

Training for Triumph E-Newsletter

Issue 004

*January/February 2005**

**Due to computer difficulties (and two of our computers being in the shop for a while), we are combining our January and February issues into one. Sorry if this is an inconvenience. We have tried to pack this issue full of great helps for the home school family.*

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1. Training for Triumph Events and Announcements

*Order IBLP Character Materials Directly From TFT!

Training for Triumph (TFT) is now offering IBLP materials through our catalog, phone orders, and at conventions. Yes, you can obtain all three *Character Sketches*, various character bulletins (at \$4.00 each) and several biographies of heroes studied in CQLA and WBLA (\$4.00 each) through us. Feel free to call or email for more information.

*Training for Triumph's Second Semester Cottage Classes Underway

Our second semester classes have been operating for several weeks now, and we are all enjoying them immensely. Joshua absolutely loves teaching Shakespeare (as well as history and government); the girls are enjoying teaching a middle school speech class; I have a new essay class; Kayla is challenging another group with research paper writing; and, of course, our piano/guitar lessons and language arts classes are still continuing from the first semester. We had to cut back on the number of classes and the number of students during the second semester due to holding the classes in our small learning center near Ossian, Indiana, but we will be offering a large selection in the fall somewhere in Fort Wayne, so watch upcoming newsletters for more information.

*About Our E-Mail Address List

We are very new in the areas of publishing our own materials and speaking to home schoolers 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. ☺ 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 or services.

*Announcing Our Newest Product: Advice for the Young Home Schooling Mom (three part cassette series)

We are excited to offer a new tape series for home school moms! After being asked for advice from several ATI moms on the Wisdom Searchers' loops, I began answering their questions in tape form, and from those answers came *Advice for the Young Home Schooling Mom*.

In this series of three cassettes, I begin with advice for the home school mom in the areas of home schooling with babies and toddlers and work up to training twelve year olds in diligence,

responsibility, and spiritual development. I describe the child centered vs parent led household and how to achieve the latter.

This series also touches on interruptions, bringing in extra income, teaching children to work independently on their assignments, multi level teaching, developing a home school way of life, and more. It is available as a three tape set in a case for \$12.00.

*Announcing Better Quality for Our Tapes

Some parents have complained that are tapes are not loud enough or clear enough for them (especially when driving in a vehicle with children!). We wanted to let you know that we have upgraded some of our equipment, learned to speak more evenly, and improved the sound of any of our new tapes (beginning with Advice for ...). We are going back through our tapes and upgrading them as time permits. Thanks for your input and patience with us as we endeavor in improving Training for Triumph!

*Forward This E-Newsletter to a Friend

If you know of someone who does not receive our E Newsletter, but would like to, please feel free to forward it to them. We would be thrilled to have new "subscribers." Likewise, if you would like the last three newsletters forwarded to you (because you have just been added to our list recently), feel free to email Cami at trainingfortriumph@mchsi.com

*Speaking Topics

Convention season is just around the corner, and we are gearing up to vend, speak, and encourage home schoolers in various states. We have a list of a few dozen topics on which Ray, Donna, Joshua, or the girls can share. If you are in charge of an event for home schoolers, whether it is a forty person support group meeting or a four thousand person convention, contact us for a complete speaker list, bios, catalog, and/or sample tapes of our presentations.

*Home School Graduation Cards

Did you know that TFT carries home school graduation cards? The only ones of their kind, as far as we know! They're pretty clever, specific to home schoolers only, and provide a unique way to congratulate the graduate. We even have one for home school parents of the graduate....."ever feel like you should be the one receiving the cards and cash?" Call or email us to order some for May's graduations. They are \$2.00 each, or we can send you a set of six (varied ones) for \$10.00.

2. Spotlight on *Sovereign in the Affairs of Man*

We have a small number of the original, paperback versions of Kayla's *Sovereign in the Affairs of Man* book still available. Soon, Kayla hopes to have it picked up by a larger publisher (I don't know why she doesn't think Training for Triumph is very big!!), or we will be printing an upgraded and expanded edition of this wonderful historical devotional.

Sovereign began as mere scratches in a notebook as Kayla did her daily devotions and various Bible studies at the age of fifteen years old. She shared with us how over and over again so many verses and situations described in the Bible have been played out over and over again in the lives of men and women throughout history (not that those verses referred to the exact instance in history she could easily relate it to; just how the principles are true over and over again).From

this, Kayla developed *Sovereign in the Affairs of Man* to show that what God says in Scripture is not only true, but continually occurring in our society and world---throughout the ages.

If you desire an inspiring, wow! kind of family devotional for the family who loves history and God's Word, this is the one for you! Kayla explains how Scripture after Scripture has been played out on God's big stage throughout history. Find out how God said what would be for the welfare would become a snare---and how this is exactly what happened when Caligula was assassinated by his own body guards; how God said that Christians would overcome by the word of their testimony---and how this is exactly what happened when the Church overcame Emperor Diocletian in 311 A.D. A great read aloud and a great way to help your children--especially teens--see how God is real in the world and in history!

Sovereign, a sixty page devotional, is available from Training for Triumph for \$7.00 for a limited time. We'll keep you posted on updated versions as Kayla finishes them.

