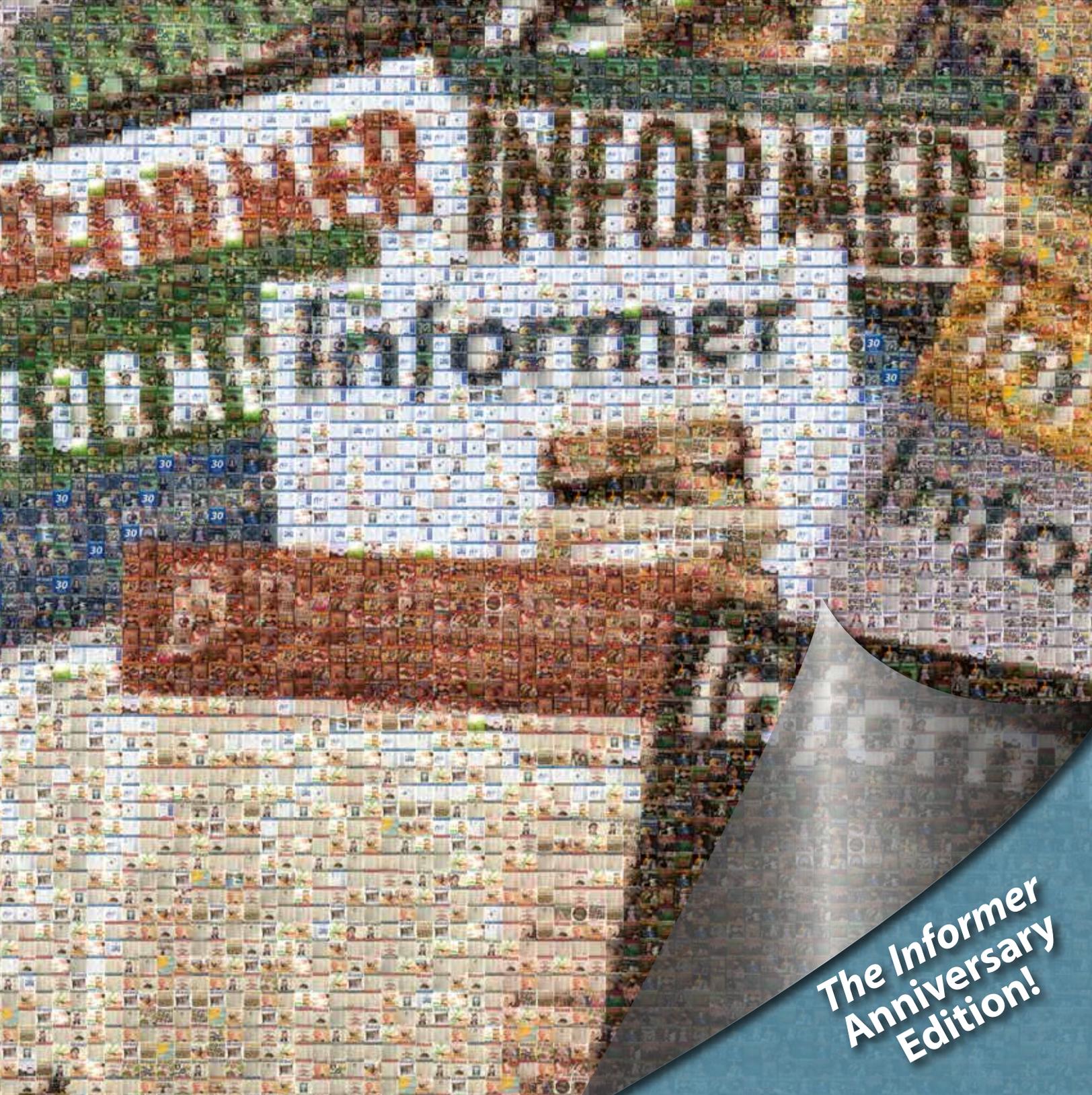


The **Informer**

Fall 2016

a publication of the Indiana Association of Home Educators



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Anniversary
Edition!**

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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 celebrated a birthday and found yourself wondering if that was really your TRUE age? Surely someone made a math error along the way.

While errors like that rarely happen in real life, they do happen in volunteer driven organizations. As we moved through 2016, we realized that The Informer is 20 years old this fall!

Since the early days of the IAHE, we have produced newsletters for homeschooling families. For many years the newsletter was published as a part of one of the first national magazines on homeschooling, The Teaching Home. Known as The Hoosier Home, the IAHE created a four page insert to keep families up to date on local news and events here in Indiana.

In the fall of 1996 that all changed with the publication of the very first "The IAHE Informer." (Renamed The Informer in 2013.) Original subscriptions were sold for \$10 a year. Today, The Informer is mailed to around 8,000 households, libraries, and businesses free of charge.

What a joy it has been for me to spend time this summer reviewing 20 years of our history and service through each issue of the magazine!

The IAHE has been blessed with so many dedicated volunteers over the years: talented writers, editors, photographers, board members, and regional representatives. Their willingness to serve families through their contributions to this magazine is a legacy that we strive to live up to going forward. We are grateful to each individual that has been a part of making that happen.

We've pulled just a handful of articles from the past in celebration of this important milestone. Their words are just as relevant today as when they were each published.

Executive Director
Managing Editor

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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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IAHE Regional Representative Map



To reach your Regional Representative please call **317-467-6244** and dial your Region 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.

Region 1

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Region 2

Kris & Stephanie Reckers
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Region 3

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Music Minute for Kids

Shhhhhh!

Shhhhhh! LISTEN! What do you hear?

All around us is music. Sometimes it's not meant initially to be musical, but to our ears it is. Actually, to listen means to pay attention to sounds.

Hearing is not the same as listening. You "hear" the train going down the track, but as you "listen" you can put some rhythms or a melody to the clacking sound that perhaps others just "hear."

As you play your instrument, are you listening for the tone? Are you getting the best sound you can from it? Are you listening for pitch? If you play piano, are you listening for the character of the sound you're producing? If the piece you're playing is a march, does it create a crisp, vibrant invitation to the listener that makes him feel like getting in step? Is that a contrast to what a lullaby would sound like? Whatever your instrument and whatever the piece, are you "making your case" with the music? The audience won't know the technique of how you're thinking and working, but they'll like what they hear and may even move from just "hearing" to "listening" along with you. ■

Else M. Perdicaris, M.M.
"I Can Play! Thanks, Mom!"
www.pixiepianist.com



Indiana's School to PRISON PIPELINE

— Debi Ketron



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In February 2016, during a hearing for a bill in the House Education Committee, IAHE learned the state of Indiana has a serious problem with some public school principals giving students who should have been expelled or referred to homebound education the option of “homeschooling.” Unfortunately, it appears that education at home never took place for these public school dropouts. These teens have committed crimes and landed in the court system. These public school dropouts have given Indiana homeschoolers a black eye even though they were not homeschoolers since education in the home had not taken place.

Along a similar vein we had suspected there was a problem, IAHE has received calls from families and learned the school has reported enrollment for their child as a “homeschooler.” As IAHE counseled a number of these families, these families decided they did not want to shoulder the responsibility required for home education. IAHE would then refer these families back to their school or to the Indiana Department of Education for other options.

That same month, unbeknownst to IAHE, the Indiana Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights met to discuss the School to Prison Pipeline in Indiana. Fortunately, a special needs advocate was there to testify, and she expressed concern to IAHE Action about the forthcoming report that will be the result of this hearing. We expect to know the recommendations later this year.

IAHE contacted the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights and expressed concern about the hearing and the fact that disparaging information about home education was discussed. The USCCR sent us the 600+ page transcript from the hearing. The parts that relate to home education in Indiana may be read here: <http://www.iaheaction.net/blog>

We were very troubled to read Indiana home education laws disparaged and to read home education in Indiana portrayed as the “Wild West.” There was a great amount of inaccurate information from the February hearing that IAHE’s sister organization, IAHE Action felt needed to be accurately addressed on their blog.

IAHE informed Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA), National Black Home Educators (NBHE), and Nevada Homeschool Network (NHN) of this hearing and coordinated the response. Since many of the topics in the hearing related to ways IAHE has been serving Indiana homeschool families since 1983, IAHE submitted testimony regarding what we are observing and how we have been serving for the past 33 years. HSLDA was asked to submit testimony to defend Indiana Code that relates to home education. NBHE was asked to submit testimony to demonstrate how minority home educators are doing in their home schools. There was concern that minorities may receive greater scrutiny when they transfer their students to home education due to this public school issue that has disproportionately impacted minority families. Home education in Nevada was also mentioned in the transcript, so their state homeschool lobbying organization, NHN, was asked to submit testimony to clarify the misinformation from the original hearing. Debi Ketron, IAHE Director of Government Affairs, was able to provide public comment.

