



**LIVING BOOKS CURRICULUM™**  
A Charlotte Mason education for the 21<sup>st</sup> century

# Grade Seven

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## Teaching Guide

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- Charlotte Mason, Educational Reformer
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- Seven Keys to Learning
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- Successful Narration: Five tips for teaching your children the "art of knowing"
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*Girl with a Hoop*

*On the Terrace*

*Self-Portrait*

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*Breezing Up (A Fair Wind)*

*A Flower for the Teacher*

*Snap the Whip*

*A Basket of Clams*

# Living Books Curriculum is—

## An idea

We believe...

- Children are persons.
- Children love to learn.
- Children need a supportive atmosphere for learning.
- Orality is essential to literacy and learning.
- Living ideas are the natural food of the mind.
- Active involvement is vital to learning.
- The formation of effective habits leads to a productive life.

## A method

The best way to provide a living education is to use...

Narration  
Great literature  
Storytelling  
Nature study  
Short lessons  
Local resources

## A curriculum

Living Books Curriculum provides the books and materials for each grade level for an academic year. The curriculum uses a literature-based, learn-by-doing approach inspired by the works of Charlotte Mason, with strong emphasis on the use of oral skills to enhance learning and literacy. LBC has a 36-week school year, divided into four terms of nine weeks each. The first eight weeks of each term are for instruction; the ninth week provides flextime for finishing work and assesses learning through end-of-term narration questions.

## A faith

The Bible tells us that apart from God there cannot be true knowledge or understanding. LBC strives to help nurture children in their faith and relationship to their Heavenly Father not only through regular study of God in His Word, but also by reading what others have written of Him and the study of His creation.

## Why our books are “living” books

Our books are living in the sense that educational reformer Charlotte Mason meant it. That is the books “warm the imagination,” nurture thinking, and communicate knowledge mind-

to-mind. When books such as these are many, varied, and living the student is able to take up the ideas in them, just as a plant takes nutrients from the soil.

*For this reason we owe it to every child to put him (or her) in communication with great minds that he may get at great thoughts... and the only vital method of education appears to be that children should read worthy books, many worthy books.*

—Charlotte Mason, *A Philosophy of Education*, p. 12

## **Who we are**

Jim and Sheila Carroll, founders of Living Books Curriculum, are educators and homeschooling parents. Jim is an educational psychologist; Sheila is an educational consultant and storyteller. As Christians, parents, and educators, they saw the steady decline of public and private education. When their youngest daughter was school age, they looked for an alternative in homeschooling. It was not until someone introduced them to the educational methods of Charlotte Mason that they knew they had found something very special.

## **Help and questions**

If you have questions or need assistance with any part of this teaching guide, we would be happy to help.

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# Notes for Grade Seven

## General Notes

Living Books Curriculum Grade Seven continues the pattern of using living books and life experiences begun in the Foundation Year, Grades One, Two, Three, Four, Five and Six. Grade Seven involves more written work, independent reading, and sometimes a longer period of study.

The areas of study for Grade Seven include studies in the Christian Faith, an extensive language arts program, science, nature study, picture study, American history, world history, and composer study. Because fluency in oral language is as important as fluency in written language, storytelling remains a key language experience in the Living Books Curriculum.

## Planning for Learning™

LBC uses a 36-week schedule divided into four terms. Each term is eight weeks of instruction, with the ninth as a “flex” week. The flex week permits the student to complete unfinished work, the teaching parent to assess learning through end-of-term narration questions, and also allows time for field trips. You can begin and end each term as best fits your schedule. You may make copies of the Grade Seven Planner included in *Part 4: Grade Seven Support Materials* in this Guide, or use the file for the complete planner on the *Grade Seven Resource CD*. Print it out and three-hole punch the pages for a notebook or have your local printer add a comb binder (usually at a very small cost). On the planner you will see the Flex Week identified as well as the Six Tools checklist: Narration, Literature, Storytelling, Nature Study, Short Lessons, and Local Resources. If you are not familiar with LBCs methods, read the documents on *Grade Seven Resource CD* entitled “Six Tools of Learning” and “Seven Keys of Learning”.

## Correlated Studies

Charlotte Mason taught that correlated studies enabled greater exploration of ideas but ought not to result in “busy work” (*A Philosophy of Education*, p. 114, ff). To correlate means to bring one thing into a complementary relation with another. To correlate studies means to bring one subject, such as history or science, into a complementary relationship with other subjects, such as art or nature study.