3. Frequently Asked Questions About WBLA and CQLA

**Is it necessary for my student to outline his original essays?*

The benefits of outlining for an original essay are plentiful. Consider these outlining tips when weighing its pros and cons:

1. Outlining notes are for the student. They should be written in a form that best helps them write. Moms often have our own ideas about how "the outline" should look! However, that might not be the most useable form for the student. Let them use whatever method is best for them---whether it's formal outlining, bullet points, full sentences, smileys and stars, or something totally different.

2. Outlining gives the student the opportunity, without writing everything out in long sentences, to see if what if he thinks he wants in his essay is really what he wants. Oftentimes students say things like, "I started out writing about XXXX, but then when I was writing down the notes, I realized.....a) I didn't have enough information for an entire paragraph; b) I needed to have two paragraphs of that information; c) It wasn't logical; d) It didn't have enough to do with what I had just planned for the previous two paragraphs, etc. When a student writes everything out in sentence form, then realizes what he has written isn't going to work, he is often too discouraged to start over, etc. With outlining, he can discover inconsistencies and other problems early on.

3. Outlining teaches the student that a paragraph is a unit of thought. More than anything else, outlining's greatest advantage is probably helping students see that a paragraph is a unit of thought and should all be about the same thing. When he decides what a paragraph will contain, he begins to understand that everything he puts in that paragraph must support or expound upon that topic

4. Outlining helps the student learn that everything must relate to and support the topic of that paragraph. This goes hand in hand with the previous point, but it is true on its own as well. When a student writes his "topic of the whole paragraph" on the outlining line, he is committing to writing about that topic in that paragraph. Everything he plans to put into that paragraph must relate and support that topic. When it doesn't, a student will often say, "Oh, that can't go in that paragraph. It doesn't have anything to do with that topic." It helps him gather information for his essay because he is looking specifically for data that supports and expounds upon that topic.

5. Outlining keeps the student from plagiarizing.. When a student takes information from a source (or sources) and plugs it into his outline, he is comprehending information and writing it in outline/note form--hopefully in as few words as he can to still be able to write from it. Then when he takes those notes and writes his own paragraph, he turns the notes into his own words (as much as possible). It is very difficult for a student to write straight from a source without plagiarizing because the material often sounds better the way the author has written it. It isn't that the student is trying to steal another's words. It is just difficult to make it sound as good in his own words. Outlining helps reduce plagiarizing by helping the student put the information into his own words.

6. The student should be able to write his essay using nothing more than his outline (unless he has referenced a quote or verse in his notes). A good question to ask your student after he has written an original essay is as follows: "Could you write your essay using only your notes, or did you have to look back in the source to write?" Good note takers will learn that they need to put enough information to write straight from their notes but not so much information that they are writing their essay in their notes! Encourage your students to reference verses and quotations they want to use, and look those up when writing, but otherwise, they should be able to write their essays using their notes--not the sources.

7. Outlining helps the student in his research process. He can see at a glance if he has enough information for what he is writing about. When a student's "sentence lines" are not filled in or only partially filled in, he knows he still needs more information about that topic in order to write a whole paragraph about the topic.

8. Outlining helps him organize his information sequentially, etc. Organization of essays is often based on how well a student outlines. When a student gets out of the outlining mode and start "free writing," you can tell! When questioned about his outlining method, he sheepishly may answer that he didn't have time to outline, etc. but had to write quickly. Guess what? It showed. The organization of students' essays when they do not outline is generally very poor. They have a tendency to ramble. They often put things in paragraphs

where they do not belong because they "just thought of it" and stuck it in wherever they were!

Outlining is one of the key elements in the writing process. Help your students become excellent outliners, and they will become excellent writers!

4. Tips for Homeschool Moms

*Organizational Strategies for the Busy Homeschool Family—chores, efficiency, and more---continued from November.

When Moms learn that we teach speech and debate, homeschool six children, write curriculum, and more, they always ask the same question: "How do you get it all done?" One thing is for sure—we **never** get it all done. We have, however, found some ways to achieve efficiency, organization, and completion around here. This section will detail some of our favorite "get it done" tips through the years. It should be noted that we don't do all the ideas listed at the same time! Some of them are more useful with younger children, some with older children, some for extra busy times, and some for maintenance times. This month, I have focused on meal preps.

Meal time can be hectic in the home school family. I have found that out first hand over the past few years when, due to busy-ness of writing for ATI and now starting Training for Triumph, my mega cooking days are gone---and my freezers nearly empty. Prior to the last five years, meal time was a snap. Every morning I would get an entrée, soup starter, or casserole out of the freezer and later in the day, the "servant day person" would finish that off with side dishes, breads, salads, fruit, etc. The little guys would set the table, and wahla...we had good, home made meals all the time. It really was that easy (each day anyway).

Of course, in order to get that way, every fifth week, we would take off from school and have all of our appointments, monthly cleaning, and "mega cooking"--cooking times in which we would put fifty to a hundred entrees, soup starters, and casseroles in the freezer. This cooking alone would take us at least two days. But it was SO worth it. (More on how to do mega cooking next month!)

