



TFT Newsletter
Issue 027
August 2009

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Need help as a writing teacher? Does your older student need to get back to the bare-bones of writing paragraphs and multi-paragraph pieces? Try **[The Write On! Quick Kit](#)** - a cd and booklet set that will help even the most intimidated writer.

Donna's Desk

Hello: Note from Donna

Dear Friends,

Welcome to another awesome school year. If it hasn't started out quite that way for you, or you have been met with challenges as we have this summer/fall—know that trials are “life classrooms” for you and your little school—and that God will teach your children (and you!) during and through these circumstances.

I have been having some health challenges this summer, something altogether new for me as I seldom miss a beat due to illness. It has been frustrating, sometimes painful, and definitely annoying—and has gotten in the way of so many things I wanted to accomplish. Nothing life-threatening—just enough to keep me from completing my ever-growing to do list and moving TFT ahead the way I wanted to. I am trying to slow down and do what it takes to get well.

In the meantime, we are still here encouraging homeschoolers in their marriages, parenting, academic training, and heart and character training. You can do this! You can teach your children in all aspects—in academics, relationships, character, spiritual.

Check out our fall seminar—Character Training in the Homeschool, which we are presenting in Panama City mid-September. Cd's from many of these sessions are available for purchase. (And many of the handouts from these will be available on our site this fall.)

Or consider having a TFT seminar in your area. We have

[Read CQLA Reviews](#)

Read Cathy Duffy's new **Meaningful Composition** review

Still not sure if CQLA is right for your family? **Print off a month and "try before you buy."**

It's not too late to start on Meaningful Composition this fall! MC books are laid out to be used for one semester (or two semesters when combined with a grammar program). **Try three weeks free.**

(our first MC review!) at her site.

Want to be a CQLA rep? Read [about it](#) on our website. Call Ray for more details. 260-597-7415

Love CQLA? Mention it to your favorite vendor.

"This is *the only* curriculum I have ever found that actually teaches you "HOW" to write - not just giving assignments and hoping for the best."

Patti, long time WBLA/CQLA user

Check out our [writing](#)

several to choose from—The Well-Trained Heart, The Almost-3-R's, Character Training—or one that is tailor made for your group. Call Ray to see about setting up an entire weekend or a support group meeting.

Our vendor list is growing. We would love for CQLA, MC, our new quick kits (*The Write On Quick Kit* will help you and your students learn the basics of writing), and *The Well-Trained Heart* to be in conventions everywhere this spring. Tell your favorite vendors about us—or become a TFT rep. In the meantime, check us out in Timberdoodle, Rainbow Resource, Homeschool and More, Solo De Gloria, and The Old Schoolhouse, to name a few.

This issue is short and quick—I've been behind and am playing catch up. We will wrap up the Love for Learning series this time (which is now available on cd) and move into some parenting issues this fall and winter. Remember, consistent discipline and deep heart training are the beginnings of a strong, enjoyable homeschooling experience.

Thanks again for your continued support. We LOVE homeschoolers!

Sincerely,
Donna Reish
www.tfths.com

TFT Writing Correspondence Classes Underway

Our Correspondence Writing Program is underway. We have a small enrollment this fall—and would love to have others join us during the second semester. It is set up in such a way that you can enroll one student for any one semester in any of our *Meaningful Composition* books. Students receive the overview cd correlating with the MC book they are using—and audio critiques of their writing (along with written critiques). It is a sixteen week-one-semester-at-a-time program—teaching our directed writing approach with weekly feedback.

[correspondence program](#). **It's not too late to register for the second semester of this school year!**

Check out our dozens of [speaking topics and workshops](#).

