

Spring 2023



2023 Convention Preview



ABOUT AFHE

Arizona Families for Home Education (AFHE) is the statewide organization that has been serving the needs and protecting the rights of Arizona's homeschooling families since 1983. AFHE is a 501(c)(3) non-profit educational, religious, and charitable corporation directed by a Christian board. AFHE membership is available to all Arizona homeschool parents.

OUR MISSION

AFHE exists to **INSPIRE** parents to home educate their children; **PROMOTE** parent-directed home-based education; **PRESERVE** the freedom to homeschool; and **SUPPORT** parents who choose a home-based education option for their children.

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Shawn & Cindy Duell
David & Christina Garretson
Jeff & Michelle Jibben

PUBLISHER

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Print distribution approximately 1,500
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EDITOR & DESIGNER

Cindy Duell
magazine@afhe.org

PROOFREADING TEAM

Meredith Boone, Katie Hill,
Jenna Ricketts, Ariana Schaeffer

CONTACT

Arizona Families for Home Education
P.O. Box 2035 | Chandler, AZ 85244-2035
homeschool@afhe.org
602-235-2673 voicemail

AFHE.ORG

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The Ultimate **ARIZONA** Book List

by Colene Lewis

ARIZONA BOOKS, BOOKS, AND MORE BOOKS! by Cindy West

One of our favorite books based in Arizona is *Roxaboxen*. This beloved and much-read book inspired a trip to Yuma, Arizona, to visit this small plot of barren land which is now a city park. It is not much more than a rocky outcrop covered with sand and dust. With no trees nor any vegetation and only a bench to sit on, one could easily drive by. But because of the book, our kids were mesmerized and spent over an hour playing, making “roads” and the outlines of buildings. I finally got hungry and told them we had to leave to get something good to eat. This is the power of a good book!

Living Books

The great educator Charlotte Mason referred to these kinds of narrative-focused books as living books. Living books draw you in, causing you to want to read further because they are written in an engaging way. Living books can be either fiction or non-fiction.

The following books can prompt delightful and deep conversations, lead to hours of play, and prepare you for extended learning on field trips. Rather than studying dull, dry textbooks, you can read captivating stories that cause

the people, places, and events to come alive! Rather than using vocabulary-restricted, dumbed-down books, read rich stories that feed the heart and the mind.

Our Criteria for Choosing Books

- Will you (and your kids) learn something about Arizona?
- Do the illustrations further impart the message and information of the book?
- Is it well-written? Is it engaging with rich vocabulary?
- Is it essentially true? There is some wiggle room in this question. Some books have some silliness, time travel, or other literary devices that will delight your children.
- Is it spiritually true? There is some wiggle room here as well.
- Does it encourage family love among parents, children, siblings, and grandparents?
- Does it portray cultures and people groups with dignity and appreciation?
- Does it encourage good behavior? Does good triumph?
- Is the content age appropriate?

Book List begins
on next page →

Ages listed indicate interest level, not reading level. Most homeschooled preschoolers who have been read to a lot will enjoy the books even if they are listed for older children. Most older kids and adults will like all these books, no matter the top age listed. This is a partial list; find the complete list at our website (see below).

GRAND CANYON

Down the Colorado: John Wesley Powell, the One-Armed Explorer, Deborah Kogan Ray. Ages 6-12. This is the best short biography of Powell that captures the excitement and danger of his travels. It is nicely illustrated and can be read in short sections for younger kids.

Exploring the Earth with John Wesley Powell, Michael Elsohn Ross. Ages 8-11. This biography of the man who explored and first mapped the Grand Canyon includes related activities for kids.

Brightly of the Grand Canyon, Marguerite Henry. Ages 8-12; a classic for all ages. Based on a real-life burro who lived in the Grand Canyon, this is a wonderful read aloud for the whole family,

Mule Train Mail, Craig Brown. Ages 4-8. This delightful tale follows the mule-riding mailman to Supai on the Havasu Creek in the Grand Canyon.

Grand Canyon, Exploring a Natural Wonder, Wendell Minor. All ages. Inspired by the work of earlier artist-explorers, this award-winning illustrator shares his daily impressions of the famous South Rim in word and watercolor sketches.

Who Pooped in the Park? Grand Canyon National Park: Scat and Tracks for Kids, Gary D. Robson. Ages 4-12. Animals are all around leaving behind their scat and tracks for observant kids to find. Colorful illustrations and a quick-reference chart in this book make field identification a breeze!

Grand Canyon, A Different View, Tom Vail. All ages. This biblical and young earth perspective of the canyon includes beautiful photography.

WEATHER

The Gullywasher, Joyce Rossi. Ages 4-11. As Leticia and her grandfather watch the summer rain clouds drift across the Arizona sky, the old vaquero provides fanciful explanations of his aging. Some editions are bilingual.

One Day in the Desert, Jean Craighead George. Ages 6-11. Good, short reader for grades 2-5. The Papago (O'Odham) and native animals adapt to the Sonoran Desert's merciless heat and torrential rain which causes a flash flood.

Hip, Hip, Hooray, It's Monsoon Day! Roni Capin Rivera-Ashford. Ages 5-11. Gorgeous illustrations of animals, plants, and humans grace the story of anticipation and celebration of the monsoon season in the Sonoran Desert! Bilingual.

PLANTS & ANIMALS

Desert Days, Desert Nights, Roxie Munro. All ages. Your child can try to find over 275 desert animals in the beautiful, detailed illustrations of this book that covers the five deserts in the U.S. Four of the five are in Arizona.

Where the Buffalo Roam, Jacqueline Geis. Ages 4-10. Lovely watercolor illustrations grace this adaption of the poem and song set in the southwest desert.

Desert Voices, Byrd Baylor. Ages 5-9. Sonoran Desert animals are described with poetic prose from this well-known and loved local author.

Desert Giant: The World of the Saguaro Cactus, Barbara Bash. Ages 4-8. Discover the lifecycle and ecosystem of the saguaro.

Night Life of the Yucca, the Story of a Flower and a Moth, Katherine B. Hauth. Ages 5-10. Fascinating story of the symbiotic relationship between the moth and the unique creamy white flowers in the Sonoran Desert.

What Kinda Cactus Izzat? Reg Manning. Ages 12 and up. Humorous descriptions of various cactus will amuse and inform!

Alejandro's Gift, Richard E. Albert. Ages 4-12. In the southwestern desert an old man lives alone and builds a waterhole for the local wildlife.

The Table Where Rich People Sit, Byrd Baylor. Ages 6-11. An impoverished 20th century family in the Arizona desert discuss the real riches of family, freedom, and nature.

Lizards on the Wall, Ken Buchanan. Ages 4-8. A child describes the lizards on his wall eating bugs and spiders.

Desert Night Shift, A Pack Rat Story. Conrad Storad. Ages 4-8. Entertaining mixture of facts and silliness about pack rats will amuse your kids! Extra info and a vocabulary list on back pages.

