

# Chapter 1: Overview of CQLA

## Frustrated or Excited Using CQLA?

It has been suggested that new CQLA users allow the first several weeks of using CQLA to be a “learning curve” time. After completing the first month, you will discover the consistency and user friendliness of the program. The next month you will enjoy the ease of using CQLA and the fruit of your students becoming better communicators. By the end of the third month, your frustrations with learning a new program will be gone, and you will be excited about using CQLA for all of your language arts studies for many years.

Note: It is especially recommended that you work side-by-side with your students on all aspects of their writing assignments for the first couple of months. This investment will pay off in independent writers sooner than if they work alone at first.

## CQLA was modeled after the best parts of some of the finest homeschooling materials available:

- (1) The copy/dictation model of *Learning Language Arts Through Literature*
  - (2) The word family spelling approach used in *Play 'n Talk* and *Spelling Power*
  - (3) The editing practice method of *Editor-in-Chief*
  - (4) The grammar practice and teaching techniques of *Jensen's Grammar* and *Easy Grammar*
  - (5) The key word outline techniques of IEW's *Structure and Style*
  - (6) Other writing techniques from *Writing for 100 Days*, *Fairfield's Guide to Writing*, *Understanding Writing*, and more.
- If you like these programs---and want to teach using godly content with step-by-step instructions---you will love CQLA.

*Character Quality Language Arts (CQLA)* is a multi-level approach to language arts with its concepts, text, essays, practice sentences, reading assignments, etc., corresponding to monthly character qualities. All levels focus on a certain character quality each month, utilizing the instruction, samples, practice sentences, and writings from character, biblical, and biographical resources.

CQLA is a comprehensive language arts program that teaches all needed areas of language arts for students in early primary grades through high school. It has been developed and tested with the time pressures and large family sizes of many homeschoolers in mind. One of the goals in developing CQLA was to help home school families learn excellent communication skills while focusing on character.

This program was designed so that a home-educating family would not need to supplement with additional English textbooks (e.g., spelling, vocabulary, composition, or grammar books) in order to academically complete all language arts requirements. The entire language arts necessities are located in one consumable book to make it easier for the student and teacher. However, each family may desire to have English handbooks for reference.

Each CQLA level is designed in the same way: the layout of each lesson (vocabulary on the first day of the week, spelling test on the last day of the week, etc.) is the same for all levels. There is a purpose for this. The homeschooling family will not have to learn a new program for each child. The lessons become increasingly difficult from one level to the next. (For example, Level B is more difficult than Level A.)

## Scope and Sequence of CQLA

A year of language arts learning is contained within each CQLA book, which is broken down into eight monthly units with four weekly lessons each month. Thus, if your student completes any CQLA book, he has fulfilled a year of English in terms of academic completion.

After completing several years of CQLA, your students will have learned all the language skills that are necessary for excellent communication. They will also be fully equipped to teach their own children language arts. CQLA was developed with this generational benefit in mind.

For an overview of the skills taught in CQLA, please consult the Scope and Sequence Chart located in Chapter 19 of this guide.

## Levels of CQLA

- Level Pre A: Second and third grade **skill level**—ages 7-9 (Early Primary)
- Level A: Fourth and fifth grade **skill level**—ages 9-11 (Primary)
- Level B: Sixth through eighth grade **skill level**—ages 11-14 (Intermediate)
- Level C: High school **skill level**—ages 14 and up (Secondary)

The sidebar on page eight further explains the approximate grade level equivalents for the CQLA curriculum. Remember, your student should work in the CQLA **level** for which he is ready, regardless of his age or grade.

Nearly every assignment in CQLA is followed by Extension and Further Extension assignments. These are more difficult assignments for the advanced student. This makes it possible for students of three or more skill levels to work simultaneously in one CQLA level (three levels within Level B, for instance). (Keep in mind that CQLA is a highly consumable program with vocabulary work, grammar sentences for marking, outlining lines to be filled in, and more. Thus, each student needs his own book.)

