

# **The Eleven Required Subjects**

## *RESOURCES THAT WORK*

The Washington State Homeschooling Law, RCW 28A.02.201, mandates 11 academic subjects with which homeschooling students are to be proficient. To meet these requirements, resources of all kinds abound today for the homeschooling family. Finding and tapping into this vast assortment can sometimes be overwhelming.

The parents you will meet here were willing to respond to a questionnaire where they were asked about those resources to which they would respond, "I've tried it and it works." They found these materials successful and would recommend them to other homeschoolers.

JANICE M. HEDIN

**Karen Cook**  
**Rachael (8.5) Jesse (6.5) Tyler (4.5)**  
**COOK'S ACADEMY**

Our main reason for deciding to homeschool: quality of individualized instruction rather than mass education.

### **The Eleven Required Subjects**

#### Occupational Education

Field Trips. Books. Talking with people wherever we go about their jobs.

#### Math

*Making Math Meaningful*, The Christian Curriculum Project. I enjoy using this series because it is extremely easy to use and gives specific instructions as to what the teacher should say and do, what the students should do and what they should understand in the process. It is very sequential and thorough. It may be too thorough for some students. We plan to use *Saxon Math* beginning with 5th Grade.

#### Language

We just started using *Learning Language Arts Through Literature*. I felt the need to incorporate more writing into our studies, however, I may have chosen other selections to copy or model than the ones presented by this series. This is a very thorough program which teaches grammar, vocabulary, penmanship, phonics, reading, spelling and thinking skills. The children have enjoyed copying poems and parts of stories that they know. I was hoping for more classical literature selections. But these may be in the upper levels of the series.

#### Social Studies

Last year, we used a textbook called *Families and Their Needs*, Silver Burdett. The pictures of families in their native clothes and homes were interesting, but the text was fairly simplistic. This year we recently purchased the Scott Foresman social studies texts for grades 1-4 at the Highline Resource Sale. Again, the 1st and 2nd grade levels needed supplementing, but the 3rd and 4th grade levels were much better. We supplement these texts with bibliographies from the library, map study skills by mapping out our neighborhood, and general discussions of people, customs, food, etc.

#### History

The Scholastic Book Company has many small booklets such as *If You Lived in Colonial Times* and *If You Sailed On the Mayflower*. They are written in a question-and-answer format. We spent a lot of time with just one book because it is very complete and entertaining. Our next goal is to make our own time-line.

#### Health

We don't have a text for this area, but we use library books and a model skeleton and book from Costco called *The Bones and Skeleton Book*. This small book covers bones, cells, muscles, circulatory system, skull, sensory organs, brain, spine, spinal cord, respiration, digestive system, skin, etc. The section on staying healthy is too short to be complete, but it is a good start for discussion and further study. The drawback of this book is two small sections on evolution, which we will skip.

#### Reading



*The Writing Road to Reading* is the text we used almost exclusively last year. I was frustrated with the extreme pace of using this text as outlined in Wanda Sanseri's *Teaching Reading at Home*. Even though my daughter was reading quite well before this program, she was very frustrated by the 30 spelling words per week with no similarities between the words and up to 10 different spelling rules per week. We have adopted a slower pace this year and have been using old basal readers, library books and a wonderful phonics series by Modern Curriculum Press. It is the plaid full color edition and we have been very pleased. The children enjoy the color pictures and it follows many of the rules presented in *Writing Road to Reading* so we can use both texts.

### Writing

Penmanship is based on the *D'Nealian Handwriting Method* by Scott Foresman. I like the fact that printing with this method flows so easily into cursive. My 4-year-old has little difficulty with the basic strokes. I found the teacher's edition for basic handwriting (K-2) and cursive (late 2) at the Highline Surplus Sale. It's helpful to have the teacher's guide for correct strokes.

### Science

We use a variety of science experiments and will begin using *Science: The Search*, Cornerstone Curriculum Project, for scientific processes and analysis. Vol. I covers properties of objects and organisms, interaction and scientific systems in both physical and life sciences and also in spiritual applications. It is written from a Christian perspective. We have enjoyed using *The Backyard Scientist* Series, Jane Hoffman, for our experiments. *Unlocking the Mysteries of Creation*, Dennis Peterson, helps us answer many questions the children have about dinosaurs, the flood, etc. *How Nature Works*, Reader's Digest, is a wonderful book with beautiful pictures, wonderful easy-to-read descriptions and easy-to-difficult science experiments.

### Spelling

After struggling with *Writing Road to Reading*, I found that my children learned better with spelling words that are based on similar phonograms. We use the *Spelling Series*, Modern Curriculum Press, and Learning Through Literature.

### Appreciation of Art

We have been using basic art projects and *Drawing With Children*, Mona Brookes. At this time, we have not introduced them to the great artists, but we plan to purchase *Art Lotto* through God's World Publications. The set has 45 images from the National Gallery of Art. They are by Matisse, Monet, Renoir, etc. Each card includes the artist's name, their life span and the title of the picture.

### Appreciation of Music

We have checked out tapes from the library. These had music by Bach, Beethoven, etc. We play them during dinner, play time or study time. We plan to order *Keyboard Capers* for our music curriculum to learn notes, timing, signatures etc. We listen to a lot of tapes and the children are currently participating in a musical.

**Roger and Kathleen Creech**

**Rebecca (14) Andrew (12)**

**GOAT HILL ACADEMY OF NATURAL AND APPLIED SCIENCES**

Our main reason for deciding to homeschool: to maintain and nourish the family as the most important building block of a healthy society.

## **The Eleven Required Subjects**

### Occupational Education

We use a modified 'apprentice' approach. Field trips (one-on-one) to a variety of professional people's workplaces give the kids an overview of what's available. Andy has spent a morning with a one-man-show professional artist, used a CAD computer drafting program, toured a local sound mixing studio and watched a commercial artist at work. Becky visits a local veterinarian and observes surgery whenever she wants, tours horse breeding farms, spends time with a saddle-maker and spent a morning with a dentist. She has a popular pet-sitting service and a regular baby sitting job, so she is learning about the real world of work.

### Math

The only part of any math 'test' that matters to me is the applied math portion. Do my kids know how to use math to solve problems? Yes! We make our budget, plan meals, figure servings, shop -- together. Andy figures gas mileage, which station is cheapest, how far to the next city, etc. We balance the check book, do taxes -- together!

### Language

I am somewhat of a maverick in this area. I do not teach parts of speech, diagramming or verb conjugation. But both kids speak and write coherently. We do study other languages and how they are like American English, or different from it. Parts of speech are an interesting way to sort words (animal, mineral or vegetable?) but I have NEVER said to myself, 'Let me see, which preposition can I use in this sentence?'

### Social Studies

The newspaper provides an excellent textbook for what's happening in other countries -- even the weather section gives information from all over the world. Graphs (pie, line and bar) are often part of demographic presentations, and studying the poll reports gets statistical analysis into our day -- but, then, that's math (or is it?).

### History

We are researching our roots right now, studying the countries we came from (Germany, England, Scotland and Ireland). We are always talking, discussing issues, the movie JFK, what it was like in 1963 for us, what the assassination of a President was like to live through. We use a large wall history time line chart to place events around the world in order. We are using people more and more as a resource. Books are great, but our senior citizens LIVED it! And, of course, we're graveyard fanatics!

### Health

Becky has Crohn's disease, so health study is a daily event. Through medications, hospitalizations and tests we have all learned a lot. Brochures at the doctor's office (also at the Vet's and at the feed store) provide free anatomical charts and information.

### Reading



We are a family of readers. Compulsive. We read hundreds of books annually. We try to keep one book we are reading out loud together, but as the kids get older, it gets harder to round them both up at once! We read for information and for entertainment. We use the library A LOT!