Mañana Iguana, Ann Whitford Paul. Ages 4-7. Retelling of the Little Red Hen with desert animals and a happy ending that will delight your little children, integrating Spanish words with a glossary and pronunciation guide.

The Bootmaker and the Elves, Susan Lowell. Ages 3-8. Another classic tale is given a southwestern flair.

NATIVE AMERICANS

Nations of the Southwest, Amanda Bishop and Bobbie Kalman. Ages 7-12. This book contains a wealth of information on ancient (Anasazi, Mogollon, Hohokam) and modern (Hopi, O'odham, Yuma, Yavapai, Navajo, Apache, Zuni) Native Americans in the Southwest. Short, easy-to-understand and interesting pictures and verbiage on pit houses, pueblos, hogans, baskets, pottery, petroglyphs, irrigation, canals, Hunters/Gatherers, early farmers, nomadic/ seminomadic/ sedentary make this a must-read book.

Corn is Maize, the Gift of the Indians, Alik. Ages 4-8. Engaging story tells of how corn was found by Indian farmers thousands of years ago, its many uses, and how it impacted history.

The Same Sun Was in the Sky, Denise Webb. Ages 5-10. A boy and his grandfather hike in the desert near Tucson where they observe rock carvings and consider the Hohokam people who had lived there.

The Anasazi Culture at Mesa Verde, Dale Anderson. Ages 7-12. A great overview of the culture of the Ancient Pueblo people includes historic photographs, easy-to-read text, and clear, simple maps. It also includes information on the archaeology used to learn about this ancient people group.

Big Moon Tortilla, Joy Crowley. Ages 4-7. Grandmother imparts wisdom to granddaughter in a modern O'odham community.

If You Lived with the Hopi, Anne Kamma. Ages 7-11. Comprehensive book about the Hopi nation for kids.

Colors of the Navajo, Emily Abbink. Ages 5-9. The Navajo people are described by using the colors in their lives such as turquoise jewelry, red sand used in their religion, black coal, gray rugs, etc.

Fry Bread, A Native American Family Story, Kevin Noble Maillard. Ages 5-10. Fry Bread is a recent (less than 150 years) food first developed by the Navajo people in response to the ingredients that were available. Fry Bread is made by many Native tribes and this book celebrates them all. The historical notes at the end are especially interesting.

Apache Rodeo, Diane Hoyt-Goldsmith. Ages 5-10. A superb story from a modern Apache girl's perspective covers culture and history of the White Mountain Apache.

The Hummingbirds' Gift, Stefan Czernecki. Ages 5-9. An Indian/Mexican family saves the hummingbirds and then are saved by the hummingbirds who teach them how to make straw figurines. This book includes historically accurate information on the Day of the Dead in an honoring and positive way.

CONQUISTADORES & MISSIONS

The Spanish Missions of Arizona, Robin Lyon. Ages 7-12. Explorers such as Marcos de Niza, Francisco Vazquez de Coronado, Antonio de Espejo, and Father Kino are covered. Presidios (forts) as well as missions are discussed. Provides a fair treatment of the negative aspects (Spanish diseases, forced servitude), while it also covers the positive aspects of the padres who wanted to help the Native peoples.

Elena and the Coin: Exploring Tucson's Presidio Heritage, Laura Orabone. Ages 6-10. A young girl visits an archaeological dig and goes back in time to visit the Mexican fortress.

Father Kino, Priest to the Pimas, Ann Nolan Clark. Ages 9 and up. Newbery-winning author's excellent biography of Father Kino whose Roman Catholic faith inspired his kindness and patience. He was the first missionary to the Pimas (O'odham).

EARLY SETTLERS & TERRITORIAL DAYS

Chico, Sandra Day O'Connor. Ages 5-11. Six-year-old Sandra loves riding her pony on her family's ranch in southeastern Arizona. This picture book memoir is a realistic look at the future Supreme Court Justice's childhood.

This House is Made of Mud, Ken Buchanan. Ages 4-8. Bilingual. A family builds a home from adobe in the beautiful Sonoran Desert. While this book's time frame is ambiguous, it accurately describes the historical building technique the Europeans learned from the Native Americans.

Coyote School News, Joan Sandin. Ages 6-12. Life in rural ranching 1938 southern Arizona is described delightfully by the twelve students in a one-room school. Historical fiction based on a true story with terrific illustrations.

We have read every one of these books and they are all endorsed enthusiastically! Slowly enjoy some of these books that will inspire, inform, and delight you and your family. You will find MANY more books about Arizona on the complete version of this book list at CULTIVATEDLEARNING.ORG.



COLENE LEWIS homeschooled her daughters through high school in a home where learning was a joy and a way of life. Alongside her husband, Tom, Colene served on the board of AFHE for over 13 years. Colene will be a featured speaker at the 2023 AFHE Convention.

CULTIVATEDLEARNING.ORG

I wrote this little poem in a minute while listening to a man talk about how bygone builders approached the architecture of angels. He spoke of how they built grand spires and sacred spaces with an expansive imagination for the ages. He challenged us to consider what we were building. Would it last? I thought, I am only telling stories to children. And this came out. It will have to serve for now as the best articulation of my ambition.

A Cathedral of Words

I cannot, I think, build a great building of any kind,
To last a thousand years.

Not with these hands.

So I will try, in my own way,
To make something that lasts a while.
I will try, I think,
To build a cathedral of words.

But that is too grand.

A cottage is more likely, with washing on the line.
A little home.
Simple meals.
A warm fire.
Happy kids.

A cottage of words.



May it last a little while and lend light to a few tired travelers,
Moving through whatever darkness
This industrious world manufactures for them.

A cathedral of words? Perhaps that's too grand a spire.
But I, bold as a mouse,
Aspire.

So I will build what I can,
And let my children, when they are grey,
Say what it was.



S.D. SMITH is the author of The Green Ember Series, a bestselling middle-grade adventure saga. Smith loves to speak to audiences about storytelling, imagination, and seeing yourself as a character in the Story. He will be a featured speaker at the 2023 AFHE Convention along with his son and co-author, J.C. Smith.

SDSMITH.COM

Our deepest thanks to Joshua & Stacey Sugata as they retire from the **AFHE BOARD**



Joshua and Stacey Sugata joined the AFHE Board in 2018. Their professional experience, years in ministry leadership, and personal skills and abilities have been great assets for AFHE for the last five years.

Josh was the AFHE Board Vice President in 2020 and 2021, becoming President in 2021. His faculty and administrative positions at Grand Canyon University were critical in supporting our convention on the GCU campus that year. Josh is a skilled communicator, recruiter, and networker, with the technical expertise needed to lead AFHE through our website migration in early 2022 and with many other projects.

