

The **Inform**er

a publication of the Indiana Association of Home Educators

Fall 2014

Writing Fiction  
[in High School]  
**REVIEW**

Demolishing Homeschool  
**STEREOTYPES**

**Fall Crafts**  
*with* **Kids**

**F.A.Qs:** *Homeschooling  
in Indiana*

**2015 IAHE  
CONVENTION  
SNEAK PEEK**  
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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

*Now you must know that a town mouse once upon a time went on a visit to his cousin in the country. He was rough and ready, this cousin, but he loved his town friend and made him heartily welcome. Beans and bacon, cheese and bread, were all he had to offer, but he offered them freely. The town mouse rather turned up his long nose at this country fare, and said, "I cannot understand, cousin, how you can put up with such poor food as this, but of course you cannot expect anything better in the country; come you with me and I will show you how to live. When you have been in town a week you will wonder how you could ever have stood a country life."*

As our family finished our own homeschool journey this spring, I've spent a lot of time reflecting on the the past thirteen years. One of the key lessons that I have learned is that there is no *right* way to homeschool. My goal with this issue of *The Informer* is to give you a glimpse into some of the very different ways that Indiana families homeschool.

Too often, moms compare themselves to the families around them, and feel like they are doing something wrong if they don't fit a certain stereotype of what they think a homeschool family should look like. We have two articles that showcase some of the differences that actually reflect the individual beauty of homeschooling. From the different ways moms plan their homeschool days, to a look at homeschool life in the country compared to life in the city. The beauty of homeschooling is finding the individual path that God has put before us to educate our children.

We are not called to mimic the world around us. We are not called to homeschool our children the same way as our neighbor. God has made us as individuals, and our homeschools will be as varied as our children. I hope that our glimpse at different families will encourage you.

We are also very excited to share with you a sneak peek at our 2015 IAHE Home Educators' Convention! Now is the perfect time to make your plans to attend.

What type of things would you like to see in *The Informer* for the new school year? Would you like to submit an article? I'd love to hear from you.

I pray that your school year is blessed!

*Tara Bentley*

### 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. 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



New Reps  
for Region

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Chris & Betty  
BROSHEARS

Chris and Betty Broshears have been homeschooling for 9 years, all of them in Greenwood, where they are members of Mount Pleasant Christian Church. Their two boys, ages 14 and 10, have been homeschool students since preschool. Betty is a former public school teacher with a bachelor's degree in early childhood education from Indiana University, and is active in the Greenwood Home Educators support group, where she has served as board chairman, co-leader, secretary, and as lead teacher for several age groups. Chris graduated from Butler University with a major in mathematics and a minor in computer science. He has worked in the software industry for 18 years, and enjoys serving as a quizmaster for local and national Bible Bowl competitions. ■



### Regional Representatives

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

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

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New Reps  
for Region

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Toby & Cindy  
MILLER

Toby and Cindy Miller have been married for 20 years and live with their 10-year-old daughter Sami, and their beloved bloodhound, Daisy Duke, in Brazil, IN. They knew they wanted to homeschool early on and are in their 6th year now going strong. They have been active in their local homeschool support group for several years where Cindy is currently leader. They are also active in 4-H and church activities, and love spending time on their favorite hobbies: drawing, gardening, and baking. They appreciate having the freedom to homeschool and love being able to focus on teaching Godly character while learning. They are eager to find ways to encourage other people with their homeschool journey. ■



*now's the time to enroll.*

# CLASSES BEGIN **AUGUST 25**

Looking for the next step after high school for your student? Encourage him or her to enroll at Ivy Tech Community College for the Fall 2014 semester. **Classes begin August 25**, so now's the time to act.

Contact us today and we can make sure your high school graduate is prepared to complete all the required enrollment steps, access financial aid and scholarship information, and select the right classes. The earlier students start, the more options they have — and the more likely they are to succeed.

Ivy Tech is also a great choice for supplementing a high school student's homeschool curriculum. Ivy Tech provides quality, accessible, and affordable classes in subjects that may be hard to manage in a homeschool setting, like advanced math, foreign language, and lab-based science courses. Best of all, your student will earn college credit while still in high school, saving money and time toward a college degree in the long run.

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# Writing Fiction [in High School] REVIEW

—Tara Bentley

The Power in Your Hands  
Writing Nonfiction in High School

BRINGING YOUR  
STORIES TO LIFE!

Who agrees to review a writing curriculum in the final weeks of her child's high school graduation? This silly blonde, of course!

Why? Because it's about writing fiction! Isn't that wonderful? Plus, it's written by Indiana's very own Sharon Watson. How could I resist?

*Writing Fiction [In High School]: Bringing Your Stories to Life!*

- A two-semester course for English credit
- No prerequisites needed
- Practical lessons and approximately 100 interesting assignments
- Hundreds of age-appropriate fiction examples from classics to recent novels
- Optional manuscript track for teens who have already written a story

Not surprisingly, we didn't get too far into the curriculum before the whirlwind of graduation came down upon us. But, we delved in far enough for me to share how much we loved it!

Here are my top reasons why:

**First**, Sharon does a great job of laying the foundation for writing before jumping in too deep. With lots of examples, students are exposed to important concepts such as the critical hook in the first sentence, where story ideas come from, and the characters' point of view. While some students may be chomping at the bit to start writing novels, the curriculum starts at a slow pace with a strong foundation.

**Second**, the curriculum is flexible. Designed to be used with a group for a full year, it is easily adaptable for different situations. Some lessons are shorter than others, meaning that some students or groups may be able to move quickly at different points if desired. There are multiple writing activities, including the manuscript track, for students who want to dig in even deeper.

**Third**, the supplemental materials and resources are fun for students and easily accessible for mom. From writing their own life story as a fairy tale, to watching *The Princess Bride* or *Sense and Sensibility*, Sharon utilizes stories that many students are already familiar with to teach them story structure and theme. By analyzing movies and other materials that they already enjoy, students are more open to the critique process as they work through their own stories.

**Fourth...** Ooops! I really was only going to give you my top three, since the curriculum has taught us the importance of 'threes', but I couldn't help pointing out... the price! For less than \$40 you have a full year's writing curriculum. For high school curriculum, this is a bargain!

Will this curriculum be perfect for you and your student?

Maybe. I LOVED the flexibility of how the lessons and activities were set-up, allowing you to move at the pace of your student and your group. But I know that some families desire a structured lesson plan, with a daily checklist of what to do next. You will not find a daily lesson plan in this curriculum. But to be clear, writing doesn't work that way. There is no daily checklist for writing. The key is to write, write, write.