When traveling, we stop at the Visitor Information Center as we enter a new state. They give away wonderful pamphlets and maps about their flora and fauna, a wealth of material to read, covering geography, history, culture, science -- all in one colorful brochure!

### Writing

My children taught themselves to write. They both write the same way. They will write every evening for a week and then not at all for two months. Becky writes letters to many friends. They both have done term papers and type reports for a class they took, but they prefer writing for fun. I never 'taught' them how to punctuate. They figured that out.

### Science

Our whole life is a science project! Becky did a microwave experiment with bread mold recently, soaked a rawhide dog chew in a bowl of water to see what would happen and devoured a book on natural remedies and herbal treatments. Andy is not a 'blood and guts' scientist. He prefers robotics, physics and the IMAX and Omnidome movies. We read science biographies together, but that's reading.

### Spelling

I don't do anything for spelling. (Horrors!) I do correct an occasional word. Both kids spell well above their grade level. I used to have them write a list of words I made up off the top of my head and related to a subject at hand, i.e. wild waves slide, Federal Way, etc. But that's writing.

### Appreciation of Art

We go to art galleries, critique pictures in magazines, study their composition, take photos of things we think are artistic. Both kids appreciate art. We check books out of the library on different painters and try different styles of painting.

### Appreciation of Music

Exposure to many kinds of music including rock. Nothing is 'forbidden,' but some is preferred. Give the kids credit. They can hear and feel the difference and will choose wisely. Free concerts in the park are popular. Free performances at the mall. Folklife.

## **Downey & Linda Cunningham**

**Dawn (17.5) Downey (16) Aaron (11.5) Bradley (6.5) Landon (3.5)**

## **LIVING HERITAGE ACADEMY**

Our main reason for deciding to homeschool: We like to be with them and be their main influence. Going to school would drastically cut down on our time together.

## **The Eleven Required Subjects**

### Occupational Education

We have taken the kids to work with us and let them be part of our family business. Also, we have visited factories, labs and many other places of business. So they can see first hand what they are all about. They also have started their own small businesses building planter boxes, picnic tables, etc. They can learn finances because they need to purchase materials and make a profit.

### Math

Our favorite subject. I turn everything into a math or logic problem. I rip every puzzle out of the newspapers and magazines. Some of my favorite books are: *Mathematical Fun, Games, Puzzles*, Jack Frohlichstein; *Saxon Math*, a magazine called *Official Puzzles and Word Games* which is good for older kids; *Logic Anyone?*, *Adventures with Logic*, *Logic in the Round*.

### Language

We use some old, used public school English books but not real often. We have some fill-in-the-blank books and use these a little more often. We have a few computer games for learning nouns and verbs, etc. Have used that on occasion.

### Social Studies

We enjoy *God's World* magazine. It's like a children's newspaper and is written at several different levels. It covers a variety of subjects.

### History

We read aloud together for most of our history lessons. We bought several books called *The Sowers*. We have been reading about Robert E. Lee recently. These books are interesting and make this time in history seem more real. And reading it in story-form rather than out of a history book makes it easier to remember. We have also checked out videos from the library. For example: the life of Jane Pittman.

### Health

I don't think you need a book for health. Health is something you learn from every-day living. We have learned about diseases and illnesses because someone we know becomes ill and 'the interest happens.' So we do research to gain knowledge. When an uncle had to have his spleen removed suddenly, the kids wanted to know the function of a spleen.

### Reading

We visit the library often. We subscribe to several magazines: *Teen Quest*, *Ranger Rick*, *National Geographic*, *World*, *Reader's Digest*, *Christianity Today*. We also read aloud often to all our kids. We really enjoyed reading five of Frank Peretti's books to them.

### Writing

Letter writing.

### Science

Visiting the Pacific Science Center. ABeka science books are good.

### Spelling



Occasionally, we use spelling books. Many times we pick our words from subjects we're studying. For example, if we're learning perimeters in math, we will also learn to spell 'perimeter.'

#### Appreciation of Art

We visit art museums. When the kids are at home and feeling creative, everything they need is handy for them: paints, colored pencils, glue, scissors, boxes of paper, etc. We also have a box in which we save 'junk' for when they want to get real creative. Junk includes empty toilet paper rolls, yarn, film containers, etc.

#### Appreciation of Music

Piano lessons. When they get older, the symphony. Concerts. The older kids work with the younger ones learning the piano.

**Mary and David R. Graham**

**Jerome (15) Douglas MacArthur (13) Francesca (12)**

### **SRI SATHYA SAI INSTITUTE OF HIGHER LEARNING**

Since originally describing our curriculum in these pages, three years ago, our central direction has not changed. Our understanding of what we are about has expanded. Our sense of going forward in a proper manner has deepened. The success of our undertaking is gratifying.

We start by recognizing that these are not our children. They belong to He Who made and is them. We are care-takers, accountable more or less as hired hands are to a property owner.

We try to discover and lead out the inner necessity of each child [*ex* (from) + *ducare* (lead) = educate]. We lead by encouraging self-motivation.

More than anything else, we desire that the children have good character. This is possible only if the parents have good character and the children are constant beneficiaries of their careful attention. Part of this attention is to keep off deleterious influences -- bad company -- much as a gardener keeps weeds and pests away from young plants.

What we strive to achieve academically is so far in advance of the '11 Required Subjects' that we feel the Superintendent of Public Instruction could with reason take us for role models. Our curriculum outline, which we call *Quintivium*, is reprinted at the end of this essay.

As before, we stress algebra. The reason is simple: the unique characteristic of the human being is the ability to reason; this ability, therefore, must be fostered; and the best way to do that is to develop skill with algebra. A person who can think can do anything needful. A person who cannot think is useless to themselves and to society.

After algebra, we stress proper use of the English language. 'Proper use' is thinking, speaking and writing the Truth. Communication we are not desiring. Communicating we are [*com* (with, being) + *unus* (one) = communicating, at-one-ment].

Three years ago I was aware of the importance of poetry in the literary diet, but I am more deeply aware of it now than I was then. Without trying to describe all of its salutary qualities and effects -- a thing I cannot do in any case -- I want to stress that I now most deeply feel the importance of poetry. Really, poetry is music and music is communicating.

The Word is The Beginning  
*Brahma Kavi*  
 God is the Poet -- The Poet is God

Each child's life is unique. A child takes birth in order to fulfill its own destiny, not the wishes of others, including parents.

Our public and private schools ask, 'How can we shape this child to our ends, making it obey our will, fulfill the goals we have established for it.' There are aspects of life which make this approach both desirable and imperative. But these aspects are not the whole story. Beyond this primary school -- personal hygiene, diet and recreation, obeying parents, reverence for elders, constant self-examination -- are the secondary and post-secondary schools of character and skills formation.

In these schools the inner necessity of the student more and more takes precedence. Train the heart to be pure and the hand to be skillful -- this is the goal. Detail emerges gradually as the child matures.

Each child, male and female, should learn a trade or 'blue-collar' occupation. They will have a livelihood which is simple, direct and always-in-demand, and they will have a reserve against uneven times, which always come. Trade skill is an indispensable component of an educated person.

The trade chosen should be that determined by the inner necessity of the child, at about age 15 or 16.

Consider that Ghandi spun cotton to the day he died, Washington was a surveyor and Lee was a civil engineer.

Consider, also, that the curriculum of the United States Military Academy begins with the work of a private soldier and progresses through the ranks. Nothing is more debilitating to society than managers (officers) who do not understand and cannot do the work of trades-people. Conversely, no situation is happier than one in which managers empathize with their charges because they understand and can do their work.

God accepts but does not approve of prayer. Just so, a teacher is happiest when a student operates autonomously, standing on their own two feet. Inner necessity is, by nature, ascetical and eremitical.