Every organization would be blessed to have someone like Stacey. Highly capable in a wide range of administrative and management skills, she tackled many new challenges while serving on the AFHE Board. Stacey worked diligently to recruit and manage volunteer teams, cultivate organizational relationships, and serve the support groups we partner with. She dedicated countless hours to the website migration as well.

Beyond these commendable qualities, Josh and Stacey care deeply about serving people well, with honor and integrity; being around them is always a joy. After spending the last two years as full-time RVers, their family has settled in the Verde Valley and are turning their attention to getting established in a new phase of life.



Annabelle Porter Wins Statewide Essay Contest

State Treasurer Kimberly Yee's office sponsored an essay contest in October 2022 for 5th grade students across Arizona, soliciting entries written on the topic "What Is Your Dream Job and How Do You Plan on Achieving It in the Future?" There were 20 winners out of 631 entries, selected from every county and every educational option (district, charter, private, tribal school, and homeschool).

Annabelle Porter, a homeschool student from Surprise, was one of the winners from Maricopa County. Winners received a deposit of \$529 in their own AZ529 Education Savings Plan accounts, which are tax-advantaged accounts families may use to save for their children's future educational expenses. Annabelle chose to write about her aspirations to become an architect who improves people's lives "because the houses I've made for them are beautiful and functional." Congratulations, Annabelle!



Treasurer Kimberly Yee, AFHE Board Member Michelle Jibben, Annabelle Porter, and her parents Randi and Kevin Porter.

To learn how you can submit an article for "Homeschoolers Excel" please visit afhe.org/magazine for instructions and guidelines.



FOR TEACHING CLASSICS, READ CLASSICS — NOT TEXTS

FROM THE AFHE ARCHIVES (1998)

BY MICHAEL P. FARRIS

The desire of most home-schooling fathers and all home-schooling mothers is for the dad to play a significant role in the family's home-schooling program.

Many dads have dreams of teaching their children a few subjects (typically math, science or history), but unless a father is able to teach the subjects at least three times a week, such a plan is not particularly practical. For elementary-age students, I believe it is imperative that they be taught in the daytime when their brains are fully functional.

Accordingly, the schedules kept by most fathers make it quite difficult for them to play any appreciable role in the academic instruction of their children.

Given the inherent difficulties that busy dads face, it is with a great deal of excitement that I share an experiment our family is trying this year, which permits this very busy dad to plan an increased role in the academic life of his children. And (drum roll, please) this plan is especially good for fathers who travel as a part of their job.

Vickie and I both have long aspired to use as many real books (as opposed to textbooks) as possible in our home-education program. Textbooks, particularly reading and literature, take a smattering of stories from a variety of sources, edit the stories and give the student a bland smorgasbord of snippets that rarely captures the essence of the full works.

We want our children to read whole works of great pieces of literature, not just sanitized samples. But the problem has been Vickie's time schedule. With 10 children, five of whom are school age, she is already loaded beyond the point that will permit her

to read two or three novels or plays a month so that she can intelligently discuss these works with our seventh- and twelfth-graders.

While I am at home, I have no free time that would allow me to read these great works of literature. However, to my great pleasure, I have found that when I travel, I can get through a few hundred pages an evening. This would be while most dads would be spending this time watching that important preseason game between the Lakers and the Sonics in their hotel rooms.

Since the beginning of September, I have read *The Good Earth* by Pearl S. Buck, *Pudd'nhead Wilson* by Mark Twain, *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee, and am just about through with *Rob Roy* by Sir Walter Scott. I'm having a great time reading these books and composing the questions my two older students must answer when they finish their reading assignments.

After each book, Katie and Jessica are given a list of essay questions that they must answer, and then we spend an hour or two discussing both the novel and their answers to the questions.

At the pace we are on, Jessica will be able to read from 70 to 100 great works of literature in the six years between seventh grade and high school graduation.

There is an additional reason that I am glad to be reading these books myself in advance. All that is classical is not necessarily wholesome. *The Good Earth*, for example, contains descriptions of immoral sexual activity. The descriptions are not graphic in any way. In fact, the narratives are not unlike the biblical passages concerning David and Bathsheba.



Nonetheless, the content warrants some parental guidance and supervision. *The Good Earth* makes a compelling case for both abstinence before marriage and monogamy within marriage. It also makes it plain that feminists who argue for sexual liberation do nothing more than play into the hands of lust-driven men who have the lowest view possible of women.

A dad who rides Metro to work can read a book or two a month. A dad who travels overnight for his job can read at least that per month. Then with a couple hours of interaction with your child after each book, your students can read the literature that has helped to shape our society and to explain the way the world works.

In fact, this approach is a lot like classical liberal-arts education, which used to be offered at the college level before political correctness stamped out the propensity to read the works of dead white males.

Teaching your own children the important works of literature is not only cheaper than college—you can be better certain that the values of the teacher will be in perfect harmony with those your child has received at home.

This article was published by AFHE in the January-February 1998 issue of Arizona Home Education Journal. It was reprinted from The Washington Times, October 14, 1997, page E6 "Home-Schooling Today" column.



MICHAEL P. FARRIS was founding president of both the Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA) and Patrick Henry College and is the former president and CEO of the Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF). He has specialized in constitutional appellate litigation, and in 2018 Mr. Farris successfully argued *NIFLA v. Becerra* before the U.S. Supreme Court, resulting in a free speech victory for California's pro-life pregnancy centers. He and his wife, Vickie, have 10 children and many grandchildren.

ADFLEGAL.ORG

Tips for Reading Classics

1. Don't be intimidated. Classics are just compelling stories that got here before you did. You don't need to be a literature expert! Keep in mind: they are considered classics because they still speak to the readers of today.
2. Not all classics are lengthy or serious. You can begin your classics reading by selecting a shorter book or a humorous work.
3. Choose an edition that includes informative notes. Penguin Classics are great for this.
4. Chapter summaries are very helpful. You can choose to read a summary either before or after you read the chapter. There are many resources, like Sparknotes, available online.
5. Set a goal.
6. Read with a buddy and schedule coffee dates to discuss what you read.
7. Enjoy a movie version with the works (popcorn & Junior Mints!). Read reviews on different versions and select one that seems to represent the original work faithfully.
8. Take notes as you read. Make this a conversation between you and the book. Write down questions, comments, and comparisons with ideas and points from other books or conversations. This is called "active reading."
9. Many people enjoy audiobook versions of classic works. Your local library should have a large selection on disc or virtual check-out.

With Abeka 101, *you've got this.*

As you begin your homeschool journey with us, we know you'll have questions. So we put all of the answers in one convenient place for you: Abeka.com/101Support. Visit this online resource for helpful tips and tools, from step-by-step instructions, to how-to videos from veteran homeschool moms, to words of encouragement when you need them most.

