

INSTRUCTION BOOKLET
IN
THE LODGE SYSTEM
OF MASONIC EDUCATION



*Prepared by The Grand Lodge of Florida through the Committee on Masonic Education
for the use of the Subordinate Lodges and their members.*



REVISED
2017

PURPOSE

Every candidate is a stranger to Freemasonry and Freemasonry is a stranger to him. It is not merely a Lodge that he joins, but a great Fraternity - with over 45,900 members and more than 291 Lodges in his own state, with 1.3 million members and more than 11,000 Lodges in this country, with other thousands of Lodges and tens of thousands of members throughout the world, with a history stretching back over many centuries, an intricate system of laws, a large number of purposes, ideals and Obligations, a set of rights, privileges, and duties, a set of Landmarks to be preserved, the whole carrying on of a program of activities of a great variety of kinds.

It is too much to expect any man that without guidance he shall be able to make himself at home in such a society, or that he shall unaided be able to take his own proper place in his Lodge's work with credit to himself and honor to the Fraternity; he has every moral right to expect that the Lodge itself shall give him much of the information he needs. It is because many of the Brethren never receive this information, and are permitted to come and perhaps go undirected and uninstructed, that they either cease attending Lodge at all or, too often undertake an active part, but for a lack of knowing better, blunder into humiliation to themselves, and damage to the Lodge and the Fraternity.

There is nothing new in these statements. For years Craft leaders in Lodge and Grand Lodge, have been only too aware of them, and have realized that this failure properly to prepare the candidate for his new duties and privileges is at one and the same time a failure on the part of the Craft to discharge its just obligations to him, and a weakness in the fundamental system of Initiation which incurs the danger of weakening the whole structure by thus attempting to build enduring walls with rough ashlar and untempered mortar. Moreover it is not solely a matter of teaching the new member the ceremonies he is to go through; it is necessary that he become imbued with the spirit of Freemasonry and to believe in - as well as understand - its purposes and ideals. Our Fraternity does not rest on compulsion or military rule; if its own members are at odds with its aims it becomes a house divided against itself. It is not too much to say that in most cases when Masonic Brethren cause dissension in a Lodge, it is not out of malice or a desire to make mischief, but because they do not understand the rules and Laws.

Countless methods have been devised for the education of newly-made Brethren and under favorable conditions they often proved successful; but in the majority of cases they have been marked by two internal, serious weaknesses: First, they have been sporadic, uncertain, and have left it to the candidate to seek their aid of their own free will, thereby bringing it about that those who most need instruction have not received it; Second, they have been conducted by volunteers or by some organization set up independently of the Lodge, and thereby lacked its stability and official sanction. The System here recommended is strongest at just these two points where others are weakest; for it, first, takes in every candidate, automatically and without exception; and second, it is an enterprise of the Lodge itself, officially under the direct control of the Master, a regular, recognized, and continuing part of the Lodge's own proper work.

It is not only the candidate who profits by this. The Lodge itself is strengthened from having new members who from the beginning are able to take a part in its activities; who are likely to become regular attendants; and who can quickest grasp the aim and purpose of the Lodge's endeavors. They come in already prepared for work, and the Master has a larger staff of trained members to work with as a result.

THE MASONIC EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Committee should be composed of Master Masons of knowledge, dedication, and tact. It is wise to have at least one Past Master in its membership. The Committee should be composed of a Chairman appointed by the Master, who is responsible for reporting to the Master on the candidate's progress through the Three Symbolic Degrees and Masonic Education Program.

The Brother or Brothers selected as LODGE MENTOR should first be active in the life of the Lodge and knowledgeable about not only his own Lodge, but also about the Grand Lodge of Florida and all of Freemasonry, in regard to the history, tradition, philosophy, and the Laws and Regulations of The Grand Lodge of Florida. The Particular Lodges may find that a number of the Brethren would like to serve as LODGE MENTOR and this should be encouraged, as it will foster the idea of a Lodge that is interested in making living and thinking Masons of their Lodge candidates, not just card-carrying members.