Anyway, so now, we are busy working around here—and we look around to see that Kayla and Cami are both at Huntington College and Kara and Jonathan are out in the learning center in one of Joshua's classes—and that leaves me with two little boys (ages nine and six) to cook dinner. Enter frozen pizzas! tee hee In spite of not having the time to put dozens of freezer meals into the freezer, we do have some temporary solutions to the meal time dilemma.

i. I try to have the boys do some kinds of prep work each week with meats. (See November newsletter for instructions for that.) If they at least get some ground beef fried up; some beef or chicken cooked and shredded; or some chicken breast or beef cut in strips or cubes, seasoned, and pre cooked, we at least have something started. Then we can use these for soups, casseroles, stir fries, Mexican and Italian dishes, stews, and more.

ii. Do two things at one time (more on this later, too!). I read aloud to the boys while they peel and cut up fruits or potatoes. They listen to story tapes while they fry meat. Any kind of “two for one” time makes it more enjoyable---and gets two things done at once (learning from a tape and frying meat!).

iii. Resort to simple recipes. We have simplified our lives a lot in the areas of meals. We use more convenience foods than we used to when the older kids were little, but we also just make simple things a lot---stir fries with frozen vegetables; soups with store bought noodles and canned beans; baked potatoes; rice, stews, and soups made with canned or frozen vegetables; spaghetti made with store bought meatballs; salads made from pre-bagged Romaine purchased at the wholesale club; and more. Even my nine year old can make spaghetti and meatballs using our own frozen meatballs or store bought frozen meat balls.

iv. Teach children to cook. We have “cooking lessons” at least a couple of times a month. In this time, I teach a new skill or concept that they can carry over to other areas. I teach all four of the “middle children”—ages 17, 14, 12, and 9—together. I know I’ll have to re-teach most of the things to the two youngest guys, but I still want them introduced to the skills. For instance, I teach them how to thicken gravies or soups (with corn starch or mashed potato flakes), how to season a certain type of meat (for swiss steak, roasts, or Monterey chicken), how to make a certain casserole, how to precook veggies in micro at the same time as you’re browning meat in order to have stir fry all done at same time, etc.

v. Think double. I love to get double benefits out of any work in the kitchen I do with the kids. This week, Josiah and I seasoned tons of stewed beef that was reduced for quick sale. We made stir fry for that evening and enough for leftovers for lunches. Then we froze the extra pre-cooked beef for stew, fajitas, or stir fry another time. When we make pot roast with potatoes and carrots, I make twice as much meat as we need, and then we shred up the leftover, along with any juices, gravy, and veggies that are left, and stick it in the fridge for a few days. Then we’re ready to add Veg All large stew veggies (or fresh, pre cooked veggies that the boys prepared while I read to them!) to it for another quick meal---beef stew. When we fry hamburger for sloppies, we have another pan of taco meat

going, too. It doesn't take double effort to do double duty—and end up with double results.

vi. Have each person in charge of certain often-made foods. I have found that teaching the children to make a few things each very well goes a long way in getting ready for company, taking foods to potlucks, and more. For example, Kayla always makes homemade butterscotch pudding, homemade popcorn, chocolate chips cookies, and mashed potatoes (seasoning and mashing them). (Kayla can and does make anything, but I'm trying not to depend on her too much since God is leading her to prepare to be a medical missionary.) Cami always makes salads, roasts and veggies, and doubled eggs. Kara always makes goodie trays, chicken noodle soup, sour cream cookies, corn, and green beans. Jonathan always makes omelets, pumpkin bread, and Mexican wedding cakes. Josiah always makes boxed brownies, Monterey chicken breasts, and hot Mexican dip. I am expanding these all the time, but the general idea is that that food becomes "his" or "hers." We have some quality control as the same person makes it over and over and gets better and better at it. The children like to be "known" for their specialties. (Josiah's great uncle couldn't believe he made the hot Mexican dip all by himself at our Christmas gathering, and Josiah was one proud nine year old!)

vii. Have a night (or more) in which everyone comes into the kitchen together and cooks. When we're in a pinch, we'll all gather in the kitchen and within thirty minutes we can have something put together and on the table. We have eight here now, with Joshua married, and I am always amazed what eight of us can do in the kitchen in thirty minutes. We use this approach often when we're having company, cooking for someone with an illness or new baby, or going to a potluck (only a longer period of time). Just start the first person on the task that takes the longest (browning meat or cutting veggies or potatoes; use the micro liberally (for precooking veggies, etc.); start the little ones on table setting, salad assembling, etc. and your meal will be ready in no time!

ix. Have a few very easy "standards" and always keep those ingredients on hand. We have several dishes/meals that are fifteen minutes or less in terms of prep time. They are not gourmet (and a couple are actually embarrassing!) But they are standards that nearly anyone can whip up within fifteen minutes (prep time only). The secret to success with these "standards" is to always have the ingredients on hand. These items are on my "running grocery list." If you don't have any really quick ideas, you might check out *Taste of Home's Quick Cooking* or one of those "five ingredients or less" books or "thirty minute meal" books. Many entrees (besides those listed below) become fifteen or twenty minute prep time entrees when meats are done ahead of time and in the freezer. Obviously, if entrees are that quick, they are not the healthiest meals in the world. We

use a lot of frozen vegetables, fresh vegetables, fruit, and bagged salads (from a discount store) to add to them. We rely on these dishes when we're desperate:

