THE robinson SELF-TEACHING curriculum

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Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

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How the Robinson Children Fare
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Common Questions & Concerns
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An Outstanding Resource - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Homeschool Curriculum Excellence

Printable Curriculum Books Delivered on CDs
The Most Cost Effective Curriculum Available

INTRODUCTION

Teach your children to teach themselves and to acquire superior knowledge as did many of America's most outstanding citizens in the days before socialism in education. [MORE...]

VIRTUAL SEMINAR

Listen to a speech by Dr. Robinson about homeschooling and more on the Robinson Radio.

QUICK OVERVIEW

Learning Features

- Printable books/materials on CD
- Complete Course of Study
- 12 Years of Education - 22 CDs
- 120,000 Page Library Resource
- 1911 Encyclopaedia Britannica
- 1913 Noah Webster's Dictionary
- 2,000 Historic Illustrations
- 6,000 Word Vocabulary Teacher
- Progress Exams Keyed to Books
- Outstanding Science Program
- Very High Academic Quality
- Proven Methods of Self Study
- Long Feature Description

[Speech by Art Robinson]

THE ROBINSON STORY

We Need Higher Hopes

Read the Robinson family's story and discover how their efforts created a home school that actually needs no teacher and is extraordinary in its effectiveness.
"Ten years ago Laurelee and I decided to educate our children in a homeschool rather than a public school or a private school. The burden of this decision fell most heavily upon Laurelee who took responsibility for the substantial work that we expected this home school to require." [CONTINUED...]

From the original article by Dr. Robinson: Christian Children Must Have More Than A Fighting Chance

FROM OUR CUSTOMERS

I Love the Robinson Curriculum!

We love Robinson Curriculum! I've used it for a year, and am sticking with it, especially now that there are so many more CD-ROMs to use. I love it because my girls really are becoming self taught, my 12 year old having literally educated herself this year. [CONTINUED...]

A UNIQUE APPROACH

The Independent Learner

When you teach something you truly learn it. This is the key to the self-teaching approach of the Robinson Curriculum. In this set of articles Dr. Arthur Robinson explains the benefits of this approach and provides other insights on a variety of topics.

Dr. Robinson is a scientist who works on various aspects of fundamental biochemistry, nutrition, and preventive medicine. He is President and Research Professor of the Oregon Institute of Science and Medicine. His wife Lauralee, who was also a scientist, homeschooled their children until her

Includes

22 CD-ROMs, deluxe softcover folding CD case, printable books, science program, vocabulary, phonics, and math flash cards.[MORE...] Note: Does **not** include the Saxon Math books.

Rated #1 Curriculum

- by Practical Homeschooling
- 2000 Annual Reader Awards

Flexible

Use as a standalone homeschool curriculum or as a supplement to your children's current school education; all books, science program, and vocabulary, phonics, and math flash cards included.
- You can find out where to start older children here.

Value Priced

The total price of the Robinson Curriculum is $195 - onetime. Regular shipping is included free. No matter how many children you have you only need to purchase one curriculum for them all.

Express Shipping

Ask about FedEx shipping for only $35 (great for emergencies).

Order Yours Today

- Order by Internet
- Order by Phone
- Order by Mail
- Order by Fax

death in November 1988, when the children were 12, 10, 8, 6, 6, and 16 months. During the past ten years, Dr. Robinson and the children have continued their homeschooling by developing a program entirely based upon self-teaching. [FIRST ARTICLE...]

× Click on a link in the index on the left to see more information.

þ Ready to Go

- 22 CD-ROMs
- Deluxe softcover CD case
- Setup Instructions
- Coupon for 20% off Saxon Math
- Free, unlimited web support
- Printing Recommendations
- Access to Discussion Forums
- Telephone support. 9 - 5 EDT

þ Print This Out

Print out this web site for a friend:

- HTML Version
- Acrobat PDF version.

The Robinson Curriculum is a product of the Oregon Institute of Science and Medicine

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An Outstanding Resource - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Robinson Radio Online

Firestorm Chat - Homeschooling Alternative

An interview with Art Robinson by Gary North. Length 1 Hr 18 min.

Firestorm Chat - Homeschooling Alternative

Alternate Links:

Streaming MP3 Standard MP3 RealPlayer Windows Media

Art Robinson Interview with John Saxon of Saxon Math

In this rare interview Dr. Robinson speaks with John Saxon, the author of the Saxon Math books we recommend for use with the Robinson Curriculum (RC customers get a 20% discount from OISM on these books).

The interview is full of great insights into what makes this math program so effective and essential to your homeschool.

> "Understanding more often than not follows doing rather than precedes it. If I'm going to teach you how to drive, I don't lecture you on the theory of the internal-combustion engine. I get you behind the wheel of the car and drive around the block." - *John Saxon*

This interview is the only audio of John Saxon available today and presents a rare and unique opportunity to hear the real story of Saxon Math from the author himself. The value is further enhanced by Dr. Robinson's insights on how to maximize the benefit of Saxon Math by using it in a self-teaching homeschool using the Robinson methodology.

Art Robinson Interviews John Saxon 16K MP3 Length: 1 Hour 28 min.

Alternate Links:

Streaming MP3 Standard MP3 RealPlayer Windows Media

The Virtual Robinson Curriculum Seminar

Recently Dr. Robinson spoke in Southfield, MI about homeschooling. The whole evening was captured on tape and is now presented here.

robinson radio

Download a free RealAudio Player if you need one.

Self-Teaching and Academic Excellence - 45.0 Min. Real - MP3

Questions and Answers:

Homeschooling and social interaction - 3.7 Min. Real - MP3
Can anyone homeschool? - 2.0 Min. Real - MP3

Where do I start my child in the curriculum? - 2.0 Min. Real - MP3

What about spelling, grammar, and syntax? - 3.5 Min. Real - MP3
What about Latin and Greek? - 2.7 Min. Real - MP3

What feedback have you had from users? - 2.3 Min. Real - MP3
What is the most common objection you hear? - 1.4 Min Real - MP3
Christianity in the curriculum - 1.3 Min Real - MP3
Academics and faith in the curriculum - 1.7 Min Real - MP3

Books vs. Video and Animation - 2.3 Real - MP3

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Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) - 0.7 Min. Real - MP3
Learning differences - 1 Min. Real - MP3
Learning disabilities and math - 2.4 Min. Real - MP3
Dyslexia and other disorders - 0.7 Min. Real - MP3

Printing expense - 2.0 Min. Real - MP3
Cost of printing out books - 1.0 Min. Real - MP3
Screen reading software - 1.3 Min. Real - MP3
Windows and Mac versions - 1.7 Min. Real - MP3

Motivation and discipline - 2.5 Min. Real - MP3
Sugar and television - 5.5 Min. Real - MP3

The day's schedule and meals - 1.8 min. Real - MP3
Team sports - 1.5 Min. Real - MP3

Navigating the college mess - 5.3 Min. Real - MP3

Downloadable files

If you would rather download these audio files here are the link to do so.

Self-Teaching and Academic Excellence - a Zip file - 2.6 MB

Questions and Answers - a Zip file - 3.4 MB

If you need it, see www.download.com for a program called WinZip to unzip these files.

From the Easy Chair with Sam Blumenfeld

An interview with Sam Blumenfeld by RJ Rushdoony. Length 51 min.

From the Easy Chair - Homeschooling

Links:

Streaming MP3 Standard MP3 RealPlayer Windows Media

From the Education MP3 CD at www.christrules.com - used with permission.

Superb Educational Results

... with Far Less Teacher Time

From phonics to physics, these 22 CDs and a set of Saxon math books are all that you need to give your children a superior education. You can use this curriculum to supplement your children's current schooling or as a stand-alone education using the included self-study methods.

They teach themselves to think.

The Robinson children teach themselves (as do the 60,000 children now using this system) - so well that their 11th and 12th grade work is equivalent to high quality 1st and 2nd year university instruction in science, history, literature, and general education.

They also teach themselves study habits that do not depend upon planned workbooks, teacher interaction, and other aids that will not be available later in life.

They teach themselves to think.

Dr. Robinson has spent less than 15 minutes per day teaching all six children...

Many home schools are limited by the burden of teaching that is placed on parents. Dr. Robinson has spent less than 15 minutes per day teaching all six children - ages 6 through 18. Yet, both of his oldest students scored over 1400 on the SAT (over 1500 on the new SAT) and received two years of advanced placement in college. The younger children are doing as well.

Teach your children to teach themselves and to acquire superior knowledge as did many of America's most outstanding citizens in the days before socialism in education.

Give children access to a good study environment and the best books in the English language and then - get out of their way! All Curriculum books may be viewed on the computer screen and printed with included software.

This unique curriculum will save you hours of teaching time each day and will give your students an opportunity to develop superior knowledge and life-long study habits.

One caution - do not use this curriculum unless you are willing for your children to be academically more learned than you.

Complete 12-Year Education

Most importantly, this curriculum teaches children to think

If you could only have one home school resource, this curriculum would be the one. Developed by an outstanding scientist and his six home schooled children with the help of their professional and personal co-workers, the curriculum offers self-taught preparation of children for the modern world. This includes education in math, physical science, history, literature, economics, and general studies.

... give your students an opportunity to develop superior knowledge and superb life-long study habits.

Most importantly, this curriculum teaches children to think productively and provides them with study procedures that will facilitate learning when they become adults. The curriculum includes a program of self study that requires almost no teacher interaction. This unique curriculum will save you hours of teaching time each day and will give your students an opportunity to develop superior knowledge and superb life-long study habits.

In 1988, Laurelee Robinson, Dr. Robinson's wife, and also a scientist, had accumulated several filing cabinets filled with teacher-based home school materials from many different sources. She was actively schooling their children - Zachary age 12, Noah, age 10, Arynne age 8, Joshua age 6, and Bethany age 6. Matthew, age 16 months, was not yet in school.

Then, in a sudden illness lasting less than 24 hours, Laurelee Robinson died. With responsibility for his wife's work as well as his own, Dr. Robinson was not able to utilize most of the home school materials she had gathered. These materials required a teacher.

In the years that followed, he and the children developed a home school that requires almost no teacher time.

In the years that followed, he and the children developed a home school that requires almost no teacher time. Moreover, this was done using specific, exceptionally high quality books and study methods that he knew would prepare the children for outstanding university performance.

Using techniques that he and his most accomplished colleagues use in their own work, Dr. Robinson's primary goals were to teach the children to think effectively, to learn independently, and to be well prepared with the basic skills and knowledge that must be learned early in life.

Note: All materials are to be printed out and assigned to the students as directed in the Course of Study. Only the parents are to use the computer (with the exception of a computer based vocabulary drill tester for older students).

An Outstanding Resource - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Four Keys to Learning

Environment, Habits, Course of Study, High Quality Books

The keys to this are study environment, study habits, course of study, and high quality books.

The self-teaching home school that the Robinson children developed has been so effective that each of the children is far surpassing Dr. Robinson's own accomplishments at equivalent ages - even though he was, himself, so well prepared that he was accepted by MIT, Harvard, Rice, and CalTech. After graduation from CalTech and then the University of California at San Diego, he was immediately given a faculty position at UCSD and was considered one of the best prepared young scientists of his generation.

Moreover, this teaching program requires almost no teacher interaction. It is not dependent upon the teachers individual education, and it routinely allows the student to acquire skills and knowledge that are beyond those of their parents.

Children using this curriculum are able to advance at their own rate ...

Academic knowledge is in books. Each child must learn to extract and use that knowledge to the greatest extent that his or her abilities permit. This curriculum enables the student to learn these skills with very little teacher help, and it provides the student with 120,000 pages of knowledge from the greatest science, history, literature, economics, reference, and general education books in the English language. These are reinforced by frequent and appropriate examinations.

Home schooling not only provides a superior childhood and family environment, it also has potential to transform American society by building new generations of more capable young adults. Home schooling is, however, often held back by the academic education of the parents or by their lack of time to become home school teachers.

The Robinson Curriculum solves both of these problems. Children using this curriculum are able to advance at their own rate through learning of skills and facts whether or not their parents have this knowledge - and to do so on their own without an active teacher. The Robinson Home School Curriculum Version 2.2 is an extraordinary system of home-education that exceeds, in quality and effectiveness, any other home-school curriculum - and at a very low price.

Independent of Parent Skills

Children Learn Whether Parents Have Skills and Time or Not

This teaching program requires almost no teacher interaction. It is not dependent upon the parent's individual education, and it routinely allows the students to acquire skills and knowledge that are beyond those of the parents.

Books contain knowledge that children need. Each child must learn to extract and use that knowledge to

the greatest extent that his or her abilities permit. This curriculum enables the student to learn these skills with very little teacher help, and it provides the student with 120,000 pages of knowledge from the greatest science, history, literature, economics, reference, and general education books in the English language. These are reinforced by frequent and appropriate examinations.

Home schooling not only provides a superior childhood and family environment, it also has potential to transform American society by building new generations of more capable young adults. Home schooling is, however, often held back by the academic education of the parents or their lack of time to become home school teachers.

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An Outstanding Resource - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Curriculum Contents List

120,000 Pages of Outstanding Materials

The Robinson Home School Curriculum Version 2.2 includes:

1. **Books:** More than 250 very high quality books. Academic knowledge is in books - especially books that are carefully chosen. See 'Best Books'.

2. **Encyclopedia:** The complete 30,000 page 1911 *Encyclopedia Britannica* with special on-screen reading software for its use. The 1911 *Britannica* is generally acknowledged to have been the greatest encyclopedia ever written. Its depth of knowledge and the erudition of its text are remarkable. For the 98% of recorded history that occurred before 1911, this is the most definitive source.

3. **Dictionary:** The complete 400,000 word 1913 Webster's Dictionary with special on-screen software for its use. This dictionary contains five times as many words as the original Webster's dictionary and yet preserves the literary beauty of

robinson features

- Books
- Encyclopedia
- Dictionary
- Science Texts
- Fast Software
- Special Illustrations
- Examinations
- Language Skills
- Phonics & Arithmetic
- Vocabulary
- Course of Study

the original work.

4. **Science Texts:** All of the required science books and answer keys. (Current Caltech 101 Science texts.) Also included are advanced science texts for use by students with unusual ability.

5. **Fast Software:** Software that operates very quickly in both the on-screen viewing and printing modes. The on-screen viewing software is the best of its type available anywhere. High quality "scale-to-gray" gives your screen a 300% increase in virtual resolution to look as much like paper as possible. Flying magnifier makes details easy to check out. Maximize mode lets you take full advantage of your screen real estate to display pages by temporarily removing all but the essential page navigation controls.

   Minimum computer requirements are a Windows-compatible 386 or higher with 16 MB RAM and Windows 3.1. Of course, the curriculum runs faster on a Pentium with Windows 95, 98, NT, 2000 or with Windows XP. Actually, you do not need to own a computer at all - you just need access to a computer with which you can print materials from the CDs as needed.

6. **Special:** A large number of woodcut illustrations with special emphasis on early American history and geography. Especially noteworthy are over 1,000 detailed woodcuts of civil war events that were produced before 1890 from sketches by individuals, including many famous figures, who actually participated in the war. Study of this collection of illustrations and the accompanying narrative gives the student a very clear understanding and visualization of the events.

   Also of special interest is a very beautifully illustrated travelogue of the United States published in 1872. This provides an unusual opportunity to see our country - both its cities and its wilderness - in the era before it was extensively populated and developed.

   Also included is the original King James Version of the Bible - the 1st Issue of the 1st Edition in 1611 (The Great He Bible). This volume is noteworthy for its beauty and historical significance. It is the foundational book of the Curriculum.

7. **Examinations:** Over 50 SAT style examinations with answer keys. The advanced tests being in essay form. Tests follow specific books. Also included are bonus exams for the Chronicles of Narnia series by CS Lewis.

8. **Language Skills:** Penmanship Practice pages by Bethany Robinson, extensive Grammar Text written especially for the Robinson Curriculum by Jane Orient with Primer, Main Course and Reading Passages, Answers to the Grammar Exercises and Basic American English Spelling.
9.

   Phonics & Arithmetic: Printable flash cards for phonics and arithmetic (all that is required before Saxon 54). These flash cards are easily made with any computer printer. (See books 503 and 504 in the Books list.)

10. **Vocabulary:** This 6,400 word vocabulary program assures that the student's reading produces an active vocabulary (words used spontaneously in writing and speaking) rather than a passive

vocabulary (words understood, but not actively used).

a. *Vocabulary list in flashcard format* with word - definition and word - sentence for each of the 150 books in the core read order. On average, about two--thirds of the words and sentences in each list are actually drawn from the books themselves. The other third are drawn from previous SAT exams.

b. The flash cards also appear in a second iteration with book numbers printed on each card and both Sentence and Definition appearing on the same card. The format is more traditional. (See book 502 in the Books list.)

c. The curriculum also includes a complete set of printable *Vocabulary Exercises*. Each book has its own set, or sets of exercises. Each of the words for that book are represented in every exercise and these include:

- Vocabulary List - a list of the words and definitions
- Word Find - containing the vocabulary words as clues
- Crossword Puzzle - with clues to words across and down
- Word Find - containing definitions as clues
- Matching Game - matching words with definitions

d. For the older student there is an *on-screen vocabulary exerciser* that tracks the student's progress and adjusts his lessons to emphasize those words with which he is having the most difficulty.

This is followed by the answer keys to all the exercises. (See book 501 and 503 in the Books list.)

11.

Course of Study: A 100 page discourse by Dr. Art Robinson discussing all the aspects of a self-teaching homeschool which also incorporates the experiences of the many families who have found this to be most effective in their own homes. 12 sections in all: Overview, Introduction, Self-Teaching, Study Environment, Science and Mathematics, Vocabulary, Examinations, Oral Learning, Books, Books to Buy, Ordering and Registration, Newsletter Vol. lll, No.12. This is essential reading ... and rereading. It takes a concentrated effort to get on a different track for our children and deprogram ourselves from an institutional model of dependent learning.

With over 14 gigabytes of information on 22 CD-ROMs conveniently organized in a durable metal case and accessed with simple, user-friendly software, it can be honestly said that there is not now any home school curriculum for sale anywhere that provides as high a quality home school education as does this Robinson Home School Curriculum Version 2.2.

The Best Books by the Best Authors

Following is a small sampling of the books and authors that are a part of the Robinson Curriculum.

The Life of George Washington by Josephine Pollard. "The main purpose of the work [is] to give to its

young readers a distinct and vivid idea of the exalted character and priceless services of Washington." Other books by Pollard: *Our Hero General Grant, Christopher Columbus and the Discovery of the New World, The Bible for Young People*

Original Children's Classics: *Bobbsey Twins* (11 volumes); *Tom Swift* adventures (8 volumes); 26 Horatio Alger volumes; *Five Little Peppers and How They Grew; Heidi; Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farms; The Boy Knight: A Tale of the Crusades* by G.A. Henty

History: *Life of George Washington* by Washington Irving; *War Between the States* by Alexander Stephens; *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government* by Jefferson Davis; *The Life of Stonewall Jackson* by R.L. Dabney; *Picturesque America: A Delineation by Pen and Pencil*, 2 volumes edited by William Cullen Bryant

Economics: *The Wealth of Nations* by Adam Smith; *Economics in One Lesson* by Henry Hazlitt

Geography: *The Heart of the Antartic; My African Journey* by Winston Churchill

Autobiographies, firsthand accounts: *Personal Memoirs of* U.S. Grant; *Diaries of George Washington*; *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin;* David Crockett*'s Autobiography; The Autobiography of Theodore Roosevelt; Memoirs of William Tecumseh Sherman; Lincoln's Speeches and Letters; The Soldier in Our Civil War*, a unique collectors two-volume account by those who fought, including some 1,000 illustrations by artists who were present at the events.

Sample Books:

- McGuffey's Readers
- The Rover Boys
- Hans Brinker
- Little Women
- Robinson Crusoe
- Heidi
- Up From Slavery
- Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea
- Treasure Island
- Economics in One Lesson
- The Federalist Papers
- The Enterprising Americans

Sample Authors:

- Daniel Defoe
- Rudyard Kipling
- Longfellow
- Horatio Alger, Jr.
- Murray Rothbard
- John Bunyan
- Jules Verne
- Arthur Conan Doyle
- Charles Dickens
- William Shakespeare
- John Calvin
- John Locke
- Isaac Newton

An Outstanding Resource - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Math, Phonics, Course of Study

20% Discount on Saxon Math Books

Mathematics is a key element in early education. Not only is mathematics the language of science, mathematics also teaches mental discipline and rigorous rational reasoning.

The Robinson Curriculum uses Saxon math books and a unique study method that markedly enhances their effectiveness and the student's progress.

Everything required for 12 years of home-education is on these 22 CD-ROMs *with the exception* of nine

Saxon math books - starting with Saxon 54 and extending through Saxon Calculus. A coupon allowing purchase of these books at a 20% discount from the ordinary retail price comes with each set of 22 CDs. Each student usually finishes these books by age 14 to 16, so about one book per year is needed, depending on the student's individual rate of progress. *(Ed. To know where to start older children, you can click here to find the free Saxon Math placement exams.)*

The curriculum is not divided by "grade" levels. Each student simply moves up a seamless road of knowledge at whatever rate of progress his abilities and study habits permit. We omit grade levels because they have become a means by which student achievement is normed to public school academic levels. These schools have, however, fallen very far behind the academic levels that were common even in the public schools of earlier generations. Children should not be deprived of the chance for a superb education by subjecting them to the failed standards of public schools.

The curriculum is not divided by "grade" levels.

Phonics and then Self-Teaching

During the first year of school, each student learns to read by phonics and practices reading with a great many books until reading becomes both easy and enjoyable. The CDs contain phonics flash cards, a large number of books that are both fun to read and appropriate to this first year of education, sets of vocabulary flash card exams for each book, and reading comprehension exams for some of the books. The student also learns all of the arithmetic tables by means of flash cards, so that he knows these tables perfectly. When this year has been completed, with some teacher help in learning phonics and understanding arithmetic, the student is ready for self-teaching.

...with some teacher help in learning phonics and understanding arithmetic, the student is ready for self-teaching.

Thereafter, each school day consists of math (or science when the appropriate math has been completed), followed by writing, followed by reading. The only teacher interaction required is in marking errors in the daily writing assignment. Students spend five to six hours in class each day. We advocate that this be done six days per week, ten to eleven months per year. This schedule is, of course, dependent upon family habits. The more study, the greater progress.

...each school day consists of math ... followed by writing, followed by reading.

Course of Study

The "Course of Study," a book-length document on the CDs, explains every aspect of using this curriculum in extensive detail. It gives many hints and helpful procedures covering all aspects of the learning process. The keys to academic success are good study habits and excellent study materials. The Course of Study emphasizes the means by which students can acquire good study habits. The 22 CD-ROMs provide excellent study material for students of all ages - including materials extending all the way from those for beginning students to materials so academically difficult that even the most advanced and

brilliant students will still be challenged.

History, English, literature, economics, geography ... are taught during the reading period each day...

History, English, literature, economics, geography, and all other subjects except for math, science, and writing are taught during the reading period each day. These are taught from actual books rather than text books. For example, the War Between the States is studied by reading autobiographies of the most famous individuals who fought on both sides of the war - supplemented by illustrations produced by artists who were actually present during the pictures events.

The books for these subjects are mixed together and presented to the student in a specific, carefully determined reading order, so that the vocabulary, sentence structure, and content of the books gradually becomes more difficult as the student's abilities increase. Each book is followed by a vocabulary exercise in a flash card format to ensure that the vocabulary from each book becomes an active part of the student's vocabulary. The CDs also provide extensive reading comprehension examinations for many of the books. These tests are in the format of the Scholastic Aptitude Tests that the student will be required to take for college entrance.

Outstanding Results

The Robinson Self-Teaching Curriculum is in use by 60,000 students throughout the United States and in many other countries.

Results have been uniformly outstanding. Students using this curriculum achieve high academic performance and a much greater enjoyment of learning than is otherwise the case.

Parents are often astonished by the remarkable progress of their children

Parents are often astonished by the remarkable progress of their children with this program, even thought the cost in curriculum expense and teacher time is remarkably low. There is no comparable home school program available from any other source.

Tracking and Testing

Math: Your students should work their Saxon Math problems each day and then check their answers in the Answer Key. Make sure that they keep a graph of their error rate as instructed in the *Course of Study*: *Math and Science* document.

Writing: Since they will be writing a full page every day that you will mark for errors, every day is a test

of their writing skills.

Vocabulary: For every book in the required reading section, Vocabulary Exercises and Flashcards are available. The exercises are made up of crossword puzzles, word finding and matching games, and word/definition lists along with answer keys.

Reading: Since the reading in the Robinson Curriculum is from a selection of the best books in the English language, the books are highly engaging and easily hold a child's interest.

To help you keep track of their progress, we have created the **RC Weekly Assignment Record**. It helps you to know the students' position in their Math, Writing, Reading, and Vocabulary.

There are **SAT style exams**, with answer keys, for every 4th or 5th book in the curriculum. These are accessed through the *Examinations* tab of the Robinson Curriculum program. The purpose of these exams to measure your students' reading and comprehension skills and to familiarize them with this style of exam.

Some RC users have also created tests for various books. These can be accessed through the Robinson Forums (see the *Parental Contributions* section) as well as 3rd party websites such as: http://www.my.homewithgod.com/joyfullight/booklevel.htm (click on the X link beside the books).

For complex tracking and reporting, as required by some states, you may wish to use the **Homeschool Tracker**, a free program from www.tghomesoft.com.

Note: There are also Placement Exams available for the Saxon Math. For placement in the Curriculum see: Where to Start an Older Child

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What Our Customers Say

I love Robinson Curriculum!

I love the **Robinson Curriculum**! I've used it for a year, and am sticking with it, especially now that there are so many more CD-ROMs to use. I love it because my girls really are becoming self taught, my 12 year old having literally educated herself this year. There are subjects that she knows better than I do. How could I expect to teach her those subjects? So, I turn to those who can teach her, and their written word makes it possible for them to reach even beyond the grave to continue the influence that helped shape the people I've learned to respect and accept as mentors. PJA

I can definitely see using this curriculum through high school

She is gaining confidence and is actually enjoying it!

I love the Robinson curriculum. We are in our third year of homeschooling, with "older" children who were accustomed to testing and quizzes and spoon-fed material. Math was miserable for the high-schooler and me until this year (we started RC on 8/4/97). She is gaining confidence and is actually enjoying it! My 11-year-old giggled at some of the antiquated phrases ("Oh, pooh!" said one of the Rover boys in book No. 16), but he is learning and developing an interest in history for the first time. I can definitely see us continuing this curriculum through high school for both of them. FSW

He is actually doing more work than he did in public school...

The ability to work at his own level and speed has made the difference for our son

This is our first year of homeschooling our sixth grader. The Robinson curriculum was recommended by a friend in our church. The ability to work at his own level and speed has made the difference for our son. He is actually doing more work than he did in public school and is enjoying the work. I know it sounds too good to be true, I thought the same thing. But through prayer and a step of faith, I have found that the Lord will be faithful. SBB

Six reasons we love the Robinson Curriculum

I only purchased it recently and have not yet gathered all the materials, but I'm working on that.

WHY???

1. My girls really like first person accounts of history instead of the "canned" materials. They report getting a "feel" for the major events instead of just date and places.

2. Literature selections are all really good. I may add a few more from Shakespeare (my personal favorite) and a few more minority authors (one of my college minors); but only because I have the books in my personal library. I am collecting books from several used book stores in the greater Houston area and hope to only print a few. There are even some internet bookstores that specialize in the out of print selections.

3. Science is introduced as a comprehensive part of the whole program, gradually at first but then in concentration after math is completed.

4. Saxon math is really good. Although I tend to switch between several math curriculums - usually Saxon and BJU - I believe that the girls are getting a good math background -- better than I have.

5. Writing every day is important. Before Robinson, I already assigned writing at least several times a week to promote both spelling and grammar (I tend not to teach them

independently) as part of the communication process.

6. Finally, the plan is simple to implement. Math takes 2 hours, Writing takes 1 hour, and Reading takes 2 more hours. That's it. I often add some other extracurricular projects -- art, lab science, music -- but only after the basics are complete.

As I said, I am only a beginner at this program; but I hope this helps some.

In Christ, Regina PLG

Robinson has got it right...

...and I do love this curriculum!

And at this point, there is no other curriculum I would personally recommend to homeschoolers.

We are beginning our 9th year of homeschooling and I have studied or tried everything available for home education. (Although, I must admit, since beginning Robinson's materials a year ago, I quit doing that!) We would always come back to the self-teaching method even after purchasing other materials. And at this point, there is no other curriculum I would personally recommend to homeschoolers.

The self-teaching and the books are what sold me on this. The structure is _thoroughly_ simple. This program/method would work for anyone & I've heard that it does -- even for people whose children were labeled with "learning disorders" (most likely teaching disorders).

The no-sugar, no-tv, no-computer aspects are good things, but I would say it is not necessary to have all of these in place in order to succeed with the RC. Unless you are already in complete agreement with your spouse over these issues, they should be considered goals & not necessities.

We have five children (one is only two years old) and the older four are thriving in their studies. For those who say that certain "subjects" are not covered with Robinson, they mean as separate subjects. Included in the reading is a wealth of information on many things! BHS

Wow! What a change!