Donna's Morning Read Aloud List Summer 2009

- *Character Sketches* by Institute in Basic Youth Conflicts
- *Heroes of History: Benjamin Franklin* by Janet and Geoff Benge
- *The White Boat Rescue (Sugar Creek Gang)* by Paul Hutchens
- *Classics to Read Aloud to Your Children* by William F. Russell
- *The Oxford Illustrated Book of American Poems* edited by Donald Hall
- *Amazing Tales for Making Men Out of Boys* by Neil Oliver
- *The Landmark History of the American People* by Daniel J. Boorstin

Donna's Nightstand

- *Romancing Your Child's Heart* by Marty Swan
- *Handbook of English Grammar* (I know, pitiful, but I love it!)
- *Morning by Morning* by Charles Spurgeon

Reish Family Read Alouds

Reishes' Speaking and Teaching Availability

We have four speakers available now—on over fifty topics. Ray and Donna LOVE to speak about heart training and our new book, *The Well-Trained Heart*, as well as many other topics (academic and non-academic topics). See our website for a complete list of topics and contact Ray to set up a TFT speaker for your event. We are especially looking for fall/winter support groups to speak to—within a couple of hours of us. And, don't forget about our weekend workshops—The Well-Trained Heart, Character Training in the Homeschool, and/or The Almost 3 R's. We love to help homeschoolers! J

Section II: Heart Training --The Dream Beginning

The Dream Beginning--reprinted from fall 2005

The Beginning of a New School Year

I'm always excited about school! I love summer school; I love regular school; I love school--and everything (almost!) having to do with it. I love planning it. I love thinking about it. I love school supplies. I love books and bookcases (which is why we have twelve bookcases spread throughout our small 1,400 square foot house!). I love homeschooling more than I could ever explain in person or convey in print--and I especially love the beginning of a new school year.

I love preparing the house for school....completing my last ditch effort of getting the whole house in order before "regular school" begins! (Like that will ever really happen!) Checking off each item in anticipation of the long days ahead. Organizing my freezer meals in order by type, ready to pull out and rescue me on "those days." Like the nesting instinct before birth, something about the initial days of school approaching makes me want to "get everything done"--for the beginning of a new school year.

- *Don't Check Your Brains at the Door* by Josh McDowell

- *Island of Aquarius* by Frank Peretti

- *Tombs of Anak* by Frank Peretti

- *Door in the Dragon's Throat* by Frank Peretti

- *Quiet Strength* by Tony Dungy

Josiah's Summer Reading List

- *Five True Missionary Stories*

- *The Jungle Book* by Rudyard Kipling

- *David Brainerd*

- *Corrie ten Boom*

- *John Hyde*

- *Hatchet*

- *Julie and the Wolves*

Jacob's Summer Reading List

- *Miss Hickory*

- *The Wonderful Toys*

- *The Forty Acre Swindler* (bio about George Washington Carver) by Dave and Neta Jackson

- *Lucinda's Secret*

- *The Sword in the Stone*

Boys' Audio Book Summer List

- *Johnny Tremain*

- *War of the Worlds*

- *Screwtape Letters*

- *Ghosts of the Chattering Bones*

I love school supplies--and finding the latest and greatest things that I only get for myself--secret tools that nobody should touch but Mother (for the first month anyway)--the stickier sticky notes, the click highlighters, and the fruit-scented markers. And, adding another dictionary, thesaurus, or "word" book to my shelf of the dozen-plus that I already have--you can never have too many words! Oh, my supplies--for the beginning of a new school year.

I love organizing my books for school. My books on shelves in my bedroom. Our library materials on other shelves in my bedroom--in historical chronological order--ready to pull off the shelf and read or assign. My desk drawers cleaned out. My library cards all in good standing--no fines, nothing lost or missing--not for the beginning of a new school year.

I love sorting the kids' things for school. Putting the books not finished from last year in their tubs, with renewed determination to get through them this time. Smelling the newness of their "this year" books--and rubbing my hand over the glossy covers of texts with no tears, no missing pages, and no doodling anywhere on them. I love filling their crates with everything I hope and dream about getting to this year. No whistles, baseballs, comic books, or candy wrappers stashed in the crates' pockets. Not for the beginning of a new school year.

I love romancing about school...you know, thinking how awesome it is going to be with all three of the boys gathered around me, anticipating the next lesson--with a clean house and dinner in the crock pot in the background of the picture. All chores done for the day. No phone calls or interruptions. No bad attitudes. No slothfulness. Outstanding character by all (including Mom!). My three daughters flitting in and out between their college classes, ministries, and music lessons. Rubbing the tops of the little boys' heads as they walk through the room we are schooling in-- smiling at the memories of when they were the ones gathered around me learning together. (And they never sat on whoopie cushions, opened every tool on a pocket knife, or snuck candy from the treat tub as I read!)

