fosters relationship (Hello/Bye)
- Procedures of Clear and Consistency



## Making Disciples

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## **Honor**

We are all created in God’s image, and He is no respecter of persons. That means we are all showing up in the fullness of who we are. Always mindful of our call to LOVING, we honor the God-image, the “in-Himness,” in others. The litmus test for this can be found in the Golden Rule. The Golden Rule, contained in over nine ancient writings of world religions, carries a reciprocal power where honor shows up – it says, “*Do unto others what you would have them do unto you.*” We could paraphrase that and say, “*Treat children the way you wanted to be treated when you were a child.*” Or we could change form and say, “*If I were in this same situation would this be the response I would want to receive?*”

### **Models Love**

Parents and teachers are to lead their students into learning. In this, they are to reflect our Heavenly Father in His love and care, even for the least. It was through love that Jesus taught the words of the Father. He modeled love in every encounter.

Love treats each child with honor. Love takes the time to minister and bless and expends the personal effort to shepherd and lead each one (see Matt 18:1–14). Through modeling love, children learn they are loved, and they learn how to love others. Older children learn that the way we treat those who are younger is the way we are treating the Lord. For as we receive (welcome or honor) a child in Jesus’ name, we are receiving Jesus Himself (Matt 18:5).

### **Models Humility**

God resists the proud but gives His grace to the humble (Jas 4:6). In a special way, His presence remains with the humble heart (Isa 57:15; 66:2). True humility is a positioning that trusts in God. The humble are aggressively and resiliently submissive to God’s will. In humility the parent and teacher can wash the feet of students and prepare them for greater works (John 13:5–17).

Children feel safe and learn best in an atmosphere where humility reigns. Women, men, and children, from every country or race, affirm that humility in family relationships strengthen those relationships. Conversely, pride has been identified as an enemy of relationships. Pride in the heart of a parent or teacher wars against the attachment necessary for healthy growth and development. It disheartens students and causes some to emulate the destructive qualities of pride.



Children learn the greatness of humility from the example of parents and teachers. They learn that the path to walking in their gift and calling is through becoming humble bondservants of Jesus Christ. Through this they can become like the great men and women in the Bible.

Humility in teaching and learning is essential. A parent and teacher do not need to pretend they know all the answers. Rather, they model the willingness to search for the truth. They do not need to be protective or defensive about what they believe to be true. Instead, they are open for dialogue with their students. They can examine other people's views while holding to the absolutes in the Word of God.

### **Exercises Civil Dialogue**

Civil dialogue is the ability to enter meaningful conversations with people whose viewpoints may differ from our own, who have different backgrounds or experiences, or who arrive at different solutions to problems. Civil dialogue seeks first to understand while engaging others. It is a process of effective communication.

A parent or teacher can listen to a child, enter into his world, and understand how he perceives what he is experiencing and learning. While a parent or teacher will lead a child to the truth, they must be willing to engage with her as she describes what that truth means to her. For example, every child will know that God is love. But the experience of His love will be personal and different for each child.

As those who will step into their Kingdom significance and work effectively with others as revivalists and reformers, they must understand the process of civil dialogue. They will learn this best from observing their parents and teachers, and as they are taught to respectfully listen to those who are learning alongside them.

**Example 3: Essential principles to consider when cultivating honor in the classroom.**

# Honor



How do we respond when students are not meeting expectations?



- Remember Identity
- Inquiry
- Accountability /Ownership
- Opportunity to Restore
- Honor and Humility

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# 4

## The Pathway as Learning

Learning is a function of a *prepared environment* conducive to student *co-design and co-creation* with the purpose of *influence and contribution*.

The pathway as *learning* has three pathfinders: (1) a prepared environment, (2) co-design and co-creation, and (3) influence and contribution.

### A Prepared Environment

A prepared environment is a welcoming environment. It is an aesthetic environment. It is a space for celebration and wonderment. In this environment, student learning is presented in a coherent fashion, in an order that makes sense to the student. Finally, it is a place for growth and regulation (or self-control). Self-discipline is a function of the ability to regulate.