### Format of Each CQLA Booklet

Each CQLA level follows the same progression, so you will not have to learn a new program for each student. A book contains the language arts instruction needed for one full year of language arts. Each book is broken down into eight units. A unit is approximately one month's instruction. Each unit is broken down into four weeks. Each week is broken down into two possible lesson plan schedules: (1) a four day a week schedule, or (2) a five day a week schedule. Each week follows the same progression and schedule. All assignments for each weekly lesson are contained and labeled within that week. Remember that the entire CQLA book is one full academic year of language arts instruction. If you take more than four weeks to complete a unit of instruction, that is okay. The key is to complete the entire CQLA book within one year; thus, you may spend up to five weeks on some units and still complete a CQLA book within one year.

### Overview of CQLA

CQLA weekly lessons contain all major language arts components, including the following:

#### 1. Passages for Copying, Dictation, Studying, Comprehension, Composition, and Other Skills

The passages for copying and dictation have been selected and rewritten from many character-based books. They contain examples of the language arts skills that will be studied each month. At the beginning of the week, students will copy the passage into their notebooks or lined paper (except for Pre A students who do all of their assignments in the CQLA book).

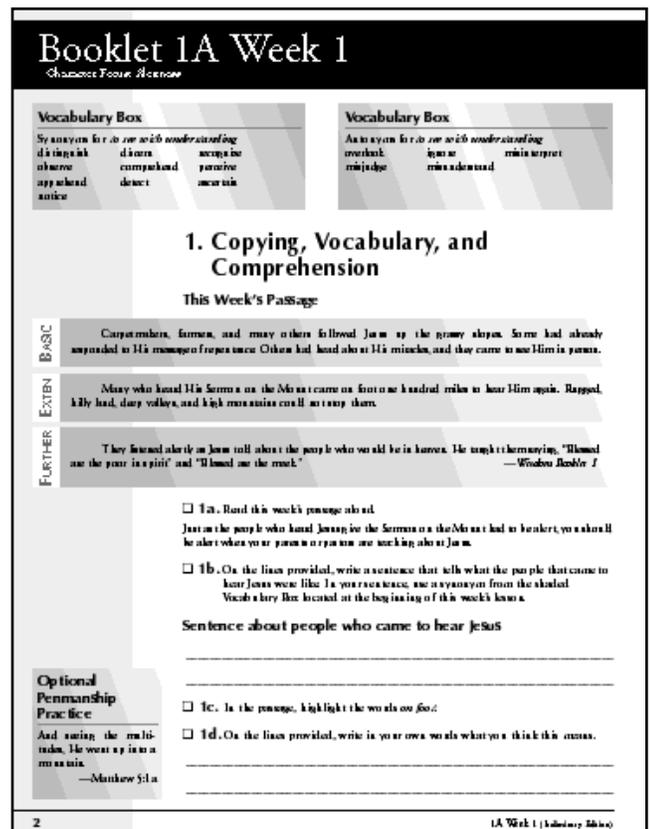
The week's lessons will refer to that week's CQLA passage to introduce and learn grammar, usage, spelling, vocabulary, comprehension, structural analysis, and composition. The student will learn spelling words, vocabulary words, and the various parts of speech from this passage. In addition to copying and dictating from the passage, the student should read the entire passage each day. At the end of the week—after working with the passage, studying the skill areas, and completing a writing assignment based on the passage—the student will take a dictation quiz on the passage.

#### 2. Reading and Listening Comprehension Based on the Passages

Practice in both reading and listening comprehension is built into the CQLA lessons. This comes through discussion questions, finding answers through reading the passage, inferring answers from the passage, vocabulary development, explanations of material in the passage, questions from the passage, and other assigned applications of these skills.

#### 3. Vocabulary Learning Based on the Passages

CQLA students will often be asked to look up words from the passage in the dictionary. Their vocabulary is increased by looking up definitions, writing definitions in their own words, using vocabulary words in sentences, finding synonyms for words, learning roots of words, and eventually writing reports and essays containing those vocabulary words.



### CQLA Abbreviations

CQLA—Character Quality Language Arts

CQLA Red 6-A—The color and numeral directly following CQLA denotes the correlating unit (meaning the sixth unit of the red series). The letter directly following each CQLA number denotes the level of that CQLA booklet (Level A).

Red 6-A Week 1—The number at the end of the abbreviation indicates the current week of that monthly unit. (Thus, this abbreviation is the sixth unit of the Red series of Level A, and the first week of that unit.)

TG—Teacher's Guide



provides areas of revision that will greatly improve his writing. Most items on the Checklist Challenge (CC) are skills that were recently taught within the CQLA lessons, including skills such as advanced sentence structures, descriptive adjectives, and sentence openers. Any grammar skill that is taught in a weekly lesson is included in that week's Checklist Challenge -- as are grammar terms your student should already know. (The last CC for each unit contains all of the grammar items/revisions that your student learned throughout the entire month. This is the final application of all his monthly grammar learning--and the goal of grammar and usage study.)

### 10. Extensions for Advanced Students in Each Level

You may have your student work on the individual CQLA assignments at his own level (Basic, Extension, Further Extension). For example, if editing is difficult for your student, you may have him only do the Basic Level Editor Duty assignments even if he does Further Extension in spelling and composition. You may also use Extension assignments for younger students if you feel it is appropriate. If an assignment only lists two levels (Basic and Extensions), Extension and Further Extension students should both complete the Extensions assignment (appropriately labeled Extensions.). Make CQLA work for your family!

### 11. Penmanship and Spelling Practice Sidebars

Each CQLA weekly lesson in Levels A and B includes Optional Penmanship Practice sidebars containing topics from the correlating character quality to the instruction, major concept, and related Scriptures. You may have your student write the penmanship words in manuscript or cursive handwriting in his notebook or on the extra lines in his book.

### 12. Extra Practice Assignments

Extra Practice Assignments are located in the back of each CQLA weekly lesson (directly following each dictation quiz). These provide further language arts practice for times when your family takes longer than four weeks to complete a unit of instruction. If your student needs more practice in an area taught that week, use these Extra Practices assignments. The Extra Practice assignments following each weekly lesson and the Further Study sidebars throughout the lesson also have suggested readings correlating to that week's passage. You may use these for literature, content area studies, biographical history, or whatever subject you choose.

### 13. Teacher Tips

Teacher Tips are located in the margins of CQLA rather than in a separate teacher's manual for each unit. Older students may find that the Teacher Tips help them understand difficult concepts. Teach your older students to watch for these and heed their applications.

### 14. Teacher's Helps

At the end of each monthly unit, there are pages entitled Teacher's Helps. These are two page summaries (a five day lesson plan and a four day lesson plan) of each weekly lesson. There is one Teacher's Help (lesson plan) for each of the four weekly lessons. Thus, one might be labeled "Red 1-A Week One Teacher's Helps," meaning that this Teacher's Help is for CQLA Unit 1, Level A, Week One of the Red Series.

## 1A Week 1 Teacher's Helps For a Five-Day Week

**Day One**

**Vocabulary Box:**

Synonym for the root word under meaning:	Antonym for the root word under meaning:
difficult	simple
strong	weak
copy	write
myself	other
to	from

1. Copying, Vocabulary, and Completion

**Basic Level:**  
Capitalize, insert, and copy after allowed just up the page's left. See red labels marked in the margin of pages 10, 11, and 12 of this unit's text, and they are in the margin.

**Extensions:**  
Always who had. He seems to be the same as the one had in the book. He is strong. He is weak. He is to. He is from. He is to. He is from.

**Fun with Extensions:**  
They had a strong. They had a weak. They had a to. They had a from.

2. Spelling/Structural Analysis: Long First Vowel With Silent *e* at the End (Examples: cake, kite, label)

**Key Sentence:**  
The child have highlighted the following words:

- cake
- kite
- label

**Basic Level:** 1. cake 2. kite 3. label

**Extensions:** 4. cake 5. kite 6. label

**Fun with Extensions:** 7. cake 8. kite 9. label

11. The VCE pattern means that the syllable is a vowel syllable and means a long vowel followed by a silent *e*. The *e* at the end of the word is called a silent *e*. It makes the word say its long vowel. The silent *e* is at the end of the word and it is silent while the *e* remains silent.

**Day Two**

3. Editor Duty: Correct Given/Patting/aphid (Simple Subject)

4. Study Skills/Pronouns: Key Word Outline

Indicate the parts of the text.