Homeschooling is one of the ten elements that comprise our system of education. Homeschoolers are teachers of note. Qualities they seek in an 'educated person' are paradigmatic for the whole society.

A new day is come for our system of education. *Gitché Manito* has called us to the sacred river, to bury our weapons, to bathe and emerge clean, refreshed, not fighting. The Call of the Divine is an Invitation which has to be accepted. Let us take note and take heart.

## QUINTIVIUM

<u>Philosophy</u>	(Grammar)	Overview-Vedantha	ETHER
<u>History</u>	(Science)	Brahmin/Teacher	AIR
<u>Government</u>	(Sociology)	Kshatryia/Ruler	FIRE
<u>Industry</u>	(Economics)	Vaisya/Farmer/Businessperson	WATER
<u>Art</u>	(Composition)	Sudra/Laborer	EARTH



Details of the *Quintivium* are as follows:

Philosophy (Grammar)

Mathematics

Logic

Systematics

Cosmology

Chronology

Ontology

Epistemology

Exegesis

Diet

ETHER

History (Science)

Piety

Anthropology

Linguistics

Paleontology

Chemistry

Physics

Oceanography

Geology

Botany

Zoology

Medicine

AIR

Government (Sociology)

Military

Police

Physical Education

Law

Politics

FIRE

Industry (Economics)

Agriculture

Plant

Animal

Business

Manufacturing

Service

Art (Composition)

Cooking Cleaning Sewing Writing

Painting Sculpture Music Drama

Dance Architecture Engineering

Mechanics Construction

EARTH

**Sandi and Gene Hall**  
**Kyle (10) Cassandra (9)**

Our main reason for deciding to homeschool: Our original reason for choosing to homeschool was to maintain our children's natural desire to learn. Today, our main reason for homeschooling is to keep our family close.

## **The Eleven Required Subjects**

### Occupational Education

We observe and ask questions everywhere we go. When the kids were young, I pointed out the tools of different jobs. I asked questions everywhere we went. Now they ask their own questions. We also tour Daddy's and his support crew's offices and plants whenever possible.

Currently, we (Sandi, Kyle, Cas) work at a large equestrian stable and experience what is involved with running the stables. This could be viewed as an apprenticeship program since Cas says this is what she wants to do when she is grown.

### Math

During the early years and even today, we use real life experiences for math. This year, we began using *Saxon Math*. We have math lessons about twice a week to make sure we are getting a well-rounded program. We use *Learning Wrap-ups*, 2122 E. 6550 So., Ullintah, UT 84405, 801-479-496, for math facts, and we enjoy the board games *Smath* and *Yahtzee*. The computer has played an important part with *MacEdge*, *Kids Time*, *Number Maze* and *Math Blasters I & II*.

We buy some workbooks but rarely use them from start to finish. Kyle and Cas pick them up for entertainment on long car trips. Cas often asks Gene or I just to write her a series of problems.

### Language

We read to the children so they can experience good language skills in a variety of forms. We try to use correct grammar. We never use 'baby talk' and do not talk down to the children. If they do not understand something they simply ask for the meaning. We have enjoyed playing with sign language and a little Spanish and Japanese.

When they became interested in writing, I would point out punctuation marks as I read to them. Then I would use little sounds for each punctuation mark when they were writing their own sentences. We made our own card game with words and punctuation marks. We would use these to make up sentences around the breakfast table.

Both Kyle and Cas are developing public speaking skills by participating in homeschool panels, giving reports and demonstrations through our co-op group and 4-H, MC-ing at our annual talent show and offering testimony to the Senate and House Education Committees.

### Social Studies

This is covered mostly through reading. We like *National Geographic* and *World* magazines. We enjoyed an exchange student from Japan. A globe is often found on our dining table. We look for places where cousins live, where Daddy travels or places we heard about in the news. Religious, social and cultural differences are discussed over dinner or as we drive. Map reading skills are also developed during car trips.

We have Learning Wrap-ups for states, capitols and postal abbreviations. *Kids Learn America!*, Williamson Publishing Co., Charlotte, VT 05445, is good for learning a little bit about each state. We also enjoy the computer game *Where in the World is Carmen San Diego?*

### History

We have a home-made time-line running up the stair case. We add events as we hear about them or see them. LOTS of reading about historical figures and events. The children act out events from history. We visit local museums, Pioneer Farms, Fort Nisqually's annual candlelight tour and other special events. We use the audio tapes, *Great American Series. Inventors and Explorers, Jabberwocky, San Francisco*. Our favorite computer program for history is Oregon Trail.

Cas reads and collects the *American Girl Collection*, Pleasant Company, Madison, WI 53791.

Kyle started a club to study medieval times. A group of 10 children gets together once a month to design coats of arms and weapons, to play chess and to discuss the difference between knights and foresters. They end the meeting by going out into the woods to 'hunt and protect the kingdom.'



### Health

General good health and personal hygiene practices. Discussion of different illnesses and diseases affecting family members and society in general. Help with planning meals and preparation. Exercise is taken through general play, swim lessons, baseball and horseback riding.

We traced Cas's body on butcher paper and then added construction paper cut-outs of internal organs. *Blood and Cuts*, Little, Brown and Co., Boston.

### Reading

Cas taught herself to read. I did nothing more than read to her and answer questions like, 'What is the 'b' sound?' or, 'What does "s-i-s-t-e-r" spell?' She first enjoyed *Little Critter* books. Now she enjoys the magazine, *Highlights for Children*, P.O. Box 269, Columbus, OH 43216-0269.

Kyle is just now showing interest in reading. We use *Teach Your Child to Read in 100 Easy Lessons*, Englehorn, Haddox and Bruner, Simon & Schuster, New York. We also use *V2-Vowels/Values*.

Both children enjoy the computer programs *Reader Rabbit* and a game of word match that is a part of *Kids Time*.

### Writing

Only what is used for every-day writing -- grocery lists, letters, making cards, etc. We have some workbooks, but, like the math workbooks, they are only used when the children decide they want to use them.

Kyle is very interested in police and detective work so I will write down a series of clues for solving a make-believe crime. I use one of the sounds he is working on in his reading program. For example: a tan van was spotted at the crime scene; it was driven by a man named Stan who is known to have a friend named Dan. Both Kyle and Cas will write down the clues. They also make up their own crimes using clues that rhyme. One investigation included a caution against intoxication.

The computer program *Once Upon a Time* encourages them to do some creative writing.

### Science

Kitchen experiments; taking care of critters; dissecting fish; studying the skeleton of a raccoon killed beside the road and the chicken we ate for dinner; field trips to the zoo; Pacific Science Center; a planetarium; the arboretum and beach; gardening; and more. Kyle is interested in electronics and has built a small switching box with Gene's help.

We listen to tapes about favorite inventors, such as, Edison, Bell, Wright brothers, Ford, etc.

### Spelling

Just reading together helps with spelling. Cas is using a series of workbooks from McGraw-Hill that her friends had so she wanted them. Kyle's spelling 'practice' is closely tied with his reading program. We also play spelling games as we drive in the car or while we are cooking dinner. Cas likes me to spell 'antidisestablishmentarianism' or 'supercalifragilisticexpialidocious.'

### Appreciation of Art

Plenty of art supplies around the house to use freely. Both children took art lessons. We have studied da Vinci and visited museums. Grandma is an accomplished artist who shares her training and enjoyment with her grandchildren.

#### Appreciation of Music

My all-time favorite. We sing with just about everything we do. Kyle and Cas learned about creating their own operas from *Mister Rogers Neighborhood* at a very early age. Since the age of 4 or 5, Kyle 'writes' a song for me each birthday.

We watch the old musicals together. Our latest passion is the modern operas *Les Miserables* and *Phantom of the Opera*.

