

# The *Inform*er

a publication of the Indiana Association of Home Educators

Fall 2017



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Language Mountain  
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## The Informer Core Values

- To be Christ-focused
- To be Indiana-focused
- To be encouraging
- To be a resource

### IAHE

The IAHE is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1983 for the purpose of serving the Lord Jesus Christ by supporting and encouraging families interested in home education. We define home education as parent-directed, home-based, privately-funded education.

Our primary functions are maintaining visibility as home educators with civil government leaders, influencing the legislative process, sponsoring seminars for parent education, and publishing.

The IAHE is governed by a volunteer board of directors. Sixteen regional representative couples are in direct contact with local support groups across the state.

Our major source of income is our annual convention. With the growth of the home education movement, both our needs and responsibilities continue to grow, and we welcome your tax deductible contributions.



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# Welcome

a note from the editor

Have you ever had a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day?

Some days are like that.

Even when you homeschool.

Thankfully we have a merciful God that brings us fresh opportunities and grace each and every morning.

*The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.*  
—Psalm 103:8 (ESV)

*For the Lord your God is a merciful God. He will not leave you or destroy you or forget the covenant with your fathers that He swore to them.* —Deuteronomy 4:31 (ESV)

*The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning...* —Lamentations 3:22-23a (ESV)

The beginning of each school year is a fresh opportunity with our children. Brand new books, sharpened pencils, and clean lesson planners. Excitement and enthusiasm is abundant for a while. But, hard days come when we allow our unmet expectations to overwhelm us.

His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning...

Thank you Lord for your abundant mercy!



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depositphotos.com: #30812123

\**Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*, published in 1972, is an ALA Notable Children's Book written by Judith Viorst and illustrated by Ray Cruz.

## The Informer Magazine

*The Informer* is published quarterly by the Indiana Association of Home Educators (IAHE) to provide information, inspiration, and support to homeschool families. Circulation is 8,000 and subscriptions are FREE upon request. The mailing list for *The Informer* is never sold or rented.

The articles in this magazine reflect the freedom of home educators in Indiana to choose from a wide variety of homeschool philosophies and teaching methods. Opinions and attitudes expressed in articles do not necessarily reflect the beliefs of the Indiana Association of Home Educators. IAHE does not endorse or advocate any one method or philosophy. The Board encourages each home educator to seek God's will in determining what is best for him, his school, and his students.

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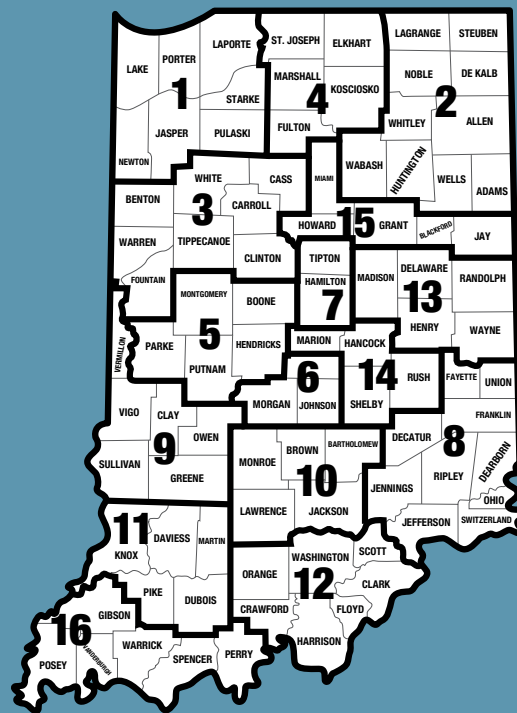
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Regional Representative's extension.

*If you do not receive a response in a timely manner,  
please contact the IAHE office.*

## Regional Representatives

serve the homeschooling community throughout Indiana. Each representative is a veteran homeschooler who can help answer the questions of a family just starting out. They also communicate with local support groups in their region and keep them up to date on changes in the law and activities throughout the state.

You can contact your regional representative for information about spelling bees, sport clubs, book fairs, curriculum advice, workshops, standardized testing and convention information. They can also help you find a support group in your area, or if none is available, they'll help you start one.

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# Why Homeschoolers Will Rule the World

—Woody Robertson

As a homeschool graduate of the mid-1990's, I have for the past twenty years asked the same question, "What is it about homeschoolers that makes them unique and consistently stand head and shoulders above their counterparts?" My conclusion: the world is not only looking for educated young people, but it is more importantly looking for those with vision who know who they are and where they are going. Individuals who exhibit character and a strong "roll up the sleeves" work ethic. Those who exhibit qualities such as Initiative, Diligence, Creativity, Wisdom, and Enthusiasm, stand out and are highly sought after.

Due to the fact homeschool education typically involves a strong focus on character, generally presents a greater opportunity for communication skills and education and the fact that homeschoolers themselves tend to have greater vision for their lives, homeschooled graduates are uniquely positioned to stand out. Like Daniel in the land of Babylon who was reported to be "10x better than the best in all the land" (See Daniel 1:20), think about the opportunity for our young people to make a significant

difference. These fundamental differences create a once in a lifetime opportunity where the sky is truly the limit.

I fear that many parents don't understand this great opportunity and as such fail to fully tap into their child's potential, inspiring them to greatness and dreaming big. In some cases, there is even a tendency to isolate and sequester, to limit interaction with the outside world and to focus on "protecting." Our focus should be on raising up children to launch like "arrows in the hands of a mighty man" (see Psalm 127:4). An archer doesn't shoot with the intent of retrieving or protecting the arrow. He shoots with the intent for impact.

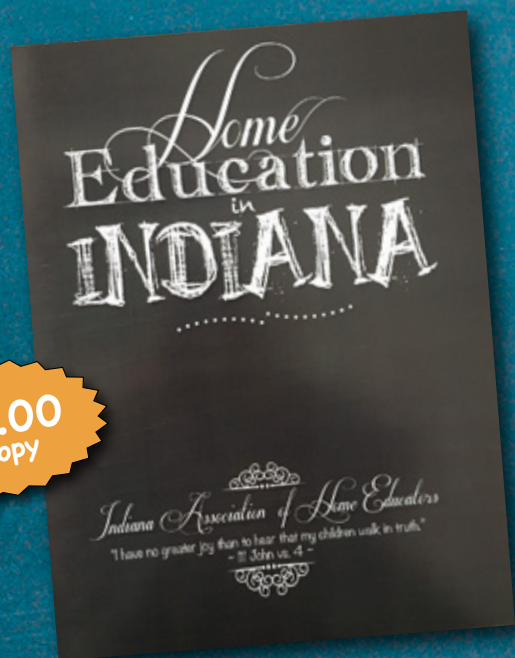
Never before have homeschoolers faced such an incredible opportunity to stand out amongst their peers. This is our time to seize the day and focus on the launch of the next greatest generation! ■



**Woody Robertson's** personal mission is to live "a real life with a real relationship with a real God." A first generation homeschool graduate, Woody is passionate about reaching the next generation of culture shapers. As a member of the Lumerit team, Woody lives in San Antonio, TX with his wife Gina—the girl of his dreams!

## New to homeschooling in Indiana, or just have questions?

Get answers to your questions and support the IAHE by purchasing your copy of the **Home Education in Indiana** guide!



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### Included topics:

- *Where Do I Start?*
  - *Providing an Equivalent Education*
  - *Record Keeping*
  - *F.A.Q.s: Homeschooling in Indiana*
  - *What About High School?*
  - *Memories from a Homeschool Pioneer*
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# Music

## Minute for Kids

$$4 + 4 = 8$$

### Do you have a piano, organ, or keyboard?

You're going to need one for this project, which is all about the scales!

While some people think that scales are hard, that's really not the case. Instead, they're pretty easy—and they are fascinating!

You'll see—follow me—just remember that two notes (black or white) that are right next to each other are a half step apart. And, two notes that have one note between them (black or white) are a whole step apart.

Now, put both hands on the keyboard. Thumbs will not be used here. Put the little finger of the left hand on C, the next (ring finger) on D, the next (middle finger) on E, and the next (pointer finger) on F. Skip a whole step between hands and go to G. With the right hand put the pointer finger on G, middle finger on A, ring finger on B, little finger on C. Voila!—you've just played the C scale!

