

Choosing Curriculum: A Curriculum Evaluation Tool

There are many ways to evaluate curriculum. Some people compare prices. Some people have a checklist. We have chosen to look at theological goals and educational strategies. We have chosen five questions in each category. We will begin by examining the questions and then make practical applications to our denominational curriculum, *Growing in Grace & Gratitude*.

Theological Goals:

Does the curriculum accomplish the following theological goals?

Call us to community through Baptismal font and Communion table?

Point to God's sovereignty over all creation and in all nations?

Accept the authority of the whole canon, Old and New Testaments?

Foster the covenant relationship between the triune God and humans?

Connect us in all our diversity through Christ and in Christ?

Educational Strategies:

Does the curriculum use the following sound educational strategies?

Allow for the diversity of learners by incorporating multiple ways of being intelligent and learning, in age-appropriate ways?

Encourage peer or cooperative learning among the students?

Create a bridge to daily life?

Provide clear and understandable directions for teachers?

Make connections to the worship life of the congregation?

5 Practical Considerations:

Teacher Preparation

What does it take to be ready for class?

- How long does preparation take and what is involved in preparation?
- How easy is it to give to a substitute teacher at the last minute?
- Where are the supplemental materials/resources?
- How well with this curriculum work with a team of teachers?

Adaptability

How adaptable is the curriculum for class size?

How adaptable is the curriculum for rotation workshop?

How adaptable is the curriculum for a broadly-graded class?

Format/Design

Is the format and design attractive, easy to follow, engage you as a teacher?

Ordering/Delivery

How easy or complex is the ordering process? How efficient is delivery and/or return issues handled?

Affordability

How does this curriculum compare in price to other curricula?

Are there ways to save costs?

What is most important for Reformed Churches to look for when choosing a curriculum and resources?

- Uses the latest developments in educational theory: multiple intelligences, brain research, inclusion of differently-abled, etc.
- Field tested by Reformed congregations
- Interprets and reflects the mission of your denomination
- Celebrates cultural diversity
- Acknowledges the implications of the trends of society
- Is Reformed in language, theology and belief
- Integrates spiritual practices
- Developmentally appropriate
- Uses current technology
- Adapts to the workshop/rotation model
- Developed in partnership with other denominations
- Is teacher/learner friendly
- Teaches Baptism and Communion in Reformed ways
- Can be reused (not dated)
- Is biblically-based
- Is lectionary-based
- Is inexpensive
- Is colorful vs. black and white
- Other _____