In my perfect scenario, the girls never interrupt us--the boys never tickle the girls as they walk by or stop to talk to them about the Boxer Rebellion in China or proper wheel chair etiquette--that wouldn't be "real" school, you know!

(Boxcar Childrden)

- *Mystery of the Star Ruby* (Boxcar Children)
- *Mystery of Blizzard Mountain*
- *The Radio Mystery*
 - *Mystery of the Spider's Clue*
- *Brave New World*
 - *Calico Captive*

See Morning Reading tips and more about reading aloud and heart training in our March E-Newsletter, [Issue 025](#)

"Worry does not empty tomorrow of sorrow; it empties today of strength." Corrie ten Boom

"Homeschool socialization should be...protecting our kids for a short time so they can be witnesses to the world for a lifetime."
Kayla M. Reish

Romancing...about the beginning of a new school year.

And then it happens. The beginning of the new school year passes. The fruity markers became less fruity--or the ink leaks out of the bottoms of them. The stickier sticky notes are not really as sticky as was advertised--and my idea to write Scriptures on them and put them on the bathroom mirrors every morning fades away. A library book turns up missing--and I have to pay \$29.99 to replace it--plus, a restocking fee. My little guy's math book cover gets torn off--and it is no longer glossy or pretty. My historical chronology of books gets wrecked as we began "stuffing" on the shelves rather than "filing" by the third week.

Something happens to the little guys gathered around me, smiling as I am reading, too. You see, my freezer meals ran out, so now they have to peel potatoes while I read--and cutting long strips of peeling or carving designs in the potatoes becomes more exciting to them than listening to Mom read. Oh, and the character...let's just say those flaws were not quite as noticeable when they were playing outside or mostly doing independent work during the summer. They never are. It's passed--the beginning of a new school year.

But I'm not discouraged! I have been at this long enough (twenty-three years when I began homeschooling my younger sister!) to know that each "beginning of a new school year" passes--and some of the excitement fades, but my efforts are not in vain. I'm not in this for just the first few days of a new school year. I'm not in this for a few short years of each child's life. I'm in this for the long haul (for thirty-four years by the time my last one graduates!)--and it's "doing the stuff," regardless of how new, lovely, easy, or romantic that "stuff" might not be, that matters. You see, I love homeschooling--the end of the year, the summer school days, the holiday school times--and the beginning of a new school year.

Section III: CQLA, Meaningful Composition, and Language Arts Help

Meaningful Composition Maze:

The popularity of MC has taken us by storm! We are thrilled to have so many homeschoolers learning to write with meaningful material in a directed way through our *Meaningful Composition* books. Last newsletter we had a MC Maze section—and this time we will update that and give some placing help:

Need some back to school help? Check out our article about “Dreading Back to School” at my [blog](#).

More help starting the school year: [Tips for a New School Year](#)

1. MC is simply the writing portions of CQLA pulled out to be composition-only books. Thus, the passages, writing exercises, outlining, assignments, teaching text, Checklist Challenge, etc.—**anything that has to do with composition—are all found in MC** (but not grammar instruction, vocabulary, spelling, copying, dictation, Editor Duty, etc. etc.).
2. You do not need CQLA and MC. MC is for **parents who want the directed writing approach for their students**, but do not want an all-in-one language arts program.
3. If your student is especially heavy in grammar and spelling but lacking in composition—and you want to **bridge the gap between the subjects—MC is the answer!** Many students who are at higher levels in grammar and spelling, use MC for a year or a semester to catch up their composition skills, then move into CQLA.
4. Some folks have asked us if MC’s are just books of Key Word Outline essays, and the answer to that is no. MC (just like CQLA) contains a **wide variety of writing projects**. Some assignments are KWO essays and reports over given material since that approach works well with short passages of material that a student may desire to write from (especially when that material is given to the student). However, each outline or pre-writing assignment is based on the type of writing for that assignment. For example:
 - a. Formal outline for middle-school-and-beyond biographies and upper level informative/research based reports (since students use a variety of sources in these—and the KWO approach is primarily good for small snatches of material from one source)
 - b. Sentence-by-Sentence outline for upper elementary and middle school informative writing and all essay or personal writing
 - c. Split paper technique for comparing/contrasting reports and essays