Play it again and listen. It sounds right, doesn't it? I'm sure you recognize it as the “do, re, mi ...” from “The Sound of Music.” The C scale that you just played, beginning and ending on C, is the same form for every major (or “happy”) scale.

Did you see the pattern in that? It's C (whole), D (whole), E ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ), (F) (whole between the two hands), G (whole), A (whole), B ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ), C. That 4-note pattern of whole, whole, half is called a tetrachord and the major scale is made up of two of them with a whole step between them. With tetrachords you can build any major scale and find which notes are sharped. There you have it: 4 notes in the left hand + 4 notes in the right hand equal the 8 notes in an octave. We can deal with the flats later.

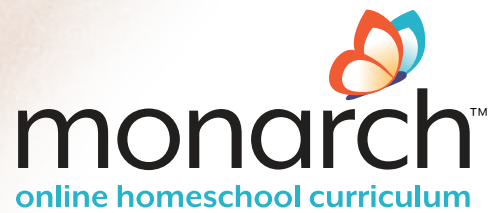
That's the C scale with no sharps or flats. Now put the left hand beginning on G where the right hand was before, to build the next scale. Follow the pattern: whole, whole,  $\frac{1}{2}$ , (whole step between the two hands) and whole, whole (ah: F#)  $\frac{1}{2}$  and you have the G scale with one sharp: F. Let's do the next key. Put the left hand where the right hand was (beginning on D) and add the right hand so you're in the key of D. You'll find two #'s: F and C. You can just keep going until you get all the notes sharped. Your keys will be in this order: C, G, D, A, E, B, F#, C#. Neat! By the way, the sharps will be in this order: F, C, G, D, A, E, B.

Music is so logical, isn't it? Well, most of the time!

Musicians from long ago figured all this out, but the one who was most involved with this complicated science of sound was J.S. Bach. Thanks, Mr. Bach! ■



**Else M. Perdicaris** studied music and Christian education at the Moody Bible Institute, and earned her Bachelor of Music (BM) and Masters of Music (MM) from the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago. She has been an acclaimed teacher in public schools and private music studios for decades and has directed sacred music and been staff organist and pianist for many churches. She enjoys equipping and encouraging students to develop their talents and is the author of the well-received piano teaching book *Pixie Pianist*.



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*When There's Just One Left In Your Nest*

—Heidi Krieder



**After a wobbly start,** I embraced the beginning of our homeschool. In the early days, I planned much. I planned co-op classes, field trips, lessons, and days off. Each August, I bought a new calendar and the kids chose their own composition books which became their student planner. I bought fun stickers, made fancy charts and together we'd plan our homeschool year looking forward, but never farther than the 180 days need to fulfill that school year. Over the years, I planned less and less as more and more became routine.

Days and weeks turned into months and years without me giving much thought to the other end of our homeschool journey. In what seemed like the blink of an eye, I was celebrating the graduation of my first from public school where he played four years of football. I wasn't overly phased by his graduation because I still had his sisters schooling at home to keep me busy. It is true that time waits for no one and it wasn't long before I was attaching a high school transcript and cumulative G.P.A. to my second child's college applications, celebrating her acceptance, and planning her high school graduation. She's off to Valparaiso University's School of Nursing this fall and just like that, there is one left in my nest.

After fifteen years, I'm now thinking about the end of my homeschool journey. I have four or five years left and I want to run this race well. I want to be able to say as the apostle Paul did, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith" (2 Timothy 4:7). I want to finish well, and for a while I wasn't sure what that looked like.

I have always admired those who homeschool one child. Back in the days of having babies and toddlers, I watched my neighbor homeschool her one son. I was intrigued with the amount of time she was able to devote to him. He was a bright boy and she challenged him while giving him creative outlets to explore his own interests. She finished her race and her son now lives in Florida with his wife. Even though I started my homeschooling journey watching Stephanie school her one, I doubted my own ability.

After being a homeschool mom of three, I found myself feeling overwhelmed at the prospect of homeschooling one. Seemingly a million questions flooded my thinking. Would I be able to challenge her enough? Would she be lonely? Could I provide enough variety? How creative would I need to be? How would she stay motivated?

The ironic thing is these are the very same questions I had sixteen years ago when I considered keeping our oldest home from kindergarten. I had circled right back around to the beginning of

my journey. I still had the same insecurities that I started with, regardless of the experience I had gained. It was there in my circling around and chasing of my tail, that my God met me and led me out.

*From the end of the earth, I will cry to You,  
When my heart is overwhelmed,  
Lead me to a rock that is higher than I. —Psalm 62:1*

God led me back to the beginning of my homeschool journey not only to remind me of His unending faithfulness, but also of the lessons He has already taught me. The key to finishing this race well with my youngest is to go back to the years of planning well. She might not want fun stickers and fancy charts, but I can offer her co-op classes with other teens, field trips, extra-curricular lessons, homeschool sports teams, dual credit classes at Ivy Tech and Grace College, and days off. Together, she and I can plan her high school years to be challenging and creative.

Fourteen years ago, He gave me the deepest desire of my heart, one more child. Today, I am grateful for this one left in my nest and our homeschooling years to come. ■



**Heidi Kreider** is from Winona Lake. She and her husband Chad have been married twenty-three years and have three children that they have homeschooled for fifteen years. They also experienced public school and private school. In her spare time, Heidi works as a part-time social media manager and occasionally writes at *Her Heart's at Home: Helping Women Find Work-at-Home Opportunities*.

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# Tackling the Foreign Language MOUNTAIN

— BECKY BARNES-ISRAEL

## “Mom, why do I have to learn another language?”

Have you been met with this question recently? Do not be overwhelmed as you contemplate the why and how behind second language acquisition. As Christian parents, it is imperative we have the right mindset guiding us and with it, we can joyfully teach our children! While there are many reasons our children should learn a second language, be sure to have a Christ-centered approach when beginning to tackle the foreign language mountain, and each step will produce a more fruitful reward in the long term. Encourage your child that not only will he or she earn the foreign language credits, but with a second language, they can share the gospel with someone from another country. What a privilege to deliver the gospel to someone in their native tongue, or to comfort them by praying with them in their own language. By preparing your child to have the goal of being able to share the gospel in another language, you are also preparing them to fulfill Jesus’s command to “go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.” (Mark 16:15 NASB)

It may seem daunting to teach a foreign language, but it truly can be an enjoyable process for each family. God has prepared you to teach your child everything they need to know. Don't be overwhelmed with the task. Take it one step at a time.

I have chosen three basic steps to guide you as you tackle the foreign language mountain. Each one is seemingly simple with practical application; teaching a language is easier than you think! Here they are:

## 1. Choose a Language

Pick a language that is practical. Do not get crazy and have unrealistic expectations. Think practically about your child's future goals in life and decide what language will best prepare them to meet those goals.

Does your child plan to live and work locally? Spanish would be a great choice. There are many Spanish-speaking people now in Indiana, and it is a helpful language to know.

Does she desire to do mission work? Study the language and culture of the country where she wishes to go.

Does he wish to be a pastor? Study Greek or Hebrew. You will be preparing your child for seminary. Studying God's Word in its original language- what a privilege!

Still can't decide? Did you know many Indiana towns, such as Clarksville, Batesville, and Bloomington, have sister cities in other countries? You could study the sister city's language—but above all, pick something you're comfortable studying too. After all, you'll be grading it!

Now that you have made your foreign language choice, you are ready for Step 2.

## 2. Pick a Curriculum

This is a personal choice and varies by family. As a foreign language teacher and homeschool mom, I recommend curriculum that emphasizes grammar above all. This will reinforce what you are teaching in English and will teach your student to become a proficient reader and writer in their chosen foreign language. I found in my teaching experience of both homeschooled and public schooled students, those who didn't have a solid knowledge of grammar struggled with correctly reading and writing in the foreign language. This often inhibited students from progressing and causing frustration on both the students' and parents' parts. Prevent burnout by choosing the best curriculum possible.

I spoke with several other homeschool parents prior to writing this article, and they mentioned this important aspect as well: to be sure to remember your student's personality. Is she an introvert or extrovert? If an introvert, don't choose curriculum where she

will have to record herself and have an online group listen to her. This is intimidating and may prevent her from stretching herself. As parents, we want to set our children up for success. Don't squelch her desire to learn the language by making her go too far out of her comfort zone. Even being in a co-op foreign language class might not be a good choice for an introvert student, according to my friend and fellow homeschool mom Christine Dingledine. She says for introvert students, "a classroom setting would be a disadvantage...they would be very uncomfortable with a group of peers possibly laughing at them." However, if your child is very outgoing, then go ahead and find a program that is very involved with other students dialoguing with one another. This could be either a foreign language online program or a co-op class.

