



COOLING VIDEO KIT

Performance versus Character in Education

Professor Trevor Cooling is Faculty Director at the National Institute for Christian Research, Canterbury Christ Church University UK. EdComm has produced the Cooling Video Kit as a five-part series for individual or group use primarily in Anglican schools. Each video is designed as a discussion starter with introductory notes and questions to get all staff thinking through their school's approach to biblically-shaped education.

Introduction

The annual HSC league tables and the tri-annual PISA tables serve to highlight the pressure on teachers and schools to teach to examinations. For some time there has been a growing concern that 'character' education in schools has been sidelined in the race to gain the best exam results.

Consequently, governments have encouraged schools to focus effort on developing 'character attributes' in their students. Can such character development be neutral or independent of religious beliefs? How do we teach values and virtues? Are there ways for teachers to make subtle adjustments in their pedagogy that will make learning more meaningful while still ensuring that students are well prepared for the final examinations?

In this video, Professor Trevor Cooling explores the pressure that teachers and schools find themselves under with the advent of league tables and state-based examinations and suggests ways to both enhance and build the character of students while still fulfilling examination requirements.

WATCH THE VIDEO:

'Performance and/or Character in Education: Do we have to choose?' (4:23 mins)



VIDEO TIPS

- To watch the video go to: edcomm.org.au/Cooling_Video_Kits
- View "Video 2: 'Performance and/or Character in Education'"
- You will need to be connected to the internet and have a high-speed broadband connection for uninterrupted viewing.



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Discussion questions

1. The pressure on schools to achieve exceptional results has put a great deal of pressure on classroom practice. How has a performance culture disrupted the school's ability to produce well-rounded, thoughtfully engaged students?
2. Why is it important to enhance the ability of our students to engage with their world widely and not become reductionist or narrow in their understanding of the world?
3. Professor Trevor Cooling ends by saying, 'If we focus on the pedagogy, the performance will follow'. What adjustments could you make to your pedagogy to enable both the enrichment of character and the skills required for performance?
4. How can the Anglican school ensure that its approach to teaching and learning enables students to grow and thrive as whole people, while maintaining high standards for performance?

GOING FURTHER

Sire, JW 2000, *Habits of the Mind: Intellectual Life as a Christian Calling*, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove.

Dockery, DS & George, T 2012, *The Great Tradition of Christian Thinking*, Crossway, Wheaton.

Dow, PE 2013, *Virtuous Minds: Intellectual Character Development*, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove.

Spears, D & Loomis, SR 2009, *Education for Human Flourishing*, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove.