

Training for Triumph E-Newsletter

Issue 001

September 12, 2004

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1. Tid Bits of Info

*CQLA Volume I Available in All Levels

Announcing....all four levels of **Character Quality Language Arts Volume I** are now available! (And not a minute too early!) We have hundreds of students using it already in CQLA first year, and we are thrilled! (Thanks to the three thousand-plus WBLA students for spreading the word about CQLA to non-ATI friends!)

Pre A is a new addition to our language arts materials and provides language arts learning for second and third grade students. **Level A** is for fourth and fifth grade students. **Level B** is for

sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students. **Level C** is for high school students.

Now, we are switching gears to work on Volume II. Students who use Volume I this year (at any level) will move into Volume II next year. It will be the same format with different character qualities, spelling words, lessons, essays, and more.

*About Our E-Mail Address List

We are very new in the areas of publishing our own materials and speaking to homeschoolers outside of ATI. Thus, we have a small email list. If you have been sent something from us and would rather not, please either delete it, or email us asking to be removed from our list. If you receive duplicate emails, please be patient with us as we grow. And, as the next note says, "Tell others about us!"

*Tell Others About Us

If you have received this E-Letter or our E-Catalog, it is because you are on one of our lists! Either you have ordered from us in the past, have attended our workshops or classes, or have a connection with us through ATI or speech and debate. At any rate, we would love to build up our e-mail address list and reach even more homeschoolers with encouraging words, articles, products, classes, and workshops! You can help us do that. 😊

If you have been helped or blessed by our ministries to homeschoolers through the years via our speaking, writing articles, teaching/coaching speech and debate, writing for ATI, hosting speech and debate tournaments, hosting workshops, girls' newsletters, or our daughters' workshops and classes, please consider helping us spread the news about Training for Triumph and our materials by forwarding our E-Catalog or one of our E-Newsletters onto a few people who might like our products.

If ATI families using WBLA, those whom we have served in speech and debate, those who have attended our workshops through the years, and more each send our catalog or newsletter to ten people, over twenty thousand families would hear about our materials!

2. Upcoming TFT Events

*Cottage Classes

Training for Triumph's "Cottage Classes" are underway! We are still hosting language arts classes in our learning center here at home to test WBLA and CQLA, and we continue to teach beginning speech and debate. We have thirty-five new students this year learning to be communicators for Christ in our beginning speech and debate class, in addition to the dozen or more returning students.

Besides our WBLA and beginning speech and debate ministries (and Ray's ministry of coaching and hosting tournaments during the second semester), TFT has added writing, elementary speech, guitar, US Government, and art classes to our roster of "Cottage Classes." We are excited to be able to offer these opportunities to families, who much like those desiring piano lessons or foreign language courses, feel a lacking in a specific area. Of course, we would never attempt to take the place of home, but we are enjoying watching students blossom in our areas of expertise (while getting help ourselves in biology lab, Spanish, and piano!).

The first semester is well underway, and nearly all of the classes are full. We are pleased to have our son and daughter-in-law join us both in teaching and in developing materials for homeschoolers. Read upcoming emails for announcements of other "Cottage Classes" during the

second semester in the Fort Wayne and Ossian, Indiana areas.

*Speaking Engagements

Donna is speaking on "Prioritizing Your Life, School, and Home" to a couple of large support groups this fall, and we look forward to doing vendor workshops about our products at upcoming conventions during Spring '05. Locally, we are hosting language arts workshops, as well. If you would like a complete listing of the over thirty topics Ray, Donna, and their older children speak about, please call or email us.

*Language Arts Workshops

We had a great turnout for our first local language arts workshop in August on how to use WBLA and CQLA, how to use various outlining and editing tools to teach writing, and the importance of the grammar and writing connection. There seems to be a large enough interest to host another one soon, so if you missed the first one, and would like to be notified of the next one, please call or email us. Watch your TFT E-Newsletters for more information.

3. Spotlight on Our Coloring Books

*Creation Corner and Women of Wisdom Coloring Books

Many of you are already enjoying our delightful coloring books. We found a need and are endeavoring to meet it---just like Gregg Harris and Bill Gothard have encouraged us to do in their seminars.

After writing and testing Wisdom Booklet Language Arts (the sister curriculum to CQLA that we write for the Advanced Training Institute) for over four years, we found that young writers--in second through even sixth grades---had trouble coming up with material for their original essays. Parents basically had to read to them (then explain it to them!) from longer biographies and encyclopedias in order for them to find information to include in their biographical essays and informative essays. Thus, our coloring books were born!

Our daughters have written two coloring books with short three or four paragraph texts on each page and an accompanying picture for each "story" that children can color. The text is written at a third through fifth grade reading level and is written in short snippets as opposed to long discourses.

Our goal in these (and some future publications) is to provide reading, but even more importantly, writing source material for young students. When it comes time to write an original essay, your budding author can pull out one of our publications and take notes! The material will be at his level of comprehension, and he will have more success with writing independently.

Creation Corner is our animal coloring book. It has an animal on one page and the text on the opposite page. Each entry tells about that animal--and how it does or does not display a certain character quality.

Women of Wisdom is our woman's biography coloring book. It has a Christian woman on one page and the text on the opposite page, as well. Each entry tells about that woman---and the impact she had on the kingdom of God. Both coloring books measure 5" x 7" and have colorful, inviting covers.

Whether your preschooler through middle school student colors, is read to, reads himself, or writes from one of our coloring books, we are sure he will enjoy it---while learning godly principles from the lives of animals and Christian women. Each coloring book sells for \$4.50.

4. Frequently Asked Questions About WBLA and CQLA

*What Is a Whiteboard?

A whiteboard is a wipe and write board. You use dry erase markers on it. I use 12 x 18 ones that I can hold up at the table. Some moms use wall mounted ones. (It's basically the modern day chalk board.)

I recently noticed that Office Depot sells "white board paper" with sticky backing that you can stick to card board or light press board. It came in a pack like laminating sheets, and it looked as though there were five or six in a pack. This would be much less costly than paying ten or fifteen dollars for a small hand-held (12" x 18") one, and you could even make each student one to practice spelling words on, etc.

*What Is a Minit Book?

The newest *Teacher's Guide* will clarify this. A minit-book is a little book the student makes out of paper with tag board or construction paper on the outside. The simplest version of this is when a stack of typing paper with tag board on the outside is folded in half and stapled (like a half page book). Then the student writes vocabulary words and definitions, stories, reports, Scriptures, spelling words, etc. on the inside. Of course, there are variations of this, too. It is just a fun way to show a finished product, etc. (See the link to Dinah Zike's Big Book internet later in this E-Letter for more mini book help.)

5. Helps for Homeschool Moms

*Children Help in "Cooking Ahead"

Realizing that my oldest daughter, our chief cook, was going to start college, write books, and become a missionary, I set out in the past year to teach my other children to cook. With our commitments to ATI for WBLA in the past four years, each task around the house fell to the one who was best at it. Kayla automatically became chief cook, Cami became the chief cleaner, and Kara became the chief editor. Of course, the little guys filled in in between, and we would all pitch in for large tasks, but that is how it went for a few years.

This summer I really got serious and began typing up simple recipes and steps for even my third grade son to be able to follow directions to "take a cooking

night.” We have done “mega cooking” around here for fourteen years now, but in the past few years, my freezers have gone from always having between one hundred and two hundred entrees in them to being filled with frozen pizzas and pot pies! Thus, it was time to get serious about teaching the younger children to cook.

One of the first things I did to “take back my kitchen”—which is still somewhat surrendered to Sam’s Club freezer section---is to teach everyone to at least get three basic meats into a useable form. This meant cooking large quantities of meat and freezing it to be ready to use in entrees. Anyone (even a third grader!) can do this, and it makes a big difference in mealtime preparation. The remainder of this section will detail how we do that. (Watch upcoming editions for how to save money making your own soups for the processes below!)

Ground Beef

1. Defrost up to twenty pounds of ground beef.
2. Get two huge skillets (and I do mean huge!) filled with some of this meat.
3. Fry each skilletful until browned completely.
4. Drain the meat in colander, while starting another load in each skillet.
5. While next batch is frying, bag partially cooled meat in colander into freezer bags you have labeled: Pre Fried Ground Beef; 2 pounds (5 cups); date.
6. Continue until all meat is fried, drained, bagged, and ready to freeze.
7. Freeze bags of meat flat on freezer shelves.
8. Clean up your mess! ☺

Beef Roasts

1. Defrost up to twelve pounds of beef roasts. (We usually use three of four 3-pound roasts.)
2. Get out the following ingredients: coffee (any unflavored type), fresh garlic, minced onion, beef base (or use beefy onion soup in place of minced onion and beef base), huge oven cooking bags, peppercorns, and bay leaves.
3. Rub each roast on both sides with all seasonings (including coffee) except bay leaves; use 1 tsp of peppercorn and garlic; use 1 TBSP of onion and beef base or 1 packet of beefy onion soup per each roast, depending on size. (I usually help them with the seasonings.)
4. Place roasts in however many oven cooking bags it takes and either pour one huge can of cream of mushroom soup or ½ cup of beef broth per roast into the bags. Drop three or four bay leaves into each bag.
5. Tie bags, place them in foil roasting pans, and make four or five slits in the top of each bag.
6. Bake in preheated 200’ convection (250’ regular) oven for six hours or so, until done but still tender.

7. When chicken is cooled, freeze three pounds or so (along with its “gravy” or “juices”) in one gallon freezer bag, labeled as follows: Pre Cooked Beef Roasts; 3 pounds; date.
8. Freeze bags of meat flat on freezer shelves.
9. Clean up your mess! 😊

Boneless, Skinless Chicken Pieces

1. Defrost up to twenty pounds of boneless, skinless chicken breasts and thighs (or one or the other, depending on what we have on hand).
2. Get out the following ingredients: fresh garlic, minced onion, chicken base (or use), huge oven cooking bags, peppercorns, and bay leaves.
3. Rub chicken pieces with all seasonings except bay leaves; for each three pounds of meat use 1 tsp of peppercorn and garlic, and use 1 TBSP of onion and chicken base. (I usually help them with the seasonings.)
4. Place chicken pieces in however many oven cooking bags it takes and either pour one huge can of cream of chicken soup or ½ cup of chicken broth per every three pounds into the bags. Drop three or four bay leaves into each bag.
5. Tie bags, place them in foil roasting pans, and make four or five slits in the top of each bag.
6. Bake in preheated 200’ convection (250’ regular) oven for six hours or so, until done but still tender.
7. When chicken is cooled, freeze around three pounds (along with its “gravy” or “juices”) in one gallon freezer bag, labeled as follows: Pre Cooked Chicken; 3 pounds; date.
8. Freeze bags of meat flat on freezer shelves.
9. Clean up your mess! 😊

Uses for Pre-Cooked Meats

The uses for these meats are endless. I will enumerate a few below, but I’m sure you have ideas of your own!

*Ground beef ideas:

1. Tacos, taco salads, nacho supremes, beef enchiladas, beef burritos, beef and bean burritos, etc.
2. Spaghetti with meat sauce (one of our quickest favorites)
3. Layered casseroles, such as tator tot casserole, spaghetti casseroles, shipwreck casserole
4. Lasagna, Mexican lasagna, etc.
5. Chili soup

6. Hamburger stew
7. Sloppy joes or other sandwich fillings
8. Pizza and mini pizza topping

*Beef Roast ideas (some you use juices with; some you separate juices and do not use them):

1. Beef and noodles or dumplings with beef
2. Vegetable beef soup
3. Beef stew
4. Mexican dishes like shredded beef tacos, Mexican beef casseroles, shredded beef burritos, etc.
5. Beef pot pies
6. BBQ beef
7. Serve as is with gravy, rice, noodles, etc.
8. Beef stroganoff

*Chicken ideas:

1. Chicken and noodles or chicken and dumplings
2. Soups: white bean, chicken noodle soup, chicken rice
3. Chicken stew
4. Mexican dishes like in beef roast ideas
5. Chicken pot pies
6. BBQ chicken sandwich filling
7. Serve as is with gravy, rice, noodles, etc.
8. Chicken a la king
9. Chicken Mexican casseroles
10. Chicken lasagna
11. Hot chicken sandwiches

6. Book Review Just for You

*Reel Kids Adventures by Dave Gustaveson (reviewed for kids by Kayla)

For someone who is interested in world missions and what life is like in other countries, the best fiction books I can recommend are the Reel Kids Adventures. The Reel Kids are a group of kids that travel to different countries making movies about the Christian work in each country (to be shown in churches and such).