- (1) Chicken noodle casserole with store bought noodles, canned chicken, cream of chicken soup, chicken base. Simple!
- (2) Tuna casserole with canned tuna, potato chips, milk, and cream of mushroom soup.
- (3) Layered Mexican casserole (only if beef, chicken, or ground beef are precooked and in freezer is this quick) with layers of meat and enchilada sauce (combined), shredded cheese, and flour tortilla shells.
- (4) BBQ meatballs or BBQ chicken thighs and baked potatoes (only if we have store bought meatballs or meatballs prepared ahead of time in the freezer is this one quick).
- (5) Egg casserole with the following layered: hash browns (We bake them a little on 400' in the pan we're making the casserole in while we're whisking eggs and milk or cream.), eggs mixed with cheese and milk (or cream), and bacon bits (or any precooked meat you have on hand).
- (6) Pork and beans with noodles (Don't ask. It's a "delicacy" my dad taught my kids to make!)
- (7) Macaroni and tomato juice (same as number 6!)
- (8) Chicken noodle soup with canned chicken and store bought noodles.
- (9) Chili (only if ground beef is pre cooked).
- (10) Chicken stew or beef stew (only if we have precooked meats in freezer) with cream soups, canned large vegetables, bases, etc.
- (11) Chicken Alfredo (again, only if we use precooked chicken or canned chicken is this a quicky): We cook spaghetti noodles until al dente; drain; add milk and cream cheese, garlic, parmesan cheese; and seasonings; stir in shredded chicken. Very fast and all in one pan. Plus, it's my kids' favorite. (For their birthdays, we make this with cream instead of milk and shrimp instead of chicken!)
- (12) Spaghetti casserole with cooked spaghetti noodles, precooked ground beef, and store bought sauce. Stir together, layer it in a casserole dish with cheeses of your choice (and mushrooms, if desired).

Watch this space over the next few months for more ideas on meal preparation time, daily chores, mega cooking, servant day, school charts, and more!

5. Book Review Just for You—for Children and Family Read-Aloud Time

Title: *Tip Lewis and His Lamp*

Author: Isabella MacDonald Alden

Reviewed by Kayla

What if you were born in a poor family one hundred years ago? What if your parents were not Christians and didn't teach you about God? What if the minister's son didn't like you? How could those circumstances ever help you? In the story of *Tip Lewis and His Lamp*, the young boy Tip has to face those questions and others as God works his life together for Tip's good. Even though it was written years ago about a boy who lived a hundred years ago, *Tip Lewis and His Lamp* is not hard to read or understand. It is a wonderful fictional story of how God can work all things together for good.

Where can you get it???

Check for it at your local library. If you really like it, see if your local Christian bookstore carries it! I know vendors who carry "old fashioned" books often carry this book.

6. In the Kitchen---Recipes for Potlucks and Hospitality

Layered Mexican Dip

This recipe is great for finger food snacks or meals. I have found that the majority of people do not care for guacamole, so you might want to check out those you will be serving before adding it. Ole!

1 large can refried beans 2 ½ cups fried hamburger

2 cups sour cream Taco seasoning mix

Salsa Shredded lettuce

2 cups shredded Cheddar cheese

Optional: Onions, Tomatoes, and black olives (drained)

Optional: Guacamole (1-2 cups)

1. Mix fried hamburger with 2 TBSP taco seasoning mix and ½ cup water. (Mix seasoning mix into water, then pour into hamburger.) Micro on high uncovered for 5-7 minutes or until water is evaporated and seasoning is throughout.

2. Mix sour cream with 1 TBSP taco seasoning mix.
3. Spread refried beans onto large round platter.
4. Spread sour cream mixture over beans.
5. Sprinkle seasoned hamburger over sour cream.
6. Sprinkle 1-3 cups shredded lettuce over hamburger.
7. Sprinkle shredded cheese over all.
8. Note: If using onions, tomatoes, and black olives, sprinkle them on top of cheese.
9. Note: If using guacamole, spread it over refried beans, before spreading sour cream.
10. Serve with Salsa in bowl beside it or pour over top of dip, if desired.

Creamy Potato Casserole

This is my favorite potato casserole recipe hands down. It is so yummy and creamy. This recipe makes eight casseroles that will feed 10-12 people. We like to keep these in the freezer for company or potlucks. (The kids have strict orders that these are too precious and too expensive to have for dinner just for us!)

8 sticks butter 8 cups half and half
 100 oz. Velveeta 8 12 oz containers cottage cheese
 8 32 oz bags hash browns (I prefer shredded.)

1. Melt butter, half and half and Velveeta on stove.
2. Take off the burner and add cottage cheese until dissolved.
3. Sprinkle hash browns in 8 9 x 13 greased baking dishes.
4. Pour wet mixture over hashbrowns.
5. Let set overnight or for at least one hour.
6. OR cover, label, and freeze each one:
 - Creamy Potato Casserole
 - Date Serves 10-12
 - Thaw. Bake at 350' convection for 60-70 mins
 or regular oven for 70-90. Let set up for
 five minutes before serving.
7. Bake in 350' convection for 60-70 minutes (70-90 regular oven) uncovered.
8. Let set up for five minutes or so before serving.
9. Makes 2 9x 13 casserole dishes, serving 10-12 each.