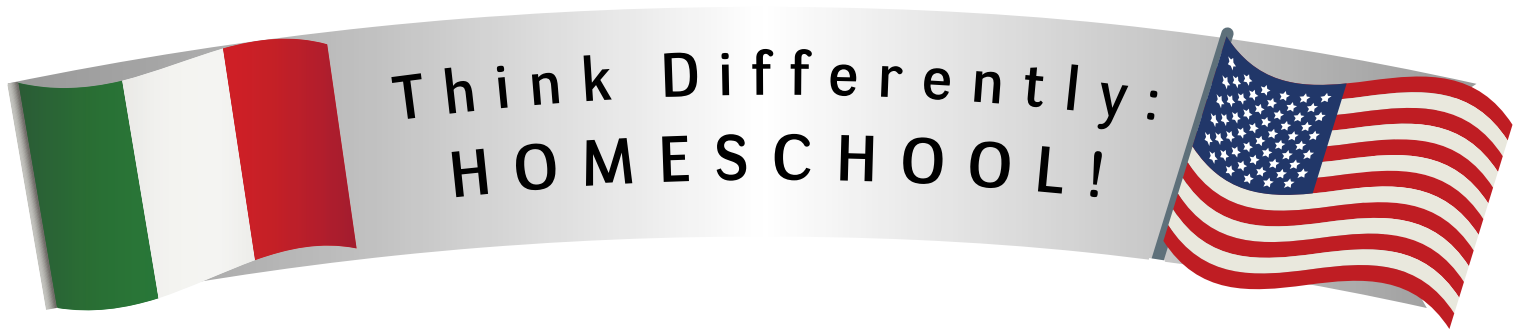
For even more support and inspiration, join our Facebook group, Abeka All Access, where you can connect with other Abeka families.

We're thrilled that you're part of our community and we're here to help you every step of the way.



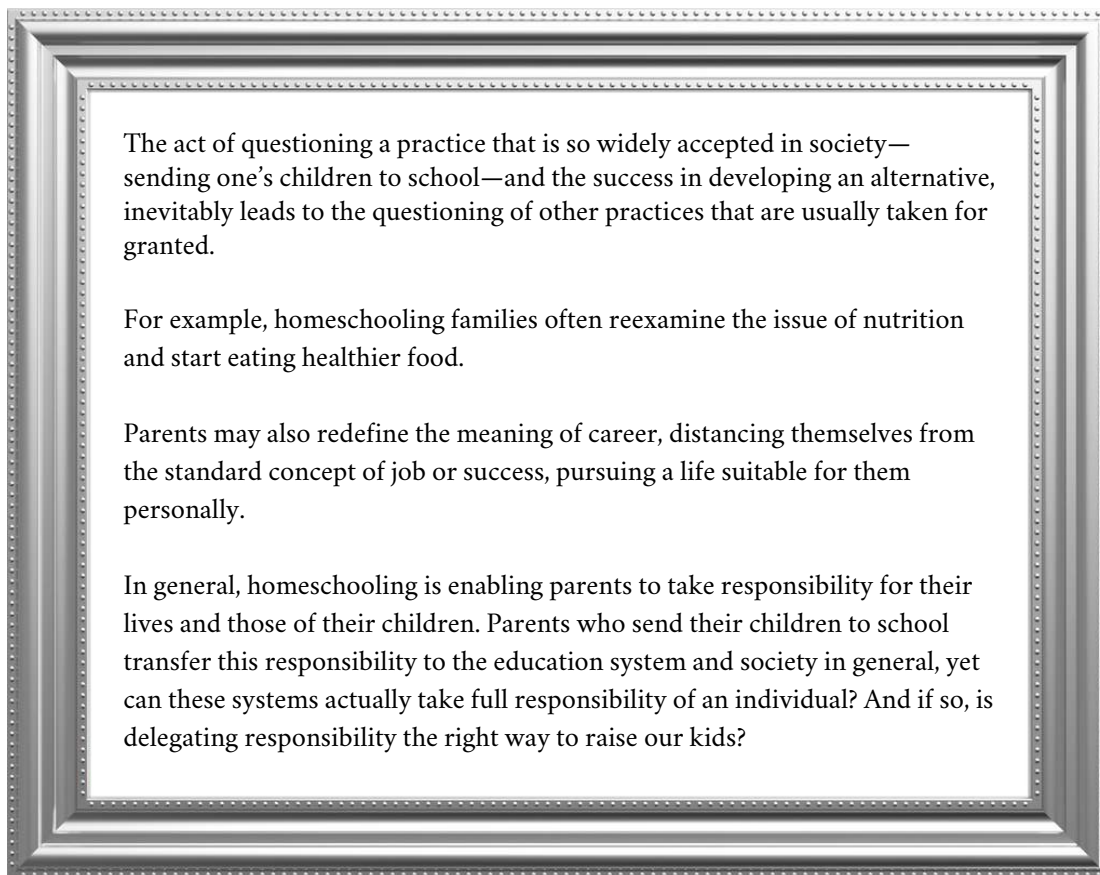
HELP IS HERE FOR LEARNING AT HOME





Erika Di Martino is an American/Italian citizen who has been a homeschool advocate in Italy for over fifteen years. She is the founder of Edupar (www.edupar.it), a national organization in Italy providing a network for home educating families to receive legal guidance, access discussion forums and homeschool resources, and get support in group and conference settings. Although homeschooling has been legal in the United States for some time, and most Americans now know someone who homeschools, educating your own children outside the traditional school system is not yet a familiar concept in Italy.

Erika recently shared on Facebook some thought-provoking statements that shed light on how shifting one's perspective on education can affect many other areas of life. Her post is shared here for your consideration. To learn how the homeschooling movement is faring worldwide, visit the Global Home Education Exchange website at GHEX.WORLD (also on social media).



ERIKA DI MARTINO is a homeschooling advocate, public speaker, and author of **Homeschooling: L'Educazione Parentale in Italia** and **El Mondo è la Mia Classe (The World is My Class)**. She and her husband currently homeschool four of their five children, dividing their time between Ireland and Italy. Erika says it is thanks to their children that they have dedicated their lives to helping others walk this educational path.

ERIKADIMARTINO.COM



Creating World Movers

The Pleasure of Curating a Home Library

by Jamie Mehan

"Show me a family of readers, and I will show you the people who move the world."

— Napoleon Bonaparte

I clearly remember walking into my school library. When I was about eleven years old. Overwhelmed by all the choices, I asked the grandmotherly library assistant for help. Putting her hand on my shoulder, she pulled me aside and almost whispered, "You are just the type of girl who would enjoy the book I'm about to show you." That's when I met L.M. Montgomery's classic heroine, Anne Shirley, of *Anne of Green Gables* fame.

That wonderful woman gave me two gifts that day. The first was the gift of being seen and understood. She saw a young girl clearly in love with the written word, one who was looking to feast on literature. Secondly, she gave me a newfound delight in literature. I had been given books as presents before, but this was something entirely different. What she put in my hand that day was the seed of the love of literature which would flourish in my adult life and then be passed down to my own children. She had shared a treasure with me, one I believe that she didn't take lightly, nor did I.