Teaching Tip

Walk them through it. So many things that children (and adults) need to know for, well, life, are things that just need walked and talked through. When your kids ask you, "What would this shirt be since it's on sale for 40% off," don't just tell them (and unless they just worked on this, don't make them stand there and figure it out (or try to figure it out) in frustration.

Instead, walk them through it: "Well, the shirt was \$20—each 10% will be \$2—so it will be \$8 off—that will make it \$12."

Math is just an obvious area this works—cooking in the kitchen: show them how you know to use two sticks of butter when the recipe says one cup; driving down the road: show them how you know by the mile marker that you are three miles from your exit; playing basketball in the driveway: show them how you learned what an obtuse angle was; and on and on and on. We use this all the time with our kids for decision making—what is the least you can re-sell that cymbal for? What is the most you can make? Walking through math, science, decisions, reading comprehension, etc. not only teaches that skill at that moment, but it gives kids tools to figure things out for themselves later.

- d. Mapping for elementary reports and essays
 - e. The paragraph house for elementary beginning paragraph writing of many types
 - f. Question and answer outlines for younger students retelling assignments
 - g. Brainstorming for many types
 - h. Paragraph by paragraph planning for story writing and upper level personal writing
 - i. Fill in the blank paragraphs for younger ones
 - j. Piggyback story writing for new story writers
 - k. And much more!
5. Placement in MC is key—starting in the right book and moving along through them will yield an outstanding writer someday very soon! First of all, we have **at least three weeks of free lessons for each MC book at our website** both to "try before you buy" and to help you see what each book contains for placement purposes. Additionally, these benchmarks may help you:
- a. MC 4+: Sentences, Paragraphs, and More—for the young student who is ready to learn **what a sentence contains, then what a paragraph contains**—with lots of paragraph writing. Includes Key Word Outline (KWO) how to's and Checklist Challenge (CC) how to's. Also good remediation for **reluctant older writers**. (Do not start here if your student has a good handle on paragraph writing.)
 - b. MC 4 II: Put Those Paragraphs Together—for the young or middle school student **who needs more paragraph help**—and needs to learn how two or more paragraphs are combined to write reports and essays. Very directed—lots of hand holding. Includes KWO and CC how to's. Also good remediation for **reluctant older writers**.
 - c. MC 5 I: Writing for Real—for the middle school student who wants to write all types of writing. Lots of hand-holding, directed writing, but not babyish. Contains KWO how to's and CC how to's. Also good remediation for **reluctant older writers**.
 - d. MC 5 II: Clever and Creative—our middle school creative writing book. Lots of creative writing in our directed writing format. Some KWO essays/stories/retelling with imagery, quotes, etc. lessons. Piggyback stories, time capsule, time

lines, What If stories—tons of fun! Good for **strong upper elementary writers on up.**

- e. MC 6+: Long and Strong—for **the junior high writer** who wants to write all types of writing. Contains KWO how to's and CC how to's. Great remediation for **high school writers who have not written much** multi-level writing, have not learned the KWO approach to given material, or have not learned revising skills through our Checklist Challenge.
- f. MC 8+: Bridging the Gap—for **the upper junior high or high school writer** who has not learned the KWO how to's or CC how to's—all types of writing.
- g. MC 9 I: Research Reports—for **the strong junior high or any high schooler** who just wants to work on research-based writing. Very directed and very incremental approach to research reports—contains five reports with new skills and more challenging expectations with each one. Your student will be prepared for any type of research writing and will learn about tons about organization/paragraph breaks.
- h. MC 12 I: The Research Paper—for the **upper level high school student** who is nearly finished with high school English credits. Teaches the full-length research paper of 20-30 pages using the MLA format. Very directed, step-by-step method.