We just started using the RC JUST this week. In just a few short days there is such a change in the atmosphere in our home. The kids and I are so much more relaxed and they are enjoying their reading so much more. I was dumbfounded when I saw my youngest (10yo) with such a short attention span. But thinking about it, that was exactly what he was being taught by using the "canned" curriculums-20

minutes here, 10 minutes on this etc. My 15yo was balking at this new way of learning. On Tuesday he commented that he thinks he's really going to like this. He said he wasn't nearly so stressed out. Now I can hardly get him to do any of his chores because he's holed up somewhere reading. I as a mom, can hardly wait to see what changes are in store for us after using this a year.

The boys cringed when I told them they were going to write a paper everyday. By the third day they were talking about what to write next week. My oldest is writing a story. Hallelujah! He's the one that has been allergic to his pencil. ha

So if anyone is wondering if this works.....you bet. We have an extensive library here at home. They are now fighting over who gets to read what first. You have to love those kinds of fights.

Thank you Mr. Robinson!

Brenda

Response to a critique of the Curriculum

Hi,

I wanted to give you my opinion, as a user of the curriculum since September.

It is costing me approximately $2.50 to print a book, which is very reasonable (I have a new Epson Stylus C60 printer, which cost me less than $100, and I have been able to buy ink cartridges for $4.50 to $8.00 apiece).

My computer was purchased in 1997 but has had some upgrades. My memory is maxed out at 64 MB. While I have had a few instances of freezing up while printing, generally things have gone smoothly. There is no delay at all in viewing pages. Once you get the hang of it, it is very easy to print all odd/all even pages. I have printed 17 books so far.

I use the 3-ring binding system. My 9-year-old son has had no complaints at all about books in this form.

Before starting the Robinson Curriculum, my son had read one chapter book in his life. Since starting in September, he has read thirteen and is on his fourteenth. He is comprehending and enjoying the books.

We use a different order than is given on the RC web site. I found a web site that has the books ordered by grade level (for example, the George Washington book is not 4th on the list, but about 60th on the list). The site is http://www.my.homewithgod.com/joyfullight/booklevel.htm

This has been very, very helpful. The site also has additional tests for some of the books.

What I love about this curriculum is that the child is taking responsibility for his education.

I am an unschooler at heart, and the Robinson Curriculum has been a perfect solution for us. My son independently does his Saxon math (including checking his work), a page of writing a day, and 2 hours of reading. This leaves me free to teach my 5-year-old how to read and attend to my 1-year-old baby. My 9-year-old sets his alarm and gets going early each day and has plenty of free time for other pursuits of his choosing.

What I love about this curriculum is that the child is taking responsibility for his education; I know that he is reading high-quality, well-written books; and I can clearly see progress and improvement in all areas since September (reading, writing, and math).

... I am very satisfied with it and consider it a blessing for our family.

Best wishes,
Ruth

I was asking to little from my children

We have been using this curriculum for the past year and love it. We have always been on the mindset of "self teaching" and have just done that with other material, this curriculum has put a backbone to a system that was already in place and has made for an easy transition. I can see that I was asking to little from my children and now see how much more they are capable of.

MC in Ohio

Kids love this Curriculum

If your children are learning to hate school ....

I was using all of Abeka's stuff and their day became drudgery. They were not liking school at all and they had no time to read except for snippets of information.

Now they love history, they love math, and they enjoy reading!

When we started they had to get the definitions of the definitions because they were still dumbed down. They still have to live a dictionary but they are having a lot of fun.

I did use the Abeka language book because I needed it to correct their work. I let them use a computer to take advantage of the spell checker and a spelling game. The husband is still addicted to TV but even that is being curtailed over time. So I don't make an issue of it.

It took about a year to make the transition to using the Robinson Curriculum but wow, what a difference.

- fb in TX

An Outstanding Resource - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Frequently Asked Questions

question

Will this Curriculum work for my children if they have already started with another one?

answer

Yes it will work just fine. It may take more time to transition into the self-teaching methodology, depending on their background, than if they started with the Robinson Curriculum to begin with.

question

What is the Scholarship Program?

answer

The scholarship program is paid for by those who pay full price. You may direct further questions about the scholarship program to OISM at 2251 Dick George Rd., Cave Junction OR 97523.

question

Is there a demo available?

answer

No. This is one way we keep the price low.

question

What are the computer requirements?

answer

For Windows: System Requirements - Win95, Win98, Windows NT, Windows 2000, Windows XP, and Windows 2003
- 8 MB of RAM or greater (16 MB recommended)
- CD-ROM drive
- 386 CPU or greater
- 5.5 MB of disk space
- Printer (See Printing Recommendations)

question

Will I need a computer for each child?

answer

No you do not. It only takes one to print out the materials.

question

Do I have to buy the whole set of Saxon Math books at one time?

answer

You may buy as many or as few as you like. The discount will still apply.

question

Can I buy the CDs for just one grade?

answer

No, it is a complete set of CDs and we cannot separate it.

question

Can I buy the Saxon Math answer books alone since I already have the book?

answer

No, we can't do that. We purchased them in sets ourselves.

question

Do I need the latest version of the Saxon Math books?

answer

No, the versions are virtually the same.

question

Is there a money back guarantee?

answer

We have a no return policy to help keep the cost down. We would rather people read the information we offer than purchase the Curriculum without knowing what they are getting.

We do stand behind our product and will replace any defective CDs. We also offer free technical support for the software.

question

Can I view the books on the computer?

answer

Yes, there is very good on screen reading software (the best of any software of which we are aware) but we recommend you print out the materials since we recommend the children do not look at the computer for extended periods of time. The resolution on current computer screens is about 1/6 that of paper and the contrast ratio is about 1/3 that of paper. This severly retards both

reading speed and comprehension.

question

Can the Curriculum be used as a supplement?

answer

It can be used to great profit as a supplement since it is such a rich resource of materials. However, to get the greatest benefit from the Curriculum it should be used full time if possible.

question

How long will it take to get my Curriculum?

answer

The Curriculum will arrive 2-3 weeks from when you place your order. It will arrive by Priority Mail from the USPS.

question

Where do I start my older child?

answer

Dr. Robinson has created a curriculum or educational program that truly is not based on "grades." The student/child is advancing through a series of math books, writing daily, studying, and reading a course of chosen literature at an individual pace. The literature to be read is put in an order from simple to advanced levels and you can choose where to begin by using your own judgement as you view the books on the screen, based on your knowledge of your child's age and reading ability. I would not worry about starting an older child too early in the reading selections as most of the books are enjoyable and worth reading at any age.

A more objective way of placing the student is by using the vocabulary flash cards to determine their reading comprehension level. Each book in the core read order has a corresponding vocabulary. Choose a place in the read order and if they do 80% or better on the first pass through the vocabulary flash cards (Words and Definitions) they can skip ahead in their reading. If they get less than 80% correct you should skip back. Keep on testing till you find their level. (They should

master all the vocabulary words regardless of where they start.)

For Math, Saxon Publishers have available math placement tests. Or, if you have them available, use the tests that come with each textbook.

See Where to Start an Older Child for more.

question

How well does the Robinson Curriculum prepare students for college and do I need a diploma?

answer

The Robinson Curriculum is specially designed to prepare students for the SAT - a standardized nationwide test administered by the College Board (not to be mistaken with the SAT Achievement test which does not give you any credit). The Saxon Math and the RC Vocabulary section do an excellent job for SAT prep. For further credit they can take the Adanced Placement Exams for the college they are attending in order to test out of credit courses. This reduces the time and money required to get their degree. 3 of the Robinson children have done all this with great results. They only need a GED if they are going into something that does not require college but does need a "High School" diploma. A transcript generally does you no good. It is the SAT scores that matter. Any other paper is not important except in unusual cases.

question

My child scores very high and is gifted. Would this Curriculum be appropriate (he loves computers too)?

answer

The Curriculum has a lot of "headroom" for the gifted student. The science aspect of the Curriculum has optional elements that will stretch the limits of the most exceptional student. The Vocabulary and Exams are especially geared toward preparing the student for the SAT. Note that the Curriculum is mostly paper based for the student. They do not sit in front of the computer to use this Curriculum. The most valuable aspect of the Curriculum is the Course of Study documents (of which the Robinson Story is a part). The section on Oral Learning is invaluable and unique.

question

I am new to homeschooling. How do I get started?

answer

Here is what I would suggest:

1. Read as much of our website as you can. Listen to the Robinson Radio Online as well.

2. Join the Homeschool Legal Defense Association. (see www.hslda.org)

3. Try out the Robinson Forum and see how others are doing it.

4. See our page on where to start an older child at: Where to Start an Older Child.

5. Look up homeschool groups in your area: Regional Associations - Local Homeschool Groups

More FAQ's

For more frequently asked questions see: Frequently Asked Questions from the Support section.

Ordering - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Order by Internet: Easy/Secure

The Robinson Curriculum can be purchased over the Internet by **credit card** here. (Use the Order by Mail form for checks or money orders.) We use Microsoft's bCentral to make your order easy and secure.

Its **easy** : Just type in your name and address, as well as your credit card information, and your order will be processed. You will receive an e-mail confirmation that your order has been received.

Its **secure**: you will see a closed lock or solid key in the status bar at the bottom of your web browser when you are doing the actual ordering. This lock is to show you that the browser is in secure mode and its communications are encrypted. No one else is able to look at your credit card information when this closed lock is showing.

The charge will show up on your credit card statement under the name of **Entrewave**.

Ordering Options

Find out about the G.A. Henty collection at www.henty.com.

entrewave	Price	Microsoft bCentral [View Cart]
Robinson Curriculum Version 2.2	$195.00	Add to Cart
Robinson Curriculum and the G.A. Henty Collection	$275.00	Add to Cart

Standard Curriculum Shipping Free: Takes 2-3 weeks from when you place your order (orders are batch processed once a week). It will arrive by Priority Mail from the USPS. Included free for all US orders.

Express Curriculum Shipping $35: Takes 3-4 business days from when you place your order. It will arrive by FedEx 2nd Day by Federal Express. Available in the USA 48 states only.

International Curriculum Shipping $20: Shipping time is dependent on the country it is sent to. It is shipped by Insured Air Mail or best way. Required for all non-US orders. If normal mail shipments are unsecure you should contact us about sending it by FedEx for actual FedEx charges plus $10 handling.

Customer Service Policy: We have a No Returns policy. However all products are warranted to be defect free.

Mac Users: An unsupported Mac version of the Robinson Curriculum software (uses the same CDs as the Windows version) can be downloaded by clicking here .

Ordering - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Order by Phone: 517-546-8780

Order the Robinson Curriculum for $195 or combine with the G.A. Henty Collection for a total price of $275.

robinson ordering

Priority Mail shipping is included. The Curriculum will arrive 2-3 weeks from when you place your order. It will arrive by Priority Mail from the USPS.

Express FedEx shipping within 3-4 business days is available for an extra $35.

International Curriculum Shipping $20: Shipping time is dependent on the country it is sent to. It is shipped by Insured Air Mail or best way. Required for all non-US orders. If normal mail shipments are unsecure you should contact us about sending it by FedEx for actual FedEx charges plus $10 handling.

Our credit card order center is open during business hours from 9 to 5, Monday through Friday EST.

You will be asked for the following information:

1. Your name as it appears on your credit card.
2. Phone
3. Email Address - you will be sent a confirmation of your order.
4. The address your credit card it billed to:
    a. Street
    b. City
    c. State
    d. Zip
5. You can ask to have it sent to a different delivery address if you wish.
6. Credit Card: MasterCard, Visa, etc.
7. Credit Card Expiration Date.

Call: 1-517-546-8780

The charge will show up on your credit card under the name of "**Entrewave**."

Customer Service Policy: We have a No Returns policy. However all products are warranted to be defect free.

Ordering - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Order by Mail: Order Form

Printable Order Form for Check or Money Order

Robinson Curriculum	$195	___
Robinson Curriculum and G.A Henty CDs	$275	___
Express - FedEx Shipping	Add $35	___
International Shipping	Add $20	___
Total	$ _____	___

_____
Name

_____
Street

_____
City, State, & Zip

(_____)_____-_____
Phone

_____/_____/_____
Date

_____
Email Address (optional)

Send check or money order made payable to:
RC Internet
Mail your order to:
3321 Sesame Dr., Howell, MI 48843

Customer Service Policy: We have a No Returns policy. However all products are warranted to be defect free.

Note: Regular Shipping (included free with the Curriculum packages) is 2-3 weeks. FedEx Shipping is within 3-4 business days. Thank you for your order.

International Curriculum Shipping $20: Shipping time is dependent on the country it is sent to. It is shipped by Insured Air Mail or best way. Required for all non-US orders. If normal mail shipments are unsecure you should contact us about sending it by FedEx for actual FedEx charges plus $10 handling.

Ordering - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Order by Fax: 517-546-8730

Fax Ordering

Robinson Self-Teaching Home-School Curriculum

Robinson Curriculum for a total price of $195 US _____

Robinson Curriculum & G.A. Henty CDs $275 US _____

Ship within 3-4 business days FedEx in US $35 US _____

Ship to International (non-USA) address $ 20 US _____

_____
Name on Credit Card

Billing Address:

_____
Street

_____
City, State, & Zip

_____
Phone

_____/_____/_____
Date

_____
Email Address

_____/_____ Credit Card Number / Expiration Date

Credit Card: __Visa __MC __Discover __ AmEx

If shipping address is different than the CC billing address please add it below. Fax to: 517-546-8730

Thank you for your Order

Customer Service Policy: We have a No Returns policy. However all products are warranted to be defect free.

The charge will show up on your credit card under the name of "**Entrewave**."

The Curriculum should arrive 2-3 weeks from when you place your order. Regular shipping for the Curriculum is by Priority Mail from the USPS. Express Shipping is by FedEx and takes 3-4 business days.

International Curriculum Shipping $20: Shipping time is dependent on the country it is sent to. It is shipped by Insured Air Mail or best way. Required for all non-US orders. If normal mail shipments are unsecure you should contact us about sending it by FedEx for actual FedEx charges plus $10 handling.

Upgrades and Specials - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Saxon Math Order Form

As a Robinson Curriculum customer you are entitled to order the Saxon Math books for 20% off the regular price. Prices are subject to change in the future without notice.

```
Please send the following Saxon Math Books
including answer sheets and exams.

Payment for the total amount and my Version
2.x  serial number are enclosed (use order date
if you have not yet received your Curriculum).

From:

 Name: _____________________________________

 Address: __________________________________

 City: _____________ St: ____ Zip: ___________

 Ph: _________________ Email: _______________

 Date: ____/_____/_____ Serial No: ___________
```

```
    Quantity                                Amount

    _____ Saxon Math 54 .......... $50 EA _____

    _____ Saxon Math 65 .......... $50 EA _____

    _____ Saxon Math 76 .......... $51 EA _____

    _____ Saxon Math 87 .......... $51 EA _____

    _____ Saxon Algebra 1/2 ...... $51 EA _____

    _____ Saxon Algebra I ........ $52 EA _____

    _____ Saxon Algebra II ....... $52 EA _____

    _____ Saxon Advanced Math .... $54 EA _____

    _____ Saxon Calculus ......... $59 EA _____

                              Sub Total = $_____
 Regular Mail:  $5.00 Per Book
Priority Mail: $10.00 Per Book
                               Shipping = $_____

                             Grand Total = $_____

 Send a check or money order made out to OISM
 and mail to the:
    Oregon Institute of Science and Medicine,
     P.O. Box 1279, Cave Junction, OR 97523.

 If you wish Priority service send this order
 in by Priority Mail. We cannot offer
 international shipping.

 Note: You can  determine which Saxon Math Books
 you need by using the Placement Exam available at:
 www.saxonpublishers.com/homeschool/pg/index.jsp
```

Upgrades and Specials - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

RC Upgrade from 2.0 to 2.2

For Owners of Version 2.0 (1997 - 2002)

Version 2.2 of the Robinson Curriculum is now available as an upgrade for current owners of Version 2.0. You have Version 2.0 if your CD Disk 1 has "Version 2.0" on the label. The upgrade consists of a new CD Disk 1.

Contained within the upgrade are the following:

New and Updated Content

1. A revised *Course of Study.*
2. *Grammar* and *Spelling* books.
3. *Vocabulary Exercises* for the more than 6,400 vocabulary words associated with each book in the core read order.
4. Newly formatted flash cards for Vocabulary, Math, and Phonics.

New Software

1. Version 2.2 keeps track of all your print jobs in a printable *Print Log*. Also, clicking on a book title will tell you when you last printed that book.
2. The new *D* indicator marks all the pages that are dark and will cost a lot of ink to print. The Skip feature skips past these saving you ink and therefore money.
3. *Print Percentages* are now set for each individual book. Thus, when you print the books, they are preset to fill the printed page with about a one inch margin. As before, you can reset the percentages yourself, if you like.
4. The print engine has been modified to print pages in 25 page groups, eliminating any past problems with print spoolers.

Shipping: Regular Shipping is included free of charge.
Please allow 2-3 weeks for delivery.

question

I just upgraded my RC to 2.2 and am having problems printing the vocab exercises. All I'm getting is a totally black, ink-saturated page. I can print out other things just fine. What is happening?

answer

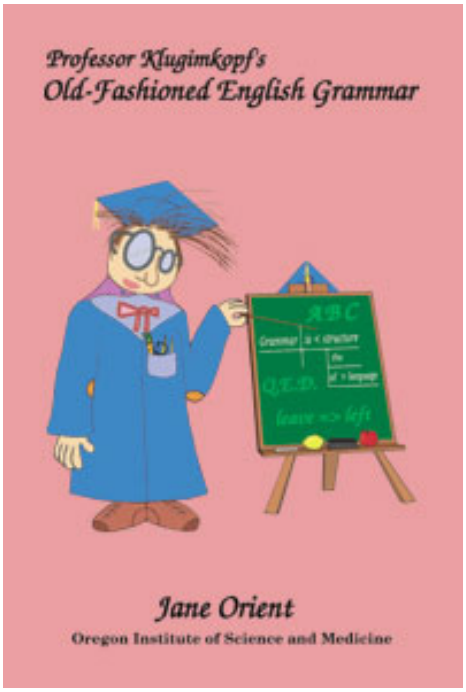
There is an error in the HP print driver in Windows 98 that causes this. You can easily work around it by setting the Print Percentage to something other that 100% - try changing it to 99% or 101%.

Upgrades and Specials - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Special Offer: Printed Books

The Spelling and Grammar books that are part of the Upgrade to Version 2.2 are now also available as printed books.

Professor Klugimkopf's Old-Fashioned English Grammar



Hard Cover - 416 pages - ISBN: 0-942487-11-7

Professor Klugimkopf's Old-Fashioned English Grammar
By: Jane M. Orient

Professor Klugimkopf's Old-Fashioned English Grammar, is a blueprint for the study of English.

Special Features:

- Old-fashioned diagrams
- A layered style, with a primer and advanced sections
- Old concepts reviewed in each set of exercises, as in Saxon math
- Answers and detailed explanations for the exercises
- Exercises based on passages from books in the Robinson Self-Teaching Home School Curriculum
- Practice in correcting common errors

Professor Klugimkopf's Spelling Method

Hard Cover - 154 pages - ISBN: 0-942487-09-5

Professor Klugimkopf's Spelling Method
By: Jane M. Orient

In *Professor Klugimkopf's Spelling Method* learn the great secret of the universe:
Letters stand for sounds.

Special Features:

- Essential rules from phonics
- "Families" show various ways to spell each sound
- "Oddities" and "orphans" identified
- Special emphasis on homonyms
- Words of more than one syllable as ordered in the vocabulary lessons in the Robinson Self-Teaching Home School Curriculum
- Designed to accompany *Professor Klugimkopf's Old-Fashioned English Grammar*.

Makes Vocabulary Words Easier to Learn

The Robinson Curriculum contains printable flash cards for the 6,464 vocabulary words keyed to the core read order of books from 4-150. Each book has between 15 and 50 words with definitions and context sentences associated with it. This vocabulary gives your child's mind active knowledge of a set of words that enable them to think and understand with greater clarity.

We now offer Robinson Curriculum Vocabulary Exercises that make learning and remembering these words easier and more enjoyable. Each book has its own set, or sets of exercises. Each of the words for that book are represented in every exercise and these include:

1. **Vocabulary List** - a list of the words and definitions
2. **Word Find** - containing the vocabulary words as clues
3. **Crossword Puzzle** - with clues to words across and down
4. **Word Find** - containing definitions as clues
5. **Matching Game** - matching words with definitions

The final volume contains the answer keys to all the exercises.

This is the most complete *self-teaching* English vocabulary course available.

The total cost of the entire 10 Volume, 1600+ page, comb-bound, set of Robinson Curriculum Vocabulary Exercises is $79.95 plus shipping. See the Ordering section below.

Note: The Vocabulary Exercises are included in Version 2.2 of the Robinson Curriculum and can be printed out in its entirety from there.

entrewave	Price	Microsoft bCentral [View Cart]
Vocabulary Exercises - 10 Volumes for RC Owners Only Shipping $7	$79.95	Add to Cart

Special Offer for Robinson Curriculum and Henty CD-ROM Users

Note: This offer is valid only for users of the Robinson Homeschool Curriculum or the G. A. Henty CD-ROM set. This order form must be printed and mailed to the address below.

Dear Friends:

This letter is to tell you that the Robinson Curriculum project is being expanded to include printed versions - in both hard bound and soft bound formats - of the recommended books in the curriculum. This new project is called Robinson Books. We plan, eventually, to include all of the materials in the curriculum. Books currently available can be purchased by Internet at www.robinsonbooks.org.

As an introductory special, we are offering these books - in sets of 10 or more - to users of the Robinson Curriculum or of the Henty CD collection for 25% less than the retail single-copy prices. Orders of fewer than 10 books may be made at the undiscounted prices given in the order form.

Our first printings include the entire collection of 99 full-length books written by GA. Henty, two books of Henty short stories, and Professor Klugimkopf's grammar and spelling books by Dr. Jane Orient in soft cover and hard cover; Up From Slavery by Booker T. Washington in hard cover only; and the Robinson Curriculum 1,600-page, 10-book vocabulary exercise set in comb bound.

The G. A. Henty books are printed with the actual format, size, and cover art of the original Henty editions published a century ago. About 30 of Henty's books are already in print from other publishers in other formats. Our 99 books and two volumes of short stories include all of these 30 plus an additional 71 titles. In fact, this is the first time - even including the years of Henty's life - that all of his books have been in print simultaneously. Some of these books are so rare that serious Henty collectors are already ordering them to add to their collections.

Click here for a print friendly PDF version of the form below (requires Acrobat Reader).

Listed below are the books now in print. The 25% discounted prices are:

All hard cover books are $17 each. All soft cover books are $11 each. The vocabulary exercise set of 10 books is $79. Postage and handling is $1 per book for US addresses.

Payment can be made by check or money order to the Oregon Institute of Science and Medicine, 2251 Dick George Road, Cave Junction, OR 97523.

Please Circle SC (Soft Cover) or HC (Hard Cover) for each of your selections. [CB is Comb Binding.]

SC	HC	A Chapter of Adventures
SC	HC	A Final Reckoning
SC	HC	A Hidden Foe
SC	HC	A Jacobite Exile
SC	HC	A Knight of the White Cross
SC	HC	A March on London
SC	HC	A Roving Commission
SC	HC	A Search for a Secret
SC	HC	A Soldier's Daughter
SC	HC	A Woman of the Commune
SC	HC	All But Lost Vol. I
SC	HC	All But Lost Vol. II
SC	HC	All But Lost Vol. III
SC	HC	At Aboukir and Acre
SC	HC	At Agincourt
SC	HC	At the Point of the Bayonet
SC	HC	Beric the Briton

SC	HC	Rujub, the Juggler
SC	HC	St. Bartholomew's Eve
SC	HC	St. George For England
SC	HC	Sturdy and Strong
SC	HC	The Bravest of the Brave
SC	HC	The Cat of Bubastes
SC	HC	The Cornet of Horse
SC	HC	The Curse of Carne's Hold
SC	HC	The Dash For Khartoum
SC	HC	The Dragon and the Raven
SC	HC	The Lion of St. Mark
SC	HC	The Lion of the North
SC	HC	The Lost Heir
SC	HC	The March to Coomassie
SC	HC	The March to Magdala
SC	HC	The Plague Ship
SC	HC	The Queen's Cup

SC	HC	Bonnie Prince Charlie
SC	HC	Both Sides the Border
SC	HC	By Conduct and Courage
SC	HC	By England's Aid
SC	HC	By Pike and Dyke
SC	HC	By Right of Conquest
SC	HC	By Sheer Pluck
SC	HC	Captain Bayley's Heir
SC	HC	Colonel Thorndyke's Secret
SC	HC	Condemned as a Nihilist
SC	HC	Dorothy's Double
SC	HC	Facing Death
SC	HC	For Name and Fame
SC	HC	For the Temple
SC	HC	Friends Though Divided
SC	HC	Gabriel Allen M.P.
SC	HC	Held Fast for England
SC	HC	In Freedom's Cause
SC	HC	In Greek Waters
SC	HC	In the Hands of the Cave Dwellers
SC	HC	In The Hands of the Malays
SC	HC	In the Heart of the Rockies
SC	HC	In the Irish Brigade
SC	HC	The Sovereign Reader
SC	HC	The Tiger of Mysore
SC	HC	The Treasure of the Incas
SC	HC	The Young Buglers
SC	HC	The Young Carthaginian
SC	HC	The Young Colonists
SC	HC	The Young Franc-Tireurs
SC	HC	Those Other Animals
SC	HC	Through Russian Snows
SC	HC	Through the Fray
SC	HC	Through the Sikh War
SC	HC	Through Three Campaigns
SC	HC	To Herat and Cabul
SC	HC	True to the Old Flag
SC	HC	Under Drake's Flag
SC	HC	Under Wellington's Command
SC	HC	When London Burned
SC	HC	Winning His Spurs
SC	HC	With Buller in Natal
SC	HC	With Clive in India
SC	HC	With Cochrane the Dauntless
SC	HC	With Frederick The Great
SC	HC	With Kitchener in the Soudan

SC	HC	In the Reign of Terror
SC	HC	In Times of Peril
SC	HC	Jack Archer
SC	HC	John Hawke's Fortune
SC	HC	Maori and Settler
SC	HC	No Surrender!
SC	HC	On the Irrawaddy
SC	HC	One of the 28th
SC	HC	Orange and Green
SC	HC	Out on the Pampas
SC	HC	Out With Garibaldi
SC	HC	Queen Victoria
SC	HC	Redskin and Cow-Boy

SC	HC	With Lee in Virginia
SC	HC	With Moore at Corunna
SC	HC	With Roberts to Pretoria
SC	HC	With the Allies to Pekin
SC	HC	With the British Legion
SC	HC	With Wolfe in Canada
SC	HC	Won by the Sword
SC	HC	Wulf The Saxon
SC	HC	Professor K. Grammar
SC	HC	Professor K. Spelling
	CB	Vocabulary Exercises - 10 Volume Set
	HC	Up From Slavery

Please send the Robinson Curriculum books that I have marked in this list to:

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Street: _____

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___ I am ordering at least 10 books. Enclosed is $17 for each hard cover (HC) book, $11 for each soft cover (SC) book, $79 for each 10-book set of vocabulary exercises, and $1 shipping for each book on my list.

___ I prefer to order fewer than 10 books at the undiscounted prices. Enclosed is $22.95 for each hard cover book, $14.95 for each soft cover book, $79 for each 10-book set of vocabulary exercises, $3 shipping for the first book, and $1 shipping for each additional book.

When our family began home schooling 20 years ago, it was never our intention to produce books and CD-ROMs for children. The death in 1988 of our wife and mother, Laurelee, when the children were 12, 10, 8, 6, 6 years and 18 months old, markedly changed our lives. From then on, our home school became a project in self-teaching, which required, more than ever before, the very best books and educational materials because the children had no teacher.

From this experience has grown the Robinson Self-Teaching Curriculum on 22 CD-ROMs that is now used by more than 60,000 children. These CDs provide the best books, vocabulary exercises, reference works, and other teaching aids that we have been able to find or produce. Also, to supplement the teaching of history, we published the books of G. A. Henty on a 6 CD-ROM set.

Until now, the users of the Robinson Curriculum have relied primarily upon books printed from the CD-ROMs with laser or inkjet printers. Some have purchased those few books that are still in print or obtained used books, although the supply of these is quite limited. Some also have read the books from computer monitors. Low-resolution computer displays, however, reduce reading speed and comprehension. Reading from the printed page is much better.

Computer printing of the books is the most economical. Including paper, printing supplies, and three-ring binders, 400-page books can be produced this way for about $7 to $9 per book, depending upon the prices paid for supplies - and not including the cost of equipment. If two home-schooled children use these books, the total cost is about $100 per year per child.

There is, however, another cost. Many parents do not have the time to routinely print books. Books that they do not print are, therefore, lost to their children. This lost opportunity cost is very high - much higher than is often realized. When this cost is considered, many families will find the $11 book cost + $1 shipping = $12 price of the new soft cover Robinson Books to be actually more economical than self-printed books.

By selecting the very best books from our rich, centuries-long heritage of English language works, those of us who originated the Robinson curriculum have been able to produce a curriculum that surpasses all modern equivalents produced by contemporary writers. The selection of these volumes and their integration into a unique teaching system have produced a course of study that is without equal in modern American education.

A problem, however, is that many of the ideas, morals, and ethics that have made our civilization great are out of fashion, so the books that teach these unique values are out of print. For the past eight years, we have been able to bring these books back into print only by means of digital CD-ROMs. Now, we are bringing them back with paper and ink.