With all of the responsibilities parents face, it might seem that choosing books to build a home library is rather low on the list. It's far too easy to fall into the mindset of "as long as they're reading, what does it matter?" It matters—more than parents might realize.

When parents begin to realize the joy of well-chosen words and illustrations, it's inevitable that curating a home library follows. Children will naturally gravitate toward excellent stories, if only they are introduced to them. They will want to hear them again and again until

everyone knows them by heart, and then they'll want to hear them some more. Some of the most wonderful things to see in a home are books that have been read over and over until they're almost falling apart.

Read-alouds are not just for the little ones who aren't reading independently quite yet. My teenagers will still sit and listen when I read, especially if it's a family favorite. Not only do they appreciate the familiar words, but the comfort of being together, doing something peaceful, and creating a bond with their family is too inviting to pass up.

Reading creates connections within your family. We have a rule at our dinner table that there is no screen talk. The goal has been to focus on current events, what they have been learning in Sunday School or in church sermons, what's been happening in their individual lives, or books they have been reading. We have learned so much from each other! Stories have been remembered, recommended, and joked about over many years. Please don't get me wrong. We are not book snobs who sit around and only discuss books. It has just worked as a guideline and reminder to us all (Mama and Daddy included) to keep the conversation focused and intentional.

So what books do you choose to create or add to your home library? Of course, we know that every family is different and that will be reflected in the books you see upon your shelves. By force of habit, one of the first things I do when going to someone's house for the first time is to look at which books they have on their shelves.

That gives me a glimpse into the character of my hosts. It gives me a thrill of pleasure to see old familiar book friends as well as quite possibly new ones that I need to add to my “to-be-read” list. When curating your own library, it pays to be choosy. Not only will you want to develop a taste for what is quality literature, but you will also want to stay clear of books that lack richness of language, are shallow in their plots, and are poorly illustrated.

The first question to ask is, what makes quality literature? Quality literature are books that have several different qualifications. First, is there noticeable and excellent character development? A story can have a character spiraling into sin and vice but if it is written in such a way that shows the process and yet does not celebrate it, it can be considered wonderful character development (looking at you, Anna Karenina).

On the flip side, a hero/heroine who grows in understanding of self and others around them, learns from his or her mistakes, and shows a great improvement by the end of the story will be a model for character development. Which children’s book characters demonstrate growth like this? We love Wilbur in E.B. White’s **Charlotte’s Web**, Daniel in **The Bronze Bow** by Elizabeth George Speare, the March sisters from **Little Women** by Louisa May Alcott, and Edmund in C.S. Lewis’s masterpiece **The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe**.

Quality literature will also create opportunities for in-depth conversation with your children. One of my favorite things to do is to find characters or situations in books that I can point out to my kids. We can talk about qualities that are endearing, such as Samwise Gamgee’s loyalty and faithfulness to Frodo in the *Lord of the Rings* series (J.R.R. Tolkien), Horton’s endurance in Dr. Seuss’ *Horton Hatches the Egg*, and the perseverance and hard work displayed in *Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel* (Virginia Lee Burton). But, by far, the best book to do this is *Little Pilgrim’s Progress* by Helen L. Taylor. Based on Bunyan’s allegory of the Christian life written in the 17th century, this book beautifully adapts the story for children. We have read it multiple times, and I am always amazed by the discussions we have as a family and the way my children analyze and digest Christian and Christiana’s stories.

Another thing to look for in deciding if a book would be considered quality literature is if the plot will stand the test of time. No matter what the setting and time frame, well-written books will have a timelessness about them. Sure, the technology and society may be different than how we are living right now, but if the conflicts and relationships are the same, it will translate to our modern day well. Feeling lonely? Frances Hodgson Burnett’s *The Secret Garden* will resonate well. Feeling misunderstood or overlooked? Try *The Sword in the Stone (The Once and Future King)* by T.H. White. Great literature will cause the reader to say to themselves, “Me, too!”

One last thing that is important, especially in children’s books (though one could argue that we need more in books for older readers, as well) is quality illustrations. Before little ones have phonics and decoding skills, they’ll



“read” through pictures. Don’t discount the necessity of being able to feast with our eyes. Illustrators such as Tasha Tudor, Ernest Shepard, Garth Williams, Jessie Willcox Smith, and Steven Kellogg are just a few of many who bring stories to life and are a delight to see.

An intentionally curated home library provides families the ability to feast on great works, enriching their lives as a whole as well as individually. If you are looking to inspire your children to be world movers, I humbly suggest you begin with your bookshelves.



JAMIE MEHAN is a homeschool mama who runs on Jesus and coffee. A passionate bibliophile, she fell in love with the smell of books as a child and was hooked. She now spends her days homeschooling and helping others build their own libraries. People and books are her favorite, and if you get her talking about them, you’d better be prepared to be there for a while.

COZYCOTTAGEBOOKSHOP.COM



Homeschool Day *at the Capitol*

A Gathering to Celebrate Homeschool Freedom in Arizona!



The inspiring Wesley Bolin Plaza outside the Arizona Capitol was the location for this year's Homeschool Day at the Capitol. Attended by over 250 members of the homeschool community, the uplifting event highlighted historic moments from the past 40+ years and provided stirring glimpses into the future.

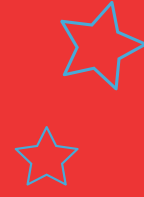


Young members of our community played a large part in the day! The Arizona Wildflowers kicked off the program with a lively performance, which was followed by the presentation of colors by members of Boy Scout Troop 282. Marysol Martinez recited Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, and Joseph Lavy offered a skillful oratory analysis of the same.





March 3, 2023



Thank you to all who attended and contributed!

The crowd heard greetings and comments from special guests Cathi Herrod from Center for Arizona Policy, Kate Anderson representing Alliance Defending Freedom, and State Treasurer Kimberly Yee.

The Boone family led us in several patriotic songs. And Jeff Jibben, AFHE's Co-Director of Government Affairs, provided an update from the current legislative session.



A definite highlight was learning about the history and development of Arizona's homeschool movement from longtime AFHE Board members (retired) David & Valerie Monk. Many attendees said that this review was especially motivating and eye-opening. We must not forget the determined and persistent efforts by homeschool parents and advocates over the last four decades that led to the elimination of regulations, intrusions, and limits on Arizona's homeschool families. Only by constant vigilance can we maintain our freedom and independence from government involvement in the upbringing and education of our children.



Jeff Davis and Liz Evans, program directors from ASU's Center for Political Thought & Leadership, presented a civics workshop for high school students in the Historic Senate Chamber. Students compared and described corresponding sections in Arizona's Constitution and the U.S. Constitution.