Both children and Mom took piano lessons for a while. Cas still opens up her music books and picks out songs for enjoyment. Kyle likes to compose his own pieces. We listen to *Music Master* tapes and borrow tapes from the library. We like the music of Africa.

### **Paula Harper-Christensen**

**Paul (13) Amanda (11) Sam (6) Abby Rose (1.5)**

### **PINEHILL SCHOOL FOR THE GIFTED AND TALENTED**

Our main reason for deciding to homeschool: We homeschool in order to maintain family relationships: parent-child bonding and child-child bonding.

### **The Eleven Required Subjects**

#### Occupational Education

Learn the jobs of the family: care for animals, plan meals, sort and fold laundry, care for the wage-earner, etc. When the children are older: field trips, community service, food bank volunteer, visit local government, stack books at library, pick up trash in parks. By 9 or 10, child can earn income with a small business: pop to construction workers, baby sitting, lawn mowing. By teen years, the child can apprentice in an area of interest: Vet, Architect, Grocer, Farmer, etc.

#### Math

Hands-on approach works at all ages. Start explaining math as it relates to a child's daily activities: cooking, counting money, allowance, temperature. Help them understand that numbers are an important part of their lives. Use real materials: tooth picks, beans, pennies. Encourage children to build and measure, have a business, keep records, budget, etc.

Use math books from the library. Key Curriculum Press has workbooks for older ages. *Saxon Math* uses examples easy to understand. *Work Jobs, Math Their Way, Mathematics: a Way of Thinking*, Mary Baretta-Lorton, is my favorite.

#### Language

This is learned first through listening and repeating. We must use proper language ourselves, because the children learn most from what they hear.



With preschool children, use a dictionary with pictures and use word games. Look up words, read definitions and begin a sense of order (alphabetizing).

The best resource is truly great books. Read literature and poetry every day. Also newspaper. Start vocabulary lists.

*Easy Grammar: A New Approach to Grammar that Works* is a complete resource. *English From the Roots Up*, Lundquist, is easy to understand.

### Social Studies

Experience foreign food, customs, unusual holidays and people from other backgrounds. We study a different country each month, reading about animals, weather, holidays, dress and people. We make a map and end our study with a feast. We try to learn a few words or phrases in the national languages. We share our festivals with other families.

*The Complete Teacher's Almanac*, Dana Newmann, is good. *The Kid's Holiday Book*, Frost, has activities. *Writing Down the Days*, Dahls. *Cooking the [Russian, French, Italian, etc.] Way*, a 20-book series, is my favorite for ethnic studies.

### History

We learn history by reading biographies. Biographies by Jean Fritz are good. We also create a character of a specific period and then make a journal of this person's life. A time-line has been helpful, charting the same period of time in different parts of the world. Explain how people's lives are different because of geography, weather, diet, etc.

If a child is interested in a particular period of history, research it more fully and find an overview. This year, my 13-year-old interviewed survivors of the Depression. He learned about hardship and economic tricks and family survival tactics.

Whatever is the deep-down interest of your child, study the history of that thing or area. Also, keep clippings of articles about historic figures and file these.

### Health

Children learn health through healthful living and as an integral part of daily life. Teach children to prevent illness through avoidance of poor-quality food, toxic chemicals and harmful people. As children enter puberty, they should understand the social significance of sexual behavior. Books, television and movies are filled with sexuality that is unhealthy and inappropriate behavior. Good health is both physical and emotional.

*The Brown Paper School* series addresses humans and environment.

### Reading

Reading is the most important part of homeschooling families' day and night. Read together often and at all ages. Children learn to read from being read to. When they begin wanting to read themselves, start with word games. When the desire to read is strong, begin phonics work. There is no one right method to teach reading. Each child will learn in their unique style. Review books and select one that seems to suit the child.

Once a child reads well, there is no need to 'teach' reading anymore. The parent's job is to make great books always available.

*The Reading Teacher's Book of Lists*, Fry, Polk and Fountoukidis, has lists and associations of words and I have used it a lot.

### Writing

There are several areas homeschoolers should address: creative writing, research, composition, penmanship, typewriting and computer word processing. When the child starts to talk, begin a journal *with* the child. Write what the child wants to say each day.

Encourage children to write letters. Make many drafts of things you write and this way learn the mechanics of writing. Make copies for a file. Write to favorite authors, pen pals, legislators, soldiers and even the President.

*Easy Grammar*, Wanda C. Phillips, tells about the mechanics of writing. For creative writing, try *The Kids Book of Questions*, Gregory Stock.

Handwriting can be taught using the italic method. The transition to cursive is easy with a few connecting lines. For pretty and frilly penmanship, find a book on script. Handwriting should fit a child's personality.

Frequent trips to the library are essential. The more children learn to find answers for themselves, the more they self-educate, the better equipped they are for life.

### Science

Do not use a textbook. Use real-life experiences. Listen to your children and design science around their interests. What are the questions they ask? These tell you what their interests are.

Organize groups of homeschoolers to study an area of science. Take your leads from the learners.

### Spelling

This has been our greatest challenge. Good readers are not always good spellers and some of us are adults before we make sense out of words. Spelling must have importance and relevance in the learner's life before the interest is sparked. Some children can learn one or two new words a day and others can do more than that. Taking words from creative writing or subjects of interest can be helpful for motivation.

*Recipe for Spelling*, Francis and Deborah Bloom, and, *The Reading Teacher's Book of Lists*, Fry, Polk and Fountoukidis, are my favorite books for teaching spelling.

### Appreciation of Art

The first rule is: love your own work. Have art materials available at all times, in a box they can freely explore and pick from. Instruction may be needed later, but I feel it is inappropriate for young children. For appreciation of art other than their own, visit the library for art history books. Local artists may be eager to speak with children. Art shows, street fairs, Pike's Market and that sort of thing are free displays. Most museums have a free day. Speak to the docents. PBS television has *The Big A* show that has good ideas.

We save and display the art we do at home. This can be flower arranging, gardening, hair cuts, cooking, decorating, sewing, etc. Most children appreciate art and nature. Very little instruction is needed.

### Appreciation of Music



While doing art at home, put on some music. Infants to elderly listen to and appreciate music. Get records and tapes from the library. For lessons, we go out of the home, but appreciation can be done in the home. Inexpensive concerts are listed in the newspaper. Study of the history of music and the lives of composers has brought even more enjoyment to our music appreciation.

### **Robert E. and Janice M. Hedin**

**Clint (14) Stacia (12)**

Our main reason for deciding to homeschool: preservation of our family, time to nurture individual growth and creativity.

## **The Eleven Required Subjects**

### Occupational Education

Our immediate family and relatives are personal examples. We discuss with each other and take every opportunity to talk with people about their careers and vocations. At every opportunity, Clint will take an 'odd job' house sitting, lawn mowing, car washing, dog sitting, etc. Stacia's goal this summer is to volunteer at a pet shop.

### Math

We continue to use 'math games' by using dice, cards and board games.

Fun and challenging math books catch our attention at the libraries. For example, *The Great Book of Math Teasers*, Robert Muller, or, *Calculator Word Games*, Bennie Rhodes.

Key Curriculum Press, P.O. Box 2304, Berkeley, CA 94702, has inexpensive workbooks for fractions, decimals, percents, algebra and geometry.

*Saxon Math 76*, Saxon Publishers Inc., 1002 Lincoln Green, Norman, OK 73069.

*Beginning Algebra*, Charles P. McKeague, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

### Language

We continue to progress through a series of 'word building' books called *Fearon Teacher Aids*, David S. Lake Pubs., 500 Harbor Blvd., Belmont, CA 94002. The series is called *The Roots of Language*. Occasionally, we purchase 'word game' books also. For example, Word Puzzles, Patricia Tyler Muncy. They contain crossword puzzles, anagrams, hidden words, word chains, etc.