Once you have your curriculum picked and started, be sure to do number 3 as often as possible!

## 3. Apply Language to Real Life

Rote book work will not create fluency in any language. Application is the key to success! There are many creative and fun ways to apply foreign language to daily life. Here are some easy ideas:

- Order at ethnic restaurants using the foreign language (Spanish, Japanese, etc.)
- Attend church services in other languages
- Find a ministry that serves immigrants or refugees and use your new language skills while volunteering
- Attend festivals celebrating other cultures (FIESTA Indianapolis and others)
- Go shopping at ethnic grocery stores
- For vocabulary practice, print words in a foreign language and hang them on items around the house
- Try to speak to each other in the foreign language, not in English
- Find a second language pen pal and practice writing to him or her in your new language

I hope these three simple steps have helped ease your apprehension about teaching a foreign language. Above all, remember to have a biblical view when it comes to learning a foreign language. Ask the Lord for wisdom in teaching your child and He will generously give it to you (James 1:5). How will YOU use your second language to glorify Him? ■



**Becky Barnes-Israel** is a homeschool graduate and homeschool mom of 3 energetic children. She is happily married to an Indiana native, Spencer. Becky graduated from Northern Kentucky University with a degree in Spanish Education.

# Unexpected Credit

Creating a Course Description for What Your Child Actually Learned

— Debbie Burks



**Patricia Polacco books are strewn around me** as well as the handful of students in my little class. Their favorite is *My Rotten, Red-Headed Older Brother*. We explore that book to see why it is their favorite:

"Good title."

"Lots of repetition."

"Repetition makes it interesting."

"What does the author repeat?" I say.

They settle on *arguments*.

I call the repeated arguments "interesting dialogue." We examine the text carefully to see how Patricia Polacco used the arguments and discussions with her older and red-headed nemesis to create an interesting story and to move the plot along.

Any genre---including your child's transcripts---can be written better with comparison to a good writer. My students and I compared Patricia Polacco's stories based on her memories so that the children could capture their own stories on paper. Long ago, when one of my children was transferring from Cedarville University to a much less expensive state university address (where our house replaced the 'dorm'), we found out that Cedarville has unusually good class descriptions. That was from the mouth of the head of admissions. Several of the previously rejected classes were approved for credit after reading the book of course descriptions that this pack-rat mama had saved.

Years later, when someone asked me to help her write a course description for one of her daughter's classes, I referred to Cedarville's course descriptions to help us create a well-written document. We also considered some of the descriptions from written curricula that the family already used.

### Writing Genre Compared to the Same Writing Genre

If you want something a bit more specific, try HSLDA's website. I discovered that they also have suggestions for creating your students' transcripts. (Everything, including HSLDA's website, has changed immensely since my children were homeschooled.) Examples of several different types of transcripts are included, and I would recommend this page to anyone with a middle school or high school age student. If your child is in middle school, planning for high school should be on your mind now anyway.

HSLDA even has a transcription service. If you are nervous about doing it "right" or just want hard copies somewhere besides your house in case of fire, flood, tornadoes, theft, etc., then their transcription service should be a good option for you.

Most of your packaged curricula will come with a course description, which you can use for their transcripts. However, we homeschoolers are often a bit eclectic in our teaching and learning.

In your home school, you may have spent a lot of time learning about styles of music and their corresponding time periods while studying history, literature, economics, government and geography. You and your child(ren) have gone to the symphony with other homeschoolers and learned about the symphony and types of instruments. You have learned how music has changed over time, and its influences on society, and society's influences on music. Your child can recognize many styles of music and composers. But you don't know how to document all of this for high school credit. You know that you should be able to do so, since you have covered the material so thoroughly, and you have evidence of what they have learned over time.

You could create a "final exam" for the class. Choose ten or more pieces of music and have the teen name the style of music; use multiple choice if you want. Have your student match the names of several pieces of music to the corresponding composer. Play the sound of an instrument and have them identify it. (There are many websites for this online. You don't have to invent it yourself; Google it.) Create some essay question for your studies: "How did American music change during World War II?" for example.



You could also have your student create a final project for the class in lieu of an exam, integrating music in some way into another study, such as science, history, and/or art. Create a rubric together to insure that expectations will be understood. It is a culminating project, after all.

A one credit hour class is said to consist of 4-5 hours of work per week (in and out of the "classroom") for a semester. Stretched out over four years of casual high school study, and more intensive times like when you were preparing to go on the annual field trip to the ISO, you could easily meet these criteria.

You might find that home economics, wood shop, art appreciation, or drama has interested you and your child might have explored the interest enough to claim it as a formal class. A portfolio, a final exam, a final project: do something to bring it all together. Then use good examples of course descriptions to write it up for his/her transcript.

You will be ready when the younger siblings come up and will not have to piece it together as a 'course' after the fact. You will have your projects/exams planned and the transcript will not be an issue.

With the Andrews Sisters now in my brain, singing *Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy*, I leave these websites for you that I consulted. I thought it interesting to note that Cedarville now has a webpage on homeschool transcripts. So there you go....

<http://publications.cedarville.edu/academiccatalogs/2016-2017/#17/z> pg. 13 "Homeschool Transcriptions." Retrieved April 2017.

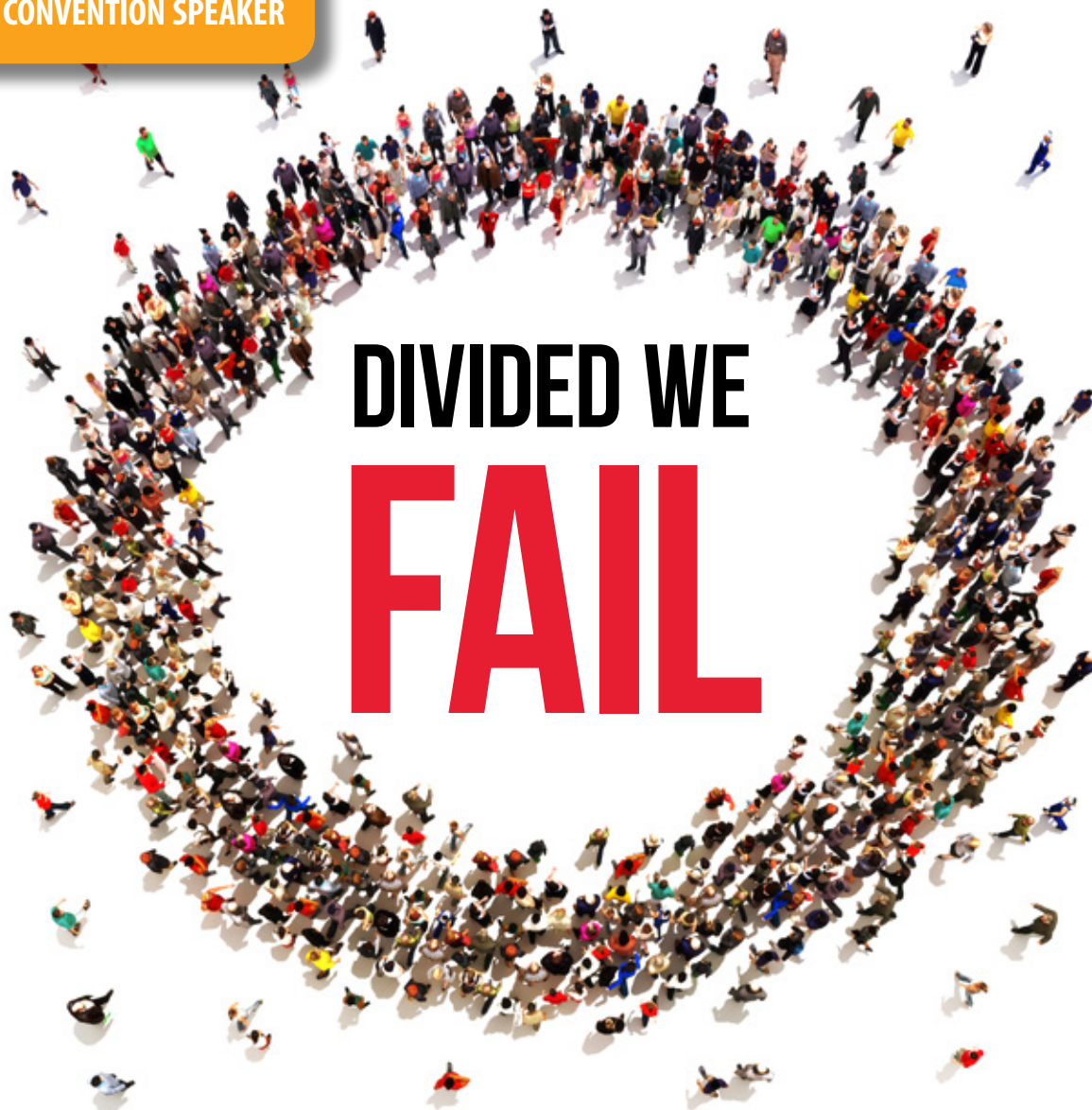
<https://store.hslda.org/high-school-transcript-service-p262.aspx>. Retrieved April 2017.