The claim presented during the hearing is that there is a “loophole” leading dropouts into the prison system. We disagree. **This is a public school problem not a home school problem.** Principals refer families who are not a good fit to home education. Home education takes discipline and commitment to continue when the days are hard. If a parent is unavailable

or unwilling to make the sacrifice, or if the student is unruly, belligerent, and does not respect authority, home education is impossible. Families in these situations should not be referred to home education. It needs to be a decision by the parent where they feel called to homeschool, not being pushed into homeschooling to avoid expulsion.

Public schools are abusing our home education statutes to pad their dropout rate and thus protect their A-F grade. This abuse does not mean Indiana home educators should be penalized due to these public school dropouts. The report from the Indiana Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights should be available this summer. IAHE has been meeting with the Indiana General Assembly to discuss correcting this issue without harming our homeschool liberty. Stay alert in the event we notify you to act to help protect your Indiana home education rights. ■



DEBI KETRON 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.

ONLINE ANIMATION AND DRAWING CLASSES FOR AGES 11 TO 18

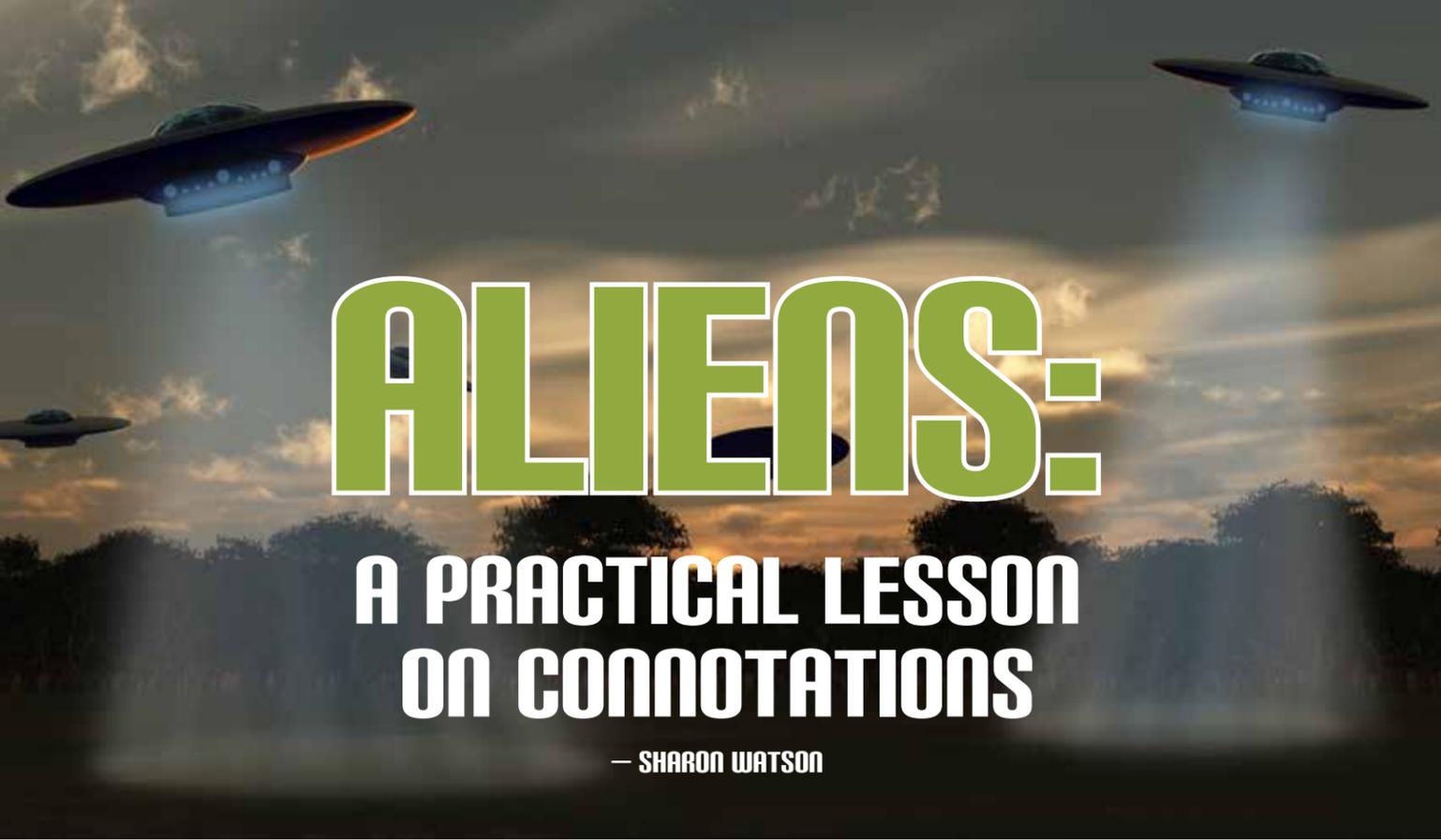
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STEPHANIE S. - PARENT

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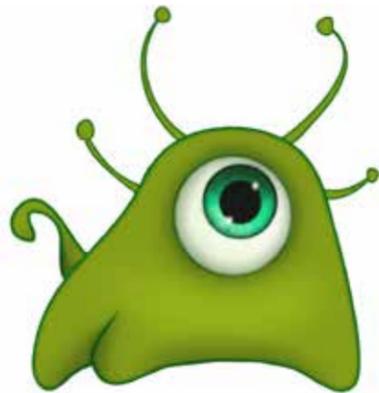
ALIENS:

A PRACTICAL LESSON ON CONNOTATIONS

— SHARON WATSON

The Colorado House of Representatives recently voted to remove the words “illegal alien” from their state laws and substitute them with “undocumented immigrant” or “foreign national.”

Stephen Lebsack, the Democratic Representative behind the bill, says that “aliens are from other planets. We should not be referring to human beings as aliens,” according to the Denver Post. The radio station K99 in Colorado quotes him as saying that the term “illegal alien” is “outdated and hurtful language.”



In other news, the United States Justice Department is no longer using the terms “felon” and “convict” for people who have been convicted of crimes. They prefer to use the term “person who committed a crime” or “individual who was incarcerated,” according to a report in washingtontimes.com, since they believe the stigma of those former terms will keep criminals from becoming contributing members of society.

Here is my point (yes, I have one): Words trigger reactions because of their connotations. Connotations go beyond the dictionary definition. They are about how people feel about a word or phrase, how they react to it, and what sort of image it conjures up in the minds of readers or audiences. Connotations are powerful.

For example, if someone “develops a plan,” people feel okay about it, but if someone “hatches a scheme,” it sounds suspicious.

Even though “plan” and “scheme” are synonyms in a thesaurus, people may react negatively to “scheme” because of its connotation.

When a word’s connotation is negative, culture has a tendency to create a nicer-sounding term in its place. Take, for instance, the word “sin,” which has been replaced with more palatable words: problems, issues, difficulties, and shortcomings—all of which have softer, more gentle meanings than the hard-hitting word “sin.” When you change a word, you also change the concept.

Changing a negative term for a feel-good one gets you a euphemism. For example, did you tell a lie, or did you simply relate a divergent reality?

Words mean something. They can be loaded (positive or negative) or neutral. Be aware of the terms and their meanings that people use as they debate issues. Those who define the language generally will win the arguments.

Use any of these five writing activities with your students to give them a better idea of connotations.

1. A NEW TERM

In a letter to the Denver Post editor, Steve McCulloch proposes the term “illegal resident” because it seems more precise to him than other terms. What do you think of his proposal? If you were to change the term “illegal alien” to something else, what term would you choose? Defend your choice in a paragraph.

2. CHARACTERIZE A PERSON

Women who stayed at home instead of entering the workforce were called “housewives,” then “homemakers,” and now “stay-at-home moms.” Each term brings with it a subtle change in meaning and a feeling for the person and her worth.

Create two new terms for a check-out clerk. The first term will have a positive connotation. The second term will have a negative connotation. Now do the same thing for a sports referee or umpire.

3. ALIEN

The word “alien” has had many meanings throughout the years, as the above quote from Stephen Lebsack shows. Research the meanings by looking them up in very old dictionaries (print or online versions) and in more recent dictionaries. Draw some conclusions about your findings and then write up your findings and conclusions.

4. SCHEME OR PLAN?

Arrange the following words from negative to positive connotation: plan, scheme, idea, strategy, ploy, plot, stratagem, tactic, wiles.

There is no clear-cut, right way to line up those words. It’s all about how YOU feel about them that counts in this exercise.