One of the first things Sharon shares in the book is that every writer's process is different. And to pull a quote she includes in the student book, "There are three rules for writing a novel. Unfortunately no one knows what they are." –Somerset Maugham, author of *Of Human Bondage*

~~~  
I received a copy of this curriculum for free in exchange for a honest and fair review. I received no other compensation, and I am free to give you my opinion, good & bad.

This review originally appeared on [www.theblondemotherbear.com](http://www.theblondemotherbear.com) for the review team of Home & School Mosaics, <http://homeschoolmosaics.com>.



# Writing: Let's Make It Easier!

by Sharon Watson

You've just read the title of this column and are laughing uncontrollably. I get it. Writing is hard. My students confirm this, and so do yours.

Many moms stop by my booth at homeschool conventions and report that their students have it "up here" (pointing to their head) but can't get it on paper. Let's start fixing that today.

What creates this strange head-to-hand disconnect? One major reason is that students don't organize their thoughts or plan their papers. Big mistake. They think it's a time waster; but you know otherwise. The following is a short activity on opinion writing, devised for success. Practice it with your students. They won't actually be writing this essay, which is one of the reasons this activity works so well.

1. Choose a topic that interests them. It can be something goofy ("Why children should never do chores"), on their radar ("Why I should be allowed to get a job"), or be related to something they are involved in ("The benefits of playing soccer").

2. Let them spitball anything on the topic. This is called brainstorming and should not be edited, hampered, or thwarted in any way. Here, there are no "dumb ideas." Throw perfection out the window. Include siblings or friends in the brainstorming session, if you wish, and watch the number of ideas multiply and become more creative. To unplug the flow of ideas, try asking this question: "What do you want people to know about this?"

Don't organize the ideas. No bubbles, webs, lists, or outlines. No writing down and then scratching out. This is not the time to evaluate the ideas. Let them flow—whether silly or serious. Practical, essay-worthy ideas often come from silly ones. Strange but awesome tip: use a whiteboard, a large piece of paper, or a lined sheet of paper turned sideways. Brainstorming seems less like work this way.

3. Let them choose three ideas they could write about and that seem to fit together. Because they are not going to write this essay, they'll have an easier time of choosing three points. The pressure is off. Then ask them if some left-over points could be used to support any of their three points. Likely, some will.

4. Ask them to arrange their three main points into an order that makes sense. They don't have to know anything about point orders and neither do you. It's been my experience that students have an innate sense of how to organize their points—if only they would think about them for a little while. Ask them to explain why they chose that order for their points.

Have fun with this activity. If you walk through it once or twice a week, your students will find that planning and organizing an essay will stop being the heart-clenching, Kleenex-inducing chore it is today. Moving information from the head to the hand will succumb to gravity and become almost effortless.

Yours for a more vibrant writing class,

Sharon ■



**SHARON WATSON**, author of *Jump In*, *Apologia's popular middle school writing course*, is an 18-year veteran of homeschooling with three adult children, two granddaughters, and one terrific husband. *The Power in Your Hands: Writing Nonfiction in High School* is *Jump In's* practical sequel. In her informative blog, she equips you to be the teacher you want to be. Her fun *Middle School Prompts* and engaging *High School Prompts* will get your students writing again. Go to [WritingWithSharonWatson.com](http://WritingWithSharonWatson.com) for FREE writing lessons when you subscribe. Photo by Esther Moulder of ClickPhotography.biz.

# Making Plans



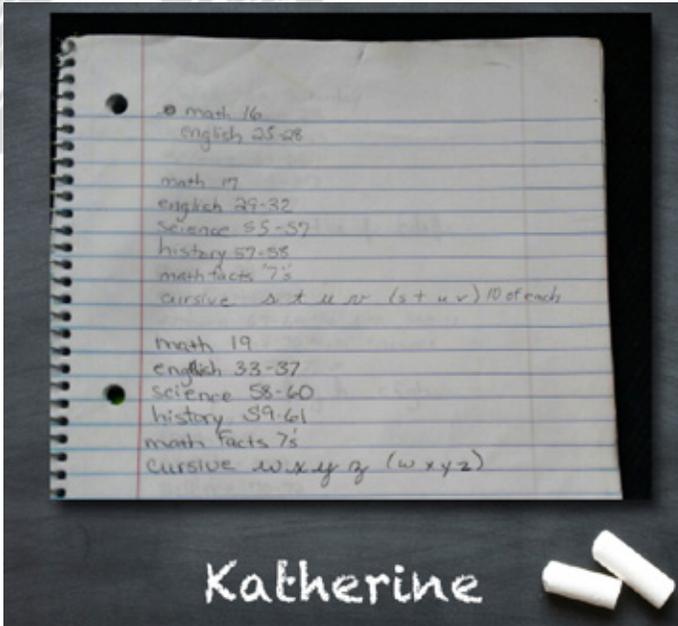
—by Debbie Spence

With each new school year comes the opportunity to make new plans. Last year's plans may not have worked out the way you had hoped. The quote by Robert Burns is absolutely true: "The best laid plans of mice and men often go awry." Even though life and plans change, having a pre-planned destination is still the best course to take. Otherwise, you will not likely accomplish the goals you have for your school or family.

Homeschool plans vary just as each mom and school varies. The format that works best for you is the format that you should use. Whatever method you choose to use, remember that plans change. Be willing to adjust as the need arises. Do not write your plans in cement, but stay focused and know what it is that you are trying to accomplish.



**DEBBIE SPENCE** is beginning her 20th year of homeschooling. She and her husband Steve have been married 31 years and have five children. Her blog exists to encourage overly-busy moms to slow down and smell the roses. Her hope is to help all moms find freedom from driven lifestyles and guilt. You can find her blog at <http://debbiespence.com/>

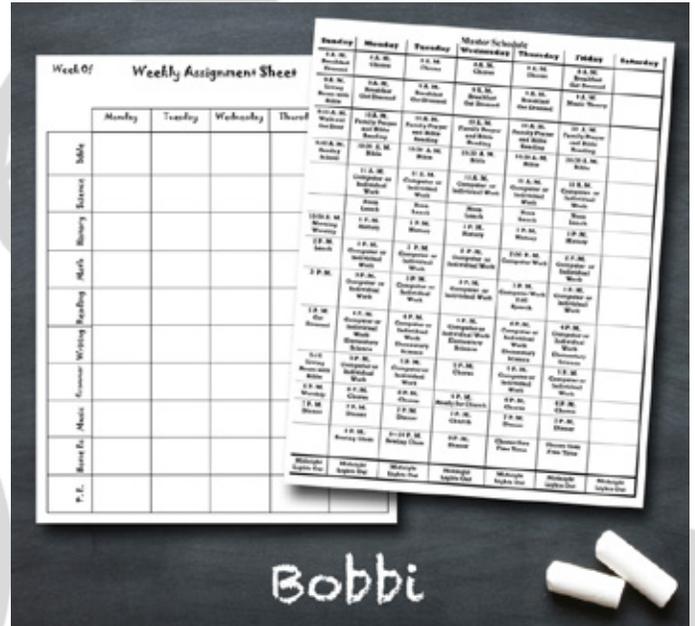


Katherine

As a working mom, it is important to Katherine to make daily plans for her children. She hand writes lessons on a daily basis for each of her children. They keep these in a notebook and the children cross off the completed items. Writing lessons daily keeps things fluid with a changing work schedule.

**KATHERINE**

Working mom of four children, ages 5-14



Bobbi



Bobbi has created her own spreadsheet that she uses to keep her family organized. With more children than available computers, and outside activities for some children, a spreadsheet for each child helps them get their turns on the computer for school work and leaves no one running around with nothing to do. In addition, each child has his or her own notebook that lists their daily lessons.

**BOBBI JASAY**

Mother of eight children, ages 3-17



Patti



Patti uses "Home School Planet," an online scheduling tool. Each child can go online, follow his or her own schedule, and check off completed items. The best feature is that when things are not completed, it gives you the option to automatically reschedule. It costs \$65 a year but they offer a 30 day free trial.

**PATTI WEITZEL**

Mother of two children, ages 8 and 11



Michelle

Each week Michelle puts a hand-written assignment sheet in each child's notebook. It tells them what subjects to do each day. They know what assignment should be next. The children check off completed subjects. They follow a regular weekly schedule but leave room for flexibility.

**MICHELLE BYRUM**

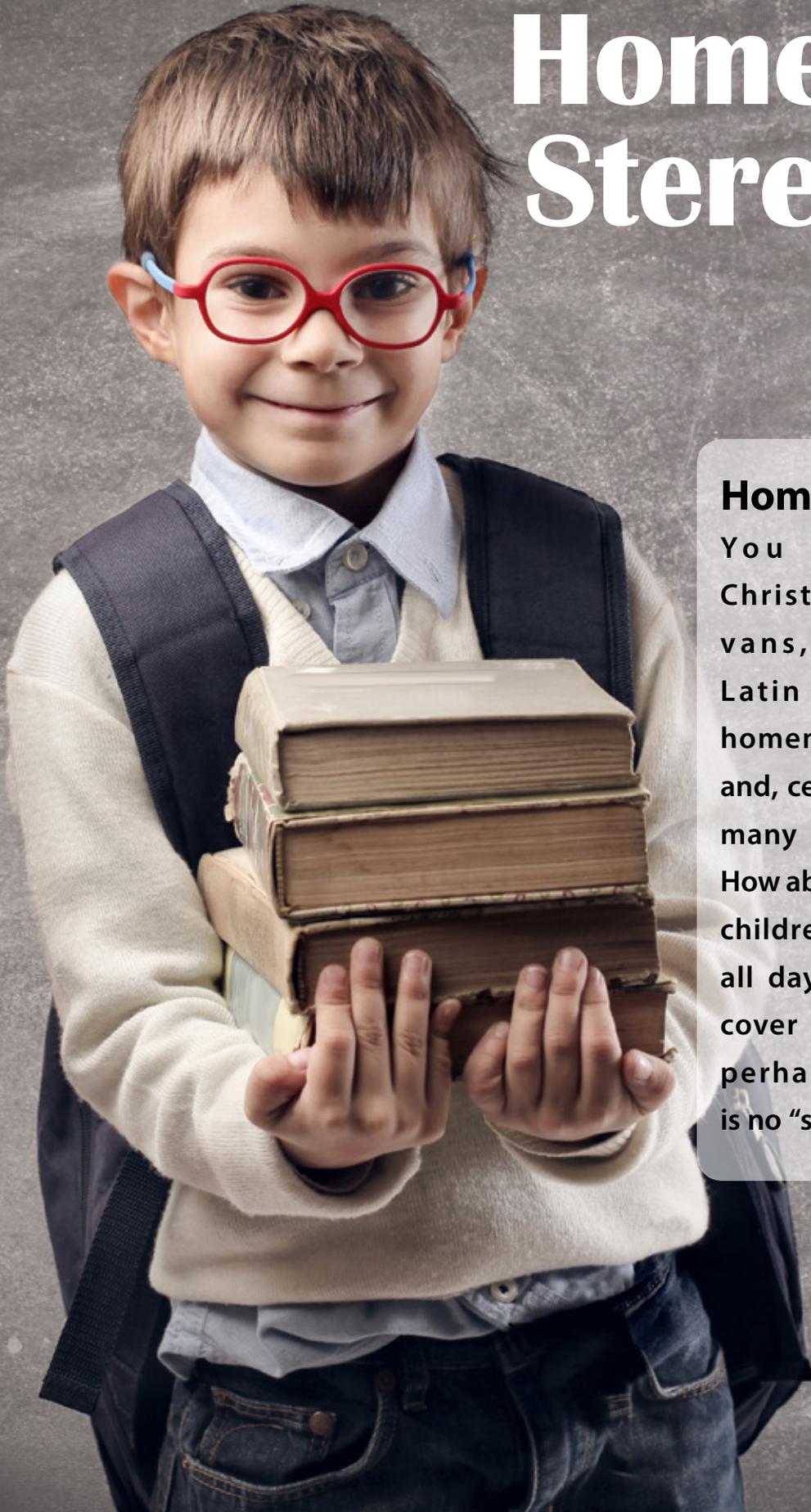
Mother of four children, ages 8-13

# Demolishing Homeschool Stereotypes

—Aleisha Whitesell

## **Homeschool stereotypes.**

You know—conservative Christians, jean jumpers, big vans, children who know Latin and play instruments, homemade bread, no television, and, certainly, no socialization. How many of you fit that description? How about the opposite: uneducated children who sleep late and play all day? Homeschool stereotypes cover one extreme to the other, perhaps indicating that there is no “stereotypical homeschooler”.



At one time, homeschoolers may have appeared alike but only because their beliefs and family visions were similar. Today, even the reasons parents homeschool vary as much as the families doing it; although, most reasons ensue from parents doing what they think is best for their children. Perhaps a glance into the lives of four Indiana homeschooling families will help break down these faulty impressions and demonstrate the existing variety. I assure you they look nothing like the description above!



## Black Family

Stephanie, Aaron, Finn (6), Jude (8)

