

# All Things Homeschool

*...helpful curriculum info and other useful stuff*

## SPRING IS IN THE AIR

**S**pring is definitely "just around the corner!" That means that our focus is starting to shift from our textbooks to more [activities](#) that can be done outside.

During this time of year, we start to eat our lunch outside, weather permitting, of course.

We take more field trips in the spring, as well, just so we can be outside and meet with friends.

Since we are California transplants, the cold weather forced us to stay inside and not venture out as much, but that changes during the spring season.

### SPRING THEMES

We have several special spring themes we explore at this time of year.

I simply add to the curriculum or substitute for a less interesting topic.

Gardening is a favorite theme that requires a lot of time. We discuss what flowers and vegetables we plan to grow.



Then, we have to prepare the soil, locate pots and tools from last season, and start some of the plants indoors to prevent loss from a late frost.

Usually, that leads us right into the spring cleaning and household organization that is necessary to find things that have been put away.

We have fun with crafts, too, such as coloring pretty butterflies and rainbows.

We also use the Internet to locate resources to help us observe spring [holidays](#) and celebrations.

Spring is also a time when we resume our family trips to the YMCA as some of us (okay, just me) become conscious of how we'll look in our new spring outfits!

March 20th is just around the corner so start preparing for it now.

## TO TEST OR NOT TO TEST?

You may be [required](#) to test your children by the local educational agency or may choose to have standardized testing done for personal reasons.

I know that some parents disagree with achievement or aptitude testing and prefer to "loosely" evaluate their children's progress themselves.

### OUR EXPERIENCE

When our high school juniors and seniors started preparing for college admissions and scholarships, the importance of testing became very clear.

If they are going to ultimately have to perform well on standardized testing in order to gain admittance to college or earn scholarship funds, why wouldn't you want them to be well prepared for the task?

That's pretty much the decision we have arrived at in our home.

I think it is unfair to expect them to perform their best on ACTs or SATs later in life if they are completely unfamiliar with

the testing experience.

I have not always held this opinion, but have come to see the value of standardized testing for older children.

At around the middle grades, I think it can be helpful to see if there are any learning gaps.

It also allows the parent-teacher, aka "Mom" in most cases, to be seen as a legitimate teacher in the eyes of doubtful spouses or other relatives.

Recently, our children in grades 5, 7, 9, and 10, were tested at a local Christian school.

I firmly believe in the Scripture that says, "Let another man praise you," so I will not discuss their extraordinary scores (humor, really!)

Seriously, I wanted to share some tips for testing that you might find useful, too.

### BASIC STUFF

- 1) Be sure your child gets plenty of rest the night before test
- 2) Encourage your child to eat a nutritious breakfast the day of the test

- 3) Advise your child to wear comfortable clothes, shoes and wear a light sweater or jacket in case the room is cold
- 4) Remember to take pencils and a calculator, if permitted

### TEST TAKING TIPS

- 1) Read all directions carefully.
- 2) Read the entire question.
- 3) Read all answer choices before making final choice.
- 4) Use time wisely and don't spend too much time on one question.
- 5) Use process of elimination when unsure of answer.
- 6) Work quickly but thoroughly.
- 7) Be careful when filling in answer sheets.
- 8) Unless advised differently, when you don't know an answer, make your best guess.
- 9) Answer every question.

## WORDS FROM WAYNE



*If you are new to this newsletter, let me intro-*

*duce you to my husband, Wayne, who the Lord often uses to teach **ME** about home education and family.*

It is during the course of our "regular days" that Wayne and I often realize the need to make adjustments to our home school program.

Recently, we were discuss-



### Mary Kay Principle

*I have never sold Mary Kay cosmetics, but I heard about this principle from a rep and I think it works.*

*She suggested that her representatives create an achievable To-Do list of six items daily.*

*Read your daily list the night before.*

*Cross off each item as it is completed.*

**The End**

ing the necessity to create a "Biblical Exit Test" for our children before graduating high school.

We believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God and have tried to develop a habit within our children of studying the Scriptures.

The creation of this test has been put on my short list and I will gladly share it with anyone who is interested. Just drop me a line at the [Contact Me](#) page on my website.

## ENTERING MANHOOD

Two years ago we acknowledging our oldest son Isaiah's passage into manhood with a ceremony with family and friends.

It was a very special event because my dad was present and my only brother, Robert, was also able to attend.

This month we recognized our second oldest son, Wesley's, passage.

Our Passage to Manhood celebrations are Biblically based.

It is the time when we present our sons to the Christian

We plan to develop questions that will require them to demonstrate their ability to explain Scripturally what they believe, and why, concerning their belief in God.

We recognize that we'd be doing them a disservice by not fully preparing them to defend their beliefs.

Our hope is that they become mature Christians who can hear God, obey Him, and share their beliefs with others.

community and announce that they are becoming men and should be held accountable as such.

Of course there is still requisite growth and development but it is an important part of his spiritual life.





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*Curriculum reviews, teaching tips, and more to help you fulfill your commitment to train your children at home!*

This newsletter allows me to connect with my readers and share a little more about our family and how **WE** home school at our house. I would love to hear from you so please send me your questions, comments, kids' contributions or reviews to [www.AllAboutHomeschoolCurriculum.com/contact-me.html](http://www.AllAboutHomeschoolCurriculum.com/contact-me.html) to be included in future issues.

Have a terrific month,

*Claudette*

## THE BACK PAGE

### STILL LEARNING

The longer I home school my children, the more I learn about what not to do as well as a few new things to add to their training.

\*Most importantly, do not (s)mother your children and handicap them. [Thanks, Sis:-)]

\*Teach them to be independent learners capable of finding their own answers.

\*Provide as many opportunities as you can realistically

manage to encourage their development.

\*Keep your home teaching as simple as possible.

\*Expect a lot from them, but be sure to *inspect* that it is getting done.

\*Give them plenty of praise and encouragement.

\*Do not compete with other families or homeschooled kids.

\*Create a peaceful, loving home but realize that they will have to leave it one day.

### TEACHER'S HELPS:

- Check out the April 2012 [back issue](#) to get some tips for shopping at a homeschool curriculum exhibit hall
- Take a look at a great app called [Pocket](#) which lets you save items to read later. It works across multiple devices, too!