[www.hslda.org/highschool/academics.asp#transcripts](http://www.hslda.org/highschool/academics.asp#transcripts) . Retrieved April 2017.

[www.scholastic.com/teachers/books/my-rotten-redheaded-older-brother-by-patricia-polacco/](http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/books/my-rotten-redheaded-older-brother-by-patricia-polacco/), retrieved April 2017. (This is my writing class's favorite Patricia Polacco book. None of them are redheaded.) ■



**Debbie Burks** is a former homeschooling mom and classroom teacher—in that order. She and her husband, Dave, now spend a lot of time playing with their grandchildren. She teaches a writing class to a group of homeschoolers, and does "fun science and history stuff" with the grandkids.



**As homeschoolers, we need each other.** We need to be connected to the lives of others, especially those who have things in common with us. God made us not only to depend upon Him but also to rely on each other.

This is especially true when we are involved in something as challenging and complex as homeschooling. The support we receive from others is invaluable. Even a simple “You can do it!” can have a lasting impact on a discouraged homeschooling parent. Most of us would not be able to homeschool without the help and encouragement of our friends and neighbors.

Homeschoolers are sometimes criticized as isolating ourselves from the outside world. This claim is simply not true: not only are homeschoolers well-connected with each other, but we are also very active in our local communities. Today, homeschooling

families are united and networked perhaps better than any other group in America. It is that unity, coupled with a passion for making a difference, which has allowed us to bring about the positive developments in freedom that we have seen over the past three decades. When homeschoolers become involved in an issue, politicians find they have to listen.

A recent article in Slate quoted a number of state lawmakers blaming HSLDA for the avalanche of polite but forceful calls and emails they receive whenever they propose restrictions on homeschooling. Although we appreciate the backhanded vote of

# The future growth and success of homeschooling depends upon the continued strength of a strong state home school organization and local support groups.

confidence, these legislators give HSLDA too much credit for the effectiveness of the “homeschool lobby.” They fail to acknowledge the work of IAHE and of support groups in Indiana who have mobilized their members in grassroots opposition to harmful legislation. Without these organizations and their members, HSLDA would never have been able to accomplish so much.

IAHE has been in existence for over 30 years. They were founded when the freedom to homeschool was still largely unrecognized. We walked together through those difficult times—and we’re proud to say that the relationships we forged with you are still strong today.

The future growth and success of homeschooling depends upon the continued strength of a strong state homeschool organization and local support groups. In addition to helping defend the freedom to homeschool, these groups offer countless services to homeschoolers.

- They provide valuable information and resources for new and returning homeschoolers alike.
- They help homeschooling students connect and make friends through positive activities, ranging from academic courses and field trips to social events and sports teams.
- They organized websites with classifieds sections for selling curriculum
- Educational co-ops let homeschooling parents share their talents by teaching each other’s children in a variety of subject areas.
- Support organizations link new homeschooling parents with experienced homeschoolers for advice and encouragement.
- Local groups represent homeschooling to the public in an authentic and positive way.

■ Groups develop new leaders so that they can continue to serve the next generation of homeschooling families.

■ Finally, the IAHE produces a free magazine and a state-wide convention.

I want to take a moment to highlight the importance of IAHE’s annual convention. This convention raises revenue for IAHE, which helps pay for the other activities all year long. While IAHE receives revenue from donations, most of the services to the homeschooling community are free—so the annual convention serves as IAHE’s biggest revenue source. This convention provides a free informational homeschool workshop, a full exhibit hall, and practical workshops by inspirational speakers on many different topics.

Recently, because of competition from commercial, regional conferences and internet resources, attendance has been declining at many state conventions. This makes it harder for state organizations, including IAHE to provide support homeschooling families. A great way to support IAHE—and the many benefits it provides—is to participate in its annual conference.

More parents are homeschooling today than ever before. But for homeschooling to succeed in the long run, groups are essential. If you aren’t already part of a homeschool organization or support group, I encourage you to consider joining one. Every family is different, and there is no one-size-fits-all approach. But we believe that there’s a group out there for you.

By supporting IAHE, local groups, and being a member of HSLDA, you are making a strategic investment in the current and future success of home education in America and around the world.

**SEE YOU AT THE IAHE CONFERENCE, AND BRING A FRIEND.** If you cannot make the convention, would you consider a tax-deductible gift to IAHE? Perhaps you could volunteer for the IAHE conference well. ■



**Mike Smith** is the President of Home School Legal Defense Association. HSLDA was established to protect the right of parents to teach their children at home. Mike’s desire is to communicate the benefits of home education and that God has raised up this movement at present for a special purpose.



**By donating to the IAHE** you are partnering with us to support homeschool freedom. Donations of all sizes are needed to help us continue our work. You can make a generous one-time gift or a monthly gift. Monthly giving is the perfect way to make a small budget go further! Consider making a \$25 or \$50 a month gift!

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Mike Smith  
HSLDA President

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# Our Featured Speakers

Mike Smith is the President of Home School Legal Defense Association. HSLDA was established to protect the right of parents to teach their children at home. Mike's desire is to communicate the benefits of home education and that God has raised up this movement at present for a special purpose.



Debra Bell, PhD

Debra Bell, PhD, is the best-selling author of the award-winning *Ultimate Guide to Homeschooling*, and many other products from Apologia Press. Currently, she is completing *Writers in Residence* and *Readers in Residence*—a multi-volume language arts program for grades 4th and up.

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## REGISTRATION

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**Early Bird October 16-December 31**

\$45 Individual – \$65 Family

**Pre-Reg January 1-March 3**

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**At-the-Door March 23 & 24**

\$55 Individual – \$85 Family





Debra Bell

2018 IAHE CONVENTION SPEAKER

# 8 Reasons Kids Learn Best at Home

After I finished home schooling our kids, I headed back to school myself to complete a Ph.D. in educational psychology. I wanted to know how kids learn best. Wouldn't that be helpful information for homeschooling moms and dads?

Boy, did God blow my socks off! I can sum up what I found in one sentence: *If we built a school from the ground up based on what the research shows as how kids learn best...we'd build a home.*

How's that for some liberating good news? And doesn't it make complete sense? The best learning environment for any child is the one God designed: a family.

Here's why:

1. Kids learn best when they **BELIEVE** their teacher and fellow students care about them.
2. Kids learn best when they have opportunities to pursue their **INTERESTS**.
3. Kids learn best when they can make **CHOICES** and decisions about their learning.
4. Kids learn best when they can **OBSERVE** other students who model what success looks like.
5. Kids learn best when they have a teacher who is available to provide **FEEDBACK** and encouragement.
6. Kids learn best when the work they are asked to do is matched to what they are **READY** to learn.
7. Kids learn best when they can **EXPERIENCE** what they are studying firsthand.
8. Kids learn best when they have plenty of physical activity, sunshine, and **FRESH AIR**.

Think of all the obstacles kids have to overcome in a traditional setting to have these eight needs met. Even the most dedicated classroom teachers would be hard pressed to provide these

opportunities regularly for all their students. But you can and probably do so without giving it much thought.