Living fifteen minutes from downtown Indianapolis, the Blacks have two boys, ages six and eight. Although they hold school year round, taking breaks for holidays and a yearly vacation, their school days are short. School occurs from 9-noon; daily work including math, reading, and handwriting, plus science and grammar for the oldest. Other subjects are accomplished through unit studies and self-guided learning. After lunch, afternoons are reserved for field trips, reading, and playing. Play includes pretend games based on book characters, superheroes, and other inventions; Legos; games; and an hour of screen time (Kindle, computer games). They participate in co-op once a week, and join friends for frequent play days.

Living in Indianapolis greatly affects their homeschooling by supplying a large library for books and programs along with zoos, museums, college campuses, and a nearby highway for regular visits to other large cities including Bloomington, Chicago, and Cincinnati. As a family, they enjoy state parks, local festivals, community events, and free concerts. Steph's main reason for homeschooling is that she loves spending time with her kids and realized that sending them to traditional school would require sacrificing that time. She also believes that she can provide the quality one-on-one time that they presently need.



## Smith Family

(Back row): Teddy (17), Matthias (27), John-Michael (25), Thaddeus (17), Tristan (29), Seth (19), Lemuel (21); (Second row): Jessica (31), Katie (33), Don, daughter-in-law Haley (19), Wesley (22), Jennifer, Gabe (12), Miriam (14)

The Smiths are blessed with twelve children ranging from age thirty-three to twelve, nine men and three women. Five are married, blessing them with nine grandchildren. Homeschooling since 1986, none of the children have attended government or private schools. Using Advanced Training Institute curriculum for years, a homeschooling day looks quite different now, since moving to "the farm", than it did for the older children. Their days revolve around animals, gardening, and completing responsibilities. Academics consist primarily of writing personal copies of God's Law (Deuteronomy 17:18) for teaching handwriting, Bible study, and wisdom development; reading aloud daily from Psalms and Proverbs to learn expressive reading, diction, logical thinking, word definition, problem solving, and character; math; learning how to learn; interest-driven studies; and, for some children, seasons of intense study for CLEP test preparation. In their schooling, they stress the application and practice of God's Word. Activities include homeschool basketball, singing at a nursing home, church choir, 4-H, intervallic piano lessons, backyard sports, hiking, playing instruments, and firearm practice – all with friends and family. Many Fridays consist of baking and creating ferments for selling at farmer's market. Attempting to become as self-sufficient

# Homeschool stereotypes cover one indicating that there is

as reasonably possible, they raise beef, dairy cows, and grass-fed poultry on their fourteen acres. This requires much time but teaches responsibility and new skills, like making dairy products. The older children are now stay-at-home homeschooling moms, Casey's managers, electrical apprentices, self-taught theologians, musicians, and more.

Although realizing that she often fails to emphasize academics, Jennifer believes the Lord has called them to keep their children home and love them bountifully. Their primary reason for keeping the children out of public school was not the negative environment but the principles of Deuteronomy 6, charging parents to teach the Word through daily life – everywhere, all the time. This does not allow much time for bus rides or countless hours under unknown authority. Her homeschooling career adage is, “Use what you have, do what you can . . . and let God perfect it”. God ultimately does the work, and they are grateful that He prevented them from using the world's education system.



## Radke Family

Debra, Hudson (7), Colter (9), Jocelyn (11), Kayli (13), Jasmin (18), Mark

With five children ranging from age seven to nineteen, the Radkes live near Indianapolis' Garfield Park. Rising at 5am to read or exercise, Debra gets the kids up at 7:00. Twice a week they leave early for Classical Conversation's community days. Otherwise, they begin with devotions followed by academics including math, grammar, Latin, history, church history, literature, geography,

fine arts, and science. Stressing diligence and independent learning, they desire their children to understand that learning is a life-long pursuit and working hard is a delight, despite what our culture teaches.

To accommodate the children's peak learning time, they eat lunch around 12:30, following with house clean-up. The kids usually have two free hours before dinner, depending on schoolwork completion. They enjoy karate; playing dress-up with neighborhood kids; gardening; walking to the park; picnics; swimming; outdoor movie nights; and visiting the elderly, sick, and shut-in. One night a week is Bible Study Fellowship, and other nights contain dance, karate, and track practice.

Living in the city has both challenges and benefits. One perk is the field trip options, which, for the Radkes, include museums, the symphony, recycling plants, orchards, plays, and more – not enough time exists for everything! A drawback is the evident poverty and crime in close proximity. However, it also offers tremendous opportunities to build relationships and share the love of Christ while demonstrating the best way to live. Debra states that, “We are not ‘bubble homeschoolers’ trying to protect our kids from all the ills of society . . . the best way [for them] to learn how to respond is to see it modeled by [us]”. Hopefully, when the neighbors see Dad rising at a reasonable time, dressing in clean clothes, and driving to work daily, it will affect them and demonstrate a more rewarding lifestyle. During walks to the store, park, or library, they often stop by a homeless crowd to share food or hear great stories. Another challenge for urban homeschoolers is “to rest and be still”. It is unnecessary to do everything the city offers, sometimes it is better to sit down with tea and a book. Debra states that being the best teacher for her children must start with “attending to them – spiritually, intellectually, and emotionally”. Homeschooling partially because of the poor performance of surrounding schools, they also love that it enables efficient and individually paced learning while permitting parents to help their children develop their God-given talents and fulfill their created purpose for His glory.

# extreme to the other, perhaps no “stereotypical homeschooler”.



## Mitchell Family

Lillie (8), Josie (10), David, Michael (17),  
Ethan (12), Jessica, Maggie (1)

Living on twenty-five acres, the Mitchells have five children from ages one to seventeen with another due in October. Although toddlers create unpredictability, each week Jessica writes down each child’s assignments for every subject, keeping them focused. Rising by 7:30, they eat breakfast, pray, and read the Bible and a devotional together. Individually, the boys study theology, literature, history, math, grammar, composition, and science. The girls do Bible, history, math, grammar, spelling, reading, and Latin. They do geography and memorization together. During lunch prep, the kids play outside, and they often watch an Andy Griffith episode while eating to enliven the day. The school day usually ends by 4:00, after which the kids play. This includes backyard sports, riding 4-wheelers, creek wading, playing in forts, riding bikes, working in the shop, shooting sports, lifting weights,

and fishing. Living in the country enables many of these activities and is convenient when studying science. Chores, musical practice, and family mealtime follow. Tuesday and Thursday afternoons consist of music lessons and basketball practice. The school year extends from August until May; and, in summertime, the boys work for David’s drywall business which provides tremendous learning opportunities. Taking few field trips, they travel to Montana twice a year to visit family and for David to preach, taking advantage of amazing scenery and historical sites along the way. David participates in schooling by showing interest in projects, discussing theology and what is being learned, and leading family worship.