Parents and teachers are facilitator-coaches who know their students. They have an established and trusted relationship with them. Therefore, they will know when students need extra support to work something out. They facilitate this through encouragement and providing instructive feedback that may require things like extra time, repeated instructions, assistance, or maybe even some solitude. Regardless of the instructional strategy employed, it is all done through loving and leading with the aim of student growth, restoration, and success.

#### Aesthetic and Welcoming

The learning space should be aesthetically pleasing and welcoming. It should not be cold and sterile or distracting with too much clutter. The learning space should make the student

happy to be there and eager to learn. And since children are naturally wired to learn, they should see the space as a place where they can explore, solve problems, and gain understandings.

### **Relational**

The learning space should also be connected to (and not isolated from) relationships. For student learning is also a relational adventure. It is part of the nurturing relationship between the parent / teacher and the child, and with peers, friends, or siblings.

### **Celebratory**

The learning space is prepared to be inviting and celebratory. The book of Proverbs compares teaching and learning to a lavish feast (Prov 9:1–6). As the brain learns, endorphins are released that cause the student to desire to learn more. Like a satisfying family meal, the child is left with fond memories and an anticipation for more.

It is celebratory in three ways: through celebrating the child, celebrating their efforts, and celebrating their accomplishments.

### **Ordered and Sequential**

While there may be many subject areas to cover in a day or in a week, presenting what is to be studied in an orderly manner is essential. A student needs to know what is expected of her at different times. Also, allowing the student to help plan the order of schoolwork, learning activities, and recreation time creates a sense of ownership and motivation.

Learning needs to be sequential to be effective. New learning builds upon prior knowledge, allowing the brain to make connections and create meaning. The student learns how to build knowledge and is willing to take on new challenges. Most lessons within a curriculum are sequential in their design as they build toward a particular learning goal. Allow the time needed master each step.

### **Multi-modal, Sensory, and Age Differentiated**

Multi-modal provides different ways in which a child can learn. This is important for two reasons. First, with a variety of modalities, the brain can make more connections with new learning. Second, certain modalities may better match the smarts or intelligences of the child. Modalities can include physical workbooks, digital resources, interactive and manipulative learning, audio-visual learning, research and writing, and group learning.

Sensory learning is particularly important for younger learners. It stimulates the child's senses of taste, touch, smell, sight, and hearing. Young children use their senses to explore and

understand the world around them. Sensory learning includes activities that help children study objects, colors, textures, tastes, numbers, and situations. It is a naturally immersive form of education that follows the developmental processes of the brain.

Learning should be age differentiated. However, it is not based on age alone, but on the individual developmental level of each child. Typically, curriculum units logically progress in the type of learning presented and in the expected applications to real-life problems as evidence of learning. With differentiated learning, a child can make progress according to their ability rather than being restricted by their age and grade level. In a multi-age classroom, older students can assist younger students.


### **Trauma-Informed**

A trauma-informed learning environment is a compassionate one. It creates an emotionally safe place, establishes predictability, builds a sense of trust, offers choices that empower the student, and maintains an atmosphere of resiliency. It does not punish children for behaviors that are symptoms of experienced trauma.

### **Available Resources, Research, and Artifacts**

Resources for learning can include textbooks, worksheets, videos, computer assisted learning programs, science lab kits, library resources, and trusted online resources. In addition to aiding in the learning process, available resources are essential for students to be able to learn research as a tool for exploration and in seeking answers for real-life issues. Artifacts are the products students create while completing quests. Learning is an adventure and creating artifacts help students make sense of what they are learning. It is important to allow students to take new and existing learning, and perhaps collaborate with others, to create a science project, a piece of artwork, design a building, write a research paper, do an experiment, develop a plan to feed the needy, and so on.