Our initial printing emphasizes the wonderful collection of historical novels written by G. A. Henty. While some of these books have been in print, two-thirds of them have been out of print and generally unavailable to home school readers.

G. A. Henty wrote at a time when the teaching of a deep Christian faith, high moral character, sound ethical principles, a strong work ethic, simple personal humility, and self-confidence based on real accomplishments were considered essential to the education of each young person. This is in sharp

contrast to today's tax-financed schools where these values are deliberately excluded. The Henty books provide training in history and in many of the highest aspects of human character, while holding the attention of the reader with tales of adventure written by a master story teller. Not only do Henty's heroes serve as excellent examples to people of all ages, his own vocabulary, grammar, and literary skills serve as outstanding examples to young writers, readers, and speakers of the English language. In learning to write, as in learning to speak, the examples that children follow are the most important factors in their accomplishments.

American young people should read not a few Henty books, but all 99 of them. Taken together, they constitute a superb course in world history and an education in some of the the highest aspects of human behavior in the heroes - and in some of the lowest aspects in the villains.

In the Robinson Curriculum, we emphasize autobiographies of famous historical figures. Reading history in the words of those who made it is best, but many great events are not memorialized by appropriate autobiographies. Moreover, autobiographical figures usually assume that the reader is familiar with the customs, culture, and issues of their time.

G. A. Henty, on the other hand, teaches the culture of world civilizations along with his rendering of great events. As a result, the reader of Henty's books gradually gains an understanding of human nature and of the historical contexts of world affairs.

Consider the way in which modern human events are generally taught to students today. Each outstanding figure is usually classified as either a hero or a demon - yet, in truth, people are usually not this way. Both the virtues and the faults of human nature are found in everyone. Good and evil abound throughout the human race. Sometimes, when evil triumphs within a powerful individual or nation, great amounts of human suffering are the result; whereas sometimes good triumphs with equivalently beneficial results.

In order to understand current events and to act with wisdom and good judgment toward our fellow men, it is necessary to understand history - to understand the nature of man and the ways in which he has behaved in the past. It is this understanding that is greatly augmented by reading the works of G. A. Henty and by thinking about the events and people that he describes.

In the Robinson Curriculum, we place the greatest emphasis on learning to think. Mathematics and science are the primary tools used in this educational process. In these subjects, problem solving predominates with rigorously rational problems for which there are exact, entirely truthful answers. We study mathematics and science for several reasons, but the primary reason is that this study teaches the student to think.

Applying this skill to human affairs is, however, much more difficult. Human beings and the civilizations they build are far more complicated than simple problems in math and science. Moreover, each student must create, in his mind, a model of human behavior that can be used as a reliable reference. This model can best be constructed by observing past human behavior. The student must become familiar with the ways in which people and nations have behaved over many, many centuries, so that he can both anticipate future behavior and understand past behavior in a sensible historical context.

It is in building this model that the works of G. A. Henty are especially valuable. By reading the 99 books

that Henty wrote, the student is able to build a consistent model of human behavior during many of the great events of the past two millennia - both that of the famous participants and that of ordinary men who were caught up in these events.

I have been delighted by the depth of historical understanding that Henty's works have imparted to my own children and to many others who use our curriculum. Moreover, having read all of these books once and most of them more than once, my own life has been enriched and my understanding of history much improved. We hope that, in publishing these printed volumes, we will help make these experiences possible for many more children and their parents.

Arthur B. Robinson
OISM - October 2002

The spelling and grammar books are meant to be self-teaching. The introduction contains many suggestions on how to use them. The amount of teacher direction needed or desired depends on the child.

There are detailed answers for all exercises.

They are not designed to be used year after year, but for concentrated courses at times determined by the teacher and the student's abilities. Again, there are suggestions in the introduction.

The books specifically reject the idea that students should get their grammar in small doses spread over 12 years.

The spelling list for words of more than one syllable contains the words in the vocabulary exercises, ordered by books in the Robinson Curriculum. Vocabulary and spelling can be assigned as the various books are read.

The child need not memorize the lists of one-syllable words all at once, but the teacher might want him to have a quick look at the ways to spell various sounds, with examples, and then go through the book again more slowly to practice each word family.

The Robinson Curriculum is designed for children to proceed at their own individual pace, and thus does not go by government-school grade levels.

The scope is quite comprehensive. The grammar book has a primer in bigger font and a "main course" taking the concepts in the same order but at a higher level. Advanced concepts are included in the "main course" and labeled as such so that they may be skipped.

If you find a basic English concept that is omitted, please call it to the author's attention so that the omission may be remedied.

The books are not consumable, so they can be shared by many children. The student can write answers on a separate sheet of paper. The exercises consisting of reading passages from the Robinson Curriculum can

be printed out from the CD-ROMs (exact page references are included), and the student can write on the print-outs. Thus, for this part of the book, teachers can generate as many consumable copies as they wish.

The font size is 12 point (primer) or 10 point (more advanced).

Robinson Story - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

More Than A Fighting Chance

We Need Higher Hopes

(From the original article by Dr. Robinson: Christian Children Must Have More Than A Fighting Chance)

Ten years ago Laurelee and I decided to educate our children in a home school rather than a public school or a private school. The burden of this decision fell most heavily upon Laurelee who took responsibility for the substantial work that we expected this home school to require.

Of special concern to us were the following facts:

1. The social and religious environment in most schools

1. The social and religious environment in most schools in America has deteriorated to a level of evil such that it is a threat to the spiritual, moral, and mental health of each child who is forced to participate in it.

2. The level of political and secular humanist indoctrination

2. The level of political and secular humanist indoctrination in American public schools has risen so high that it is very difficult for any child attending public school to emerge with an understanding of historical and religious truth.

3. Irrationalism has become the norm throughout American schools

3. Irrationalism has become the norm throughout American schools. It is therefore very difficult for children who attend those schools to learn how to think rather than to simply believe whatever propaganda is being disseminated at the moment.

4. The academic quality of most schools has deteriorated

4. The academic quality of most schools has deteriorated to the point that American students are literally the world's largest group of dunces. In test after test of academic abilities, American students score last in comparison with students from the other twenty or so advanced countries.

It is, of course, possible for a child to emerge from an American public school with good academic training and a good spiritual and moral outlook. With increasingly rare exceptions, however, students who achieve this do so in spite of the school rather than because of the school. The over all performance of American children who attend public schools is very poor.

Even when American public schools of the past are used as a standard, current schools are an embarrassment. Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores have deteriorated so much during recent decades that the tests themselves are now on the verge of being changed. The American educational establishment is determined to change these tests, so that continued comparisons with past performance will not be possible.

Even the SAT tests themselves are being used as tools for social engineering. "Politically Correct" questions are being asked about "socially responsible" reading passages. In some cases the student must give an answer that he knows to be false or misguided in order to please the social engineers who designed the tests.

As a result of these facts, hundreds of thousands of American families have chosen to educate their children at home. Home schooling is rapidly becoming a major force in American society and has become a significant embarrassment to the public school establishment.

Moreover, families who have chosen this path are clearly achieving some of their objectives. In particular, they are succeeding in partially isolating their children from the social and religious decay that is pervasive in American public schools. They are also strengthening their families by keeping children and parents together rather than allowing them to be physically and mentally separated by the State.

Robinson Story - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Homeschooling Problems/Needs

What is Needed for Homeschooling to Grow

There is a growing possibility that, if the home schooling movement continues to expand, it may become the most important single force that Christians can employ to take America back from the anti-Christian forces that currently control American public life.

In order for this to occur, however, there are some current weaknesses in the home school movement that

need to be corrected. Aside from the obvious legal problems and other difficulties that have developed as the public school establishment attempts to protect its decaying monopoly, these include:

1. Home schooling is very difficult for some parents

1. Home schooling is very difficult for parents whose circumstances prevent at least one dedicated parent from giving a very large percentage of his or her time to the home school. While it is fine to argue that a family should always include one full-time parent in the home with time to teach the children, many families find themselves in circumstances which do not permit this.

2. Parents lack the education they want for their children

2. Many parents themselves lack the education that they so earnestly want for their children.

As a consequence, home schooled children have a difficult time rising above the level of academic achievement of their parents.

This is true of many homes in which both parents are college trained and may even have advanced degrees. A large fraction of college graduates, for example, are not trained to do simple calculus a level of academic achievement easily possible for most properly educated sixteen-year-old children. Even parents holding doctoral degrees in mathematics and science are often poorly educated in literature, history, and the foundations of our civilization.

3. The same evils in American colleges and universities

3. Home schooled children cannot attend college and graduate school without exposure to the same evils in American colleges and universities that were a primary reason for taking the children out of the public schools in the first place. There are very few institutions of higher learning where these evils are not pervasive and even fewer which offer high quality educations in such fields as science and engineering.

4. The average level of academic achievement in home schools

4. The average level of academic achievement in Christian home schools at present looks good only when compared with the disastrously poor results currently the norm in public schools. While it is true that SAT scores are a little higher for home schools than for public schools, the average public school child comes from a generally poorer home environment and a school environment that is not conducive to learning.

Our children must be able to think

Some Christians react to these difficulties with various forms of resignation. They hope that more families will find a way to rearrange their lives for home schooling. In their home schools, they emphasize subjects such as spelling and grammar and generally neglect more difficult subjects such as mathematics and science. They hope that by the age of 18 the children will be strong enough to resist the evils that they encounter at the universities, or else they deny the children a higher education and direct them into occupations where that education is not required.

They are comforted by the fact that they have achieved slightly higher educational performance than the public schools while, at the same time, sparing their children the depravities of the secular world for at least part of their formative years. These Christians are dedicated people and are doing their best for their children. I believe, however, that they should be thinking beyond the current home school situation.

In order to take our country back from the secular humanists - back from those who have abandoned the Christian values and disciplines that made America great - back from the evil that is destroying our society, we must do more in our home school movement than we are doing now.

Our children must be not a little better educated when compared with those in the public schools - they must be so much better educated that they are entirely beyond such comparisons.

Our children must be able to think - and to think so much more effectively than their opponents that they are able, in one generation, to become such a superior force in science and engineering and in industry and government that they dominate American society.

Our children must be such shining examples for the home school movement, that the majority of American families demand the same quality for their children - a quality that can only be obtained by becoming Christian families who take responsibility for themselves.

Our children must be such superior performers in America's colleges and universities, that they not only resist the corruption in those institutions - that they destroy, by their example, the corruption itself.

Robinson Story - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

The Experiment Begins

How can this be done?

Interesting rhetoric, you may say, but how can this be done?

I respond, it MUST be done, and, for the remainder of this article, I describe an experiment that indicates the beginnings of a way in which it may possibly be done.

Like most successful experiments, this one reveals only part of the truth and suggests further experiments that may be worthwhile. Also, like a great many experiments that point in a different direction, this one was done by accident. If it ultimately proves to have been worthwhile, then the credit belongs to the Lord - not to the participants.

Laurelee Undertakes The Children's Instruction

As our children reached school age, Laurelee undertook their instruction. A highly educated scientist herself, she understood what they needed to learn, but she had no experience in teaching children. Moreover, she worked virtually full time with me in our civil defense work and our research work; she was still bearing new children and caring for infants; and she was carrying out a significant amount of farm work in addition to the usual household chores.

As an aid to her growing home school (all of our children have been entirely home schooled), Laurelee purchased educational materials and curricula from a wide variety of sources. These she melded into a curriculum along with a large amount of Christian materials that she purchased. (She purchased so many Sunday school materials, that the people at the local Christian bookstore thought that we were operating a church.)

She Created An Entire Twelve Grade Curriculum with One Flaw

Not knowing whether or not these materials would be available to us in the future, she created an entire twelve grade curriculum for each of the six children and obtained all of the necessary materials for that curriculum. These she organized meticulously in the order that they would be used. That curriculum occupies the equivalent of about five large filing cabinets and is in perfect order.

This effort, in degrees that vary according to the resources, education, abilities, and motivations of the parents, is one that is being undertaken today in tens of thousands of home schools across America. It is being made increasingly effective by the growth of many excellent businesses that supply materials and curricula to home schools.

Laurelee's effort was truly outstanding. It allowed for every academic eventuality and it utilized the very best materials available. It even included life insurance on me, so that she would be able to continue the home school in the event of my death. Her plan had only one flaw - a flaw that neither she nor I ever considered. The plan assumed that she would be alive to teach.

A Class Without A Teacher

When she died suddenly after an illness that lasted less than 24 hours (four and a half years ago) her class contained Zachary, Noah, Arynne, Joshua, Bethany, and Matthew - ages 12, 10, 9, 7, 7, and 17 months - a

class without a teacher.

As I assumed her work including cooking, laundry, and other household tasks, and continued the farm and professional work without her by my side, there was no possibility that I could even read the curriculum that she had so carefully created - much less have the time to teach it to the children. Friends tried to help, but the problem seemed to be intractable.

What happened then, with the Lord's help, was remarkable.

What happened then, with the Lord's help, was remarkable. Gradually, over the next two years and building upon the environment that their mother and I had already created for them and some rules of study that I provided, the children solved the problem themselves. Not only did they solve it themselves, they created a home school that, in many ways, points toward answers to some of the difficulties enumerated above.

Gradually, with occasional coaching and help from me, they created a home school that actually needs no teacher and is extraordinary in its effectiveness.

Robinson Story - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

How the Robinson Children Fare

Judging Its Effectiveness

In judging the effectiveness of our home school, I have some experience for comparison.

I, myself, was fortunate to attend one of the finest public schools in Texas, Lamar in Houston, during the late 1950's when public schools in America still retained reasonable standards. I performed well and was admitted to every college to which I applied - including Harvard, MIT, Rice, and Caltech. After graduating from Caltech, I obtained a PhD in chemistry from the University of California at San Diego and was immediately appointed to a faculty position at that University.

There I taught introductory chemistry to 300 students each year and supervised a group of graduate students.

The Children Teach Themselves

I can honestly say that the six Robinson children in our home school are, on average, at least two years ahead of my own abilities at their ages and have a far higher potential for the future than did I. Moreover, by the age of about 15, they are surpassing at least 98% of the college freshmen that I taught at the

University of California at San Diego.

The oldest, Zachary, who is 16 [1994 - Ed.], is already completing a math and science curriculum that uses the actual freshman and sophomore texts from the best science universities in America. Last October he took the Scholastic Aptitude Tests for the first time (the PSAT). His scores of 750 in math and 730 in verbal for a sum of 1480 (and a NMSQT score of 221) were above the 99.9 percentile among the 1,600,000 students worldwide who took the test. The other children are, for their ages, performing at least as well.

During the past four years, I have spent less than 15 minutes per day (on average) engaged in working as the children's teacher. They are teaching themselves.

The Children Assume Responsilbilities

Moreover, each one of them has spontaneously, without suggestion or demand from me, taken over an essential aspect of our farm and personal lives. They do all work with the cattle and sheep, they do all laundry, cooking, and housework, and they are working beside me as Laurelee used to do in the scientific research and civil defense work that is our ministry and our professional life.

One by one, my tasks just disappeared as the children assumed them.

In general, they prefer to work independently. They tend not to share tasks and have not divided them as one might expect. For example, 11 year old Joshua is the cook - and already a better cook than I. Zachary does all work with the cattle (about 30) and the chickens; Arynne cares for the sheep (about 100); Noah is in charge of all farm and laboratory repairs; and Bethany does the washing and teaches Matthew. Some tasks are shared such as house cleaning, sheep shearing, and watching over Matthew.

This sort of extracurricular work is especially valuable as reinforcement for the home school.

While self confidence can be built somewhat in sports or other "activities", the self confidence that comes to a child from the knowledge that he is independently carrying on an activity that is essential to the survival of the family is valuable indeed.

It is important, however, not to take advantage of this situation. The development of a young mind takes place in a few short years. A parent must always make certain that the children have more than enough time for their academic studies and for essential recreation. When children show an aptitude for productive work helpful to the parent, there can be a tendency for the parent to let them do too much. This can deprive the children of mental development necessary to their own futures.

This School Is Entirely Self Taught

I generally consider each child's time to be more valuable than my own. If I provide them the time for

optimum development and direct them to the necessary tools, then each of them should be able to surpass my own abilities and accomplishments. If they do, then my goals for their academic work will have been fulfilled. Remarkably, they have spontaneously responded with efforts that provide me also with more time for productive work.

Our home is not as neat and clean as some, our spelling (including mine) is not all that could be desired, and our traditions have become somewhat unusual (they leave the Christmas tree and nativity scene up for six months each year - from December through June), but these children know how to work and they know how to think. Their home school is a success.

This school is entirely self taught by each student working alone. It depends upon a set of rules that can be adopted within any home in America. As their parent, my sole essential contribution has been to set the rules under which they live and study.

Robinson Story - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Rules and Procedures

These Rules Will Achieve Remarkable Results With Any Child

For the remainder of this article I will list those rules and procedures and, for some rules, give a short rationale that may or may not be correct. For those who consider adoption of these procedures, I offer the opinion that they will work in any home and with any children, regardless of ability. Obviously children differ in innate ability. I believe, however, that these rules will achieve remarkable results with any child when compared with other alternatives.

These are not, however, "suggestions." They are rigorous requirements. I know what has happened here. I do not know what would happen in different experiments under different conditions.

If, therefore, these suggestions are all followed in the same way, I expect the same result. There are probably better ways; there are undoubtedly worse ways. I discourage, however, the notion that compromise is always permissible. Below, for example, I state that the home should have no TV and no sugar. I then advocate a self-teaching program that has mathematics and free reading as its basis. It is entirely possible that this self-teaching program would fail in a home that still contains a TV and children who are still in a sugar-influenced mental state.

1. There is no television in our home.

1. There is no television in our home. We do have a VCR that was donated to the civil defense project. As a family we watch a video tape approximately once every six months. Television wastes time, promotes passive, vicarious brain development rather than active thought, and is a source of pernicious social contamination.

2. The children do not eat sugar

2. The children do not eat sugar or honey or foods made with these materials and have never done so at any time in their lives. Though Laurelee and I (both sugar addicts) established this rule, it is now out of my control. Two years ago, when some visitors whom we greatly wished to please came for dinner, they brought sweet rolls and donuts. I suggested to the children that they should eat just one so as not to offend. They all refused. Sugar is not just a threat to the teeth. It has subtle and undesirable effects upon mental attitude and performance. When I occasionally buy cookies for myself, I rarely am able to finish them. The children know all my hiding places and feed them to the chickens. They say that sugar makes me irritable and isn't good for me. The children also do not eat artificial sweeteners such as Aspartame (Nutrasweet). The mental effects of these substances are unknown. Aspartame may be linked to deleterious mental effects. Why take a chance?

(See the Frequently Asked Questions section or A Diet Without Sugar for info on how to cook without sugar. Ed.)

3. Formal school work occupies about five hours each day

3. Formal school work occupies about five hours each day - six days per week - twelve months per year. Sometimes one of them skips his studies for the day as a result of some special activity, and we take an occasional automobile trip. With these diversions, their actual annual school time occupies about ten full months of six day weeks.

4. Those five hours each day are the most productive hours

4. Those five hours each day are the most productive hours - the morning and early afternoon. As soon as they wake - and with time out only for breakfast and milking the cows - they study.

Each has a large desk in the school room. My desk is also in that room. I try to do my own desk work during the same time, since my presence keeps the school room quiet and avoids arguments about noise.

5. The children were taught to read with the phonetic system

5. The five older children were taught to read by Laurelee with the phonetic system - learning the individual sounds of our language. Matthew (five years old) is currently learning to read by phonics. The children are teaching him.

6. The books we accumulated are essential to the curriculum.

6. The teacher-presented materials that Laurelee obtained are not used, but the books that we accumulated, which include a good selection of classics, are essential to the curriculum.

7. Working about 30 math problems first thing every day.

7. Each day, before beginning any other work, each child (except Matthew) works an entire lesson in the Saxon series of mathematics books. This usually involves working about 30 problems.

If the 30 problems seem to be taking much less than two hours each day, we sometimes increase the assignment to two lessons or about 60 problems per day. If the lessons seem to be taking much more than two hours, then we reduce to one-half lesson or about 15 problems per day. This is an excellent series of texts. The children work their way through the entire series at a rate that finishes calculus, the last text in the series, when they are 15 years of age.

They grade their own problems and rework any missed problems. They must tell me if they miss a problem and show the correctly worked solution to me. The younger children tend to make one or two errors each day. As they get older, the error rate drops. The older children make about one error each week. On very rare occasions, perhaps once each month, an older child will actually need help with a problem he or she feels unable to solve.

This emphasis on math with the help of the excellent Saxon series teaches them to think, builds confidence and ability to the point of almost error-free performance, and establishes a basis of knowledge that is essential to later progress in science and engineering.

It is also absolutely essential preparation for the non-quantitative subjects that do not require mathematics. The ability to distinguish the quantitative from the non-quantitative - the truth from error - fact from fiction - is an absolutely essential requirement for effective thinking. Otherwise one will tend to confuse independent, truthful thought with opinions based upon falsehoods and propaganda.

Our society is filled to the brim with public school graduates who imagine that they are independent thinkers when they actually are programmed to believe anything they perceive as fashionable. This cult-like behavior is not limited to graduates in "soft subjects" rather than the sciences.

Many people supposedly educated in the sciences and engineering also practice this ritual of non-thought.

I believe that much of this difficulty stems from poor early education in mathematics and logical thought. It is essential to understand that physical truths are absolute and can be rigorously determined. This must be learned by actually determining absolutes. Mathematical problem solving is an excellent mechanism for doing this. Grim examples of failures in this area are everywhere.

Earlier today, for example, a local bureaucrat telephoned in an effort to get my help in fashioning a community compromise on environmental issues between the solid citizens of this Valley and some pseudoenvironmentalist political agitators who have been disrupting the community recently.

During the discussion I mentioned that the agitators had filed a document with the federal government that contained a graph condemning the local lumber industry for destroying local game fish.

Actually there was no correlation between fish population and timber harvest. The agitators had created a correlation by leaving out about half of the data for the last forty years - the half which proves that their premise is false.

"Oh well," the bureaucrat replied, "we all do that sort of thing."

The horrible fact is that this bureaucrat is not far from the truth. As our population is increasingly made up of people who do not think logically and honestly about facts, our whole society enters a never-never land of irrationality where paganism is equated with Christianity; where lies are equated with truth; and where moral absolutes are equated with moral relativism.

Human affairs are very difficult to understand, since most subjects that concern humans are so complex that they cannot be rigorously understood or expressed with mathematical precision. In order to compensate for this, we combine the truths we do know for certain with good intuitive extrapolations into the areas we seek to understand. The chance that this sort of process will go awry in a well prepared mind is high enough. For a mind that is unprepared to distinguish between logical truths and illogical falsehoods, this process is entirely impossible.

8. Each child writes a one page essay

8. After completing the mathematics work, each child writes a one page essay and gives it to me. The remainder of the five hours is spent in reading history and science texts. Some of the children enjoy writing these essays more than others. At present, some of them write a page every day and some write less frequently.

9. Freshman and sophomore college physics and chemistry

9. Zachary (16 years old) [1994 - Ed.] has a more rigorous curriculum, since he finished calculus about a year ago. He is working his way through freshman and sophomore college physics and chemistry texts in the same way that he previously worked his way through Saxon math. After those years of self-taught math, he has simply gone on to self-taught science - and in the toughest college level texts that I was able to obtain.

His mind has become used to the fact that there is nothing in the well-known sciences that he cannot understand and learn and no problem that, with a proper book, he cannot work correctly.

His error rate is negligible.

Robinson Story - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

More Rules and Procedures

10. No child is allowed to use a computer until 16 years old.

10. No child is allowed to use a computer until after he or she has completed mathematics all the way through calculus. (At one point Saxon calls for a little use of the hand-held calculator. I permit this, but only on a very few occasions.)

It is important to realize that one cannot insert a calculator or computer into one's brain. Quantitative thought requires mental mathematics. Introduction of machines before the brain has learned to do this work by itself weakens the development of the ability to think.

I recall years ago explaining to the children some ways in which they could recognize a real scientist in contrast to the many imitations they are likely to meet. One thing I mentioned was love of quantitative thought. Real scientists often revel in inventing small problems and calculating solutions mentally with whatever facts are at hand. These things continually dribble into their conversations with occasional efforts to impress each other with the relative vigor of their imaginations or the speed of their mental arithmetic.

The kids listened to all of this with toleration and dutifully participated in my games to see who could mentally calculate our auto gas mileage at each fuel stop to four significant figures in the shortest time.

Then one day Professor Martin Kamen, then 77 years old, visited our home for dinner. Professor Kamen was the discoverer of Carbon 14, the originator of much of the radioactive tracer methodology upon which biochemistry is based, and a major figure in the understanding of photosynthesis. He talks twice as fast as a normal human; yet it is still obvious that his mouth cannot keep up with his brain.

All evening he continued as he has whenever I have seen him over the last 30 years. During the evening he posed and solved numerous small problems involving mental arithmetic. When he had gone off to bed, the children looked at me in awe. "That's exactly the way you told us scientists behaved," they said.

People who can think do so with their brains. Surely their thoughts often lead to problems that require experimental test, and often computers are essential equipment in those experiments. The thinking, however, is done with the brain. The arithmetic ability involved in that thinking must also be in the brain during the thought process.

For almost 30 years I have used advanced computer systems in my research work. Laurelee was, herself, a superb computer systems programmer. When we were involved in university re- search work, our labs

were known as among the most highly developed in the world in terms of their computer technology. We used computers as word processors a decade before the general public had access to them.

Nevertheless, we were in total agreement that none of our children would ever use a calculator or computer of any kind until their brains were fully developed in ability for quantitative thought.

Laurelee did not live long enough to see that point come in any of the children. We both thought it would probably not come until college - at the age of 18.

As a result of the Saxon math and self-teaching work, Zachary finished all of his math through calculus before he was 16. Therefore, at age 16 I gave him his mother's computer - an older 386 model. Although he has done quite well with it and is, therefore, a substantial help to me in our research work, I still worry that I gave it to him too soon. There is a very dangerous temptation to substitute computer manipulations for real thought.

Some people will say that computers are becoming such a pervasive influence in our world that children need to learn how to use them at an early age. Besides the mental development issue, there is a simpler response to this idea. Computer technology is advancing so fast that, long before a child reaches the point in life where he or she really needs to use a computer, the machines will be so different that early practice will have been irrelevant.

Recently Zachary and Noah have been helping a colleague of ours who is a talented electrical engineer. They are repairing the electronic circuitry of some computer equipment that Laurelee and I used here 10 years ago. We need the equipment for a special project. This educational entertainment looks, however, more like archaeology than technology. This equipment is quite valuable in teaching the boys about computer engineering, since the digital logic in older machines is provided by discreet components that are more easily studied than are the components of current machines. These machines are, however, of little use in learning about the programming and utilization of modern computers.

11. They read whatever interests them from our library

11. Since they have no television, the children are prone to spend a substantial part of their non- school hours reading. They read whatever interests them from our library - which Laurelee purged of all books that she thought it best for them to avoid. By recreational reading, the children pick up most of their vocabulary and grammar and most of their knowledge about the world. Regarding current events, they do not listen to the radio, but it has become increasingly difficult to maintain control of my copy of the Wall Street Journal.

12. Each child is asked to write one page each day

12. Each child is asked to write one page each day about any subject that interests him. I read these pages and mark misspelled words and grammatical errors that the child must then correct.

Sometimes I fall many weeks behind with these corrections, but the children just keep writing.

There is an unusual bonus in these short essays. Sometimes the student will write things that he or she would not (and sometimes should not) say to the parent otherwise. These essays have educational value, and they also open a new line of communication with the children.

13. We have a family Bible reading before bed

13. The Bible is not a required part of our formal curriculum. We have a family Bible reading before bed each evening, and we discuss elements of Christianity as they happen to arise in our everyday lives.

Like Isaac Newton, no one in our family ever questions the truth of the Lord's Word as provided to us in the Old and New Testaments of the King James Bible. We only seek to understand these truths by repeated reading. That reading is rarely accompanied by interpretive comment.

Each of us must understand these things for himself and build his own relationship with God.

14. What the Curriculum does not contain

14. This curriculum is important for what it contains and also for what it does not contain. It contains about two hours of math or science problem solving followed by about two hours of directed reading and a short essay each day - all self taught by the student. What it does not contain is also very important.

Although the children take piano lessons and engage in a rich variety of extracurricular activities oriented around our farm and laboratory, their formal curriculum consists of "reading, writing, and arithmetic" and nothing more. It also essentially has no teacher - a fact that I have come to realize can be an advantage.

The brain is never asleep. It continues to work and think 24 hours per day. If a brain gets used to the fact that it will actively work math problems for two hours at the same time each day and that it can understand and work those problems without error, it will also allot a significant part of its time during the other 22 hours to thinking subconsciously about mathematics. In this way understanding and performance are reinforced.

Each additional subject that is added to the curriculum creates a demand upon the brain's 24 hours of time. If an unnecessary subject is added, it wastes not only the curricular school time, but also a fraction of the extracurricular time. It is therefore important to be very careful not to add unnecessary subjects.

Our public schools and also many of our home schools have so many subjects in their curricula that the children's brains do not have time to give adequate attention to the fundamentally important subjects.

In the formative years, it is absolutely essential that children learn how to think and how to learn

independently. They have a lifetime to accumulate facts and will do so more effectively if they acquire a correct foundation - not of facts, but of ability to read, think, and evaluate for themselves.