“A man with a testimony is never at the mercy of a man with an argument.”
Unknown

“A God who can breathe universes out of His mouth is more than capable of keeping our young people.” Pastor Don Williams

“The best way to have the last word is to apologize.” Unknown

Section IV: In the Kitchen This Month

Breakfast and Lunch Recipes for Four, Yes, Four

Over the past thirteen months, three of our children have left home for college and marriage. It has been difficult for me to let them go—but another difficulty that I had never even thought of was that of food. Grocery shopping, cooking, menu planning—all of that has changed.

When there were nine of us here, I always revised recipes to feed twelve or so. That gave us one evening meal and a leftover lunch meal for some. After throwing away vats of beef

stew and stock pots of chili this past winter, I have been revising my recipes to feed eight instead. This is an ongoing process.

Additionally, I have been trying to encourage our sons to eat more protein and veggies—and less cold cereal and frozen pizzas! Thus, I have assembled some breakfast and lunch recipes for them to make for the three of them. Most of these feed four—and are marked otherwise if they feed a different number. Sometimes I have to make the recipe with one of the boys the first time, but they are all relatively easy—and we are often all in the kitchen together, so they learn as they help.

Check out these recipes at my [blog](#).

Read all three installments of "Creating a Love for Learning in Your Homeschool" at my [blog](#).
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Section V: Article From Training for Triumph

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Creating a Love for Learning in Your Home School (cont.)

Part II of III
 January 2005
 By Donna Reish

Definition of "unrealistic expectations"—"premeditated resentment".

Focus on Your Learners

Focus on Learning Styles

Throughout my twenty-plus years of homeschooling, there have been many buzzwords and trends—just like in any other endeavor. The problem with buzzwords, so to speak, is that they often alienate those who are not in the know. I can remember when I first began homeschooling my sister—and I had just graduated with an elementary education teaching degree—and every thing I read about homeschooling seemed to talk about learning styles. Even as a trained teacher in elementary education, I felt intimidated by this buzzword. Let this be a lesson to us seasoned homeschoolers not to make this lifestyle seem too difficult or out of reach for others. I see this happening all of the time as everything gets new labels and definitions. Homeschooling our kids doesn't have to consist of some unknown skill that only those educated in

Latin can comprehend!

That said, what about these learning styles that intimidated me so? Well, I found out later that the bare bones of learning styles is figuring out what makes your kid tick! Yes, they fall into three categories: auditory, visual, and kinesthetic. And yes, they each have their own characteristics—but once I got past the labels and definitions, I could see my kids clearly in each category.

From the beginning, Joshua and Kayla could listen and comprehend anything they heard, it seemed. Both of them had poor penmanship and were not artistic. Neither one was musical. While they both loved building with Legoes—even this time had to be accompanied by talking books and radio dramas. Classic auditory learners.

Cami, on the other hand, wanted to sit right up against me as I read morning reading—in case there were any pictures to look at. She adored those little DOVER coloring and activity books---and played school, office, post office, etc. with all types of stickers, books, pens, stamps, etc. She wanted to *do* to learn—the more minit books and lap packs the child made, the happier she became. Kinesthetic learner.

Learning styles—just seeing what makes our children tick. And trying to cater to that as much as possible. For Joshua and Kayla, this meant read aloud a few hours a day, radio dramas by the shelf-ful, presidential speeches while they did their educational coloring books, etc. For Cami, this meant hands-on math, workbooks at a young age (despite the fact that I did not care for workbooks for young children), and not relying on verbal explanations of things only.

Even multi-tasking is directly related to learning styles in my kids. Kayla and Joshua both get bored if they only do one thing at a time—they have to be listening to something while they do repetitious work (like circling all of their verbs in the Checklist Challenge) or they get bored. Cami, on the other hand, is usually telling the little guys to turn Oddysey off while she does her CC.

Let learning styles help you determine your child's best work environment, curriculum picks, types of books for research based writing (i.e. visual kids love Usborne books!), and

more. But do not let the idea overwhelm you or dictate your kids' behavior. Even kids who like to be doing need to learn to sit still when told and even kids who are auditory need to do their penmanship book as directed. Be sure you do not confuse learning styles with poor character—or poor parenting!