#### Example 4: The impact of a prepared environment.





# Foundational Differentiation Strategies

Differentiation is responsive teaching rather than one size fits all teaching. - Tomlinson

We can plan for differentiation based on knowing our learners. - Rose

Flexibility and choice are key in differentiated classrooms. - Rose

Honor for the unique giftings and assets in each individual brings unity to a differentiated classroom. - Rose



**FLEX GROUPS**  
Plan for flex groups based on readiness levels. Frequent assessments.

**CHOICE**  
Content, Process, Product  
Opportunity to shine

**HIGH STANDARDS**  
Students are challenged to go deeper not just faster - application

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## Co-Creation and Co-Design

The ability for a student to collaborate or cooperate is a function of ownership and agency which is a function of understanding oneself. This occurs best in an environment committed to inquiry and discovery and one that promotes independence and choice.

Agency is the sense that “I am the one who is thinking these thoughts and causing or generating an action.” Ownership is the sense that “I am the one who is undergoing an experience.” This understanding allows the student to choose her actions. For example, with a growth mindset, the student understands “if I choose to put forth the effort, I can learn something new and I can use this knowledge or skill to do something worthwhile.” Therefore, she can make the choice to stick with a challenging topic and take the risk to create and design new things.

An environment committed to inquiry and discovery aids in the development of agency through allowing the student to choose an area of interest and how to explore it. This is the process of inquiry and discover that children are born with. Therefore, presenting new learning in an interesting and intriguing way motivates the student to collaborate and codesign their learning experience and the expected results from it. It becomes *their* adventure in learning.

### **Curiosity and Inquiry**

Inquiry learning places the ownership of learning on the student. While guided through his curriculum, the student is presented with (or comes up with) questions reflecting his curiosity. These questions become a guide for inquiry which provides a framework for new learning. The brain processes new learning best when it has a framework that can be used to attach new information. Curiosity sparks inquiry. Curiosity and asking questions lead to more effective learning because the student is excited, motivated, and has ownership.

### **Risk-taker / Not Afraid to Ask Question**

Risk-taking can lead to discovering new knowledge and learning new skills. Being encouraged to take a risk allows students to try something different. When there is a successful outcome, the student experiences an increase in their self-esteem and willingness to take additional risks. And in a supportive environment, even when risk-taking fails, the student learns that there is no failure in trying. They learn the resilience of a growth mindset that learns from mistakes and failures.

Asking questions is an essential learning skill. This is not the same as a teacher asking student a series of questions and expecting her to come up with the right answers. Rather, this is encouraging the student to think and ask questions. Asking questions helps the student think deeply and motivates him to explore new learning. Asking questions can improve student motivation, independent thinking, and the ability to grasp and communicate complex ideas. The student also learns she has the right to ask questions, that her questions are not a threat, but instead are encouraged as part of her learning.

The willingness to take risks also supports the ability to develop friendships and the ability to work in teams.

### **Self-directed**

Co-creation and co-design promote the valuable skill of self-directed learning. Self-directed learning means the student takes initiative and responsibility for their own learning. While the parent / teacher may at first set the learning goals (or use their curriculum's goals), they are facilitators, not transmitters, of student learning. Over time, the student learns to take initiative for their own learning. Then, as a self-directed learner, she is enabled to take responsibility for identifying her own learning needs, coming up with goals, finding the right resources, and identifying the projects to demonstrate mastery.

## Creative and Innovative

Student interest and passion fuels the drive to create—from creative works of art to solutions to perceived needs. Creativity serves to express an idea or concept, while innovation seeks to solve an issue. Creativity is at the heart of innovation.

Each student perceives the world differently and they are moved in their hearts by different needs. Learning can be guided by their passions and desire to make the world or their community a better place. Creativity and innovation are characteristics that emerge as they are allowed look at the world in new ways and form ideas to improve it. Therefore, they learn in order to find authentic solutions to real-life problems. They intentionally use creativity and innovation to develop something authentic and beneficial.