Explaining their reason for homeschooling, Jessica says, “I was so scared to start out on this overwhelming journey [three years ago]. I remember the night before our first day of school. I knelt down in our little schoolroom actually trembling inside, and prayed for wisdom, grace, strength, and courage. I have since started every day the same way . . . I am not able to do this job that I have been given to do . . . but my God is faithful! His mercies are new every morning, and his grace is sufficient. Our vision as a family for our little school is to see more of Christ. All of the subjects and activities listed are important to us, but oh, for our children to see more of Christ.” ■



**ALEISHA WHITESELL**, daughter of Karen and Warren Whitesell, is a homeschool graduate, recently graduating with a BA in music through CollegePlus!. She helps out at home, does farm chores, works at a bakery, teaches piano students, and loves reading. One passion is encouraging believers to aim higher in everything they do.

## HOMESCHOOL TIME OUT FOR LAUGHTER

**FAMILY MAN**  
todd wilson

### How women and men view curriculum vendors...



The idea for this cartoon was submitted by Dave Jorgensen.

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PEEK**

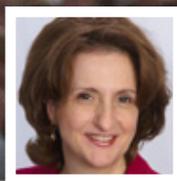
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Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you  
know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain. —1 Cor. 15:58**



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## Why Attend the IAHE Home Educators' Convention?

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Taken from 1 Corinthians 16:13

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Complete contest details will be posted to the website this fall ([www.iahe.net](http://www.iahe.net)) and will be included in the Winter issue of *The Informer*.

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**Entry deadline—  
Monday, February 23, 2015**

# We've Forgotten

— Ken Ham



*“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge”*  
—Hosea 4:6

As an Australian now living near Cincinnati, Ohio, growing up “down under” offered some unique experiences, including the time I once talked to an old Australian aboriginal elder.

This aborigine recalled roaming the deserts with his family many years ago in their tribal state. This old man had since become a Christian. He remembered that as a little boy — bound in this spiritist, anti-God culture — he asked his father one day: “What is God like, Father?” He said his father turned to him, and after a long pause said: “I don’t know, Son. We’ve forgotten.”



photo by ken ham

His father had forgotten because his father before him had forgotten. Their ancestors had known, but somewhere in their ancestry, a father had not passed on the truth about the God of creation to the next generation.

Many passages in the Bible command fathers to teach their children so that the correct information is passed on to, and implemented by, the next generation (e.g., Isaiah 38:19; Ephesians 6:4) so that they could stand strong in God’s work (1 Corinthians 15:58). Passages like these prompted Mally and me to homeschool all five of our children.

As I pondered my conversation with the Australian aboriginal, I realized that this same problem is being reflected not only within Christian families here in America, but also in Christian education as a whole. As I have had the opportunity to speak in hundreds of churches and dozens of schools in America, I have noticed that Christians do not have enough knowledge to defend the basics of their faith, much less to a skeptical generation.

In addition, from my experience in reviewing various Christian textbooks and visiting Christian schools, here is what I have largely discovered (with some happy exceptions): they basically take a secular way of thinking and just stamp God’s Word on it. In other words, they merely put Bible verses in the textbooks. And then we wonder why our young people don’t have a Christian worldview and why so many are leaving the church as young adults?

Now, according to the Bible, who is supposed to be the primary educator for children? It is the father (except, of course, when mothers are forced to raise their children without a father). One of the greatest problems in Christian homes today is that most husbands and fathers do not carry out their God-commanded responsibility to be the spiritual head of their family and to train their children (but leave it to others).

In America and other parts of the Western world today, it’s sad to hear a father and mother assume, “Oh, the kids are going to church and Sunday school, and we have them in a Christian school setting, so they’ll be fine.” In most instances, however, they need much more training in order to cope in an increasingly secular, anti-God culture.

### SEEING THE WORLD THROUGH BIBLICAL GLASSES

Training children means much more than just daily Bible reading. It means sharing a Christian worldview about everything, all the time (see Deuteronomy 6:7), as naturally as breathing. In every interaction, parents can help teach children a Christian way of thinking.

Most children from Christian homes are being trained in a secular worldview, to which “God” may be added by the parents at home and in church. But you can’t Christianize a secular philosophy, which is what even a lot of Christian texts and schools try to do. Unfortunately, even those books that are “anti-evolution” often fall into this error, especially if they don’t present the positive case for Genesis creation. These children often end up thinking in a secular way, with God and the Bible as merely “add-on extras,” rather than being relevant ultimately to everything, and be the supreme authority.

Let me give you a little test. I believe it would be a real eye-opener for many homeschool parents and their children. Our experience at AiG has shown that the majority of Christian parents and teachers could not answer most of these questions:

1. What is the best evidence you would use to defend your belief that there is a God who created the world?
2. Where did Cain find his wife?
3. When did the dinosaurs live?
4. For what do scientists use Carbon-14?
5. Is creation a side issue or a foundational doctrine?

Unfortunately, many Christians today, when asked these same questions by their young people, give an answer similar to that of the father of the aboriginal elder quoted above: “I don’t know—we’ve forgotten.”

Here are very brief answers to the questions we posed. Every Christian parent should know the answers as they eventually send their young people into the world:

#### 1) Evidence for a Creator God?

The design and order of the universe, in particular living systems, demands an intelligent Designer. To deny the obvious signature of God in His creation is to be “without excuse” (Romans 1:20). Life is built on an information/code system (DNA)—which can only arise from an intelligence.

## 2) *Where did Cain get his wife?*

Adam and Eve had “sons and daughters” (Genesis 5). Such unions were a problem by the time of Moses, but were not a genetic problem so soon after creation.

## 3) *What about the dinosaurs?*

The Bible reveals that land animals were created on day six of the creation week, along with people, about 6,000 years ago. There is much evidence (including in our Creation Museum) that humans and dinosaurs lived at the same time.

## 4) *Carbon-14?*

This dating method cannot date things to be millions of years. But this method, like all other dating methods, is based on fallible assumptions (e.g., decay rates are constant; have a starting belief that the Earth is very old; etc.).

## 5) *Isn't the creation/evolution controversy a side issue?*

Most of our Christian doctrine is based on Genesis, especially the definition of, and punishment for, sin, and man's desperate need for a Savior to die in substitutionary payment for that sin. Not to accept Genesis as written is to undermine the authority of Scripture.



*Ken Ham inside the famed Creation Museum he founded.*

Full answers to these questions, and many more, can be found by going to our website of [www.AnswersInGenesis.org](http://www.AnswersInGenesis.org) (with several thousand articles) or by visiting our high-tech Creation Museum in northern Kentucky and near Cincinnati.

Equipped with answers, you will be better able to stand strong in the work of the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58) as you defend our Christian faith and evangelize more effectively. ■