5. WE ARE ALIENS?

The Bible says we are aliens in a foreign land. In the middle of the Hall of Faith (Hebrews 11), we find that those spiritual heroes understood that they “were aliens and strangers on earth.” Peter addresses his first letter to “strangers in the world” and urges us “as aliens and strangers in the worlds to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul” (1 Peter 2:11).

What does it mean to be “aliens and strangers on earth” as Christians? How does this change the way we view our lives here and conduct ourselves? Give one example of how you are an alien and stranger on earth. ■



Portions of this article were previously published on WritingWithSharonWatson.com.

Sharon Watson is a “retired” homeschool mom and the author of *Apologia’s Jump In*. She’s also the author of *The Power in Your Hands: Writing Nonfiction in High School, 2nd Edition*, in which you’ll find a new grading grid for every assigned essay and report. Get free writing lessons by subscribing to WritingWithSharonWatson.com. Photo by Esther Moulder of ClickPhotography.biz.

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— Ephesians 2:10



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All convention proceeds are used to fund the IAHE's ministry to support & promote home education in Indiana all year long. Your convention dollars stay in Indiana and work to protect homeschool freedom.

REGISTRATION

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At-the-Door March 24 & 25
2-day \$55 Individual | \$90 Family
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Additional guidelines and full project details will be available on our website beginning
September 1, 2016.

Submission deadline: Midnight, Tuesday, February 7, 2017.

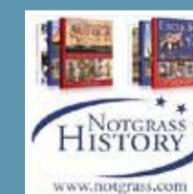
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HAPPY Anniversary ≈ to ≈ The Informer!

The Indiana Association of Home Educators is grateful to the many individuals that have volunteered their time and talents to serve Indiana homeschool families. Writers, editors, managers, designers, and advertisers. Each have been a valuable part of providing this resource for over twenty years. Many have served quietly behind the scenes without recognition. In appreciation of their work, known and unknown, we present a small sample of the many contributors that have made this magazine a success.

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| Joyce Johnson | Cindy Morris |
| Stan & Marilyn Durnell | Ronna Brown |
| Janet Willig | Inge Cannon |
| Dr. Jay Wile | Ron & Vicky Broadfield |
| Tom Clark | Sharon Watson |
| Nancy Sample | Kathleen Fowl |
| Mary Carney | Salem Stegemiller |
| Jennifer Kaufeld | Amanda Runge |
| Rick & Sherrie Payne | Jennifer Mayhill |
| Delaine Thomas | Tara Bentley |

Did you know?

The IAHE originally sold Informer subscriptions to help cover printing and mailing costs. In 1998, the board took a leap of faith and decided to offer the magazine for free to homeschool families. While advertising only helps to cover only a portion of the costs involved in providing thousands of magazines each year, we are grateful for the partnership of the many companies that have worked with us along the way. Be sure to tell them you appreciate them as well!

Are You Educated Enough to Educate Your Child?

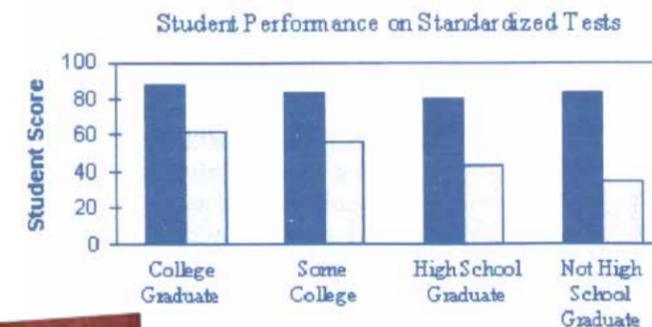
- Dr. Jay Wile

Dr. Jay Wile was one of the earliest contributors to The Informer magazine. We are grateful that he has been a part of the IAHE legacy, working with us to encourage Indiana families for so many years. While the study in this article is now 20 years old, time has continued to show that the success of home education is linked directly to the parent's involvement and personal dedication to their child's learning.



Have you ever asked yourself that question? As your student gets older and older, do you ever wonder if you are educated enough to "keep up" with your child? Can you really teach your student trigonometry, chemistry, and world history? Can you really handle teaching high school classes, or even junior high school classes, to your student? All homeschoolers ask themselves these questions. Unfortunately, they often answer them in the negative. As a result, they end up sending their children to school for their junior high or high school years. Well, now Dr. Brian Ray has shown us that despite their seeming importance, these questions are utterly irrelevant when it comes to homeschooling!

In a landmark study, Strengths of Their Own: Home Schoolers Across America, Dr. Ray reports on the results of data collected on 5,402 home schooled students during the 1994-1995 and 1995-1996 academic years. The results reaffirm the many other studies that indicate homeschooling is academically superior to both public and private schooling. The most interesting aspect of the data, however, is revealed when student performance on standardized tests is correlated with the parents' education level. Look at the following bar graph:



The black bars represent the performance of homeschooled students on a standardized basic battery test grouped by the mother's education level. The results are very similar if the data are grouped by the father's education level. Compare this to the gray bars, which represent the performance of publicly schooled students grouped by their parents' education level! What conclusions can we draw from these data? It's really quite simple. While a publicly schooled student's academic performance is directly correlated to his or her parents' education level, **a home schooled student's academic performance DOES NOT depend on his or her parents' education level!** So what's the answer to the questions you have been asking yourself? The answer is YES, you ARE educated enough to educate your child at home. The data says that everyone is!

How can we understand these data? They go just opposite of the trend that many "experts" would predict. After all, the experts say, since a homeschooled student has only his or her parents as teachers, the homeschooled student's quality of education will depend completely on the parents' education level. Publicly schooled students, however, have expert teachers. Thus, their quality of education will not be very affected by their parents' education level. Well, that sounds nice, but the data say that it is wrong! In fact, the trends indicated by the data are directly opposite what the "experts" predict.

What's the explanation, then? I think it's rather obvious. Over and over again, teachers say that in order for a student to be well educated, the parents must be involved. That seems to be just what the data are saying. For publicly schooled students, the higher the education of the parent, the more likely the parent will be heavily involved in the educational process. Thus, the increase in the scores of publicly schooled students whose parents are more highly educated is really the result of an increase in parental involvement in the educational process.

Well think a minute. What is homeschooling? It is the ULTIMATE in parental education involvement. That's why homeschoolers have the highest scores. It is also why the education level of a homeschooling parent does not affect the quality of education for the student. All homeschoolers are totally involved in the student's education. As a result, all homeschooled students excel.

In the end, then, the question should not be, "Are you educated enough to educate your child?" Instead, the proper question should be, "Am I involved enough to educate my child?" If you are homeschooling, the answer is an undeniable YES!!!!

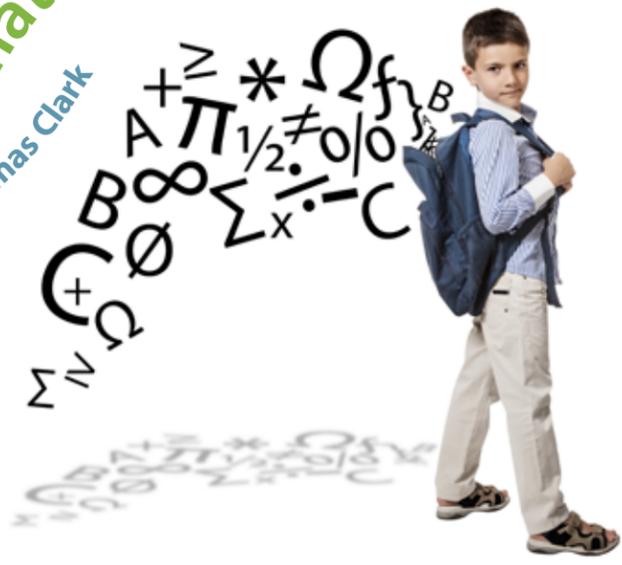


Dr. Jay L. Wile holds an earned Ph.D. in nuclear chemistry and a B.S. in chemistry, both from the University of Rochester. He has won several awards for excellence in teaching and has presented lectures on the topics of Nuclear Chemistry, Christian Apologetics, Homeschooling, and Creation vs. Evolution. He is best known for his award-winning "Exploring Creation With..." series of science textbooks. Dr. Wile and his wife of more than 25 years, Kathleen, homeschooled their daughter, Dawn, from the time they adopted her until she graduated high school. Dawn is a Butler University graduate and is currently a longhaul trucker with her husband, James. You can visit Dr. Wile on the web at <http://www.drwile.com>.



Mathematics is a Language

—Thomas Clark



The cry is heard all across the nation, and probably around the world. You will hear it in every math classroom, every tutoring session, and every home-school class. It generally begins in August or September, continues all through the school year, and frustrates students, parents, and instructors alike. “But what do they want us to do?” “Do we just work them?” “I don’t understand the instructions.” “This stuff is Greek to me!” Why is it that students have such difficulty comprehending the directions for sets of problems in mathematics texts?