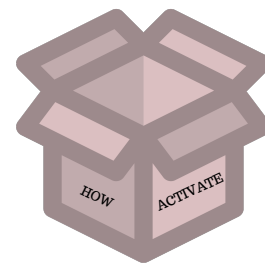
## Team Player

Co-creation and co-design infer collaborating in the process of learning through team activity. This could be collaborating in a learning project, an experiment, a service project, or a sports activity. In some cases, this may mean working with the parent, siblings, or with classmates.

**Example 5: Co-creation and co-design for student understanding.**

# Classroom Structure for Understanding

- Flexible grouping
- Opportunities to go deeper
  - Must do/ Choose to
- Project Based (Co-creation)
- Opportunities for acceleration
- Inquiry and research
- Application of knowledge
- Frequent informal and formal assessments



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## **Influence and Contribution**

Our students are called to be influencers in the earth, bringing into it the creativity and blessings of God's Kingdom. We want to support them in representing Jesus well. Therefore, inquiry-based learning in the context of a student's passions, interests, and wonderings is with a spirit of excellence. We employ excellence yet guard our hearts against perfectionism and performance.

We want our students to be like Daniel and his friends. "In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom" (Dan 1:20).

We want our students to have an answer for the question "What will be different in our neighborhood, community, state, region, nation, and/or world because we were here?"

### **Identity Awareness**

The foundation of identity is the unconditional love received from a parent, care giver, or teacher. And at the center of learning is a child's awareness of their relationship with God and with the extended family of believers. Every child is born into a spiritual heritage to which they belong. Parents and teachers, the Scriptures, the church family, and the Holy Spirit reinforce the truth of this heritage which forms the basis of understanding their calling. Therefore, the learning experience should help the student understand and prepare for their future influence and contribution. Inquiry-based learning in the context of the student's passions, interests, and wonderings allows them to apply their learning in creative ways. They learn to see a need and find solutions. And as they walk with God, they are willing to tackle the needs they see through faith, love, and effort.

### **Maturity**

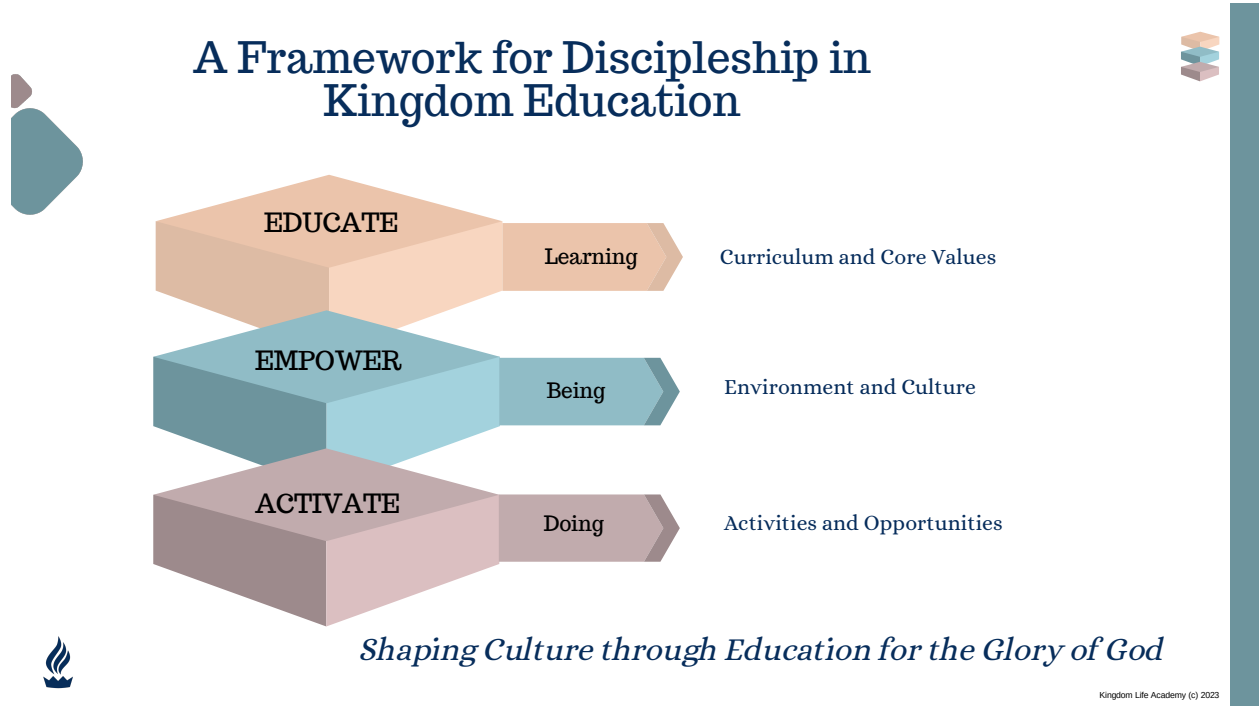
Maturity takes on responsibility. Here a student is "response able." They have learned the process of discovering a need and finding solutions. They are willing to put in the effort, and they are willing to work with others to find a greater answer. They are willing to be disciplined in learning God's creative and life-giving ways. They become personally responsible to prepare themselves for their calling.

