

Homeschool INDIANA

a publication of the Indiana Association of Home Educators | Issue 24, Volume 2



Special:
A Snowy Study
page 16

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Welcome

Have you ever been so ready for a new year as 2021?

Last year was full of many changes and challenges for families across the world. But, what a beautiful opportunity to clear away the clutter in our lives and focus on what really matters!

The beginning of a new year is the perfect opportunity to start new routines as well. Did you know that January and February can be the most stressful time of year for homeschool families? Bad weather and cold temperatures along with fewer daylight hours can quickly lead to cabin fever. Combine that with a global pandemic and you've got a recipe for frustration.

Unless you are intentional!

What are some fun ways to rethink education in the winter months?

- Load up on a fresh stack of library books and hot chocolate for cozy reading breaks. Take your reading area to the next level with a blanket fort.
- Take advantage of winter's clear night skies and spend time stargazing.
- Expand your history studies by building a family tree. Encourage your children to talk to older family members and capture their stories.
- Play in the snow! Check out the article on page 16, *A Snowy Study*, for a full list of fun ideas for how to take your learning into the great outdoors this winter.

Tara Bentley
Executive Director, IAHE

The Indiana Association of Home Educators

(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.

IAHE

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— Jasmine D.



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Meet Your Newest Regional Reps!



Region 10 | Keith & Rachel Williams

Friends since middle school, Keith and Rachel have been married since 2003. Faced with unexplained infertility, they decided to pursue adoption, bringing their son home the day after he was born in 2010. Rachel knew from the beginning they would want to homeschool. The Williams bring the unique perspective of homeschooling a single child. Keith works as a line haul driver with Pitt Ohio, where he has been since 2007, and Rachel serves with Classical Conversations in various capacities, while both serve at Grace Bible Church in New Whiteland.



Region 12 | Bryan & Misti Haney

Bryan and Misti are members of World Gospel Church in Terre Haute where they have raised their four children. Bryan and Misti were married in 1996 and decided to homeschool when they were expecting their first child. Bryan and Misti have been blessed to homeschool their two boys, who have spent their educational years battling the challenges of autism, and their two girls, the youngest of which was adopted from China. Bryan and Misti enjoy encouraging homeschool families through their local co-op where Bryan teaches Chemistry and Physics, and Misti co-directs the high school side of the co-op.

Have you connected with your IAHE Representative?

Serving the homeschooling community throughout Indiana.

Regional Representatives are veteran homeschool parents who are here to support your family on your home education adventure. Whether you are looking for local activities,

have questions about curriculum, or want to find a support group in your area, your Regional Representative couple is available to help you!

To contact any of our reps by phone, dial 317-467-6244 and then their extension.



DAYS
TO

REMEMBER

California Gold Rush | 1848

In Sutter's Creek in California, James Marshall unintentionally found gold while building a sawmill along the South Fork of the American River. Augustus Sutter, who had hired Marshall for the build, attempted to keep the gold a secret. Unfortunately for him, word spread quickly, and the largest gold rush in the world began bringing thousands of men to California.

★ *What kinds of equipment do you think they used to pan for gold in the 1800s?*

★ *What do you think the value of gold is today? Look it up!*

Friendship 7 Launched | 1962

The spacecraft Friendship 7 was launched from Cape Canaveral, Florida making astronaut John Glenn the first American launched into orbit. Glenn was able to reach an altitude of 162 miles and complete three orbits in nearly five hours. His trip was preceded by Alan Shephard and Virgil Grissom who had both completed short sub-orbital flights. At a speed of 17,500 miles per hour, Glenn radioed back, "Capsule is turning around. Oh, that view is tremendous."

★ *Look at views of earth from space and imagine being Glenn looking at those same views from Friendship 7.*

American School for the Deaf | 1817

Thomas Gallaudet and Laurent Clerc founded the first American school for the deaf in Hartford, Connecticut. The school began with seven full-time students and was originally called Connecticut Asylum at Hartford for the Instruction of Deaf and Dumb Persons. Soon, the school had dozens of students ranging from ages 10-51. The school, renamed American School for the Deaf, is still educating students today.

★ *Many deaf people use sign language to communicate. Try learning to sign the letters of the alphabet.*

★ *What would it be like to do your school with no talking at all? Try having everyone in your home do their schoolwork for one hour in complete silence.*

January
24th

February
15th

February
20th

March
24th

April
15th

Death of Lewis Wallace | 1905

Lewis Wallace, an Indiana resident, died on this day. Wallace was an American soldier, a diplomat, an artist, and an author remembered for Ben-Hur, a historical novel. His art included the painting titled The Conspirators where Wallace sketched the faces of the defendants in Abraham Lincoln's assassination trial. He also played the violin. Wallace's former home in Crawfordsville, Indiana is now a museum where you can visit and learn more about this multi-talented man.

★ *Consider reading Ben-Hur or looking up one of Wallace's paintings.*

★ *Plan a visit to Wallace's former home.*

Exxon Valdez Wreck | 1989

The oil tanker Exxon Valdez in Prince William, Alaska en route to Long Beach, California struck Prince William Sound's Bligh Reef and caused one of the largest oil spills in the U.S. The tanker spilled approximately 11 million gallons of oil over the next few days. This spill caused much damage to the environment and the natural habitats over a 45-mile span.

★ *What procedures and equipment are used to clean up oil spills?*

★ *How do oil spills specifically harm ocean animals?*

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Speed Bumps Along the Homeschool Road

—Joann Burnside Hoyt

Imagine you have been planning to take a trip, whether it be a long-awaited vacation or a needed family visit, and you are finally on the road. The car is packed with luggage and snacks, the kids have their games and books, you are in the driver's seat, and you pull out onto the highway! You drive for a while thinking to yourself that this is going to be a good trip; you have planned and packed accordingly and feel reasonably prepared to meet everyone's needs as well as their expectations. Woo Hoo! Then, without any warning, the cars in front of you all suddenly stop, and traffic backs up for miles and miles. Your trip has suddenly come to a swift and complete halt. Welcome to home education!

Don't panic! Just as almost all road trips will include some kind of traffic delay, most homeschooling journeys will have their share of challenges. They come in many forms and can create a myriad of emotions ranging from concern to sheer panic. You may have already experienced some and walked through them like a pro, or perhaps you just hit the first major snag and are unsure whether you can even continue to teach your child at home. It is similar to traffic problems where you may not know whether a traffic delay will stop your trip completely, slow it down a bit or, perhaps, cause you to find an alternate route.



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Discovering the Problem

The hard part is the initial “not knowing what went wrong.” When you cannot see the cause of the traffic delay, your mind comes up with all kinds of possible scenarios: “Was it an accident or road construction?”, and the most crucial question, “How long is this going to last?”

Now, here is the hard part of this equation—just like a traffic delay when traveling, you may never get the full answer to the first question, and the second answer may never be clear and may change as you go along; it will be so much easier if you can just be ok with that. When you face a challenge in your homeschooling journey, there are many possible answers, lots of alternatives, and thankfully, innumerable sources of information you can use to continue your journey, which is already better than being stuck in traffic!

Common Challenges

Some familiar and normal homeschool challenges could include: curriculum you chose that now does not seem to meet your child's needs, curriculum your child just does not like, doubting family members or friends who question what you are doing, physical illness for you or your child, child training issues, finding a gap in your child's previous education, or perhaps discovering your child has a special learning need that was never addressed. As a veteran homeschool mom please allow me to reassure you, first and foremost, that you will survive this!

Facing Curriculum Challenges

If curriculum issues arise that can be an easy fix, never be afraid to ditch a curriculum midstream. I know it is hard to imagine that, but believe me, it is ok. It is a lot harder for a child to struggle through a difficult curriculum than to switch to something else. That being said, before you change, there are a lot of ways you can alter or personalize a curriculum. You do not have to assign all the questions for example. You may also have your child answer verbally instead of doing all the writing. If a curriculum requires a report, let them act it out in a play—the options for fine-tuning are endless!

