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BECOMING BETTER EDUCATED

by Patrick Saint, PhD

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*This white paper is intended for an adult American who has no college degree, or who, having one, nevertheless senses a poverty of real education. It consists of three parts. The first presents information about tools and sources. The second presents a curriculum of sorts that will plug gaps and greatly improve a person’s knowledge and understanding of “the liberal arts.” The third section contains my brief recommendations regarding general education for adults who wish to wade into sustained courses of study in various subjects. Each of these three sections stands on its own and could be read profitably without the other two.*

*I write for white Americans who want to know their heritage. Although much of this book might help a nonwhite reader, his needs and interests are distinct from ours, and only someone dedicated to a nonwhite’s particular culture will be able to address his needs as strategically as I have done here for my own people.*

# Section One: Tools and Sources

The tools and sources discussed in this section (Section One) may be had at small cost, but it important for you to realize that this book’s next section (Section Two) actually could be used to its fullest without any outlay of cash at all.

[Project Gutenberg](https://www.gutenberg.org/) has 60,000 free ebooks for download. Everything I recommend in Section Two (below) could be found there. And here at the outset I wish to point out a very important fact to the aspiring student: collecting resources is very often a substitute for actually doing the schoolwork. There is a type of personality that will collect thirty books on Confederate history, but never read them. Or he may drift from one to the next like a bee in a garden without ever advancing in real education. Resist this urge to clutter your world with distracting books.

Used bookstores are also valuable, although they aren’t free. Some public libraries operate used bookstores within their building. Paper books are superior to ebooks in most ways (but not all!) You need a good *hardbound* dictionary, preferably one that is thirty or more years old (to reduce the level of liberal corruption) such as Webster’s Collegiate, 9th edition. Trust me when I say that online dictionaries, quick and handy though they be, are insufficient for a true learner. Likewise you need a large atlas of the world. Online maps will not develop your education like large paper ones. For the same reason, you need a desktop globe, but delay purchasing it until you find a cheap deal somewhere.

The public library can meet many needs. Surely you have a library card, don’t you? In the big cities I’ve visited, our rulers have made the libraries into homeless shelters and after-school care centers for what the news media call “youths.” So I tend to stay away from them now, even though I spent my first forty years living in them myself (though not as a bum). But sometimes I still go and avail myself of their riches.

I’ll end this section by reiterating my earlier warning against collecting more and more learning resources. Any peacock could produce a book telling you 100 books to read and where to travel for the rest of your life, but that’s not what this white paper is. I’m trying to avert your eyes from the avalanche of data that pours from your computer screen every day and that serves primarily to excite and anger you without improving you. If you sense a poverty of education within yourself, despite living in this information-drenched age, you are sensing the difference between information and education. I want you to focus, to learn important foundational things that will develop your understanding and your ability to learn more things; and I want you to learn them well; which is why, for instance, I want you to see a *real* dictionary entry on a page, rather than the sketchy little blurb these online sites toss at you because they think it will satisfy you and continue in some way to enhance their revenue stream.

# Section Two: An Initial Program to Advance Your Education

Although we easily understand the word "educate," there is no agreement on what we mean by "educated," as in "He is an educated person." Among illiterate people, one who can merely read and write might be called educated. Among Communists, someone who doesn't agree with Marx might be considered uneducated.

Everyone is already educated somewhat. You can read, but you cannot read Greek. I can read New Testament Greek, but I cannot read the classical Greek of the poets. I wish that I'd gotten a *better* education and you wish the same for yourself, even though we are both educated.

Even though opinions differ, I believe that these things are true regarding any truly "educated" person:

An educated person stays with a subject long enough to develop some understanding. The more that you do this, the more that you will notice when others are speaking without understanding. Just knowing a lot does not equal true education.

An educated person sees a thing in relation to "all" other things. Of course, no one knows *all* other things, but the more he knows and understands, the better his judgment.

An educated person is at home in the world of ideas. New ideas and beliefs make sense to him because he is well acquainted with earlier forms of similar ideas and beliefs.