Topic of paragraph 1  
2. Summary  
Paragraph 2  
3. Summary  
Paragraph 3  
4. Summary

5. Grammar: Simple Subjects

**Day Three**

6. Composition/Creative Writing: Write a Rough Draft from a Key Word Outline

7. Grammar: Adjectives

**Key Sentence:**  
You should have highlighted the following:

- myself
- strong
- weak
- to
- from

**Day Four**

8. Editor Duty: Correct Given/Patting/aphid (Simple Subject)

9. Composition: Edit and Revise

**Day Five**

10. Spelling: Spelling Test

11. Dictionaries: Dictation Quiz

12. Composition/Creative Writing: Final Copy: Informative Essay

Extra Practice (Optional)

1A Week 1 Teacher's Helps (Advanced Edition) 49

Teacher's Helps and Answer Keys are located in the back of each monthly unit. You may pull these out and put them in your binder or leave them in for your student's daily lesson plan.

## 1A Week 1 Answer Keys

3. Complete the following steps:

- In the paragraphs provided, make corrections in the level directed by your teacher.  
**BASIC LEVEL:** Correct only the first paragraph.  
**EXTENSION:** Correct the first and second paragraphs.  
**FURTHER EXTENSION:** Correct all three paragraphs.
- In the first paragraph, highlight the simple subject of each sentence.

**Tip:** Myself and his family began to have more and more children. They children all spoke the same language. They moved in and out and started a highly-developed city, rather than a primitive, that up here in the world. This city was known as Babel.

The people of Babel even made themselves great. They practiced in writing and other forms of witchcraft. They decided to use their advanced skills in building a huge tower that would reach to heaven. Some people think they were and to study the lessons to evil men.

God decided that nothing would keep them from going toward their evil goals. Because of this, God confused the language. God caused different languages. Even though the people of Babel were caused to speak different languages because of their evil, God made it for good.

5b. In the sentences provided, highlight the simple subjects. (Hint: The subjects are on the left of the first few words.)

- The multitude came to hear Jesus.
- The crowd gathered to hear the Gospel.
- People desired to hear Christ's message.
- Jesus saw each person.
- He showed how the examples in the Old Testament.
- Jesus began His ministry.
- Jesus had healing answers for people.
- He said to them to see.
- The crowd gave up their places.
- Jesus went to the wilderness.
- Jesus saw more than a crowd.
- There on the mountain can see better.
- The Sermon on the Mount helped people to just. (Sermon)

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## CQLA Suggested Levels

- Beginning Early Primary: Level Pre A (*without* Extension)
- Early Primary: Level Pre A (*with* Extension)
- Beginning Primary: Level A (*without* Extension and Further Extension)
- Primary: Level A (*with* Extension assignments)
- Upper Primary: Level A (*with* Extension and Further Extension assignments)
- Beginning Intermediate: Level B (*without* Extension and Further Extension assignments)
- Intermediate: Level B (*with* Extension assignments)
- Upper Intermediate: Level B (*with* Extension and Further Extension assignments)
- Beginning Secondary: Level C (*without* Extension and Further Extension assignments)
- Secondary: Level C (*with* Extension assignments)
- Upper Secondary: Level C (*with* Extension and Further Extension assignments)

There are no hard and fast rules for when a student moves from one level to the next; however, it should be based on his skill level, not on his grade level.

The Teacher's Helps were designed so that a teacher can see at a glance what her student is studying that week. It shows the passage, Vocabulary Boxes, Spelling Words, Help Boxes, and the order of lessons, all in a page-at-a-glance format. These can be used as lesson plans and are formatted for a five-day week or a four-day week. They also give Teacher's Tips that will help the teacher understand the spelling rules, grammar rules, etc.

## 15. Answer Keys

Following each weekly Teacher's Helps is the Answer Key for that week's assignments. A mother can simply pull out all four Teacher's Helps with their coordinating Answer Keys and put them in her own binder and she will have an overview and the answers to each assignment at her fingertips.