No one cares about a child more than Mom and Dad. Both can regularly be available to answer questions and encourage a child's progress. Older siblings and mixed age groups in many of our co-ops provide those models of success and friendship. At home kids have plenty of free time to pursue what they are interested in and to be outside soaking up all the benefits of nature. Opportunity for field trips and firsthand experiences abound. Parents can adjust their expectations and methods quickly to match what each child is ready to learn. We can let our kids choose what books they read, what topics they study, and what curriculum they prefer. We encourage them to take ownership of their education when we attend conventions and homeschool rallies as a family.

The catch is we have to see God's design at work and maximize the advantages He's given us. I hope I can help with that by unpacking exactly how we can leverage all the opportunities a family uniquely provides each child.

I'm looking forward to talking with many of you at the upcoming IAHE convention on March 23rd and 24th! ■



**Debra Bell, PhD**, is the best-selling author of the award-winning *Ultimate Guide to Homeschooling*, and many other products from Apologia Press. Currently, she is completing *Writers in Residence and Readers in Residence*—a multi-volume language arts program for grades 4th and up.

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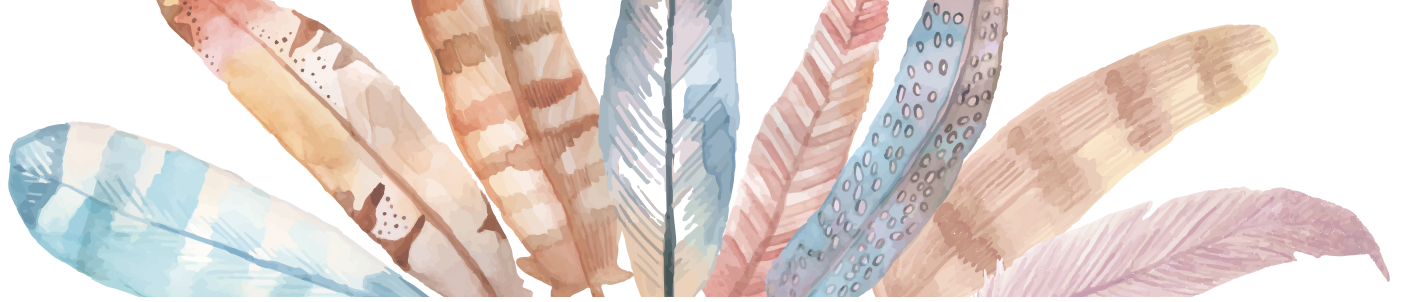
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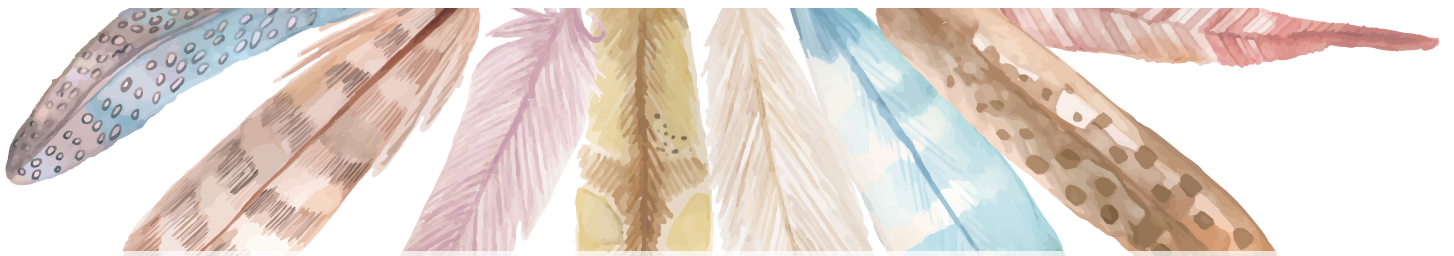
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# What is a Unit Study?

—Sharon Gibson



**Creatures of habit . . .** that's what we are. Even when there is a better, more efficient, or easier way to do something, we often resort to auto-pilot. If our child asks why we do something a certain way, we may find ourselves responding with "I don't know, that's the way I've always done it."

We see habitual behavior in every aspect of our lives, whether spiritual, physical, or emotional. Old habits are hard to break and new ones often harder to establish. The same is true when it comes to our homeschool habits. Whether you are a fledgling homeschooler or a veteran like me, each of us tends to steer our proverbial homeschool bus straight for that which is most familiar . . . textbooks. Because, being creatures of habit, we tend to teach how we were taught.

But, let's think about the original objective of textbooks for a moment. Textbooks were designed to be convenient. They were meant to help teachers instruct a large group of students, roughly the same age, the same subject, at the same time, in the most judicious way possible. Each public or private school teacher has, in fact, only one textbook from which he or she has to teach. Yet, the first thing we do is burden ourselves with a busload of textbooks for every subject, grade, and child in our family. Is it any wonder we are soon ready to pull our hair out?

Now, don't misunderstand me, a textbook can certainly be an effective, useful, and even convenient tool to use when educating our children. But textbooks for every subject, grade, and child in our family? That's where convenience ends and major homeschool burnout begins.

The solution? Unit studies!

Unit studies simplify your life by enabling your whole family to study the same topic, at the same time, regardless of age. They accommodate various learning

styles and abilities by incorporating an assortment of creative, hands-on, multi-sensory assignments. Due to their fun, experiential approach to learning, they also improve long-term memory of the material studied. What's more, their flexibility gives you the freedom to do as much or as little as you like, as well as the opportunity to tailor it to your family's educational needs and interests.

Unit studies eliminate textbook clutter by building multiple academic subjects around one central theme. That means, while you are studying birds, as in the illustration here, you are able to cohesively and sensibly connect Bible, reading, classic literature, science, history, language, geography, art, etc., to that theme.

For instance, when our family did a four-week study on the science of ornithology we looked up, discussed, wrote, and/or memorized a variety of different Scriptures relating to birds (Bible).

By utilizing our local library system we enjoyed a wide assortment of beautiful "living" books. Each book pertained to the topic of birds and, of course, we included classics, Caldecotts, and Newbery award winners for enjoyable family read-alouds whenever applicable. All books were chosen according to each child's ability. Our youngest, for example, was read simple, fact-based books and great classics like *Make Way for Ducklings*, *Chicken Little*, and *Henny Penny*,

while our oldest read more advanced, informative books that applied to each week's focus (Reading/Classic Literature, Science).

A unit study is divided into individual, bite-sized pieces. So, in the first week of our bird study, we began reading books about birds and constructing a backyard habitat while building feeders and a bird bath. We also made homemade hummingbird nectar and learned which types of seeds attract different kinds of birds. In the second week, we read biographies about John James Audubon, familiarized ourselves with how to use a field guide, began learning how to identify birds, and created journals in which to record them. In the third week, we read about Daniel Bernoulli, conducted experiments while studying the science of flight, and discovered the miracle of bird migration. In the fourth and final week, we read about birds of prey, our national bird, and even investigated threatened, endangered, and extinct species. As you can see from these few examples, various subjects were woven into this one science topic (Reading, Arts & Crafts, History, Science, Language).

Examples of language assignments during the course of our study included, among others, essays, poetry, science journal entries, and a thank-you note to the Audubon member who guided us on our bird hike. Spelling and grammar were also addressed when necessary. The beauty of learning together is you can adjust writing (and other) assignments to each child's interest and/or ability. For instance, one child may do an oral presentation using visual aids; another may write a poem about their favorite bird, while still another may write a composition about an endangered species or create a lapbook on backyard birding. Younger children may dictate and color pictures of the birds they, too, are learning to identify (Language).

Ornithology is obviously science, but you can easily weave history into a science-based unit study (and vice versa) by learning, as we did, about the life of a famous ornithologist who lived long ago and placing him on a history timeline in the appropriate period in which he lived (Science, History).

Mapping migration paths and discovering different habitats provided us with opportunities to develop our mapping skills and learn more science, as well as geography (Mapping Skills, Science, Geography).

Sketching birds in our journals and photographing others offered us areas to grow in our artistic abilities. Examining Audubon's paintings and his meticulous attention to detail challenged us and furthered our appreciation of the arts (Art/Art Appreciation).

Of course, you'll still need a math book for each child, resources for teaching early language skills, and your favorite go-to grammar resource, but the majority of your subjects can easily be integrated into your unit study topics, from early childhood through high school, without the added expense or chaos of multiple textbooks.