**KEN HAM** is the president of Answers in Genesis and the Creation Museum in Petersburg, Kentucky (near Cincinnati). The author of several books and the host of the daily radio program “Answers,” Ken is the visionary behind the construction of a full-size Noah’s Ark south of Cincinnati.

## *Find Out More!*

The Creation Museum is less than two hours from Indianapolis, and only five minutes into Kentucky from the Indiana border near interstate 275.

The state-of-the-art 70,000 square foot museum brings the pages of the Bible to life, casting its characters and animals in dynamic form and placing them in familiar settings. Adam and Eve live in the Garden of Eden. Children play and dinosaurs roam near Eden’s Rivers. The serpent coils cunningly in the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Majestic murals, great masterpieces brimming with pulsating colors and details, provide a backdrop for many of the settings.

Check out their website for more information!

**[www.creationmuseum.org](http://www.creationmuseum.org)**



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# On the Shoulders of Giants

—by Dr. Jay L. Wile



**“Home-schooled students shine in National Merit List” says the title of a Chicago Sun Times Article by Kate N. Grossman. The Christian Science Monitor reports on Keith Harding, a homeschooled student who got his college degree at the ripe old age of 15. Two homeschooled students were named to the 2014 All-USA Community College Academic Team, which is made up of only 20 students nationwide.**

Why do homeschooled students excel in their chosen fields? I am sure that if I posed this question to a room full of homeschooling parents, I would get lots of answers. Here are a few:

- Homeschooling teaches independent learning.
- Homeschoolers have a more flexible education that allows them to concentrate on the things they love.
- Homeschools have an incredibly high teacher/student ratio.
- Homeschooling parents can choose curriculum that meets the needs of each individual student.
- Homeschooled students are taught responsibility and a good work ethic.

These answers (and many others) are clearly part of the explanation. However, if I allowed my hypothetical room full of homeschooling parents to propose answers for hours on end, I doubt that they would mention the single most important answer of all.

To what answer do I refer? Let me express it in the words of Sir Isaac Newton, one of the greatest scientists of all time. In a letter to Robert Hooke, he said, "If I have seen farther than others, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants." In other words, Sir Isaac Newton says that he was able to do so much because of the scientific work of those who came before him. They built a platform that allowed him to see where others could not. In my mind, this is the most important reason that homeschoolers excel: They have stood on the shoulders of giants, and that has allowed them to see farther and better than any other kind of student.

Who are these giants? They are the homeschooling parents themselves. I know, I know - most homeschooling parents do not see themselves as giants, but believe me, they are. Consider the parents who were homeschooling 30-35 years ago. At that time, there was virtually no curriculum available to them. Believe it or not, A Beka Book would not even sell to homeschoolers back then - they would sell only to Christian schools! Think about how tough it would be to homeschool your children without the wealth of curriculum that is available today. Nevertheless, the parents who were homeschooling back then did just that. Why? Because they knew it was the right thing to do, no matter how hard it would be. That's why I call them giants.

Think about how much harder homeschooling would be today if it weren't for these giants. Do you really think there would be all the great curriculum available today if the homeschooling movement hadn't grown to its present size? If the previous generation of homeschoolers had decided it would just be too hard to homeschool and had not bothered to do it, do you think that homeschooling would be what it is today? Of course not! Homeschooled students of today are benefiting greatly from the hard work and endurance of homeschooling parents from more than a generation ago!

Not only that, homeschooled students are benefiting from the hard work and dedication of present homeschooling parents as well. Most homeschooling parents are faced with hardship. For some, it's financial. For others, it's the scorn of their own parents or other family members. For others, it is sheer exhaustion, and

for others, it is a combination of these. Nevertheless, they endure, and their children have a better education as a result. Not only do their children have a better education, but other children do as well. Today, homeschool cooperatives allow parents to help each other, so that many children benefit from one mother's artistic talents and another mother's mathematical talents. If the homeschooled students of today did not have the platform that these mothers have built, they

would not succeed in the way that they do.

As you spend time wandering the exhibit hall and listening to speakers at this year's convention, think about the fact that you are doing so in the presence of giants. If you are a new homeschooler, or if you are wondering whether or not to begin homeschooling, seek out one of these giants (a veteran homeschooling parent) for advice. As a convention speaker, I can assure you that you will get more out of a conversation with one of them than you will from listening to one of my talks. ■



**DR. JAY WILE'S** *love of science is demonstrated by the many awards he has won for excellence in teaching and research. He has also presented numerous lectures on the topics of Nuclear Chemistry, Christian Apologetics, Homeschooling, and Creation vs. Evolution. He has published 30 articles on these subjects in nationally-recognized, peer-reviewed journals, and has 9 books to his credit, most of which belong to the award-winning "Exploring Creation with" series of junior-high and high-school science courses. His new elementary science curriculum is available through [www.bereanbuilders.com](http://www.bereanbuilders.com).*

Who are these  
giants?  
They are the  
homeschooling  
parents themselves.



# F.A.Qs: Homeschooling in Indiana

—by T.J. Schmidt

IAHE fields many questions throughout the year related to homeschooling in Indiana. Since many new families begin to homeschool in the fall, we thought this would be the perfect time to share some questions we have received in case there are others who need the information. We've asked Indiana's HSLDA attorney, Tj Schmidt, to answer the following questions:

**1.** *IAHE has fielded questions from some who say that there are those who are not teaching their children. What does it mean to provide an "equivalent" education to that of the local public school?*

Indiana law doesn't define "equivalent" so we look to the common definition of the word. Miriam-Webster defines "equivalent" as "equal in force, amount, or value" or "like in signification or import." Indiana law requires that the instruction is to be equivalent to that given in the public schools. "Instruction" is defined as "the action, practice, or profession of teaching." Thus, in our opinion, a parent can provide equivalent instruction in accordance with Indiana law by teaching their child subjects that are equal in value to what is provided in the public school. A parent does not need to use the same curriculum or even the same methods that are used in the public school. The State Board does not have the authority to define what equivalent instruction is. See also question 7.

**2.** *Do you advise keeping records in case there is ever a charge of educational neglect? (Over and above attendance records?)*

Indiana law requires attendance records solely to verify enrollment and attendance of a child in a nonpublic school. It is recommended that a parent keep records that are sufficient to verify "equivalent instruction" has been provided. There is no right or wrong way. However, a parent could keep samples of instruction or work done by the student in each subject regularly throughout the school year. If you have samples from the beginning, middle, and end of the school year you will demonstrate that the child was provided instruction in the various subjects and that they made educational progress.