7. Get Connected: Internet Site Review

I found a great web site where you can listen to many things available on Christian radio.....including new Adventures in Oddysey and more! Just a

click away. My kids were excited to find this site, and we've been having a lot of fun with it. Check it out at www.oneplace.com

8. Start the Year Off Right—Loving and Affirming Your Children!

*Ideas for loving and affirming your children from the Reishes

It is a new year, a new start, and for many people, a new resolve to be better than the previous year. As home schooling parents, we all want to be better parents, better teachers, better listeners, better communicators, and better affirmers. If we don't, we should want to! It is crucial to our children's relationship with us—and even their relationship with God—that they experience some of His unconditional love here on earth.

Don't get me wrong; we won't be perfect—and no one can love like God, but we can resolve to be more loving, affirming, and positive in our relationships with our children. Less nagging, more complimenting. Less angry looks, more million dollar smiles. Less sighing, more whooping. Less negativity, more positivity! (Okay, that's not a real word, but you get the idea!)

Before I start on the list, I want to share something that happened this summer in my extended family that showed me (once again) the importance of the heartstrings between parents and their children. My thirty-four year old, married, mentally handicapped sister became very sick physically, mentally, and emotionally while my mom was out of state. My brother and I took turns staying with her in the hospital, trying to comfort her as best as we could. As soon as Mom arrived from her flight home, she ran into the hospital room crying, grabbed my sister's hand, and immediately connected. They did their secret squeeze; Lisa knew everything would be okay. Mom knew that Lisa knew that everything would be okay.

I didn't have the kind of relationship with my parents that my children do with me and Ray. I was raised in a typical, non-Christian home—and was a very typical teenager. I didn't have secret squeezes, non-verbal facial expressions, or words of affirmation between Mom and me. I was too busy trying to drive her crazy, I think!

Anyway, when Mom grabbed Lisa's hand, I automatically began crying. It was amazing to see that connection between a grown adult and her parent. Even though Lisa is like a child many times in many ways, it still struck me. I saw how the relationships I am developing now with my children will even affect their adulthoods. I saw how strong the connection can remain if I don't let it get lost in busyness, peer pressure, or laxness.

We'd like to share our favorite (and sometimes silly!) affirming greetings, statements, words, and actions. Don't be embarrassed to love your kids! I am so crazy about my kids---regardless of what they do—and they and everyone

around them know it. They survive my silliness, and your children will too. (For more information about building family unity and building strong relationships with your teens, see our tape set "Father and Family" in our E-Catalog.)

1. When your child enters the room (regardless of whether he has just done what you want him to or not), how do you respond? Try some of the following room-entering sayings or actions:

- *"How's the best ____ year old son/daughter in the whole world?"
- *"Here comes the princess of the fourteen year olds!"
- *High five as he walks by.
- *Grab her hand and give it secret squeezes.
- *"Here comes the best husband in the world--next to his father"....my new favorite to use on my married son!
- *"One of the sweetest daughters in the world has just entered the room."
- *Give him a one hundred watt smile.
- *Upon waking: "Boy, I've missed you so much all night!"
- *In the mornings: "I am so happy I get to spend the day with you!"
- *"Here comes the sweetest daughter-in-law!"
- *"Here comes Mr. Diligence or Miss Sweetness or Mr. Helpful...etc."
- *"Hi, Sweet Girl. Where have you been all my life?"

2. Nicknames and terms of endearment set your child apart from everyone else. We have more nicknames than I can remember, but nobody here seems to mind them!

- *Nanny is the nickname of our hard-working, first born daughter.
- *Millie Mercy is our nickname for our daughter Cami who's a softy with her baby brother.
- *Jaby Baby is our first son's nickname.
- *Kare Bear is Kara's nickname.
- *Hi ya, Si-ah is what we often say to Josiah.
- *HOY, SOY, DOY are nicknames for my family members: husband of the year; son of the year; daughter of the year.
- *Baby, sweetie, honey, dolly are nicknames for every sweet child I meet!

3. When your child is leaving for the evening (or in my case, going to another room—I'm very sentimental!), be sure to bless him and send him with your love.

- *"I can't believe you're leaving for the whole evening; I'll be so lonely for you!"
- *"I hope you have a wonderful time...but not better than you would at home with me!"

- *"Call me halfway through the evening...I'll be lonely for you!"
- *"I love you, and I can't wait until we're together again!"
- *"I don't know how I'll make it through the evening!"

4. When your child does something good, tell him.

- *"Terridaculriffic!" (Okay, it came from the Flintstones!)"
- "You are triff at that!"
- *"I could listen to you play forever."
- *"Wowsie, wow, wow! You did great!"
- *"Congratulations. It didn't surprise me though!"
- *"That was perf!"
- *"What a writer! (or poet, or singer, etc.)"
- *"Super Duper!"

5. When your child is not successful, but he tried hard, let him know it!

- *"You have worked so hard. You'll get better and better."
- *"Mr. Diligence, it will pay off eventually!"
- *"I'm so proud of your efforts."
- *"You have sticktuitiveness!" (Okay, it came from Winnie the Pooh. These don't have to be original!)

6. When you talk to other people about your child, say good things and let the child hear it.

- *"I don't know what I'd do without Josiah doing laundry. He is so thorough and diligent."
- *"Jonathan is my library boy. He can find missing things, organize our materials, and get them back to the right library."
- *"Kayla can cook and bake as well as I can!"
- *"We couldn't make it without Kara's great editing! She catches so many things we overlook!"
- *"Cami is our organizer. She keeps all computer files and more organized for us. I can't find anything without her!"
- *"Jakie keeps us smiling all the time!"