So, are you ready to break free from old habits? Are you ready to start having more fun? If so, imagine for a moment you are a child again. Before you there are two tables. Each table represents a class. Resting on one table is a science textbook, fill-in-the blank worksheets, and test forms. You page through the book, noting a

brief chapter you will read on birds before touching on other forms of wildlife. Suddenly, the other table catches your eye.

Wow! That table is overflowing with homemade bird feeders, bird seed, and recipes for bird food concoctions. There's a field guide, binoculars, colorful library books, and a biography about John James Audubon. His book, *Birds of America*, reveals hundreds of beautiful paintings. Ooh . . . there's also a book that will teach you how to draw birds and a blank journal in which to record the many species you'll discover while on a field trip. Alongside those are a documentary, a movie, and a CD that will help you identify birds by their songs. There's also a Bible in which you'll discover God's careful attention to detail when creating birds. Yikes . . . there are even owl pellets you'll apparently dissect using rubber gloves and tweezers in order to determine its last victim!

If you were a child again, which class would you choose? ■

**Sharon Gibson** is the founder of Homeschool Legacy and author of *Once-a-Week Unit Studies*. A seventeen-year homeschool veteran Sharon enjoys sharing her joy of homeschooling with others. A firm believer that learning can and should be fun, she educated her sons using the unit study approach. Both sons went on to earn college degrees and are now happily employed in God career directed paths for their lives. It was, in fact, Sharon's sons who encouraged her to create *Once-a-Week Unit Studies*, so that others could enjoy learning and homeschooling as much as they had. For more information: <http://homeschoollegacy.com/>

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The advertisement features a circular logo on the left with a red apple and the text "HOME SCHOOL FOUNDATION" and "AMBASSADORS". To the right, the text reads "Many hands making a difference in your homeschool community." Below this is a photograph of four diverse children holding hands on a grassy hill under a blue sky. At the bottom, text states "HSF Ambassadors help families homeschool through hard times. To learn more, visit [www.homeschoolfoundation.org/volunteer](http://www.homeschoolfoundation.org/volunteer)." The footer includes logos for the Home School Foundation, ECFA (Enhancing Christian Family Education), CFC (#10535), and HSLDA.

# The SUFFOCATING EMBRACE of the STATE

—Debi Ketron



**During the 2017 Indiana legislative session,** there were two Education Savings Account (ESA) or Education Options Account bills introduced. If you are not familiar with state ESAs, they are a type of state taxpayer-funded voucher. IAHE is concerned that home schools in Indiana, which are classified as private schools, are at risk of losing their liberty if they would receive government funding as the lines are blurred between public and private. As IAHE researched this issue, we noticed quotes that said there is a desire to build a new public school system that would include private schools, such as this one, by long-time school choice advocates:

“Any private schools that do participate will thereby become public schools, as such schools are defined under the new system.” [1]

Indiana’s 2017 House ESA bill, known as HB 1591, would have drawn home educators into the publicly funded mix of educational choices. The House author, Representative Jim Lucas, tried to reassure the homeschool community his bill would do no harm since his bill included “protective language.” IAHE compared the language in HB 1591 to the protective language used for vouchers, and it was the same. Here is the “protective language” used for vouchers:

## **IC 20-51-4 Chapter 4. Choice Scholarship** **IC 20-51-4-1 Autonomy of nonpublic schools; curriculum**

Sec. 1. (a) Except as provided under subsections (b) through (h), it is the intent of the general assembly to honor the autonomy of nonpublic schools that choose to become eligible schools under this chapter. A nonpublic eligible school is not an agent of the state or federal government, and therefore:



(1) the department or any other state agency may not in any way regulate the educational program of a nonpublic eligible school that accepts a choice scholarship under this chapter, including the regulation of curriculum content, religious instruction or activities, classroom teaching, teacher and staff hiring requirements, and other activities carried out by the eligible school;

(2) the creation of the choice scholarship program does not expand the regulatory authority of the state, the state's officers, or a school corporation to impose additional regulation of nonpublic schools **beyond those necessary to enforce the requirements of the choice scholarship program in place on July 1, 2011;** and

(3) a nonpublic eligible school shall be given the freedom to provide for the educational needs of students without governmental control.

On its face, it doesn't sound too bad, does it? IAHE Action decided to ask parents whose children were in voucher-accepting schools to learn their first-hand experience. They felt the "protective language" still has negative effects on their schools that you may read more about on the IAHE Action blog. [2] According to the EdChoice publication, The ABCs of School Choice, these are the requirements for Indiana voucher schools:

#### IC 20-51-1-4

- **Be accredited** by either the state board or a national or regional accreditation agency that is recognized by the state board.
- Comply with health and safety codes
- **Must not discriminate** on the basis of race, color, or national origin\*
- **Conduct criminal background checks** on employees
- **Administer the Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress (ISTEP) program and report to the state data for A-F ratings including ISTEP scores and graduation rates**

To remain eligible to accept new scholarship students, a school must not be rated as D or F for two or more consecutive years

- **Must grant the state full access to its premises for observing classroom instruction and reviewing any classroom instructional materials and curriculum**
- Provide civic and character education and display related historical documents [3]

*\* There has been a discussion from a Congresswoman about an Indiana Christian voucher-accepting school and a recent effort in Nevada to broaden this to include gender.*

If these are the requirements for private schools to receive voucher students, homeschoolers should expect similar requirements since Indiana classifies home schools as private schools. Strangely enough, few requirements were included in the text of HB 1591. Although it was not included in the language of the bill except as "rules and regulations," the House author of HB 1591 stated there

"Any private schools...  
will thereby become  
public schools, as such  
schools are defined under  
the new system."

Let's continue with what we know works and not be seduced by offers of tax dollars with government strings attached. Homeschool liberty is at stake.

will be “assessments to make sure the parent is giving taxpayers their money's worth.” What happens if the State decides they are not “getting their money's worth?” We do not know because the Code has not yet been written.

Remember, **assessments drive instruction and curriculum choices in order to do well on the high-stakes assessments.** Catholic school parents have shared they have seen many changes at their school including using Common Core curriculum in order to do well on the assessments. Did the State say they must use Common Core curriculum? No, but they feel nudged in that direction in order to perform well on the state aligned tests. [4]

The General Assembly changes the law every year. Many times they use incrementalism to accomplish unpopular agenda items. This means they pass a bill that seems good at first, and then each year, more regulations are added. This is what happened with vouchers until Indiana received an F rating on the freedom scale from the Education Freedom Watch Private School Choice Freedom Grading Scale Table because “private” voucher schools must administer the state assessment to all of its students (even those who did not receive vouchers) and collect the data. [5]

Where are we headed? Why would anyone desire a blurring between public and private? This quote from the Hoover Institution ties the current nationalized educational landscape of Common Core and School Choice together:

**“A parallel shift in state finance systems toward fully portable “weighted student funding” should be combined with strong performance incentives for schools and pupils alike.**

**States should also rewrite their compulsory attendance laws to define “school” more flexibly, such that students may satisfy the statute in various settings. (There is precedent for this in the exemptions already given to homeschoolers.) The state's principal interest should shift from attendance to academic achievement.**

**As that policy transformation occurs, an authorizing body is needed to approve and monitor schools and other education providers (HB 1591 included parents as providers), but this responsibility need not be confined to traditional public school systems.** They ought not to function as both service providers and regulators of their competitors. Instead, **independent sponsorship entities—perhaps operating on**

**a multistate or nationwide basis—should become viable alternatives.**

Also needed are **independent audit-and-data units responsible for honest reporting on student, school, and district performance across multiple variables:** academic, financial, and so on. These, in turn, should be **accountable to governors or state auditors rather than education departments; this work, too, might be outsourced to multistate or national bodies.**

**A spine of national standards, tests, and core curricula is needed to hold all this together, furnishing common goals, metrics, and benchmarks against which the many diverse providers can be tracked and their performance compared across the entire nation and aligned with similar international measures.**

The future, in other words, need not result from an extrapolation of present-day trends. It could—and in this realm should—be different and better. But **that's not likely to occur spontaneously.** [6]”

The Hoover Institution quote should be very troubling to homeschoolers. Homeschool parents, seek to facilitate the **equivalent education** of their individual students instead of focusing on “achievement” as compared to other students in a traditional school; therefore, enabling the homeschool child to become a fully functioning member of society and not a burden to their family or the state. In homeschooling, “education” may look different for different children and different families at different ending times but it is the parent and not the state that is ultimately responsible for the education of the child. This is why direct government funding of a child's education outside of the public school is hazardous to our liberty!