Several possible reasons surface immediately. The technical vocabulary of the mathematics being taught may be too sophisticated or “polysyllabic.” The child may not understand the “examples on the board” or those in the book. The interchangeability of terms may confuse the child. The child may be prejudging on the basis of past experience (or failure) with laboriously involved explanations for sets of problems.

There may be other factors as well, but one element seems to be present throughout. The student doesn’t understand (and probably has never been exposed to) the structure and syntax of the language of mathematics. It can be demonstrated very quickly and easily that there is a “method” in the supposed madness of the symbolism of math. Personally, I have found that even relatively young students are entirely capable of grasping the language of mathematics at least as efficiently as the written form of their spoken language. In fact, what seems at first to be just a jumble of symbols, turns out to be a much more manageable group of expressions than the myriad of combinations at our disposal in the English language. At the risk of oversimplifying the issue, let me share with you the general nature of that structure. Of course, you will have to decide just which elements and how much exposure your child can handle at this point in time. At the very least, you, personally, should be able to view the “jargon” of the subject with more confidence, and less apprehension, thereby making you a better instructor of the subject.

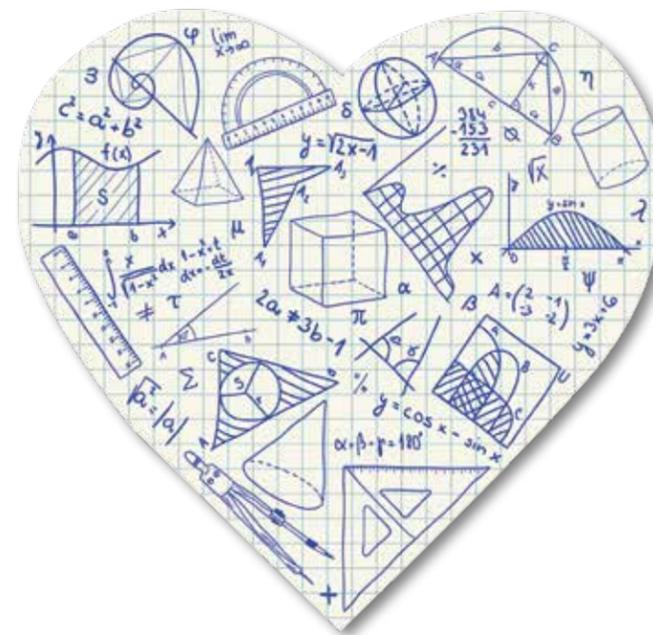
The first thing we should notice about mathematics is that there do exist, in fact, MATHEMATICAL PARTS OF SPEECH. In the English language, it has traditionally been accepted that there are eight basic parts of speech. In mathematics, however, there are only five, and several of them correspond nicely to the English parts of speech. One is number symbols (the “things” of mathematics), and they parallel the nouns in our spoken language. Another is operation

symbols (the “actions” of mathematics), and these behave like the verbs in English. Of course, EVERY language has its “things” and its “actions”.

Mathematics is no different. Then there are the relation symbols which show comparisons, the grouping symbols which do exactly what their name implies, and the placeholder symbols (usually called “variables”) which signify an unspecified thing, much like a pronoun does in English. That’s it. All symbols in mathematics will fall into one of those five categories. Do you realize how comforting that realization can be to a student who perceives math symbolism as chaotic?

The next step in conquering the language of mathematics is to put the various types of symbols together in meaningful combinations. Recalling our experiences in English grammar, we remember that an expression had to include a subject and predicate to be called a sentence. Likewise, in mathematics, there are certain requirements which must be met before the expression is meaningful. Unlike English, however, there are only FOUR TYPES OF EXPRESSIONS based on the presence, or absence, of placeholder symbols and relation symbols. For example, the expression $3 + 4$ has no placeholder (so it is “closed”) and no relation (so it is only a “phrase”). In addition, there is only one thing we can do with a “closed phrase,” and that is to “evaluate” it.

Now consider the expression $3 + 4 = 7$. It does have a relation (so it is a “sentence”) but it still has no placeholder (so it is still “closed”). Further, the only thing we can do with this “closed sentence” is to tell whether it is true or false. And what about the expression $n + 5$? Since it has a placeholder, it is considered “open” for modification. Of course, it has no relation, so, as before, it must be just a “phrase”. Now, what can you do with an “open phrase”? Obviously, all we

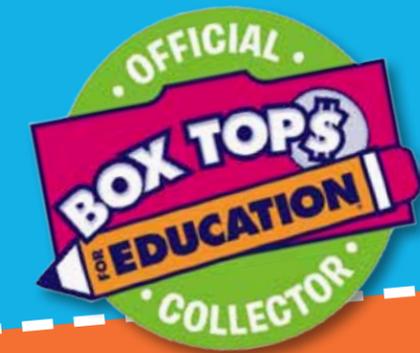


can do is to replace the placeholder with some number (making it a “closed phrase”) and then evaluate it.

Finally, look at the expression $n + 5 > 9$. It has a placeholder (making it “open”) and it also has a relation (making it a “sentence”). In addition, the only thing we can do with this “open sentence” is to substitute a number for the placeholder (making it a “closed sentence”) and then tell if it is true or false.

Again, that’s it. There are only four types of mathematical expressions, and that is all you can do with them. Check it out in the math program you are currently using. At the elementary level, there are a lot of “closed phrases” and “closed sentences”, and not so many “open” expressions. At the middle and high school level, you will find very few closed expressions and a lot more “open sentences” (often called equations and inequalities). That really is the essence of Algebra, isn’t it? Now, if you examine the “instructions” for the various sets of problems, you will find that, no matter what the wording is, you are being asked to do “the only thing you can do” with that type of mathematical expression. If we had the time, we could even carry this to a third level of language, that of “translating” back and forth between mathematics and English. The point is, if mathematics is Greek to you, you simply must learn how to “speak” the language, and that means understanding how mathematical expressions are built. Only then will you be able to concentrate on the actual development of a concept without getting bogged down in terminology. ■

 **Tom Clark** is a lifelong teacher of Mathematics and Science. He has directed his attention toward helping homeschooling parents become more effective instructors. Tom is president of VideoText Interactive, specializing in bringing the textbook to life through technology. His website is found at www.videotext.com.



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WILD AND FREE PIGS OF OKEFENOKEE SWAMP

This article first appeared in the The IAHE Informer, October/November 2002. It was accompanied by an article "The Problem With Home-based Charter Schools".

Some years ago, about 1900, an old trapper from North Dakota hitched up some horses to his Studebaker wagon, packed a few possessions—especially his traps—and drove south.

Several weeks later he stopped in a small town just north of the Okefenokee Swamp in Georgia. It was a Saturday morning—a lazy day—when he walked into the general store. Sitting around the pot-bellied stove were seven or eight of the town's local citizens.

The traveler spoke. "Gentlemen, could you direct me to the Okefenokee Swamp?" Some of the oldtimers looked at him like he was crazy. "You must be a stranger in these parts," they said. "I am. I'm from North Dakota," said the stranger.

"In the Okefenokee Swamp are thousands of wild hogs," one old man explained. "A man who goes into the swamp by himself asks to die!" He lifted up his leg. "I lost half my leg here, to the pigs of the swamp." Another old fellow said, "Look at the cuts on me; look at my arm bit off! Those pigs have been free since the Revolution, eating snakes and rooting out roots and fending for themselves for over a hundred years. They're wild and they're dangerous. You can't trap them. No man dare go into the swamp by himself." Every man nodded his head in agreement.

The old trapper said, "Thank you so much for the warning. Now could you direct me to the swamp?" They said, "Well, yeah, it's due south—straight down the road." But they begged the stranger not to go, because they knew he'd meet a terrible fate. He said, "Sell me ten sacks of corn, and help me load it in the wagon." And they did. Then the old trapper bid them farewell and drove on down the road. The townsfolk thought they'd never see him again.

Two weeks later the man came back. He pulled up to the general store, got down off the wagon, walked in and bought ten more sacks of corn. After loading it up he went back down the road toward the swamp.

Two weeks later he returned and again bought ten sacks of corn. This went on for a month. And then two months, and three. Every week or two the old trapper would come into town on a Saturday morning, load up ten sacks of corn, and drive off south into the swamp.

The stranger soon became a legend in the little village and the subject of much speculation. People wondered what kind of devil

had possessed this man, that he could go into the Okefenokee by himself and not be consumed by the wild and free hogs.

One morning the man came into town as usual. Everyone thought he wanted more corn. He got off the wagon and went into the store where the usual group of men were gathered around the stove. He took off his gloves. "Gentlemen," he said, "I need to hire about ten or fifteen wagons. I need twenty or thirty men. I have six thousand hogs out in the swamp, penned up, and they're all hungry. I've got to get them to market right away."