Too much importance cannot be laid upon the need for the candidate to know that what he hears during the various Lectures given by the Lodge Mentor, is not the result of the random opinion of some individual, but a series of Lectures sanctioned by The Grand Lodge of Florida, to be accepted in all seriousness and sincerity, and points the way toward his life as a Freemason.

The Lectures as contained in the MENTOR'S MANUAL should not be looked on as the ultimate and final information to be given to the candidate. A continued search for "MASONIC LIGHT" by the Lodge Mentor and the Lodge Masonic Education Committee, should be an ongoing process. It is suggested that the Lodge Masonic Education Committee meet from time to time, to discuss new material that can be added to the Masonic Education Lectures by the Lodge Mentor or supplemented during the Candidate's Catechism Classes.

Worshipful Masters who do not have candidates should take advantage of the Masonic Education Lectures and information contained in the Lodge System of Masonic Education Booklets and Mentor's Manual to further their Lodge's Masonic Light. It is also suggested that Lodges use this material to increase interest and attendance by the Brethren by publicizing that a series of talks and questions and answers about Freemasonry will be held during their Stated Meetings.

THE SYSTEM

The Worshipful Master appoints a Committee of five or more Brethren, one of which shall be designated the LODGE MENTOR. However, any number of Brethren may be appointed as LODGE MENTOR, if the Worshipful Master so desires.

After the candidate's petition has been favorably balloted upon, the candidate is notified by the Lodge Secretary to meet with the LODGE MENTOR at the Lodge prior to receiving the Entered Apprentice Degree. The candidate, of course, will without question, and properly so, for it is the Worshipful Master's order, accept this as one of his first duties incident to Initiation.

THE FIRST MEETING

The principal purpose of this First Meeting is to introduce the candidate in a general way to Freemasonry as a whole and to prepare him in mind and spirit to receive Initiation. He is entering a strange country; his teachers will give him the necessary guidance and point out the Landmarks by which he is to steer his course. And it will be impressed upon him that becoming a Mason is not a light and frivolous undertaking, but fraught with important consequences, and that Initiation, Passing, and Raising are not perfunctory ceremonies to be entered into lightly, but the first and all-important steps into the world of Freemasonry. He will learn that Freemasonry is a life to be lived, not a set of hollow forms to be hypocritically observed; that he must become prepared in his heart first of all. He will also learn that in his Lodge Instructors he has a set of guides and friends to whom he can come for counsel at every step of the way.

1. During the First Meeting, the Lodge Mentor will give the candidate(s) the First Lecture from the MENTOR'S MANUAL (Chapter 2), and Masonic Education Booklet No. 1. This will enable the candidate to begin to understand that the Fraternity that he is about to become a member of, is of a deep and serious nature, unlike any other type of club or organization he might have been a member of, no matter how well-intended they were. The First Meeting must be scheduled PRIOR to receiving the Entered Apprentice Degree, and if possible, it should be given the same night the candidate is to receive the Degree. He may then take the GL-201 Exam on his own at home. (These optional Exams and Answer Sheets may be turned over to the Lodge Chairman of Masonic Education for grading, then to the Worshipful Master for his perusal who may turn it over to the Secretary for filing.)

The candidate should be instructed that the Masonic Lectures and Masonic Education printed material he is to receive are the result of study and research by The Grand Lodge of Florida, to enable the candidate to become a thinking and living Mason. He should also be instructed that the Masonic Education Booklets can be ready by family members, thus removing some of the Family objections to the so-called veil of secrecy that may seem to surround the candidate during his instruction and the ceremonies.