7. Try sweet words when a child is not acting like himself—or how you would expect him to act. I like to whisper these words so no one else can hear them, holding the offending child close. (Please note: We are not "redirecting children's behavior" fans or any other "feel good" disciplinary approach. We believe in a die-hard parent-controlled approach to child rearing. However, sometimes the gentle touch is the answer. This is an example of that.)

- *"Someone came in and took my great little six year old and left a different six year old that looks like mine, but doesn't act like him. Could you go find the real Jakie?"
- *"That isn't how my sweet nine year old talks. That sounds like some mean little boy, not my wonderful little boy."
- *"I know you can be more thorough and diligent than you have been today. Come on, show me the true Jonathan."
8. When he's gone (even for the evening) and he calls, let him know you miss him.
- *"I'm so glad you're having fun. I can't wait until you get here though!"
- *"I can't talk long; I'm too homesick for you!"
- *"It's lonely here without you. We can't do anything fun or we miss you too much!"
9. Make a big deal in front of the rest of the family for one child's successes.
- *"I have an announcement to make—it's about one of our wonderful children...."
- *"Everyone stop everything....and then tell the child's success"
- *"Today, Cami has made the entire family proud!"
- *"Let's have a round of applause for Kayla's grades!"
- *"Three cheers for Kara---hip, hip horray; hip, hip horray; hip, hip horray!"
- *"I know something good about someone!!"
- *"I have a good report about someone!"
10. Affirm the child on his birthday—and have others affirm him too.
- *Create traditions for birthdays that are not typical, such as the whole family singing a love song to the birthday child, everyone going around the room and telling what they love about the birthday person.
- *Right before he goes to bed on the night before his birthday, be as silly and affirming as he'll allow (!): "I get the last kiss from you before you're ten; here's Josiah walking backwards for the last time while he's still nine; here's your last hug while you're still nine; everyone take a good look at Josiah before he is no longer nine."
- *When he arises on his birthday, be as silly and affirming as he'll allow: "Hurry, I need the first hug from you as a ten year old; let me be the first to say I love you as a ten year old; here comes Josiah, walking down the stairs for the first time since he turned ten."
- *Try to incorporate some one-on-one time on birthdays, such as a birthday lunch with Dad, etc.

11. Create family unity by talking about what a great family you have in front of your children—and get them to join the bandwagon! My husband and I looked at each other and laughed aloud when we heard Gary Ezzo talk about this in *Growing Kids God's Way* as we had been doing the exact same things he described---even using the same wording!

*"Okay, now we have every member of the greatest family ever loaded in the van!"

*"Donna, can you believe what a great family this is?" (aloud for the children to hear)

*Roll down the van window, then say: "There's so much *creativity* (or whatever) in this van, I have to open the window to let some of it out!" (This is my personal favorite when we have all ten of us, including our son and daughter-in-law, in the van discussing ideas!)

12. Create special secrets that only the two of you (or your family) know about.

*I have special squeezes for different children that mean certain things. (Sorry, I can't tell or they wouldn't be secrets!)

*When my son was at home, we had a special secret (that is no longer a secret!) of "a penny for your thoughts, a nickel for a hug, and a dime if you tell me you love me." We used to pass sixteen cents back and forth between us—I would even tape them in the top of his lunch box when he began working outside of the home. Only the two of us knew why we would give each other sixteen cents.

*My little guys and I like to sing this song to each other: "I love you a bushel and a peck; a bushel and a peck and a hug around the neck; (a hug around the neck); and a barrel and a heap; a barrel and a heap, and I'm talking in my sleep about you...about who? About you!"

*"I love you ten million times infinity and beyond!" (Alright, it came from Toy Story!)

*My husband and I have more secret signals and words than I can remember....and I dare not tell them! (smile)

*We like to sing parts of songs to each other from movies, tapes, etc. that we have attached special meaning to, such as "Talk to me; show me that you care; Talk to me; listen to the words I say. Etc" or "L is for the way you look at me; O is for the only one I see, etc." or "I love you with the love of the Lord; yes, I love you with the love of the Lord, etc."

13. Send special notes in lunch box, computer bag, cell phone case, etc.

*If this feels unnatural to you, go to the Christian bookstore and pick up a set of love notes for parents to give their kids that are already pre-printed, and simply tuck them here in there.

*Write any special words or numbers (we have those too!) on index cards and stick them where your child will find them.

*Write Scripture blessings for your child and put them in his lunch box or desk drawer.

14. Send love notes via email.

*These are easy and quick!

*My kids love their X's and O's I send them.

15. Let him know that you enjoy and like him, not just love him.

*"You are so fun to be with!"

*"I would rather be with you than any other twelve year old boy in the whole world!"

*"I'm happy tonight. I get to spend the evening with the three greatest teenage girls in the world!"

"How did I get to be the most blessed mom in the world to be with you!!!???"

16. Give things special names that are unique to your family.

*Sometimes a name that a child used as a toddler sticks with a family and becomes a sweet remembrance of childhood. We still say, "pasghetti, hanngurbers," and other nicknames that the toddlers had for older siblings like "Doss" for "Joshua" and "Mil-Mil" for Cami.