Homeschoolers left the public school system for many reasons such as the curriculum, the testing, or the data collection. Do you want to risk getting sucked back into the public system with state ESAs? Parents, you have been doing an excellent job of teaching your children without government assistance. Let's continue with what we know works and not be seduced by offers of tax dollars with government strings attached. Homeschool liberty is at stake.



**DEBI KETRONE** and her husband graduated four children from their home school. They were involved in homeschool leadership in Dearborn County, IN for many years. She was a former IAHE Region 8 Representative with her husband Phil, and currently serves as the IAHE Director of Government Affairs and on the Board of Directors for Indiana Association of Home Educators (IAHE) and IAHE Action.

[1] John E. Chubb, Terry M. Moe. *Politics, Markets, and America's Schools*. Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institute, 1990: p. 219.

[2] <http://iaheaction.net/parental-observations-regarding-their-voucher-accepting-school/>

[3] <https://www.edchoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/The-ABCs-of-School-Choice-1.pdf>

[4] <http://iaheaction.net/parental-observations-regarding-their-voucher-accepting-school/>

[5] <http://edlibertywatch.org/2012/10/education-liberty-watch-private-school-choice-freedom-grading-scale/>

[6] [http://www.hoover.org/sites/default/files/pages/docs/ae2030\\_book.pdf](http://www.hoover.org/sites/default/files/pages/docs/ae2030_book.pdf)

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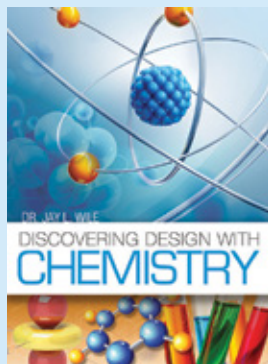
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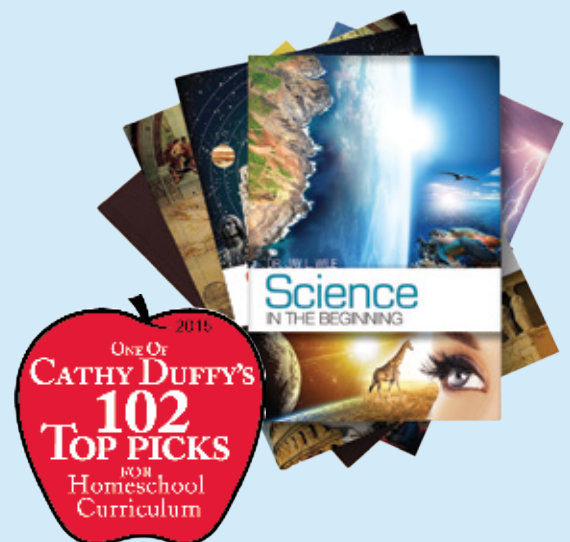
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# I Don't Remember

*By Dianne Craft, MA, CNHP*

**One of the most puzzling situations** a mother finds herself in is when she has a child who can read the words in a book, but cannot answer the questions or tell her what has just been read. These moms frequently hear the phrase, “I don’t remember,” when queried about the reading material.

When working with bright, hardworking 4th through 8th graders in my reading class, I often had students who were experiencing this particular reading difficulty.

I realized that these students were not proficient at converting the words they were reading into a “movie” in their head, as the rest of us do when we read. They were merely doing “word calling” much of the time. I found that “movie making” was a skill that could be developed in them, using an easy fifteen-minute a day exercise. This exercise did not involve paper or pencil, but only the use of their brain. “Word calling” is a left-brain auditory task, while creating a picture or movie of those words is the responsibility of the right brain hemisphere. I merely showed them how to create a seamless flow of words to pictures as they were reading. You can do this at home, very easily.

## **Converting Words to Pictures**

When a child or teenager regularly reads a passage well, but “can’t remember what is said,” we know that he is using an inefficient strategy for comprehension. He often is trying to remember the exact words he read, rather than converting the words into pictures. Whether he is reading for recreation or information, he must change the words he reads into images in his mind. The more these images involve the senses (sight, sound, smell, feel), the greater will be the comprehension of the passage.

## **Daily Training Sessions**

The following steps can be used with a student to develop his ability to change the words he hears or reads into pictures for good comprehension. You will be surprised how fast his comprehension skills will improve after just a few weeks of these “training sessions.”

This method works well with one child or a group of children or teenagers.

## Step 1: Parent/Teacher Reads A Passage Aloud

Choose material to read to the child that is interesting and very descriptive. Standing in front of him as you read to him, have the child sit upright and keep his eyes upward, creating a “movie” in his mind. You can pretend that you are looking at the projection screen in a movie theatre to further aid him in his “movie making.” Read a sentence or two aloud. Then ask him a few questions until you are sure he is seeing the pictures of the words you read, in detail.

For example, this is how your training session might look if you are reading aloud a passage about a beaver. Your first sentence you read may be, “The beaver is the largest rodent in North America.” Stop reading, and point to the imaginary screen, and say, “On our screen, let’s draw a quick sketch of North America. Now put the beaver on that map.” Your next sentence in this passage will read, “An adult beaver weighs from 35-70 pounds.” Stop reading and point up to the imaginary screen and say, “Now, use the ‘zoom lens’ of your brain camera and write ‘35-70’ on the beaver’s coat. Let’s use white paint to do this. Is your paint dripping? Oh well, he’ll wash it off soon.” The next sentence in the text will be, “Because of its large lungs, a beaver can remain submerged in water for fifteen minutes.” Stop reading and look up at the screen and help the child see this in his head by saying, “Now we need to change our scene. Let’s make a picture of a pond, with beavers around it. Do you see it on your screen? Now have one of the beavers slip into the pond. See him down on the bottom of the pond. Picture a large clock next to him. Have the hands of the clock move from twelve o’clock to twelve fifteen.”

As you do this training, instruct your child how to “move” his pictures and “freeze” them when he wants to notice something. You both will have great fun with this!

When you get to the end of a passage you’re reading, instruct your child to “rewind” the movie and answer some questions about the passage. As you ask the questions, direct his gaze upward as he reviews his “movie” for the answers. This is the exciting part. Your child will be amazed at how easy it is to answer the questions.

## Step 2: Parent/Teacher Reads Aloud to You

After your child has demonstrated proficiency in converting words to pictures as he hears them, he is ready to read the words himself while creating his “movie.” Select a reading passage that is easy for him to read so that he can concentrate on making pictures rather than sounding out new words. Repeat the process you used before, stopping him after he has read a sentence or two, to ask him some questions about his “movie.” Direct his gaze upward to see what he just read. Be sure he gives you detailed pictures. As this becomes easier and more accurate for him, you can increase the number of sentences he reads before you ask questions.

## Step 3: The Student Reads Silently

When your child is successfully reading aloud while making good pictures in his mind, you can have him read a passage silently, asking him to stop every few lines or so, and asking him to tell you about the pictures he has made. If the pictures are detailed and accurate, you can have him read to the end of the passage uninterrupted. At the end of the reading, have him “rewind” his film and tell you all that he has read. You will be surprised at the things he remembers! His “words to pictures” process will soon become automatic. The upward eye movement will soon be unnecessary for the storage and retrieval of reading material.

Remember:

**No pictures = No answers**  
**Few pictures = Few answers**  
**Great pictures = Great answers**

This strategy is simple, but very effective. Expect to see great changes in the comprehension and retention of reading material in your children. ■



**Dianne Craft** has a Master's Degree in Elementary and Special Education and is a Certified Natural Health Professional. She is president of Child Diagnostics, Inc. She has 25 years experience teaching bright, hardworking children and teens who have to work too hard to learn. For many other memory enhancing techniques, read her other articles and visit her website. Dianne's Right Brain Reading Program, Spelling, and Math products have helped thousands of children. Download free Daily Lesson Plans using alternative teaching strategies. You can also watch Dianne's YouTube clips for learning tips. [www.diannecraft.org](http://www.diannecraft.org)





In 2010, I asked a Division I football coach what a homeschooler needed to do to be recruited onto the team, and he said, “Ask your homeschooling friends what they did.” I retorted, “I don’t know Tim Tebow’s mom.” He was the only homeschooled collegiate athlete I had ever heard of. Now, seven years later, the times have changed, and there are homeschooled athletes at colleges all over the country. Justin Jackson just led North Carolina to a NCAA Men’s Basketball National Championship. Did I mention he was homeschooled?