**3.** *What public official has the right to look at attendance records?*

Indiana law only provides that the state superintendent and the superintendent of the local school corporation can legally request the attendance records of a nonpublic school. While other state agencies may ask for evidence that a student is being educated, only the individuals above can request the attendance records of a nonpublic (home)school.

**4.** *How many days a year does the state require us to teach?*

Indiana law requires all children of compulsory attendance age to attend school for the same number of days the public schools are in session. Generally, a public school is required to provide 180 instructional days each school year.



### 5. *Is registration of a homeschool on the Indiana Department of Education website required?*

No. However, in some situations it may be preferable to indicate that you have registered with the Indiana Department of Education than submit information verifying that you are providing equivalent instruction to your child(ren). Registration is not the same, but some state agencies view it as being the same. A parent is most likely to face pressure to register when a child is withdrawn from a public school.

### 6. *Does the compulsory attendance law apply to homeschoolers?*

Yes. Compulsory attendance laws apply to any child from age 7 until 18 (or they have graduated). However, a child attending a nonpublic, non-accredited (home)school is not bound by the curriculum or content of the educational program required to be provided by public schools.

### 7. *Are homeschoolers required to follow the Core 40 requirements for high school?*

Homeschoolers are not required to follow the Core 40 and complete the exact credits required to complete a homeschool program in Indiana. They could simply cover the equivalent subjects covered in high school in Indiana. However, a parent who is interested in having their child graduate and attend an Indiana college would benefit from being able to demonstrate that their student completed the appropriate credits listed in the Core 40.

### 8. *If a homeschooler follows the Core 40 with Honors diploma requirements, can a student's transcript say "Honors Diploma" for college?*

Just as a homeschool student can't say they have a "Core 40" diploma, they couldn't say they have a "Core 40 Honors Diploma." Those are public school designations. However, if a student has met the credit requirements for either of these diplomas, they can—and should—indicate that what they have completed is equivalent to a "Core 40" diploma or a "Core 40 with Academic Honors" diploma.

### 9. *I had read somewhere that you can put on the homeschool transcript that a class is "honors" but you cannot use the "AP" label because AP is licensed by the College Board and only classes and curriculum approved by them can be labeled as such. Do you know if this is true?*

You can only use the AP label to a course that has been approved by the College Board. For more information see this website: <http://www.hsllda.org/cms/?q=blog/when-can-i-designate-course-advanced-placement-ap-transcript>.

### 10. *When withdrawing/transferring a student from the public school system, do homeschool parents have the right to request the student's school records?*

Under Indiana law "a public agency must permit the parent, or parent's representative, to inspect and review any educational record of the parent's children for birth to eighteen (18) years of age that are collected, maintained, or used by the public agency." A parent also has the right to request an amendment of educational records. The public agency must allow the parent to inspect and review the educational record without unnecessary delay and in no case more than 45 calendar days after the request is made. The parent also has a right to make copies of the record and they can be charged no more than the actual cost of the copies. See 511 IAC 7-38-1. Federal law has similar provisions for parents to access their children's educational records. ■



**THOMAS J. (TJ) SCHMIDT** was first taught at home in the second grade by his parents in northern Vermont. Tj received his J.D. while studying at home from Oak Brook College of Law and began serving as a Legal Assistant at HSLDA. Now, as an HSLDA Staff Attorney, Tj answers general legal questions and assists members across the country experiencing legal difficulties. Tj and his wife, Susan, have six children, Josiah, Suzanna, Ella, Makenna, Jonah, and Annika.

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# BIBLE BOWL

## Fifty Years of Quizzing & Discipleship

—by Chris Broshears

In 1964, two youth pastors in Illinois invented a game, modeled after the popular television quiz program General Electric College Bowl, in which teams of students competed to demonstrate their knowledge of Scripture. Fifty years later, the game, known as Bible Bowl, celebrates its golden anniversary season, culminating with the national championship that will be held July 7-10 in Indianapolis.

Many top teams at Nationals over the years have included homeschooled players, many of them from Indiana, in both the Teen (grades 6-12) and Beginner (grades 3-5) divisions. Why has the Hoosier State been so well represented? And why have homeschool students had success in the program?

### DESIGNED FOR HOMESCHOOLERS?

Josiah Gorman is a former homeschool student who now serves as the Executive Director of Bible Bowl. He offers a couple of reasons why the program “is almost uniquely designed for homeschoolers.” First, he cites the appeal of a scripture-oriented program to those families whose approach to education is similarly scripture-oriented. Second, he says, homeschooled students as

a group are known to excel academically, and Bible Bowl “rewards studiousness, diligence, and hard work.”

Gorman speaks from experience as a former player; he competed in Bible Bowl from 1998 through 2007. Another ex-player, Sherri Wilson, coaches one of the largest Bible Bowl programs in the country, at Mount Pleasant Christian Church (MPCC) in Greenwood, Indiana. MPCC fielded six teams at Nationals, and over half of its players were homeschool students. Wilson attributes the popularity of Bible Bowl among homeschoolers to the fact that families are looking both for Christian-based extra-curricular activities, and for “team competition beyond just athletics.”

### TEAMS AND TOURNAMENTS

Bible Bowl began as a program of the North American Christian Convention, a gathering of church leaders from the independent Christian churches of the Restoration Movement tradition. Most Bible Bowl teams today are still sponsored by these independent Christian churches. However, membership in a sponsoring church is not required for students to play for a church team. Wilson’s MPCC teams include players from churches that do not have their own Bible Bowl programs.

In recent years, teams sponsored by homeschool groups, rather than churches, have become increasingly common. In 2012, Teen Nationals was won by a team from the Shanan Community, a homeschool co-operative in Franklin, Tennessee. The following year, two homeschool group teams placed among the top ten teams at Nationals.

Teams compete regionally in monthly round robin tournaments in the months leading up to Nationals. Indiana is home to the largest such gathering of teams in the country, the Greenwood Round Robin, drawing teams from all over Central Indiana. Round robins also take place in the neighboring states of Illinois, Kentucky, Michigan, and Ohio.

Starting in June, some teams choose to travel to optional “college tournaments” staged by Christian colleges and universities. This year, Wilson said, MPCC teams will travel to three college tournaments, with team fundraising activities defraying almost all of the travel costs. Besides serving as competitive tune-ups for Nationals, these college tournaments also offer scholarships to members of top teams.