The ability to think is the most important. A very large percentage of our public school graduates lack the ability to think. Most of them can, however, articulate acceptably. When we give the brain a small number of the most important tools to learn and use, we give it an opportunity to learn to think.

Always remember that when you add a subject or activity to a child's schedule, you are subtracting from the time for something else. Is it really more important, for example, for the child to learn a foreign language than it is to learn error-free applied mathematics?

The Problem of Higher Education

We have not yet had experience with the higher education problem. Like many home school parents, I dread the thought of sending the children into the social nightmare that now exists on American college campuses.

At present, we are thinking about the possibility of renting a small house near the campus of a large university where all of the children would eventually enroll. They would live together during the years that their college educations overlap.

More generally, it seems to me that groups of Christian, home school families should establish living facilities near college campuses in which the social and study environment provides an island of sanity for their children. Out of such islands would surely emerge the highest achieving students of the university.

In Summary, the Children Educate Themselves

In summary, in this experiment, I have watched a group of children educate themselves in a far superior manner than I could have done for them if I had spent every waking hour teaching them in the usual manner. I am convinced that, had I done so, their progress would have been far less.

Although I have occasionally helped them with specific questions, that help has been so infrequent that they would have advanced almost as far if I had not helped. Moreover, the level of academic accomplishment that they have achieved is truly extraordinary.

Self-Taught but with Parental Discipline

This is not to say that they are not typical kids. If I had not set the rules and provided the curriculum, they would not have done this work. If I did not keep order and provide a reasonable environment in which they can work, they would cease to advance. When I ask them to do something, they do it - always. It is

just not thinkable that it should be otherwise.

If I say quiet down, they do - for a while. Then I may need to say it again more forcefully. If I say spend five hours at their desks, they do - but I need to keep an eye out, or over a period of weeks the time may slide to four hours or whatever level they think credible. They are normal.

Nevertheless, open defiance by refusing to do whatever is asked by the parent is just not tolerable in any home. Perhaps we were lucky. I cannot remember any differences between Laurelee and me concerning discipline. In families where such differences exist, they should never be resolved in front of the child. Parental orders must always be followed - without exception (and without argument or complaint).

Children learn by example and by doing. They do not learn effectively by being lectured to or by vicarious involvement as in television viewing. Our educational method works, and it involves almost no parental time once the school room and curriculum have been provided and the rules have been established.

If I could make one further advance, it would be to provide a reading curriculum that is structured like the Saxon mathematics curriculum. There is an order in which literature should be read just as there is an order in which mathematics should be learned. With the children's help, we are now working on the development of such a literature curriculum. I would like to have it available, while there is still time to help these children with it.

Although this approach to education is unusual today, it is much closer to that utilized by many influential Americans of the past. Many of America's greatest citizens were largely self taught.

The Robinson Curriculum is Conceived

If I could make one further advance, it would be to provide a reading curriculum that is structured like the Saxon mathematics curriculum. There is an order in which literature should be read just as there is an order in which mathematics should be learned. With the children's help, we are now working on the development of such a literature curriculum. I would like to have it available, while there is still time to help these children with it. *(Ed. This has now been done and the Robinson Curriculum is the result.)*

Although this approach to education is unusual today, it is much closer to that utilized by many influential Americans of the past. Many of America's greatest citizens were largely self taught.

The public schools have not always been with us. Only recently have we had the resources to subject our children to the miracles of modern educational procedures. The principal miracle of the modern American educational system is that it can turn out citizens who are more poorly educated than they would have been if they had worked individually with no school whatever.

Common Questions & Concerns

Steps to an optimum self-teaching home school

I urge every parent to:

a) Remove your child or children from their group school - public or private.

b) Set aside a room in your home with a large desk for each child.

c) Remove all television sets from your home.

d) Remove all sugar and honey from the children's diet. At all meals, provide them with an unlimited amount of the most nutritious food that you can prepare. Avoid, if possible, the boxed and canned substitutes for good nutrition that are widely available. Since many of these substitutes contain sugar, they will not be on your list anyway.

e) Purchase a complete set of the Saxon math series of texts and answers.

f) Obtain the best library you can of literature, history, and introductory science books.

g) Give the children a large breakfast (We eat only two meals each day.), and then consign them to five hours of work as described above - six days per week at least ten months per year.

h) If possible, do your own work in or near the room in which the children are working. Don't talk to them. Just set an example by working hard yourself. This is probably especially important if there are only one or two children in the home. With six children, our school room has internal peer examples of studying that surround each student.

i) After their five hours is complete (no breaks except for the bathroom), go on about your personal lives.

j) When the oldest child is 15, obtain a set of SAT exams at your local bookstore and have the child take one of these tests every three or four months. This introduces test taking. (You may have noticed that our curriculum includes no examinations or tests.)

k) When each child finishes calculus, continue on with a college level physics text and a college level chemistry text on the same schedule as with the Saxon math. Be sure that these texts include lots of problems and an answer book for self-grading.

l) Children who have not yet learned to read require a brief period of special instruction. They must be taught to read by means of phonics. There are several good phonics programs. These consist of various procedures for teaching the sounds of letters and letter combinations and for gradually combining these into words and sentences.

Phonics is Essential

It is absolutely essential that reading be taught by phonics and not by the so-called "look-say" methods currently in vogue in the public schools. If the child is not taught to read correctly, then the entire school program which follows will be so difficult that the child will have a very great disadvantage.

This phonics instruction does require interaction with an instructor for a few weeks. The instructor can be a parent, an older brother or sister, or a hired teacher. After the child can read, then he or she should be encouraged to read several hours each day in books of gradually increasing difficulty in order to build reading skills and confidence. With no TV in the home, this reading will probably be spontaneous as it is in our home.

Without good reading skills, self-instruction is not possible. Moreover, progress in any educational pursuits will be very difficult.

1. Why not just regulate the TV?

Some questions that may be asked about this self-education procedure are:

1. Why not just regulate TV? After all, there are some good programs on TV, and it serves as a convenient babysitter for the toddlers. Moreover, the parents like to watch the evening news and occasional "specials."

a) Children learn by example. If you watch TV, then they will watch TV.

b) Children easily learn well reasoned and truthful absolutes. If TV is mentally harmful, then it is harmful and should be avoided always. How can it be harmful sometimes and not others? Why is it not good for the older children but all right for the younger children?

Children also easily understand that they are different from adults. While sugar and television are not good for adults, moderate amounts of these vices can be considerably less harmful to adults than to children in their formative years.

During a period of rapid brain development and general metabolic development and during a period when the brain is learning fundamental abilities, the diminution of its capabilities through TV and sugar is especially damaging.

c) TV is a passive medium that promotes a vicarious, non-interactive mental attitude. Nothing could be more destructive to the mental process that is required for academic achievement in a home school. The mind is awake and working 24 hours per day. Why spend part of the day teaching the brain good habits and then part of the day teaching it bad habits?

In a home with no TV, the effects of TV are especially easy to observe. Yesterday, for example, our family was visited by a large home school family that lives nearby and also has no TV. A previous visitor had given the children a Laurel and Hardy comedy video tape that they had not yet watched. (As I mentioned, our civil defense project was given a VCR and an old viewing screen with which we watch a video tape once every few months.)

All afternoon and into the evening our home was vibrating with dozens of games, piano playing, competitions, and conversations. The children were excitedly engaged in virtually everything including preparing dinner and doing the evening farm chores. Their brains were receiving exactly the sort of active recreation necessary to reinforce their academic studies.

Then Matthew, our five-year-old, remembered the video tape. He lobbied with everyone for viewing the tape. Finally, enough people succumbed that we turned on the tape. The party, of course, immediately died. No more active interaction - only passive laughing at the screen. Moreover, as Laurel and Hardy went through one of their routines, there was a short segment of can-can dancers that, while ridiculously prudish by 1990's standards, obviously made the mother of the visitors nervous and definitely should not have been shown to the kids.

Most American children are addicted to TV. Their brains spend four hours or more each day learning bad, passive habits from the TV and another few hours (if they are fortunate to have good activities,too) unlearning the bad habits. Then, if there are any hours left, they can make positive progress.

Moreover, when TV is used as a tranquilizer, it can mask other problems that should be solved early in life. Children need to work out the ways in which they interact with other people. Even though their behavior while doing so may be more distracting than their behavior when pacified by a television set, the TV may be retarding this aspect of development which is then undesirably transferred to the classroom instead.

A developing mind deserves the very best possible environment that can be provided to it. Since TV is a negative influence on that environment, no home with children under the age of 18 should have a television set.

d) If there is no TV in the home, it will not be missed and a discipline problem will not arise over its use.

2. Cutting out sugar seems impossible.

2. Cutting out sugar is almost impossible. Why can't we regulate that, too?

a) Sugar, especially when consumed by children with developing minds and bodies, has several deleterious effects - the least of which is tooth decay.

Sugar alters the metabolism in such a way as to increase the probability of diabetes, hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia, and immune deficiencies that can lead to cancer and other fatal illnesses at a later age.

Most importantly to a home school, sugar diminishes mental function and increases irritability and mental instability. Most children are able to learn regardless of these effects, but why burden them with this disadvantage?

These points about sugar have been expanded upon in several texts that may be available in your library. I recommend the books: Sweet and Dangerous by John Yudkin, Peter D. Wyden, Inc., 750 Third Ave, New York, NY 10017 (1972); Sugar Blues by William Dufty, Chilton Book Company, Radnor, PA (1975); and Food, Teens & Behavior by Barbara Reed, Natural Press, PO Box 2107, Manitowoc, WI (1983). These books contain a substantial number of appropriate references to the scientific literature.

b) Moreover, how are you going to teach the child that sugar is bad for him on some occasions and not on others?

This argument may sound good to a parent who wants to rationalize his or her own sugar addiction or who cannot face the possibility that past gifts of sugar to children may not have been wise, but it is unlikely to fool the kids.

c) Remember that we are not talking about naturally occurring amounts of sugar such as those present in fruits, vegetables, and virtually all foods.

In fact, if the children do not eat sugar, their taste receptors will adapt until they find the natural sweetness of food to be just as pleasurable as do the jaded taste receptors of a sugar addict when eating candy or honey.

Joshua (our 11 year old cook) makes his whole wheat bread from flour that he grinds from whole wheat kernels. He makes it entirely without sugar or other sweeteners. He does occasionally add some raisins. Even if, however, he adds no raisins or other fruits, his bread tastes sweet to us.

The problem with sugar is not that it is "refined" or in some other way an unnatural product. The problem is that modern technology has made it inexpensively available in enormous amounts.

The average American child gets about 20% of his or her calories from sugar - a feat that was almost impossible until the advent of modern technology. Honey and molasses are just as harmful as refined sugar, since they are just alternate ways of eating much larger amounts of sugar than human metabolisms and minds were designed to encounter.

Sugar is entirely a natural product. When it is consumed only in the process of eating whole foods in their natural state, it is difficult to overdose. When it is concentrated by refining or when certain whole foods that contain huge amounts are eaten (such as honey or large amounts of concentrated orange juice or grape juice), it is possible to overdose.

3. I don't want my children to appear "different"

3. I don't want my children to be embarrassed by appearing "different" to other children who do eat candy

and watch television.

a) On the contrary, we want our children not only to "appear" different but also to "be" different. The TV and cookie rules are a good place to reinforce this.

When you go out to a restaurant to eat, do you offer a prayer before that meal? Although Jesus clearly warned against prayer in public places for the purpose of pious appearance and approbation, we certainly should not avoid prayer because others are present. Moreover, a discreet prayer followed by a family dinner including quiet and well-behaved children (more likely if they are sugar-free) is a Christian testimony in public. In this event, the children do appear "different."

We want our children to be different. We want them to be different spiritually, academically, socially, mentally and physically from the norms that are currently established in the secular world.

We want them to know that their way is superior to the current way of the world.

The ban on sugar and TV is not only good for the children, it is also a good way of teaching them the virtues of their "differences."

This past Friday, 16-year-old Zachary took a practice SAT test here at home [1994 - Ed.]. His score was 800 (a perfect score) in math and 775 in verbal. While he is unlikely to do that well under the pressures of an actual exam in a room full of public school kids, I complemented him greatly - precisely because this was the most "different" score that he has achieved.

Should I have rather said, "Zachary you will need to miss a few more problems, so that you will not appear different." Or should I let him watch a little selective TV and munch a couple of candy bars before his next exam to make sure that his score is more "normal?"

4. I want to interact with the children in their studies.

4. I want to interact with the children in their studies. Perhaps they could learn alone if their parent could not spare time for them, but I am sure they will be better off with my help. Moreover this is "quality" time that we spend together.

It is hard to imagine a Christian home, with children present 24 hours per day and no time sinks such as television, where there is not as much or more quality child-adult interaction than the family members want or need. This interaction is an important part of learning. Books are certainly not the sole source of knowledge.

However, just as you cannot insert a calculator into a child's brain so that he or she can think quantitatively, you cannot insert yourself into the child's brain as a life-long crutch. That brain must learn by itself, function by itself, have confidence in itself alone, and achieve by itself. You will not always be there to help with the academic answers. Also, if the child learns to depend upon you as a social and spiritual protective peer group, whom will he choose for that purpose when he enters the secular world?

The possibilities in today's world are chilling indeed.

If a child receives too much individual attention, he can develop a dependency upon his teacher that is difficult to break. In this case, it is necessary to just let the child spend many unhappy hours alone at his desk. In time he will gradually start to work effectively on his own.

This may seem harsh and unfeeling to say, but you may well be harming a child when you go out of your way to help him with his studies, reward him with candy and TV, and build his self-esteem by not punishing him for misbehavior.

5. My child does not enjoy math and science.

5. My child is not likely to go into science or engineering, so he will not require a lot of mathematics. He does not enjoy math and science.

Our society is now entirely based upon the products of science and engineering. An individual who lacks an understanding of these disciplines is dependent upon those who do. Moreover, at the precollege level, these disciplines are the best way to learn logic and honest thought. An individual who cannot appreciate truth and logical deduction on the basis of first-hand experience is likely to become a drone who can do little else than parrot the statements of those around him. If math and science are learned correctly, they are enjoyable to most people. If they are not learned or are learned incorrectly, then they are not enjoyable.

6. My child is already partly through public schools

6. This all sounds utopian, but what about my child who is already partly through the public schools and needs remedial help? He cannot work on his own and is unwilling to learn in a rigorous environment. I must give him a simplified math program and things that "interest" him to do.

I have never forgotten an experience that I had at the University of California at San Diego, UCSD, concerning the teaching of so-called "disadvantaged" minority students. At the time I was teaching introductory chemistry to a class of 300 first year students. I had selected the best text I could find - one which, if mastered by the student, gave an excellent and complete knowledge of all aspects of this subject. While there had been some complaints that the text was too difficult, the senior faculty had encouraged me to proceed without watering down the course.

We must never become our children's worst enemy by catering to their problems.

One evening I was eating dinner with some graduate students at a restaurant in La Jolla when the door opened and a tough-looking character in a black leather jacket sauntered in and looked critically about the room. Much to my astonishment this fellow walked straight to our table and pulled up a chair. He knew the graduate students. He was a faculty member in the new college for minority students that had recently

been formed at UCSD.

This unlikely successor to the traditions of Booker T. Washington then proceeded to treat us to a non-stop "black power" and "third world" extravaganza of rhetoric that left even the students a little restive in their chairs. As you might imagine, I was very quiet.

Finally, however, the discussion turned to academics and I ventured a comment. I stated that I made no distinctions between students in my chemistry course on any basis. I believed that every student must master the same material, so that he would be properly prepared in the subject. If the student, for any reason, was unable to master the material, the student should know that he had failed to do so. The course was always there for a second try.

At this point our new arrival (who was so different from me in every way) turned to me and said, "That's right! I am tutoring two students who are taking your course. It's a tough course, but you are right. Our worst enemies are these white liberal professors that teach watered down courses to our people and turn them into permanent second class citizens."

I doubt that any professor holding to my attitude (or perhaps even to his) would survive long in the academic world of today. In our home schools, however, this must be the way. We must never become our children's worst enemy by catering to their problems.

A public school student, who encounters a high quality, self-teaching home school curriculum for the first time, may sit for weeks staring at material that he or she is convinced is impossible or unreasonable. Let the student sit there. Eventually he will respond. If he does not, then at least you showed him the way to excellence - rather than showing him the way to mediocrity while dishonestly fooling him into thinking otherwise for the transient benefits of false hope and domestic tranquility.

Robinson Story - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Social Skills and Thinking

Concern: "I want my child to learn social skills."

7. "I want my child to learn social skills. The kids at the public school have problems, but in mixing with them my child will learn to articulate his views and to interact with people."

a) I rarely meet an adult who cannot articulate and relate to others. Yet a great many adults will not or cannot think. There are many people with whom the child will learn to relate, and these skills can, if necessary, be learned at a later time in life after the child has learned to think.

When I attended Caltech, 30 years ago, they accepted about 180 freshman students each year.

As a result of the exceptional academic standards that these young men (there were no girls admitted

then) were required to meet, each class contained a large proportion of students who were quiet, studious, and relatively inexperienced in so-called "social skills."

I do not recall any member of my class who managed to emerge as a senior student, four years later, without social skills. These were just picked up as they were needed. On the other hand, had the students not had high academic skills when they arrived at Caltech, they would not have graduated at all. At 18 years of age, they were quite well able to pick up social skills. It was far too late at that age, however, for them to start to learn to think.

Where The Real Lack Of "Social Skills" Occurs

b) Modern "social skills" in children are often almost the opposite. When the children and I occasionally eat at a public restaurant during our automobile trips, sometimes one or two of the other customers (often older people) will pass by our table as they leave and stop to compliment the children on their behavior. This has happened on numerous occasions.

I rarely give instructions to them concerning behavior in public places and, without a mother in our home, their formal table manners in terms of utensil use, posture, and spilling leave quite a lot to be desired. The reason that they are frequently complimented is that they happen to lack some of the "social skills" of their public school counterparts. They don't understand that it is their duty, as well adjusted kids, to tear the restaurant apart. These other customers are so relieved to see a group of six kids quietly eating their dinner that they are moved to say something.

The children are always quiet around people they don't know - for a little while. Then they begin to act like kids - kids who, however, are not skilled in some of the techniques taught at our public schools.

On one of our trips this past year, the children were fortunate to have an opportunity to spend two days visiting the home of a famous scientist and his wife. He is a Nobel Prize winner whose accomplishments in his field of chemistry are unsurpassed. He and his wife raised a large family similar to ours.

It happened that, in an odd event that occurred, another individual who observed the children on that occasion criticized them as too quiet in their demeanor. The scientist told me about this later.

He said, "I kept telling him that children learn by example, but he just didn't believe me."

Two generations ago children were taught to be "seen and not heard." Our civilization has not suffered as a result. What I have learned from these children is that, without the peer group example in our public schools, this sort of behavior actually comes naturally.

The Goal Should Be To Teach Our Children To Think

c) The goal of our home schools should be to teach our children to think - and to think faster and better

than we, ourselves do. We should want our children to surpass us in every way.

Often parents think about this in terms of a "better life" for their children - more wealth, more leisure, a larger house, and more "happiness." A truly better life, however, depends more importantly upon a better understanding of the world and a better comprehension of the worldly and spiritual matters taught to us in the Bible.

In order to gain that understanding and that comprehension, our children need above all else to develop their ability to think.

In this article I have related some of the positive experiences that we have had in our home school. It is a home school that has had an unusual history. These experiences lead me to suggest a particular sort of program for home schooling. This program has, I believe, some special advantages over other methods. If you follow this general program, you will, I believe, be astonished by the academic results and also enjoy the enormous benefits of keeping your family together during your best hours each day.

As the children and I have traveled this path, they have demonstrated to me many positive benefits of directed self-education.

In evaluating our experiences, we find that our single greatest unfilled need was for a directed, self-teaching literature curriculum that is designed to meet the criteria that we have found most useful.

Therefore, the children and I have decided, as a continuing exercise that is a part of their school itself, to start to create one. We wanted this curriculum for our own use as well as for other home schools.

That curriculum is now available here.

Robinson Story - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

More Letters and Articles

How the Robinson children are faring

An earlier biographical update of the happenings of Art Robinson and his family can be found at www.independentscientist.com.

This letter by Art Robinson is from May 2003 in response to a request as to how the children are faring:

> Matthew finished calculus at the age of 14. He is now 15 and working his way quite succesfully through our physics program. (This physics is at the level of Caltech freshman physics.) Matthew is entirely self-taught using the rules in our curriculum.
>
> Zachary has a doctorate in veterinary medicine.

Arynne has a BS in chemistry.

Noah is a graduate student in chemistry at Caltech.

Bethany is studying for a BS in chemistry.

Joshua is studying for a BS in mathematics.

Both Zachary and Noah completed their BS degrees in chemistry with only two years of college work - they skipped the first two years by means of advanced placement exams.

All of the children have performed outstandingly in their academic work.

Noah has been the most remarkable. When he applied to graduate school, he was told by MIT that he was their top ranked applicant. Noah's academic record was especially outstanding. Added to this, his GRE scores were 800, 800, and 770 - two perfect scores and a 99 percentile. The GRE is a sort of SAT taken by those who aspire to graduate school. Scores this high are very rare.

Other than academics, the children are also doing quite well - by our standards. The "World" would think differently.

Best Regards,

Art Robinson

Below are excerpts of letters and articles by Art Robinson to homeschoolers concerning topics of general interest.

Details and Procedures

[To a mother who lives alone with her young daughter and who is thinking about removing here from public school and home schooling - but is worrying about all of the details and procedures.]

10 October 1998

Hi Xxxxxx, ...
An objective look at the products of public schools shows that, in most cases, the school has a net negative influence on the child. You not only can do a much better job, it would be virtually impossible for you to do worse. Realizing that most home school parents have no teaching experience and no special abilities or facilities, you may be interested in the following academic figures: ["Solid Evidence to Support Home Schooling" by Michael P. Farris, The Wall Street Journal, March 5, 1997, p A18.]

In summarizing the Farris article in my newsletter, Access to Energy, I wrote:

"on a battery of tests in reading, listening, language, math, science, social studies, and study skills,

where public school students average, by definition, 50th percentile, home schooled students average between the 80th and 87th percentiles with an overall score of 85th percentile.

"On reading tests, the home schooled whites, hispanics, and blacks all scored at the 87th percentile, while in math home schooled whites were at the 82nd percentile and minorities at the 77th percentile.

"In the tax-financed "public" schools, however, in reading tests whites were 57th, while blacks and hispanics were both at 28th. In math, whites were at the 58th, while hispanics were at the 29th and blacks were at the 24th. Imagine the howls of racism and child abuse that would be heard from the public schools and their unions if these numbers for home schools and public schools were reversed.

"The cost? Public school costs are $5,325 per student year compared with $546 per student year in home schools (excluding, in both cases, the capital costs of the buildings in which the students are taught). Using the 22 CD-ROM self-teaching home school curriculum developed by the Oregon Institute of Science and Medicine, this cost drops to $49 per student year plus the cost of a computer (already present in half of American homes) and requires very little teacher time.

" . . . . . This academic performance is in significant part linked to the infinitely superior social and moral atmosphere of the home.

Why have children, the most precious blessing imaginable, and then turn them over to the state to raise - where their teachers will be a peer group of immature children refereed by disinterested government employees? Don't worry about all of the details. Simply decide that your daughter should not be exposed any longer to the degraded social, moral, and academic environment of a government institution, and then just keep her home. The rest will eventually work out wonderfully for you both regardless of what mechanics (which curriculum, etc.) you decide upon. If I had a seven-year-old daughter, I would not permit her to spend even one single day in a public school.

One added point: If you have your daughter at your side 24 hours per day, seven days per week, you will soon come to realize that your own life as well as hers has become immeasurably enriched. My children were 12, 10, 8, 6, 6, and 18 months when my wife died. While I then adopted a policy of always staying with them or of taking them with me wherever I needed to go - even on several trips across the country, I was especially protective of the baby boy because of his age. I even moved him into bed with me, so that I could watch at night to see that he was O.K. Well, he is still there; we have been virtually inseparable for 10 years; and we both have thrived so much from the experience that most people who know us are astonished. Add to this unusually close relations with all six children and I have had more happiness in the past 10 years than most people dare to even dream about. Now, they are 22, 20, 18, 16, 16, and 11, so, unhappily, I am running out of children - but they are becoming remarkable adults, so I have some great co-workers. To do this, however, both you and the child must know for certain that it is unthinkable that you would turn him (her) over to someone else for even a brief period. [Even before my wife died, we had a policy of always taking the children everywhere - never ever leaving them with anyone else.]

I lead an unusually rigorous life, so the children have been in some very unusual places. ... You have the great blessing of a seven-year-old girl. Keep her so close to you that the idea of having her away for even

a few hours at any school - public or Christian - is just too ridiculous to even be considered.

Sincerely,

Art

State interference in family life. Languages

It is unfortunate that your state requires a "cover school." Even at the low price you are paying, the cover over 12 years will cost twice as much as the entire cost of teaching materials, etc. for a twelve year period. Maybe you should eventually start your own cover school. It sounds like a lucrative game.

I just returned from three days in California. On the news (there) was a new ruling by the state that all children must complete kindergarten in a state approved institution before they are permitted in the first grade. They keep moving earlier the time at which they contrive to seize the children. Also, while I was gone, a call came from a mother in Nevada who has just had her 10 and 12-year-old children (she has a total of two) seized by a swat team with guns, handcuffs (for her), etc. This stemmed from her taking one of the children to the emergency room (for what turned out to be a false alarm). After they had her children, the state changed the charge to "educational neglect." She now wants to get our curriculum as a low cost way of having better materials to show the state.

Getting her children back will be the hard part. The state receives about $100,000 from the federal government for each child they seize - which then goes to pay the people who seize them and their various associates who "care" for the children. The state of New Jersey made a grab for my children a few years ago when we were vacationing there. We escaped - fortunately, since the "child protective" industry in New Jersey stood to gain over a half-million dollars in federal money by taking them. They had Matthew (then 7) in their clutches for about a day and were after the others. Virtually their entire investigation of me revolved around finding out how much money I had - so that they could determine how hard I would be able to fight them.

A man and six children in a pickup truck (cab type) were just too great a temptation to them. A detective with a gun grilled a scientist we were visiting.- for about two hours (this scientist happens to have the Nobel Prize in Chemistry).. He repeatedly told the scientist that the primary suspicious characteristic of my children was that they were "too quiet." The scientist (who, with his wife, also raised six children) kept telling him that children learn by example, but the guy just would not believe him.

Why not let Xxxxx learn languages in her recreational time? The restriction to solely essential subjects applies only to at-the-desk formal (best hours in the day) study time. This only occupies about five hours. She will be awake for 14-16 hours. With an hour out for meals, she still has 8-10 hours per day. Learn the languages then.

I hope the curriculum meets your expectations. It really works exceptionally well - especially for children who start it at an early age. Never forget, however, the really important part - Keep Your Child OUT of the World. (Get rid of that television altogether. I know one man who took his out on the back porch and

shot it. This is extreme, but do you really want to give this trouble to someone else? Destruction of the thing is the best option.)Then she will grow up naturally - and without the impediments and faults that are taught by the world (but are not naturally a part of a developing human being). With usually quite modest amounts of discipline, children grow into wonderful young adults - if they are not distracted. Surely, some manage this anyway regardless of circumstances - but why make it difficult for them and also risk failure?

Sincerely,

Art

The New Jersey incident. What motivates bureaucrats.

Hi ...:

The New Jersey episode went as follows:

We all traveled together in those days because the children were then ages 7, 12. 12. 14. 16. And 18 and there is only one parent. I still prefer not to have them away (ages now 11-22). All of us speak by telephone every day (usually during an evening Bible reading).

We were then on a trip in a pickup truck (two doors with back seat) and were visiting Dr. R. B. Merrifield, a scientist at Rockefeller University who received the Nobel Prize in Chemistry for being the first to synthesize an enzyme and for the development of related techniques. Rockefeller University is in New York City and, for the visit, we were all dressed in the best clothes we had with us. The plan was to visit the lab at Rockefeller and then spend the weekend at Dr. Merrifield's home in New Jersey.

Matthew had developed a cough, so Dr. Merrifield suggested that Mrs. Merrifield could make an appointment with a pediatrician. The Merrifield's raised several children, but all were grown, so she just picked a pediatric clinic from the yellow pages. We arrived there after hours at 5:30 p.m., so two women M.D.s and two nurses were on after-hours duty.

Matthew and I went in, while the other five children waited in the truck. After an about one-half hour wait and following the quickest physical exam I have ever seen, one of the pediatricians announced that Matthew appeared to have a very serious, rapidly fatal bacterial infection - which could be stopped only by immediate hospitalization and intravenous antibiotics. I called our pediatrician in Oregon, who told me that the disease, while rare, did exist - and he could not, of course, advise about Matthew without seeing him.

So, the other children went on to the Merrifield's, while Matthew, Arynne, and I went to the hospital. (Arynne also had a cough, but wound up sleeping in the pickup that very cold night because the hospital would not allow her inside unless I admitted her.) Curiously, the Dr. did not suggest examination of the other children who had, presumably, been exposed to this dread and contagious illness. The admitting physician at the hospital seemed confused, since she could find nothing wrong with Matthew other than a bad cold - but she dutifully ordered a set of x-rays and administered the IV and an intermittent respirator,

while telling me "you have nothing to worry about" and commenting that our Dr. must have "a very low threshold." I was later to learn that the hospital record code number for Matthew designated "admitted for reasons other than a medical emergency."