This special event concluded with a guided tour of the Capitol Museum, where families enjoyed the many historic treasures in the museum's collection.

What a great celebration of homeschool freedom—past, present, and future!



COUNTER >>> <<<<<< CULTURE

change the future one child at a time

AFHE's 40th Anniversary Convention, July 14-15, 2023

Always motivating and impactful, the AFHE Convention is the largest gathering of homeschoolers in our state each year. The weekend is sure to inspire and equip, and it provides a homeschool shopping experience that can't be beat! Our 80,000 square foot exhibit hall is filled with curriculum and resource vendors, service providers, Young Entrepreneurs, nonprofit organizations, and more.

Go to **AFHE.ORG/CONVENTION2023** for all the details.

ENJOY *community*

There's nothing like coming together with so many families who are sharing the homeschool journey.



LISTEN TO *encouraging* SPEAKERS

Attend workshops on a wide variety of homeschool topics taught by outstanding featured speakers.

JOIN THE *fun*

There's so much waiting for you at this year's AFHE Convention, whether you are new to homeschooling or have years of experience.

GET EQUIPPED FOR *successful homeschooling*

It's a professional development conference for the home educator! Gather ideas, tools, and practical tips for the road ahead.

FIND *curriculum* AND *resources*

Compare and shop in person for the quality curriculum and resources you need.



KEYNOTE *speakers*



◀◀ KEN HAM

Ken Ham is the founder and CEO of Answers in Genesis and its two popular attractions: the acclaimed Creation Museum and the internationally known Ark Encounter, which features a life-size 510-foot-long Noah's Ark. Ham hosts the daily radio program "Answers" and has launched the new streaming service Answers TV. He's also the founder of the award-winning *Answers* magazine. A prolific author of more than 30 books, Ham's newest releases are *Divided Nation* (about today's culture wars) and the devotional commentary *Creation to Babel*. Ken and his wife Mally have five children and eighteen grandchildren and reside in northern Kentucky.

Mr. Ham will present our Friday morning keynote in a live broadcast from Answers in Genesis headquarters in Kentucky.

CONNIE ALBERS ▶▶▶

Connie Albers is a leading author, podcaster, and speaker dedicated to supporting parents and homeschoolers. With her book *Parenting Beyond the Rules* and podcast "Equipped To Be," she provides positive parenting strategies for today's families. Featured on multiple media outlets, including Focus on the Family, FOX 35 Orlando, and "The Busy Mom" podcast, Connie is a trusted voice on balancing life's demands. Join her community and listen to the "Equipped To Be" podcast for advice, support, and inspiration. With 38 years of marriage and five adult children, Connie's expertise is rooted in truth and seasoned with her personal experience.



FEATURED *speakers*

The speakers in our 2023 lineup will provide workshops with a balance of inspiration, vision, subject expertise, and practical strategies you can implement in your family and homeschool. These men and women will help provide the tools you need to "change the future one child at a time!"



KATHY BECKER



DR. JAN BEDELL



JEAN BURK



KATHLEEN COTTER CLAYTON



KEVIN CONOVER



BRYAN DAVIS



DARCY DAY



DENNIS DINOIA



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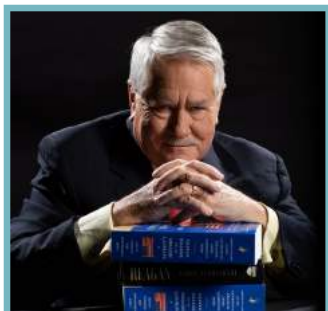
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NICOLE THOMES



HAL & MELANIE YOUNG

You're sure to find much-needed encouragement, fresh ideas, and "aha moments" as you attend your choice among the 90+ featured speaker workshops and 30+ exhibitor workshops awaiting you at this year's Convention. Download the workshop schedule and descriptions to start planning which you want to attend. There are sessions to inform and inspire everyone!

2023 Registration

REGISTER EARLY

AFHE Members have the opportunity to pre-register for the AFHE Convention at the best early pricing April 4 - June 23, 2023.

The earlier you register, the better the price for adult admission!
Register online.

BOOK YOUR HOTEL

We have arranged a discount rate at the Hyatt Regency Phoenix for convention attendees. Book your room early. Reservation link is on the AFHE website, or call 602-252-1234 and let them know you're with the AFHE Homeschool Convention.

VOLUNTEER

Volunteers are a vital component of the AFHE Convention. Join the many men and women who serve as workshop hosts, greeters, registration staff, and more! Volunteer 5 or more hours for free adult admission. Teens can join the Youth Service Team!

AFHE membership required.

CONVENTION REGISTRATION

Registration details online at afhe.org/registration

ADULT ADMISSION

Individual adult or
married couple

PRE-REGISTRATION

APRIL
4-30

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Thursday PRE-CONVENTION EVENTS

YOU CAN HOMESCHOOL

AFHE can help! Come find out how to get started!

FREE MINI-CONFERENCE
FOR THOSE NEW TO
HOMESCHOOLING

THURSDAY
July 13
9:30AM-12:30 PM



GETTING STARTED HOMESCHOOLING WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

FREE Pre-Convention Event

2:00-5:00 PM

THURSDAY, JULY 13, 2023

SESSIONS TO INFORM & INSPIRE



REACHING HIGHER

POST-SECONDARY OPPORTUNITIES FOR HOMESCHOOL GRADS

Parents and teens (and parents of all future homeschool graduates!), please join us for an in-person Opportunities Fair hosted by Arizona Families for Home Education. You'll be able to visit with representatives from universities, colleges, trade/tech schools, gap year programs, and college prep services all in one place!

No AFHE membership or convention registration required. **FREE!**

THURSDAY, JULY 13

11:00 AM - 4:00 PM

PHOENIX CONVENTION CENTER
SOUTH BUILDING, ROOM 161-163

"Ace the SAT/ACT and Get Free College"
12:30 PM workshop

KIDS @ CONVENTION

KidsCorner

Visit this fun "booth" near the concessions area where kiddos can relax and play. Take a break yourself while your youngsters enjoy some games and toys in a space set up just for them!



Curious kids and their parents are invited to join in with fun activities and demonstrations throughout the day, presented by our convention exhibitors! Check the schedule of events when you arrive at Convention.



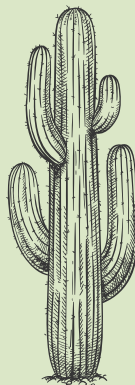
All About Arizona Treasure Hunt

Enjoy a fun Arizona-themed treasure hunt in the Exhibit Hall!

Families can visit the AFHE booth to pick up a treasure hunt activity map, then locate the *All About Arizona Treasure Hunt* activity stations located around the exhibit hall.

Complete activities or solve puzzles that help you find the answers you need on your map!

Children under 12 must remain with a parent/adult at all times.



Special Workshops

Saturday's schedule includes sessions selected to engage and delight young attendees.