In the LBC curriculum, we have designed the major subject areas, i.e. the histories, sciences, language arts, to correlate with work in other areas, such as copy work, poetry, Bible study, and so on. Your student will greatly benefit by integration of the lessons in this manner. It also means that, while there are a number of “subjects”, in fact the amount of work is very manageable and enables a homeschooling family to spend the afternoons in outdoor activities and life skill training.

## Journals and Notebooks

Your Grade Seven student utilizes several notebooks for narrations and a Nature Journal. Your student has the option of incorporating all of them in one large, three-ring binder with subject-divider tabs or using individual notebooks.

One notebook that should be separate is the Nature Journal. If this is your first year to start a Nature Journal, LBC offers two options: a LBC Nature Journal template for you to print from the *Grade Seven Resource CD* or *Art Trails Nature Notebook* for sale on our Web site at <[www.livingbookscurriculum.com/livingbooks-nature.study.htm](http://www.livingbookscurriculum.com/livingbooks-nature.study.htm)>

The following subjects require a notebook, whether for a place to keep notes, as in science, or for written narrations:

- American History—Early Explorers to the Civil War.
- World History—Ancient World to the Middle Ages.
- Exploring Creation with General Science—A “Lab Book” is needed.
- Copybook—See Copy work.

## End-of-Term Narration Questions

Each term in the LBC curriculum is an eight-week period with the ninth week as a flex week. The flex week is included to complete any unfinished work and to assess your student’s learning with end-of-term narrations or in other ways. The questions provided are meant to be suggestive; you may want to formulate questions that more closely reflect the work your student has done during the past term.

We include end-of-term narration questions for two reasons. First, our research of Charlotte Mason’s syllabi for the Parents National Education Union (PNEU), used for over eighty years, showed that each term ended with “narrations” as a means of assessing student progress. Second, teaching parents who are using Living Books Curriculum have asked for assessment tools for their own planning and to demonstrate learning, where necessary, to state and local school officials.

## LBC Book of the Centuries

Charlotte Mason recommended using a “Book of the Centuries” throughout the elementary and junior high years. Read “Using A Book of the Centuries in the Living Books Curriculum” found on the *Grade Seven Resource CD*. If you did not purchase *History Through the Ages* timeline, you can create your own using the guidelines in this article. Plan a few minutes once a week for your student to work in his Book of the Centuries. Use this Book of the Centuries for History, Science, Composer Study, and any other subjects where it seems right to add information to the timeline. Use it as an aid in narration as well.

*The Timeline of History* is for use in Grades 7 and 8 (and Grade 9 if you use an extended plan) and provides you and your student with a high-quality, easy-to-use Book of the Centuries that will be a treasure for years to come.

LBC has provided most of the persons studied in Grade 7 and 8 on CD for you to print out. Ideally you will print them in color as it makes a more appealing picture.

Plan a time at the end of each week to have your student cut and paste the figures. Record important events at the top or bottom of the correct page in the lined areas provided.

### **Narration**

The use of narration is the most important aspect of Living Books Curriculum. It is the means by which students take up the ideas presented in living books and make them their own. A student of Charlotte Mason expressed it this way: "We read; we narrate; then we know." If your student is new to the use of narration, begin with very short narrations. The process of using narrations effectively is described in "Successful Narration: Five Tips for Teaching Your Child the 'Art of Knowing'" found on the *Grade Seven Resource CD*.

### **Christian Faith Studies**

Charlotte Mason called this part of your student's study "Religious Knowledge", but such a term today is not specific enough, since one could ask, "Which religion?" In her time it was a foregone conclusion that such a term referred to the Christian faith.

### **Scripture Reading**

This year your student will read *Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel* in the Old Testament, and *John* in the New Testament. The rotation of readings comes from the PNEU syllabus of Charlotte Mason. The hard work of discovering what was read during which grade was completed by Victoria Waters and can be viewed at her Web site: <[www.charlottesdaughters.com](http://www.charlottesdaughters.com)>. We are grateful to her for making them available.