"You've WHAT in the swamp?" asked the storekeeper, incredulously. "I have six thousand hogs penned up. They haven't eaten for two or three days, and they'll starve if I don't get back there to feed and take care of them."

One of the oldtimers said, "You mean you've captured the wild hogs of the Okefenokee?" "That's right." "How did you do that? What did you do?" the men urged, breathlessly. One of them exclaimed, "But I lost my arm!" "I lost my brother!" cried another. "I lost my leg to those wild boars!" chimed a third.

The trapper said, "Well, the first week I went in there they were wild all right. They hid in the undergrowth and wouldn't come out. I dared not get off the wagon. So I spread corn along behind the wagon. Every day I'd spread a sack of corn. The old pigs would have nothing to do with it."

"But the younger pigs decided that it was easier to eat free corn than it was to root out roots and catch snakes. So the very young began to eat the corn first. I did this every day. Pretty soon, even the old pigs decided that it was easier to eat free corn. After all, they were all free; they were not penned up. They could run off in any direction they wanted at any time."

"The next thing was to get them used to eating in the same place all the time. So I selected a clearing, and I started putting the corn in the clearing. At first they wouldn't come to the clearing. It was too far. It was too open. It was a nuisance to them."

"But the very young decided that it was easier to take the corn in the clearing than it was to root out roots and catch their own snakes. And not long thereafter, the older pigs also decided that it was easier to come to the clearing every day."

"And so the pigs learned to come to the clearing every day to get their free corn. They could still subsidize their diet with roots and snakes and whatever else they wanted. After all, they were all free. They could run in any direction at any time. There were no bounds upon them."

"The next step was to get them used to fence posts. So I put fence posts all the way around the clearing. I put them in the underbrush so that they wouldn't get suspicious or upset. After all, they were just sticks sticking up out of the ground, like the trees and the brush. The corn was there every day. It was easy to walk in between the posts, get the corn, and walk back out."

"This went on for a week or two. Shortly they became very used to walking into the clearing, getting the free corn, and walking back out through the fence posts."

"The next step was to put one rail down at the bottom. I also left a few openings, so that the older, fatter pigs could walk through the openings and the younger pigs could easily jump over just one rail. After all, it was no real threat to their freedom or independence. They could always jump over the rail and flee in any direction at any time."

"Now I decided that I wouldn't feed them every day. I began to feed them every other day. On the days I didn't feed them the pigs still gathered in the clearing. They squealed, and they grunted, and they begged and pleaded with me to feed them. But I only fed them every other day. And I put a second rail around the posts."

"Now the pigs became more and more desperate for food. Because now they were no longer used to going out and digging their own roots and finding their own food. They now needed me. They needed my corn every other day. So I trained them that I would feed them every day if they came in through a gate. And I put up a third rail around the fence. But it was still no great threat to their freedom, because there were several gates and they could run in and out at will."

"Finally I put up the fourth rail. The I closed all the gates but one, and I fed them very, very well. Yesterday I closed the last gate. And today I need you to help me take these pigs to market."

End of story. ■

\$\$ The Price of Free Corn \$\$

The allegory of the pigs has a serious moral lesson. This story is about "free" tax money being used to bait, trap and enslave a once free and independent people. Most homeschoolers believe we could never be trapped; but the promise of vouchers, tax rebates, free curriculum or a free computer, might be all it takes to steal the freedoms we all so richly enjoy. Let us continue to be vigilant in guarding those freedoms.



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Blazing Trails:

Educational Adventures in Indiana

— Nancy Sample

For many years Nancy Sample's column Blazing Trails provided families with the very best information on educational field trips. We've updated one of our favorites based on Indiana authors. With a new version of BenHur hitting movie theatres this fall, now is the perfect time to revisit the roots of this classic piece of literature first.

Do you have a budding author in the family—or someone who hates to write? Do you and your students curl up on the couch with a good book on chilly autumn days? Have you ever read aloud "When the Frost is on the Punkin," or selections from Girl of the Limberlost or BenHur? Or do eyewitness tales from WWII fascinate you?

If you answered "yes" to any of the above, a trip to the home of a famous Hoosier author may be the key to opening the window of creativity for your students. Consider these writers.

Geneva (nicknamed Gene) Stratton Porter was a naturalist and author of novels, nature books, poetry, and children's books, including Freckles and Girl of the Limberlost. Eight of her novels were produced as motion pictures. She is also one of the world's first and best nature photographers. She used the vast, undeveloped forests and Limberlost swampland of Indiana as the source of material for her nature studies, writings and photography.

Gene Stratton Porter Historic Site, Rome City, IN

Part of the Indiana State Museum and Historic Site Corporation, this location continues Gene's legacy of conservation, lifelong learning and enjoying the beauty of the natural world around us. The site is made up of nearly 150 acres of shoreline, fields, woods and formal gardens. You can take a guided tour of Gene's beloved Cabin at Wildflower Woods or simply stroll the grounds at your leisure. www.genestrattonporter.com/

Limberlost State Historic Park, Geneva, IN

Located one block east of U.S. Highway 27 in Geneva. Swamp tours, bird sanctuary, and Porter cabin. Group tours and education outreach programs scheduled, education materials available for checkout, by calling in advance. www.indianamuseum.org/limberloststatehistoricsite

Ernie Pyle, a journalist and roving reporter for Scripps Howard news, was best known as a war correspondent—the link between the trenches and the homeland. In 1940, he went to England to report on the Battle of Britain. By 1942, he was covering America's involvement in the war. During the next three years, he traveled to North Africa, Italy, the Normandy Beaches in France, and in 1945, his last assignment—to the Pacific theater.

Ernie Pyle State Historic Site, Dana, IN

Located 1 mile north of U.S. Highway 36 on Indiana State Road 71. Group tours and education outreach programs scheduled, teachers' packets may be requested, by calling in advance. Free. Visitor Center is constructed from two authentic World War II Quonset huts and features a video theater, research library, and exhibits. www.erniepile.org/

James Whitcomb Riley, the wealthiest writer of his time, was known as "The Hoosier Poet," America's "Children's Poet," and a "Poet of the People." He wrote over 1000 poems about everyday life, everyday people, and everyday occurrences in rural nineteenth century Indiana.

James Whitcomb Riley Birthplace and Museum, Greenfield, IN

School group tours are welcome. Museum is open seasonally, visit the website for details. www.greenfieldin.org/recreation/facilities/194jameswhitcomb-rileyoldhomea_museum

James Whitcomb Riley Museum, Indianapolis, IN

The country's only lateVictorian preservation is a National Historic Landmark which offers visitors a glimpse into the life of the great Hoosier Poet. Authentic furnishings and artifacts include Mr. Riley's writing desk and his famous top hat and cane. <http://www.rileykids.org/about/rileymuseumhome>

General Lew Wallace, of Civil War fame, is best remembered as the author of BenHur A Tale of the Christ, one of the most popular novels of the nineteenth century. General Wallace was also a soldier, statesman, artist, violinist and inventor. He traveled widely, and as a prolific writer, he often drew upon his own experiences.

BenHur Museum, Crawfordsville, IN

The BenHur Museum is located in the private study of Major General Lew Wallace and contains mementos from his life, travels, and BenHur fame. Seasonal hours only, visit the website for details. www.benhur.com

If these sites get your imaginations cooking, come home and write a poem, story, or article. I wonder.... Will your home be a historic site for a famous author someday?

Happy Trails! ■

Nancy Sample and her husband, Matt, homeschooled four children through high school. Now you'll find her writing, baking, tweeting @nancysample, or updating her website: www.nancysample.com.

Tutor or Teacher

— Steve Demme

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This article originally appeared in the January 2003 issue of The Informer. The message is just as relevant today as it was then. With the growth of home education in recent years, families are faced with many curriculum options that once again place the parent in the position of having to decide what is best, Tutor or Teacher? We're excited to welcome Steve Demme back to Indiana as a Featured Speaker at the 2017 IAHE Home Educators' Convention.

In the providence of God, I was a classroom teacher before I embarked on the journey of a homeschooling Dad. God used that experience to teach me many lessons. One of the first occurred while working with students who had been absent from class for several days. I assumed that when they had missed that much class they would have difficulty in catching up to the rest of the class. But in about twenty minutes after school I was able to bring them up to speed. It wasn't that I hadn't taught much during those three days. I took pride in the fact that in my high school math class, I finished the entire book each year. To do that I had diligently followed my lesson plans and made each day count—balancing lecture time with correcting homework and class work. So I was surprised that I was able to condense three hours of classroom instruction into twenty minutes of individual instruction. The answer was because when "school" was over I ceased being a teacher and commenced my career as a tutor.