An educated person recognizes accuracy and beauty and knows when something doesn't measure up to those standards.

An educated person commands a large vocabulary. As a writer, Mark Twain said that the difference between the right word and nearly the right word was like the difference between lightning and the lightning bug. Commanding a large vocabulary is necessary to accurately communicate and to intelligently decipher.

Notice, please, that I have not included "right opinions" in my list. Well educated people can come to differing conclusions on contested questions. A poorly educated person might expect everyone to agree “if they'd just get educated.” A well educated person knows certainly that that isn’t so.

So how does one rise to this lofty status of "educated"?

For young people, I take a dim view of college these days. I am a former college professor and I loved my work and my students, but college has been changing swiftly in the past thirty years. I see low quality for sale at high prices now. "Real" education such as I described above is no longer offered at most colleges. I would suggest as an alternative that technical training may be sought in tech schools or on-the-job, and real education has to be pursued through tutors and self study, both in person and online.

This admonition goes double for adults who wish to further their education. Unless you are pursuing some specific certification for some specific employment, enrolling in a typical college would probably be a colossal waste of resources. I cannot take the time here to even begin to explain my warning in detail; just consider yourself warned.

I offer hereunder some instruction which, if heeded, will enable a learner to advance significantly in real education. The strategy is to gain foundational knowledge and understanding (those are two distinct things) that will open doors to greater knowledge and understanding.

### Area 1: English Language

The first place to begin (for an American) is in the study of English. Language is the tool by which all other education is gained, and paucity of language will hinder any further progress.

First: get some method of learning a new word a day. This is a well known, fundamental discipline in English studies and innumerable enthusiasts have developed programs for pursuing it. Use a website, book, phone app, or some set of cards and stick with it religiously. It will involve using the new word as much as possible that day and reviewing it in the days and weeks following.

Second: work through some program to improve your English. Lovers of the language have written hundreds of books in the attempt to impede the slaughter of English, and you can avail yourself of their offerings for free! Just ask a librarian, or search for *english usage* at Project Gutenberg. Be advised, though, that just “googling” will just land you in the morass of foreigners trying to learn English as a second language.

### Area 2: A Centralizing Topic

I suggest that you choose an area of interest and stick with it for a year, examining it from as many angles as you can. It could be baseball, gardening, dogs, war, meteorology, your home town, or anything else.

Suppose that you choose baseball. Read its history. Find poems about it. Read biographies of great players and managers. Study the business end. Who was president of the USA when Lou Gehrig hit four homers in one game? Read up on sports medicine especially as it applies to baseball-related injuries. Master the math; analyze the stats; design spreadsheets and databases for your findings.

You see how pursuing knowledge in this area, an area you already like, can push you into history, literature, finance, business management, politics, science, statistical analysis, and computer applications -- all because you love baseball.

### Area 3: Some Classic Texts

Here we encounter the more formal side of education. An educated person knows the foundational literature of his people. Because the volume of English literature is massive, you will never get even 5% of it read; but there are a few classic texts that you should start with. Work your way through each of these slowly and deliberately. In the first section (Politics), read the selections in the order given.

#### Politics

Magna Carta

Magna Carta (“Great Charter”) is “a charter of rights agreed to by King John of England at Runnymede, near Windsor, on 15 June 1215. First drafted by the Archbishop of Canterbury to make peace between the unpopular King and a group of rebel barons, it promised the protection of church rights, protection for the barons from illegal imprisonment, access to swift justice, and limitations on feudal payments to the Crown, to be implemented through a council of 25 barons” (quoted from Wikipedia). This is considered to be the foundational legal code setting forth the rights of Englishmen. The document is so long and so filled with archaic and technical legal terms that it is unsuitable to read for this course of study. Even so, you need to be well aware of it. I recommend that you read the very short article about it at the [National Archives](https://www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured-documents/magna-carta).