I continue to subscribe to *Teacher's Book Club*, P.O. Box 5555, Delvan, NJ 08075. Although they are geared to all the elementary grades, occasionally they offer a text that meets our needs, and the prices are discounted.

### Social Studies

We subscribe to *God's World Publications*, P.O. Box 2330, Asheville, NC 28802-2330, and read their current events newspaper weekly. They have newspapers for all grade levels and the 'Teacher's Helper' that is included in every issue gives a quiz about the topics discussed, what happened 'This Week in History' and activities to do relating to issues in the paper.

We enjoy *Reader's Digest*, some TV, newspaper and news documentaries as a 'kick-off' for many lively discussions about social issues.

Two books I must mention, and I think Social Studies is perhaps the best subject to list them under: *Capitalism for Kids: Growing Up to Be Your Own Boss*, Karl Hess, and, *Whatever Happened to Penny Candy*, Richard J. Maybury, Bluestocking Press. They are a great introduction into economics and entrepreneurship.

*Unlocking Social Studies Skills*, John O'Connor and Robert M. Goldberg, Globe Book Co., 50 West 23rd Street, New York, NY 10010.

*Understanding Our World Through Geography*, Jerry Aten, Good Apple, 1204 Buchanan, P.O. Box 299, Carthage IL 62321-0299.

### History

We have made an effort to focus on our Christian heritage. Books like *The Story of Liberty*, Charles C. Coffin, and, *The American Covenant*, Marshall Foster and Mary Elaine Swanson have been great resources. The library is our key resource for history. We check out mainly biographies. Although its use is very limited, we have two ABeka books, *The History of Our United States*, and, *Old World History and Geography*. I like the sequence it gives us and it's a colorful text.

### Health

Discussions regarding health are on-going. Books on diet, nutrition and health are constantly sought out at the library and borrowed from friends. For years, we've referred to *The Human Body*, Jonathan Miller. Its illustrations are 3-dimensional and moveable.

Any health issue confronting anyone in the family -- from my vision problems to Grandma's high blood pressure -- is a springboard for thorough research.

### Reading

I am reaping the rewards of reading and reading to my children since they were very young. Now, they can read to me! My advice is to purchase a large plastic crate/basket, go to the library at least every two weeks and let your children seek out all the books they find interesting. We rarely come home with under 30 books. No we don't read them all, but I love having these 'friends' at easy access at all times.

The children each have their own magazine subscriptions, catering to their current interests. For example, *Zillions*, *Consumer Reports for Kids*.

We purchase books at garage sales, thrift stores and library book sales.

### Writing

For penmanship, we continue to use and recommend *Italic Writing Series*, Barbara M. Getty, Portland State University, P.O. Box 1394, Portland, OR 97207.

The majority of our writing is very practical. We write personal letters, lists, notes, directions, etc. We enjoy *Writing Down the Days: Creative Journaling Ideas for Young People*, Lorraine M. Dahlstrom.

### Science



We use 4-H resources a lot. We've done units in model rocketry, wood working and, currently, marine science. Our homeschooling support group has ongoing classes at the Pacific Science Center. If the subject is of interest, we attend.

We've purchased most of Janice Van Cleave's books on astronomy, biology and chemistry. Each is a book of '101 Easy Experiments that Really Work.'

Pursue their area of interest. Our son recently got a dog. Trips to the veterinary and all other aspects of this pet have been an education. Our son has a subscription to *Popular Mechanics*, our daughter to *Tropical Fish Hobbyist*.

Real-life science projects are on-going, year-round. We have a large vegetable garden and raise several livestock. We preserve fruits and vegetables each year.

We are currently enrolled in science classes through the Renton Parks Department. Many parks departments as well as Boys and Girls Clubs offer classes for homeschoolers.

### Spelling

When we discover an error, we correct it. My school district sent me some helpful lists. '222 Spelling Demons for Grades 2-6' and '200 Words Most Frequently Misspelled' have been helpful. Occasionally, we will work a few pages in a workbook we have, *Follett Spelling*, published by Allyn and Bacon.

### Appreciation of Art

Art takes so many forms. We attend plays regularly as a family. Study different artists and their work. Take part in free arts and crafts classes through the library. For drawing, I recommend *The Draw Squad*, Mark Kistler, and *The Big Book of Cartooning*, Vic Lockman.

I keep art materials available at all times, including paints, clay, water colors, etc. Our daughter does many art projects at her church youth group.

### Appreciation of Music

Our daughter has a wonderful piano teacher. We purchase used instruments and make our own occasionally. The library just had an evening with a brass quintet. It was great. The library has wonderful books on composers. We just found *Twenty Names in Classical Music*, Alan Blackwood. The library has cassettes and records to check out and at their annual book sales.

A Closing Statement: An invaluable book I'd like to recommend is *The Early Childhood Teacher's Almanac: Activities for Every Month of the Year*, Dana Newmann. It's not just for early childhood. It's full of integrated activities, centered around seasons and celebrations.

Finally, for two years I have been involved in a homeschool co-op. We met weekly with three other families and our activities are geared to a theme for that month. The children do experiments, go on field trips, research and report on a subject, etc. You can co-op with just one other family. It's lots of fun.

**Stephanie & Peter Maricich**

**Yuri (11.5) Gabriel (9.5) Rachael (6.5) Luca (5) Hannah (2)**

## **THE HOMEWARD BOUND HOMESCHOOL**

Our main reason for deciding to homeschool: (1) The desire to be with our children, to experience them in the delight of learning and the conviction that 'N O stranger could educate them as well as their Mom or Dad who love them beyond words' and (2) we believe they are far more at risk of grave danger at school.

### **The Eleven Required Subjects**

#### Occupational Education

The chores are an integral part of our day. They are substantial. When a car needs repair, one of the children works with father. The same goes for repair of lawnmower, etc. They construct and do wood-working projects. Gardening and caring for small budding orchard are a given. They are in charge of laundry, do dishes, car care, vacuuming, folding etc. All the children are making story quilts. The older ones do leathercraft, several do cross-stitch and bead work (boys and girls).

#### Math

Preschool and primary, through fractions, we use and love Montessori materials, a great deal of which is home-made. Continuing through high school and college level algebra, geometry and calculus, we use Montessori math. Jerry Mortenson was a 16-year Montessori teacher with a love for math and continued on with a Montessori approach to higher mathematics. Very suitable for young children. Brilliant in some areas. Supplement odds and ends with A-Beka story problems, geoboards or a few games.

#### Language

We believe, in the early years, best not to stress this as a formal study. Rather, we read voraciously as a family together at night (read aloud) and silent reading alone. As we practice writing skills (I don't mean cursive practice), we will discuss language rules. Also in their daily journals I will point out language usages, rules and applications. But believe the child well-exposed to a great variety and quantity of quality literature will acquire formal language devices and conventions fairly easily during junior high years.

#### Social Studies

So much of what we do is integrated with other areas. For example, our eldest is going on a 12-day hike in the Yukon Territory in August with Boy Scouts. He is currently doing a library search of appropriate resources for an extended project regarding this area and part of Alaska. It will include its past and history, land uses, economy, main resources, politics, relief maps, etc. We use every opportunity to integrate this area rather than to fracture real life into abnormal, lifeless compartments.

#### History

This is perhaps our children's greatest love. We have collected a substantial number of books (historical fiction, historical nonfiction, biographies) which they love to read. We use a time-line on our wall and they relate this to all books. Our children write book reports and/or logs of every book they read. So history, writing skills, reading, advanced vocabulary and casual thinking are integrated. Our children also love to master historical poetry and prose which bring the subject alive. One child (8 years) memorized 129 lines of *The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere*. Another (11 years) memorized



*The Gettysburg Address* and *Chief Seattle's Famous Speech* as he surrendered Indian lands to the government.