Concerned Family and Friends

When people in your life question why you are homeschooling, or make you doubt your decision, it can be tough. One of the best ways to respond to the naysayers in your life is to be prepared. When those concerned friends and family come along, and they will, simply tell them it is what you (and your spouse) have decided is best for your family right now. Thank them for their concern for your kids and end the conversation. You do not have to answer to anyone but the Lord. Keep seeking His wisdom and guidance. “He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.” Isaiah 40:11 (KJV)

Illness or Injury

Sometimes the challenge is physical—you or your child becomes ill or injured. This is one of the times when homeschooling is the biggest blessing! The flexibility of home education allows you to alter the schedule to fit the needs of everyone. Learning days can be shortened or rearranged or a break from school can be scheduled when you need it; remember you have 12 months, from July 1-June



30 of each calendar year, to get it done. If you are having a behavioral issue with a child, it is absolutely acceptable to pause learning for a day or so to do some serious, concentrated child training—or Mommy training, if needed. Many find that the first year or two of homeschooling is largely character development—yours as well as theirs!

Learning Struggles

If you are traveling along this homeschool journey and find that there seems to be a gap in your child's education, or begin to suspect that there may be a learning issue, praise the Lord! Oftentimes this is something that could be completely missed in a busy classroom setting. You may need to find a curriculum that focuses on what was missing or connect with other parents whose children are struggling learners.

Once again, home education is very often the best place to be in these situations because you can do exactly what your child needs! Indiana Association of Home Educators (IAHE) has many resources on their website and they host a Facebook group specifically dedicated to struggling learners. You do not have to feel alone in this! You may feel like this is a road detour that is going to take way too long, but remember, you will get there and the less-traveled routes are often the best adventures.

Rest and Perspective

As with any road trip, try to remember the delays, the route changes, the weather systems that slow down your travels are also the parts of the trip that give you time to rest a bit, or give you a different understanding of an area, or a new viewpoint. They also can cause you to become creative in how you handle things and even gain new problem-solving skills.

Trials and challenges were indeed part of the travel plans the whole time; you just didn't know about them at the beginning. Stand strong! There are many avenues for information and guidance; many parents have traveled this same path and are ready and willing to help you along the way. Of course, as in any journey, there is always God. He already has the answers, knows every twist and turn, and is ready to help.

“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.” James 1:5 (KJV) ■



Joann Burnside Hoyt lives in NW Indiana. Her real-world experiences as a Christian wife, mother, widow, 27-year home educator, grandmother, small business owner, and now wife once more, all combine to “work together for good” as she draws from her life to bring humor and hope to her audience.



Caught in the Middle

— Stacy Hanaway

Have you ever felt like you are just caught in the middle of things? You wanted to do different things, but due to certain limitations, it just was not possible? In my experience, this is how middle school students and teachers often feel. Those middle school years can, at the time, make a student feel like they are just stuck!

There is so much happening in a young person's life when they hit middle school. Their bodies are changing, and their minds are growing. They may be very mature or still working their way there. They are curious, possibly exploring new interests, and trying to figure out where they fit in. As a parent and teacher, this age level can be a significant challenge to make it through. I hope to help shed a little light on these years and help encourage you that these years are a blessing, though in disguise at times.

Acknowledge Biological Changes

Let's start with just the biological changes this age group encounters. Their changing bodies can impact how society views them, often causing some self-awareness issues that can affect their behavior in all aspects of life. It is bad enough to deal with the hormones

and physical changes all by themselves, but now there are social and educational expectations added to the mix. It is essential to keep communication lines open with your middle schooler, so they seek your wisdom and not that of the world, especially when it comes to their physical changes and well being.

Fill in Gaps

Academically, the middle school years are a great time to explore new educational opportunities. You may decide that now is a great time to fill in a few gaps in their knowledge. Gaps can be common, as students all learn differently. Sometimes, the mind is not ready for material when presented and just needs time to make real learning connections. But also remember that in some cases, a student may demonstrate some inconsistencies due to the fact that their hormones have taken over their brains. Be willing to put your schedule on hold and support them where they are.

Skip Ahead

Some students at this age level could be on the opposite end of the spectrum and be mature and quite advanced for their age. This might be an excellent time to move faster or even skip leveled work. For example, I have spoken with several curriculum companies who agree that the main difference between grade levels six and seven is how the material is presented. At a sixth-grade level, they tend to keep it more aligned with the elementary years, where at the

seventh-grade level, it is aligned more with the high school curriculum.

I often use the sixth-grade year to bump up a level in arithmetic; however, this may apply to other subjects as well. I make an effort to look at the sixth and seventh-grade books side by side. If they are indeed the same, I choose the higher level. My other deciding factor is how well they do in that given subject. Both my boys excel in mathematics, so that makes it an easy choice. These years are an excellent time to start working on some high school credits.

Try Something New

While I have explored each end of the academic spectrum, many students do best moving at their current speed. That's great! You may decide this is a good time to try out something new. As our homeschool community continues to grow, so do the options for homeschooling curricula. Maybe there is a curriculum you are interested in for their high school years. Do they have a middle school version? It might be worth trying it now. Changing up curricula in the middle school years is more manageable than when preparing them for their adult life in the high school years.

Find Activities That Interest Them

Another struggle in the middle years can be finding appropriate social events and activities. You may find there tend to be more activities that are relevant to elementary and high school students than middle schoolers. This may leave a child feeling left out or caught between age levels. Do not let this be a deterrent from seeking new experiences or getting involved.

If you have a child who enjoys sports, this is the age level where they start to get more competitive. This can give your family an idea of what it will look like at the high school level. This is also true with many fine arts activities. It is a perfect time to learn an instrument, explore drama, create artwork, and maybe learn a trade. Students discover new interests at this age, so explore these with your child. This instills in them the courage to try and do new things and possibly discover the talents they may use for the rest of their lives.

Keep Communicating

Your relationship may be rockier than in previous years, but keep them communicating. Include them when making decisions on curricula, activities, family matters, and social dynamics. Talk with them about the little things in life and the big issues too.

Encourage them to take on more or new responsibilities. They are taking their first steps into adulthood by starting to piece it all together and grow into their own skin. They may stumble at times. The tween years can be challenging to navigate, not only for them but for you too. Then again, what age is easy? Stay strong and embrace these years, for they are the foundation of who your child will become.

I will leave you with a quote from A.A.Milne/Christopher Robin that is applicable for both teacher and student, "You're braver than you believe, and stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think." You have got this, so buckle up and enjoy the journey! ■



Stacy Hanaway has served with her husband, Jason, as Assistant Youth Sports Administrator at the Christian Youth Center since their marriage, picking up together what Jason had started. They have been active in several youth sports leagues and currently coordinate and coach for their local homeschool basketball team as well as manage the Homeschool sports page at iahe.net.

Wanting to show your school pride? Look no further!

New Designs!

