



A PHILOSOPHY OF  
EDUCATION

*by Charlotte Mason*

VOLUME 6  
STUDY GUIDE

BY A CHARLOTTE MASON PLENARY



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TITLE: A PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

SUB-TITLE: VOLUME 6 STUDY GUIDE

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# A PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

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## VOLUME 6 STUDY GUIDE

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## *Introduction from* **A CHARLOTTE MASON PLENARY**

Welcome to your Study Guide for *A Philosophy of Education* by Charlotte Mason! You are taking a step toward better understanding and, therefore, a better homeschool.

You will need a copy of Volume 6: *A Philosophy of Education* by Charlotte Mason to complete this study. You may use any reprint of Volume 6 you like, but you will get the most out of this Study Guide by using the ANNOTATED EDITION OF VOLUME 6 published by A CHARLOTTE MASON PLENARY.

### **RESOURCES = EASIER**

You may want to consider the following helps which will make your study of Charlotte's *A Philosophy of Education* even easier:

- [VOLUME 6 ANNOTATED EDITION](#)
- [VOLUME 6 AUDIOBOOK](#)
- [VOLUME 6 COMPANION COURSE & DISCUSSION GROUP](#)

In addition, I will give you links to other free resources throughout the Study Guide as they relate to each chapter, including:

- [VOLUME 6 RESOURCES PAGE](#)
- [20 PRINCIPLES VIDEOS](#)

### **CHARLOTTE MASON YOUR WAY**

My motto at THE PLENARY is "CHARLOTTE MASON YOUR WAY" because the method will, and should, look different in every home. It's important to understand that it is a *method* and not a system. I hope you will find this Study Guide helpful in understanding and implementing Charlotte's method in a way that is *personally meaningful to you and your family*.

A Charlotte Mason education is so life-giving, so peaceful, relaxing, and joyful. My wish for you is that you and your children find room to breathe, to think, and to contemplate as you sit down to the feast of this education. May you have unhurried,

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uncomplicated, “smooth and easy days.”

These are the things we owe our children; the things we owe ourselves. And these are the things that I love about a Charlotte Mason education; that this style of life is simple, relaxed, unhurried, and brings peace of mind. It gives us room to find the path; our *own* path.

To that end, this resource was created with much love and respect for Charlotte and for you; to make it easier to enjoy the beautiful education that is the Charlotte Mason method. It comes from my home to yours with much love and appreciation. I hope you will enjoy using it as much as I have enjoyed creating it.

For a complete, up-to-date list of books and study guides, or for more information about the Charlotte Mason method of education, please see THE PLENARY website at [CMPLINARY.COM](http://CMPLINARY.COM).

With much love,

*Rachel Lebowitz*

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## *A Special Invitation*

### FROM A CHARLOTTE MASON PLENARY

You are invited to join a special COMPANION COURSE as you read *A Philosophy of Education*; one that will help you get the most out of your time with Charlotte's last and most important book.

**The VOLUME 6 COMPANION COURSE:** This wonderful course includes additional resources such as downloadable guides, bonus video content, and links to resources mentioned in the Annotated Edition.

The content of the course is organized based on each chapter within *A Philosophy of Education*, making it easy for you to find what you need to enhance your understanding of Charlotte's philosophy and method.

**PRIVATE ONLINE DISCUSSION GROUP:** Join our online discussion group and be part of the family! Have questions? Don't understand what Charlotte is saying? Ask us! Learn from others and help others learn.

**SPECIAL NEEDS CONSIDERATIONS:** The Companion Course also includes videos that address specific considerations of families with children who have special needs. Each video addresses how to adapt and modify the information to fit your family's unique situation.

Our Special Needs Consultant, Amy Bodkin, Ed.S., believes in the developmental approach to Charlotte Mason's method. *Children are born persons.* The respect of personhood due to *every* child means we see each child as an individual, not as a diagnosis.

**JOIN US:** We'd love to have you as part of our learning community! I hope you will join us. Visit the following link for more information:

[CMPLINARY.COM/COURSES](https://cmplenary.com/courses)



## VOLUME 6

### *Introduction*

Charlotte's introduction to *A Philosophy of Education* is a good overview of the entire volume. She introduces ideas that she will discuss in more detail in later chapters.

