



Of Education:

Milton and the Common Core State Standards

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Is Milton Relevant?

1. Milton proposed educational reform in 17th Century England
2. The CCSS is the proposed reformation following the No Child Left Behind Act in 21st Century America
3. So, how do they relate?

Milton's Education

1. Humanist Education

- a. Focus on the rebirth of classical Greek and Roman education
- b. Seven primary subjects
 - i. Arithmetic, Geometry, Music, Astronomy, Grammar, Rhetoric, and Logic

Milton's Education (cont.)

1. St. Paul's
 - a. Preoccupation with language
 - i. Four years of Latin, three years of Greek, one year of Hebrew
 - ii. Used biblical texts to aid in learning language
 - iii. The literary aspect of writing is more important than the moral, or meaning of the text

Milton's Education (cont.)

1. Cambridge University
 - a. Was not allowed to student ministry
 - b. Disappointed academically
 - c. Universities give students a contempt of learning

Milton's Pedagogy

1. Milton attributes his educational reform to schools of thought from Greece, Italy, and Asia
 - a. Does not credit St. Paul's or Cambridge
 - b. Based on his private study while travelling abroad
2. Therefore, he criticizes the traditional school system

Milton's Pedagogy (cont.)

1. Purpose of education is to thoughtfully engage society
 - a. The enlargement of truth, and honest living
2. Milton argues that the traditional education system fails to prepare students to use their education
 - a. Inadequate teaching of language
 - b. Schools presented students with material beyond their ability

Milton's Pedagogy (cont.)

1. Reasonable place and pace
 - a. Education begins at twelve years of age, not seven
 - b. Read texts that lay a groundwork for grammar and idiom
 - c. Foundation of arithmetic
2. Moral Citizens
 - a. Students will learn how to care for the nation
 - i. Reading the authors of agriculture, economics, politics, and law

Common Core State Standards

1. Standardization to bridge the education gap
 - a. The difference in performance between schools in wealthy and poor districts
 - b. Designed to ensure students learn the material, not simply time out of the system

CCSS (cont.)

1. Tier system
 - a. Designed to teach students material at their grade level
 - b. Prepares students for college level material
 - c. The tiers allow students to progress at slower or faster paces
2. The Da Vinci Curriculum
 - a. Most similar to Milton's pedagogy
 - b. Based on a Renaissance style of education

Pedagogical Comparison

1. Postmodernism
 - a. a lack of overarching metanarrative
 - b. Milton's religion
2. Setting a Foundation
 - a. Milton's goal
 - b. CCSS goal

In Conclusion

The Common Core State Standards as a postmodern reinvention of Milton's pedagogy, as expressed in *Of Education*.

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