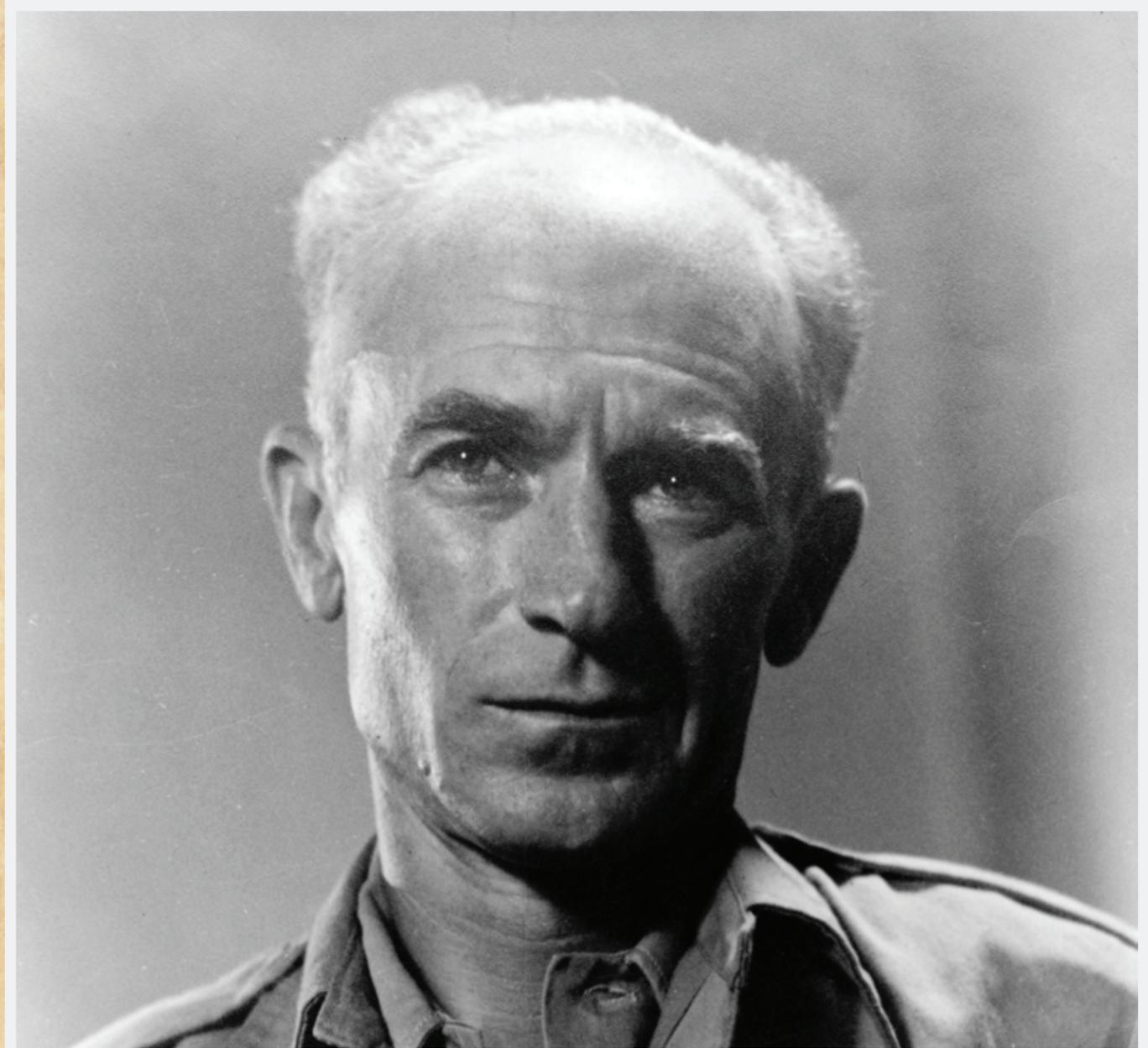
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Ernie Pyle was born to a tenant farm family in Dana, Indiana on August 3, 1900. Pyle was an only child and graduated high school in Bono, Lawrence County.

After graduation, Pyle went on to study economics and journalism at Indiana University Bloomington. While there, he worked for the Indiana Daily Student. He eventually became the editor of this newspaper, which is still running today.

In 1925, Ernie moved to Washington, DC to work for *Washington Daily News* as a reporter and eventually a managing editor. However, due to the monotony of his desk job, he decided to travel across the U.S. in 1926 and write a few columns for other newspapers. Two years later, he finished traveling, and returned to *Washington Daily News* and began writing a successful aviation column. These aviation columns can now be found in a book titled *On a Wing and a Prayer: The Aviation Columns of Ernie Pyle*. Then in 1932, he resumed his previous role as managing editor.

From 1935 to 1941, he became a national columnist for Scripps-Howard Newspaper where he was able to write human interest columns, which allowed him to recreate the lives and hopes of everyday citizens. This column gained Pyle quite a bit of popularity, and the columns were featured in many different newspapers.

After the U.S. entered WWII in 1942, Ernie decided to go overseas as a war correspondent. His writing style differed from others because he wrote from the perspective of ordinary soldiers. He described how these ordinary soldiers fought on the frontline and how they survived. While traveling with the soldiers, he covered many aspects of the war, like the North Africa Campaign and the invasions of Italy and France.

Pyle not only wrote about the soldiers, but he was also vocal about increasing the pay of soldiers in combat. In 1944, he wrote a column asking for a "fight for pay," which is when The Ernie Pyle Bill was passed



by congress. This new law increased the monthly pay of these soldiers by \$10.

The same year The Ernie Pyle Bill was passed, Pyle also won a Pulitzer Prize for his writing. He once wrote about how frontline soldiers are different than your average civilian:

All the rest of us—you and me and even the thousands of soldiers behind the lines in Africa—we wanted terribly yet only academically for the war to be over. The front-line soldier wanted it to be terminated by the physical process of his destroying enough Germans to end it. He was truly at war. The rest of us, no matter how hard we worked, were not. Say what you will, nothing can make a complete soldier except battle experience.

This type of writing earned him recognition as a writer and a war correspondent. His columns have since been compiled in books: *Here is Your War*, *Ernie Pyle in England*, *Last Chapter*, and *Brave Men*. The motion picture *G.I. Joe* was also about his coverage during the war.

In 1945, he traveled to the Pacific to cover the war against Japan. Unfortunately on

April 18, 1945, Ernie Pyle was killed by enemy fire on the island of Ie Shima, a small island near Okinawa. He was only 44. He is buried at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Oahu, Hawaii.

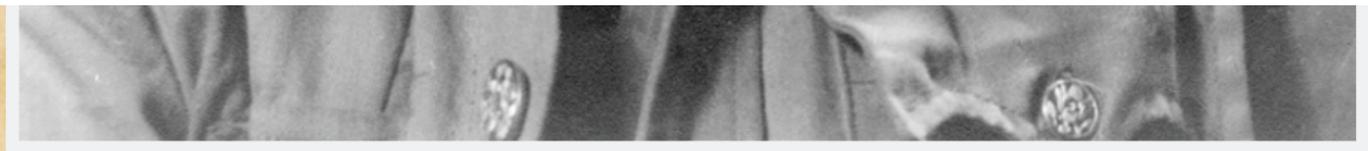
Ernie Pyle will be remembered for his extraordinary writing, columns, and awards, and also for his understanding of and compassion for his fellow man. As Henry Truman said after Ernie died, "Nobody knows how many individuals in our forces and at home he helped with his writings. But all Americans understand now how wisely, how warmly, how honestly he served his country and his profession. He deserves the gratitude of all his countrymen."

Challenge: The house where Ernie Pyle was raised was rescued from demolition in the 1970s. An organization called The Friends of Ernie Pyle was able to restore the home, and they were able to move it into Dana. In 1976, it was dedicated as an Indiana state historic site. It has now been expanded and has been named the Ernie Pyle World War II Museum. Plan a field trip there if you can, or check it out online at: erniepyle.org.

 **Lacey Hooie**, an Indiana native, is a wife, mother, and home educator. After attending Indiana University, she and her husband decided to stay and build their family. On any given day, you can find her soaking up time with her family and pets, and exploring their interests through activities and books.

HOOSIER SPOTLIGHT

Ernie Pyle



A Snowy Study

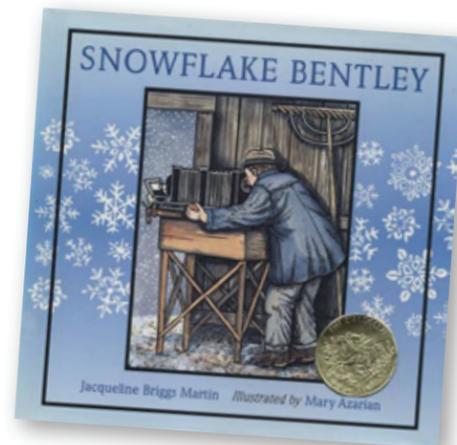
— Amy Sager



Snow is a miraculous phenomenon that captivates all of us in our childhood and many of us in our adulthood as well. This display of God's creativity provides a beautiful winter wonderland for visual enjoyment and opportunities for snow sports and adventurous excursions. This marvelous part of nature deserves some study. I hope you find it as fascinating as my family has.

Enjoy literature, a science experiment, an art/craft, a weather study, and some snow play. You may use all of the activities in this guide or pick and choose certain ones to learn about snow with your children. My family loves reading a great book together and letting the topics in that book fuel our exploration.

Let's use *Snowflake Bentley* by Jacqueline Briggs Martin to jumpstart this study of snow!



Jumpstart your study of snow by reading aloud *Snowflake Bentley*.