Storytelling and Your Legacy: S.D. and J.C. Smith, Father and Son Co-Authors Live Q&A
Green Ember and Jack Zulu
fans of all ages are invited to this fun session!

Authentic Medieval Code of Christian Servanthood
with Aaron Gruben
Encounter tales of real knights and learn about the code of chivalry they followed. We will show off real armor and weapons, practice sword skills, and learn a chivalry song!

Exhibit Hall Highlights

Visit the AFHE website today to see the directory of registered exhibitors and make your list of where you want to shop.

Stop in at the Mentoring Moms booth to ask questions, get advice, and enjoy connecting with moms who are there to help.

The Book Locker is where you can store and stash your purchases, rolling carts, and/or strollers for a small fee each day.

Attend an exhibitor workshop to learn about a specific program or curriculum.

Chat with speakers and sponsors at their booths for more great information.

Stroll through College Row to learn about post-secondary options for homeschool graduates, whether your students are teens or little ones.

Don't miss shopping with our hardworking Young Entrepreneurs.

Enjoy the special commemorative display celebrating the history of homeschooling in Arizona and AFHE's 40th anniversary.

Christian TEEN PROGRAM

{TRUTH} Jeremiah 29:13

FRIDAY SESSIONS

Walk Thru the Bible will take teens through their **otLIVE** and **ntLIVE** interactive learning experience, revealing the amazing **true** story of God's rescue plan in scripture. Students will come to understand the milestone events, key figures, and "family history" of the Bible like never before.

Participants will receive the 60-page *Walk Thru the Bible* guidebook, a resource that will help them remember what they learn and a tool they can use to share God's rescue plan with others.

SATURDAY SESSIONS

Begin the day with *Bryan Davis*, award-winning author of multiple fantasy series, in his interactive seminar:

A Hero's Journey Tale:

Seeking Truth through Storytelling

Readers, writers, and movie enthusiasts will enjoy this search for the heart of the hero's journey tale.

On Saturday afternoon, *Mike Schutt* from *Worldview Academy* will challenge and engage students in the critical areas of **TRUTH** and **SUCCESS** — what are they, exactly, and do they matter in my life?



WorldviewAcademy

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Educación en el Hogar Mini-Conferencia

The homeschool movement is growing rapidly. Parents are becoming convinced of its effectiveness for learning, benefits for the family and society, and potential for individualized attention to a child's unique abilities and needs. AFHE is honored to walk alongside Arizona families who are looking into homeschooling or are ready to get underway and serve them with support and resources—and now we are expanding to meet these needs in Spanish as well!

For the first time, the 2023 AFHE Home Education Convention will offer workshop sessions in Spanish! These will be introductory homeschool information workshops presented by experienced homeschool mentors from the Hispanic community.

Educación en el Hogar Mini-Conferencia will be embedded in the regular convention schedule, on Saturday, July 15, 10:30AM-3:30 PM. Convention registration is required, but no advance sign-up is required to attend the sessions in this mini-conference. ¡Es para padres y abuelos también!

Please help us spread the word! Share this page with friends, make sure they have information about the Convention, and refer them to the mini-conference webpage: [AFHE.ORG/EDUCACION-MINI-CONFERENCIA](https://afhe.org/educacion-mini-conferencia).

Orden del Día (provisional)

10:30 AM	¡Bienvenida!
10:45 AM	Recorrido por Exhibit Hall
11:30 AM	Sesión 1 - Karim Morato La Historia de Karim
12:15 PM	Descanso para almorzar
1:15 PM	Sesión 2 - Janet Forte Incluyendo a Nuestra Cultura en el Homeschool
2:05 PM	Sesión 3 - Christian Córdova Los Pilares que un Hogar Necesita
2:55 PM	Sesión 4 - Historias Reales de Padres (panel)
3:30 PM	Conclusión

CONVENTION Sponsors

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Finding Joy in Your Homeschool



by Nancy Manos

Whether you've been homeschooling for years or are just getting started, we all run into rough patches along the way. You can find joy in your homeschool journey and enjoy this amazing experience with your kids!

Homeschooling can be a joy-filled adventure.

Teaching your children at home provides the opportunity for one-on-one instruction that can be tailored to their unique interests, needs, strengths, and challenges. Homeschooling is a wonderful way to foster a genuine love of learning. It can be a rich, interactive, unhurried endeavor in the nurturing environment of home and family. Homeschooling can be a joy-filled adventure.

As a parent, you are uniquely qualified to provide a quality education for your children. No one has your child's best interests at heart like you do. And homeschooling is so much more than academics. Not only are you providing instruction in subjects like math, science, grammar, and history, you are also teaching your children important life skills and character qualities—and most importantly faith in God.

Homeschooling has its challenges.

Homeschooling is work—sometimes hard work. It requires effort, time, and diligence. Let's face it, our kids aren't always cooperative or motivated, and neither are we.



Your child may have learning needs that require extra attention or special care. Or you might have a gifted learner who soaks up information as fast as you can provide it. Perhaps you have several children at different ages and stages, or you're trying to homeschool while juggling a job.

The important reality is that the lion's share of the work of raising and educating your kids rests squarely on your shoulders.

And homeschooling isn't the only responsibility you have, either.

You're still surrounded by the same projects and piles and things that need your attention: laundry to wash, bathrooms to clean, sticky floors to mop, bills to pay. Groceries must be purchased and dinner must be prepared, plus you have to feed your kids breakfast and lunch—every. single. day! You might also be a caregiver for your aging parent, or have other additional responsibilities and challenges.





It's no wonder we grow weary and lack motivation ourselves sometimes. Have you lost your joy in homeschooling?

Where did all of that motivation and joy go?

The day-to-day reality and hard work of teaching and raising children can dull the shine of this remarkable adventure if we're not careful to keep joy in our hearts and homes.

Do you remember back before the start of this homeschool year? Your hopes were high, anticipation was energizing, and plans felt inspired. The curriculum you ordered arrived, all shiny and new, just waiting for your kids to dive in to explore new concepts and make great discoveries. The scent of fresh school supplies filled the air, drawing you into visions of happy, productive, joy-filled homeschool days ahead.

Perhaps you had big plans for a year filled with exciting learning opportunities such as going on field trips, doing science experiments, art projects, and unit studies, taking music lessons, reading biographies and classic literature, incorporating hands-on history complete with feasts, costumes, dioramas, salt-dough maps, creative writing, and more—so much more!

Enthusiasm launched your school year on a great trajectory, but now you've hit a slump. Motivation is lacking and joy is elusive. Can you relate?

Joy is a gift to strengthen you.

Homeschooling does not need to feel like drudgery or a grind. You CAN renew your

motivation and get into a good rhythm for homeschooling and family life. The key is finding—and keeping—joy.

The joy of the Lord truly is your strength. Joy is a gift in your homeschool!

