

# Delighting in God's world

## What Does This Mean?

The word *Eden* means delight ([Genesis 2:8](#)). The biblical Eden was a garden of delight, and it offers a way of looking at our world: the world was meant to be a garden of delights to be explored. Christians through history have often talked about learning in terms of being in God's garden of delight, and that is part of the history of the word *kindergarten*. It is easy to drift into seeing knowledge only in terms of usefulness and to neglect delighting in it. In the Bible, God tells people to "take delight" in the things he has given them ([Deuteronomy 26:11](#)). Delight is akin to joy; it is consciously taking pleasure in someone or something. It involves a raised awareness, taking notice, reveling in something, whether that be the beauty of math, the pleasure music creates, the joy of giving, or the simplicity of a design. The Bible describes God as delighting in his people ([Psalm 149:4](#)).

*Our only business is to love and delight ourselves in God. Brother Lawrence*

Delight does not mean ignoring the darker side of life. It means fully acknowledging the difficulties of life while remaining determined to celebrate what we can and trust the underlying goodness of God.

*This world is so full of care and sorrow that it is a gracious debt we owe to one another to discover the bright crystals of delight hidden in sombre circumstances and irksome tasks. Helen Keller*

*Mathematics, rightly viewed, possesses not only truth, but supreme beauty—a beauty cold and austere, like that of sculpture. . . . The true spirit of delight, the exaltation, the sense of being more than Man, which is the touchstone of the highest excellence, is to be found in mathematics as surely as poetry. Bertrand Russell*

*As a believer, I see DNA, the information molecule of all living things, as God's language, and the elegance and complexity of our own bodies and the rest of nature as a reflection of God's plan. Francis Collins*

## What Does This Mean in School?

We can organize teaching and learning to bring delight and to show that delight can be a proper response to the world.

- Allow students time to revel in sounds in music and poetry, to enjoy textures and color in art, and to be enchanted by the structure of crystals, the elegance of DNA, and the beauty of numbers.
- Model taking delight by the language used in class, the ways in which things are spoken about.
- Make delight a part of the lesson plan when appropriate. Find opportunities to show the beauty and intricacy of things.

Think of a time when you experienced a moment of delight in the classroom, when what was being explored became a joy. Locate a lesson or unit that you think has potential for delight. How could the teaching and learning facilitate this? You might supply images of DNA photography and DNA portraits in a science lesson. You could create a tactile display in art and allow time for touching. You could devise a task that encourages students to delight in sounds in poetry.



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