

THE KING'S SCHOOL WEST RAND



STUDENT LITERATURE AND VISUAL TEXTS

1. INTRODUCTION

Students of The King's School will be strongly encouraged to develop a love of literature and of reading. They will be trained to be aware of but not to be taken captive by hollow and deceptive worldly philosophies (Col 2:8), and to be transformed in their thinking by the renewing of their minds (Romans 12:2). Christian education should bring the light of Christ to all situations – 'For with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see light.' (Psalm 36:9).

To those ends, critical and reflective habits of reading will be fostered. Students will be taught to evaluate the worth and validity of what is read in the light of God's Word, and to discern the presence or absence of a biblical Christian worldview. They will learn to distinguish between fact and opinion, detect false claims and contradictions, and identify the assumptions and biases of authors. They will be encouraged to respond personally by further clarifying their own faith commitments and setting their minds on the things of Christ rather than on the things of the world. (Phil 4:8)

Our students must be taught to think deeply and theologically about all matter of things.

'A Christian school studies the world as it is in all its fallenness, but from a God-centred perspective that prepares students to cope with that fallenness.' Christian teachers are able to discuss relevant biblical truths and values, and to help students discern between a biblical Christian worldview and other worldviews which are commonly held.

Christian teachers recognise the need of nurturing guidance for young people and promote a commitment to virtue and godly character as portrayed in Scripture. In no way do Christian teachers wish to lead students astray or cause students to stumble (Isaiah 9:16) Nor do we glorify

that which is shameful (Phil 3: 18-19). A Christian school seeks always to support Christian parents in the task of bringing their children up in the ways of the Lord. At times senior students will study controversial literature which is designed to promote deep discussion and thought on adult themes. In such cases, material will be scrutinised and classified very carefully. The counsel of other Christian schools will be sought, and parents will be advised beforehand of the controversial element(s) to be discussed, so that they also may engage in fruitful conversation with their child.

2. **CLASSIFICATION OF LITERATURE**

In selecting texts to be used at The King's School, teachers will evaluate material on guidelines, some of which are:

- Are there negative consequences for wrong behaviours (Is Romans 6:23 upheld? The wages of sin is death.)
- Is wrong or unhealthy behaviour normalised? Is evil promoted as good and good as evil? (or can right and wrong be discerned and discussed)
- Is there a character who deals with the issues placed in the book by the author? (identifiable to the students)
- Is there hopelessness and helplessness? A victim mentality? (or is there hope/light/growth)
- Is this text a hindrance to building healthy lives? Or can it be used to guide students towards truth and virtue?
- Is the educational value outweighed by the detriments?
- Will there be teacher oversight and interaction as students read this text? Will classifiable elements be discussed and judged from a biblical Christian worldview?
- Is there a specific use planned for this text? (i.e. Does the text have intrinsic worth as a teaching tool with the context of The King's School's beliefs and values?)

The bases for not using certain texts in The King's School classes may include –

- Texts which dwell on or motivate students to dwell on themes such as suicide, depression, mental illness and wrong choices without hope or help.
- Texts which do not contain one example of a character of worth and integrity, or a character who develops such attributes, but instead make a hero out of an unrepentant sinner.
- Explicit or deviant sexual descriptions which create fear or high level offence.
- Texts which normalise promiscuous or extra-marital sexual relationships without resolution. (i.e. no opportunities for students to consider and discern right from wrong)

- Texts which paint an anti-Christian picture or mock Christianity in ways which cannot be resolved or explained.
- Texts which portray the occult, witchcraft or Satanism as pathways to truth. (Hence the difficulty many Christian educators have with Harry Potter)
- Texts which portray bad behaviour without alternative or reprieve.
- Texts which advocate the use of illicit drugs, under-age drinking and other addictive behaviours without demonstrating negative consequences of such behaviours.
- Texts with intense foul language or profanity without reason or context.
- Authors who involve violence in their story with a particular relish that glorifies such violence.
- Texts which instil, through terror or horror, great fear in the reader without resolution.