Daliah’s Byzantine Education Classwork (transcription)

**Do-Now:**

Math – Basic math is taught because it is necessary for daily interactions with the world, higher math is solely for critical thinking.

English – A person who can write well can think well. Also to become more cultured. And reading is necessary.

Science – For an understanding of the world around you.

History – Partly to be more cultured, also a way of teaching critical thinking.

I realize now that most of these things aren’t going to help me directly in my adult life, but it’s the only way of teaching how to think we have and knowing how to think is the most important skill you can ever have. Also, it’s nice to be able to walk into a cocktail party and be able to have a conversation about literature without looking like an idiot. Never underestimate the importance of being able to communicate intelligently at a cocktail party.

**Herodotus’s *The Histories***

1. *Why the Byzantines studied this text:* I imagine they agreed with Herodotus’s goal of preserving the records of human achievement. I bet they also though that if they didn’t learn history they were doomed to repeat it. In addition, they really admired Greek culture, and Herodotus provides a really good best fit, so it makes sense that they would study that which they admire.

**Should the Byzantine Empire’s classical Greek education be taught today?**

Parts of it should be taught in greater detail, but some are not really useful for example, logic and rhetoric – a lot of the stuff Aristotle thought about – would be really useful for my careers, like law. In addition, they teach new ways of thinking. However, the history is pretty dull and is fairly inaccurate at this point because we have other sources now. So that doesn’t need to be taught. We still teach Euclidian geometry, and I think it’s a good way of teaching logical thinking so we should continue with that. As for literature, a ton of it is just useful background knowledge for reading other books – there are influences seen today in stuff like Joyce’s Ulysses. But they don’t need to read in their entirely – summaries would suffice. In general, though, these topics are pretty heavy for elementary school kids, and many high schoolers I know would not be able to grasp a lot of these people talk about. So this system probably wouldn’t work, but it has its good points.