

An Outline of Sister Miriam Joseph's
The Trivium

Shane Michael Sexton

May 26, 2019

I. The Liberal Arts

A. **Trivium** - pertains to mind

1. Logic
2. Grammar
3. Rhetoric

B. **Quadrivium** - pertains to matter

1. Arithmetic
2. Geometry
3. Astronomy
4. Music

C. **Language Arts** - the correct and effective use of language

1. *Phonetics* - how to combine sounds and form spoken words properly
2. *Spelling* - how to combine letters and form written words properly
3. *Grammar* - how to combine words to form sentences properly
4. *Rhetoric* - how to combine sentences into larger structures
5. *Logic* - how to combine concepts in a truthful, reasoned way

D. **Norms of Language Arts**

1. *Correctness* - the norm of phonetics, spelling, and grammar
2. *Effectiveness* - the norm of rhetoric
3. *Truth* - the norm of logic

II. The Nature and Function of Language

A. **Means of Communication**

1. **Imitation** - an artificial likeness, for example:
 - a. Paintings
 - b. Photographs
 - c. Statues
2. **Symbol** - an arbitrary sign upon which meaning is imposed
 - a. *Common* - a symbol of a common language (e.g., English)
 - b. *Special* - a symbol of a specialized language (e.g., chemistry)

B. **Terms of Essence**

1. *Essence* - that which makes a being what it is
2. *Species* - the set of all beings sharing an essence
3. *Genus* - a set of more than one species
4. *Aggregate* - a set of more than one individuals

C. **Imposition and Intention**

1. Imposition
 - a. *Zero imposition* - discussing properties of a sign other than its meaning
 - b. *First imposition* - using a word only in relation to its meaning
 - c. *Second imposition* - refers both to the sign and the meaning (grammar)
2. Intention
 - a. *First intention* - refers to reality
 - b. *Second intention* - refers to the concept (logic)

III. General Grammar

A. Categorematic vs. Syncategorematic Words

1. *Categorematic words* - significant by themselves
 - a. *Substantives* - nouns, pronouns
 - b. *Attributives* - verbs, adjectives (primary); adverbs (secondary)
2. *Syncategorematic words* - only significant in combination with other words
 - a. *Definitives* - articles, pronominals
 - b. *Connectives* - prepositions, conjunctions
 - c. *Copula* - connects subject and predicate

B. Substantives

1. Concrete vs. Abstract
 - a. *Concrete* - an existing object (e.g., “woman”)
 - b. *Abstract* - a conception (e.g., “femininity”)
2. Characteristics of Substantives
 - a. Number (singular or plural)
 - b. Gender (masculine, feminine, neuter)
 - c. Person
 - (1) *First person* - speaker
 - (2) *Second person* - receiver of speech
 - (3) *Third person* - person spoken of
 - d. Case
 - (1) *Nominative* - performs the action
 - (2) *Genitive* - possessor
 - (3) *Dative* - the term to which the action proceeds
 - (4) *Accusative* - receives the action

C. Attributives

1. Verbs
 - a. Express an attribute with a sense of time; make an assertion
 - b. *Transitive* verbs flow from subject to object; *intransitive* verbs stay with the agent
 - c. *Tense* - temporal relation between the act and its being spoken of
 - d. *Mood* - expresses relation between subject and predicate
 - (1) *Indicative* - expresses a matter of fact
 - (2) *Potential* - expresses a possibility
 - (3) *Interrogative* - requests information
 - (4) *Volitive* - expresses a wish or desire
2. Verbals
 - a. Do not assert or express mode
 - b. *Infinitives* - standard dictionary form of a verb (e.g., “to take”)
 - c. *Gerunds* - end in “-ing” and function as nouns
 - d. *Participles* - end in “-ed” or “-ing” and function as adjectives
3. Adjectives - Unlike verbs or verbals, adjectives express attributes with no notion of time
4. Adverbs - *Secondary* attributives in that they modify primary attributives (e.g., verbs and adjectives)

- D. **Definitives** - single out an individual (“this”) or group (“those”)
- E. **Connectives** - connect words and sentences
 - 1. *Prepositions* - connect words and show their relation (e.g., “in” or “behind”)
 - 2. *Conjunctions* - join independent clauses or sentences
 - a. May **conjoin**, that is, join sentences and meaning (e.g., “and”)
 - b. May **disjoin**, or join sentences but not meanings (e.g., “but” or “or”)
- F. **The Pure Copula** - links a subject with a predicate (e.g., “The book **is** on the table.”)

IV. Terms and Their Grammatical Equivalents

- A. Empirical vs. General Terms
 - 1. *Empirical* terms designate a specific individual or group (e.g., “This cat is purring”)
 - 2. *General* terms signify something universal or essentials (e.g., “Cats purr”)
- B. Positive vs. negative terms (e.g., “awake” vs. “unawake,” “blue” vs. “non-blue”)
- C. Concrete vs. abstract terms (e.g., “human” vs. “humanness”)
- D. Absolute vs. relative terms
 - 1. *Absolute* terms can be understood on their own (“man”, “woman”)
 - 2. *Relative* terms come as pairs and are understood in relation to each other (“husband”, “wife”)
- E. Collective vs. distributive terms
 - 1. *Collective* terms apply to a group as a single entity (“The platoon marched its way north.”)
 - 2. *Distributive* terms apply to a group’s individual members (“The platoon marched their way north.”)
- F. Extension and intension
 - 1. *Extension* refers to the complete set of objects to which a term applies (prime numbers are 2, 3, 5, 7, 11...)
 - 2. *Intension* refers to the essential meaning (prime numbers are numbers greater than 1 whose factors are only 1 and themselves)
- G. Definitions
 - 1. *Logical* definitions describe a species in terms of its proximate genus and specific differentia (man is a rational animal)
 - 2. *Distinctive* definitions describe a species in terms of its genus and some non-essential property (man is an animal capable of written language).
 - 3. *Causal* definitions describe an entity in terms of its causes (AIDS is a syndrome caused by advanced HIV infection)
 - 4. *Descriptive* definitions list the traits by which a species can be identified (a domestic cat is a small, furry, quadrupedal mammal with whiskers, a tail, and a regal demeanor)
 - 5. *Definition by example* uses a set of examples that can be used to arrive at an abstraction (a cactus is a plant like a saguaro, cholla, or prickly pear)

V. Propositions and Their Grammatical Expression

VI. Relations of Simple Propositions

VII. The Simple Syllogism

VIII. Relations of Hypothetical and Disjunctive Propositions

IX. Fallacies

- A. Material fallacies
- B. Fallacies *in dictione*

1. *Equivocation*
2. *Amphiboly*
3. *Composition*
4. *Division*
5. *Accent*
6. *Verbal form*

C. Fallacies *extra dictionem*

1. *Fallacy of accident*
2. *Secundum quid*
3. *Fallacy of consequent*
4. *Ignoratio elenchi*
 - a. *Argumentum ad hominem*
 - b. *Argumentum ad populum*
 - c. *Argumentum ad misericordiam*
 - d. *Argumentum ad baculum*
 - e. *Argumentum ad ignorantiam*
 - f. *Argumentum ad verecundiam*
5. *False cause*
6. *Begging the question*
7. *Complex question*

X. A Brief Summary of Induction

XI. Composition and Reading