The Seven Laws of Teaching

These principles are enumerated and explained by John Milton Gregory, a Baptist Minister and Educator, in *The Seven Laws of Teaching*, revised edition (1917, original 1884), reprinted by Baker Book House, 1993.) These principles continue to be popular with Christian Schools and Home schoolers who want to pursue a “classical education.”

1. **The Law of the Teacher:** The teacher must know that which he would teach; therefore, know thoroughly, clearly, and familiarly the lesson you wish to teach.

2. **The Law of the Learner:** The learner must attend with interest to the material to be learned; therefore, gain and keep the attention and interest of the pupils on the lesson. Do not try to teach without attention.

3. **The Law of the Language:** The language used in teaching must be common to teacher and learner; therefore, use words understood in the same way by the pupils and yourself.

4. **The Law of the Lesson:** The truth to be taught must be learned through truth already known; therefore, begin with what is already well known to the pupil about the subject, and proceed to the new material by single, easy, and natural steps.

5. **The Law of the Teaching Process:** Teaching is arousing and using the pupil's mind to grasp the desired thought or to master the desired art; therefore, stimulate the pupil's own mind to action. Keep his thought as much as possible ahead of your expression, placing him in the attitude of a discoverer and anticipator.

6. **The Law of the Learning Process:** The student must reproduce in his own mind the truth to be learned; therefore, require the pupil to reproduce in thought the lesson he is learning---thinking it out in its various phases and applications until he can express it in his own language.

7. **The Law of Review and Application:** The completion, test, and confirmation of the work of teaching must be made by review and application; therefore, review, review, review, reproducing the old, deepening its impression with new thought, linking it with added meanings, finding new applications, correcting any false views, and completing the true.

**Online resources:**

“A Home Schooler’s Discussion of the 7 Laws”
“Gregory's entire book in downloadable format” (zip) at www.sschool.com
“A Contemporary Abridgement” in pdf form
“A Restatement of the Rules for Presenters”
You can [purchase the book](#) from Amazon.com
A Shorter Version: In Acrostic Form
*T eachers know their stuff
*E eager students pay attention
*A ble to understand each other
*C onnect the known to the unknown
*H elp children to find out for themselves
*E xpress and explain it
*R eview and apply it

Seven Laws to Help You Present Better: An Abridged version

1. **Know the subject**
   Study the material fresh each time
   Seek out and use illustrations from real life
   Use a natural order of truth, from the simple to the complex

2. **Generate audience interest**
   Gain and keep the attention and interest of your audience
   Use a variety of presentation techniques: visual aids, stories, illustrations, questions and discussion
   Make your presentation interactive by asking questions

3. **Use words that your audience knows**
   Use short sentences
   Explain new ideas by using objects, visual aids, slides, pictures, analogies and discussion

4. **Build on known truths**
   Relate your points and illustrations to what your audience has experienced
   Help your audience understand that practical new knowledge is usable in life experience

5. **Stimulate self-learning**
   Use practical exercises and illustrations that activate audience members' imaginations and get them involved
   Encourage your audience to try new skills and seek new knowledge. Demystify the unknown

6. **Learn by doing**
   Stimulate audience questioning, answering and participation
   Make sure your audience's actions are practical. An activity must lead somewhere and go there for a reason

7. **Tell them, tell them again, then tell them what you told them**
   Remember that review is the final touch to your presentation
   Repetition begets retention.
From the Sunday School Page:

1. The Law of the Teacher
   - Teachers must be fully equipped with the knowledge they wish to communicate.
   - Fresh study and preparation are keys to enriched teaching.

2. The Law of the Learner
   - Student interest and attention must be generated by the teacher.
   - A teacher’s enthusiasm is contagious with students.

3. The Law of the Lesson
   - Lessons are best begun with common and familiar experiences.
   - Excellent teachers understand the background of their pupils and use it as a starting point.

4. The Law of the Language
   - The words used by teachers must be easily understood by students.
   - Illustrations, natural objects, and visual aids are important to good communication.

5. The Law of the Teaching Process
   - Expert teachers arouse and direct self-activities by their students, thus stimulating them to learn for themselves.
   - Student skills grow with practical exercises involving their minds.

6. The Law of the Learning Process
   - Excellent education helps learners to be investigative discoverers.
   - Real and valuable learning is more than memorization.

7. The Law of Review and Application
   - Review perfects knowledge, confirms knowledge, and makes knowledge ready and useful.
   - Practical reviews are characteristic of excellent teachers.