Mayflower Compact

This was the first governing document in America, crafted and signed by the Pilgrims while still aboard the Mayflower and anchored near Plymouth in November of 1620. It simply says that they agree to submit to whatever “just and equal” laws they enact once they go ashore and start their colony. It is important for two main things: (1) it displays the democratic spirit which had taken root in the Puritan Christians of England and (2) it documents that they were colonizing the land for the glory of God and the advancement of the Christian faith. Here is the entire text:

In the name of God, Amen. We whose names are underwritten, the loyal subjects of our dread Sovereign Lord King James, by the Grace of God of Great Britain, France, and Ireland King, Defender of the Faith, etc. Having undertaken for the Glory of God and advancement of the Christian Faith and Honour of our King and Country, a Voyage to plant the First Colony in the Northern Parts of Virginia, do by these presents solemnly and mutually in the presence of God and one of another, Covenant and Combine ourselves together in a Civil Body Politic, for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by virtue hereof to enact, constitute and frame such just and equal Laws, Ordinances, Acts, Constitutions and Offices from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the Colony, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In witness whereof we have hereunder subscribed our names at Cape Cod, the 11th of November, in the year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord King James, of England, France and Ireland the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fifty-fourth. Anno Domini 1620.

[The Declaration of Independence](https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/declaration-transcript)

Drafted by the talented writer Thomas Jefferson and freely drawing from various earlier American documents, the final version of the Declaration was developed by the Continental Congress, which voted to declare independence on July 2, 1776 and voted to ratify and publish the final form of the text two days later.

Do whatever research is necessary to answer these questions:

* List Jefferson’s “self-evident truths,” carefully distinguishing each one from the others.
* What would be the difference between the “unalienable rights” which the document mentions and some other rights?
* What were “domestic insurrections”?
* God is mentioned four times as Providence, Judge, Creator, and God. Locate those occurrences.
* Define “the voice of justice and of consanguinity.”

[Patrick Henry's “Liberty or Death” speech](https://www.ushistory.org/documents/libertydeath.htm)

On March 23, 1775, at St. John’s Church in Richmond, Virginia, Patrick Henry spoke to the Patriot legislature of Virginia and rallied them to authorize the sending of troops to join the revolutionary cause. It is a very famous speech, but nobody wrote it down at the time. The surviving text was composed by a biographer eighteen years after Henry’s death (and forty four years after the speech was delivered) by interviewing several who were present that day. Despite its inauthentic character, it stands as a milestone in American heritage and does reflect Henry’s arguments and the historical situation he was addressing.

[The Constitution of the United States](https://constitution.congress.gov/constitution/)

You should read the entire Constitution carefully. It isn’t very long and you can understand nearly all of it. Notice what it says, and notice that it says nothing more! The field of study called “Constitutional law” is a long effort to pretend that Americans may be ruled from Washington D.C. by invoking powers supposedly found in the rays that emanate from the penumbra surrounding the Constitution. (Take your mortgage contract in hand and try that double-shuffle with your bank when you quit making your payments.) In actuality, the Tenth Amendment specifically says the opposite. Read it for yourself.

[The Dred Scott Decision (1857)](https://www.owleyes.org/text/dred-scott-v-sandford/read/opinion-of-the-court%22%20%5Cl%20%22root-344)

Everybody quotes (or, usually, misquotes) the Dred Scott decision, calling it the worst judicial decision in history. But they haven’t read it.

It was a perfectly good decision by the U. S. Supreme Court. Dred Scott was a slave in Missouri. He traveled with his master to free territory, then back to Missouri. He filed suit against his master, arguing that living in free territory made him free and he couldn’t be re-enslaved by returning to a slave state.

The lawsuit went all the way to the Supreme Court. Chief Justice Roger B. Taney wrote for the majority an exhaustively long decision, proving in every conceivable way that a slave was a slave, not a U. S. citizen, and therefore had no standing in federal court.

Abolitionism being what it is, the losing side screeched in fury all across the nation, misquoting the decision and calling down fire from heaven. Taney had wasted a month of hard labor explaining the law to a mob who cared nothing for the law, but only about fundamentally transforming the United States of America. To this day they consign Taney and his odious document to the lowest pit of Hell to fry forever with the likes of Nero, Hitler, and Jerry Falwell.