Depositphotos: #87526818 & #17241122

Literature Discussion

- ❄ Did you notice that Wilson Bentley was homeschooled for most of his childhood? How might that have played a role in his tremendous amount of curiosity about the world around him?
- ❄ While other children built forts, what was Willie doing?
- ❄ What did Willie do for three winters to try to study snowflakes?
- ❄ What tool did Willie's parents buy him to help him study snowflakes? How did it work?
- ❄ What are some of the things Willie learned about snowflakes?
- ❄ How did the people of Wilson Bentley's town honor his memory after his death?
- ❄ How did Willie use all of his pictures of snowflakes?
- ❄ You may enjoy looking at Bentley's best snowflake photographs in his book called *Snow Crystals*. Maybe you can find it at your library or online.
- ❄ You may also enjoy some other books and poems about snow:
 - The Snowy Day* by Ezra Jack Keats
 - Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening* by Robert Frost
 - Katy and the Big Snow* by Virginia Lee Burton
 - The Snowflake: A Water Cycle Story* by Neil Waldman
 - The Story of Snow: The Science of Winter's Wonder* by Mark Cassino with Jon Nelson, Ph.D.

Science

What is a crystal?

A crystal is a solid substance made up of atoms that has a natural symmetrical pattern of faces and angles. Atoms can only fit together in a special pattern, and therefore, all crystals have a specific shape. It is this pattern that gives each type of crystal its shape. Crystals have straight edges, clean angles, and a predictable shape.

What is a snowflake?

Snowflakes are actually snow crystals. They form when water vapor in the air freezes directly into ice. Snow crystals grow as more vapor condenses; they form very ornate patterns. Snow crystals always have six arms and hexagonal symmetry because of the way water molecules fit together. As each snow crystal forms, it moves through different temperatures and humidity levels in the clouds, causing the vapor to freeze in different patterns. This is why no two snowflakes are exactly alike.

What is recrystallization?

The process of making crystals out of substances is called recrystallization. It occurs when a substance, such as borax, is dissolved in hot water and then cooled slowly. Why do crystals appear as the mixture cools? It has to do with solubility, or the largest amount of something that can be dissolved in something else, such as dissolving a powdered cleaning product like borax in water. The solubility of a substance typically increases with temperature which is why the experiment requires dissolving the borax in hot water. When it cools, more borax is in the mixture

than can be contained by the cooler water. Therefore, when you stick a pipe cleaner in the mixture, some borax readily comes out to cling to the pipe cleaner where it forms crystals.

Make Crystal Snowflakes

Supplies needed:

- borax
- jars or vases
- craft sticks or pencils
- string or ribbon
- pipe cleaners
- water



Step 1: Cut a pipe cleaner into thirds, place the pieces together, then twist the center to hold them together, and pull the six sides to look like a snowflake.

Then you need to cut 6, 1 to 1.5" pieces of matching pipe cleaner and twist one onto each arm of the snowflake to make it look more snowflake-like.

Tip: Before starting, compare the opening of the jar with the size of your snowflake! It is easy to push just the pipe cleaner in, but once all the crystals have formed, your snowflake will be bigger!

Step 2: Tie a long piece of string to the center of the pipe cleaner snowflake and wrap the other end around a popsicle stick or pencil.

Tip: Make sure you have the right string length so that the pipe cleaner is not touching the bottom and will still not touch the bottom once crystals form around it.

Step 3: Dissolve 3 tablespoons of borax powder for each cup of boiling water. This will make a saturated solution where the maximum amount of borax that can be dissolved in the hot water has been added.

When using boiling hot water, adult assistance is highly recommended.

Step 4: Once you have filled your jars with the borax solution, hang your snowflakes inside the jar. Make sure they are fully emerged but not touching the bottom or sides of the jars.

Place the jars in a quiet place where they will not be disturbed. Do not pull on the string or move the jar around! Stillness will allow the most beautiful crystals to form.

Check on the snowflakes after a couple of hours. There will be some changes. Check back periodically, and there will be more crystals growing! Leave the solution alone for 24 hours.

Step 5: After 24 hours, gently lift the crystal snowflake ornaments out of the jars and let them dry on paper towels for an hour or so.

Now it is time to decide where to hang your sparkling creations. Enjoy their beauty!

Snowflake Card Decoration

Supplies needed:

- white or blue yarn
- large needle
- cardstock
- glue
- pencil
- silver gem stickers (optional)



Step 1: Cut a letter-sized sheet of cardstock in half. Cut each half in half width-ways so you have 4 roughly square-shaped cards. On one side of the card, very lightly trace a snowflake shape with a pencil. You can freehand the shape or look at clipart online to use as a template.

Step 2: Poke holes with your needle along your drawn shape and erase the pencil lines. Begin threading yarn through the holes starting in the center of the snowflake. Make sure to tie a knot at the end of the yarn after the first pass through, so it stays secure in the back of the card. Once the center ring of the snowflake is threaded, work on each arm.

Do you remember how many arms each snowflake has?

Step 3: Continue stringing until your snowflake is complete. Tie another knot at the end of the string where you just finished. If desired, stick or glue on silver gems for extra sparkle.

Step 4: The back part of the card where you sewed the snowflake will look messy. You can simply cut a piece of paper and glue it over that part.

Step 5: Either tape the snowflake card to a wall for decoration or poke a hole in the top and use string to hang it.

Optional: Add a snowy message to your snowflake card.

❄️ **Freezing rain** is precipitation that cools below 0 degrees Celsius (32 degrees Fahrenheit) but does not turn to ice in the air. The water is supercooled. When the drops hit anything, they instantly turn into ice.

The next time you see snowy weather, you be the weather forecaster and decide which term to use to describe it. If there is no snow coming in the near future, look up videos of snowy weather and try to describe it.

How is snow formed?

When cloud temperatures are at the freezing point or below, and there is an ample supply of moisture in the air, ice crystals form around a core particle. As water vapor condenses and freezes, the complex pattern of a snowflake is born, one molecule at a time. A snowflake's hexagonal shape starts very early with water molecules bonding together into stable crystal structures.

Snow is fun, but what else is it good for?

- ❄️ Snow waters the ground in the winter.
- ❄️ Ski resorts need snow to stay in business. That means some people count on snow to have a job.
- ❄️ Snow makes it possible for some animals like polar bears, some penguins, and other arctic animals to survive.



Depositphotos: #321148510, #321859226, #31272284, #17777590

Observing Snowflakes

Supplies needed:

- black construction paper or black cloth
- magnifying glass

Step 1: Freeze your black paper or cloth (keep it in the fridge or outside in a cold dry area). Snowflakes are delicate, and their fine crystalline shape can vanish at the touch of warmth.

Step 2: If snow is falling, just hold your paper or cloth aloft to catch a few flakes and view with your magnifying glass. You may need to wear a scarf over your mouth and nose to avoid melting the snowflakes with a warm breath.

Step 3: Observe the snowflakes. Can you see the intricate patterns? Is each one different? Can you count six arms?



Photographing a Snowflake like Bentley

Supplies needed:

- camera with a "macro" lens
- tripod

Step 1: Set the camera in a shady spot.

Step 2: Set the focus and experiment with exposures. Chances are, unless you are using a fast film, you will need your exposure time to be between 1/15 to 1/30th of a second, and maybe longer.

Step 3: Take a few photographs, evaluate them, make adjustments, and take some more.

You can also try catching snowflakes on black paper and photographing them.

Do your photographs look anything like the photographs that Willie Bentley took? Practice makes perfect!

Check out the Smithsonian Institute's OpenAccess website to see some of Bentley's original photographs of snowflakes from 1885.



Sensory Play

A Batch of Play Snow

Supplies needed:

- baking soda
- white hair conditioner
- large bowl
- toy cars, plastic shovel, playdough tools, etc. (optional)

Nothing compares to playing in real snow, but when that is not available, get creative! This project is so simple, yet it can provide hours of engaging play.

Step 1: Cover a table with a plastic table cloth or protective covering of some kind.

Step 2: Mix 2 1/2 cups of pure baking soda with 1/2 a cup of white hair conditioner. If the "snow" is too wet, you can add more baking soda. If it is too dry, you can add more conditioner. To make a larger batch of snow, simply multiply this recipe.

Step 3: Now the fun begins. Let your child use their imagination to build "snow" mountains, tunnels, sledding hills, igloos, snowmen, and more.