Each season’s competitions focus on a single section of the Bible. The 2013-14 study text includes thirty-six chapters selected from the books of Joshua, Judges, and Ruth. Individual players who devote themselves to memorizing the entire text have a competitive advantage, but students who set less ambitious study goals can still make meaningful contributions to the team.

### THE GAME

In a Bible Bowl game, two teams of up to four players sit opposite each other awaiting the reading of toss-up questions by an adult quizmaster. The first player to buzz in and give the correct answer to a toss-up earns points for their team, plus the right for their team to work together to answer a series of bonus questions for additional points.

Games move quickly, as quizmasters strive to complete the entire slate of fifteen toss-up questions and their corresponding bonus questions in just fourteen minutes. This fast pace, plus the variety among questions—the Bible Bowl rulebook lists at least twelve different question types—keeps spectators engaged and players on their toes.

### BENEFITS OF BIBLE BOWL

Sherry Weir of Greenwood is a parent of three homeschooled Bible Bowlers, and highly recommends the program. Bible Bowl, Weir says, provides kids with “mentoring and sense of belonging to a community.” She also reports that “my children have reaped academic benefit from Bible Bowl.” Gorman agrees: “First and foremost, Bible Bowl promotes spiritual growth and discipleship. But students also learn how to study and memorize.”

Spiritual growth among Bible Bowlers was evident in the results of a survey of over 400 former players in March 2014. Ninety-nine percent said that they still consider themselves Christians. Fifty percent said they went on to attend a Christian college or university. And twenty-three percent reported being involved in vocational ministry.

### GETTING INVOLVED

Gorman says Bible Bowl is committed to helping new players find teams, and to helping churches and homeschool groups establish new teams. “We’ve done our best to lower the barriers to entry,” he says. “Our new website has ‘Join a Team’ and ‘Start a Team’ buttons to instruct you how to get started. We take care to get new players and sponsors in contact with local teams or round robin coordinators, preferably face-to-face, to get relationships built with veterans who can be mentors.”

Weir encourages parents to take advantage of these resources. “My children’s lives,” she says, “would not be the same without Bible Bowl.” ■



**CHRIS BROSHEARS** and his wife Betty are the new IAHE Region 6 Representatives. He is a quizmaster at local and national Bible Bowl competitions and the parent of two Bible Bowl players, ages 10 and 14. Contact Chris at [r6@inhomeeducators.org](mailto:r6@inhomeeducators.org). For more information about Bible Bowl, visit [www.biblebowl.net](http://www.biblebowl.net).

The infographic features a central title "ONLINE DUAL CREDIT" in large, bold, yellow and blue letters. Below the title, it says "from TAYLOR UNIVERSITY" in yellow. Surrounding the central text are several callout boxes with benefits: "saves you time and money" (blue box), "flexible — work at your own pace with no meeting times" (purple box), "convenient — study when and where you want" (purple box), "120 courses available that will transfer" (blue box), "#1 baccalaureate college in the Midwest for six years running — U.S. News & World Report" (purple box), and "165-year heritage of academic excellence" (purple box). At the bottom, it says "more information: ONLINE.TAYLOR.EDU" in white text on a blue background.



# Fall Crafting with Kids

—Tawnee Hinton

The leaves are turning colors, the temperatures are cooling, and back-to-school time is upon us. What a great time for some crafts! In our school, we love starting the new school year with some fun crafts to get the school year going again (and decorate the house). If you have an elementary student, you may find that fall is a great time to do some crafting while enjoying the season.

## NATURE WALKS

Fall is an excellent time to go on nature walks and see the changing insects, trees, and foliage. Turn your fall nature walks into a time to collect what you need for some fall crafting.

## PAINTING WITH NATURE

Since my kids love to collect things along our nature walk, we turn the collection into crafts.

## WHAT YOU NEED

Various leaves, sticks, pinecones that you find along your nature walk, paint, paper, paper plates, newspaper, paint brush

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Lay out newspaper on your flat surface (because things can get messy).
- 2) Lay out your collection from your nature walk and pick your biggest leaf to start with.
- 3) Pour several colors of tempera paint onto paper plates so you can easily work with the paint.
- 4) Lay your leaf in a color of paint or brush your leaf with various colors of paint.
- 5) Once painted, transfer painted side to paper, gently pat down, then slowly remove the leaf and see the lovely, colorful pattern on the paper.
- 6) Repeat steps with various leaves, pine cones, and sticks until you complete your masterpiece.
- 7) Let dry thoroughly before displaying!



## FALL WREATH

We love heading out and collecting leaves when they are at the height of their colorfulness. Making a fall wreath for the door after collecting makes a great craft.

### WHAT YOU NEED

Various leaves of different colors and shapes, paper plate, wax paper, big book or boards, glue or staples or Mod Podge

### INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Head out and collect a wonderful assortment of leaves in various shapes and colors. Picking nice big leaves with little to no browning is helpful.
- 2) After you have collected your leaves, place each leaf between two pieces of wax paper and lay flat between heavy books or between boards. Allow to press for 2 days.
- 3) After you have pressed your leaves, get out your remaining supplies.
- 4) Cut a hole in the middle of your paper plate so that it resembles a wreath.
- 5) Remove your leaves from the press and arrange them in an order you would like on the wreath.
- 6) Glue leaves to paper plate (or you can staple them if you don't have glue, though this method may tear some of the leaves). You can also use Mod Podge to set them.
- 7) Allow the glue or Mod Podge to dry. Hang on your door to display!

## APPLES

Who doesn't love apple picking in the fall? It is almost always a fall field trip for us. So why not use the apple inspiration to keep the fall crafting going?

### APPLE SUN CATCHERS

We love to make apple sun catchers. They're a great way to decorate any window.

### WHAT YOU NEED

Tissue paper (red, green, yellow), clear contact paper, yarn, hole puncher, and apple pattern (draw your own or find one to trace)

### INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Cut tissue paper into small squares (or tear into small dime-size pieces).
- 2) Cut two pieces of contact paper bigger than a regular piece of paper.
- 3) Peel back one side of the contact paper and place it sticky side up.
- 4) Have kids put tissue paper randomly all over the sticky parts.
- 5) Peel back second piece of contact paper and place over the tissue paper side.
- 6) Lay apple pattern over the contact paper and trace around it.
- 7) Cut out apple outline, punch a hole in the stem, and thread yarn for hanger.
- 8) Hang your Apple Sun Catcher in the window and watch the lovely effect!

## HANDPRINT APPLE TREE

Any handprint crafts make us smile. Who doesn't love to see that little hand on some art hanging on the wall?

### WHAT YOU NEED

Paper, paint, apple template, red and green construction paper

### INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Have child paint trunk of a tree brown on a piece of plain paper.
- 2) Draw several branches, at least three large branches with a few smaller ones.
- 3) Paint your child's hands green and have them place them onto the tops of the branches as leaves.
- 4) Place apple template on red construction paper and cut several apples out.
- 5) Draw stems on brown construction paper. Cut out number of stems for apples needed.
- 6) Glue stems and apples on "leaves" of tree. Maybe glue some on the ground around the tree trunk as well.
- 7) Hang on the refrigerator and enjoy!

There are just a few ideas for making some lovely fall crafts with your elementary students. Of course, you can make any of these more intricate and defined if you have an older child. Just enjoy the fall and let your inspiration lead you to some fun crafting times together. ■