The main character is Jeff, the reporter; and there are two others in the group: his younger sister (the researcher) and K.J. (his best friend and the cameraman.) They are very dedicated Christians, and they share this love with those they come in contact with. They go to many different countries including the Philippines, Columbia, Vietnam, Kenya, and Turkey, they and meet a range of people--- from street kids to African witch doctors. They are excellent and fun to read.

7. Get Connected: Internet Site Review

*Dinah Zike's Big Book site (minit books and more)

You might see sidebars or "Extra Practice" assignments throughout CQLA that suggest you and your students make "minit books." Those of you who make minit books and lap packs might enjoy perusing Dinah Zike's web site. Mrs. Zike is the author of *The Big Book of Books*, describing how to make these great little booklets. The link for this site is www.dinah.com.

"Comprehension Skills and the Key Word Outline" by Donna Reish

In trying to help a friend of mine help her son with his Key Word Outline (KWO) and comprehension, I came up with the following suggestions for her, and I thought others might benefit from some of the ideas presented here too.

Keep in mind when reading this that her son can write (physical act of writing) well (and even neat, when he tries!), can spell at grade level or above grade level, can word call (decode words as in reading) above grade level, and doesn't have problems with other areas outside of comprehension.

That is why I suggested that she write for him so much (he doesn't need the writing practice, and if he is forced to do all the verbal comprehension work and write a bunch after each interchange, I thought she would lose him). In other words, I would do more writing for him in exchange for the time that they will spend working on comprehension. She knows he can pen down the words for the KWO himself, but he needs help with comprehension.

I would focus at home on his comprehension in the following way:

1. When he is ready to do his KWO, sit down with him and do the following:

- a. Have him read the passage to you.
- b. Then take one sentence at a time and ask him if he knows what each of the questionable words mean.
- c. If he doesn't know what a word means, tell him what it means (unless it's a vocabulary word)--pointing out any roots, suffixes, etc. that might help him understand it (i.e. "Uncompassionate"--do you remember what compassionate means? If I say "untie" the dog, what am I say--the opposite of tie, right? etc. etc.).
- d. After you do that for any sentence, see if he can tell you the meaning of the sentence.
- e. If he still can't, ask him what the sentence is about (i.e. Uncompassionate people, for example: people who do not show compassion or care)
- f. Then ask him what those uncompassionate people do or what the sentence says about them. (i.e. They only think of themselves.)
- g. Do this for each sentence.
- h. Then ask him as a whole what he thinks the whole paragraph is about.
- i. Write that on the topic line for him. (Since this will be such a laborious process, and you already know he can write on the lines himself, I would write the words he tells you on the lines for him.)
- j. Now go back to the first sentence and read it to him and remind him what he told you it meant.
- k. Ask him which key words in that sentence would help him remember what the sentence is about when it's time for him to rewrite it.

l. Highlight those words. (If he gets stuck on this, remind him that he told you earlier that the whole sentence was about uncompassionate people, so he should highlight that since his new sentence will also be about uncompassionate people)
m. Do this for all of the sentences and all of the paragraphs.

Remember, it will be that interchange of information--him telling you what he thinks something means, you giving him any info he doesn't know, etc. that will build his comprehension. Unfortunately, comprehension worksheets, etc. rarely work. Discussion, root word studies, the way the sentence flows, his input, your input, etc. are the things that build comprehension.

Don't worry about writing the words for him in his KWO. Your focus is on building comprehension skills--not the physical act of writing. You will write what he finally understands. That will make him less likely to hate this whole process. (If he has to discuss it all with you, THEN write it all out, it would get so long.) Plus, kids usually like just "talking" to their parents about things.

2. In all interactions, use anything he already knows to help build comprehension. If you are reading a book and the word "uncharacteristically" comes up, ask him what character means. (Or if you always say, "Don't be characterized by selfishness" like I do, you can say, "What do I mean when I say 'Don't be characterized by selfishness' all the time?" When he say, "known for it," you can say so "characteristically" means known for it too. Do you remember that "un" means the opposite...so "uncharacteristically" means "not characterized" or not known by it.)

