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“Recall” IN UPPER SCHOOL MAIN-LESSONS

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Recall is the process of gathering together what has been achieved in the past days or day, so that a pupil can go forward in a more conscious manner. It establishes continuity and can lead to a growing understanding through comparison and experiencing change or development.

In main-lesson the pupil engages in a process of active listening, responding and writing. The pupil's thoughts, feelings and observations are written up for homework.

The active listening and thinking, both in the lesson and the homework, engages the pupil's will and opens the soul to the enrichment of sleep. Significantly, recall allows a brief moment for this enrichment to come to consciousness. Often, an essential idea not expressed in the course of the lesson or in the homework comes from sleep and will be stated the following day. If the whole class is listening carefully, the 'heart of the matter' can be received by everyone while spoken by a pupil in recall. Careful, active listening is of the utmost importance.

The Upper School main-lesson is a balance of thought processes. It is beneficial to look at these processes as planetary qualities: Moon through Saturn. In Class 9 I have tended to concentrate on the first two of these qualities, Moon and Mercury. Therefore, careful, painstaking reproduction is required as well as the ability to observe in detail, list phenomena and make general comparisons. As the teacher, I must ensure a balance of qualities and inner dynamic by seeing that Jupiter and Saturn qualities are also present. If successful, the lesson will come alive of itself and not just out of the inspirational gifts of the teacher. Recall offers further opportunity for these latter qualities, Jupiter and Saturn, to come from the pupils themselves after having the space to 'sleep on' the lesson.

For instance, after the lessons on Michelangelo in Class 9 History of Art, I have asked pupils to 'recall' by writing in their notebooks the word or phrase which would sum up his work. Many pupils' hands shoot up and the words *will*, *purpose*, *courage* are spoken or rather called out. Some boys in the act of leaping out of their chairs give voice not only to a Saturn quality in the word *will*, but a Jupiter quality in the leap.

As mentioned above, the main-lesson should contain a variety of thought processes in dynamic interaction. This dynamic should be fostered in each part of the main-lesson in metamorphosis. We can therefore look at each of the six planetary

qualities, the three below the Sun – Moon, Mercury and Venus – and the three above – Mars, Jupiter and Saturn – in relation to recall as an essential part of the main-lesson.

Below I will give examples of recall which have worked in main-lesson and which stimulate a given thinking (planetary) quality.

First is Moon, the ability to remember and reproduce or repeat something accurately. A written description, in a given time of, say, ten minutes, of a painting, apart of a biography, a story, a route taken, an experiment, are examples of this form. A sketch of a painting detail or a map would be another approach. More examples and variations can be used and made suitable to the different classes.

Next is Mercury, the making of comparisons and concise lists of relevant points. Here I have often asked pupils to compare two subjects, either two paintings from one main-lesson or two paintings of a similar period but different artists, or two works of art from different periods. Sometimes I will ask pupils to look only for similarities, at other times only differences. Possibilities are almost endless, but careful attention needs to be paid to what is asked of each age group.

The last 'under Sun' quality is of Venus, the realm of feeling, and here the 'feelings' of the pupils need to be taken as objective phenomena and thought about. Sympathy and antipathy with respect to a painting, a story or an animal species are facts as much as the red of a robe, or the blue of a crystal. Class 10 marks a good beginning to teach this and the recall in a clear, precise manner of one's feelings; and the attempt to designate these properly is an excellent exercise. It is very good for vocabulary as well.

The fourth quality is Mars, the forming and expression of sound judgment based on sound reasoning. Various recall exercises can encourage this. In the Friday lesson the pupils can be asked to recall the whole of the week in reverse order. In Class 11 they can be asked to recall three subjects from each day in reverse order as well as the above. This is more than remembering. It is establishing a right order, which is more difficult. The teacher needs to have thoroughly prepared for this one, or you will be caught out. Next, you can take any recall exercise, as above or below, but ask a pupil to come forward and read his recall (Classes 9/10) or speak it extemporaneous (Classes 11/12). This speaking out in front of the class is a Mars quality and, as such, should be done properly – standing straight, speaking slowly and clearly, not dropping words etc. The reading out of homework is also helpful in this regard. In my lessons, every pupil has the 'opportunity' to stand in front of the class and read the homework essay. The shy ones are helped because they know everyone has to do it; it is taken seriously, the class is appreciative and it has 'always been done.'

In Class 11, they can begin to criticize these read essays. The teacher must be sensitive here but the pupils need and even want this. It must be well structured, clear and simple. The criteria of criticism need to be well defined and easily understood. For example, you could ask the class to note the number of physical qualities, colors, objects etc. noted by the reader with respect to a given painting. Based on this, you could then ask if a full enough description was given. Pupils can also take one of their own sketches (Classes 9-12) and critically compare it with the original, following clearly stated criteria. In Classes 11 and 12, they can perform the above with a sketch of another pupil. Both critiques, as when as all the above recall exercises, are written up and included in the main-lesson file.

Jupiter gives the opportunity to recall gesture, the dramatic gesture of a lesson, a

period, a sculpture etc. In the Class 9 History of Art lesson, I have asked a class to close their eyes and recreate the image of, say, the painting The Madonna of the Rocks by Leonardo, and then to picture clearly the Madonna, her hands, posture, head, and so on. A pupil is asked to come to the front and recreate the Madonna's exact position. Other pupils can come forward and alter this, the first pupil becoming a 'day model' until the class is satisfied. You don't have to show the slide to check correctness. Working on the gesture is the important thing.

Finally, Saturn is the essence of what we do and what we strive to think about. We sacrifice hours of time and effort for this quality, and it is worth the sacrifice. The pupils make it willingly. But what is it? And, more importantly, can the pupils find it in themselves?

Earlier in this essay I mentioned this quality in connection with a main-lesson on Michelangelo. I asked the students to recall the one word or phrase, which would sum up his work. You could also ask for three words, or a sentence, to characterize a work, a life, and a period. In Class 11 students have discovered the meaning of 'style' in this manner.

Recall in main-lesson can be used to encourage, indeed to train, a living thinking in pupils. Although only a small part of a main-lesson, the whole array of thinking qualities can be found within it and used as a teaching tool.