What I did not know throughout that night at Matthew's bedside was that, when we visited the clinic, one of the staff members noticed the truck and asked the children to talk with her and to get out of the truck. She, being a stranger, they refused to do either. The Dr. then called New Jersey social services and a plan to trap us through hospitalizing Matthew was decided upon. My first warning was when a woman from New Jersey social services appeared in the hospital room late the next morning backed (in the hallway outside) by two men with guns - one detective and one police officer. She repeatedly demanded that I leave the room to meet with them, which I, fortunately, refused to do.

The interrogation of me that followed (in the room with her running back and forth to talk to the men outside) then centered almost exclusively upon our finances. How much money was in my wallet? How much did our home cost? Where did we get the money to buy it? Etc. In retrospect, I believe that their main purpose was to determine whether or not we were wealthy enough to fight them. After a couple of hours, they demanded to see the other children. So, after reaching an agreement that, if I left Matthew's room, I would be permitted to go back in, we drove to the Merrifields - detective, social worker, and me.

Since we refused the social worker's demand to see the children alone, she questioned them in the presence of Mrs. Merrifield and me - while the detective questioned Dr. Merrifield in another room. Before beginning, the social worker gave us a short talk on how good she was with children. After a couple of hours of this, the two conferred and then left. Professor Merrifield told me that the detective said the most suspicious evidence was that the children were "too quiet." Dr. Merrifield said he kept telling the guy that children learn by example, but he wouldn't believe him.

Back at the hospital, they still refused to release Matthew. However, after I agreed to participate in meetings and examinations the next morning, they let him out. We, of course, immediately drove out of the state.

When I asked later for the state records of this episode, I was told that they were sealed. I was not to be allowed to read them.

Several things should be realized. First, most states have passed laws allowing them to receive child abuse money from the federal government. When a child is seized, these programs provide over $100,000 per child which pays the people who seize the child and their retainers in the police dept., child services, foster homes, etc. Our family was worth at least $500,000 to the social services industry of New Jersey. Second, these laws specify that certain professionals - including MDs - are guilty of a serious crime if, knowing about a potential case - they do not report it. Therefore, at the clinic, once one of the staff had raised a question about the children, all of the staff members were at serious personal risk if they did not call the "social services" people. The ruse they then participated in order to snatch Matthew was, of course, highly unethical. It was after hours and the child services people needed time to get their act and paperwork together. Third, Matthew's need for child protection was, as far as I was able to determine, of little interest to these people. If we had been relatively poor and had not been visiting a famous man. I am sure that all six children would have been seized - and I would have been involved in a long fight to get them back. Even if successful, this fight would have devastated our work, since it would have been waged

3,000 miles from home.

At present. There are more than a million allegations of child abuse each year. 80% are dropped - but usually after the children have been seized and interrogated. About 200,000 children are currently incarcerated in locations away from their parents. Federal funding of this now stands at about $3 billion per year. This pays about $100,000 per child for the seizure and institutionalization of 30,000 children per year. States supply similar amounts of money. After the child has been processed and placed in a "foster home," Yearly tax-financed expenditures are less.

Teaching Students to Think

From: Access to Energy: A Pro-Science, Pro-Technology, Pro-Free Enterprise Monthly Newsletter
AUGUST 2000 (Vol. 28, no. 1) Box 1250, Cave Junction, Oregon 97523

Teaching Students to Think

by Dr. Arthur B. Robinson

We live today largely in a trust-and-parrot society. This fact and the erosion of our government from a republic into a poll-driven democracy is costing us our freedom. Those who would enslave us have gained the trust of our people and have taught them that anything goes so long as the majority approves. This is the tyranny of mob rule, but they do not realize it.

To be sure, not all Americans have fallen into these traps. We associate ourselves personally with people of similar interests and inclinations to our own, so each of us tends to think of our society as made up of the people we see around us. It is difficult to integrate our observations over 260 million people except by evaluating their aggregate actions. Those actions tell a sorry tale.

More than half of our economic freedom has disappeared into a federal, state, and local tax system that confiscates over 50% of our earnings. We are surrounded by capricious and irrational controls, such as the massive web of "environmental" regulations, which is largely based upon self-serving political claims rather than reality. Every newspaper and magazine is brim-full of items that a thinking individual would designate for "Stark Raving Mad."

...I have concluded that the teaching of math and science, if done in an appropriate manner, can add greatly to the student's inclination and ability to think.

This is, of course, the key — a thinking individual. Our people do not think. They simply mimic the claims of others, communicated to them largely through television, and pretend that they are thinking. The media launches a particular propaganda campaign; the pollsters monitor its results; and, when the polls indicate that over 50% of the people now parrot the propaganda, unprincipled politicians act on it.

We cannot change this entire system overnight or even in one generation, but how do we ensure that those for whom we are personally responsible do not succumb? How can we teach them to think?

On the basis of our experience with home schooling — we now have, through our curriculum, about 40,000 students - I have concluded that the teaching of math and science, if done in an appropriate manner, can add greatly to the student's inclination and ability to think. This should begin at an early age.

First, let me assure you that this course of study can be followed successfully by most students.

Our curriculum requires that, during the first year of school, the student learn to read well and also learn the addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division tables through 12s by instant, rote memory. These tables are learned primarily by flash card exercises after an initial period in which the student learns their conceptual meanings. Most students are ready for this first year at some time between ages 5 and 7, girls being ready a little earlier than boys.

After this initial year, the student starts with the Saxon 5/4 arith metic book and progresses at his own pace through the nine Saxon books, including calculus. A fixed number of problems are worked each day, with the number metered so that the student fmishes in two or three hours and has an average error rate on the initial attempt of less than 5%. The student grades his own paper and then must find the correct solutions to any missed problems. Most children are capable of finishing calculus between ages 14 and 17.

A key requirement is that the student never be helped with his math. He is learning problem solving — not the solutions to problems. If the student says he cannot work a problem, the response is that he will just have to remain at his desk until he figures out the solution. If started early in life, rarely if ever will a problem remain unsolved. In any case, even if there is such a problem, it should remain un solved. Never should it be worked for the student.

After the student finishes calculus, he begins calculus-based physics and, after that, chemistry. These subjects are handled in the same way. The student reads the text and solves the problems without any help whatever, if he has trouble, he rereads the text and thinks about it until he finds a solution.

Science is not taught to the student before he finishes mathematics through calculus. It is never taught as facts to be memorized. This precludes early science courses because, until he has the needed math skills, the student is not able to figure out solutions for himself. He is only able to trust and parrot, a habit that is to be avoided.

First, let me assure you that this course of study can be followed successfully by most students. We have substantial experience that demonstrates this. Math and science problem solving can become, like most other tasks, simply a job that the student knows he can and must complete each day. Helping the student, on the other hand, robs him of the benefits of the more difficult problems and breeds a dependency that removes his confidence in his own thoughts.

Today, my 13-year-old Matthew is sitting at a desk near the one at which I am writing. He is halfway through Advanced Math, the book before Calculus. Matthew has an unusual string of seven straight days with 100% right answers going. He is trying for an eighth. His perfect scores will undoubtedly soon end,

but consider his mind set. Matthew is not a genius. He is an ordinarily bright boy who has, for seven years, been working his math by himself - math that has gradually increased in complexity. He knows that he can assemble a set of facts and deduce a right answer by thinking for himself. He does so every morning except Sunday.

Matthew does not know much about "science" at all — only that encountered in hobbies. He will not know science until he is able to do it by himself — beginning with calculus problems based upon Newton's laws in introductory physics. Other l3-year-olds are being taught "science." That is to say that they are being taught to trust and parrot facts about science that adults are giving them to memorize. While gaining this skill to mimic what they are told, they are not learning to reason for themselves. They have "help" with their problems and physics books that use no calculus — instead giving them formulas to memorize because they are unable to derive them.

If you want a man to think, put him in a position where he must think, every day.

If you want a man to think, put him in a position where he must think, every day, for the months and years that he is growing up. if you want him to trust and parrot, give him lots of practice in memorizing things told to him by authorities. The choice is clear and the results are as expected.

Math and science are not just for scientists and engineers. They are a great blessing which the advance of human knowledge has made available to everyone. Properly incorporated into early education, they can markedly enhance the ability to think and to think with confidence — a trait that must be maintained in order to preserve freedom.

The Independent Learner - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Teach them to Teach Themselves

The student who masters a subject on his own learns more

By Dr. Arthur Robinson

Home schools have many different purposes each unique to the particular family and their family goals. The academic part of those purposes usually includes the accumulation of skills and knowledge that cannot be as effectively acquired later in life.

Although often overlooked in the morass of subject-related teaching materials, the single most important aspect of early education is the acquiring of good study habits. These can be learned through the regular mastering of challenging academic material in an excellent study environment, on a regular schedule, and by means that will be available throughout life. Without such habits, the academic life and mental achievements of the student will eventually hit an artificial ceiling far below his inherent ability—a ceiling that will probably remain impenetrable for the remainder of his life.

Not a Team Sport

Learning is not a team sport. Learning is an activity that involves solely the student and the knowledge. Everything or everyone else that may become involved in this process is essentially superfluous—and is potentially harmful as a distraction from the fundamental process.

In the adult world this is, of course, self-evident. Adults ordinarily do not have special teaching aids and dedicated teachers available to hold their hands when they need to acquire new knowledge. Usually, they have only books. When the knowledge comes directly from other repositories such as computers, people, or other sources, that knowledge is seldom tailored for spoon-feeding to an unprepared mind.

Good Study Habits

Since certain skills need to be acquired at an early age—particularly mathematics and reading, writing, and thinking in one's native language—it is sensible to arrange the homeschool so that learning these essential skills will automatically lead to the development of good study habits. This is one reason that self-teaching homeschools have a special value.

Consider, for example, the teaching of math and science. Many homeschools use Saxon Math. Although produced with teachers and classrooms in mind, this series of math books is so well-written that it can be mastered by most students entirely on their own without any teacher intervention whatever. This self-mastery usually does not happen automatically, but it can be learned by almost any student with correct study rules and a good study environment.

While the subject matter, can be mastered with or without a teacher, the student who masters it without a teacher learns something more. He learns to teach himself. Then, when he continues into physics, chemistry, and biology— which are studied in their own special language, the language of mathematics—he is able to teach these subjects to himself regardless of whether or not a teacher with the necessary specialized knowledge is present. Also, he is able to make use of much higher-quality texts – texts written for adults.

Practical Advantages of Self-Study

Besides the great advantage of developing good study habits and thinking ability, self-teaching also has immediate practical advantages. Many children should be able, through Advanced Placement examinations, to skip over one or more years of college. The great saving in time and expense from this is self-evident. These and other comparable accomplishments await most children who learn to self-teach and then apply this skill to their home education.

Even children of lesser ability can, by means of self-teaching and good study habits, achieve far more than they otherwise would have accomplished by the more ordinary techniques.

Just Say Nothing

Self-teaching is an "extraordinary" technique today, but it was ordinary in the past, when most of the great scholars in human history learned in a similar way.

No one can claim to have complete knowledge about the best techniques for human learning. This is a very complicated subject. It is possible, however, to observe individuals who excel and to notice characteristics which they have in common. Self-teaching, excellent study habits, and a well-disciplined approach to independent thought are characteristics of these people.

These are skills that can be taught to any child. When your eight-year-old child is all alone at his large desk in a quiet room with his Saxon 65 book and has been there three hours already—with most of that time spent in childhood daydreams —and says, "Mommy, I don't know how to work this problem," give him a wonderful gift. Simply reply, "Then you will need to keep studying until you can work the problem."

For a while his progress may be slow. Speed will come with practice. Eventually, he will stop asking questions about how to do his assignments and will sail along through his lessons without help.

These study habits can then spill over into the other subjects—with astonishing results.

The Independent Learner - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Learn to Think Scientifically

Each person needs to distinguish Propaganda from Truth

By Dr. Arthur Robinson

It is essential that each home-school provide a good foundation in science. Although most children will not become scientists or engineers, science and technology play such an important part in the modern world that adults who cannot think logically and effectively about these subjects are at a significant disadvantage. Each person needs to be able to distinguish propaganda from truth, logic and reason from irrationality, and wisdom from foolishness in order to be an effective citizen and to avoid being misled by those who would exploit his ignorance to his own disadvantage and that of his family and others for whom he may be responsible.

The language of science is mathematics. Until a student has learned mathematics through calculus, which can easily be done by ages 14 to 16, he or she is not ready to study science. (The nine Saxon Math books starting with Math 5/4 and extending through Calculus are excellent for this—if they are used in a self-teaching manner.) Until that time, curiosity about scientific subjects should be an extracurricular activity, which is not included in the formal academic hours of each day. If the child shows a curiosity about ants,

by all means get him the best books about ants—even very technical books—and encourage his study. Let him choose his interests in the natural world, and then encourage those interests as hobbies or play.

"Pretend" Science is not Science

Some people use a different method. They publish, for example, physics books for children that do not depend upon a knowledge of calculus. The study of physics always begins with the study of Newtonian mechanics, since this is the simplest subject in physics and is also of fundamental importance. Most of our technology depends in some way upon Newtonian physics. (Shortly after the Apollo rocket took off for its trip to the moon, someone in ground control asked the pilot, "Who is driving that thing?" The astronaut's immediate answer was, "Isaac Newton.")

Yet, when Isaac Newton invented mechanics, he also simultaneously in vented calculus. He did this because he could not solve mechanics problems without calculus. If Isaac Newton could not do this, how does one expect a homeschooled child to do it? The answer is that he cannot do it—he can only pretend to do it with physics problems that have been artificially contrived to encourage this pretense. Since modern chemistry depends upon physics and modern biology depends upon both physics and chemistry, an education in any of these three subjects that is built upon pretended knowledge may be worse than no education at all.

What is the Parent's Role?

First, provide excellent books, a good study environment, and a daily schedule conducive to good study habits—and then get out of the way! Academic knowledge is in books. Anyone or any thing that gets between the student and his books is likely to slow the transfer of that knowledge into his brain.

Second, and most important of all, set a good example. Children learn primarily by example. If your idea of recreation is watching television, why do you expect your child to prefer reading? If you do not think logically, why should he? If you sometimes indulge in expedient lies, why should he value the truth?

Science and mathematics consist of certain truths that people have discovered about the world and universe which the Lord created—simple truths that are within the limited abilities of the human mind to comprehend. They have allowed mankind to see and enjoy aspects of the Lord's creations that were not visible to earlier generations, and they have made possible technology that increases the quality and quantity of human life. If your children learn to self-learn these subjects, they will continue to do so throughout their lives and, in so doing, will be able to improve their own lives and the lives of those around them.

Taking Away the Crutches

Gaining self-confidence that arises from independent learning

By Dr. Arthur Robinson

Zachary, my oldest son, started college at Oregon State University this week [Feb, 1996 - Ed.]. He expects to complete his chemistry major in two years. [Zachary completed his degree in Chemistry at Oregon State University in 2 years. He is now a graduate student in chemistry at Iowa State University. - Ed.] On the basis of College Board Advanced Placement Tests, he was allowed to skip the first two years of courses.

When I looked over his schedule of junior level chemistry and mathematics courses, I began to think I should help. After all, I had taught the same sorts of chemistry courses when I was a university faculty member. So, I said, "If you wish, I will help you with this material."

There was then a long silence.

Both of us were thinking the same thing. How would I help? Would I lecture to him? Show him how to work the problems? Check his homework assignments for errors? Provide workbooks or other study aids? Give practice examinations? In 12 years of homeschooling, I have never done those things. His brain has no experience in the use of such crutches.

Actually, although his university instructors may not realize it, most of their job was over when they selected the textbooks and required that Zachary learn the material in them. Their periodic examinations will reflect that he has learned the material, but the professors will probably never realize that he learned it without further help.

Learning to Learn

For those people who think for themselves, most of life is a self-teaching experience. Otherwise, what would they do when they needed to learn new information or academic skills? Should they re-enroll in the university and ask to be taught? Perhaps they should not learn those things for which no teacher is available?

Unfortunately, for a great many Americans, learning only the things they are actively taught is the usual way. After school, television and the people in their immediate peer group become their primary sources of information and, all too often, misinformation. They lack the ability to learn on their own. Most importantly, they lack the ability to think independently.

From the very first day that a child begins formal academic instruction (at ages five to seven), the ultimate adult mind that will be formed by that child's education should be uppermost in the parents' thoughts. Their goal should be to mold an adult who can learn without help, since there will be no formal schools

and teachers for most of the information that he needs in life.

Moreover, each person should have the self-confidence that arises from in- dependent leaning. That self-confidence is an essential part of the process of independent thought—a requirement of individual freedom. And, your child will require individual freedom for the best possible life before man and God.

What Should We Teach?

Elementary education is a race between the biological development of a child's mind and the learning of skills and information required for the optimum use of that mind. Facts and information are important, but even more important are skills that must be developed early in life for optimum mental development. Some such skills, such as mathematics and writing, are also an integral part of the factual information. Other skills are a part of the organization of the school itself and consist of a collection of mental habits and attitudes.

In designing homeschool curricula for our children, we should, therefore, ask ourselves several important questions:

1. Are the facts we teach fundamental information of primary importance to productive thought?
2. Are the study habits and attitudes we teach suitable for the adult that our child will become?
3. Are these things acquired in such a way and with sufficient mastery that the child will develop self-confidence in his independent individual abilities?

Ultimately, no authority can answer these questions. Parents know their child best, and it is their responsibility to answer these questions for their family. Parents should realize, however, the importance of these questions.

These questions lead to some surprising conclusions: First, much of the information traditionally a part of grades 1—12 is of lesser importance than other often-neglected information. Book selection is of crucial importance. Second, study environment and habits are very important, where-as learning tools and active teacher tutoring are of lesser importance and potentially harmful. Three, children learn by example. Most importantly home-school teachers must serve, through their own behavior regarding their own work, as good examples for their students.

Authors Note: The next editions of this column will discuss specific parts of homeschooling and the ways in which each of them fits into these goals. I am delighted to have this opportunity to share these thoughts with you. I hope that you will find among them an occasional gem that proves beneficial for your students.

Children Learn by Example

The single most important thing to keep in mind

By Dr. Arthur Robinson

The single most important thing that homeschool families must keep in mind is this:

Children learn by example.

Actually, adults learn largely by example, too, and this also has a profound effect upon homeschool families.

With this in mind, a visit to a typical tax-financed socialist "public" school provides more than enough motivation to homeschool. Do responsible parents want their children to emulate the behavior of the teachers and children there? Disorder, ignorance, misbehavior, disrespect for parents and family, and worse are the norms in such schools, so they obviously do not provide the examples we want for our children. Even the mobs of immature children and typical adults found in most private and Christian schools are often poor examples.

Once the children are at home, however, learning by example does not end. It simply transfers to the home itself. If you read, the children will read. If you value academic achievement for yourself, so will they. If your Christian faith is strong, theirs will be. Conversely, if you watch TV, so will they. If you form your opinions from shallow sources of propaganda such as TV news commentators and local newspapers, instead of by responsible independent thought based on accurate information, so will they.

If you permit government agencies to confiscate the earnings of your neighbors and fellow citizens by forced taxation, and then partake of a share of the loot through government payments, and if you carefully vote for politicians who promise you a greater share of the loot, then your children will learn that it is acceptable to steal. If you earn your own way, even when it seems more difficult to do so, your children will learn the virtues of hard work and honesty.

Academic study is only part of the home environment, but it is an essential part. This study best takes place in a quiet, comfortable atmosphere with an adult example nearby. For instance, if a separate room is available, each child should have a large desk in that room, as should at least one adult. The tops of these desks should be completely clear of all items except those immediately in use. The room should be free from distractions such as toys and other interests. Even school wall hangings can be distractions. The action is on the desks—between the students and the books—not on the walls, floors, and ceilings. **Anything that interposes itself between the student and those books is a negative influence,** whether it be an overly solicitous teacher or a distracting toy (even a toy that pretends to be educational). Academic knowledge is in books, and it is from books that the student must learn to extract it.

The students need one primary thing from their teacher—they need an example. **An adult should, if at all possible, do his or her own reading and paperwork, such as accounting and bill paying, at a desk in the school room.** I know of fathers with desk-intensive professions who have had great success by simply taking their children to work. The students are given desks in the corners of the father's office and taught to conduct themselves in complete quiet. They work at their desks, while Daddy works at his desk. The children soon learn to tune out distractions such as telephone conversations or other workers visiting the father—and they emulate the father.

There are, of course, a great many possible variations. If, for example, the parents' work requires that another adult supervise the children for part of the day, that adult should be chosen with academic example (as well as moral, spiritual, and ethical example) in mind. The supervisory adult will become the students' role model. Is that person an example of the sort of adults you want your children to become?

It is ridiculous to have children—the greatest blessing that our life in this world offers—and then turn them over to the state or to mobs of other immature children and disinterested adults to raise. When we keep them at home, our homes prosper, strengthening our family lives and our spiritual lives.

None of us are, of course, perfect. The typical adult—as is present in the Robinson home, for instance—has many faults and foibles which he will probably never outgrow. But to a certain extent, my children invert my foibles, having learned from my example about habits (such as sugar addition) that they should not acquire.

Our children even serve, in many ways, as examples for us. There are great stores of inherent wisdom within the minds and hearts of children, especially those who are fortunate to live "out of the world." If an adult shelters a child from the negative influences of the world and then emulates, himself, the wonderful person that automatically emerges as the child grows, that adult is likely to improve greatly in heart and mind.

Academic mental achievement—learning to think and learning to find accurate, reliable information upon which to base our thoughts—is an important aspect of life. Homeschools foster this achievement. The principal duties of parents in this process are to provide a good study environment, excellent study materials conducive to self-learning, good study rules, and—above all else—a good example for the students to emulate.

Multiculturalism and Curricula

Difference can be cool. But not when it's the rule.

By Dr. Arthur Robinson

What should be the composition of a quality education? The answer is obvious—reading, writing, and arithmetic; where arithmetic gradually includes science as the student's mathematical skills increase, and reading includes the broad general knowledge of literature and the world without which no person can be considered educated.

But now, the list of subjects some homeschooled families consider for the reading part of their curriculum includes something called "multiculturalism."

What is multiculturalism? In actual academic context, it is no more than the same information that used to be taught under the headings of geography and history and government. It is a delightful fact that the world is made up of all sorts of people who live in many different ways. Any encyclopedia printed before about 1960 reveals hundreds of articles describing, without prejudice, the curious ways of people in other countries and geographical locations. Books recording these sorts of facts have been popular for thousands of years—going back to Julius Caesar and before. No first-rate selection of books from the great writers of the English language can avoid containing many selections of this type. In addition, America has always been a melting pot of people from many different places, so within our own country, we have had an opportunity to live with many different sorts of people.

Yet now we have this new word, "multiculturalism." This word has been brought to us by the dead hand of government and by political agitators who seek to use American schools as mechanisms for social engineering rather than institutions of learning. By this word and the propaganda that surrounds it, they seek to introduce "values" into the differences between different human beings—the difference itself being the value—and they themselves being the self-anointed custodians of that manufactured value. No longer agreeing with Thomas Jefferson and our other founding fathers that all people are created equal and that each person should have an equal right before the law to life, liberty, property, and an opportunity to better himself by adopting the best examples set by other people, the state schools teach that all people should be forced to remain different so that their "cultures" will not change.

The Inequity of a Watered-Down Curriculum

The latest example of multiculturalism is being called "ebonics." Ebonics is supposed to be a culturally different (and therefore automatically valuable) language spoken in part of the black community. In fact, it is nothing more than a hodge-podge of slang and poor grammar that has arisen as black students, deprived of a decent education by public schools, seek to communicate with one another. Let me illustrate by telling a personal story:

After I finished graduate school at the University of California at San Diego and was given a faculty position there, I spent much extracurricular time with my graduate students and the other graduate students, since we were of the same age. Some of this time was whiled away at a beer and hamburger joint in La Jolla known as El Sombrero. I shall never forget one evening there.

As several of us sat at a back table, the El Sombrero door was suddenly filled by a tough-looking character whose dark skin perfectly matched his leather jacket. The first rule of survival in such situations being no eye contact, I immediately became unusually attentive to the discussion underway at our table.

To my astonishment, however, the new arrival sauntered over to our table and sat down. He knew the graduate students. It turned out that he was also one of my fellow faculty members—assigned to the "third college." a new division of the university for minority students that still had no name because of an ongoing squabble over which third-world revolutionary to name it after (Lumumba-Zapata being the most recent discard).

What followed was a discourse on "third-world" and black-power politics in which I took no part—being unprepared academically, politically, or even psychologically for the prejudices of my esteemed colleague. (Actually, I just wanted to stay out of a fight.)

Eventually, however, the subject turned to teaching. I was at the time teaching freshman chemistry to a class of 300 students and found myself pointing out that I made no effort whatever to tailor the goals of my course to separate standards for minority students or any other group regardless of their preparation or ability. In my opinion, they all needed to know the same material in order to be prepared for the same post-academic world, or—at the very least—they needed to realize that they did not know the material, so that they could plan accordingly.

The black professor's response was immediate. "You are right!" he said. "Your course is tough. I know, I'm tutoring two students in your class. But you are exactly right, our worst enemies are these white liberals who teach watered-down courses to our people and turn them into permanent second-class citizens."

This conversation took place 25 years ago. Today, both the black professor and I would both be in serious trouble for not considering the "cultural diversity" of black students—or Spanish students, or whatever other racial group the state bureaucrats wished to keep on the Plantation of multiculturalism. We would be fired for racial insensitivity, or would have long ago quit in disgust.

Teaching the Truth

My advice to homeschool parents is to teach geography, history, and government largely from books which were written in the 1950's and earlier, before it became popular to teach overt racism under the rubric of "multiculturalism."

First, racism is morally wrong. It should not be taught to students. Second, the world is composed of people of many different races and background with whom your students will interact as they go through life. Every person they meet during their lives must have an equal opportunity in their eyes—eyes that have been trained to see the similarities between all human beings and not the differences.

Racism has no place in the education of an upright young Christian—it is a false religion. Teach the truth to your students. Leave lies like "multiculturalism" and other racist activities to the schools of the secular humanist state.

Motivation by Excellence

The trick is to be so skilled at work that it becomes play.

By Dr. Arthur Robinson

"How do we keep kids from burning out? How do we keep their motivation for schoolwork high?" These are certainly relevant questions, as a short visit to almost any public school illustrates.

Deliberately torn clothes, rings through ears and noses (and worse), painted faces and hair, booming primitive "music," and general demeanor that belongs in the anthropology section of NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC are immediately noticeable. Look deeper by listening to the actual conversations and studying seriously the behavior patterns of these very unfortunate children, and only a deliberate act of mental charity prevents one from seriously comparing this to a zoo.

These are not, however, animals. These are children whose fundamental hopes and dreams, whose rights to temporal and spiritual opportunities, and whose mental abilities and productive potential are the same as those of any other children. Why has their motivation been so terribly crushed that they look for fulfillment in demeaning ways?

This is also a crucial question for homeschool families. Without the peer examples and pressures of the public schools, homeschool children don't ordinarily deteriorate so obviously as public school children. This is, of course, one of the facts that often motivates parents to begin a homeschool. The same general deterioration can, however, take place in a homeschool—a drifting away from academic, mental activity, and positive development and the substitution of other pursuits that undermine the purposes of the school and diminish the children's prospects in adult life.

The Cycle of Motivation

A fundamental cycle is present in most remarkably successful personal activities: **An individual likes to do the things at which he excels**—and **he excels at the things he likes to do**—and he draws more motivation from the fact that he excels. If he ceases to excel, he ceases to like the activity, and he seeks motivation elsewhere; this diminishes his efforts in the primary activity and lowers still further the quality of his performance. Both of these cycles are self-amplifying. The first leads to outstanding performance and maximum skills. The second spirals downward to failure. A successful home school must assure that

students reside in the first cycle, and remain there.

The key to success is to focus upon the essence of the first cycle—excellence and motivation built upon truly individual and independent performance of important work. The most common error is to focus upon pleasure without demanding excellence.

Ability is the Key

You cannot fool children for long. If they are being given busywork, games, or watered-down "educational" work created to respond to the lowest common denominators in the marketplace, they will eventually realize this. If they are unable to learn without lots of colored pictures and entertaining crutches and continual handholding and compliments from a teacher, they will realize this, too. If, however, a child knows that six days a week his first activity will be to read a challenging math lesson and correctly solve the problems given with that lesson without any help whatever, he will begin to take great pride in his ability and to enjoy this activity. The satisfaction of having this ability will become its own reward. Also, he will easily understand the essence of his work—which depends upon the quality of the text and problems and has nothing to do with colored pictures, dancing teaching aids, and other marketing frills.

In this example, it is the mathematics that is fun. It is not fun, however, the first day. For children entering this real learning activity from a poorer background, it may not even be fun for the first few months. For those who are coddled, it will probably never be fun. In many cases, only when the child realizes that he is entirely on his own with the math book and that there is no way out through asking for help or complaining or refusing to complete each day's lesson (even if he sits at that desk the entire day) will he apply himself.

Children, of course, vary in ability. It doesn't really matter how quickly they learn as long as they learn each subject thoroughly and completely. The parent must therefore, provide a study environment responsive to each child's ability. For children who learn more slowly, it is especially important to eliminate all but the most essential work: reading, writing, and arithmetic. Schools organized so that each child progresses at his own rate, and so no child is required to learn materials unnecessary to progress in fundamental thought, are especially valuable to students regardless of their abilities.