You can become one of the elite intellectuals who have actually read the decision. It will take some time and you will probably need your dictionary occasionally, but you can do it and it will teach you some American history and legal theory. Most of all, it will enlighten you to the brainwashed state of nearly everybody who refers to the dreaded *Dred Scott v. Sandford*.

[Jefferson Davis’s Farewell Address](https://jeffersondavis.rice.edu/archives/documents/jefferson-davis-farewell-address)

When Jefferson Davis addressed the U. S. Senate in January of 1861 before returning to his home state of Mississippi, he explained the rights of the Southern states.

I was told by an old timer from Mississippi that schoolchildren there used to learn this speech as a declamation exercise. It was considered a classic then. The public schools of Mississippi now probably regard it somewhat less enthusiastically.

In this speech you will hear echoes of earlier texts. Hearing such “echoes” is a sign of being educated.

[Abraham Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address](http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/gettysburg.htm)

I call him “Slick Abraham.” He always knew the right thing to say, even if it contradicted what he said to a previous audience. This speech is a masterpiece and is enshrined in our present nation’s conscience since his cause prevailed and the old nation is gone with the wind. Still, you need to know this speech, so study it well. Listen for echoes of earlier texts. Look for where he redefined words to justify his war.

#### Bible

The King James Version of the Bible is the most important text in the history of the English speaking people. For your personal spiritual life, I recommend that you read whatever translation you prefer – so long as you actually *read* it. But to further your education, the King James Version is irreplaceable.

Here are about twenty (depending upon how you count them) of the most famous (or significant) passages of the Bible. If you are fairly unfamiliar with Bible reading, these would be a good place to start. Move at your own pace, but go slowly enough to absorb what you’re reading.

Genesis chapters 1, 2, 3, and 12

Exodus chapter 20

Deuteronomy chapter 6

Psalm 23

Isaiah chapters 6 and 40

Luke chapter 2

Matthew chapters 5, 6, 7, and 23

The Gospel of John chapters 19, 20, and 21

Acts chapter 7

Romans chapter 2

1 Corinthians chapter 13

Revelation (a.k.a. Apocalypse) chapters 20 and 21

The Zondervan Publishing Company has issued a good list of sixty readings that provide an overview of the entire Bible (download the .pdf [here](https://www.alextran.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Zondervan_-_60_Day_Overview_of_the_Bible.pdf)). I’d recommend that you go through mine, then theirs (omitting places where theirs overlaps mine). My list has you in mind; theirs is general, and provides a passable substitute for “read the Bible in a year” plans. (Almost everybody fails who embarks on a plan to read through the entire Bible. I have read it entirely through more than ten times, but my vocation drew me in that direction.)

#### Literature, short works

Poems show you what skill and beauty look like. These are well known, so you should become very familiar with them. It would be valuable to research them, but watch out for modern (Marxist, feminist, antiwhite) criticisms.

[For Whom the Bell Tolls](http://www.yourdailypoem.com/listpoem.jsp?poem_id=2118)

[She Walks in Beauty](https://discoverpoetry.com/poems/lord-byron/she-walks-in-beauty/)

[Jerusalem](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/54684/jerusalem-and-did-those-feet-in-ancient-time)

[The Raven](https://discoverpoetry.com/poems/edgar-allan-poe/the-raven/)

[The Bells](https://poets.org/poem/bells)

[If--](https://discoverpoetry.com/poems/rudyard-kipling/if/)

[Gunga Din](https://www.bartleby.com/103/48.html)

[Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening](https://discoverpoetry.com/poems/robert-frost/stopping-by-woods-on-a-snowy-evening/)

[The Road Not Taken](https://discoverpoetry.com/poems/robert-frost/the-road-not-taken/)

#### Literature, long works

There are countless works of literature that are worth reading. Here are the four that I think will advance your education the most.