Through those early years I observed this phenomena many times. With only one student at my side I could quickly present the new material and then follow through with the practice exercises in a fraction of the time that it took me to present the identical material to an entire class. I was learning why tutoring was so effective and efficient.

As a young parent just beginning to formally teach our children "at home," this was a big encouragement. I saw that tutoring had distinct educational advantages over classroom instruction.

But over the years, God provided more insight into the distinction between a classroom teacher and a tutor who works oneonone with his students. Two statements sum up this lesson. A teacher teaches a curriculum to students. A tutor teaches students with a curriculum. Another way to state it would be: a teacher teaches textbooks to a class, whereas a tutor teaches a student with textbooks. In the first scenario, the teacher has as the goal of his instruction, to "finish the book" or accomplish the objectives as outlined by the school or school system. The material is to be presented as clearly and effectively as possible, so that hopefully the majority of the students can learn the majority of the material. This is traditionally attempted through lectures and homework, then measured by tests and papers.



WANTED!

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In the second scenario, the tutor has the same goal of imparting knowledge about a particular subject. Often they employ similar teaching strategies (usually because that is how they were taught—not because they are particularly effective) in working with their student. But instead of being objective driven, they are student driven. They move at the child's pace, rather than the textbook's lesson plan. Instead of the textbook's objective's being preeminent, the standard is how quickly the pupil is learning! As a classroom instructor, I hoped I was teaching the entire class, but in reality I knew that the smart students were often bored and the slower students were probably lost, but I was still moving on in order to finish the book.

Here is a true story to illustrate the classroom paradigm. I was conducting a math inservice training day for all the teachers in a local elementary school. During one of the breaks, I asked a sixthgrade teacher how things were going in her math class. She responded that they were having difficulty with division. My logical response was "How are their multiplication skills?" She replied "We gave up on those. It was taking too much time, and we had to finish the book, so we gave them calculators and kept moving."

Do you see the difference? A tutor moves at the child's pace and only progresses to a new topic when the previous one has been mastered. But a classroom teacher progresses at the textbook's pace. While this type of instruction goes on daily at schools, quite the opposite is occurring in home education programs.

Here is another account to illustrate the homeschool paradigm. While living in Massachusetts we had periodic evaluations with the local school district. On one such occasion I was asked by the principal who was supervising our homeschool program, what kind of grades my kids received. I replied, "100s." His face indicated such consternation it was almost comical. I explained that we didn't move to new material until what we were studying was learned to our satisfaction. This was so novel that after I left his office, I still don't think he knew what I was talking about.

I am often asked about the training that education majors receive in college and whether it is needful for home instruction. I tell home educators that classroom teachers require specific training for managing 2030 students in a school setting. Classroom management skills are a must for that environment. But home teachers are not classroom teachers, they are tutors and this is not a necessity for them. To those that ask me what qualifications they do need to teach their children at home, I usually respond by asking them if they are willing to learn along with their children.

In my experience most of us who have come through the public school system have never learned anything properly the first time. How many of us learned systematic intensive phonics, or science with a Biblical creation model, or a providential view of history? All home tutors need is to be willing to learn and grow with their children. If they possess that humble approach, then, with God's help and curricula available today, they can do a great job.

The second piece of advice I give to parents of students who have already been in a formal education setting is not to assume anything. Students



can slip through the cracks in a school by working hard, keeping quiet, and avoiding eye contact, and never really learning the material. As a classroom teacher, I never really knew what my students did or didn't know at the end of the year. But when I am sitting next to my son and teaching him daily I have a much better grasp of what he has learned and where he needs to improve.

Not making assumptions allows the tutor to fill in any gaps in instruction and build a good foundation for future learning. This is particularly important in math and reading. These two subject areas are sequential and require a thorough mastery of essential facts before moving to the next level. For example, it is very important that a student master multiplication before moving on to division.

So we can deduce that tutoring is by far the most effective way to teach. In fact colleges often boast of their low studentteacher ratio implying a higher quality of education. The ideal ratio that they are aiming for is 1:1 which all home educators have already achieved.

For parents who are committed to this form of education and have accepted the responsibility to tutor their children, this approach with its obvious academic advantages also carries great responsibility. After all, the parent is "the" teacher. And it is to that parent that I would like to address the remainder of this article. There is hope in God.

And even more than hope, there are resources available that are divine. God does not call the qualified, but he qualifies the called. And where God calls, He enables. The Bible is full of instances of God calling men and women from common walks of life to do great things with His aid. For those who are convinced that they are called to teach their children, let me say that I am convinced he has provided what you need to do this great and good work. As we respond to His call, He works in us and through us to accomplish His purpose and fulfill His promise of "all thy children shall be taught of the Lord, (Isaiah 54:13 and John 6:45). This truth is worth our meditation. He will teach our children. He will probably use us to be the primary instructors, but it is a comfort to know that it is He who has undertaken to teach our children. Let's mix that promise with faith and make it ours.

"A teacher teaches a curriculum to students.

A tutor teaches students with a curriculum."



But there is more to it than that. There is a bigger picture here. So the whole tenor of this article is what is best for the child. God is also interested in us, the homeschool parent. After all, as Christians, we are His children and He is our father. We are all being tutored. Even though we know that one of our primary goals is to see our students become lifelong learners, it is extremely difficult to teach something that one is not practicing. To effectively teach and exhort our children to be lifelong learners we must be lifelong learners ourselves. A lifelong learner is just another term for a disciple. Jesus said "Come unto me, all ye that are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart : and ye shall find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light". Notice that we are to learn of Him. Be encouraged, this goal of producing disciples is right in line with Jesus' call to each of us to follow Him and learn of Him. He is a great Rabbi—the ultimate teacher, especially with the help of the Holy Spirit.

In reviewing what I consider to be the primary qualification for home education; the question remains, are we willing to learn along with our children? When we home educate our children we are being tutored as well. Our instructor is Jesus and our tutor is the Holy Spirit. He has called us (parent and children alike) to be His disciples. Only the omniscient and omnipresent God can tutor each of us. When we accept Jesus as Savior and follow Him as our Lord, we enroll in the divine academy. Jesus prays for us and the Holy Spirit comes along side and "leads us into all truth". We are all receiving that wonderful oneoneone instruction from the Triune God. As a tutor, my first assignment in working with a new pupil was to discern how they learned and what they knew already. But who knows this information about us any better than God who formed us in the womb and knew us before the foundation of the world.

So as we ponder our responsibility, let us also be mindful of the divine resources available to each believer. When faced with a shortage

of energy or creativity, I often meditate on how the Spirit of God moved upon the face the waters at creation. This same Spirit is now operating in and through me to inspire (from inspirit) me with creative ideas and supernatural energy and enthusiasm (from entheos meaning inGod). Make no mistake, home education is a high calling, but it is a good calling, and with God's help, we are doing it. So let's continue to lean on Him daily for fresh courage and renewed inspiration. For He is faithful who has called us to teach, who will also see it through.

After all, He promised to teach us and our children. The ultimate responsibility is His and He doeth all things well. Amen. ■



Steve Demme and his wife Sandra have been married since 1979. They have been blessed with four sons, three lovely daughters-in-law, and three grandchildren. Their fourth son John has Down Syndrome and lives with them in PA. Steve addresses a variety of topics at conferences and churches to encourage parents as they seek to build families of faith. Steve is the author of MathUSee and the founder of Building Faith Families.

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WRITING A TRANSCRIPT FOR COLLEGE ADMISSIONS

CINDY MORRIS

This article originally appeared in the May/June 2008 issue of The Informer. With the growth of home education today very few college admissions officers are unfamiliar with homeschooling any more. But the question remains, how do I best prepare transcripts for my student to get into college? Cindy Morris provides some simple answers! (We've update a few details that have changed since this article originally appeared.)



What is a “homeschooler”? Many admissions officers ask themselves that same question each year. While you may understand your homeschool, you know that there is no “homeschool mold.” A well compiled transcript of the high school years will provide the answers an admissions officer needs in defining your particular school while highlighting your student’s achievements and skills. However, before discussing transcript details, allow me to give you a few quick pointers for coordinating the high school years. These will prove to be helpful when you construct your student’s transcript later.

Planning

1. In Indiana, your homeschool is considered a private school. The laws pertaining to the public schools do not apply to you, but, if you cannot prove that your child has received an education equivalent to, or better than, what the public school provides, colleges may not accept your student.
2. Because many of the courses necessary for graduation may be studied anytime during high school, it is recommended to plan the entire high school career as one unit so that all courses are studied in an orderly, timely manner.
3. Use Indiana’s diploma options as your planning guide. Many families consider the Core 40 the minimum standard for student aiming for college. Diploma standards change over time, be sure to visit the Department of Education’s website for more information.
4. Pick up a high school handbook or curriculum guide. Resources for homeschooling through high school are abundant. Remember that as a

private school you determine your graduation guidelines and your own curriculum. Use different references when you are looking for another English course, ideas for electives, or needing a name for the handson, part time job in which your student deserves a high school credit.