Do you have a student who wants to compete at the next level? There are a number of steps you must take. Our children do not have guidance counselors to help them navigate this complex process. We as parents must do that. It is an achievable goal, but you must be willing to research and put effort into making it happen.

#### The first step is to count the costs.

Ask your athlete if he understands the sacrifices it will take to compete at the college level. He will sacrifice mentally, physically, spiritually, and socially. I believe the sacrifice is worth it, but you must gauge if your student will proceed through. I have seen many students start down the path only to balk at the end of it and not show up on campus the first week of practice.

#### The next step is to determine where your athlete wants to go to school.

There are 2,000 college athletic programs across the country. To whittle it down, you must take the top 3 or 4 factors into account that define your value system. For our family, we are ideologues: we homeschool for ideological purposes, and this does not end at higher education. We also take distance into account. We wish to see our athlete compete, so we wanted a

college that was within reasonable driving distance. Most importantly, your student will be getting a degree. The college must offer an area of study that your child wishes to pursue. Remember: he will be going to class. If you do not agree with what he will be taught, choose somewhere else. The competition for students is fierce. The end goal is a college degree; athletics is just one way to get there. Don’t lose sight of the ultimate goal. Begin with that, and it will be easier to navigate the waters.

#### There are, generally, two major college athletic associations: the NCAA and the NAIA.

Each association has divisions. The NCAA has three divisions known as D1 (Division I), D2, and D3. NAIA has only D1 and D2 divisions. There are multiple tiers within them as well. The largest schools are Division 1 and they must offer most of the 24 sports. They offer full scholarships. Division 2 offers a limited number of full scholarships and some partial scholarships. Division 3 offers scholarships based on need or academics but not athletic participation.

"Ask your homeschooling friends what they did."

I retorted,

"I don't know Tim Tebow's mom."

**Your research and planning should ideally begin during the student's sophomore year.** I have seen it successfully navigated beginning later, but waiting will limit your options. As with anything, the more preparation and research that you do, the more smoothly things will proceed.

**Both athletic associations have rules that govern the recruiting process.** The NCAA rules are strict, especially so regarding men's football and basketball. If that is your son's sport, you should do more research. After all, you wouldn't want your son to lose his Heisman because you didn't follow the rules.

Once you have determined where your athlete may like to attend college, **the next step is to visit the campus.** It is imperative that you ask the admissions office to set up an athlete visit so that you can tour the facilities and, most importantly, meet the coach. The coach will have a profound effect on your child's life. If you think he is a foul-mouthed tyrant who will make your child's life miserable, now is the time to found out, not after you have committed to his program. I entered each meeting armed with a list of questions. My attitude is that I am loaning my child, whom I have invested my life in, to this coach and he should display positive principles in dealing with his athletes. Programs run from the top down. Be wary of choosing a coach solely on his win-loss record. If he is too good, he probably will be leaving for the next higher division sometime soon. Ask about what positions he needs, and how much playing time your student can expect.

**Your student may be "red-shirted" his first year.** This means that he may practice with the team, but be ineligible to play games his first year. This is something that you should discuss with the coach at your initial meeting. There are pros and cons to this. It may give your student another year to grow, develop, and acclimate to college life. But, it must be weighed with the fact that it could also take your student another year to graduate.

**It is also imperative to meet with the other players.** Our sons took advantage of the stay overnight with a team member options

the schools provide. This gives your athlete a feel for the team with which he will be spending a great amount of time. He can also ask candid questions about the team and see if it is a good fit for him. We also watched games and practices. If the team is playing an away game near to your home, you can call and ask the athletic department for complimentary tickets to see the game and meet the players before or after the game. Usually, smaller schools are more than happy to recruit your student this way.

**The NCAA rules regarding this varies depending on the sport.** If you have a swimmer, it will look different than if you have a chess player (yes, there are college scholarships for tournament chess players.)

**In general, you may contact the school whenever you wish.** But according to NCAA rules, the coach may only contact the student during certain times of the year. If you are not hearing back from him, it may be during these "black-out" times. Be persistent. The assistant coach in most programs will be the main recruiter. You may have initial contact with him but meet the Head Coach personally.

**One thing that coaches like to see is film.** Begin filming your student during their sophomore year. Make a highlight film, but also send full games. They do watch these. Incidentally, our son's school adopted one of the plays on his highlight film that we sent in during the recruitment time.

**If you are in a sport that values stats, send those in.** Swimming and track do not want to see your child compete, but they do want to know how fast they can make to the finish line. If those numbers are within a certain parameter, you will get their attention.

At the beginning of your child's junior year, **he must fill out the recruiting form for the NCAA or NAIA.** If you are unsure, fill out both. Here is a caveat: I filled out the form for my older son while he sat on the couch and played the guitar. This was a huge



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## HOME SCHOOL TIME OUT FOR LAUGHTER

FAMILY MAN | todd wilson



mistake. He got to school and did not know how to navigate their website. For my next son, I refused to fill it out and demanded that he do it. He ignored me, which meant that when he got to school he had to miss his first collegiate game due to not filling out the required form. These take a long time to fill out, so go to the websites—they will walk you through it.

When filling out these forms, you will need two items in particular which are special requirements for home educators. **You will need a regimented transcript.** By regimented, I mean they will only take a transcript that adheres to their template. The classes must be listed as ones they recognize. You cannot list “Traveled for a month to India” as a class. It has to be something their system will accept as a class.

**The next item is a booklist.** You must send them a list of all the books you used for all their classes from Freshman-Senior. I had to do quite a bit of research and catch-up myself to fill this requirement. If you think there's an outside chance of this, start your freshman year of high school. It will make it easier later.

**Academics are key.** Honestly assign grades to your student. It is imperative that he takes the SAT or ACT. If you are in doubt, take both. Whichever you take, take it twice. Take it the first time in the spring of your junior year. (If it is a spring sport, like baseball, and every Saturday is booked, then take it in the winter of your Junior year.) A program may only consider your student if his score is within the score scope that is dictated by the NCAA or NAIA.

In the off-season after your child's freshman, sophomore and junior years, **look into camps offered near your home.** The coaches have a network and like to look at talent that is “all in one place.” This is how my football son was recruited. Each sport has its own tournaments or meets for this purpose. Which leads me to my next point. Get the backing of your high school coach. He is invaluable as a reference. Ask him to call the coach of the college. Also ask him to be frank about the talent of your athlete. If your child needs to work on some things, start now.

As home educators, we bring a unique perspective to the realm of sports. Our athletes are usually academically ahead of the game. And socially versatile (remember being asked about socialization? This is where they will stand out.) A coach does not want a player that he has to bail out of the local jail.

Collegiate athletics have been a great blessing to our family. During college, the athlete must invest a large amount of time in the sport, and it takes quite a bit of determination. Your athlete must have the right temperament and garner the study skills to pilot their way through 4 years of school. However, it has been a productive method to help them fund their college education. ■



**Robyn Moore** is the wife of Albert, mother of nine, has graduated five from homeschool, and has been to way too many ballgames.

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- Christian business owners from various fields offering advice and pointers related to Goal Setting, Interviewing, How to Get Started, First Step, etc.
- Planting seeds of serious thinking about future plans within the minds of current home school students.

## SPEAKERS



### Sen. Dennis Kruse

Sen. Kruse is a Christian and along with his wife they home educated their children. He is an auctioneer who was a founder of what became Kruse International. Sen. Kruse was an Indiana State Representative from 1989 to 2004, and is a current Indiana State Senator

for the 14th District. He is the chairman of the Education & Career Development Committee, and is a member of the Agriculture & Small Business, Pensions & Labor, and Utilities & Technology Committees.



### Phil Ping

Mr. Ping is first and foremost a follower of Jesus Christ. In addition to his experience in the US Army Reserves as a helicopter mechanic while also working for a local Chrysler Automotive Foundry he started from his own home what is now the largest locally owned tree care

company in the Indianapolis area. Mr. Ping has served on the Indianapolis/Marion County Tree Board since its inception in 2007 and also possesses a Bachelor's Degree in Theology.

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