George Bernard Shaw shared that, "Imagination is the beginning of creation. You imagine what you desire, you will what you imagine, and at last, you create what you will."

Studying the intricacy and beauty of snowflakes helps us appreciate the magnificent creativity of its Designer. I pray that this winter brings a plentiful amount of snow for you and your family to study and enjoy. ■



Amy Sager is the IAHE Publications Manager and Managing Editor of Homeschool Indiana. She and her husband Mike homeschool their five children in the rolling hills of southern Indiana. The whole family enjoys reading quality literature, playing music together, and working on their farm.

Weather and Observation

Weather forecasters use specific terms to describe different types of weather. Here are some terms that describe the intensity of snowfall:

- ❄️ A **snow flurry** refers to light showers of snow that do not cover large areas and do not fall steadily for long periods of time.
- ❄️ A **blizzard** is a severe winter storm that includes a combination of snow and wind, resulting in very low visibility. Officially, the National Weather Service defines a blizzard as large amounts of falling or blowing snow with winds in excess of 56 kilometers (35 miles) per hour and visibilities of less than 0.40 kilometers (0.25 miles) for more than 3 hours. Heavy snowfall and severe cold often accompany blizzards, but not always.



Treasure the minutes and enjoy the days and weeks that add up to another successful school year.

that week, or even over the weekend with Daddy's help; we even adjusted when our school year ended according to the needs of that year's coursework. Once I learned to relax and be flexible, we all were much happier.

Try to be flexible with the timing of lessons. You might take advantage of a few minutes in the morning before Daddy (or Mommy, if Dad is the primary teacher) goes to work, and while Daddy rocks the baby, Mommy briefs the children on the lessons for the day or teaches the math concept to the oldest child.

You may need to teach the harder subjects in the morning if they work best in the morning, or you may need to wait until Daddy comes home from work and can entertain the toddler while you focus completely on reading lessons with the early-reader.

Learn to adjust the days to meet the needs of your family, and know that the order of instruction will change yearly, with the ages of the multiples. It could even change within a school year, with the stage each child is going through.

Work with Naptimes, Mealtime, and Daddy Time

If mornings require the most work teaching the toddler or preschooler, let the older kids do independent work during that time, and then while the younger guys are napping or resting, teach the older ones the concepts that need individual attention.

Consider listening to an audible book during lunchtime or discussing a Bible story while gathered around the lunch table. And take advantage of Daddy time in the evenings if extra attention is needed for a particularly hard math lesson. Daddy can teach while you work on dinner or check the day's work or vice versa.

Combine as Many Subjects as Possible

So many lessons and extracurricular subjects can be taught together when multiple ages are in a homeschooling

family. I struggled with that even later in my homeschooling, thinking that my children needed the social studies and science lessons taught in one particular grade of school. When I combined many of my sciences, social studies, geography, art, music, Bible, foreign language, and others, not only did it free up some of my teaching time, but the children enjoyed learning together.

Involve the Little Ones as Much as Possible

I found it much easier to keep the little ones nearby during teaching. I kept sensory toys and activities handy and rotated those and other toys out frequently so they would not get bored. I kept them nearby while I helped the older kids. Having those younger ones at the table coloring or doing puzzles or playing with manipulatives, let them think they were doing schoolwork, just like big brother or sister.

With craft and art projects, we especially enjoyed creating together, even though at times the little one was just basically creating chaos!!!

Let Older Ones Teach Younger Ones

I not only rotated toys for little ones, but I rotated kids with little ones, too. Child number one might either read to child number three or simply play with building blocks with number three, while I taught sight words to child number two. Then, child number two helped child number three clean up toys, while I helped child number one with the subtraction of two digits.

Next, I might send the two older children to do their chores for the day while I helped child number three with letter recognition or counting by twos or something like that.

Letting your children work with each other in different ways creates unique bonds and gives them a sense of belonging and purpose. And a great feeling of accomplishment, too!

Keep Activities on Hand for the Little Ones

As mentioned before, keep toys and activities ready for the little ones nearby, so that they feel included and can be

entertained while you need to teach. Sensory activities like modeling dough, or manipulatives like building blocks, or math counters, or plastic vehicles in a tub, or toys that involve imaginative play can be switched out to be fresh and fun for the little guys.

Incorporate Screen Time Sporadically

You may consider using an online curriculum for one or two subjects for older children, if that works for your family, while you teach the younger ones. Also, consider a short educational show for the preschooler while you teach harder concepts to the older ones.

Read—Read—Read

Fit in lots of reading time. Let older children read to younger siblings, and little ones "read" to their older siblings. Read chapter books aloud to the older kids grouped together while the little ones play on the floor nearby. Read a chapter while nursing the baby or gather as a family and read a chapter before bedtime. Fit in much reading!

Enjoy the Multiples

Probably the most important tip that I can think of is to just enjoy these multiple ages of homeschooled sweeties! The challenges that occur by teaching multiples are what makes your family special! Plan, but be flexible each day. Give lots of grace and lots of hugs. Work together to find the plan that best fits your family—and then laugh because you know that plan could change in two weeks when the baby starts crawling or Daddy's work schedule changes!

Treasure the minutes and enjoy the days and weeks that add up to another successful school year. ■

 **Julie Lavender** and her husband David homeschooled their four kids in six states for more than twenty-five years. Though all of the kids are college graduates now, Julie stays connected by blogging for several homeschooling websites and online magazines. Julie's newest book, *365 Ways To Love Your Child: Turning Little Moments Into Lasting Memories* includes many activities she carried out with her homeschooled kiddos over the years.



— Julie Lavender

Homeschooling multiple ages can be quite a

challenge. The solutions you find that best fit your family on a day-to-day basis can oftentimes serve as lessons, too, in the bigger picture. By making academics work within a family unit, family members learn to navigate the challenges of the community around them, with its interruptions, multiple personalities, and ages and differences.

Though there is no generic and perfect homeschooling plan for teaching multiple ages of children, organization and some other tips will help (most) days go smoother.

Have a Plan

Organization is key to a successful homeschooling calendar, yet the plan will need to be held loosely. In other words, plan ahead, but just keep in mind that interruptions will come along—a baby with a fever, a toddler with a skinned knee, a neighbor with an emergency, a mommy with a migraine, or simply a beautiful fall day that just begs for hours and hours spent outside instead of on academics.

In the summer, I worked on an overall plan for the year, just to make sure we did enough pages and lessons to complete the subject. Then over the weekends, I used that as a guideline to make my plans for the week. Each child had their own notebook with assignments for

each day written on separate pages. The "seatwork" assignments—work the kids could do independently—were often signified by an asterisk or a sticker. Those written notes without a sticker meant the child worked with me for that assignment.