*Our vans have always been named. It usually means Mom and Dad are excited when we talk about "all piling into Big Red"—since that means Joshua and Lisa are going with us, and we'll all ten be together.

*When my older kids were little, they called their special time with Dad before bed their "Malachi" (turning the hearts of the fathers to the children). They still see pictures of them with their dad, reading the picture Bible and say, "Oh, that was my Malachi!"

*My special time with each child when the older kids were little was called "Terrific Tuesday."

*My special time with my little boys now is called "LLL Day"—lunch, library, and love!

9. Article from Training for Triumph

The Power of Story

by Kayla M. Reish

The golden age of Greece gave rise to many philosophers, thinkers, and scientists, who themselves gave rise to many stories, fables, and

tales--- some true, some hardly believable. One of the true stories concerns Plato and the city fathers of Athens. One day Plato petitioned the city fathers to remove from the streets of Athens a threat to reason and logic. He was not talking about thieves, soldiers, or even politicians; he was talking about the storytellers of Ancient Greece. What Plato understood and recognized was that all the logic and reason he had could not compare to the power of a good story. The incurable influence a story has is one of a Christian's most powerful weapons, and he should be able to use it.

There are probably as many reasons for a story's power as there are stories, but some reasons stand out among the others. The first is that life is a story. When a person goes to bed at night, he has a story to tell about what that day held for him. What we live; what we call *life* is a story. Psalms 90: 9 (KJV) says, "Our days are as a tale that is told."

A story appeals to the "kid in all of us." This is an old expression but very true--the fact that a story in its most basic concept and outline is usually very simple, so even a child can understand it. What made Walt Disney a household name throughout the world? All he did was tell uncomplicated, childish stories that appealed to the kid and to the "kid in all of us."

Though very simple in its make-up, its meaning, its parallels, its analogies, a story also has the power to make humans think. Take the parable of the sower and the seed. "A sower went out to sow some seed. Some fell on good ground, some on rocky..." Any six-year can tell you the story, but it is stories like this that have kept the theologians in business for the past two thousand years.

A story can make a potentially difficult truth easy to hear. When the prophet Nathan confronted King David about his sin with Bathsheba, he did not start with a firm rebuke or a discourse on the evils of adultery. Those came later; but Nathan started with a story (the story of the rich man and the poor man and their little lambs) because a story was potentially the only way David could have understood the magnitude of his sin. The filmmaker George Lucas once said, "Sometimes the truths are so painful that a story is the only way you can get through to them."

The simplest reason stories are so effective is that a story is entertaining. In America the easiest way to *not* make your point is to bore your audience because America today is obsessed with being entertained. And how do Americans entertain themselves? They switch on the television, turn on the

radio, or open a book. They see, hear, and read stories. Even the bad stories that some of these sources offer have elements of entertainment.

There are hundreds of different ways of telling stories. Pictures take one part of a story and freeze it; poems use flowery language and parallels to weave stories together; plays bring stories to vivid life; even our every movement tells the stories of what God is doing in our lives.

The oldest and still most widely used form of storytelling is verbal. In the Bible, especially in the books of Deuteronomy, Joshua, and Judges, God commands the children of Israel to tell the stories of His mighty works. Today we are still told to tell the stories of God's love, power, and grace.

God knew that over time stories that are purely verbal can be changed, so He gave His Word to men to write down in a book, the Bible. Books have the ability to take one person's ideas and spread them throughout the world.

When Abraham Lincoln was in the White House in the midst of the Civil War, he was visited by a woman; he gave her this unusual greeting: "So you're the little woman who started this great war." What did she do? To this day we do not know if she knew how to use a weapon, but we do know she knew how to use a pen. She was Harriet Beecher Stowe, the author of the book, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and of all the arguments for and against the slavery issue, this one book (the *story* of a simple slave's life) had more influence on the thinking of America in that day than anything else. One person went so far as to say that, "Overnight, Harriet Beecher Stowe has created two million abolitionists."

The power of story is known to the powers of the world all too well. America is obsessed with two very powerful forms of story telling: movies and television. What Hollywood tells America through its stories, America believes, and Hollywood knows it. Interestingly, some of America's greatest filmmakers went into the film industry because they wanted to influence American thought. Alfred Hitchcock, the great suspense filmmaker, said he liked to play audiences like a piano, and he knew with a good story you can make an audience laugh or cry on cue. Frank Capra, director of *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* and *It's A Wonderful Life*, said that the power held by movies was so great that only someone of utmost integrity deserved to have it. That is certainly not a rule followed in Hollywood today as the directors and actors convey their own definitions of right and wrong to the American public through *stories*!

Sadly, few in the church are so quick to understand the power that is at their fingertips. God invented stories. When Jesus was on this earth, He only spoke to the crowds through stories, yet Christians today try to use reason and rules to battle the stories of the world. And while clear reasoning and godly standards are God-given, when a normal person is taught one thing, but shown something else in a story, he will believe the story.