We strongly suggest the teaching parent read Charlotte Mason's writing on the reading of Scripture. We entitled it "Charlotte Mason on Bible Study" and include it on *Grade Seven Resource CD*. Here is an excerpt:

*Children between the ages of six and nine should get a considerable knowledge of the Bible text. By nine they should have read the simple (and suitable) narrative portions of the Old Testament, and, say, two of the gospels. The Old Testament should, for various reasons, be read to the children. The gospel stories they might be read for themselves as soon as they can read them beautifully. It is a mistake to use paraphrases of the text; the fine roll of Bible*

*English appeals to children with a compelling music, and they will probably retain through life their first conception of the Bible scenes, and, also, the very words in which these scenes are portrayed. This is a great possession. (Home Education, p. 248)*

### **Practical Work**

When the Carrolls visited Ambleside, England, to study the works of Charlotte Mason, we discovered that “practical work” in Bible Study was required of a student in the PNEU curriculum. Practical work meant putting one’s faith to work in practical ways, such as visits to a shut-in or writing letters to a missionary. We suggest you brainstorm with your student about opportunities for service open to him or her. In *Part 4: Grade Seven Support Materials* there is a list of suggested activities.

## **Language Arts**

### **Grammar**

The grammar book for Grade Seven is *The Blue Book of Grammar and Punctuation: An Easy to Use Guide with Clear Rules, Real World Examples, and Reproducible Quizzes*. This book is an excellent review of all the rules. The author’s Web site <[ww.grammarbook.com](http://www.grammarbook.com)> has a number of free resources and additional quizzes that are also helpful.

### **Storytelling**

Storytelling is a unique feature of the Living Books Curriculum. It is included because fluency in storytelling directly relates to a student’s ability to excel in reading, writing, comprehension, narration, and creativity. Each term your student will have a storytelling opportunity assigned that will build confidence in public speaking, enhance expressive language, and improve writing (yes, writing!). Be sure to read the essays “Storytelling: the Invisible Gift” and “Teaching with Stories” found on the *Grade Seven Resource CD*. These explain fully why oral language experiences, especially storytelling, enable your student to build his language skills to a high level of mastery.

No book has been assigned for this year, as in other years. Instead your student will be prompted in the Week-by-Week guide which type of story to find and learn. He will develop three types of stories: Historical stories from his reading in history and geography, literary tales, and a retelling of *Twelfth Night*. An audience to hear the budding story is essential and your family can easily provide that. Avoid having your student tell only to you. A story requires a few listeners to develop.

### **Copy work**

In Grades One through Four, LBC students use *Italics: Beautiful handwriting for children* as a guide for instruction in penmanship. By Grade Seven most children are fluent in cursive italic. If your student needs further work, we recommend purchasing *Italics: Beautiful handwriting for children* from our Web site <[www.livingbookscurriculum.com](http://www.livingbookscurriculum.com)> to review handwriting skills.

## Grade Seven—Term by Term

SUBJECT	TERM ONE	TERM TWO	TERM THREE	TERM FOUR	
CHRISTIAN FAITH STUDIES	Scripture	<i>Joshua</i> 1-24. <i>Judges</i> 1-21; <i>Ruth</i> 1-4.	1 <i>Samuel</i> 1 to 2 <i>Samuel</i> 4.	<i>John</i> 1-20.	
	Practical Work	Suggestions given in Part 4: <i>Grade Seven Support Materials</i> .			
LANGUAGE ARTS	Storytelling	Learn a story from history or geography readings. <i>Best-loved Literary Fairy Tales</i> .	Learn story from <i>Best-loved Literary Fairy Tales</i> , history or geography readings.	Retell the story of <i>Twelfth Night</i> .	
	Literature	<i>Best-loved Literary Fairy Tales</i> .	<i>Best-loved Literary Fairy Tales</i> .	None.	
	Shakespeare	None.	None.	<i>Twelfth Night</i> .	
	Copy work/ Dictation	Student chooses his copy work from current readings. Parent chooses the dictation from current readings.			
	Narration	5-10 written narrations per week, plus oral narrations for the remainder of readings. See Part 2: Notes for Grade Seven for guidelines.			