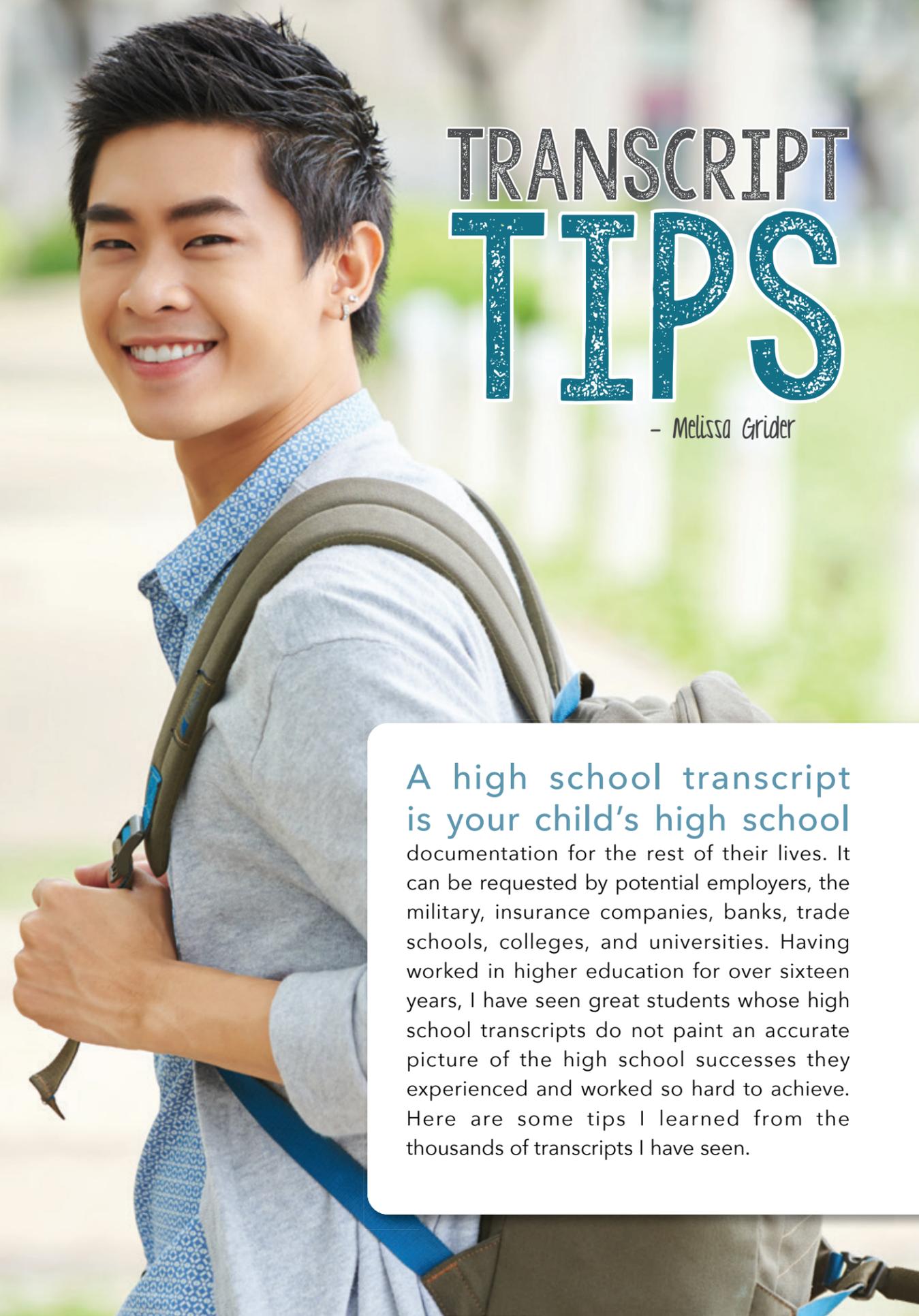
Then, each night after the children went to bed, I could glance at their assignments for the next day and pull out any supplies needed, and have those readily available. (Disclaimer: I am a night-owl and tend to stay up late; therefore it was easiest for me to gather supplies then. Many of my homeschooling friends were morning moms, and they liked to get up much earlier than their children, have quiet time, and then gather supplies and look over lesson plans.)

After everyone was asleep was also the time I would lay out the newborn's clothes for the next day, or pick out which new sensory activity I wanted to rotate into the schoolroom for the toddler for the next day, or organize my thoughts and recipes and ingredients for lunchtime. I tried to be as organized as possible the night before to make the next day go smoother.

Stay Flexible

Though I mentioned it several paragraphs back, I think it is important to remember to stay flexible. Having been an elementary public school teacher before I had my kids and then later became a homeschooling mommy, I started off with rigid ideas about completing everything on my lesson plan for every day. I found out quickly that not only was that not good for our sanity, it just was not necessary either. We could almost always catch up on another day

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TRANSCRIPT TIPS

– Melissa Grider

A high school transcript is your child's high school documentation for the rest of their lives. It can be requested by potential employers, the military, insurance companies, banks, trade schools, colleges, and universities. Having worked in higher education for over sixteen years, I have seen great students whose high school transcripts do not paint an accurate picture of the high school successes they experienced and worked so hard to achieve. Here are some tips I learned from the thousands of transcripts I have seen.

GETTING STARTED

Create a transcript early in your child's high school career. Add grades each semester to keep it up-to-date. It is much more difficult to go back several years to gather grades.

Strive to have your child complete an equivalent to Indiana's Core 40 requirements for high school graduation. This is often the minimum standard that college admissions offices will require for admission.

Use a chronological year-by-year format. If you do not use a chronological format, the reader may think you are hiding something. If you have a student who struggled to complete a course in a year's time, you can include it in the year it was completed.

A transcript that shows grades for each semester is preferred over a transcript that has only one grade for the entire year per course.

Transcripts should be easy to read. Make it look professional and organized. You do not have to pay to have it done – a simple Excel spreadsheet or Word document will work.

Choose good, but short course titles. Make them reflect what your student studied. This is not a time to be creative or vague with course titles. Try to stay consistent with a typical high school course title (World History rather than Revolutionaries throughout History or Indigenous Histories of the Americas).

Keep the transcript short. You do not have to send course descriptions unless asked to do so. If asked to provide course descriptions, include a title, book(s) used, and a short description of the course.

WHAT TO INCLUDE

Include identifying information. Legal name, birthdate, address, email, and phone number should all be easy to find. Please use your email and phone number instead of your student's since questions about the transcript should come to you.

Use letter grades A, B, C, D, F for all courses. Pass/Fail should only be used for physical education courses, if at all.

Calculate a GPA. You can use any scale you choose (A=90-100, B=80-90, etc. or A=4.0, B=3.0, etc.) Include your scale on your transcript so that the reader knows what was used. A 4.0 scale is the most common scale for calculating a GPA.

Include any dual credit (college) courses on the transcript in the semester they are completed, but add an asterisk or designate in some way that they are a college course. While some families may choose to give one year of high school credit for a college course, my recommendation is to list the college course as a one-semester high school course and weight the grade: instead of a normal A=4.0 scale, an A=5.0, B=4.0, C=3.0, D=2.0, F=0. Foreign language, math, or science courses that are worth 4 or 5 college credits can easily count for one year of high school credit and have a weighted grade.

You can include test scores on the transcript, but you will also need to have scores sent directly to a college or university from ACT or College Board or CLT for them to be considered official. Contact the college you are interested in to find out specifics about their entrance exam requirements.

If you designate a course as honors, please be sure you require an adequate amount of work to justify the honors designation. I usually steer homeschoolers away from honors designations and suggest doing dual credit college courses. Dual credit definitely requires more work (justifying the weighted grade), is taught and graded by someone other than you, and allows your student to "test" college before leaving home.

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NOW WHAT?

Send a pdf, not a Word or Excel document that can be easily changed. Many electronic applications will only accept a pdf document.

Keep several copies of your child's transcript in different places so that it can be retrieved at any time in the future when they need it (even decades after they graduate!) Generally, it is not necessary to have it notarized, but some places may require it.

A transcript is a summary of your child's high school years and should not be an afterthought. Careful planning and documentation make the process much easier. A transcript is an official document that should reflect the excellence you demanded during these four years you worked together. ■



Melissa Grider has worked in higher education in the Indianapolis area for 16 years and has seen thousands of high school transcripts. She homeschooled her two children through high school and both are successful college students. She has presented at the IAHE conference and at local groups about transcripts and dual credit.



Good luck!



Want to learn more about creating transcripts? Head over to the IAHE shop for MP3s by Melissa Grider & other homeschool veterans!

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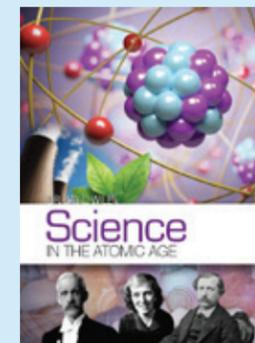
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An Oxymoron: Publicly-Funded Homeschooling

— Debi Ketron

Over the years, there's been a nationwide trend in

both federal and state leadership asserting "homeschoolers need government money." The term, "publicly-funded homeschooling" has been commonly uttered. What is the problem with this? An oxymoron can be defined as "a combination of contradictory or incongruous words", and we can quickly determine that "publicly-funded homeschooling" is just that. One cannot accept government funds and have an expectation of freedom regarding what our children learn, where they learn, how they learn, and when they learn.

In our nation's early history, families either taught their children at home, or they were taught in private brick and mortar schools. Public or Common Schools were basically non-existent. Our nation's literacy rate was very high at this time. In our state, we like to say that Abraham Lincoln was one of our first Indiana homeschoolers. He moved to Indiana at the time of statehood but had very little formal education. He received the vast majority of his education at home.