Focus on interests/strengths/bents

In addition to learning styles, kids are motivated by their interests. I remember during my master's degree we spent a good two weeks discussing the need for high interest books for remediation in reading. The theory was (and I have seen this borne out in my own kids) that if the material is interesting to a student, he can read at higher levels. Thus, second graders who are reading CS Lewis!

It is true in all areas of life that when we are presented with something that interests us, we work harder, listen better, etc. to understand the information. We can use this to our advantage as homeschoolers too.

We have purposely watched our children's "loves." What is it that they just adore. For Joshua, academically speaking, it was history, geography, and literature. For Kayla, it was anything academic—but especially Bible. Cami adored music, photography, cosmetology, and people!

We took each of their interests and basically shaped a high school program for each one around them. Yes, they completed their "Core 40"—Indiana's high school credit system. But above and beyond those basics, their high school consisted of what they love. Joshua studied history, government, and literature. Then went on to spend two semesters of high school interning at two different state capitols (Michigan and Okalahoma). Kayla spent her high school years studying the Bible, preparing for medical studies in college—and co-writing an English curriculum with me (combining her love for writing, history, and Bible). Cami scrapbooked for hire, took a month long cosmetology course, went to deaf camp, and more.

Out of these tailor-made high school programs, each student discovered a lot about himself or herself. While Joshua loved the capitol environment, it was too time consuming and at times disappointing to him—he discovered a love for teaching

(which goes along with his history, literature, etc.) by teaching speech and debate classes with us. Kayla was able to study the lives of great missionaries all through high school as she wrote the curriculum—building even more of a desire for missions within her, ultimately helping her to choose nursing over physician, due to the length of time it would be before she would be ready to get on the mission field. Cami is still in process—but has learned from her month-long cosmetology experience that her skin problems (allergies, eczema, etc.) will prohibit her from becoming a beautician. All of this—from our kids' loves and interests!

Delight directed studies

Our first born, Joshua, did not like math. I made so many mistakes in so many areas with that poor kid that it is amazing he loves to learn the way he does today! (I didn't have other homeschoolers' mistakes to learn from yet—consider yourself blessed to learn from "older" homeschoolers' trials and errors!) Anyway, I had a workbook series without the teacher's materials (thought they were only needed for the classroom) in early elementary—and I was not strong in math, so I didn't do the material justice. Then in his middle grade I used a math program that simply took too long each day to complete. All of this added up to a math phobia, and dare I say math disdain, for Joshua.

It didn't take long for Ray to remedy this situation, however. You see, while Joshua didn't love math—he did love sports—watching them, playing them, sorting sports cards into teams and creating "dream teams," figuring stats, etc. And we had been to three Gregg Harris workshops by this time—where Mr. Harris had encouraged us to practice "delight directed studies." Delight directed studies are lessons based on things our kids are delighted in. What delights your kids? For Joshua, it was obvious.

Ray began working with Joshua on math in all types of sports scenarios at around age eight, and they continued these sports-math lessons practically until Joshua's high school graduation. They began working with geometry on a baseball field on paper. They worked on statistics extensively with Joshua's sports cards. And the lessons that stuck the most—stats in the driveway while shooting free throws together.

We have seen this over and over again—Kayla learning

geometry through quilting; Kayla and Joshua learning sentence and paragraph structure through their love for writing fiction (and my editing!); measurements in the kitchen; and much more. Delight directed studies work.

Give Children the Gift of Learning

Teach children how to learn

In addition to giving our children a love for learning, one of the best gifts we can give to them is the how to's of learning. We have found dozens of ways to teach our kids to learn through the years. The first way is one talked about extensively in this article—discussion. We love to talk to our kids! We talk to them about how to organize information. We talk to them about how to make decisions. We tell them stories of our past—and what we have learned from these experiences. All of these discussions aid in our children learning how to learn—because they usually revolve around thought processes, how we came to a certain conclusion, etc.