Romeo and Juliet

This is the most famous of Shakespeare’s plays, probably because it is the easiest. It’s a great story, but the old language is difficult. Search for an edition that has a modern-language translation side-by-side with the original. You need to read the original, but you also need to understand it.

Shakespeare is very important to our English-speaking identity. Liberals, nonwhites, and globalists are trying to remove the study of Shakespeare, partly because of his Christian beliefs and partly because nonwhites often lack the ability to read **any** English at a high level. You, on the other hand, will work your way through this one play, at least, and will join hands with the preceding generations.

Treasure Island

Robert Louis Stevenson was an excellent writer and this novel of his is quite famous. It is quoted from and alluded to unceasingly by writers and speakers of every stripe. You need this. You’ll like it.

Animal Farm and Nineteen Eighty-Four

These two novels by George Orwell should be required reading for every legislator because they are making the same mistakes Orwell warned of in the 1940s. Learn these books well; everybody quotes them now, and for good reason.

# Section Three: General Education

This is where things become laborious and chaotic; laborious because the task is long and difficult; chaotic because the possibilities are endless.

College may be rightly criticized as a day-care center to give young adults something to do for four years until they grow up a little. It would be unfair to take that literally, but “the college experience” that is marketed these days features very little of true education. Playing football or basketball is not education any more than driving a forklift or selling cars would be. Parties aren’t education, nor is staging a protest march against something you consider imperfect about the world. But I will say this much about college: you do spend a **lot** of hours over four years reading, writing, and participating in class. Despite my recommendation to avoid college if possible, I will admit that you’ll have difficulty finding enough time on your own to cover everything that would constitute a complete college curriculum.

It is of primary importance that you cover the foundational things I listed above. If you have done that, and done it well, I can offer a few insights about education that can inform any further efforts in that direction.

First: Latin

Latin is foundational to all learning in the West. When the expression “grammar school” was first used, it referred to Latin grammar. Until one had learned Latin, he was unfit to progress to higher education. Although it has fallen out of favor now, the fact remains that the study of Latin will open more intellectual doors than any other discipline; and I say this as one who learned the language *after* having studied several other languages ancient and modern, and *after* having already graduated from several institutions of higher learning.

To study Latin, you will need a tutor. Probably no teacher is so dedicated to his or her subject as a Latin teacher is. They are crying out for somebody – *anybody!* – to whom they can teach this wonderful language before they pass away. (And for the average Latin teacher I’ve seen, that day isn’t too far off.) Just check around; you’ll see.

Your tutor could be electronic. Lovers of Latin have created many online courses, some of which are free. Check [here](https://www.alllanguageresources.com/learning-latin/%22%20%5Cl%20%22resources-for-learning-latin).

Even studying one year’s worth of Latin will change your life.

Second: philosophy

It helps you *a great deal* in your later studies if you have a background in philosophy. The topic is profoundly value-laden, so find a resource that is explicitly Christian.

Begin with logic. I mean that.

Third: economics

Economics is also a profoundly value-laden discipline, so one cannot avoid being partisan. Begin by reading Henry Hazlitt’s *Economics in One Lesson*. Understanding real economics equips you to cut through the fog of mass media and politicians’ blather, and to make sense of history. (Disclaimer: it does *not* teach you how to get rich.)

Fourth: natural science

In order to become “an educated person,” you need a grasp of such things as chemistry and biology – not so that you can teach it or work with it, but so that you can understand the world and people. Because the sciences are technical fields, you have to learn each discipline carefully one step at a time; each step builds upon what has gone before. If you miss a step, what follows will be unintelligible.

These subjects, therefore, require a school and perhaps a laboratory. Any community college can meet these needs.

In biology, the reigning paradigm in this age is evolution. Although I believe that it is incorrect, there’s not much to be done about it while you are in school. “Eat the fish and spit out the bones.” There is a difference between the data and the interpretation of the data, and scientists can differ in their interpretations. Learn the data; worry about the interpretations some other time.