The Common School movement which began in other states prior to Indiana statehood was, according to E.G. West, author of Education and The State: A Study in Political Economy, for families who chose not to educate their children privately. The Common Schools, which are included in Article 8 of our state Constitution, were originally not universal, compulsory, or free. They were founded in the rural parts of states to provide biblical literacy. Families had to pay a fee to have their children attend a Common School. Those who benefited financially from the Common Schools were the ones who advocated for them to become universal, compulsory, and free.

In 1923, Meyer v. Nebraska affirmed parents have the "right to control the education of their own" children. In 1925, Pierce v. Society of Sisters reaffirmed the right of parents and guardians "to direct the education and upbringing of children under their control." It also stated, "the child is not the mere creature of the State; those who nurture him and direct his destiny have the right, coupled with the high duty, to recognize and prepare him for additional obligations." Numerous other cases support parental rights as well as the First Amendment that protects the religious liberty of faith-based home educators.

Let's fast forward to the early 1980s. From the humble beginnings of the Common (public or government) Schools, now the vast

majority of families send their children to them. Most families probably don't realize their beginnings were meant to be for those who chose not to take personal responsibility to educate their children. Prayer and Bible reading had been removed from the Common Schools in the 1960s. Families begin to notice they do not like what their children are being taught.

Outcome-Based Education (OBE), which was the forerunner of Common Core, crept into the public school system in the 1980s and 1990s. Some opt for private brick and mortar schools. For many, tuition to a private brick and mortar school is cost-prohibitive.

John Holt and Dr. Raymond and Dorothy Moore were advocates in the early days of the modern homeschool movement for an old idea that had become new again. It's the idea of home education.

Homeschool families faced jail time and the potential loss of their children in the 1980s and in some states in the 1990s in order to have the right to direct the education and upbringing of their children at home. Indiana Association of Home Educators was founded in 1983 to advocate for the right of parents to teach their children at home apart from government involvement.

Today, we continue to advocate for that right for all families. Homeschoolers' education rights strengthen non-homeschoolers' parental rights. They may not choose to home educate, but the liberty we protect benefits them as well. Those rights must be vigorously defended today more than ever. There are a number of organizations here in Indiana that seek to limit those rights.

Homeschoolers understand that whoever funds education controls the education. This is why we vehemently oppose public funding for homeschoolers in order for parents to maintain control of their child's education. If the state wants to cut taxes to allow families to keep more of our money, we believe that would be a wonderful idea that would help many families. Unfortunately, once tax dollars funnel through the government, it must be viewed as tainted. Taxpayer dollars must accompany taxpayer accountability as we have seen with Indiana's vouchers.

Homeschoolers need to be very wary of any politician or lobbyist who wants to "help" us with government funding. That is the type of "help" that Ronald Reagan warned us about when he said, "The nine scariest words in the English language are: I'm from the government, and I'm here to help." Home educators have proven that we can provide a superior education at a reasonable cost. Families of all income levels are home educators. It takes motivation, commitment, and perseverance and those are qualities that money cannot buy.

Will you stand with the IAHE to protect and maintain a parent's right to direct the education and upbringing of their child apart from government involvement so that we can pass the baton to the next generation of home educators? ■



Debi Ketron was a homeschool mom for 21 years. She served on the boards of IAHE & IAHE Action and as the Director of Government Affairs. She was a founder of IAHE Action and local homeschool support groups in Cincinnati, OH, and southeastern Indiana. She lives in Region 14.



I'M TOO YOUNG TO VOTE, BUT CAN I SEE YOUR ID, PLEASE?

When you vote in an election, you are greeted by a team of people who check your ID's, give you a proper ballot, and help guide you along the way. It is the job of this team, election poll workers, to make sure the voting process runs smoothly and with accuracy.

If you voted at the Stinesville Lions Club in south central Indiana, you may have even seen me! I was a 16-year-old, blue-haired girl who tried my best to help where I could. For young people who, like me, aren't sure if they are ready to join the workforce yet, I would encourage you to try working the election polls! It was really fun, and I was able to meet a lot of friendly people, gain some useful work experience, and even make a couple of friends!

The work itself was challenging, but not overwhelming, and it would make a perfect first job. I personally gained a lot of confidence by working there, and I will definitely do it again. Even if you are not a young person, and are considering a change of scenery, I would highly recommend this job as well. At my poll, the workers were very professional and friendly and chose to keep politics both out of their work and casual conversations. It was never awkward, and I certainly felt at home.

I think that everyone should work the polls at least once in their life because it feels truly gratifying to know that you served your country in such an impactful way. It put a deep sense of patriotism in my heart, and the process was just a blast! I really hope that I will be joined by new faces at the next election as I look forward to working the polls again! ■

CC Bowman is sixteen years old, and lives with her family and three rowdy dogs. She loves writing when she can find the time, and enjoyed writing this article for Homeschool Indiana.

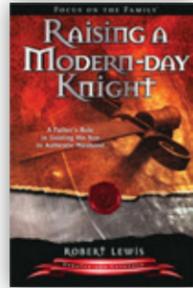
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The Familyman's Bathroom Book of Fathering
Todd Wilson

I am not sure that anything comes out of Milford, Indiana that is worth hearing about, but Todd Wilson's book is definitely worth taking note of and reading. In his classic style, Wilson uses wit, humor, and storytelling to address the very serious topic of fathering. His candidness about his failures will help ease the guilt many fathers feel about their own failures. Through personal stories, Wilson encourages dads to laugh and enjoy time with their kids no matter what they are doing. With this short book full of short chapters, Wilson is practicing what he preaches about "making every minute count."

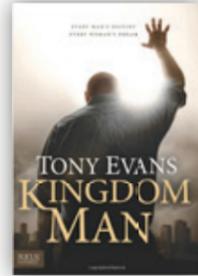
— Reviewed by Mike Sager



Raising a Modern-Day Knight: A Father's Role in Guiding His Son to Authentic Manhood
Robert Lewis

Robert Lewis was once asked, "How does a son grow into a man?" Not being able to articulately answer that question started Lewis on a journey to find out the answer. In medieval times, a boy's training started early and followed a planned and well-thought-out path. Following his study and reflection on this, Lewis reveals his discoveries and his thoughts on this journey from boyhood to manhood. Lewis says that dads "want a process that calls their sons to be godly men." The question is how to accomplish that. Lewis addresses that here as he teaches dads practical, doable steps to take to implant a noble vision of masculinity in their sons and guide them toward authentic manhood. More than ever, our society needs men who understand their God-given role, and this book is just the tool that dads need to set their sons on the right path.

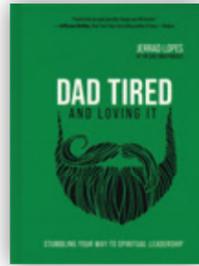
— Reviewed by Mike Sager



Kingdom Man: Every Man's Destiny, Every Woman's Dream
Tony Evans

Tony Evans' book *Kingdom Man* opens with a sentence that perfectly summarizes the point of his book: "A kingdom man is the kind of man that when his feet hit the floor each morning, the devil says, 'Oh crap, he's up!'" Evans skillfully walks men through what Scripture tells them to be, a true Kingdom Man. Using his 40+ years of pastoral and ministry experience, Dr. Evans discusses what Scripture says about the role of men in this world and how men effectively further the Kingdom. He challenges the cultural views of men and lays out the foundation of how to live your life for the Kingdom. Part of his Kingdom series, this book is a must read for any man who needs help and encouragement leading and serving well.

— Reviewed by Timothy Carey, Jr.



Dad Tired and Loving It: Stumbling Your Way to Spiritual Leadership
Jerrad Lopes

As dads, we all struggle with how to lead our families well. That's where Jerrad Lopes can help. Condensing tools from his popular blog and podcast, Lopes guides men through what it really means to be the spiritual leader in your home. Aply titled *Dad Tired and Loving It: Stumbling Your Way to Spiritual Leadership*, Lopes addresses the constant struggle of husbands and fathers: being physically and spiritually exhausted. Lopes uses Scripture to remind men of their unique calling to lead in the home by keeping Christ at the center of it all. Blending his pastoral wisdom and laugh-out-loud funny stories, Lopes will guide you on a journey that will leave you feeling edified and prepared to approach your life and family in a new way.