Children who have been correctly taught prefer to work alone without help, and they do not like disturbances and interruptions—especially interruptions that interfere with their school work. They are caught up in their own cycles of excellence and dislike intrusions. It is toward this attitude that each homeschool should be directed.

The Blending of Work and Play

Success in this ultimately answers the question of work vs. play because the two activities should become identical in a successful adult. I recall vividly my thoughts when, after graduate school, I obtained a permanent position at the university involving primarily laboratory research. I loved laboratory work which had long been a cycle of excellence for me. My thoughts were, "This is wonderful, I'm going to get to play all of my life, and people are actually going to pay me for it. I'll never have to work."

Adults love to play as much as do children. The trick is to be so skilled at work that it becomes play—and for that play to be so effective that it becomes a foundation for correctly placed motivation and self-confidence.

The Study of Science

Home schooling and science

Posted by Art Robinson on May 26, 2002 at 15:14:45

Every child should study mathematics and science in the most effective way possible. The method we use in the Robinson Curriculum is the most effective and academically superior available.

But, why should children study these subjects? Most of them will not become mathmeticians or scientists. They should study these subjects for the same reason that scholars 200-300 years ago studied the classic literature.

At that time, the classic literature was the highest level of human knowledge. There was no science and very little mathematics. So, in order to train the minds of the students to think, they were required to study the highest level of intellectual knowledge available.

Now, science and math are the highest levels of available rational knowledge. A student's brain and ability to think are developed much more effectively by study of math and science than they are by study of the classics.

This development requires, however, that they really study math and science. Pretend study is not worthwhile. Pretend study - science without math, physics, without calculus, descriptive texts without understanding - must be avoided.

There is no better preparation of a young mind for vitually every occupation and for everyday living than the proper study of math and science. Even morality is enhanced in certain ways because these subjects always concentrate on finding the truth and upon rigorously right answers.

But why should the student home school in these studies? There are two reasons, the second being far more important than the first.

The first is that self-study at home from the best texts, with the most effective methods, allows the student to learn at a far higher rate and with much greater effectiveness. In other words, academic quality can be superior in a home school because the curriculum choice and study method can be far better than those of a public school.

The second, and more important, reason is that home schooling keeps the child at home.

Home schooling is no more than a tool that can be used to keep a child out of the World.

If a young person is kept out of the World, the Lord will raise him (or her). Little else is necessary. The links to the Lord are already built into the child. He will follow those links and will directly help the child. All children receive this help. Parents really need do very little in addition.

If, however, the child is in the World, especially the World of today - which is very rich in evil, he will hear the messages of the World and be continually pressured by his peers to follow them. In effect, the World will distract him from the messages of the Lord and fill his ears and eyes with other things.

So, although academic quality is important, the most important thing is to keep children away from the World - so that the Lord can raise them.

Only God knows what will become of the Robinson children. At the present time, all six of them are extraordinary.
Very frequently, I hear comments to the effect that I have done a wonderful job of raising the children.

These comments are wrong. Actually, I did not raise the children at all. After Laurelee's death, a quiet calm settled over them. They were protected, guided, and raised by the Lord - in just the same way that He endeavors to raise all children.
The only really important thing that I did was to keep them away from the World.

A recent question here related to the best outside courses and experiences for a gifted child. This is a very common question. Parents often seek additional opportunities for their children - in the World. They do not understand that the opportunities are not there.
With a good self-study curriculum of the highest quality - emphasizing the fundamentals of reading, writing, mathematics, and science, the child has all of the academic opportunities he requires.
It is counterproductive to bring in video, audio, or Internet programs linked to the outside World or to place the child in junior college courses, etc.

The Robinson children and the many families that use our curriculum in the most effective way, restrict their study to its contents. They also develop a wide variey of extracurriculur interests - at home.
The most valuable interests are those in which they work with their family -doing work that is essential for the family's survival.

In every action that you consider taking for your child, always ask one question first. Will this activity take my child into the World or it will it help him to stay out of the World? The answer to that question is the most important thing.

In other words, since it is the Lord and not myself who is raising my child, which activity leaves him most free to hear the Lord's voice?

I have not raised six children. I have instead been immeasurably blessed by being allowed to watch the Lord raise six children - and being given a few odds and ends to do to facilitate this.

Use math and science as a tool to develop your child's mind and use home schooling to keep your child out of the World.

Remember also, that the World affects all of the people living in it. Just because an activity is Christian does not mean it is safe. Often Christians are especially vulnerable to Christian activities because their guard is down. The label indicates that the activity is safe.

When our family goes to church, everyone sits together in the main service. This has always been the case - even when the children were small infants. Sunday schools and children's churches are public schools, too.

The Lord is in the child's heart. Do not let anything, regardless of its label - come between the child and the Lord.

Art Robinson
Cave Junction May 2002

Self-Motivation for the Study of Science

By Dr. Arthur Robinson

The goal of the homeschool with respect to the science part of the curriculum should be to give the student three skills:

1. **Certain basic skills** in mathematics and science that are require to think effectively about these subjects.
2. **Self-confidence** that he can, without outside help, think effectively about mathematics and science—self-confidence that is based on real ability.
3. **A thorough understanding** that science is based upon absolute truth and complete honesty about the organization of factual observation of the physical world.

A very effective way for the student to reach these goals is to learn the basic skills and facts by himself from excellent books—entirely without teacher intervention. All children can do this with the very rare exceptions of those with severe mental handicaps. They will not do it, however, unless they are required to do so. Teacher intervention and help destroys self-confidence and encourages a dependence on others that is not compatible with independent thought. Each student must, of course, also be provided with a quiet, distraction-free environment in which to work and a schedule that includes daily self-study of these subjects—preferably six days per week and during the early hours of the day.

These skills cannot be acquired quickly. They are built gradually over a period of years of problem-solving in mathematics and then in science during which the subject matter becomes gradually more complicated in accordance with the child's increasing biological brain development and increasing acquired skills. If a student begins self-study after earlier years of teacher-mediated help, then a period of several months may be required for adjustment. The methodology is simple. Just make sure that the subject matter and the daily lesson goal is correctly matched to the student's ability; require that he complete his lesson each day; and then give him one of the finest gifts you will ever be able to provide him in life—gently but firmly refuse to help.

When this is correctly done, most of the problems often encountered in education disappear. Self-motivation? The self-satisfaction of beginning each day with an intellectual challenge that you know you will be able to meet and overcome by yourself is a powerful self-motivator. Attention wandering and daydreaming? Well, it's his day. If he wants to spend eight hours on an exercise that he could have completed in only one or two hours, then that is his decision—a decision he will learn, by experience, is foolish.

The Independent Learner - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

The Future of Homeschooling

Lets go for higher academic standards

By Dr. Arthur Robinson

Homeschooling has always been a part of the great American experiment with human freedom. Early Americans learned primarily within their homes or in very small schools formed by neighboring families. Due to the rigors of life in that era, parents had little time apart from work, so pre-university education was often largely self-taught. Most students who continued their educations attended universities which were entirely funded by voluntary private means, usually as Christian institutions. These generations of Americans built all of the underlying institutions of freedom of the United States and most of its scientific and technological base.

A Taxing Problem

The rise of socialism and the concomitant reduction of freedom in America during the past century, however, has brought with it the phenomenon of large government schools that are financed by forced

taxation. Huge sums of money (now about $5,375 per student per year) are seized from American citizens by force or threat of force (usually the threat of confiscation of homes and other property) in order to finance these schools and the literal army of more than *two million* bureaucrats and teachers who inhabit them.

The current cost of homeschooling now averages $546 per student per year—about one-tenth the cost of government schooling. Yet even this cost is difficult for many overtaxed American families. With taxes and regulations consuming over half of the earnings of the average family, both parents are often required to work for wages, leaving the family without a homemaker who can serve as teacher to the homeschool.

The Decline of American Education

During their initial decades (without considering their entirely wrongful dependence upon outright theft of private property), government schools were moderately effective. The momentum generated by quality private education within a nation of people with Christian moral principles carried forward into the government schools. As is usually the case when a socialist government takes over a private enterprise, the enterprise continued successfully for a while until the government ruined it.

The demise of government schools in the United States is nearly complete. These schools are now moral sewers that actively oppose most Christian principles. Academically they have sunk to remarkably low levels. These socialist institutions have even invented a whole class of new (nonexistent) learning "diseases." More than five million uncooperative students have been "diagnosed" with these diseases and are then given mind-altering drugs. These schools cannot be saved. The only sensible question is how much longer these institutions of nationalized child-abuse will be allowed to continue operating. Most children who manage to rise above their peers in government or private schools do so by self-learning. They create intellectual islands within themselves, and mentally isolate themselves from the chaos around them.

As parents have become aware of these terrible conditions, they are turning to homeschooling in record numbers. Homeschooling strengthens the family by keeping it together throughout each day, permits the teaching of decent and correct moral and religious principles, and provides an opportunity for academic progress consistent with each individual child's perseverance and ability.

The New Revolution

Fortunately, the revolution in computer costs is occurring simultaneously with the new rise of homeschooling. Researchers have used computers since the 1960s, but computer capabilities that formerly cost millions of dollars now cost only about one thousand dollars. Consequently, 34 percent of American families and over 85 percent of homeschool families now have home computers.

Since these machines permit information transfer at a very low cost, especially by CD-ROM, the price of homeschooling is presently dropping to as little as $100 per student per year (aside from the initial purchase of a single computer available to each family). I expect that, within ten years, the price of computerized teaching materials for homeschooling could drop to as little as $10 per student per year up to age 18, and that homeschooled, fully-accredited university educations will become available at a cost of about $500 per student per year, or about $2000 for a four-year bachelors degree.

As tax-financed education dies, private schools and homeschools are taking its place. American families, and therefore America itself, will greatly benefit if homeschools eventually dominate over private schools. The technology to facilitate this is here, but there are two additional factors that, in my opinion, will decide this issue.

Turning Point

First, will the homeschool movement succeed in growing away from the mediocre academic standards that have been set by government schools? There is a widespread demand for curricula that are "easy and fun." Government schools have met this demand by lowering academic standards. Sadly, many homeschool curricula are still keyed to the "grade" levels of government schools—for the same reason. Easy and fun curricula sell too well to parents and children who have become intellectually lazy. This academic link between the faded standards of government and the academic standards that American children need to excel in the modern world must be broken. If it is not, elite private schools and the high costs associated with them will prevail.

Second, will the homeschool movement realize that learning is an individual activity that, at least until the age of 18 requires very little intervention? The academic growth of a student is not a toy for parental self-satisfaction. It is a completely personal activity that takes place between the student and the books. Parents need only to provide their children with high-quality educational materials, a good study environment, and excellent study habits. Anything or anyone who gets between the student and the books diminishes this activity.

Children learn their faith, morals, ethics, behavior, work habits, and most other important things by example. The examples homeschooled children follow can be closely controlled by their parents. (This is one major disadvantage of even private schools. The examples there are primarily from an undisciplined mob of other immature children.) Children learn academic subjects, however, by self-study.

The keys to expanding homeschooling to include most American children (rather than a fortunate few) are self-learning with non-teacher-based curricula, high academic standards, and an understanding of the importance of disciplined study habits and a good study environment. These keys can unlock wonderful lives for hundreds of millions of American children and can assure a great future for our country. We must provide these keys.

The Independent Learner - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Teaching Government Right

Our children should not be taught to "trust and parrot"

By Dr. Arthur Robinson

As our children go though life, they will continually interact with government. Under present conditions in the United States, government will confiscate about half of everything they ever earn—through direct taxes on their wages and taxes on the people and institutions with whom they conduct business. Government regulations and bureaucrats will limit their activities in business, recreation, home life, and even in the exercise of their Christian faith. Government may draft them to fight in war. Virtually every newspaper they read will be filled with reports of the actions of federal, state, and local government.

Clearly, our homeschools must teach children about government. This education is complicated by the fact that we have essentially two classes of governments—the ones that Americans have agreed to under the federal Constitution and Bill of Rights, state constitutions, and local charters and the ones that we live under, which are quite different. Perpetuated by now vast bureaucracies and often unprincipled politicians, these governments have assumed roles that are not specified or permitted by agreement with the people. This second class—the government we have today—continually spends vast resources "educating" the people with propaganda activities. About which class of government should we teach our children? The practical answer must be both.

Original Writings

In the early years of homeschooling, education about American government can be restricted largely to the study of history. The minds of children who are still too young to comprehend the details of government documents can learn the underlying concepts through the eyes of those who created them. This can be done by studying appropriate history books or by reading biographies, autobiographies, and other writings about and by those who created our government. I much prefer the teaching of history through autobiographies.

Autobiographies are enjoyable to read and give the most accurate account of history possible, since they were written by those who made history and actually participated in the events. No account written by a human being is ever completely unbiased or perfectly accurate, but autobiography is the closest to the truth that we can read—especially if we include autobiographies from several points of view.

For example, the War Between the States can be studied by reading the autobiographies of U S. Grant and William Sherman and the writings of Abraham Lincoln on the Union side and the autobiographies of Jefferson Davis and Alexander Stephens (president and vice—president of the Confederacy) on the Confederate Side. Adding the autobiography of Booker T. Washington for a view of post-Civil War America is also valuable. Alternately, one could read a textbook about the civil war by some modern historian; one who will probably give an account that fits the particular social agenda that the writer wished to promote. The autobiographical method is much more accurate.

As the student grows older, the actual documents of government should be studied—the documents themselves and not textbooks telling about the documents. There is no substitute for studying the Constitution and the Bill of Rights in their entirety. But what about explaining them to the student?

Again, the original is better. The student should read the Federalist Papers and other writings in which the founding fathers themselves debated the issues underlying their creation of our government.

In addition, the student should read autobiographical writings such as those by George Washington and Benjamin Franklin; books by scholars who influenced the founding fathers or who eloquently described their principles such as John Locke, Frederick Bastiat, and Adam Smith, and later writers who worked to perpetuate their principles such as David Crockett, Henry Hazlitt, and Leonard Read.

These are not just dry, scholarly works. The autobiographies of great Americans and the principal writings by which they attempted to influence events are some of the most interesting and entertaining books in the English language—written with the skill and erudition that we would like our children to emulate in their own writing and speech.

Thinking for Themselves

Petr Beckmann, an outstanding American scientist who was a refugee from Communist Czechoslovakia, wrote often about the "trust and parrot" method by which too many Americans form their opinions—especially about science. He wrote many articles in which he urged his readers to not believe him. Instead, he gave them the primary scientific references and asked them to read those documents and compare their conclusions with his own.

In learning about government (or anything else, for that matter), our children should not be taught to "trust and parrot." They should not be taught to form their principles and opinions by reading overviews, or watching news programs, in which the writer or anchorman leads them to interpret facts in accordance with his own agenda. History textbooks—especially modern politically-correct texts, and even those written by people in whom we have confidence—usually contribute to trust-and-parrot thinking. Students should be taught to learn about history and government by unabridged complete writings of those who made history and created government—and then forming their own opinions of the events.

With a firm foundation in American government as it was created, the student is then well-prepared to study government as it is currently practiced and reported in the daily media. The difference is, of course, astonishing. The last and best hope for the long-term preservation of American freedom and the remarkable legacy of the constitutional republic created by our founding fathers is in the education of young Americans to think and learn for themselves the truth about government as it ought to be.

Our predecessors have written and bequeathed to us a wonderful literature from which these can be learned. It is our duty to provide this literature to our children along with study habits and a study environment in which it can be effectively read and understood.

College Preparation

Good study habits prepare a student for college

By Dr. Arthur Robinson

A good homeschool provides college preparation far superior to that offered in private or public schools, especially if the student is self-taught. Academically, the homeschooled student escapes being reduced to the lowest common denominator in classroom schools, and he escapes the examples and peer pressures that are exerted both academically and socially by fellow students and teachers whose preparation for college is generally poor. By self-teaching, he also avoids the limits of academic knowledge and study habits that may exist with his parents and siblings in his own homeschool.

One caution: some homeschool programs are academically keyed to public school "grade levels." Do not fall into the trap of believing that completion of these programs necessarily gives good college preparation. "Grades 1 to 12" are, in many cases, merely normalizing concepts whereby all students are lowered to the levels of the poorest students.

The Big Tests

A homeschooled student should be prepared for high performance on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and on the College Board Advanced Placement (AP) Tests. With excellent performance on these tests, acceptance by a prestigious college or university is assured. Moreover, high performance on the AP Tests can markedly reduce the time that the student must spend at a university. Both of the oldest students in our home-school, Zachary and Noah, scored so highly on the SAT and AP Exams that they are skipping the first two years at the university. Zachary completed his degree in Chemistry at Oregon State University in 2 years. He is now a graduate student in chemistry at Iowa State University. Noah Robinson scored 1480 on his SAT (1400 on the PSAT) and also received 2 years of advanced placement in college. He has now graduated in Chemistry from Southern Oregon University with a 3.98 grade point average.

During the year preceding the SAT exam, the student should take about 10 practice SAT exams at home in order to familiarize himself with the form arid timing of these exams. During the two months prior to the AP Exams, the student should take one practice exam in each subject. He should plan to take 12 or more of these exams in different subjects, so that he will have an opportunity for maximum advanced placement.

All of these exams are given at local high schools. Typically, only two or three AP exams are given, since public school students are so poorly prepared. Arrangements for a greater number can be made with school administrators for a modest fee. The examination cost for proctors and tests for Zachary and Noah was about $700 each—a very inexpensive substitute for two years at college. Practice SATs can be obtained at local book stores, while practice AP Exams are available from the College Board

organization. Ask the local high school for the College Board's address and phone number when you register several months early for the exams. AP exams are given only once per year. Check this time with the high school.

These exams are the formality, and taking practice exams can improve performance by making the student familiar with the testing method. But the essential college preparatory work must be carried out during the 11 years preceding these tests, preferably beginning when the student is five or six years old. The tests are just ways of demonstrating that the student has learned good study habits in an excellent study environment and has applied himself with diligence to the acquisition of superior academic knowledge during those 11 years.

Early Preparation

If the student is taught good study habits in a proper study environment at an early age, he is likely to be very well prepared for college. He needs to be provided with an ordered framework of high quality, very well-selected books: this is an endless road that stretches out in front of him down which he may travel at his own pace in accordance with his own abilities. The average student should be so well prepared that he can skip at least one college year, while above average students can skip two years.

Remember, however, that American schools have degraded severely. The first two years of college today are approximately equivalent to the last two years of high school in earlier times before socialism destroyed American education. The academic achievement of skipping two years of college is approximately the same as having been well educated at the ordinary academic levels that prevailed earlier in American history. We are asking no more of our children in good homeschools than their native abilities permit.

A Negative Influence?

Moreover, when our children are raised in a home environment, they can be exposed to good examples of correct social, moral, and religious standards. In group schools, their examples become randomly chosen teachers and large numbers of immature children. Children learn by example! Why have children - the most precious blessing that any home and family can possess and then farm them out to someone else to raise in an away-from-home school'?

Children are inherently modest, quiet, honest, hard-working, and well-behaved when raised in a home where discipline is quickly applied on the occasions when they go astray. When they lose these characteristics, it is almost always a result of following bad examples. Last year a friend remarked to me, "Do you realize that you have five teenagers at home?" I had not noticed because the usual problems associated with teenagers were just not present in our home. No one had taught these children to misbehave.

Healthy social, moral, and religious standards are also a very important part of college preparation. This is especially true of students in science and engineering, since Christian colleges are lacking in these subjects. This forces the student to attend a secular college. A young man or woman must be very well prepared in order to resist the temptations and pressures of these places. Everyone, no matter how well prepared, is susceptible to peer pressure. so this exposure should be limited. Advanced placement can

minimize this exposure. Strong links with family are a great help, too, so I advocate the choice of a college as geographically near home as possible.

I strongly believe that entry into college should not be a time when the child is kicked out into the world, never to be seen again except during holidays and funerals. I believe in extended families; having two, three, and four generations living near each other and working together when possible during their entire lives.

College is an opportunity to gain knowledge and credentials — especially in science, engineering, and other specialties. At present, it is also a dangerous time which can threaten an extended family. Eventually, this threat will be removed by homeschool universities. There is reason to hope that such universities, accredited and of good quality may be only a few years away.

The Independent Learner - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Science Taken Seriously

The language of science is mathematics

By Dr. Arthur Robinson

The academic day should be restricted to the teaching of truth. For example, when teaching spelling, you teach the true spelling of words. When teaching math, you teach how to arrive at true solutions. Two plus two equals four in base ten *all* the time, not just some of the time!

Science is the study of natural truth. It progresses by a logical sequence—experimental observations, to hypotheses, to quantitative analysis. It is not possible to study or apply most science reliably without first knowing the language in which it is written—mathematics-—at least through introductory calculus. When students lack an adequate understanding of mathematics, yet try to study "science," they are typically presented with oversimplified half-truths which later need to be unlearned.

Real science is largely problem-solving. Skillful problem-solving requires many years of practice and much self-confidence. A self-taught child has a very great advantage in problem-solving, because he has mastered the basic elements of this activity early in life. He has not memorized specific methods for solving particular types of problems. He has instead learned to extract information from the books by himself and then apply it to any problem that is presented. Also, of equal importance, he has learned that he is able to do this without any outside help. These are essential skills that make possible the learning of

advanced scientific problem-solving.

Formal Science v. Playing with Science

"Does this mean my child should not study science until he is in high school, or even college?" A distinction needs to be made between activities that belong in the academic day, and those that do not. The five or six hours in the academic day are a narrow window of opportunity in which information can get into a developing brain. The parent must use these hours to concentrate on essential subjects. Other, less essential topics should be skipped. If a child is particularly interested in a non-essential topic, he can study it on his own time, as a hobby, but regardless of his interest level, class time should not be pre-empted for such studies.

Children are always curious about the world around them. Sometimes this interest focuses on a particular subject like ants or electronics. Such interests should be encouraged for many reasons—one of which is that they can be the precursors to later abilities in science or engineering, which is applied science.

If the child is interested in ants, provide him with books about ants and the means to experiment with them, but do not feel you must now incorporate ants into your regular curriculum. If his interest persists, get him the most complicated and complete text on ants you can find. Only part of this text will be understandable to him, but it will show him the limits of his present knowledge. This does not say, "This subject is too difficult." It says instead, "This is your subject presented in the way that it is discussed by those who love it best and have made it their life's work. Study hard, so that one day you will be able to fully communicate with them."

Alternatively, if your student is interested in electronics, he may become a ham radio operator. (Children as young as five have done this.) This is a wonderful hobby that teaches much about electronics. This is an excellent extracurricular activity. Someday, if he goes far enough in his academic studies, he may gain a true understanding of his hobby.

Self-selected hobbies are an important part of personal development. There are thousands of subjects from which to choose. It is best that this choice be made by the child, so that there is an optimum possibility that the interest will endure.

What is "Real" Science?

Contrary to the typical public-school science sequence. physics should be the first science formally studied in the classroom. Knowledge of physics is required to correctly understand chemistry. and knowledge of physics and chemistry is required to correctly understand biology.

Introductory physics usually starts with mechanics, since this is the simplest subdivision and is also that part of physics upon which most of the Industrial Revolution is based. All of mechanics was discovered by Isaac Newton. When Newton discovered mechanics, he simultaneously invented calculus because he found it too difficult to solve *real-world* mechanics problems without calculus.

If Isaac Newton could not do mechanics without calculus, how can a teenage student do so? The answer is, of course, that he cannot. He can only pretend to do mechanics with the help of texts that contain

artificial problems. If he ever has an opportunity to learn physics properly, he will then have to unlearn the incorrect procedures. This is debilitating and wasteful of his time.

One of my sons went through Saxon Math and then decided to take a physics course for high schoolers. He answered all the questions as thoroughly as he did in his Saxon Math books. But when he went on to study a good first-year book from Cal Tech, he discovered he did not know physics. The early book was actually an impediment to his work.

Let me give one example of the difference between "real" physics, based on the math needed to understand it, and oversimplified physics. If you teach the problem of an apple falling from a tree, you can present the formula for calculating the time it takes for the apple to fall. This requires only simple math. Distance = $^{1}/_{2}$ x acceleration x time^2. if you know the acceleration effect of gravity (32 ft/sec^2) you can calculate either distance or time, given one of the two. But this does not teach you what acceleration really *is.* Acceleration is the second derivative of position with respect to time. If acceleration is not assumed to be constant (which it is not, even in the apple and tree problem) the handy $d = {}^{1}/_{2}at^2$ formula no longer works and what the student thinks he knows about acceleration no longer turns out to be true. More importantly, physics is not the memorization of specialized formulas. The Student should have been taught Newton's Law that:

$$F = \frac{d(mv)}{dt}$$

and been required to derive the apple equation.

in chemistry, some books teach young children about electron orbitals by telling them that electrons whiz around the nucleus like planets around the sun. This is wrong. Actually, electrons are distributed around the nucleus in accordance with a probability density equation. The electron even has a probability of being *inside* the nucleus at any one time. So what happens? We have many children and now adults thinking that electrons orbit atomic nuclei like planets. They have not been taught the truth. But they *think* they know the truth.

As an analogy, many children coming through the school system *think* they can read—but all they are doing is memorizing certain words using a look-say method. This leads to very poor reading which will top out at a certain level, yet typically the student will not seek help because he *thinks* he knows how to read. He just thinks he does not enjoy reading.

Science is the study of physical truth. It should not be undermined by the teaching of half-truths. Children who are taught scientific formulas and concepts before they have learned sufficient mathematics are taught half-truths. Let's make the most of our freedom in home-schooling to give our science students the whole truth.

225-0743, email: svc@www.home-school.com, website: http://www.home-school.com. Prices are $19.95 / 6 bimonthly issues or $35 / 2 years. This publication should be read by every homeschool family.

Ann's Corner - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Teaching Younger Children

Phonics and that First Year

It is essential that each young child first receive instruction in a phonics based language program. Although the Robinson Curriculum has phonics flash cards, they are not an instruction program and are really only the building blocks for making one yourself (if you are so inclined!), or a handy review. Dr. Robinson himself says that:

> "there are several good phonics programs . These consist of various procedures for teaching the sounds of letters and letter combinations and for gradually combining these into words and sentences. It is absolutely essential that reading be taught by phonics and not by the so-called "look-say" methods currently in vogue in the public schools. If the child is not taught to read correctly, then the entire school program which follows will be so difficult that the child will have a very great disadvantage. The phonics instruction does require interaction with an instructor for a few weeks ... After the child can read, then he or she should be encouraged to read several hours each day in books of gradually increasing difficulty in order to build reading skills and confidence."

The first year for our children has been:

- Math - learning the facts through flash cards, written practice and timed tests, and some workbook pages of our choosing
- Phonics and Language instruction - I personally like the Bob Jones 1st grade homeschool package. There is plenty of material for a slower learner but interesting enough for those who take to reading like fish to water and for the teacher too, I might add. They take phonics immediately into the context of useful reading and comprehension.
- Writing - a combination of penmanship practice and the workbook exercises in the language part of the BJ curriculum. Often the workbooks are finished before spring and I have them begin a journal where they can copy sentences, poems, Scripture, etc..
- and last, but not least, Reading, reading, reading. - at first I would require 15 minutes and be their listener but as they gained mastery I just needed to provide appropriate books and more books. I have always needed more than is in the RC curriculum at the beginning of the first year. There are many more books once they can manage the reading level of, for e.g., The Bobbsey Twins.

Literature for the first year that you will find in the Robinson Curriculum:

1. McGuffey's Primer
2. McGuffey's 1st Reader/2nd Reader
3. Nursery Rhymes
4. Childhood's Happy Hours - various authors
5. Sophie May's books (Dottie Dimple, etc.) 7 books listed
6. Arthur Scott Bailey's books - 6 included (Solomon Owl, etc)
7. Bobbsey Twin books (11 books) - many more at the library.
8. (Penmanship Practice)

This spring our 'first-year' child has also read Elsie Dinsmore and is currently enjoying the Pony Rider books along with her older siblings. They can make 'years' of progress in that first year!

Other literature that I would recommend for the first year:
B - Beginning 1st Year
A - Advanced 1st Year

- *B- A* Nature Readers 1-3 (Christian Liberty Press)
- *B- A* Childrens Bible Story books
- *B- A* Bob Jones University Press has many excellent stories which are color coded by age level - red ages 2-6, orange ages 6-7, yellow ages 7-9. (e.g. On Yonder Mountain and These Are My People by Milly Howard).
- *B- A* Bob Jones University Press Readers
- *A* Thornton W. Burgess Classics e.g. The Adventures of Jimmy Skunk, Old Mother West Wind, The Adventures of Bobby Raccoon (Dover Publishers sell these for $1.00 each as "children's thrift classics.")
- *A* Laura Ingalls Wilder series:
    - Little House on the Prairie
    - On the Banks of Plum Creek
    - By the Shores of Silver Lake
    - Little House in the Big Woods
    - Farmer Boy, Little Town on the Prairie
    - The First Four Years
    - These Happy Golden Years (the only one I set aside for a later time)
- Mr. Popper's Penguins - Atwater (paperback)
- *B* biographies written for children - e.g.
    - The Story of Helen Keller - Lorena A. Hickok or Margaret Davidson
    - Pocahontas, Indian Princess - Katharine Elliot Wilkie
    - Pocahontas and the Strangers - Clyde Robert Bulla
    - Squanto Friend of the White Men - Clyde Robert Bulla
- *A* Charlotte's Web - E.B. White
- *A* The courage of Sarah Noble - Alice Dalgliesh
- *A* Marguerite DeAngeli's stories for young children:
    - Yonie Wondernose
    - Henner's Lydia

    - The Empty Barn
    - Copper-Toed Boots
    - Skippack School
- A The MatchLock Gun - Walter Edmonds

My Favorite Read Aloud Books for Young Children

- James Herriot's stories for young children:
    - Moses the Kitten
    - Only One Woof
    - Oscar, Cat - About - Town
    - Smudge, the Little Lost Lamb
    - The Market Square Dog
    - Bonny's Big Day
    - The Christmas Day Kitten
- Robert McCloskey's stories for young children:
    - Blueberries for Sal
    - Lentil
    - Make Way for Ducklings
    - Burt Dow, Deep-Waterman
    - One Morning In Maine
- Rod and Staff Publications: Little Jewel Books (l-606-522-4348 PO Box 3, Crockett, KY 41413).