Our children also love to dress up and wear period garb and play-act. We have some very good audio tapes which they love to listen to. These are about historical events and personages.

### Health

Just as we have made big educational changes in the last 3 years, our diet has changed radically as a result of reading and awareness of new research. We discuss this at great length with our children as we seek to apply the new approaches (primarily vegetarianism, low-fat, high-fiber often raw foods and fresh juices) to our old eating patterns.

We discuss at length abstinence and the positive reasons for remaining chaste, not only because of our spiritual beliefs but also in the interest of staying healthy and disease-free.

Our children have been present at the births of their siblings and this has been a great boon in helping them to feel comfortable and positive about their own sexuality as well as a real respect for life.

### Reading

My highest priority has been: (1) Use *Parents as Teachers*, P.O. Box 44093, Tacoma, WA 98444, with little ones to teach reading. Has been a great success. (2) Children read daily with me, individually. (3) Children read, memorize or write poetry daily. Has been wonderful for conveying picturesque vocabulary, capturing historical events in a powerful way, inspiring them, challenging them. We are slightly more inundated with nonfiction but read a lot of fiction as well. (4) Extensive silent reading during day, whenever they can, late at night, in car, etc.

### Writing

Our children make an entry in their journals daily. We do not correct their journals, but we do respond in writing beneath their entry. If they misspelled a word or used a run-on sentence, we use it correctly or spell the word correctly in our entry. We are just preparing to use writing strands with our children. They also write a book report of all books they read. We encourage creative, exciting book reports which would either induce the reader to want to read the book or convince them not to.

### Science

*Backyard Scientist* experiments. Their Dad is now working to help them prepare for keeping a scientific journal of experiments in scientific language: hypotheses, tools used, outcome, methods, applications, etc.

Use several interesting books. *The Way Things Work*, David Macaulay. Belong to Science Center. Active star gazers with Dad. When we watch TV -- which is seldom -- we keep TV in closet, only bring it out for extremely worthy events -- it will sometimes be for a *NOVA* science special.

### Spelling

Eldest son (11 years) keeps a personal word-book. He adds two new words to it each day. He also adds new vocabulary which interests him, and then he commits correct spelling to memory. I check it once a week. 9-year son has spelling cards -- 3X5 cards with words he frequently misspells. This has been quite helpful customizing a spelling program for each child, based on their need and developmental place. 6-year old, a beginning reader, with Frank Rogers' *Parents as Teachers* program, uses daily diction approach to help with spelling.



Several aids have been wonderful. We love using the moveable alphabet -- a Montessori tool. It's a wonderful tool for all but especially good for tactile learners and young children.

### Appreciation of Art

We have done little formal work, but we like what we have done. In our home school room, we change and put up beautiful pictures at least every season and usually more often. The children really notice them and notice beauty around them and comment on it. 'Mom, look at the lovely flowers.' Our Montessori environment -- we try to maintain it with beauty -- I think contributes to this appreciation!

### Appreciation of Music

Our children study Suzuki music. Three play the violin, one the piano. The baby (2 years) will start next year. The Suzuki repertoire is the most beautiful, pleasing collection of classical music. In that endeavor, the children listen to tapes of beautiful music frequently. Since they were infants, we have exposed them to a wide variety of music: folk, period, ethnic, Christmas, popular. We do not encourage general listening of radio rock music because of its anti-life, anti-Christian, often immoral lyrics and values.

I can't commend the Suzuki music approach enough. Has carried over to other areas as well. One of our sons is quite shy of appearing in front of a group. The Suzuki approach has two group lessons a month in addition to a weekly individual lesson. The group piano lessons are essentially bi-weekly recitals in front of a group of peers and their parents. That has had a tremendous effect on his confidence and comfort level with public demonstrations of skill such as reciting poetry. So many skill levels overlap and acquisition of certain skills enhances acquisition of still others.

### Overview

There are so many areas we attend to that don't fit into neat little boxes like formal school curriculum tends to gravitate towards. We try very hard to integrate celebrations of all kinds, seasonal, historical, spiritual holy days and holidays. We use readings, prayers, poetry, candles, crafts, recipes and music to celebrate with. We tend to do this at night when Dad can join us. This is our favorite time.

We are currently trying to develop a cottage industry around materials which will help people celebrate strong family values, a sincere sense of security, a connection with our past and a firm sense of belonging.

In addition, our Christian Faith is vital to us. Teaching, modeling and transferring our Faith hopefully to our children is our highest priority. We do many activities to support this conviction which also relate to other academic areas: history, writing, reading, logical thinking, exposure to other cultures, health, etc.

In summary: we often find homeschooling to be hard but no harder than when our children (the oldest ones) were in school, considering getting them up early, breakfast, getting dressed, tracking down homework, driving to and from, homework, PTA mtgs., fund raisers -- our lives revolved around school. We disliked that immensely. Now our lives are still very busy, primarily because of the size, age and personality of our children. But it revolves around our family. We learn together, we laugh together, read together, pray together -- and, Oh yes -- we do fight together.

But I can't imagine life back in artificial, fractured schools.



**Christine Mathison**

**Jason (15) Jared (14) Eric (13) Jaime (9) Matthew (5)**

**BEAVER CREEK ACADEMY**

Our main reason for deciding to homeschool: I can teach my children what I and they themselves feel is important, not what someone else feels is important and I can do it better.

## **The Eleven Required Subjects**

### Occupational Education

Our boys belong to the Boy Scouts of America. We have found this to be a great resource for occupational education along with the rest of the 'Required Subjects.' To earn merit badges takes reading, writing and speaking. Since they must earn their merit badges through a merit badge counselor, there is lots of interaction with other adults besides parents. We have found it to be a valuable resource.

### Math

We use *Saxon Math*. It works for us. I don't start my children in any kind of math textbook until they are 11-13 or so (unless they want to). Then we begin with *Saxon Math 65*. Order from Thompson Book Depository, P.O. Box 60160, Oklahoma City, OK 73146. Phone: 405-525-9458. Look around. Other sources may have *Saxon Math* also.

### Language

For language so far, I've just corrected any mistakes my children have made. We've had discussions on parts of speech and have done some public speaking. I have now ordered Winston Grammar. It hasn't come yet. My plan is to start that program this Fall. I ordered mine from Latterday Family Resources, 242 E. Southfield Rd., Spanish Fork, UT 84660. Phone (801) 798-2106. I also plan on using *Grammar Study Notes* along with *Winston Grammar*. They are just to be a supplement along with whatever else you use. I have been very impressed with them. Order from Joyce Kimmont, 2770 S. 1000 W., Perry, UT 84302.

### Social Studies

My children really enjoy *the National Geographic World*. Order from National Geographic World, Department 00492, 17th & M Streets N.W., Washington D.C 20036. It is \$12.95 for a yearly subscription. We have also taken a 12 year old boy from Mexico as sort of an Exchange Student this year. That has been an experience! My children have loved it. We also have lots of good family discussions on this subject.

### History

We love doing genealogy in our family! We have collected many family histories that are wonderful insights into history. We've read the 'Little House' series and have thoroughly enjoyed it. Jaime my daughter loves the 'American Girl Collection.' Jason my oldest went through a phase where he read all he could on wars the U.S. has been a part of. The public library is a wonderful resource. Use it! We also love to camp and visit museums on the way to visit grandma and grandpa.

### Health

I've found a great resource for health in the *Reader's Digest*. In the Feb. 1992 issue there is a wonderful article on AIDS. Right now our family is into nutrition. We have been studying the effects of what we eat on our overall health. We have been working really hard on changing our eating habits, going back to whole grains and lots of fresh fruits and vegetables. All of this hit home when grandpa was diagnosed with cancer this year. The doctors told us there was a direct connection with his cancer and his eating habits.