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>TERM ONE</b>	<b>TERM TWO</b>	<b>TERM THREE</b>	<b>TERM FOUR</b>
<b>Grammar</b>	Optional review in <i>The Blue Book of Grammar and Punctuation: An Easy-To-Use Guide with Clear Rules, Real-World Examples, and Reproducible Quizzes</i> (Used in Grade Six).			
<b>Poetry</b>	<i>Jabberwocky: Poetry for junior high.</i>			
<b>Recitation</b>	Each term student memorizes one poem, Psalm, or other scripture chosen from readings.			
<b>SCIENCE</b>	<i>Exploring Creation with General Science.</i>			
<b>COMPOSER STUDY</b>	<i>Meet the Great Composers</i> Book and CD 1.			
<b>WORLD HISTORY</b>	<i>The Story of Greece.</i>	<i>The Story of Greece, continued</i> <i>The Story of Rome</i>	<i>The Story of Rome, continued.</i>	<i>Heroes of the Middle Ages</i> <i>Story of the Middle Ages.</i>
<b>AMERICAN HISTORY</b>	<i>This Country of Ours</i> <i>A History of US: Sourcebook and Index.</i>	<i>This Country of Ours</i> <i>A History of US: Sourcebook and Index.</i>	<i>This Country of Ours</i> <i>A History of US: Sourcebook and Index</i> <i>The Life of George Washington.</i>	<i>This Country of Ours</i> <i>A History of US: Sourcebook and Index</i> <i>Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin.</i>



<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>TERM ONE</b>	<b>TERM TWO</b>	<b>TERM THREE</b>	<b>TERM FOUR</b>
<b>GEOGRAPHY</b>	<i>A Book of Discovery.</i>			
<b>NATURE STUDY</b>	<i>Handbook of Nature Study: Fishes.</i>	<i>Handbook of Nature Study: The Brook, Insects of Brook and Pond.</i>	<i>Handbook of Nature Study: Cultivated Crops.</i>	<i>Handbook of Nature Study: Trees.</i>
<b>PICTURE STUDY</b>	Edgar Degas <i>The Dance Class</i> <i>The New Orleans Cotton Exchange</i> <i>Ballet Rehearsal</i> <i>Race Horses in a Landscape</i>	Claude Monet <i>Haystacks</i> <i>The Cliffs at Etretat</i> <i>Woman with a Parasol</i> <i>Water Lilies</i>	Auguste Renoir <i>Girls at Piano</i> <i>Girl with a Hoop</i> <i>On the Terrace</i> <i>Self-Portrait</i>	Winslow Homer <i>Breezing Up (A Fair Wind)</i> <i>A Flower for the Teacher</i> <i>Snag the Whip</i> <i>A Basket of Clams</i>

## TERM ONE • WEEKS 1-4

SUBJECT	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4
<b>CHRISTIAN FAITH STUDIES</b>	<b>Scripture</b> <i>Joshua 1-24.</i>	<i>Judges 1-21; Ruth 1-4.</i>	<i>1 Samuel 1 to 2 Samuel 4.</i>	<i>John 1-20.</i>
<b>Practical Work</b>	Suggestions given in Part 4: <i>Grade Seven Support Materials</i> .			
<b>LANGUAGE ARTS</b>	<b>Storytelling</b>	Continue to work on your chosen story from the history or geography readings. Allow 20-30 each week. Student will be asked to tell the story during Flex Week.	Continue to work on your chosen story from the history or geography readings. Allow 20-30 each week.	Continue to work on your chosen story from the history or geography readings. Allow 20-30 each week.
<b>Copy work/ Dictation</b>	Student chooses copy work from personal library, current readings, Scripture or <i>Bartlett's Quotations</i> (found online at <a href="http://www.bartelby.com">www.bartelby.com</a> ), and spends 10-15 minutes 3 times per week copying. Parent chooses the dictation from current readings. See Part 2: <i>Notes for Grade Seven</i> for guidelines.			
<b>Grammar (Optional—review of Grade 6)</b>	1-2 times a week do a review quiz in <i>The Blue Book of Grammar and Punctuation: An Easy-To-Use Guide with Clear Rules, Real-World Examples, and Reproducible Quizzes</i> , if you used this book in Grade Six. Or, go to the author's website for a short quizzes < <a href="http://www.grammarbook.com">www.grammarbook.com</a> >.			