— Reviewed by Timothy Carey, Jr.

IN THEIR WORDS

An Interview with the Mom of a Special Learner



Monica McNeil is a wife and mother of two. She and her husband decided to bring their nine-year-old special learner home to educate him, after he started begging to not go back to school. He is now thriving at home and eager to learn. Monica agreed to talk with Homeschool Indiana's Managing Editor, Amy Sager, about the blessings and challenges of homeschooling a special learner.

Tell us about your family and what brought you into homeschooling. We are a family of four. I have a 23-year-old son who graduated from a charter school and a 9-year-old son I am currently homeschooling. My husband has been blessed with the opportunity to work from home this year.

We made the decision to homeschool when my youngest was in first grade. He was wilting in the public school system and begged me not to make him go to school. He had known special needs and unknown special needs at that time. I was paying for private occupational therapy for him. While his teachers were both aware of that fact, one of his teachers would get in his face and yell at him because she couldn't read his writing. I requested an evaluation for services at his school. I figured they should be part of the solution, not part of the problem. They said he was too young to be evaluated for dyslexia and denied him all other services, including occupational therapy. We decided to homeschool him.

What positive changes did you notice in your son once you brought him home to homeschool him? My son showed an eagerness to learn that I didn't see from him when he was in public school. He was happier because he no longer had to manage the pressures put on him at school. He began to see that even though he struggled with reading due to dyslexia and writing due to fine motor skill challenges,

he was not "stupid." It broke my heart to hear him call himself that. I am thankful he doesn't say that anymore. I am even more thankful he doesn't believe that anymore!

What resources and/or testing services have you found to help you homeschool your special learner?

After we started homeschooling, we had him evaluated for dyslexia and autism. For about a year, we attended tutoring sessions to help with his dyslexia. With the onset of the pandemic, his tutor canceled the tutoring lessons, and we have yet to secure any services for the autism. When society begins functioning more normally again, we look forward to exploring other options that homeschoolers around us can suggest.

Have you found community for yourself and your son? How has that been a support and encouragement for both of you on your homeschooling journey?

We found a Classical Conversations community in Muncie the first year. I do not believe we would have been nearly as successful with our homeschooling if it were not for the amazing support and structure we have received from others in the Classical Conversations community.

What advice do you have for other parents who are considering homeschooling their special learner?

Homeschooling is such a sweet part of our relationship. Be a student of your child. Learn about them. Discover how they learn best. Be open to change. If something doesn't work for your child, try something else. Be your child's biggest cheerleader. Seek help and support for you and your child. As a whole, the homeschool community is very supportive. Believe you can do it. ■

SPECIAL LEARNERS

and Homeschooling — Staci Morgan

Choosing to homeschool our children opens the door to make many decisions for our children that we never even knew were ours to make. When taking on the task of being the primary educator to our children, we soon find we are asking ourselves a multitude of varied questions:

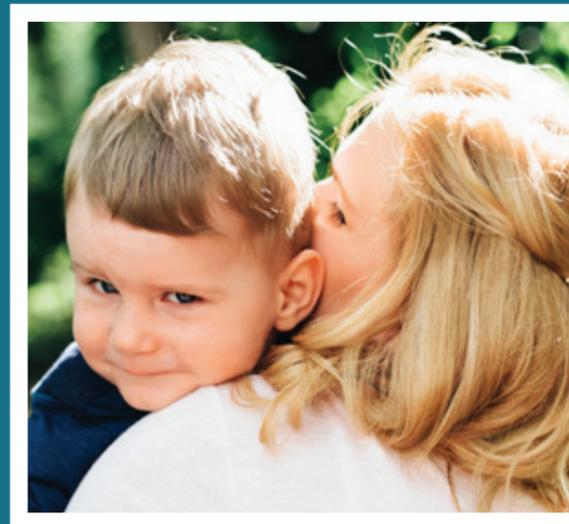
Can I really do this? What do I need to teach them so that they can become who God made them to be? What materials do I need to teach them good handwriting skills, math facts, history, grammar, or even art?

As if there are not enough decisions to make as a homeschooling parent, those of us with special learners soon find we face even more decisions, one of which may lead to an opening of Pandora's box.

Ask Questions/Consider Answers

A frequently asked question of the Indiana Association of Home Educators' (IAHE) Special Learners Team is: "How do I keep my child's IEP?" Questions that may soon follow are, "How do I transition them to an ISP?" or "How do I get services for my special learner?" Though this may be the question of the hour from someone first transferring their special learner from public school to homeschooling, it brings to light a question that begs to be asked of all parents homeschooling special learners. Since there is no "one size fits all" with special learners' families, we must stair-step our way through the decisions that need to be made.

I know it can be scary as you make these decisions, but once you have explored what your outcome goals are for your special learner, it will be much easier to plot out your steps to get there.



First, we need to ask ourselves: "What is my end goal for my child's education?" For some families with special learners, they will have college-bound students; others may have a student permanently living at home; other families may fall anywhere in between this.

If we believe our child needs some type of service or therapy, then we need to ask ourselves, "What am I wanting to gain out of the services or therapies to be received?" Another way to put this is, "How will the service(s) benefit my child in meeting the end goal we have set for my child's education?"

Some people tend to solely defer the answers to these questions to the professionals by saying, "Whatever the physician, psychologist, speech or occupational therapist says." But I challenge you, while working in cooperation with the specialist, to consider for your own family, for your own individual child—What is the end goal you are looking for from the therapy? When we ponder this question, then we can step forward in finding what best fits our child. We can also adjust our decisions of the what, when, where, and how of services as the child grows physically, intellectually, emotionally, and even spiritually.

Obtain Services

Once a family has decided what the end goal of education is and what services will help their child meet the end educational goals, they will then need to consider their capacity for obtaining these services/therapies. Maybe your family can meet the financial and time constraints in order to obtain services in the private sector. However, one or both of these resources may be limited for your family. Thus, your family may find themselves in need of some assistance in locating these resources.

The IAHE wants you to know, we understand how overwhelming this can be to homeschooling parents of special learners. We also want you to know you are not alone as you walk this path of exploring so many decisions. That is why the IAHE has a dedicated spot on the website at iahe.net/special-learner and an IAHE Special Learners Homeschool Support Group on Facebook for families like you. We have resources listed for you and a team of volunteers ready to assist you as needed.

I know it can be scary as you make these decisions, but once you have explored what your outcome goals are for your special learner, it will be much easier to plot out your steps to get there.

Follow These Steps

This can all be a little overwhelming, so here are a few steps to help guide you as you make decisions for your special learner.

- Decide what the end goal is for your special learner's education.
- Decide what services and/or therapies are best for your special learner.
- Decide what resources (financial & time) you have available for obtaining these services.
- Research and reach out to homeschooling families near you to determine what is available locally.
- Reach out to the IAHE. We are here to help.

Decide if you want to obtain private services (you are fully in charge of who/what/where/when), or if you want to obtain services through the local school district that your child is assigned to. Maybe you will choose a combination of the two options to obtain the outcome you most desire for your child.

This just begins to cover the process of helping you and your special learner succeed in homeschooling. Keep an eye on the Special Learners page on the IAHE website for more articles and information to come that will consider, in detail, all options for obtaining services, whether at home, from the local school district, or a combination.

Remember, you are not alone on this journey. Many families are obtaining the therapy/services they need and are successfully homeschooling their special learners. You can too! ■



Staci Morgan, MSN, RN holds a pediatric-focused master's degree in Nursing but admits her real education has come from being a mother to and homeschooling her four children that vary in special giftings ranging from learning disorders to academic giftedness to mental and physical conditions.

Indiana Association of Home Educators

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HOMESCHOOL DAY AT THE CAPITOL

Thursday, February 11, 2021

Date Change!

*Creativity and
homeschooling always
go hand-in-hand, and
this year is no exception.
Wait till you see the
creative ideas that are
being developed for this
year's **Homeschool Day**
at the Capitol!*

STAY TUNED FOR MORE DETAILS: iahe.net/capitol-day