**TAWNEE HINTON** and her husband live with their four children in Central Indiana. Tawnee is a Support Manager for *Classical Conversations* and an officer in the US Navy Reserve. She has been a copy editor for *The Informer* for a year and blogs about her family's homeschooling adventures at *Adventures in Homeschooling*. You can find it at [www.adventuresinhomeschooling.com](http://www.adventuresinhomeschooling.com).



# Calling to a Greater Purpose: Starting a Support Group

—by Eve Drew

*When the **FOUNDATIONS** are in place, you will be **READY TO FOCUS** on the goals of your group.*

When I started my first support group, it was because I felt the need to provide support for families that had no idea what they were doing, except that they were led by God to bring their children home to educate them. I was homeschooled as a child and didn't have any support from friends and neighbors, and I know it would have helped when the days were tough or we were discouraged. There were many times when we all wanted to give up—we had a principal from the local school and the city attorney against us, and there were times we did not even answer the door because my parents were afraid that they were going to spend some time in jail! Scary? Absolutely—but in the end it was worth it and I feel now that I have the best education I could have received. Now, as a mom who is home educating her own children, I strive to help others find the support I lacked.

Starting your own homeschool support group is a high calling that should never be taken lightly. Before taking any steps toward forming a group, saturate the idea in prayer to be sure the plan is of God and not for self-seeking glory-- after all, God is the one we were created to give glory to! In your prayers, ask, "What is God's will, and what is the need?" Answering these questions is a must and will help when planning the basic fundamentals of a support group for home educators. Thanks to the freedom that home education allows, every homeschooler will need a different type of support. Creating a well-rounded vision that includes a purpose and goals is vital for reaching the needs of the various families in your group.

Of course, a support group is nothing without its members. You will never be able to lead a group on your own, and delegating roles to other parents who have the same vision in mind is key for the success of any support group. Talk to the other homeschool moms and dads in your area and discover their strengths and weaknesses—these can be transformed into talents used for God by serving others! There are many different types of talents and while it can be difficult at first to meld them into a cohesive leadership team, remember that God gave us friendships to bring us together in harmony. Recall 1 Corinthians 12—only with every part of the body can we function as the servants of Christ.

This is a great time to contact your regional IAHE representatives to let them know you are starting a new support group. They are there to help you and will have many more resources to assist as you grow! With their assistance, and your leadership team in place, it's time to start laying out the structure of your group. The fundamentals include a statement of faith, mission statement, origin, purpose, code of conduct, and—if applicable—a dress code for field trips, co-ops, or other events where it may be deemed necessary.

## Here are some examples:

### STATEMENT OF FAITH

2 Timothy 3:16-17

### MISSION STATEMENT

We define home education as parent-directed, home-based, and privately-funded education. The mission is to protect that definition of home education and prevent those freedoms from being altered

### ORIGIN

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom

### PURPOSE

Providing fellowship and support through resources, encouragement, and social functions

### CODE OF CONDUCT

Promote unity within the group, members conducting themselves with honesty, integrity, compassion, and love

### DRESS CODE

Modesty with guidelines

You will also want to decide if the group is going to be inclusive or exclusive. Inclusive means that the group will have rules but will be willing to overlook or bend in areas of unimportance. They can be open to different religions or philosophies, often grow quite quickly, and can still choose to be exclusive on some ideals. Exclusive groups have rules and regulations to follow and under

no circumstances are there any exceptions to said rules. These groups are often smaller than their counterparts, but can have a more close-knit feel to them because of their more specific nature. Votes may also be taken to decide whether a member is permitted to join the group.

When the foundations are in place, you will be ready to focus on the goals of your group. Remember that as a member of a support group one of your main goals should be giving yourself to mentor someone with less experience than yourself. Offer encouragement to others in the group even if you think it is not necessary—you never know when your words may have a positive impact on someone's day!

Many groups choose to form "co-ops" to help with this. A co-op is a group of parents with certain strengths in areas of education with a willingness to help other families succeed in their education goals. For instance, a parent with strengths in science may teach a biology class, and another parent with a passion for English may teach a writing workshop. Families that start a co-op will set aside a time frame for classes to be taught by parents taking turns at teaching, typically one day a week at a central location such as a church or library. This lightens the load for parents that might be concerned about teaching subjects that they may not be very familiar with. Don't fret—co-ops do not need to be started within a group immediately unless the leadership team and families think it is an urgent necessity.

Please keep in mind that this article is not intended as a list of do's and don'ts. Just as every family is different, every support group will be unique as well. What I do hope is that you will be confident in knowing that you too can start a support group to encourage other families just like yours. Mentoring is important because the more we help each other, the less Satan has a chance to discourage or attack us. ■



**EVE DREW** was homeschooled from fifth grade through high school. She then successfully homeschooled her own three children. Afterwards, she went to the University of Phoenix and earned an associates Degree in Criminal Law. Eve & her husband have served as IAHE Representatives in Region 11 for 8 years.

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## 2015 IAHE Convention March 27-28

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# Adopt a Legislator

## The IAHE's Adopt a Legislator Program

is a way for a homeschool family to focus on building a positive relationship with their own legislator to further the IAHE's mission of maintaining visibility with civil government leaders. It is a unique way for an elected official to learn more about home education in Indiana through personal relationships. IAHE will offer ideas and suggestions during the year of different ways for you to reach out to your legislator, but you are encouraged to build the relationship in additional ways as you feel led.

Did you know that most legislators only hear from their constituents when there is a problem? We want to build relationships that are different.

- **Adopt a Legislator is important to build relationships with legislators by being their friendly homeschool constituent.**
- **Consistent communication will show your legislator that their homeschool constituents are engaged and informed.**
- **When issues arise, legislators will understand that they have engaged homeschool constituents in their district who will be affected.**
- **IAHE has several easy requirements for the program, and IAHE will teach you what they are.**
- **It's a great educational experience for the entire family.**
- **You are helping to protect homeschool rights in Indiana.**

For more details, visit our website. You must have an account to view this page:

<http://www.iahe.net/adopt-legislator>



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