I've found it helps to look at joy as a priceless treasure—a gift that I am responsible for safeguarding. Joy is mine to keep or yield. Joy does not mean that life is free from difficulties. It does, however, bring strength and peace along with the ability to see beauty and blessing, even in the most challenging times.

Plant good seeds and cultivate joy.

Like a gardener tending to her garden, you are doing good work planting seeds in your children's minds and hearts that will reap a harvest in their future and for generations to come. Don't grow impatient or weary in this good work. It takes time for seeds to take root, grow, and bear fruit.

Fertilize the ground you're cultivating and water those seeds by speaking life to your children, over your day, and to yourself. Also, be sure to keep a close eye out for weeds that will sneak in, bringing discouragement, complaints, strife, or discontent, stealing joy from you and your kids.

Remember to look up to the Lord and out to the future. The seeds you are planting today have an eternal impact, and raising your children is one of the most important things you'll do in your lifetime. There is a reward for a job well done. So hang in there, mom and dad! You've got this! You can create a joyful homeschool experience for yourself and your children.





Tips for Fostering Joy

1 Look at today with the end in mind.

Ask yourself what you want to accomplish during this season of raising and homeschooling your children. After your last child has graduated and you are looking back, how do you want to feel about your homeschool years? Make choices today, moment by moment, that help create that future.

2 Actively seek joy.

Teach yourself and your children to look for joy. When you're having a rough day, stop and look for blessings together with your children. Ask questions like: *What can we be thankful for right now? What is going right in our homeschool? In what ways has God shown Himself mighty on our behalf? How is He helping us right now?* Focus on the beauty and the blessings and you will find joy seeping in, bringing with it strength and peace.

3 Order promotes peace.

I don't know about you, but clutter steals my joy and my peace of mind. I'm a firm believer that order promotes peace. Having a daily routine and basic order in your home can go a long way toward less stress, less chaos, and greater joy. Look for simple ways to foster a peaceful environment that lends itself to joyful learning and living in your home.

- Have your kids put their homeschool books and supplies away neatly at the end of your school day, so everything is easy to find the next morning.
- Challenge your kids to do a 10-minute tidy-up-the-house session once or twice a day. Make it a race where everyone picks up and puts away as many items as they can in ten minutes.
- Take fifteen minutes a day to clean or organize one area or item. Clean out your purse, straighten up the kitchen junk drawer, or clean off the kitchen counter. Start with the areas that cause you the most frustration. Consistently investing a few minutes can help you start each new day without so much of yesterday's mess coming along for the ride.

4 Enjoy your children.

Your children are a gift from God. Look them in the eye and smile at them. Let them know you love them—and you like them, too! The days, weeks, and months ahead are full of opportunity, discovery, and moments of wonder as you and your kids explore, learn, and grow—together.

The days may go slowly, but the years really do go by fast. You CAN find joy in your homeschool and stay motivated for this important work ahead of you.



NANCY MANOS taught her two daughters from preschool through high school and found it to be a rich and rewarding experience. Nancy and her husband James served on the AFHE Board of Directors for 13 years, and she was the Executive Director for 3½ years. Nancy will be a featured speaker at the 2023 AFHE Convention.

NANCYMANOS.COM



Become a Mama Who

PRAYS

for Her Homeschooling

by Tauna Meyer

Homeschooling is full of great joys, but it is also challenging in many ways. Submitting our homeschools to the Lord in prayer is crucial! Praying faithfully may be one of the most important things you can do for your homeschool – even more important than planning, choosing curriculum, or coming up with the perfect schedule.

If you're feeling overwhelmed and full of doubts in your homeschool, first things first, dear friends. Go to God. Fear, worry, and chaos don't come from Him. When we are drowning in doubts and feeling overwhelmed, it's because we're watching the waves instead of the Savior! When you find yourself in that place, pray, pray, pray.

How to Pray for Your Homeschool

Let's face it: how often do we really pray for our homeschooling? We need to pray for the Lord's help if we want clarity, confidence, and direction in this journey!

If you're like me, you don't pray as much as you fuss and stress and RESEARCH! Let's turn that around! Let us be women who go to God FIRST in our homeschooling, whether it's for big decisions or the daily tasks and struggles! It is THE MOST profitable use of our time, hands down!

Take some time to write out your fears and worries, praying through each of them as you go and submitting them to God. Ask for guidance, unity, and clear instruction.

Then look up some Scriptures that speak to the heart issues behind each area. Praying through (and maybe even memorizing) these verses can be so helpful.

For example, perhaps I want to pray that my children will have teachable hearts, or that the Lord would guide us through learning difficulties, or for wisdom in how to handle difficult days when they arise. I write them all out, no matter how small they might seem! The Lord cares about the details.

My Homeschool Prayer Journey

I cannot even begin to tell you how much prayer matters. Really dedicating my time and attention to prayer brought transformation into our homeschooling that I am so thankful for!

But the thing is, as much as I write about prayer, I'm TERRIBLE at consistency. I NEED simple and helpful tools to help me remember how essential prayer is and to actually DO IT.

Early on in our homeschooling journey I found myself feeling overwhelmed and unsure of how to go forward. So I set everything aside and focused on prayer. I identified where I was having trouble, prayed for God's direction in choosing Scriptures I could pray through, and created a list!

Really seeking the Lord in those things saved our homeschool and got us back on track. It was so



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meaningful and helpful that I invited my kids to start praying with me each morning for our homeschool.

I know that doing so has helped them realize that the Lord cares about the details of their lives, too, and they can come to Him in prayer!

Tools for Faithful Homeschool Prayer

In my ebook *The Prayerful Homeschooler*, I share all the details about that time and the precious lessons I learned, as well as how to go through the same process yourself. But I'm going to share with you here the two prayer calendars that I created for myself as a result of that work. They can get you started in focusing on prayer in your own homeschool!

Here are the categories of our homeschool that I pray through on a regular basis. They are covered in these calendars.

- homeschool planning, curriculum, etc.
- keeping our focus on God
- family discipleship and character
- development and academics
- relationships in our family and with others

- running the race well (and not giving up)
- when my day is difficult and I'm overwhelmed
- when the kids are having a hard day

So take the first steps and become a mama who prays for her homeschooling! I'm sharing my prayer calendars as free downloads at proverbialhomemaker.com/prayer. They include a 31-day prayer calendar you can start anytime (I use it a few times a year) as well as a weekly calendar that you can pray through every single day.

I hope these tools are a blessing to you and that you have a wonderful homeschool year!



TAUNA MEYER is the author of the curriculum *Sound Words for Kids: Lessons in Theology* and the founder of ProverbialHomemaker.com. She and her husband, Aaron, serve as leaders with OCEANetwork, Oregon's Christian homeschool organization that works to protect and expand homeschool freedoms in their state. Tauna will be a featured speaker at the 2023 AFHE Convention.

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