### **Others-focused**

The greatest influences and contributions are found in God's love. God's love is other centered. The greatest expression of maturity for a student is to serve others through love. The love of Christ controls their heart to better those around them through their God-given calling.

Through love they will answer for the question, “What will be different in our neighborhood, community, state, region, nation, and/or world because we were here?”

**Example 6: Discipleship in education promoting student influence and contribution.**

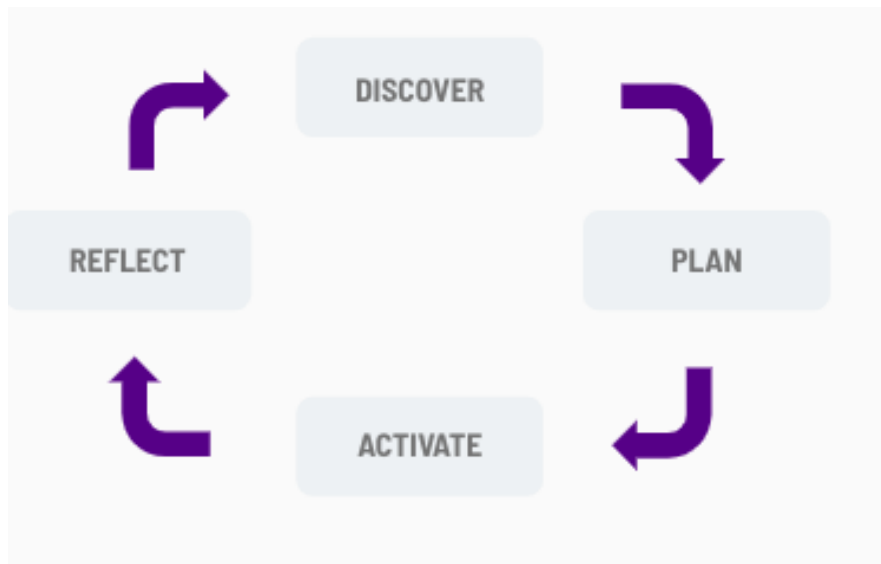


# 5

## Conclusion

This framework is meant to be a launching point for parents, teachers, and administrators as they embark upon educating children in the presence of God, where they grow in knowing Him, loving Him, and living a life of complete surrender to fulfill His call on their lives. As leaders in the lives of this generation, we have the incredible opportunity to partner with the Holy Spirit in educating them to transform culture and expand the kingdom of God.

We encourage you to pray over this pathway and seek God for wisdom in applying the elements of it in your specific context. This is an ongoing process of discovery, planning, activation, and reflection with the Holy Spirit in every area of this framework.



As you consider each element in the pathway, plan what you will do, try it out, and reflect on the results. And in everything, it's essential that we continuously seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. For our God is faithful. He is equipping parents, teachers, and administrators to educate a generation for His glory.

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