Science for Youngsters

Hands on science? Whatever your own hands can devise I guess. I find there is enough to do in the natural world for a naturally interested , curious and observant young mind that I just have to give them opportunities to do just that. A good, God glorifying, science magazine for "children of all ages" is *Nature Friend Magazine*. 2727 TR 421 Sugarcreek OH, 44681 (1-800-852-4482). Ask for the sample copies for $4.00 and the Nature's Workshop catalog at 888-393-5663.

To Mrs. Jones and fellow homeschoolers

We were involved in the development of the Robinson Curriculum, helping to obtain some of the books and, primarily, my husband volunteered his time and expertise in writing the programs to put it all on CD's. At present we market the curriculum on the Internet, have become good friends with the Robinson family and, most importantly for our family, have implemented the self-teaching methodology and curriculum in the education of our 3 'school age' children (ages 6-10) these past three years.

It is an established part of our lives now and I feel I have to make an effort to remember that I had some of the same trepidations as you, and others, have at the start. Our children are proving, beyond a doubt, that it is an effective education. They are learning a great deal about everything and improve yearly, as they mature in their abilities to self-teach.

That leads to one of your questions, **"Does the program require 6 year olds to have 2 hours of math, 2 hours of phonics and reading and 1 hour of writing?"**

I look at these study requirements as a goal which each child works towards.

Beginning in their first year, I set certain expectations which I vary according to the individuals abilities. They do not usually know what the time element is, excepting timed drills for math, and reading time, but are aware of how much work is to be accomplished. Exceptions are made when difficulties arise (i.e. a math problem was done repeatedly till mastered and so a few less problems were done that day).

Our 6 year old works 1-1/2-2 hours at her desk and now, as an accomplished reader, painlessly spends 1 (required) to 2 hours reading.

With each year I increase the time requirement by increasing the work requirement as I see them gain mastery. The important aspect is the work: quantity, yes, but most importantly, quality.

Before the First Year

Another note about young children and reading. Before their first year, as I have described above, I have always taught them certain prereading skills , which takes about 20 minutes a day. The materials I have come to use are as follows:

- 100 Easy Lessons by Seigfried Engelmann,
- a set of short and long vowel readers by Christian Liberty Press
- alphabet flash cards
- Phonics In Song (book and tape) by Leon Metcalf (available from Motts Media , 248-685-8773, for $8.99)

I teach them how to say each sound as well as to write it. The 100 Easy Lessons is super for transitioning from individual sounds into blending of sounds into words, then sentences, then paragraphs. The Christian Liberty readers lead further down the 'phonetic' road into short stories. After this they are ready for their First Year. Have Fun with your little ones! It is so rewarding to see those little 'light bulbs' go on as they really begin to read!

The First Year Student and Math Facts

I recently reviewed what Dr. Robinson wrote about learning the math facts using FLASHCARDS. In the next few paragraphs I will summarize the steps I have taken with a first year 'student', as well as quote

from Dr. Robinson and Samuel Blumenfeld who are my teachers.

Here are the steps I have taken with our 5/6 year old:

a) I gave him the first family of addition (the ones), had him demonstrate with concrete objects that he understood the concept of adding one, and then he memorized them in order, then in mixed order. (at this stage I had him read them orally as it helped him focus and remember the whole equation)

b) We set these aside and he went through the same steps with adding two. (Concrete, in order, in mixed order)

c) THEN, we put the ones and twos together in mixed order and he (on his own now) practiced till he could get all the answers without error.(as many days as needed)

d) We set these aside and he went through the same steps with adding three. By the way, I have him learn them up to 'plus 12' because he does NOT have trouble with the teens. You may want to keep below the teens for awhile if your child cannot pronounce, count through and conceptualize these higher numbers.

e) Now that the pile has gotten larger I only add 2 or 3 new addition facts at a time and he reviews the WHOLE pile, setting aside any that he got wrong or stuck on and practicing these separately until correct before putting them away for the day.

f) Now that he is well practiced in 'doing' flashcards he only does them orally with me when he says he knows them all without error. (Like a test, because, as you may ask, "How do you know he really knows them?) I then add the new cards which he practices separately and then adds to the pile in random order.

g) He continues with ALL the cards each day. (This is the part I picked up in my review of Dr. Robinson's course of study and I had omitted with the older children, some still lack mastery as a result.) This review will avoid that problem of forgetting and build long-term memory. Because the majority are mastered he goes very quickly through most of the cards and only need stop and practice the ones in error.

Some additional points:

-- He can do the cards each day in under 5 minutes IF he is not in the same room as me. When I am nearby he feels the need to complain!

-- I think this is too early for written timed tests. (They are included in the test book of Saxon Math 54.) Right now the focus is on mental calculation and rote memorization. I include written facts from a standard 1st grade math book for now. This is optional, but I find it gives him opportunity to solve written problems independently, practice writing the numbers, and use concrete objects to reinforce the learning when needed.

h) It has been a number of weeks since our son began with his addition facts and thus far he has learned all the facts through the sevens. Here are some things we have done in the last little while.

a) I have thinned out the pile by taking out the facts he finds extremely easy b) He no longer uses any math book exercises but does write out, a number of times, any facts that he missed during the first pass with the flashcards. c) He now times himself as he goes through the cards and compares it to the previous days time. Competing with himself in this fashion made a positive difference in his attitude to his work.

QUOTATIONS from Dr. Robinson:

"The student must learn the basic arithmetic of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of small numbers by immediate, rote, non-thinking memory."

"As with all flash card systems, the best procedure is to place all incorrectly answered cards in a second pile. After the first pile is completed, the second pile is shuffled and answered with errors accumulating in a third pile, and so on. The flash card session is not complete until the student has answered every card correctly.."

"Arithmetic can be learned by the child almost entirely on his own with only occasional parental guidance. DO NOT (his emphasis) sit with the child as he learns his arithmetic flash cards. The mental dependency fostered in this way can be a significant impediment to later self-learning."

"He may wish to spend many hours figuring out the answers with sets of coins as he plods slowly through the flashcards. This is fine. It is acceptable for an entire year to pass during the learning and understanding of the arithmetic tables.....Flash cards are, of course, added gradually, with addition and subtraction first. (They) are, however, -boring. Even a patient child rebels against going through them day after day for better time and lower error rate. I have found one incentive that works well. ...after the entire set of cards is being used (all addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division through 12's), on any day that his error rate or time (with the same error rate) is better than ever before, he is not required to do the cards the following day. After a day off, he tries daily for another record." (Excerpts from the RC course-of-study.)

QUOTATIONS from Samuel Blumenfeld,

"At age 5 and 6 children can learn the arithmetic facts by rote. But before having the child memorize an arithmetic fact, first demonstrate it with concretes. For e.g., to demonstrate that 3 plus 4 equals 7, line up three pennies and four pennies and have the child count them to get the total. Then write the fact in numerals, 3 + 4 = 7, and tell the child that this is what he must memorize in order to be able to use this fact in the most convenient way. After you've demonstrated all of the addition and subtraction facts, then demonstrate the multiplication facts....After this laborious task, he will realize that the symbolic representation of 8 times 9 = 72 is a much easier and faster way.. Rote learning is the easiest form of learning. All it requires is repetition. The best way .. is to have the learner

> see the fact over and over again until it is indelibly imprinted on the mind. .. Flash the correct answer to the learner until he or she learns it cold and no longer has to "figure it out." (Excerpt from "Homeschooling - A Parents Guide To Teaching Children" by Samuel L. Blumenfeld)

As you can see, Dr. Robinson and Samuel Blumenfeld spell it out much the same. The one, but important, difference that Dr. Robinson adds is the element of **SELF** -teaching.

In closing I will add a thought (I think it also came from Blumenfeld's book, although I might be mistaken.) I read recently. "Learning the math facts is to mathematics as phonics is to reading."

Math Facts Before Saxon 5/4

I would like to make some comments in regards to that first year of Math. Our school-age children are in their 6th, 4th, 3rd and K/1st years. We have used the Robinson Curriculum for 3 years and it has been a very positive experience for the family as a whole. We are committed to continuing on in this way.

Because my husband, Arnold Jagt, is the programmer for the CDs and works closely with Dr. Robinson we have become friends of the Robinson family and we occasionally have aired our educational struggles to Dr. Robinson personally. This is to benefit our children but also because we feel a responsibility, to fellow homeschool parents who call us for advice, to be on track with his philosophy. (Because of the website Arnold has made to promote the RC we receive personal calls asking for advice on this or that issue of concern.)

The most recent call received was in regards to the question I introduced above. I feel a need to address this issue here. Up to this point I have had our children complete 1st and 2nd grade workbooks, as well as memorize the facts and then begin Saxon 54 in their 3rd year.

Today I conversed with Dr. Robinson in the matter and I would like to impress on you, as he did to me in his always patient and kindly manner, the following points:

1. When a parent judges his child is ready to begin 'school' his first year in Math must only be comprised of learning all the math facts. Yes, they need *concrete aids to conceptualize but only at the start* (and do this however you please) but always remove the aids when the concept is learned as soon as possible, otherwise the aid will become an ongoing crutch and will impede their progress. An occasional review with concrete aids is acceptable. RECITATION and FLASHCARDS

2. *Only the facts the first year and then into Saxon 54.* Yes, children have different capabilities but your response to that is to allow them to work less problems, *even* if they solve only one problem a day successfully but completely independently. Introducing other workbooks and such he says is "a waste of time." I have found it also works against self-teaching because any workbook I have used requires Mommy to be teacher. This brings me to his 3rd point.

3. Needing help is self- fulfilling. You must be careful as a parent not to become the child's crutch: that they expect you to help them with the problems they find difficult. And we as parents must be willing to let them solve problems without being their 'teacher'. Point them to where it is taught in the textbook (and it has been), fine, have them read the instructions and work it out orally (for a beginning student to the parent), fine. Education is learning, and learning is hard work. *they* must solve the problems.

That about sums up the conversation and I am resolved to make the amendments to our homeschool. To anyone I have advised differently (buy the workbooks, wait till the 3rd year) please take Dr. Robinsons word on this matter over my own. *He* is the accomplished math and science professional and his children are definitely proving his methods successful.

Blessings, Ann Jagt

About Writing

The only resource I have used up to this point is the following: Learning Grammar Through Writing by Sandra M.Bell and James I. Wheeler. It is a paperback book the size of a regular sheet of paper , 72 pages, and costs $8.95 through Amazon.com. All the rules are coded which makes it easy to reference on a child's paper. You can also get it used for $5.50 - 6.95 through Educational Accents.

To find out how to write a book report, to improve on stories, poem writing, letter writing , reports on a topic I bought a book entitled "Writing with Results" by JoAnne Moore with photocopy-able pages for the students. I still like it but haven't used it much as yet because of baby #6, a do first, ask later 3 year old and a 5 year old who I am teaching to read (and loving it).

Also, my writers are plugging along very admirably without me. Reading great books is in itself an excellent model for all kinds of writing.

Another helpful resource for children who are not "natural spellers" is A Spelling Dictionary for Beginning Writers by Gregory Hurray.

Ann's Corner - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

The McGuffey Readers

What About the McGuffey Readers?

I just happened to have been composing a 'blurb' about that very thing to go on this web site. I took a special interest in them this year after purchasing a little paperback book entitled **McGuffey and His**

Readers, Piety, Morality, and Education in 19th-Century America by John H. Westerhoff III.

As a result, we invested in the purchase of the original (1836-37) hard-cover version from Motts Media last month. All the versions of the McGuffey readers are great reading (**the curriculum has the 1879 revision**) so, be sure to use the set you already own if want to save the expense of printing.

If you are like me, you will make your own comparisons but, I would encourage anyone to read Westerhoffs's book to get a well studied comparison of all the versions as well as an eye-opening to the changing of the American peoples beliefs and values as it is reflected in the revisions. The originals are filled with Scripture excerpts, the Soverignty of God, salvation etc..

The revisionists thought it best to take this out to fit a changing, pluralistic nation! Yet, even the revisions, in light of our 20th century, have refreshing moral content, a rich assortment of literature and the occasional acknowledgement of God.

You may be interested in getting the full set of the original McGuffey's from Mott Media.

Suggestions For Using the McGuffey Readers:

In our use of these readers the children have been simply reading them independently. Of late, as I am incorporating some oral reading into our weekly routine, especially with the older children, I find these books to be ideal...for many reasons.

First, being readers, there is an appropriate reading level for each of my 'school-age' children.

Second, they are already broken into short stories or lessons.

Third, the content is wonderfully suited for instructing children of Christian households and lead to much relevant discussion.

Fourth, each lesson has its own vocabulary list, with pronunciation helps and the fourth reader (as far as we have progressed) has word definitions as well.

As we now own a reprint of the original readers, I am reading these lessons to the children 'over' the occasional lunch . The 2nd, 3rd, and 4th readers in the original version include questions after each lesson. I am presently evaluating the parent-teacher guide by Ruth Beechick (wrote specifically to complement the original readers) as to its compatibility with the 1879 version. So far it looks very probable.

Although lesson examples/stories differ, the teaching suggestions are wonderful. not only for the 'teaching reading stage' but also for grammar and spelling instruction. The purchase of this guide could give the Robinson curriculum users even more 'mileage' from their McGuffey readers. Look into it if you will and I will likely give you further updates on the matter myself.

Keeping Organized

How Do I Keep Organized?

A. Day-timer - Keeping *a day timer* of some sort on my desk and jotting a younger child's daily work helps me a great deal. Sometimes it is done after the fact but it keeps us on track and I do not need to relie on my overtaxed memory facilities.

- Categories at the back of the day-timer are invaluable if you are educating a number of children over the years. Suggestions are: Educational Resources We Own, Library Books Worth Reading, Preschool Reading Program, Bible Instruction Program, Field Trips, Community Programs Friendly to Homeschoolers, E-mail addresses , $$ Educational Purchases (where, when, how much). Although this is not an education item I thought I would mention that I also keep one category for each child and jot down their personal health facts. It helps a lot when questions arise such as "What was that medication they reacted too?" "Did they get an immunization?" "Who was it that had _____, and when ?" "How did I try to remedy that problem?" I wish I had done this for myself over the years.

B. Booklist - I also *print out a book list for each child* and record books read and exams taken on it. I circle the number of any books to be postponed so we will be sure to come back to them and list any additional reading (such as from the Books of Knowledge [-1962 edition] or any books you have personally chosen as required reading) on the back or a separate page.

C. RC Weekly Assignment Record - This is a page where each student records their daily work. For the younger student I check it each day or write the summary myself . The older child hands it in a the weeks end and completes neglected work on Saturday. (see the separate category in Ann's Corner for a link to the printable version)

D.. Binder - Each student has a binder in which they keep 1. Supplementary Reading List 2. RC Document List 3. RC Assignment Records 4. Writing Helps (student pages that explain how to write a book report, different styles of poems, organizing an essay etc.) Now I have the older ones keep separate binders for their examinations and daily writing

E. Timer - As I go about my daily routine with the little ones, in the kitchen, household chores, etc., it is easy to forget 'the time' and neglect checking up on someone who is still learning to self-teach. To minimize this I set *a timer* for myself and inform the child that I will be back in __ minutes to check on their progress ... and I am. It also comes in handy for the child that is memorizing math facts to give themselves speed drills. We have also gotten them for the older children if it helps them to be faithful in working for the required time elements. This CAN be a problem if they use the time for daydreaming and do not actually complete the work. Knowing the WORK requirement is more important then their knowing a time 'requirement'.

Weekly Assignment Record

Have you ever wanted a form to help you help your children be more accountable in their daily work and to have on hand as a record of their yearly work?

Arn and I have designed one recently and have been implementing it with our 3 oldest with good success.

Click here for a printable HTML version of the Weekly Assignment Record.

Click here for a printable PDF version of the Weekly Assignment Record.

Details on How to Use the Record.

MATH - I think it is pretty self-explanatory. To make sure they are not short changing in the time element my husband now has them write in the beginning time and have it initialled (by one of us). Having the older children accountable directly to him has kept them more honest in this aspect. When they are done they do the same.

READING - The 'book #' refers to those books from the RC booklist. In actuality we use it very little because the children write in the title and then use an abbrev. for the following days they are reading from the same book. It doesn't hurt to have them jot down the book # as it makes it easier to locate on the document list.

I included the 'titles' category because we, and most families have other books, not on the RC list that we allow or require for study time (such as The Books of Knowledge). WE do not even use the 'pages' or 'time' categories but I included them because I thought it would be useful to other families who monitor a child's reading that closely (from discussion on the forum).

WRITING - 'Editing' is the brief way of saying, 'Did you fix the grammar errors?' I just looked the word up in the dictionary and it appears it may not be the best choice here, a little overkill maybe for young writers(editing being "to prepare for publication"). I probably should have used the word 'Corrections'.

Dr. Robinson always had his children correct their writing errors prior to beginning another essay. With my younger children who tend to do their writing with less contemplation and research they fix them the same day under my supervision. When the piece of writing refered to in 'topic' is corrected we put a check mark (or my initial) in the 'edited' column.

VOCABULARY - Again, the 'book #' is the number used on the RC booklist. I use only 2 lines for the 'words' as one can fit more than one word on a line. (We wanted the assignment record to only take two pages. We played around with more but narrower lines but found that the younger children had difficulty writing that small.)

For the columns with 'pronunciation', 'spelling', and 'review' either the child or I check off or initial when the words can be spelled correctly, said correctly and they have not only written 3 new words but reviewed all the words from that week (on Monday they quiz themselves on the previous weeks words).

Now, I have to say that that is the ideal. Most of the time they do not practice spelling them, pronouncing them or reviewing them!! That is too much for me to keep up with so I have left it to them. Those who do more will know more. I DO enforce the 3 words a day. For those who neglect even this during the week they get to add it to Saturday's agenda (as many as they skipped.). We only require the math on Sat. which they, of course, enjoy so adding 'catch up' work is a deterent to skipping requirements during the week.

At the end of the week I go over each child's assignment record and I sign it and make any comments like, "You'll have to do this on Sat., sorry!", "Work on your handwriting for a couple days please." or "Keep it up." etc.

Sometimes a child doesn't fill in the assignment record and so that has to be done Fri. or Sat. just as any other neglected work. It has helped to have the older ones accountable to dad, knowing he is going to look over their record and be pleased or displeased.

Each of our students has a Study Binder and one of the categories is "Assignment Record". They put it in there and I do refer to it to see what my comments were and if they followed through.

Well, I think I have exhausted all aspects. Blessings, Ann Jagt

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Ann's Corner - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

A Diet Without Sugar

question

What would replace the sugar in the diet without adding chemicals like the other sweeteners on the market? I would like to cut out the sugar but am not sure how to do that in things like cooking and drinks.

answer

We were never satisfied with 'unsweetening' our favorite baked goods. It's just not the same and the sugar craving 'protested.' Mostly, I replaced our snacks with nuts, carob chips, seeds and raisin mixes, fruit, cut veggies (e.g. 'ants-on-a-log' - celery sticks with peanut butter and raisins on top), crackers with creme cheese or Sorrell Ridge jams, pretzels etc. etc.. No sweets unless there is a special occasion (and that's usually at someone else's home).

I found some baking recipes using honey as a sweetener (you can substitute half as much honey as sugar) and we especially like the results with muffins. Mini muffins and fruit make a pleasant

offering for guests, too.

A recipe book that helped me make many adjustments in our diet, including the sugar-less one, is *Step-by-Step to Natural Food by Diane Campbell*.

Now, regarding the question, "What is there to drink?" First of all, we bought a Brita filter jug {with hopes to buy an undercounter model someday) which has made drinking water much more desirable and I insist on this for quenching thirst. With warmer weather I keep a 2 gallon cooler on the counter full of cold lemon water or Celestial Seasoning Iced Tea. For picnics I may make lemon water using a third of a cup frozen lemonade. During cold weather we drink herbal teas with some honey. The only exception I have made is after a tobogganing trip, we have hot cocoa. It IS hard to shed old habits!

Fruit juices are tempting but there is still the question of too much sugar in the blood stream , plus, it gets too expensive.

Be kind to any new babes, don't let them have that first taste and they won't have to break a bad habit, dare I say .. an addiction. I wish I had had this resolve when our children were very young.

Sugar Addiction

News articles frequently call our attention to the damaging effect of addictions upon the American people. Once, the principal focus was on alcohol addiction - a disease that afflicts about 10% of American drinkers of alcohol. The remaining 90% apparently receive a slight amount of life extension from this habit. Now, the focus is on soft and hard drugs that destroy the mind - turning the most unfortunate into human vegetables and others into criminals who turn to robbery and worse to feed their habits.

While these addictions do diminish the quantity and quality of human life to a substantial extent, they affect a relatively small number of people. Probably more damaging are the lesser addictions that harm a large percentage of individuals. Principal among these, of course, is smoking. Life expectancy is diminished about 8 years per pack per day of cigarettes smoked. Moreover, this is not 8 years at the end. Smoking compresses life and accelerates aging. This is evident even by casual observation of heavy smokers, who often look older than their chronological age.

Another addiction also accelerates aging - the increased probability of death with time. This is the addiction to sucrose, which also diminishes the quality of life. There is a large amount of information about this; The book Sweet and Dangerous by John Yudkin is a good place to begin a review of the correlations between sugar and all sorts of scourges from tooth decay to heart disease. While virtually all natural foods contain sucrose, the ability to manufacture it cheaply has caused an order of magnitude increase in sugar consumption. In the average American diet, about 20% of caloric intake is sugar - a physiological assault that our bodies are not designed to endure.

Both my wife Laurelee and I became addicted to sugar at early ages. In my case, I was a model student in the first and second grades at ages 5 and 6 - so much so that I was expected to skip the 3rd grade and enter

the 4th at the age of 7. Then my family moved, and circumstances caused my mother to supply me with money to buy my lunch at school. I spent the money on candy, and the effects were soon evident. I developed unruly behavior, and my academic performance sharply dropped. The third, fourth, and fifth grades augured very poorly for my future. We then moved again, but I still carried the lunch money, and the sixth grade saw no improvement.

Fortunately, two more moves found my family in Victoria and then Houston, Texas, where my father designed the Union Carbide plant at Seadrift and then became head of engineering and construction for Union Carbide International. In Victoria and Houston I did not have easy access to sugar. The result was that my grades from the 7th grade on were perfect, my extracurricular performance in athletics, acting, and debate was excellent, and I was selected to attend Caltech (also MIT, Harvard, and Rice). If the sugar had not been withdrawn, I would have been lucky to attend college at all.

The addiction was, however, ingrained, and I have struggled with it all of my life. Laurelee, too, had this problem. After our marriage, she largely gave it up, with a marked improvement in her sense of well-being, but she and I were never completely free. Once every month or two, she would make a large batch of chocolate chip cookies, so we would both indulge ourselves - and then suffer the usual physiological penalties.

We were, however, not completely foolish. Before our children were conceived and born, we abstained completely - and we made sure that our children did not develop this affliction. The rewards in quiet, intelligent children with virtually no health problems and good jaw development and teeth were well worth the self-control.

Child behavior is one very common casualty of sugar addiction. I recall one study carried out by colleagues of mine who were interested in food additives and "hyperactivity." Their protocol required the parents to write down the last things the child had eaten before each hyperactive episode. The results - sugar was the hyperactivity trigger.

I remember, too, an outstanding undergraduate student at UCSD for whom we all had high hopes. He was highest in his class in science and superb in the laboratory. This won him a scholarship to Rockefeller University - probably the most exclusive graduate science school in the United States because the graduate student body is very small. Yet, a year later, he had dropped out of Rockefeller. When I offered him a job in my lab as a technician, he warned me, "I am not the man I used to be." Then he told me that sugar addiction and hypoglycemia had led to mental symptoms that destroyed his performance.

The ingestion of excess sucrose supplies the body with very large amounts of fructose. Sucrose, a dimmer of fructose and glucose, is rapidly hydrolyzed in the stomach. Glucose is ordinarily present in large amounts in the blood, but fructose is not. Also, the sugars in sucrose enter the blood stream quickly, causing a rapid rise in blood glucose. For this reason, the blood sugar of sucrose addicts oscillates wildly over a wide range. It is not known which of these effects - fructose or blood sugar oscillation - is the worst health hazard.

Sugar definitely weakens the immune system - which protects us from many things from colds to cancer. As an older person, my system contains a wider selection of immune responses than that of a younger person. Consequently, when the children have colds or other similar maladies, I am usually spared. If, however, there is illness in the house, I must be sure to control my sugar addiction. A plate of cookies will

make certain that I, too, share their illness.

Sugar addiction is very common, so many Access to Energy readers have this difficulty. After studying this problem both scientifically and personally for more than 30 years and talking with many people concerning it, I can fairly well predict the letters that this article will elicit There will be many readers who tell me similar anecdotes about their own health problems with sugar addiction. Also, there will be one or two from sugar-afflicted die-hards who insist that their habit is harmless. There is, of course, wide biological individuality; so differing experiences are expected. For most people, however, if they honestly observe their own well-being as a function of sugar ingestion, the experiences will be similarly negative.

After Laurelee died and was no longer here to protect her family with the best nutrition she could design, my addiction reasserted itself. This is especially a problem because I now buy the family groceries. Grocery stores have many temptations - even with six sugar-free children in attendance. I am one of the few adults who has had the experience of an eight-year-old child (Matthew) standing with arms outstretched in front of the grocery store cookie counter and loudly saying, "No, you cannot have any cookies."

Once, a couple of years after Laurelee died, I noticed that my semi-secret cookie supply was diminishing. The supply was already a hazard because my cookies sometimes inexplicably were found to contain soap. "Now you have done it," I thought, "You have set a bad example, and one of the children is becoming addicted."

For a while, no one admitted to the crime. Finally, however, my oldest son Zachary came forward He had, he said, been stealing my cookies and throw them away because he and the other children had noticed that I was more irritable when eating sugar. They were right Increased irritability is a common side effect of sugar consumption. The effects of sugar addiction increase with age, but they can be very damaging to young people, too. Diminished mental performance, irritability, excess weight, and headaches are some of the milder symptoms. Those are for the fortunate. Increased probability of degenerative diseases and early death await the not-so-fortunate.

The best solution, as with any addiction, is not to start. This is the reason that Laurelee and I raised sugar-free children. I hope they do not cast off this blessing. They will, I hope, have families of their own and will want the best nutritional health, both before and after birth, for their children. The world, however, is filled with temptation. Five of them are in colleges now, and are influence by their peers. One is starting to eat sugar. Another is too fond of very high sugar fruit juices. I hope that they will pull back before it is too late.

This Access to Energy is being written without sugar. Readers may notice that the rhetoric is not quite so strident. Yet, who knows what words you will encounter as a result of the large number of mercury amalgum fillings in my teeth - put there by lunch money long ago. We addicts try all sorts of artifices. Aspartame is the most common, but aspartame is physiologically active, too. You have read many words (not these) written under the influence of aspartame-laced diet soda, which also feeds one's caffeine addiction. Of caffeine, I can echo Mark Twain's boast concerning his cigars. I know that I can give it up. I have done it a thousand times. Caffeine withdrawal takes three days and follows a predictable course of tiredness and then reawakening.

The terrible irony is that, absent these addictions, the flavors and effects of ordinary foods are much more

enjoyable and certainly surpass those of health-diminishing concoctions. A sugar-free individual finds natural foods to be quite sweet and those laced with sugar to be too sweet; a caffeine-free individual is uniformly alert, not just after his fix; and a child who has been blessed with parents who keep him free of health-damaging addictions has a chance for a far better life.

by Art Robinson, Access to Energy, December 2002 (Vol.30, no.5)

Ann's Corner - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

About Essays

Exactly What Is An Essay?

My child has been filling pages with handwriting, poems, stories, copywork, letters to friends and relations, and even the occasional book report. It has been quite a process! Now, how do we get from here to writing essays? .....Exactly what is an essay?

The broader definition of an essay as given in Webster's dictionary is this: "A short composition that deals with a single topic." To add more content to this here is an excerpt from "Learning Essay Writing" by Marvin Eicher (Rod and Staff). "The four kinds of prose (nonpoetic) writing are expositiion, argumentation, description, and narration. An EXPOSITION explains an idea or process; an ARGUMENTATION sets out to prove a particular point of view; a DESCRIPTION shows the reader how something looks, sounds, or feels; and a NARRATION tells a story."

It is possible for one essay to contain elements of all the above. From my experience younger children deal best with the last two, description (e.g. This is my best friend and what we do together. or, My Favourite Hobby), and narration (a story based on something that really happened , e.g. Our Trip to Oregon, or a story from their own imagination. The more stories they read, the better their stories become.) Hey," Maybe my child has already actually started writing essays!" you say. But, is there a particular format to follow? And, how can they improve in their essay writing? In brief, yes, there is a format and by becoming acquainted with the following steps to writing a person's writing is bound to improve.