Would you like some specific examples of how I used the curriculum guide? First, our oldest son worked part time for two years on a hog farm, learning all the steps from breeding to birthing to going to market. It was a fantastic opportunity, but what could I call it? Livestock Production was listed in the guide, a perfect fit.

Working as nannies for a set of triplets starting the week they arrived home from the hospital, two of our daughters received credits in Child Care.

And yet another example is that one of our sons enjoyed stereo components, computer programming, and electronic gizmos. He tinkered, tore apart, and rebuilt a bunch of things. Later, he studied and received his Amateur Radio Operators License. A credit for Electronics appeared on his transcript.

Recordkeeping

As for recordkeeping, Indiana law only requires homeschoolers to keep attendance records, but attendance records won’t help much when you need to compile a transcript! So, jot down details for each day and record scores when there is something to grade. A check mark may suffice on days when reading is the assignment, however, it is wise to record the topic studied or textbook page numbers for reference.

Counting Credits

There are two ways to count credits.

The easiest method is this: **1 credit = 1 semester of study per course.** As an example, World History is a two-semester course, so you will give your student two credits for the entire course.

The second method of recording credits is in Carnegie Units which requires recording the hours of study. Fifty minutes x 5 days a week

x 18 weeks = 1 semester or 1 credit. Frankly, this is a little laborious and I am thankful that I’ve never been required to count Carnegie Units. If you know that college your student plans to attend, call them early in the process to learn of their preference for counting credits.

In Indiana, each class is worth one credit per semester except Physical Education which is worth only one credit per year.

How do you count credits for creative courses in which you do not have typical textbooks, like Livestock Production? I always leaned toward the conservative side to avoid being challenged by an admissions officer. In other words, don’t be overly generous with these credits. It is better to be too tight, than to give more credits than what a college feels are acceptable for the course.

Figuring Grade Point Average

GPA means “grade point average”. It is an overall score given for each year of high school.

To calculate GPA:

1. Find the semester average for each course. Apply a letter grade to the percentage score and then assign a decimal score to each letter:

A's 90-94 = A- (3.7)	95-99 = A (4.0)	100% = A+ (4.0)
B's 80-83 = B- (2.7)	84-86 = B (3.0)	87-89% = B+ (3.3)
C's 70-73 = C- (1.7)	74-76 = C (2.0)	77-79% = C+ (2.3)
D's 60-63 = D- (0.7)	64-66 = D (1.0)	67-69% = D+ (1.3)
F's <59 = F (0.0)		

2. Add the decimal values of all scores within a given year.
3. Divide the total by the number of scores added. The answer will be the GPA for that year.

Compiling the Transcript

You may purchase blank transcript forms and fill in the information, or create a form on your own computer. Our school has done the latter and it has always been honored by the admissions office.

On the front of the transcript, make a nice letterhead, using your school name and address. Below that, make a chart entitled **STUDENT IDENTIFICATION**. This should include: student’s name, birthdate, gender, Social Security number, and parents’ names, address, and telephone number.

Next print: **STUDENT’S ACADEMIC HISTORY**. One year at a time, list the courses, applying a letter grade to each semester the course was studied. During the senior year, it may be necessary to submit the transcript to a college before graduation. In that case, simply designate the courses being studied during the current semester.

The **STUDENT’S ACADEMIC SUMMARY** is another way to present the above with less detail. By school year, list the number of credits

received in Language Arts, Math, Social Sciences, Natural Science, Practical Arts, Business, Physical Education, and Other, which is anything that doesn’t fit into one of the other categories. “Other” would include Livestock Production and Child Care. Provide the Grade Point Average for the year, and the total number of days of study in that particular school year. (Indiana law requires a minimum of 180 days.) In this section, also provide a total of credits earned, or expected to be earned, by the graduation date. This total covers all credits earned during the high school career.

Transcript Extras

Colleges want to enroll self-motivated students who have good social skills. On the back of the transcript, list anything and everything that will get the attention of the admissions officer. Has she gone on mission trips? How about 4H? List any offices or volunteer positions your student has held in the community and special talents or hobbies. Also, be sure to record jobs your student has worked over the years. This may include relevant activities previous to the high school years too.

Are there any unique features to point out about a particular course? A oneline description is appropriate. Don’t overlook science labs. Our children were required to study Understanding the Times by Summit Ministries during high school. Being atypical, I wrote the following description: “Understanding the Times is a course on worldviews from a Christian perspective.” One college asked for the publishers of each course.

It is wise to provide scores for any achievement or placement tests your student has taken during his high school career. Examples of these are PSAT, SAT, ACT, and achievement tests — Stanford, Terra Nova, and Iowa Achievement tests. With each, provide the month and year the test was taken. Make your transcript look official by adding lines for signatures of the headmaster or principal, and primary teacher or instructor. If you feel that your transcript is a good representation of your student’s achievements, make the extra effort to get it notarized. When designing your own transcript form, be sure to allow space for the notary’s signature and stamp.

Course Description

When submitting your transcript, include a cover letter and a Course Description sheet. On this sheet, define your school’s requirements for graduation, listing the special features and expectations that each of your children must meet before you present a diploma to them. This page should present a clear description of courses, especially those which are not typical in the public school. Also, describe the method you used in counting credits. Finally, print your transcript and description on attractive paper. Remember, the admissions officer is wondering, “What is a homeschooler?” or more specifically, “What makes this homeschooler stand out?” Take this opportunity to make your student shine! ■

Cindy Morris and her husband Steve began homeschooling out of conviction from the Lord in 1981. Formerly, Cindy coordinated the annual IAHE Home Educators Convention and was a featured writer for the IAHE Informer. She now enjoys ministering to home educating parents and mentoring young women to become the Proverbs 31 women God wants them to be.

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BEYOND the BOOKS:

the *Heart* of Home Schooling

— Lisa Heady

It was the best of times; it was the worst of times. I have to admit that's how I feel as the summer gives way to autumn and a new school year. Our third of six children will be a senior this year. And while I know that this year will be full of excitement and special events, I also understand that we are marching with ever quickening steps toward the end of our son's home schooling career. It's a curious set of feelings: thankfulness, pride, anticipation . . . and sadness.

Preparing his high school transcripts and graduation slide show provides an opportunity to reflect on the years we have spent home schooling and to consider the significant people, events, and achievements that have highlighted his school years. I have to admit that there is comfort and relief in reporting satisfactory SAT scores and listing honors received, but what means the most to me and what lives on in my heart and mind are the events and conversations that have occurred beyond the books. To me, those memories are really the heart of homeschooling. They are what have burdened me, encouraged me, and caused me to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ (Eph. 3:18).

When we began homeschooling 18 years ago, there was a huge push for families to leave the rat race that children attending public schools were forced to run. We were encouraged to allow our children time to discover, to play, to serve, to think, to worship, and to rest. Convention speakers urged parents to concentrate on life lessons and to live out Deut. 6: 59: "Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates." Looking back, I am so thankful that we were shown the wisdom of this approach. There is a sense of peace when the important things of life, following Christ and pursuing

righteousness, are given their proper place; and the fruit of that peace is the provision of opportunities to listen and to speak into the hearts and minds of our children. This is the essence of beyond the books education, and it takes a lot of time to accomplish.

I am grateful for all those mornings when in the midst of my quiet time I heard little feet hit the floor above me and pad softly down the stairs to climb into my lap and ask me what I was reading. I rejoice at the memory of our 4 year old daughter dropping to her knees on our driveway to pray when she discovered that our dog was missing. I can still see our son's face, tears streaming down his cheeks, as he told us of his discovery that his sister's cat had been hit by a car. And I remember holding our daughter as she grieved over the news that her best friend was moving to Mongolia. We learned about life, death, and loss. These images flood my memory as well as the echoes of important discussions that have happened in the midst of everyday school. Our two older boys and I used to start school in the wee hours of the morning allowing us to have some quiet time together before the younger children woke up. We always began the morning with Bible study, and the talks we had were often deeply significant. We had time to learn from the Word and time for them to share what was on their hearts.

Taking time for beyond the books education is important and that includes those all important "come to Jesus" moments. I remember sitting on the laundry room floor with my daughter as we discussed her heart attitude and having long talks with my sons about making right choices and the effects of nailing rotten boards

to the character house they were building. Some days I wondered if we would ever finish "school" because we had to stop and deal with so many relational issues, but every minute spent talking, praying, and memorizing verses out of Proverbs was worth it! The value of these experiences and conversations far exceeded the "school" that had to be altered or postponed in order to take the time to address bad attitudes or wrong choices.