Fifth: a foreign language

If you have a friend who speaks English as a second language, he will enjoy this joke:

YOU: What is the word for someone who speaks two languages?

HIM: Bilingual.

YOU: Correct. And what would be the word for someone who speaks three languages?

HIM: Trilingual?

YOU: Right again. Now here’s the tricky one: what do you call someone who speaks only one language?

HIM: Monolingual?

YOU: American!

“Foreign language” is a part of every genuine curriculum for a liberal education. It has been said in many places that you never really understand your own language until you learn another. Having myself studied and passed examinations in several (more than three) foreign languages, I agree with that claim, although it seems a bit unverifiable. In America the obvious choice for a “second language” is Spanish since we are being flooded with such speakers and it therefore has the most practical value. For an adult learner, however, who is trying to further his education, I do not recommend the study of a foreign language for its *practical* value. The whole world is voraciously trying to learn English in the attempt to participate in what the English speaking people have produced over the centuries, so I believe that we may comfortably wait for *them* to learn *our* language if they want to communicate with us.

I’m also cautious regarding the ability of *an adult* to learn a foreign language. I have a knack for languages, but the general research shows that most people do not. God placed within human children a miraculous ability to learn languages, but that ability fades quickly with age. With *intense* study an adult in his twenties can learn a new language passably. In his thirties, unless he has an unusual knack, the learning process will be like mowing the lawn with dull scissors and his second language will always sound barbaric to native speakers.

But even with all that – if you think you’ve got the knack, go ahead. I wish you the best.

The study of Latin is different. The student’s age does make a difference, but the problems are lessened because the goal in your case is merely to read Latin, not to compose or speak it. And for those who still wish to study and speak a modern foreign language, a prior knowledge of Latin will make learning Spanish, Italian, or French almost trivial.

Sixth: mathematics

If you're good at math and took calc and trig in high school, you are miles ahead of those poor souls who don't know how to write one trillion in numerals and think that prime numbers get you a discount at Amazon.

Math is important. If your math proficiency is limited to counting how many teaspoons of sugar are going into your coffee, you could really expand your mind by taking one additional step in this field. Have you studied geometry yet? Calculus? Trigonometry? At least find a book on the beauty of mathematics.

There are some great video courses available for free online. Check out [Eddie Woo](https://www.youtube.com/c/misterwootube).

Seventh: fine arts

I love music. I love to sing it, play it, hear it, and watch it being performed. I even like to study sheet music to see how a composer wrote this or that wonderful line. But I am solidly incapable of teaching music appreciation. It is a huge field and can only be taught by a specialist who is trained to break the subject down into digestible bites. [Here’s an example](https://www.udemy.com/course/adventures-in-classical-music/) for sale for $20. Avoid a course intended to appeal to nonwhites by including pop pap and pretending that it is comparable to Mozart.

The same goes for art appreciation. The twentieth century brought a truckload of execrable trash and dumped it in museums and pretended that it was art. In 1937 Pablo Picasso painted “Guernica,” depicting war atrocities, seeming not to realize that his painting was itself an atrocity. In 1964 art critics praised the work of “Pierre Brassau” until it was revealed that the paintings had been done by [a chimpanzee playing with art brushes and paint](https://www.ladbible.com/funny/awesome-the-hoax-that-fooled-art-critics-into-thinking-a-painting-by-a-monkey-was-real-avant-garde-art-20160222). In 2013 someone paid $43.8 million for a big painting of two blue rectangles called “Onement VI.”

Art history and appreciation are worthy fields of study, but a teacher’s flawed philosophy can lead you into a time-wasting cesspool.

# Conclusion

This white paper is brief by design, but I have been careful to include enough material to serve you for a long time *if you avoid haste and learn the material well*. Rather than repeat the warnings I gave earlier, I will only remind you here to review them and understand that I gave them for a reason. Bad education is easy to come by. You will remain poorly educated if you slap at the material, hurry through it, skip the parts you don’t like, or bounce around aimlessly like a mosquito in a nudist camp.

Focus and think.