**THE WAR:** Throughout the course of the book, Charlotte frequently mentions “the War,” which was WWI. She wrote *A Philosophy of Education* in 1921, just a few years after the war had ended. The effects of WWI were quite staggering for England. More than 900,000 British soldiers were killed, and more than twice that number returned home maimed or disabled. Citizens faced extreme hardship at home as well, including famine, illness, and shortages of materials. This is the lens from which Charlotte writes about education.

Charlotte makes the argument that one of the causes of the Great War was Germany's distortion and misrepresentation of certain theories by Charles Darwin. She explains that the German education of the time was strictly utilitarian which marked the beginning of the country's moral downfall; that nothing mattered but physical fitness and vocational training; that the utilitarian education freed German citizens from any ‘moral restraints;’ and that this is what can happen when education does not nourish and inspire the spirit of a person. Charlotte cites the book *German Philosophy in Relation to the War* by John Henry Muirhead as well as a book-burning incident in Germany. You can find links to both of those references on the [Volume 6 Resources Page](#) on The Plenary website.

**EDUCATION:** Education means preparing a child for *life*, not just for making a living; it means feeding a person's mind and spirit with ideas that will inspire them.

*“Knowledge is the necessary daily food of the mind” for “it is the man who has read and thought on many subjects who is, with the necessary training, the most capable whether in handling tools, drawing plans, or keeping books. The more of a person we succeed in making a child, the better will he both fulfill his own life and serve society ... We want an education which shall nourish the mind while not neglecting either physical or vocational training.”*

Charlotte gives a list in which she describes how her method of education is different from the usual education of the day:

- Students do the work themselves

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- Teachers are only there to help if asked – except in certain subjects such as math and grammar; *“Teachers Shall Teach Less and Scholars Shall Learn More”*
- Much reading is assigned
- Nothing is selected based on a student’s interest
- Students do not seem to be confused or mixed up by the reading of so many books simultaneously
- Students delight in their studies
- Books used are literary in style
- Marks, prizes, and rewards are not used to secure attention
- No stray lessons - lessons are planned to be consecutive in order

**LIBERAL EDUCATION FOR ALL:** This education is beneficial for ALL students, not just those of the upper classes and gifted students. This is an education that nourishes children from every walk of life and every ability.

Charlotte says her theory is based on certain Principles that are usually unrecognized or disregarded. Some of which are:

- Children are persons and have the same needs as we do
- The mind needs ideas just as body needs food
- The Desire of Knowledge is the chief instrument of education and that “this desire might be paralyzed or made powerless like an unused limb by encouraging other desires to intervene between a child and the knowledge proper for him”

Charlotte will discuss these Principles (and others) in more detail in later chapters.

### STUDY QUESTIONS: INTRODUCTION

1. What is education?
2. How should education serve a person as well as a society?
3. How did education go wrong in Germany and what was the result?
4. What is knowledge? How does one become educated?

LINKS TO RESOURCES: [VOLUME 6 RESOURCES PAGE](#)

## *About the Author*



**Hi! I'M RACHEL LEBOWITZ, THE OWNER OF A CHARLOTTE MASON PLENARY.** My husband and I have always homeschooled our two children using the Charlotte Mason method of education. I have a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Houston where I studied Communications and Political Science. Before attending college, I travelled as a member of Up With People, a performing arts organization with a mission to transcend cultural barriers and create global understanding through music. After college, I spent many years working as a Radio and Television Journalist. My husband and I currently reside in Texas with our two children, two dogs, and one guinea pig.

### **OTHER BOOKS BY THE AUTHOR**

#### **THE PLENARY ANNOTATED HOME EDUCATION SERIES**

*Home Education: Annotated Edition*

*A Philosophy of Education: Annotated Edition*

(Other Annotated Volumes by Charlotte Mason coming soon)

#### **THE PLENARY PLUTARCH SERIES**

*Plutarch's Life of Publicola: Annotated Study Guide*

*Plutarch's Life of Pericles: Annotated Study Guide*

*Plutarch's Life of Julius Caesar: Annotated Study Guide*

(More Plutarch Guides coming soon)

#### **LIVING BOOKS**

*America First: Updated Edition*

by Lawton Evans and Rachel Lebowitz

For a complete listing of books and study guides, or for more info about the Charlotte Mason method of education, please see The Plenary website at:

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STUDY QUESTIONS  
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