### Reading

We use the library like crazy! We buy books like crazy. As Jason puts it, 'We read everything.' I don't push my kids to learn to read. When they are ready, they're ready. When they are ready we use *The Great Saltmine And Hifwip Direct Phonics Reading Program* by Francis Rogers. (Phone: 206-531-0312). I'm more relaxed than what he'd like, though, I'm sure, but it works. Then it's off to the library.

### Writing

We write in journals, we copy favorite stories and poems, we write letters. I have used ideas out of Ruth Beechick's *A Strong Start In Language*. You can find this at the library. I think. I'm sure you can find it at the Washington State Homeschool Convention. Mostly, I just correct any errors I spot in my children's writings.

My children have also written the public speeches and talks they have given. They never cease to amaze me. They have picked up so much naturally. As Boy Scouts, when working on merit badges, they end up writing quite a bit.

### Science

The Science Center has been our favorite science hot spot. The kids love it. I've found that kids pick up a lot just by being kids and being as curious as they are. The library is a great resource here too.

### Spelling

Basically, we just fix spelling errors as they happen in our writing. There are some great ideas in Ruth Beechick's *A Strong Start In Language* with reading and writing. I've found that good spelling sort of just follows.

### Appreciation of Art

Grandpa is an artist so when he comes to visit there's usually an art lesson. Our home is decorated with beautiful oil paintings that have been done. We love museums and keep a supply of art material on hand.

### Appreciation of Music

Lots of family sing-a-longs, we listen to tapes and records of good music. When our children turn 12, they can join the church choir which develops some good performing skills.

**Virginia McManus**  
**Heather Jolene (10) Heidi Joy (9)**  
**HARMONY**



Our main reason for deciding to homeschool: I do not want to work full-time to keep my children in private school. I'd rather spend full time with my children and meet their personal needs.

## **The Eleven Required Subjects**

### Occupational Education

Highline Foundation -- home computer -- 4-H (sewing, cooking, arts, photography, etc.) -- proper training around the home in housework, meal planning and supervised baby-sitting -- learning to be on time for set appointments

### Math

Now that they are older, they use *Saxon Math* -- in the younger years we used *Math Their Way* -- even now we use lots of *Math Games*.

### Language

My girls both keep a journal -- my older daughter uses *Winston Grammar* -- they write letters to their grandparents -- we use *Daily Oral Language* to find concepts that need to be taught -- I refer to *Learning Grammar Through Writing* by Sandra M. Bell -- they write book reports and stories.

### Social Studies

We have used *KONOS* the last three years and we all love it. We get *God's World Publications* for the age of each girl. (1-800-951-BOOK)

### History

*KONOS* plus ABeka history books as reference tools -- timelines -- books -- field trips -- grandparents and older relatives -- family photo albums -- antique shops.

### Health

General good practices -- food diaries -- the library -- once again *KONOS* -- *Blood and Guts*, Linda Allison -- *Gray's Anatomy Coloring Book*, Freddy Stark.

### Reading

We read lots of books.

### Writing

We started out using Bob Jones University but now we generally write letters, reports, etc., using as good of penmanship as we can -- both of my girls changed a few letters in BJU to fit their 'style.'

### Science

*Good Science*, Creation Books (1-800-999-3777) -- lots of experiments -- *KONOS* -- we read *Nature Friend* each month -- we read lots of books from Institute of Creation Research -- we get the *Creation* magazine (P.O. Box 710039, Santee, CA 92072) -- Science Center, field trips, etc.

### Spelling

*Mega Words* for my older daughter (5th grade) -- *Teaching Reading at Home* (based on Spaulding) for 4th grade and under -- my reference tools are: *The ABC's and all Their Tricks*, Margaret M. Bishop and *English from the Roots Up*, Joegil Lundquist.

### Appreciation of Art

Art books -- art museum -- King County classes -- ceramic classes at Tycon in Burien -- since I am not creative, I usually buy *Art With a Purpose* to do with the girls each year -- it's full of a year's craft ideas.

### Appreciation of Music

Listen to tapes -- study musicians' lives -- sing in Music Ministry -- experiment with different instruments -- sometimes lessons.

**Pamela and Darrel Nash**

**Bryan (15) Marie (10)**

## **STILLWATER ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL**

Our main reason for deciding to homeschool: Education is a life-long process, an attitude of having an open mind and being 'willing' to learn new things and doing things differently. Too often I have seen people with 'degrees' think they now know it all -- they no longer need to listen or learn. We want to encourage the natural curiosity of our children and let their natural inclinations blossom rather than stuff them with unnecessary facts that are not useful to their lives. We want them to use and develop their common sense and their ability to form a hypothesis and test its verity rather than have them rely on others to tell them what to do without reason.

## **The Eleven Required Subjects**

### Occupational Education

We talk about different careers as we run into them. Bryan is now taking 'Small Engines' at the local high school. We ask the children, 'How would you like to do this or that for a living?'

### Math

We do not start math until about 6th grade. What they haven't picked up on their own by saving and spending money and using a tape measure, etc., we teach. Then we start on *Saxon Math 65*. I am really impressed with the Saxon series. Bryan is in the middle of Algebra now.

### Language

Up until this year we have just corrected Bryan's language and had him write some letters and do some spelling. This year we got a book, *English, Plain and Simple*, to teach him grammar and the parts of sentences. He enjoyed it to a point -- then put it down.

### Social Studies

We study social studies by being aware of and interested in the news. We discuss politics, law, community, etc., as they come up in our lives or on the news.



History

Some of the books we have Bryan read take place at different times in history. We then discuss the books he has read and the period of time. Some of his questions lead to looking things up in the Encyclopedia (we have the *World Book*) and talking more about them.

Health

We are very health conscious. We talk a lot about how what you eat affects your health and that each individual can do a lot for their own well-being by eating correctly and exercising daily. We do not eat sugar, white flour, processed foods or meat and we all exercise daily.

Reading

Bryan was not ready for reading until he was about 11-12 years. Now he reads a book per week -- sometimes his choice, sometimes ours. Marie wanted to learn when she was five. We bought the series recommended by the Colfaxs, *Programmed Reading*, by Phoenix Learning Resources. She went through four books and had taught herself the basics. Now she is reading daily.

Writing

Bryan and Marie practice penmanship by writing Bible verses they are to memorize. Just a *little* each day. They write thank you notes. Sometimes they'll write a letter to a friend when they feel like it.

Science

We get *National Geographic*, *World* and *Zoo Books*. We plant and grow veggies and flowers. We have a dog and cat. We catch and watch insects, spiders and snakes and observe scorpions and other animals of nature. We go to the Zoo and Aquarium. We tried talking about Chemistry but Bryan and Marie had 'zero' interest. We have books about the stars and look at the stars when they're out. We watch the weather report on the news and talk about weather patterns (one of Darrel's favorite subjects). And we talk about space and physics as interests are aroused. We talk about dinosaurs and fossils.

Spelling

Bryan and Marie are both using *Spellbound Phonic Reading* and *Spelling* by Elsie T. Rak. We all like it. But Bryan wasn't ready for it until this year.

Appreciation of Art

Come up in conversation and going places. We all like to draw and color (except Darrel) and wish we had more time for it.

Appreciation of Music

We checked out a series of tapes from the library about classical musicians and listened to it. We have many tapes, CDs and records that we listen to. Sometimes we sing (not Darrel).

**Cathy Sly**

**Justin (11) Brandon (9) Jordon (6)**

Our main reason for deciding to homeschool: To keep our family closer. The boys spend lots of time together. If they were in school, everyone would be going in different directions.

## **The Eleven Required Subjects**

### Occupational Education

This we cover by talking mostly and taking every opportunity to observe different people in different jobs.