2. After receiving the Entered Apprentice Degree, he meets with the LODGE MENTOR and receives the Second Masonic Education Lecture from the MENTOR'S MANUAL (Chapter 3), Instruction Booklet No. 2, the Entered Apprentice Booklet along with the GL-202/GL-203 Examinations and Answer Sheets. (These optional Exams and Answer Sheets may be turned over to the Lodge Chairman of Masonic Education for grading, then to the Worshipful Master for his perusal who may turn it over to the Secretary for filing.) He then begins his Catechism Instruction in the Entered Apprentice Degree.
3. After receiving the Fellow Craft Degree, he meets with the LODGE MENTOR and receives the Third Masonic Education Lecture from the MENTOR'S MANUAL (Chapter 4) and Instruction Booklet No. 3, the Fellow Craft Booklet along with the GL-204/GL-205 Examinations and Answer Sheets. (These optional Exams and Answer Sheets may be turned over to the Lodge Chairman of Masonic Education for grading, then to the Worshipful Master for his perusal who may turn it over to the Secretary for filing.) The candidate then continues his catechism instruction in the Fellow Craft Degree.

4. After receiving the Master Mason Degree, he meets with the LODGE MENTOR and receives the Fourth Masonic Education Lecture from the MENTOR'S MANUAL (Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9). He is given the Instruction Booklet No. 4, the Master Mason Booklet along with the GL-206/GL-207 Examinations and Answer Sheets. (These optional Exams and Answer Sheets may be turned over to the Lodge Chairman of Masonic Education for grading, then to the Worshipful Master for his perusal who may turn it over to the Secretary for filing.) The candidate then completes his catechism instruction in the Master Mason Degree.

MASONIC EDUCATION FOR CANDIDATES

LODGE MENTOR

1. It is a recommendation that he be a Past Master, a very knowledgeable Brother, or a Brother who is willing to invest the necessary time to become knowledgeable about all aspects of Freemasonry.
2. The Lodge Mentor should not be the Catechism Instructor.
3. Knowledge required: Masonic history, tradition, Masonic Law, Lodge history, community history in regard to his own Lodge, and American history in regard to Masonry.

MASONIC EDUCATION LECTURES

1. Masonic Education Mentor's Manual (GL 217) is to be used as the primary source of Masonic Education Lectures, but only as a beginning source of information.
2. Use of all other resources such as Masonic encyclopedias, Masonic History, Masonic Research Books, and all other sources is necessary. The Mentor must learn to sort through all material or qualify their sources as the author's own view point, unless the source is verified by a qualified Masonic Authority.
3. NEVER READ THE MATERIAL TO THE CANDIDATES: One of the requirements to be a Mason in The Grand Lodge of Florida is that he must be able to read and write. The candidates will take Masonic Education Booklets home to read.
4. Masonic Education Booklets (GL 201 - GL 207) should be given to ALL candidates to read, keep, and discuss with their families and Lodge Instructor. The cost per candidate to the Lodge is small, \$9.00 per candidate. Remember, this new Mason will be paying dues to his Lodge for his entire lifetime, so this is an investment for the Lodge.
5. The Masonic Education Lectures must always be given in a room that is isolated and quiet. This setting will allow you to have the candidate's undivided attention, and emphasize that this is an important event in this candidate's life.
6. The following outlines for the Masonic Education Lectures for candidates is to be considered ONLY as a guideline, you may add any additional material that you find available or feel would be informational or beneficial knowledge for the candidates.