## Skills Not Specifically Taught Within CQLA

Since you are a homeschooling family, you are probably already covering many literature and other reading of good materials, and CQLA gives more suggestions for that reading. There are many varying methods to teach penmanship. CQLA does not select one specific method, but suggests content to practice your penmanship. Also, it is assumed that a student knows how to read prior to beginning CQLA.

Therefore, CQLA does not teach the following areas but only gives suggestions for further studies:

1. Penmanship instruction
2. Extensive literature (though books are recommended and many literary techniques studied through the passages and students' writing)
3. Phonics instruction for learning to read\*

\*Note: CQLA's spelling lessons are extremely phonetically-based; however, a student should not begin CQLA until his phonics for learning to read is complete. In other words, a first, second, or third grade student beginning to use CQLA should already be able to read picture books (non-phonetically controlled) by himself.

## Scope and Sequence for High Schoolers Planning to Attend College

CQLA will prepare your student for college English classes. In addition, secondary level students who plan to further their education with college studies may desire more in-depth grammar studies and longer research papers to prepare for the demands of college English. You may choose some of the following options for these students:

1. Continue CQLA until high school credits are completed.
2. Write at least one lengthy research paper with footnotes and bibliography. (Check out our *Meaningful Composition 12: Writing the Research Paper*.)
3. Participate in a speech and debate class to expand verbal communication.
4. Take an in depth literature course to learn to comprehend and analyze various types of writing.

## Determining Where to Begin With CQLA

Follow these steps to determine the appropriate CQLA level for your student:

1. Choose a passage from the CQLA level in which you think your student should work.
2. Have your student read the passage orally.
3. Have your student copy the passage.
4. Give your student dictation from the passage.

(See the section marked "Dictation Quiz in CQLA" on page 13.)

If he does an average job on this exercise, consider the skills taught in that CQLA level: Has he already learned verb tenses? Does he already know when to begin a new paragraph? If the dictation pre-test is simple for your student, he should work in the next level. Use this "test" and his performance in his first CQLA to determine your student's CQLA level. In addition to this "test," you may download and print a complete monthly CQLA unit for each level at our website to "try before you buy." (You may "test" your student's readiness to move into the next level by printing off and using a monthly lesson provided at our website.)

## Moving Into the Next Level

Your student may be ready to move into the Extension assignments for his current CQLA book or move to the next level altogether in the middle of an academic year. Regardless of the time of year, move him to the next level. You may use the following benchmarks to decide when to move to the next level of CQLA: (1) His spelling test, grammar assignments, and writing performance in his current CQLA level; (2) His need for excessive teacher assistance to complete the assignments (suggesting he is not ready to move on); (3) His handling of the dictation quiz at the next level.

A student using CQLA for all of his language arts would rarely need to remain in one level for more than three years. It is not surprising for long-term CQLA students to be working in Level C in junior high and complete their high school English studies a couple of years early. Likewise, a student may not be ready to “move up” simply because he has reached a certain age. Do not be concerned with “moving up” early or remaining in one level too long.

## Multi-Level Learning

One of the benefits of CQLA is that it eases the burden of mothers by allowing multi-level learning. You may have two or three students working in one CQLA level. Do not focus on their grade levels, but rather on their language arts skill levels. Many of the writing assignments are made multi-level by having different criteria. (e.g. The lower-level assignment might be, “Write a ten-paragraph dialogue of one hundred words and use quotations,” while the upper-level assignment might be, “Write a fifteen paragraph dialogue using quotations and at least three split quotations.”) This allows you to focus on the same skills for each student but at their skill levels.

## Where to Begin CQLA for New Readers

In order to begin CQLA, young students should have reached what Ruth Beechick calls “reading fluency.” A second grade student who has not yet mastered phonics is not ready to begin spelling and writing. A student should not be asked to spell a word that he is not able to read. Decoding (sounding out words) and encoding (spelling words) are inverse skills in language arts in the same way that addition and subtraction are inverse skills in mathematics. Just as children competently subtract when they know how to add, they competently spell when they know how to read.

## Waiting for Reading Fluency

Do not be concerned if your second grade student is not ready to begin CQLA. Continue having him read extensively to prepare for his future CQLA studies. This will give him a grasp of our language and prepare him to write well, analyze sentence structures, and spell correctly.