Another thing we have done is take advantage of library programs—our kids have learned local history, CIA secrets (okay, not really secrets—but that was what the presentation was called—that got our kids' attention!), internet use, card catalog use, and much more through the local library. We have attended these classes with them and learned ourselves. Another added benefit of taking kids to these is that they see that learning is a lifelong process—and that adults need to continue learning too.

Teaching our children proper and extensive internet use is another way to teach them how to learn. We need to have filters on all of our computers to block out the bad—but the internet is a tool and of itself is an outstanding way to help kids learn to learn. I am amazed as an adult how much I can learn by researching online. Of course, internet research opens up other avenues of learning—discerning truth from fiction, appeals to emotion, interpreting statistics, and much more. Internet research combined with discussion is a doubly good way to learn to learn.

We teach our children how to learn when we provide them with independent learning tools and books. I discovered early

on that I was training my children to become too dependent on me for learning. Yes, I homeschool them. Yes, I love teaching them and being with them. But they will not learn to learn on their own if all of the curricula and all of my approaches center on my feeding them knowledge. I began providing my children with independent learning tools—talking books, radio dramas, independent math drills, self-checking games and activities like Geosafari and Mathsafari, and much more. I developed a daily list of meeting with Mom, working independently, and working with siblings—on school, chores, Bible, and more.

Sometimes teaching our kids how to learn involves nothing more than goal setting. A discouraged student assigned a four hundred page biography doesn't need somebody to read it to him or for him—he just needs coached in how to complete the task. Simply helping him see that if he were to divide that book in half (half this week and half next week), then he can have ten 20-page sessions a week and have it done might be all that is needed! It is being more of a learning coach than a teacher as our kids get older. Organization is such a huge part of learning—and kids are not born with that (!). It is taught and it is caught.

Stock up on learning

My friends' husbands often tease them about staying away from me and my "catalogs." (At least I think they are teasing!) They hide the checkbook when I'm coming for fear that I will talk their wives into buying the latest, greatest educational item I have found. I always say, "We get our clothes at Goodwill and our groceries at Aldi's, but we get our books everywhere we find them---on sale or not!" We build a learning environment when we fill our home with good books and educational items---computers, good software, learning games, cassettes, videos, and more. It's hard not to love learning when learning items are surrounding you!

Nowadays, home school materials, in particular, and learning materials, in general, are everywhere! And the prices couldn't be better. I have gotten complete sets of readers at garage sales, expensive creation science books at Goodwill, and educational videos at thrift stores. Ebay and other online used buying and selling sites abound with educational materials. Home school swaps are prevalent online, as well. If you see a learning item somewhere, you can more than likely get it used

or on sale.

Start out with general materials and Bible/character materials and branch out according to your students' interests. Our initial "home school" purchases when our first born was a baby, twenty-one years ago, were the complete cassette series of *Your Story Hour* (of Uncle Dan and Aunt Sue venues), *Uncle Arthur's Bedtime Stories*, *The Coriell's Books of Character Building*, and *The Family Bible Library*. Guess what? We still have all four of them---and we still use all four of them almost weekly! Our oldest child Joshua was nine months old when we began this adventure by home schooling my younger sister. At the time, I had no idea what his interests would be (except maybe the packaging and boxes the tapes and books came in!). Begin your home school library and supplies with items you have found others to enjoy and with items that anyone might enjoy.

Of course, you can't go wrong beginning with Bible-related and character-related materials. As your students grow up, you will see certain bents and interests developing. Capture these. Do not get so locked into learning the "essentials" that you do not take time out for their interests! Pursue the art books and classes for the one with artistic talent. Check out every book the library has on airplanes for your future aeronautic engineer. Read the classics aloud to your literary student.

It is time to bring this article to a close. I have more notes, more examples, more ideas...but then we will move from a three part article to a booklet, so I will close for now. As a homeschooling parent, you set the tone for all aspects of your home—the emotional environment, the spiritual aspects, the physical beauty and orderliness, and the education of those within your doors. We can create a homeschool environment in which children love learning—and love homeschooling. Those loves will last our children a lifetime.