SUBJECT	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4
<b>Poetry/ Recitation</b>	<i>Jabberwocky: Poetry for junior high:</i> Casey at the Bat. Choose one poem, Psalm, or other scripture from readings to memorize this term.	<i>Jabberwocky: Poetry for junior high:</i> Hiawatha's Friends. Prepare and rehearse chosen recitation piece.	<i>Jabberwocky: Poetry for junior high:</i> O Captain! My Captain! Prepare and rehearse chosen recitation piece.	<i>Jabberwocky: Poetry for junior high:</i> When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer. Prepare and rehearse chosen recitation piece.
<b>Narration</b>	Student should respond to both history readings by narrating. The narration can be either oral or written. See <i>Part 2: Notes for Grade Seven</i> for guidelines and suggestions. Additional narrations can be at the choice of student or the discretion of the parent.			
<b>Literature</b>	<i>Best-loved Literary Fairy Tales:</i> The Box of Robbers.	<i>Best-loved Literary Fairy Tales:</i> The Rat Catcher's Daughter.	<i>Best-loved Literary Fairy Tales:</i> The Rat Catcher's Daughter, continued.	<i>Best-loved Literary Fairy Tales:</i> A Chinese Fairy Tale.
<b>SCIENCE</b>	<i>Exploring Creation with General Science:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Module 1.</li> <li>• Read the instructions for Science in Part 2 of the Teaching Guide.</li> <li>• Check "Lab Supplies" list for materials.</li> </ul>	<i>Exploring Creation with General Science:</i> Module 1, continued. Do study guide and take the test for the module.	<i>Exploring Creation with General Science:</i> Module 2.	<i>Exploring Creation with General Science:</i> Module 2, continued. Do study guide and take the test for the module.

SUBJECT	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4
<b>GEOGRAPHY</b>	<p><i>A Book of Discovery</i>, Chapter 1 Map work: See guidelines on p. 21 and Book of the Centuries, p. 12.</p>	<p><i>A Book of Discovery</i>, Chapter 2. Mapwork and Book of the Centuries.</p>	<p><i>A Book of Discovery</i>, Chapter 3. Mapwork and Book of the Centuries.</p>	<p><i>A Book of Discovery</i>, Chapter 4. Mapwork and Book of the Centuries.</p>
<b>WORLD HISTORY</b>	<p><i>The Story of Greece</i>, Chapters 1-11. Update Book of the Centuries.</p>	<p><i>The Story of Greece</i>, Chapters 12-20. Update Book of the Centuries.</p>	<p><i>The Story of Greece</i>, Chapters 21-30. Update Book of the Centuries.</p>	<p><i>The Story of Greece</i>, Chapters 31-43. Update Book of the Centuries.</p>
<b>AMERICAN HISTORY</b>	<p><i>History of US: Sourcebook and Index</i>: read introduction and "How to Use this Book". <i>This Country of Ours</i>: Chapters 1-2. Update Book of the Centuries.</p>	<p><i>History of US: Sourcebook and Index</i>: Section 2. <i>This Country of Ours</i>: Chapters 3-4. Update Book of the Centuries.</p>	<p><i>History of US: Sourcebook and Index</i>: Section 3. <i>This Country of Ours</i>: Chapters 5-6. Update Book of the Centuries.</p>	<p><i>History of US: Sourcebook and Index</i>: Section 3. <i>This Country of Ours</i>: Chapters 7-8. Update Book of the Centuries.</p>

## Suggested Schedule

This schedule is intended to suggest how the homeschooling parent might divide the day, alternating between direct instruction and interactive learning. The divisions of time in the schedule reflect Charlotte Mason’s philosophy of

- 1) 30-minute lessons (for the grade level)
- 2) Making each subsequent lesson as different from the last as possible to maintain interest.

The final decision must be the teaching parent’s, as the developers of this curriculum cannot know the individual circumstances of each learning environment. (Subjects with an asterick, see notes on the next page.)

TIME	SUBJECT	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
9:00–9:30	Christian Faith Studies	OT	Journal Entry	NT	Journal Entry	X
9:30–10:15	Math ( <i>daily</i> )	X	X	X	X	X
10:15–11:15	Language Arts ( <i>daily</i> )					
	Dictation-Spelling*	Intro-Dict.				Dict./Spell.
	Storytelling		X		X	
	Poetry	X		X		
	Recitation Practice		X		X	
	Literature or Shakespeare* (4rd Term only)	X		X		
11:15-12:15	Science* ( <i>daily</i> )	X	X	X	X	X
Lunch						
1:00-2:25	World History*	X		X		X
	American History*		X		X	
	Geography	X	X	X	X	X
Arranged	Music Study	X				X
Arranged	Picture Study*	X			X	
Afternoons	Nature Study*	X	X	X	X	X
	Silent Reading	X	X	X	X	X
	Handcrafts	X		X		X
	Life Skills		X		X	