FIRST LECTURE - PRE ENTERED APPRENTICE

BASIC SOURCE: Mentor's Manual Chapter No. 2

1. The influence that Freemasonry had on the formation of our country, such as:
 - a. Major documents - Articles of Association (10 Masons as signers), Declaration of Independence (9 signers), Constitution (13 signers), all inspired by Masonic principles, and written by Masons.
 - b. All the General Officers in the Continental Army (33) and Washington's Aides (8) were Masons.
 - c. First man killed in the battle at Bunker Hill in Boston at the beginning of the Revolution was the Provincial Grand Master of Massachusetts.
 - d. Paul Revere, John Paul Jones, Benjamin Franklin, and many other leaders of the American Revolution were Masons, especially the Father of our Country, George Washington.
 - e. First Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, John Marshall was a Mason.
 - f. Masons were participants in the Boston Tea Party.
2. Explain the purpose of Freemasonry: "Making Better Men Out Of Good Men."
3. Explain that TOLERATION of others and their beliefs is the foundation of Freemasonry.
4. Give a brief history of the formation of the first Grand Lodge in England and why it was formed.
5. Explain the difference between Operative and Speculative Masonry.
6. Is Freemasonry a Secret Society? NO, explain why.
7. Is Freemasonry a Religion? NO, explain why.
8. What does "Blue Lodge" mean?
9. Close by explaining that the candidate's Initiation is the only reason the Lodge is meeting and that he will be entering the world's oldest, largest, and greatest Fraternity as a Brother. The ceremony he will be receiving is basically the same that Brother George Washington received as have all other Brothers who have become Masons. That tonight should be looked upon as one of the highest points in his life. After the Entered Apprentice Degree is complete, give the new Mason Booklet No. 1 (GL 201). Inform him that his family can also read the material.

NOTE:

No. 1 - Allow a Minimum of One (1) hour prior to the Degree for this Lecture.

No. 2 - DO NOT allow anyone to joke or make light of the candidate or the ceremony.

SECOND LECTURE - POST ENTERED APPRENTICE

BASIC SOURCE: Mentor's Manual Chapter 3 and Lodge History

1. MUST BE GIVEN THE FIRST NIGHT OF INSTRUCTION, prior to beginning Catechism Instruction.
2. Walk the candidate through the ceremony from the Preparation Room until the Hoodwink is taken off, explaining what and why each step was done.
3. While in the Lodge Room explain the Lodge Officers titles, stations, and basic duties.
4. Exit the Lodge Room and show and explain the various Grand Lodge Awards programs.
5. Explain any historical displays the Lodge may have, then return to the separate isolated room for the rest of the Lecture.
6. Ask for any questions that the new Mason may have as you are giving the Lecture.
7. Explain the Catechism Procedure - Word of Mouth. Explain that it is just as important that he understand what the catechism means as well as learning and becoming proficient in the catechism.
8. Explain the importance of placing Masonry in the proper perspective in his life. His God comes first, then his family, his job or profession, and then Freemasonry.
9. Give a brief history of your Lodge, its members, and the Lodge's place in the community. Emphasize any community projects or Masonic projects that the Lodge is involved in.
10. Using the Mentor's Manual as a guide explain the Entered Apprentice Degree.
11. Give the candidate Masonic Education Booklets No. 2 and Entered Apprentice. Again emphasize that anything written or printed can be read by anyone and encourage him to have his family also read the booklets.

Note:

No. 1: Allow a minimum of two hours for this Lecture.

LECTURE NO. 3 - POST FELLOW CRAFT

BASIC SOURCE: Mentor's Manual Chapter 3

1. Explain the basis of the Degree, education, and achievement as a Mason and a Man.
2. That he has advanced in his journey in Masonry from the ground floor to the middle chamber and this is an advancement from darkness to enlightenment.
3. Explain the signs of recognition and the difference between the Entered Apprentice Obligation and Fellow Craft Obligation.
4. Explain the Degree using the Mentor's Manual as a guide.
5. Give the candidate Booklets No. 3 and Fellow Craft. Again, remind him that his family can and should read the material contained in them.

NOTE:

No. 1 - Allow 30 - 45 minutes for this Lecture. This Lecture is to be given before beginning Catechism Instruction.

LECTURE NO. 4 - POST MASTER MASON

BASIC SOURCE: Mentor's Manual Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, AND ANY ADDITIONAL MATERIAL AVAILABLE.