I know that sounds laborious. And obviously, you don't have to do it all the time. But I would put an emphasis on it in general this year to help him build his comprehension. It's so easy to assume that the kids know what we are talking about or referring to all the time.

3. I would go back to reading daily with him---just the two of you. I would start off with a reader at his level (truly at his level; not "History Stories for Boys" (though I like that to read aloud to kids) that is listed in the 6th grade section but has old English-type writing in it). I would use a modern type reader like Abeka or BJU--or even something easier than his level like Creation Corner coloring book, etc. Just read a paragraph to him with him following your finger across the page (have him follow along; remember, he knows how to sound out the words; you want him to comprehend them). Then discuss it. You'll know what word he might not know, etc. Ask him any of the following questions:

- a. What is this whole paragraph about?
- b. What is the main subject of this sentence?
- c. What is the animal doing in this sentence? etc.
- d. What do you think happened before to make the animal react that way?
- e. ETC....focus on high level thinking, not rote memory, and definitely not "yes" or "no" questions.

I wouldn't worry about the type of comprehension that is reading something and then remembering afterward (answering questions without the material in front of you). I would focus on comprehending the text right in front of him, pointing to sentences, words, subjects, verbs, etc. and discussing them.

Lead him through it. If he says the whole sentence is about the cave, but it's really about the bears in the cave, ask him what the cave is doing. He will realize that the cave isn't doing anything. The bear is doing something in the cave, etc.

There are several ways to increase comprehension, and none of them comes from circling the main idea in a worksheet page or answering "memory questions" about the passage after you read it. They come from the following:

1. Vocabulary development--Root words, relating words to something you already know, figuring out words in context, etc. all build comprehension. If you don't know what the word

"Uncompassionate" means, you can't possibly know that the paragraph is about "people who do not show they care." Comprehension first hinges on vocabulary.

2. Discussion about higher level materials read--There are two ways to determine readability:
 - a. Difficulty of the words as far as pronouncing/sounding them out
 - b. Comprehension of what he reads

Some students can word call anything put in front of them (much like reading "There's a Wocket in My Pocket!"). In these cases, to say a student can "read anything" simply isn't true. Yes, he can "word call" anything, but if he does not comprehend the words he is calling, the material really isn't "at his reading level"---it is just at his "word call level."

Thus, the gap between his "word call" level and his "comprehension" level needs to be bridged. This can be done by discussing the higher level material. It really doesn't matter whether you read it, he reads it to you, or you listen to it together (in the case of a talking book)--unless he is an extremely visual learner and comprehension doesn't take place unless he sees the text; I have a couple of students like this, and it is very different from my auditory learners. What matters is that discussion take place over this "higher level" material and thus, comprehension takes place.

I have come to the conclusion that this is why my kids love having Kayla for a big sister. She increases their comprehension of everything. Today is her first day at Huntington College (she's commuting as a senior in high school), and everyone here is having Kayla-withdrawal! In the first three hours she was gone, each of them said independently something like this: "I have all of my biology done except for one section; I need to wait and have Kayla help me on that," "I don't understand this US Government; when Kayla gets home, she can explain it to me," "Mom, this is serious. We can't function with her away all day. I NEED Kayla!" (Wait a minute, why don't they say that if I'm gone for the day!!! ????? tee hee)

Anyway, it's the discussions she has with them about EVERYTHING that increases their comprehension. (In fairness to me and Ray, we do the same things; we just don't talk about such "heady" things as US Gov and Biology with them!) It takes a lot of time to explain everything all the time, but that is how they learn. Ray is a master at this (and probably why Kayla naturally does it too). Everytime I'm trying to talk to him in the van, he holds up a finger to me to wait a second while he explains to the kids something along the road, in the ditch, on the highway, etc.-- a building project, the meaning of this particular flashing light, how a nature scene reminds him of a Scripture, what material the pipes they are putting in the ground is made of, etc. That builds comprehension.

I know these types of activities will increase his comprehension, which will carry over to all of his subjects. Comprehension of information is the groundwork for all learning--oral, written, or auditory.

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