

**Note: Letters to Teachers #4 and #5 are sequential.**

**#5 Subject: The Choosing Phonogram Options and Asking for Help Responsibilities and Privileges Are Hers During Any Activity**



Dear Ann,

The bullying practices of "test taking" - of "testing" period - are means of coercion and population control conceived in evolutionary, atheistic Phonics philosophers' imaginations! It is all "darkness": In 40 years, I haven't found a shred of truth in their procedures, results, or philosophies. Have you read *The History of Intelligence Testing* article on the website and *The Case Against Standardized Testing* by Alfie Kohn (See *Bibliography* under *Articles* on our home page)? Oh, how we need to have our thoughts *cleaned up* by the Spirit of Truth regarding the whole "testing ideology." I seek to direct all my teachers to consider its evils.

I will continue our discussion from our last e-mail. You asked: "Do you have any ideas regarding testing in general, because we will have the same problem with end of the year achievement tests?" Also, we were talking about "a student must *take hold* of the responsibility of exercising the privilege to **choose from among her phonogram options**, using them each time she speaks, spells, and reads." **In doing this she shows she knows all the phonograms and regards them as "tools."** She may request help to choose which one to use but only after she, to the best of her understanding, has narrowed down which ones are available to her to use in the specific speaking, spelling, or reading situation she is facing. You'll hear this discussion several times in the conversations recorded on *Listen in Library CDs #3 and #4.*

I think you could omit calling an activity a "review" or a "test" if saying these words upsets her. But at the same time, you should instruct her precious thoughts from the Word, from its Truths: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" and "He makes my path to shine like the noonday sun." These are Truths that encourage her to trust God. **God's Word is the Spirit's sword and it will conquer all her fears too!**

**Learning to Ask for Help** Actually, in our script, the student is always "taking a test" as she guides her TEAM to SAY & DO. The program is a truth test from the beginning to end. And she always can pass this test by looking to you for help! Consider this. What if after reading and rejoicing in God's Words, we returned to them only to hear Him say, "Sorry, You have to have them memorized? I will not speak them to you again. You're on your own!" How discompassionate He would be! God does not withhold His Word of Truth from us, so we like Him (we exemplify God to our children) do not withhold words of truth from them. We imitate God. *Inquire of the Lord.* How could we *ponder the Lord's statues* unless He preserved them for us?

**Maybe what she lacks is confidence in "how well she is doing as her TEAM'S Coach."**

This truthful encouragement from you supports her efforts: "**What you SAY is what you DO! You're a great TEAM Coach!**"

You know which phonograms she knows and can use correctly ... 100% of the time. This is your bottom line consideration. Retaking the test would not satisfy a lack of phonogram proficiency, if she has one. But you have assessed ... when you considered **question #5** from our previous e-mail ... her phonogram proficiency; "Yes" she is proficient; "No" she is not.

Does she know she doesn't have to know any speaking/spelling pattern (that's what a syllable is) from visual memory? Does she know her TEAM can understand and apply and master all phonograms over time and does she know the value of being patient with the process? The "does she know" distinction here is between exercising visual memory by itself and exercising a well-trained, well-informed neurological TEAM to attain knowledge!

Because she has a trained TEAM; she can call each phonogram forth to serve her in both familiar and unfamiliar situations. Her TEAM'S "work" is to know the phonograms and call them forth, "requiring" that each serves her accurately to spell a specific sound as she directs it! WOW! This is life-giving!

Guide her to direct her TEAM to "act out" the following Truth. "When I ask God for wisdom, He invites me to a 'wisdom banquet' prepared especially for me. *Liberally* and *without reproach*, He 'feeds me' what I need. That's what Mommy does when I 'ask' her." This *rehearsal* puts "asking for help" in a welcoming, just like God, "come and get it" perspective.

**Selecting the exact phonogram from among phonograms that can spell the same sound is her operational potential.** She possesses this knowledge! Therefore, she can apply it! Rejoice in this fact together.

She is experiencing "at your hand" the "**goals of instruction**" which are: 1) **love out of a pure heart** [you and she love God and each other because of the *phonogram truth* you are learning together], 2) **a good conscience** [you are obeying {putting to use} what you have learned], and 3) **faith unfeigned** [*pretension* has been replaced with "Yes" I know, "No" I don't know, *honest-to-God honesty* which rules your hearts' performance decisions]. Who would have thought teaching and learning English was thus inclined, showing God's heart thus inclined toward us?!

I surely don't have every English syllable and word memorized. Who does? Who can? I do as any "maturing" student does: I "ask" for help, maybe by "asking" a dictionary or a speller/divider (like the one included with Part Two), or a person. With "tool" use, a word's phonogram arrangement becomes familiar, like arranging a saddle on a horse's back. I *learn* to "judge" my performance. This is true of all mastery: the more we encounter a situation, the more familiar it becomes, and the more opportunity we have to exercise our "tools" correctly, even expertly, THE MORE WE "OWN" THEM. We do not then incorrectly say, "I memorized this word." We correctly say, "I know this word! I have entered into it! I know its features and potential. I am able to teach this word!"

**Your instruction is giving her this understanding:**

**"Knowing my phonograms ... whether I'm speaking, spelling, writing** (spelling and writing is *speaking on paper*), **or reading** (reading is *speaking from paper*) ... **is my firm foundation.** Asking help to single out the exact phonogram is the responsible thing I can and will do. It's my **lifetime habit.** It helps me 'judge' my performance's correctness to see whether or not I am **in the way** (which I certainly would mistake if I had to guess what it is)."

Please call or e-mail anytime for any reason. I wish to serve you. I hope I am. I've interwoven plenteous illustrative terms, phrases, and discussions in this letter, and hopefully they did not

clutter its clarity. I trust God to help you understand verbose me. (:>)

Blessings to you from Christ our Savior,

Sharon

P.S. Thanks to Sherry Frattini for editing **Letters to Teachers**, thereby improving my understanding of the inseparable oral/ written English Grammar partnership.

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