Most schoolchildren have read Longfellow's "Paul Revere's Ride," a wonderful piece of literature, yet historically speaking, it is simply wrong. It puts Paul Revere on the wrong side of the Charles River, and it puts the lanterns in the wrong church, but if you ask the average America today (certainly the average school child), he would tell you the lanterns were hung in Old South Church and Paul Revere was over by Charleston, where they were not historically. Why do students insist on putting them in the wrong place? Because that is what the story says; people do not believe the historical fact books; they believe the story, right or wrong.

Christians need to use prayer and wisdom to evaluate the stories we hear and what they are teaching us. Every story has a message to convey. Even the simplest child's story teaches something. The founder of the China Inland Mission, Hudson Taylor, first told his parents that he wanted to go to China when he was five years old after hearing visiting missionaries tell the *stories* of what they were doing and where God had called them.

Christians need to be able and equipped to use stories to convey our own messages as well. Even one of our primary purposes to be in the world is to tell the greatest *story* even told. William R White, award winning author of books on story, said, "We are a forgetful people; we need storytellers. We need someone to lay the drama of God's love before us. We need to be reminded of the uncommon grace of God." The world has its storytellers proclaiming its lies every Friday night at the theatre. When will the church give America storytellers who will communicate God's truths?

Tips for Teaching Storytelling in the Home School:

1. At the dinner table, have the children take turns telling stories of what happened that day.
2. While driving in the car, have the children describe what they see. Model this for them, and encourage them to use descriptive words and phrases.

3. Have each child take one of the parables Jesus told in the New Testament and tell what the deeper meaning is.
4. Write or tell a group modern-day parable (a spin off of one of Jesus' parable). For examples of these types of tales to read to your children, see *The Kidderminster Kingdom Tales* by Christopher A. Lane, such as *King Leonard's Great Grape Harvest* or *Mrs. Beaver and the Wolf Next Door*.
5. Read aloud a fictional book that uses storytelling to deal with some social issue like *The Princess and the Kiss* by Jennie Bishop (Warner Press; July 2000) about purity for younger children or *Tilly* by Frank E. Perretti (Crossway Books; July 2003) about abortion for older children.
6. If appropriate in your church or home school group, have your children tell a story for some church event or expo (Sunday school, children's sermon, Christmas program, home school exposition, etc.).
7. Have an older student assigned a set time each week to tell a character-based story to younger siblings. You may desire to have them start out using character stories from a book that they read and try to recreate. Some books that might aid them in this include *Uncle Arthur's Bedtime Stories* (Arthur Maxwell, Review and Herold, 2002) or *Great Stories to Remember* (Joe L. Wheeler, Focus on the Family Publishing, 1996)
8. Watch a historical re-enactor and learn how he uses costume and dress to enhance his story. Vision Forum sells the Little Bear Wheeler videos of Little Bear storytelling and lecturing on different historical periods in costume.
9. Have students read a collection of good stories and practice retelling at least one of them several days later. Some good short stories for middle school and high school students to use for this include *Hero Tales* by Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge (Cumberland Hous, 2000), *Stories for the Heart* by Alice Gray (Multomah 1996), and *One-Hundred- and-One Read-Aloud Classics* by Pamela Horm (Black Dog and Leventhal, 1995).

10. Discuss the importance of not changing Scripture when retelling a Bible story and then practice telling stories from the Bible. Encourage your student to add details or use analogies and allegories, but to be sure not to change the *meaning or facts* of the passages.
11. Have children use stories in essays or speeches as openings, closings, or examples.
12. Encourage your young storytellers by having storytelling tools available for them, such as puppets and flannel graphs.
13. Have your children act out Bible stories, situations you give them to act, or other events with each other. Acting out, while speaking the parts, will help them develop storytelling skills.
14. Do round robin storytelling in which one person begins a story, and the story is continued a sentence or paragraph at a time as you go from person to person to add their parts. You will want to decide at the beginning of the story if you want this to be a serious story or outlandish tale (as many round robin stories become).
15. Practice describers with your students. Pick an object to describe and go around the room having each child try to think of a describing phrase to more vividly, accurately, and concisely describe that object than the previous person did or than he did the last time he described it.
16. Read frequently from good storytellers. Some master storytellers to read to your children include John Milton, William Shakespeare, John Bunyan, Hannah Hurnard, Max Lucado, Frank Peretti, William Bennett (*The Book of Virtue*), Arthur Maxwell, and Aesop.
17. Model storytelling for your children. Start out with the youngest children, who will not be critical of your ability, then move up as you are more confident. Use storytelling to teach, encourage, exhort, show examples, and more in your own teaching.
18. Use books on tape to increase his listening comprehension. Students who have a large background of experience to draw on (from being read to frequently or listening to books, teaching, and

stories on tape) bring more information and techniques to their storytelling.

Kayla Reish is a tutor, high school student, author, and sister/daughter from Craigville, Indiana. She has written a speech and debate curriculum for home schooled students with her family, a middle school speech curriculum with her sister, two summer “camp” curricula for children and teen girls, a historical devotional (*Sovereign in the Affairs of Man*), an educational coloring book (*Creation Corner Coloring Book*), language arts curriculum for third through fifth graders (*Wisdom Booklet Language Arts* and *Character Quality Language Arts Level A’s*), numerous articles, and more. She is currently writing some materials for children (biographies and fiction stories) while starting a degree at Huntington College as an early entry student (studying pre med). She also has several tapes available, including her dyslexia story.

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