## Easing Into CQLA With a Second or Third Grade Writer

Move your second-or third-grade student into CQLA slowly, and only assign the projects he can easily handle. In the beginning, you may want him to copy just a sentence or two of the passage, learn only a few spelling words each week, do small portions of the grammar assignments, and dictate his essays to you. He may need to write the final copy of his report one sentence per day. Treat him with understanding and give him every opportunity for success.

## Other Training for Triumph Materials You Might Enjoy

Training for Triumph is adding new materials all of the time to coordinate with your character based language arts program! Throughout the sidebars of all levels and all volumes of CQLA you will find Further Study and Character Connection suggestions. For example, if the monthly unit your students are working on in CQLA is about obedience, the sidebars might suggest that you read about animals that display obedience or disobedience in our *Creation Corner Coloring Book*, read about a Bible character who obeyed in a *Character Sketch* book, or study the hymn-writer who wrote “Trust and Obey.” Training for Triumph carries those materials to coincide with your character studies--and is constantly adding more coordinating materials.

### Reading Fluency / Readiness to Begin CQLA

1. Student has learned all of the phonetic sounds for reading.
2. Student has been reading silently for several months or more.
3. Student can read non-phonetically controlled picture books easily (for Pre A students) or short chapter books easily (for Level A students).

### Why Are There Two or Three Grade Levels in Each CQLA Level?

1. It is consistent with the multi-level mindset of many home-schooling families.
2. It is efficient for moms with many students.
3. It is an effective way to divide the many skills repeated every year in language arts programs.
4. It has been tested with many happy, successful students and moms!

Following is a small list of materials that TFT carries that you may desire to use for Bible, character-studies, read aloud times, or unit studies while you study character in CQLA. Watch our web site for additions as we are adding items each month now. Also, look at our web site for complete product descriptions of all materials listed. Many of these are excellent writing source materials for students' original reports as well.

- *Family Bible Library*---eight volume set of gorgeous Bible story books with character emphasis
- All three volumes of *Character Sketches*, published by the Institute in Basic Life Principles; gorgeous, oversized, lengthy books detailing how animals and Bible characters do or do not exemplify various character qualities.
- Character bulletins---booklets about character qualities that can be used for read alouds and Bible/character studies
- Other booklets---“How to Stand Alone,” “Overcoming Slothfulness,” and “How to Make an Appeal”
- *Creation Corner Coloring Book*---educational coloring book for new readers with stories and information about animals and items in nature that display or do not display various character qualities---great easy source material for young writers
- *Character Corner Coloring Book*---educational coloring book for new readers with stories and information about people throughout history who displayed various character quality---great easy source material for young writers
- *Character Sketch Coloring Books*
- *Al Smith's Treasury of Hymns*
- *The Power for True Success*---coffee table book detailing forty-nine character qualities, highly recommended for all CQLA users
- *Cloud of Witnesses*---biographical compilation of fifteen godly heroes for second through sixth grade readers and writers and a parent read aloud for preschool through elementary
- *Bob Books*---first readers; four sets beginning with a short vowel set them increasing in difficulty; phonetically controlled
- *Hear Me Read Bible Stories*---second readers; vocabulary controlled; full color
- *The Beginners Bible*---first Bible story book for preschoolers to have read to them and first through third graders to read alone and write from
- *The Light and the Glory* series for children and *The Light and the Glory* series for older students ---American history books---real life, Bible, and historical
- *Uncle Arthur's Bedtime Stories*---five volume set of hard-cover books containing hundreds of character stories--real life, Bible, and historical
- *Trailblazers*---paperback historical biographies with fictional children and young people meeting and assisting the godly character---for fourth through eighth grade readers

- *Heroes of the Faith*---biographies of godly people who displayed character--short, thirty to forty page booklets that contain many of the same people that CQLA students write about in their biographical essays
- *Unlocking the Mysteries of Creation*---excellent, colorful, user-friendly creation science book for families

Note: To find out more about our Top 20 From 20---our favorite twenty products from twenty years of homeschooling, order our “Top 20 From 20 Products” tape---not to be confused with our three-tape advice and tip set, “Top 20 From 20 Advice.”