1. Begin by asking for any questions that the new Master Mason may have about anything that he has seen or heard that he does not understand or would like an explanation about in any of the three Symbolic Degrees.
2. Explain and demonstrate ALL signs of recognition; words, grips, signs, and the G.H.S.O.D.
3. Explain your Lodge Dues structure and that next year's dues are required to be paid prior to December 27 and when the dues notice is received. Do not forget to remind him of the "Let Your Pennies Make Good Cents Program" that should be included with his dues.
4. Explain the Perpetual Membership Program and its benefits to him, the Lodge and his family.
5. Give a complete explanation of what is Grand Lodge and its Officers and functions.
6. Explain the need for a will and how to obtain one if he does not have one. (Your Lodge may obtain the pamphlet "A Guide to Wills & Trusts In Florida" free from the Grand Secretary's Office).
7. Explain your Lodge Committees and his responsibility to assist his Lodge on them.

8. Explain the reasons why it is important to qualify in his Master Mason Catechism. Example: examination upon visiting another Lodge, responsibilities as a Master Mason to other Master Masons and their families, and possible violations of the Masonic Law.
9. Suggest that he complete his proficiency by qualifying for his Silver Card and becoming a Lodge Instructor. Emphasize that he too can someday become Worshipful Master of his Lodge through dedication and work in his Lodge. Suggest that he learn the Ritualistic Work and become part of the Lodge's Degree Teams.
10. Recapitulate briefly the Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft Degrees and the difference between them and the Master Mason Degree.
11. Explain the Hiram Legend, facts and fiction.
12. Give information about King Solomon's Temple, why it was built, where, how, any drawing or pictures of the Temple, and the cost (\$142,614,344,885).
13. Explain what is a clandestine Mason and a clandestine Lodge.
14. Explain Prince Hall Masons and briefly their history and why they are considered clandestine.
15. Explain what is a Regular Lodge and how it is formed.
16. Define and explain the Lost Word.
17. Explain a Master Mason's rights and benefits:
 - a. Masonic Relief;
 - b. Masonic Home;
 - c. Masonic Visitation;
 - d. Masonic Burial;
 - e. Hal W. Adams Fund
18. Explain his responsibilities as a Master Mason: Lodge dues, conduct, petitions, voting procedures, and helping others.
19. Explain all Allied and Appendant Orders, as well as their cost, charities, and meetings.
20. Suggest a visit to the Masonic Home with his family and why financial support of the Masonic Home by him is so vital.
21. Give him Masonic Education Booklets No. 4, Master Mason, Masonic Etiquette, a Petition for the Degrees, and the Lodge Trestleboard. Again, emphasize that his family should be encouraged to read the Masonic Education Booklets.
22. Recommend sources for Masonic Research and reading.
23. Ask for any final questions.

NOTE:

- No. 1: Since this is the final Masonic Education Lecture, allow at least 3 hours for the Lecture and questions.
- No. 2: This Lecture is to be given prior to beginning the Master Mason Catechism Class.

MASONIC EDUCATION MATERIAL

All material needed in the LODGE SYSTEM OF MASONIC EDUCATION are obtained from the Grand Secretary's Office. It is recommended that the Lodge give all candidates the Masonic Education Booklets to keep, rather than on loan from the Lodge. The cost to the Lodge per candidate is small, since the candidate can from time to time refer back to the Masonic Education he received while progressing through the Three Symbolic Degrees.

DIGEST OF MASONIC LAW REGULATIONS

37.18 The Grand Lodge has promulgated a "Lodge System of Masonic Education" which is described in the 1954 Proceedings at page 165 through 168. A candidate receiving the Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, or Master Mason Degree shall receive the instruction prescribed to be given either before or after the conferring of each such Degree. Prior to the conferring of a Degree, the Worshipful Master or a majority of the Lodge Committee on Masonic Education shall certify to the Lodge Secretary that the candidate has received the prescribed instruction, which certification shall be recorded in the Lodge Minutes.

The Worshipful Master and the Lodge Secretary shall be directly and personally responsible to the Grand Master and to the Grand Lodge for full compliance with this Regulation.

GL 200 was revised by the Masonic Education Committee in 2015.