Beyond the Books Education versus Extra Curricular Activities

I'm happy to say that our first several years of homeschooling were simple, Christ centered, and chock full of discoveries, learning, and fun. But the pressures were building, and I must be truthful to tell you that we made our share of mistakes along the way. Several times we sacrificed what was truly important for what seemed urgent.

As the home school movement grew and developed, so did our family. We began to look forward beyond the elementary grades into preparing our children for their future. Voices in the home school movement began discussing high school transcripts, meeting core requirements, and building a wellrounded student.

Opportunities for activities, service, classes, and memberships rushed at us with increasing frequency and intensity. We tried to be faithful to seek the Lord before committing to participation in outside activities, but there were several times when we got ahead of Him and made a decision based on horizontal rather than vertical reasoning. We felt the pressure of "keeping up with the Joneses" in terms of providing the "right" opportunities for our children. Yet, those horizontal decisions always brought about the consequences of fatigue, bad attitudes, and lost time which should have been spent on really important things — our beyond the books education. So, I've learned to pray first and to weigh the value of each outside commitment to discern whether the time spent is worth the cost.

Yet, those cautions should not be interpreted as an admonishment to stay home and refrain from outside activities. When our eldest daughter was a senior, the opportunity to participate in a speech and debate club

became available. We thought this was a wonderful opportunity not only for her but also for our two older sons. As a family, we jumped in with both feet and lived speech and debate that year. We learned together, traveled to tournaments, made some dear friends, and still look back with fondness on that period of time. Participation in speech and debate provided opportunities for us to share an activity, to learn together, and to grow spiritually. Carefully selected outside activities are important and can provide beyond the books education too. The key is to choose wisely.

There is barrenness in a too busy life. With the growth and development of the home school community, we have recreated the possibility for our children to participate in the very same rat race that the founders of home schooling were withdrawing from. I personally love to hear about all of the blossoming educational opportunities that are being developed, and our family has been the happy beneficiary of some of them. Home schooling families are creative, ingenious, and determined to provide significant and enjoyable learning experiences. But, as a former pastor of mine used to say, "You need to be able to hear the hiss of the serpent." Satan would love for us to be so busy participating in all the right activities that our time spent with our children would consist of rushing out the door, dropping them off, picking them up, and falling into bed exhausted.

I know I'm going to blink my eyes and I'll be preparing transcripts and a graduation slideshow for our youngest child. My prayer is that on that day I will be able to say that we gave the important things their proper place. I pray that we will say that we looked up instead of looking around. I hope that we will be able to say we were satisfied with our choices. And I trust that my treasured memories of our beyond the books education will be significant to our children also as they grow and take their places in the world to serve the Lord. ■

 **Lisa Heady** has homeschooled for 22 years, and the Heady homeschool has graduated four students, with two remaining at home. Lisa has served the IAHE in many capacities: as a Regional Representative for Region 14, a board member, and currently as an IAHE Ambassador. She gives leadership to Proclaim Speech and Debate Club as well as serving as Executive Director of the Hancock County Children's Choir.




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Secret to Homeschooling Success:

7 Things I Must Do Every Morning

- Heather Bowen

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After five years of homeschooling, I've finally learned that the secret to a successful homeschooling day revolves around what I do in the morning.

Yes, it's in those precious few moments each morning in the time between when my alarm goes off and the first child waking up that I can claim a victory over our homeschooling day before it even begins.

Don't believe me? Give it a try...make a point to do these seven {or really even one or two} things every day for a week and see if your days don't get better:

1. Wake up before the kids. This is really key. Nothing screams stress more than waking up after the kids and already starting the day behind. Waking up before the kids gives me the sense of satisfaction in knowing that I chose to get up and start the day, I wasn't forced out of bed from the cries of spilled milk and cheerios all over the floor. **Homeschool Mom win #1!**

2. Time with Jesus before time with the world. Whether you realize it or not, you're fighting a battle each and everyday. When you choose to begin the day with Jesus before any encounter with the world {internet, email, texts, other people, etc}, you are allowing Jesus to equip you with the armor and plans for battling the day ahead. It's a scary world out there, don't fall into the illusion that you can do it on your own. Begin the day with Jesus by your side and you've already secured the victory... **Homeschool Mom win #2!**

3. Coffee...or tea or whatever it is that you prefer. The world just seems like a better place with a hot, fresh, cup of coffee in hand. **Homeschool Mom win #3!**

4. Eat breakfast. So, you've made the decision to fuel your spirit with Jesus, you've fueled your energy tanks with coffee, don't forget to fuel your body with a nutritious breakfast. My kids will tell you, I'm a much nicer mommy if I took the time to eat breakfast. Blood sugar crashes are not your friend, besides making you feel horrible, they also greatly decrease your patience and cause irritability which are not conducive to a productive homeschooling day, so take a moment and grab some breakfast! **Homeschool Mom win #4!**

5. Get out of your pajamas. Take a shower. Brush your hair. Put on some makeup {if that's your thing}. It's much easier to be productive when you're dressed for success. I'm not saying you need to get all dolled up every single day, but changing from pajamas to even yoga pants might be a start to a better day. For me, it's changing out of my pajamas, running the flat iron through my hair, and applying mascara that makes a world of difference on my outlook for the day. **Homeschool Mom win #5!**

6. Review your to do list. Glancing over my planner and reminding myself what the day holds is a great way to mentally prepare myself for what lies ahead. This includes having a plan for errands, extracurricular activities and dinner. By knowing your plan for the day, you know where you have room to adjust when unexpected things pop up, and we all know those things happen. **Homeschool Mom win #6!**

7. Turn cell phone notifications off. My kids need to know that I am fully focused on them during our school time. It's hard to teach math while responding to emails or checking Facebook notifications. I tried to do both, oh believe me, there were many days I tried to sneak in a few minutes of blog work in between answering questions from my daughters, but it only ended in frustration. I finally realized that in order to make our school day a success, I had to remove all distractions and my cell phone was my main distraction. Making the decision to silence those notifications may be the one thing that makes the most improvement in your homeschool day. **Homeschool Mom win #7!**

If you're struggling to find a sense of balance in your homeschool day, I encourage you to try out some of these morning habits and I'll promise you that with some time and dedication, you will see a difference! ■

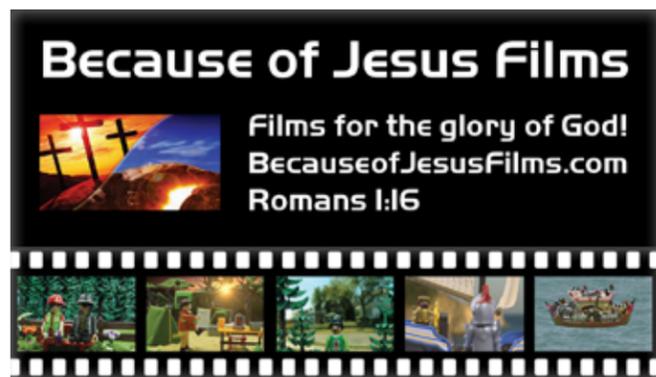


Heather Bowen is the founder and owner of *LifeofaHomeschoolMom.com* and creator of the Homeschool Mom Life Binder. She and her husband, Andrew, live in North Carolina where they homeschool their two daughters. Heather is a former Labor & Delivery Nurse who gave up her stethoscope and scrubs for computers and coding and began blogging full-time in 2013. Heather's passion lies in ministering to homeschooling moms and helping them find resources and encouragement to find balance in their lives. In her free time, Heather enjoys running through the mud and pretending to be an OCR athlete in Spartan races. Heather loves to connect with her readers.



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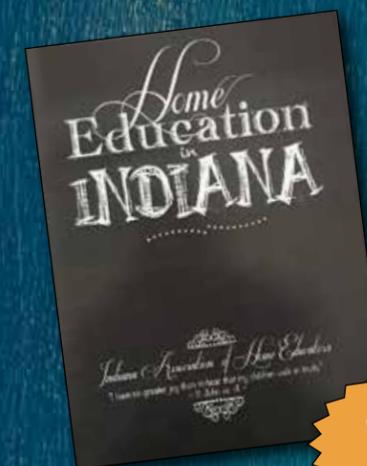
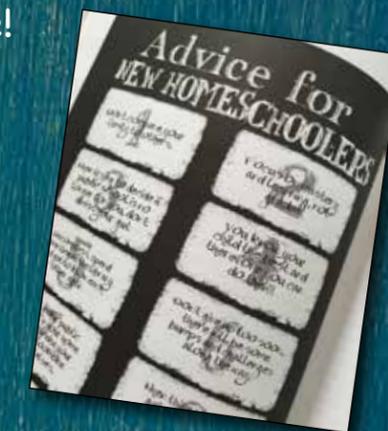


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