

# High Princely Church Order for Württemberg (1743)

## Abstract

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Eighteenth-century regulations governing the operation of German grammar schools reflect the impulse to promote more widespread general education and the continued emphasis on inculcating Christian morals in the youth. The goals of grammar school education are stated clearly in this Württemberg Church Ordinance from 1743: to instill the “fear of God, right teaching, and good discipline.” It also gives clear instructions to the schoolmaster, an agent of the state, on how to handle his pupils, both boys and girls. It details how he is to teach them basic literacy, how he is to drill them on their knowledge of the Lutheran Catechism, and even how he is to discipline (including corporal punishment) unruly schoolchildren.

## Source

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[...]

### On German schools.

In order that the youth in and at our German schools should be instructed in the fear of God, proper doctrine, and good moral discipline, and that all should be treated equally, we thus desire that the following order should be binding.

About differences among pupils.

And because not only the boys, but also the daughters should be sent to school, in all German schools, we decree that all such schools should separate the children and instruct the boys and the daughters likewise each by themselves.

And the schoolmaster should in no way permit the two groups to mingle or have any disorderly contact or combine the groups.

### On teaching.

And because the schoolmaster wants to teach the pupils effectively, he should divide them into three groups. The first should be composed of those who have only begun learning their letters.

The second, those who have begun combining syllables.

The third, those who are beginning to read and write.

And within these groups the same—those in each group should be set in smaller groups according to their skill level. This will encourage diligence and reduce the work for the schoolmasters.

The schoolmaster should not rush the children or proceed with them [to the next subject] until they have fully and actually learned that which the curriculum stipulates.

And also diligently supervise that they learn the letters [of the alphabet] correctly first, then occasionally out of the order of the alphabet, call upon a pupil to ask what the various letters are called.

And the same process in which they should match the letters' shape with the name asked, and that they

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can indicate these in the alphabet, themselves.

And here it is important that they consistently name the right letters, pronounce the syllables correctly, and in the reading of the words, *syllabatim*, distinctly and understandably *pronuncieren*, and also do not mumble the last syllable of the word.

Once a child can read fairly well, it should then be taught to write, and the lines to practice should be pre-written in an extra booklet that the child should have for this purpose, and it should strive to produce clear German letters.

And [the teacher] should see that the children have extra booklets for their scripts and should examine these attentively, to find any shortcomings in the shape of the letters, their combinations, and endings, and so on, and virtuously prohibit and report on the same, and demonstrate how they should improve and in this process, lead their hand.

And because the children should be raised above all else to fear God, we hereby declare that the schoolmaster should not permit any child to read scandalous, harmful, sectarian books or other useless fables in their lessons but rather see to it that, where printed books are to be used, these should include Christian booklets like the table included in the catechism, the booklet of Psalms, the Proverbs of Solomon, Jesus Sirach, the New Testament, and the like.

It is especially our opinion that the catechism which is included in our church order should be conveyed in the same form and taught to the children, and they should become accustomed to learning, practicing, understanding, and comprehending, for this the schoolmaster should appoint a particular day and hour of this day and practice and rehearse the catechism and simply instruct and explain it clearly to them.

And the children in the school, in pairs, boys against boys and girls against girls, should face each other and go through the questions and answers of the catechism and recite them, so that they are used to doing the same in the church at those times when the catechism is to be recited publicly in front of the congregation.

Similarly, the boys should be instructed on appointed days and hours in the week on church singing and it should be rehearsed with them.

Source: *Hochfürstlich württembergische grosse Kirchenordnung*. Stuttgart, 1743, n. p. Available online:

<https://books.google.com/books?id=619FAAAcAAJ&newbks=0&pg=PP7#v=onepage&q&f=false>

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