### Math

The one subject we use a text in. Lots of hands-on type of stuff -- counters, rods, etc. I have had good luck with Bob Jones University Press materials until the boys were old enough to use *Saxon Math*, *Math for Smarty Pants* and *I Hate Mathematics*, *The Brown Paper School*. Computer software: *Math Rabbit*, for younger kids. *Math Blasters* and *Math Blasters Plus*, Davidson, for ages 6 to 12.

### Language

We try to tackle problems as they come up, but I have used some workbooks as the boys get older to cover the basics. We have used Bob Jones and ABeka. Also *Word Works*, *The Brown Paper School* and *The Language Arts Idea Book*.

### Social Studies

Lots of reading aloud about different cultures. We had a Japanese exchange student for 3 weeks -- best way to learn about other cultures. We also did a 'country club' for a while with 3 other families. We would choose a country to study, each family doing what they chose. Some children did reports, plays, art work. Then at the end of the month we would get together with all the families and have a feast and share what we learned.

### History

Lots of reading aloud. Construct a time-line. Do a family tree. Talk to older people. Some of our favorite books are by Jean Fritz. My boys especially enjoy books about boys growing up in the early 1900s. *The Great Brain*. *Soup*. We always try to find out more about the time period and find out what else was going on in the world.

### Health

*Blood and Guts*, *The Brown Paper School*. Just talking about nutrition. Have kids chart what they eat in a week. *What's Happening to My Body*, for both boys and girls.

### Reading

Read aloud, read, read, read! *The Writing Road to Reading* teaches phonics. Once the boys can read, we jump right into trade books or workbooks. We do have silent reading time every day, about 20 minutes, to encourage reading. Once they start reading on their own, I don't worry much. But we do read as a family aloud almost daily. Many visits to the library.

### Writing



We do not do enough writing. This is one subject that is hard to teach in a 'natural setting.' As my boys have gotten older, they themselves have seen the need to learn to write. We have tried some 'whole language' ideas. These work well with younger ones. They tell me what to write and we make little books which they illustrate. Journals have worked well for a while.

*Any Child Can Write*, Harvey S. Wiener, has helped with lots of ideas. Also, having a word processor has helped. *The Children's Publishing Co.*, *The Learning Co.*, lets them choose pictures to add and they don't get bogged down with the penmanship so much.

### Science

We have tried several things. My boys love to experiment and read about science. Lots of non-fiction library books on every kind of science. The most important thing, I think, is allowing them the freedom (and the mess!) of 'doing' science.

One year, we gave our 9-year-old (then about 6) a science kit, complete with lab coat, for Christmas. It was a box with everything he would need to do all the experiments in *The Backyard Scientist*, Jane Hoffman. It was a hit and still is three years later. He keeps refilling it. We have also done many units on various science topics, according to the boys' interest. Science Yellow Pages.

### Spelling

I have never used a spelling program until this year, with my oldest. Now we are talking about word patterns -- contractions, etc. I don't think the traditional test on Friday works well. They need to write and most importantly read, read, read. Then spelling comes more naturally. *Recipe for Spelling*, Frances and Deborah Bloom. *The Natural Speller*, Kathryn Stout.

### Appreciation of Art

Trips to museums. Always pointing out works of art. Sidewalk shows. Street fairs. *Getting to Know the World's Great Artists*, Mike Venezia, is a series that covers each artist individually and is good for kids.

### Appreciation of Music

My boys all take piano lessons. We encourage good music, go to concerts and check out different types of music at the library.

**Wendy Wartes**  
**Jeff (14) Julie (11) Mike (7)**  
**WHISPERING FIRS**

Our main reason for deciding to homeschool: Want more time with my children before they grow up.

## **The Eleven Required Subjects**

### Occupational Education

Field trips, volunteer work, helping with home improvement projects, 4-H. We learned much about old time occupations and initiative by reading the entire set of eight books by Ralph Moody beginning with *Little Britches*.

### Math

All the wonderful manipulatives when young, then at 4th or 5th grade start *Saxon Math* books. Saxon requires self-teaching using a text (a very useful skill), has timed facts tests daily (my children time themselves and try to beat last time), review tests weekly and never speaks down to children.

### Language

Foreign: begin with *Learnables* (listening tapes), International Linguistics Corp., 3505 East Red Bridge Road, Kansas City, MO 64137. Then move into classes where they can listen *and* speak. Believe in giving extensive ear training prior to speaking.

Reading is single best way to teach language, vocabulary, grammar, etc. Reread passages you enjoy and discuss why you liked that.

### Social Studies

Audio tapes of states, capitols, countries from 1-800-365-SING. Current-events discussing daily after watching news, reading newspapers. Geography using *Geo Safari* and reinforce learning via games such as *Take Off*. Maps on walls, plot where stories take place. Japanese Exchange Students -- short stay, twice a year.

### History

Landmark books from library and Goodwill: *The Landmark History of the American People*, *Don't Know Much About History*. Biographies. Videos from non-fiction selection at library.

### Health

By example and discussion.

### Reading

All mine can read so they read! Favorite authors now are Clyde Robert Bulla (history), Isaac Asimov (science fiction), Dorothy Lyons (horse stories) and Willard Price (adventure series). Read aloud daily. Assign great books to older son.

### Writing

Writing letters to pen pals. Creative writing from own ideas (Julie). Reports for Quest NW Environmental Education program (Jeff). Daily handwriting practice for Mike. *Italic Writing Series*, Portland State University, to teach handwriting.

### Science

Quest NW (Jeff). Brian Hozey classes. 4-H Horse Bowl study for Julie covers biology, botany (study of feeds), etc. Extensive home library of science books and experiment books. Radio Shack has fantastic little pocket microscope for \$10 by Micronta. Carry it everywhere!

### Spelling

Mike works daily on *Dolch* basic sight words. Julie practices words for 4-H Horse Bowl (Palomino, recessive, incisors, etc.). Jeff uses *Franklin Spelling Ace* and spellcheck on computer.

### Appreciation of Art



Art classes at Boy's and Girl's Club. *Draw Squad*, Mark Kistler, Simon and Schuster -- at Target stores. Pentel water colors in tubes, markers, chalk -- especially for driveway and sidewalk art. Paper from salvage brokers, brushes of all sizes, easel -- can be made from refrigerator box, flaps out on bottom to catch drips, flaps in on tops for stability. Smaller box for table-top or toddlers.

#### Appreciation of Music

Listening to tapes, records, piano and other instruments in home. Sing in car.

### **Linda White**

**Jennifer (16) Corrie (14) Kimberly (12) Shawn (10) Kevin (6)**

Our main reason for deciding to homeschool: We as parents feel like we have the responsibility for what and how our children are taught. We want them to be taught Godly principles and be taught in a way that they know they can succeed and have self-worth.

### **The Eleven Required Subjects**

#### Social Studies

*Global Pursuit* (game) from National Geographic Society.

#### History

Biographies and good historical fiction. ABeka History: History of our United States especially good. *The Light and the Glory* and *From Sea to Shining Sea* by Peter Marshall.

#### Writing

*Writing Strands*, National Writing Institute, 7946 Wright Road, Niles, MI 49120. I've used strands 5 and 7. They are excellent! This is creative and expository writing. *A Reason for Writing*, Concerned Communications, Highway 59 North, Siloam Springs, Arkansas 72761. This is penmanship.

#### Science

ABeka: *Biology, God's Living Creation. How Science Works*, Judith Hann -- put out by *Reader's Digest* -- an excellent hands-on science for elementary students. I bought ours at COSTCO.

#### Appreciation of Art

*Drawing Textbook*, Bruce McIntire. Excellent for drawing.

#### Appreciation of Music

Band and orchestra. Cassettes of various types of music, especially classical.