Step 1. GETTING STARTED What is the first question a prospective writer asks? We have all heard it before. "What am I going to write about?" Yes, The first thing is to choose a topic. That takes a little thought, maybe a little prompting or a list of suggestions.

Step 2. It is important at this stage to keep the TOPIC narrowed down to a manageable field. E.g. 'Literature' is a very broad topic. 'Literature in the 19th Century' narrows it down. Choosing one specific author from that century would narrow it down further 'Horatio Alger, A Favourite Author of the 19th Century'.

Step 3. Make an OUTLINE. The writer should ask, "What ideas do I have about this topic?"

Asking questions about the topic helps a great deal. Write these ideas down in point form as they come to mind.

E.G. Horatio Alger

- where did he live?
- date of birth and death
- did he have a family?
- what were some events of his early life?
- when did he start writing?
- what was he like?
- what influenced his writings?
- why were his writings such a big hit?
- my favourite Alger story is _____
- etc. etc.

Step 4. ORGANIZE your ideas. Ask, "In what order should I set out these ideas?" Do some of them fit together? E.G. Horatio Alger First, the ideas about his personal life. Second, the ideas about him as an author. Third, my favourite Alger story. I think I will set this idea aside as a separate essay, a book report.

Step 5. Write an INTRODUCTION. This is the part that my children usually left off. Focusing on it for a few days in their daily writing and helping with suggestions, giving them models in other writings helped significantly. Here is an e.g. from our 8 year old daughter Rose's composition book: "I have a little sister who's name is Leah Grace Jagt." or "I like squirrels." These of course are very simple, but, they do the job. Following the e.g. of the Horatio Alger essay one could write, "Some of the greatest literature was written in the 19th century. Horatio Alger was one of those authors. He wrote exciting and adventureous stories about boys in America that even girls, like myself, love to read (a suggestion from Rose). Who was Horatio Alger, and how did he come to write such great stories?" The introduction has to, of course, lead to what is coming next.

Step 6. The BODY of the essay is what comes between the introduction and conclusion. It could be one or more paragraphs, depending on how many ideas you have. Go back to the outline and write about each of the ideas that are there. Some research, more or less, depending on the age and ability of the child, could or should happen at this point. Research, even from one source (such as the Book of Knowledge) helps ideas to be accurate, answers questions the writer had about the topic and developes the idea. It may spark new ideas as well that you then add to the outline. Use the outline to write the body of your essay. Warning: This may be a very sloppy process .... but...it does not end here.

Step 7. Write a CONCLUSION. This could simply be one sentence or thought. E.G. from Horatio Alger: "I believe Alger's stories are sure to be around for another 100 years. They are true classics." E.G. from My Baby Sister: "Babies are a lot of fun!" Certain lengthier essay's may need to conclude with a summary.

Step 8. REREAD your essay. Correct all the errors you find. Do I need to suggest a few? Check spelling (dictionary), check capitalization and punctuation (Learning Grammar Through Writing, is our favourite child-friendly help), take out unnecessary words (e.g. "In my opinion, I think that...." is saying the same thing twice, and starting every sentence with "Now" or "Then") , and change any sentences or words that do not seem right. Some parental help at this point is very helpful in building better essays.

Step 9. If necessary, REWRITE the essay and hand it in. Now it will look great. Way to go!

Since introducing the outline and roughcopy approach with our 12 year old son he has commented that it has become EASIER to write an essay. Yeah! Planning ahead is sure to improve the final product too! (And it has.)

Ann's Corner - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Where to Start an Older Child

In Reading, Math, and Writing: Transitioning into Self-Teaching

Dr. Robinson has created a curriculum or educational program that truly is not based on "grades." The student/child is advancing through a series of math books, writing daily, studying, and reading a course of chosen literature at an individual pace. The literature to be read is put in an order from simple to advanced levels and you can choose where to begin by using your own judgment as you view the books on the screen, based on your knowledge of your child's age and reading ability. I would not worry about starting an older child too early in the reading selections as most of the books are enjoyable and worth reading at any age. However you also do not want to run out of time to finish. Thus an older child should work on mastering the vocabulary from the beginning on as this will make a big difference on SAT exams.

A more objective way of placing the student is by using the vocabulary flash cards to determine their reading comprehension level. Each book in the core read order has a corresponding vocabulary. Choose a place in the read order and if they do 80% or better on the first pass through the vocabulary flash cards (Words and Definitions) they can skip ahead in their reading. If they get less than 80% correct you should skip back. Keep on testing till you find their level. (They should master all the vocabulary words regardless of where they start.)

The vocabulary flash cards are found under the "Vocabulary" tab in the Robinson Curriculum program. Set "Include Previous Number of Books" to zero, choose the book whose vocabulary you want to test them on and click on the "Print Flash Cards" tab on the bottom of the window.

For math, Saxon Publishers have available math placement tests. Or, if you have them available, use the tests that come with each textbook.

You may give children under ten years of age copybook writing to do until they are comfortable writing a page each day. You may have them copy out something from the Curriculum or whatever else you feel they would benefit from. Then begin requiring original compositions on the topic and in the writing format of their choice.

Depending on the child and the kind of educational methodology they are used to it can take 3-6 months, on average, for a student to be completely adjusted to self-teaching for 5 hours a day.

Because most of us were taught with a teacher at the front of the room the concept of self-teaching is foreign to us. This is why it is crucial to read and reread the Course of Study documents. The ideas and the self-teaching methodology do not necessarily all soak in on the first pass through the material. As you grow in your understanding you will find it easier to manage your children's education to benefit most from this curriculum.

Communications - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Robinson Forums

Ask Questions, Get Answers, or Just Chat

Click here for the Robinson Forum

There are several forums available to you. The **Robinson Forum** and additional 3rd party forums that specialize in the Robinson Curriculum (see below).

The **Robinson Forum** is the place where experienced RC users and newcomers as well as the curious can come in, read and discuss the issues that are important to you.

Note: There are 6 Sections in the **Robinson Forum**:

1. Robinson Curriculum Discussion
2. Robinson Curriculum Information
3. Parental Contributions
4. Robinson Printers and Binders
5. Robinson Technical Support Forum
6. Community - Share and Prayer

Robinson Forum Help

Forum Users Guide

EntreWave ForumWave is a web-based threaded discussion application used to host online conferences. In addition to reading and posting messages, you can also customize a number of conference options, like email notification, which, if enabled, allows you to receive notification by email of any messages that have been posted to threads you are interested in.

Use this documentation to learn about:

ForumWave terms and concepts Posting messages Setting conference options

With its end-user customizable interface, you can define a number of options for viewing conferences and interacting with other conference participants. For example, you may be able to choose between a frames and non-frames view of conference pages, depending on whether your conference administrator has enabled this feature. You can choose a font face and font size for view messages, and you can choose a number of options for managing how messages are displayed.

To view or edit your conference options, click the Options button in the main conference page.

LDS_RC_Group

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/LDS_RC_Group/

Description:
"Yet another homeschooling list for Latter Day Saint parents. The main topic will revolve around the Robinson Curriculum. You do not necessarily have to be using RC to join the group but should have an interest in learning more about the program or be willing to offer suggestions that worked for your family. Additionally, many homeschool families may not use RC exclusively and are encouraged to help others find solutions to fit their family's way of life. Conversations are encouraged that uplift and support the LDS family. Anyone is welcome to join but should understand that anti-Mormon statements will not be tolerated and the user banned."

RobinsonUsers4Christ

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/RobinsonUsers4Christ/messages?threaded=1

Description:

"This is a place for Bible & Trinity-believing, God-fearing, "Jesus-Plus-Nothing-Else" Christian families

who use the Robinson Curriculum to share ideas and to get & give support.

Please, NO business advertising (this includes "one-liner" leaders asking members to email you privately for more information on your company/product"). Also, NO selling of anything that is NOT DIRECTLY related to the Robinson Curriculum and it's methods. ACCEPTABLE examples would be: selling the actual cd's, a printer and it's components, books on the reading list, etc..... "

CatholicRobinson

We have a CatholicRobinson yahoogroup for Catholic families
To Join, send a blank email to:

CatholicRobinson-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Catholic Robinson Curriculum Homeschool

Please join us! Welcome!

Homeschool email group for Catholic families which will revolve around the Robinson Curriculum. You do not necessarily have to be using RC to join the group but should have an interest in learning more about the program or be willing to offer suggestions that worked for your family. Additionally, many homeschool families may not use RC exclusively and are encouraged to help others find solutions to fit their family's way of life.

OUR CHILDREN USE the robinson curriculum yahoogroup - CatholicRobinson

Keywords: homeschool homeschooler homeschooling homeschoolers Seton MODG DYOCC Mass sacraments well-trained mind TWTM classic classics classical education independent study reading writing arithemetic Magisterium Latin

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Communications - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Logo Info & Brochures

How to add the RC Logo to your messages & web pages

The following code snippet is all you need to add the RC Logo to your web page or forum messages.

In the Robinson Forums you can choose Options from the Forum menu and add it to your Default Settings Signature.

Printable Brochures

We have printable brochures available in 3 sizes:

1 Page: One Page Brochure

4 Page: Four Page Brochure (PDF)

100 Page: Printable RC Website

Please feel free to print one or more of these out for you and your friends. You are also welcome to print out some for your local homeschool group or book fair.

Communications - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Contact Info

From our homeschool family to yours

Mailing Address:

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Fax: 517-546-8730

Email: support@robinsoncurriculum.com

Support - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Online Application Guide

A Round-The-Clock General Support Service

The Online Application Guide is a round-the-clock general support service for the Robinson Curriculum software application. Here, you can find help with installing the software, using the interface and viewing and printing the curriculum's CD-ROM books.

There is also an on-line trouble-shooting section which provides technical solutions to a variety of appilcation-related problems.

If you have questions other than those concerning the function of the curriculum software, please consult the information sheets that came packaged with the software and the Course of Study documents.

Hardware/Software Requirements

The Windows version requires:

- - Windows 3.1, WfW 3.11, Win95, Win98, WinME, Windows NT, Windows 2000, Windows XP
- - 8 MB of RAM or greater
- - CD-ROM drive
- - 486, Pentium, AMD, Cyrix CPU or greater
- - 6.0 MB of disk space
- - Printer - See out Printer Recommendations page

If you need to purchase a computer click here.

Installing the Program from CD Disk 1

To install the main curriculum program on your computer, you should run the setup program CD Disk 1. Normally it will present itself when you first insert the RC Disk 1 into your PC. Go to Step 5.

If it does not present itself automatically, to run the setup program:

1. Insert CD Disk 1 into your CD Drive.

2. Click on the My Computer Icon.

3. Look for your CD Drive icon with the label "**ENB_V01**" and double click on it.

4. Go to the end of the list of files and double click on the word **setup.exe** (has an icon of a computer beside it).

5. Follow the instructions that appear on your screen.

6. If the default drive chosen for installation has insufficient space, change this to another drive during installation.

7. The main program is then started by:

a. Clicking on the RC icon on your desktop (it looks like a small bookshelf); or

b. Choose Start, then Programs, then Robinson Curriculum, then Robinson Curriculum Version 2.2.

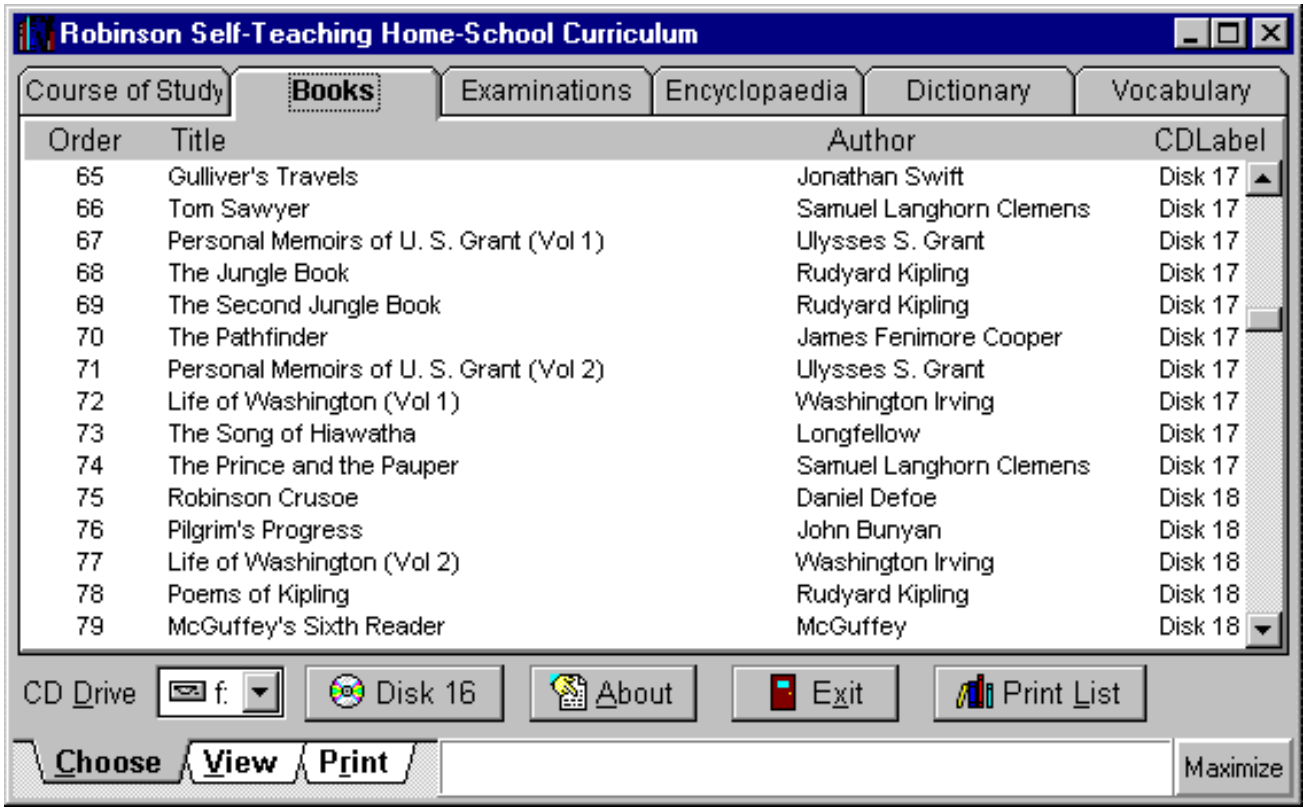
Special Note: Use Caution When Handling the CDs

- keep fingers off the bottom surface of the CDs - do not touch the bottom surface
- if the bottom sides of the CDs become dirty, use a special CD cleaning kit to clean them
- dirty, scratched, or otherwise abused CDs may make files hard to read

Choosing a Document from the Curriculum

The three tabs at the bottom control whether you are in Choose, View, or Print mode.

When you first open the application you are show the "Choose" document screen with six tabs along the top and three at the bottom. The six tabs at the top allow you to choose from among the documents available.



Choose from the list of documents by double clicking on the document line or by single clicking and choosing "View". Note: **Be sure to read all of the "Course of Study" documents before attempting to use this Curriculum.** Insert CD Disk 1 into your CD ROM Drive.

Help and Viewing Documents

Help!

Extensive help is built into the program and made available through the "status line" at the bottom of the screen where it is highlighted in red. Also available are the "About" box for system information and "Instructions" buttons on the vocabulary screens.

Viewing Documents and Books

On the left of the screen is a scrollable list of all available pages in the selected document. The size of the elevator slide control is proportional to the size of the page list. The content area shows the page itself.

View panel gives choices for different viewing situations.

Super Q is an option that allows for a higher quality viewing image but it is about 4 X slower in speed. This is especially useful for graphics such as in the Picturesque America books. For most viewing, this is not needed.

MagX is the setting for the magnifying glass feature that is available by clicking anywhere on a page image. The larger the number the greater the magnification. *A magnifying glass pops up when you click and hold anywhere on the page image.* Note: this feature requires a fast computer and works best with lots of memory.

Quality Level can be set from 0 (lowest) to 10 (highest). The higher the number, the better the screen image and the slower the image change. Type in any number from 0 to 10 or choose the arrow buttons to jump from 10 to 0 or 0 to 10.

Page Views allow for Full Page, Full Width, Two Column, or Three Column views. The latter two are for use with books that are printed in 2 or 3 columns.

Doc Nav is a simple way to navigate to the prior and next pages in a document.
Alt-1 - Prior Page
Alt-2 - Next Page

Page Navigation allows for navigation within the page itself. You can *move* to the upper left or right of a page when in Two or Three column view or *rotate* the page when in Full Page or Full Width views.
Alt-3 - Go to Upper Left or Rotate Left
Alt-4 - Move down the page
Alt-5 - Go to Upper Right or Rotate Right
Alt-6 - Move up the page or Rotate Straight

Maximize If you have a desire to see as much of a page as possible, click the **Maximize** button at the bottom right of the screen. Press it again (**Normal**) to bring it back to normal. The Maximize button increases content space while still allowing access to essential navigation aids. You can also click the full screen button at the top right side of the window to make it fill the whole screen. Reclick to return to normal view and navigation aids.

Printing Documents and Books

First you should print and read the *Course of Study* documents. They will explain the unique aspects of a Self-Teaching home-school and how to organize it. If you do not read the *Course of Study,* you may lose much of the value of the Robinson Self-Teaching Home-School Curriculum.

When you have chosen a document and are ready to print it, click on the **Print** tab.

R Check this box to print out pages in Reverse order. This is useful if your printer does not order the sheets correctly.

S Check this box to skip grayscale photographs (to save time and ink).

Super P This option uses a print engine that may faster but has fewer options.

Print All sets up the print dialog box to print all the pages in the entire document.

Print *Both Pgs, Even Pgs*, or ***Odd Pgs*** - Use this option for two sided printing. You can print on one side at a time with an ordinary printer and on both sides with a duplex printer. You would first print the odd pages then the even pages on the other side of the sheets. On an ordinary printer this type of printing is suseptible to errors from page misfeeds. A simpler type of two sided printing is to print half the book on one side of the paper and feed it through again to print the other half of the book on the other side of the paper. When the book is read it is read on the right side only. When you come to the last page you flip the binder around and page through, again reading only the right side.

Print Current Pages Plus lets you quickly set the number of additional pages, besides the currently selected one, that you want to print.

Print % allows you to print at any size larger or smaller than the original. This is especially useful for smaller sized books. For instance, the Rover Boys books print well at 150%.

Print brings up the Windows Printer Dialog where you can make printer choices unique to your printer as well as set the pages to be printed. The default is to print the current page plus the number of pages that is selected in the *Print Current Pages Plus* box. If the printer designated at the top of the dialog box is not the printer you want to use, click on **Setup** and change it.

Note: Because you are printing very high resolution digital images of original pages, the printing process may be slower than for other programs you use, especially if you have an older printer. This is normal. You may try reducing the resolution in your print driver from 600 to 300 dpi to see if this is acceptable in quality - it will certainly be faster.

Some Practical Guidelines

Printing with a Pentium computer and an HP 4 Plus printer proceeds at a full 12 pages per minute. With the very slowest computers and printers, this rate can be reduced to as little as 6 pages per hour. Just let your computer print at whatever speeds its capabilities allow.

We used to purchase paper already punched for 3-hole notebook and 3-hole binders at our local Price-Costco or Sams discount store. The 3-hole paper costs about $30-$35 per 5,000 sheets and the 3-hole binders cost about $1 each in bulk. Now we buy the regular paper and the older children 3 hole punch it with a heavy duty (fixed hole - not sliding) punch. It does about 25-40 pages at a time.

Since you will want to print many pages, it would be advisable to have a new model, good-quality, low-operating-cost laser printer. See the Printer Recommendations for more suggestions on printers and Inexpensive Bulk Ink Supply if you plan to use an ink jet printer.

Program Crashes with a message about "Could not load lead.vbx"

This message means that there is a "lead.vbx" file in the *C:\windows\system* directory that is older than the one the Robinson Curriculum uses. To remedy, copy the lead.vbx file from the *C:\robinson* directory to the *C:\windows\system* directory (hold down the shift key if you are doing this with the mouse).

You may need to reboot the computer to release this file so it can be copied over.

An Unsupported Feature - No more flipping CDs

A unsupported use of the Robinson Curriculum may be very convenient if you have enough free hard drive space.

Simply copy all the CDs to the root level of a hard drive and then indicate that drive to be the CD Drive in the Robinson Curriculum program.

This can be done by dragging all the folders from the CDs to the root level of your c:\ drive. The c:\ drive would them look just like your CD drive to the Robinson Curriculum program.

The effect of this is that you no longer have to put any CDs in the machine in order to access all the books and other materials. It also means less wear and tear on the CDs which can be put away in a safe place.

Some steps to follow:

1. Double click on the My Computer icon.

2. Then double click on the CD drive. We will call this the CD Drive Window.

3. Double click on the My Computer icon again. We will call this the My Computer Window.

4. Click on the first folder in the CD Drive Window and press Ctrl-A to highlight all the folders.

5. Drag and drop the folders onto a hard drive (eg. C:) in the My Computer Window (one with enough space 650 MB to hold the contents of the CD). It will from 5-15 minutes depending on your computer's speed.

Note: You would need to copy the book folders to the c:\ or d:\ level not the c:\robinson folder. Thus a book would be c:\bookdir where on the CD it would be e:\bookdir (if your CD drive was letter e:).

6. To access the books from your hard drive, change the CD Drive letter in the Robinson Curriculum program to your hard drive letter instead of your CD drive letter.

7. For CDs not copied to your hard drive you will need to change the CD Drive letter back to your original CD Drive letter.

For a small utility to help you do this:

- Where your CD drive is letter D:

- Where your CD drive is letter E:

Support - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Technical Support

Support Options and Services

There are several options available to you if you are in need of techincal support:

1. Check the Support FAQ to see if your question is answered there.

2. Go over the rest of the Support section and your RC Application Guide . It was installed on your computer when you installed the program and can accessed at the same place you start the Robinson Curriculum program.

3. Try the Robinson Forum Support Sections where you can ask questions and read other people's questions and answers.

4. You may download the RC setup file if you need it for some reason (requires the CDs to be of any use).

5. If none of the options above provide the help you need for Robinson Curriculum **Windows** technical support you can send an email to support@robinsoncurriculum.com

6. For Robinson Curriculum **Mac** support go to SoftAnswer provided by Steven Friedrich.

7. RC Works Under Linux/WINE! This note from Glenn, an RC user:

> FYI - I'm successfully using the Robinson Curriculum with RedHat 7.1 Linux and "WINE," which is a windows emulator. The only limitation is that I have to restart the program when I change CDs (this seems to be a limitation of linux.)
>
> You may want to let people know that they don't have to pay Microsoft license fees in order to use your excellent Curriculum. I'd be happy to help anyone setup a linux/WINE system. You can give out my email address glenn @ meaning.com to anyone who asks for help.
>
> cheers,
> glenn

Replacement CD Request

For broken, lost, or damaged CDs.

Note: Although the form will show that you are being charged $15 this charge will not take place if you purchased the curriculum new and include the serial number in the "Special Instructions" section of the order.

Click here to order a replacement CD.

General Advice

Some printers and print drivers are more prone to problems than other as manufacturers try to gain a competitive advantage by pushing the technology envelope.

As a rule, the print drivers that ship on the Microsoft Windows CD are more reliable than those that come with the printer. Thus, if you are having problems, look in you printer manual for information on which other printers your printer is compatible with. Then install the print driver(s) for those printers (My Computer - Printers - Add Printer). Print drivers for earlier models may be simpler, more thoroughly tested, and thus more reliable.

For many printers that are PCL (HP's Printer Control Language) compatible, the HP LaserJet Series II print driver is a solid choice for a fast, reliable print driver. If you have the Brother 1650/1850 printer the best prit driver is the HP LaserJet 8100 Series PCL.

Software Only Update for Version 2.0 Users

Our CD Disk 1 Upgrade to Version 2.2 contains new **content** and XP compatible **software**. You can read more about it at:

http://www.robinsoncurriculum.com/view/rc/#1422

For the **software only** update for Version 2.2 that allows the RC to run under XP click the button below:

Be sure to reboot your computer before installing the update.

Once you download the update you must install it. This means you must open the file and run the setup file inside it.

To open or run a file you can either double click on it or right click on it and choose Open.

For the Windows XP update for the Robinson Books - G. A. Henty Collection application go http://www.henty.com/henty/s86p1372.htm

Special Notes:

You do not need to disable the Print Spooling under Windows XP.

You now have the option of printing two pages per side which will reduce the size of the pages by 50%. This option should be available to you from the properties button on your print dialog box which comes up after you press Print. It does slow down your printing substantially.

Support - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Inexpensive Bulk Ink Supply

A home-school mom told me about this supplier of ink for Ink Jets; They sell ink by the pint for about $25. I cannot give any guarantees about this product but I thought it would be helpful to pass along the link.

Its even cheaper by the quart - they are really nice people.

Automation Consulting and Supply

Another mom told me about the good deal SAMs has on Dataproducts CLICK-IN SYSTEMS FOR HP AND CANON INKJET PRINTERS.

It looks like they cost more from the company direct than from SAM's though.

From another home-school Mom...

Check out the Web Site called Cartridges USA. I just ordered ink from them on Saturday. It is due to arrive at the end of the week. I'll let you know how we like it. I normally pay $12 for a black ink cartridge. The same cartridge, in a generic brand, (I have used Pelikan very successfully in the past) from Cartridges USA has 2 ml more ink and costs only $5.50! I'm very excited about what the savings could mean to our book printing. Also, if you order $50 worth at a time, the shipping is FREE! The color magenta, cyan, and yellow cartridges are also only $5.50, and they hold more ink than the name brand.

Laser Excellence - 800-541-4345

Graymar Business Systems

Yahoo listing for toner cartriges and for ink cartriges

From Glenda:

I have received the ink from Cartridges USA. It's perfect. I ordered all four individual colors. They all come professionally packaged (not refilled cartridges) and each holds two ml more than the name brand cartridge. They fit my machine perfectly and there is no difference in print quality. As I mentioned in my previous note, the cost is less than 1/2 what I would normally pay (only $5.50 as opposed to $12 for a black cartridge), so, needless to say, I am excited about the savings, too.

I am using the Canon BJC620, but they carry cartridges for other printers as well. You can call them toll-free at 888-866-3787, or check out their website at http://www.cartridgeusa.com to see the different brands and types that they carry.

Hope this can be helpful. :) Glenda

PS We ordered a quantity that totalled a little over $50 and true to their word, shipping charges were waived.

Mention you are using the Robinson Curriculum and we'll give you a $5 discount off the shipping and

handling charges associated with our ink -- which is $21.95 per pint or $39.95 per quart for most inkjet printers. http://www.oddparts.com/ink/inkjet.htm or call us tollfree at 1-888-728-2465 8:30AM to 9PM EST.

Are you paying waaaay too much for your printer ink?

We at Encore Ink are both homeschoolers and Robinson Curriculum users. We offer high quality, carefully formulated bulk ink and refill kits at extremely competitive prices. Our refill kits contain everything you need to refill your inkjet or bubble-jet cartridges. We also carry many types of compatible cartridges at a significant savings. We fully guarantee all of our products, and provide technical assistance should it be necessary. Visit us on-line at http://www.encoreink.com or call us toll-free at 1-888-883-6053 If you visit us on-line, enter coupon code 030501-1011 at checkout for free shipping. If ordering by phone, mention this code to receive free shipping.

Support - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Printer Recommendations

Recommended Printers

Because printing is central to the use of the Robinson Curriculum I know a lot of you have questions as to which printer would be best.

The main factor to consider is cost per page since this cost is often more than the cost of the printer once you have printed all the necessary materials in the Curriculum. Paper costs about $20-$30 per 5000 (1/3 to 1/2 cent per page). Generally ink jet printers can cost from 3-5 cents per page for ink. Laser printers are faster and cost from 1-3 cents per page. Thus the major cost is the ink or toner.

The ideal is a duplex printer that will print *both sides of the paper at one time*. Amazingly, the cost of these printers has dropped in half in just the last 3 years. A duplex printer is the closest thing you can have to your own printing press. And with prices for toner down at 1 cent per page it is cheaper than buying preprinted books. The ones that best fit the bill are:

Duplex Printers and Supplies - Click on links for details

Printer - Description	Market Prices	Toner	Drum
Panasonic KX-P7100	$99-$298	4K ** $55	20K $130
Brother HL-1850	$440-$499 *	6.5K ** $55	20K $104

* You may also be able to find the brother printer available as a refurbished printer for considerable saving.

** K means 1,000 pages. An 5K toner cartridge is good for 5,000 pages.

Tip: Our expereince has shown that the best print driver to use with the Brother printer and our curriculum is the HP LaserJet 8100 Series PCL. This print driver is available on your MS Windows CD. It is very reliable and stable. More info...

Shopping Guides

The following sites are worthwhile to visit for getting good prices on printers and supplies:

---

www.shopper.com

Provides links to the low cost suppliers of printers and just about anything else. A really great site.

---

www.pricegrabber.com

Good for comparing prices as well as finding who sells what brand and model of product.

What about Printing Books

Some Ideas

First of all, remember that you will be spreading this out over quite a number of years. Of course, if you are beginning with older children the printing will be much heavier to begin with. But still, print books as needed and children can share much of the same reading - as great literature is great literature at any age. The read order is as flexible as you need it to be. Presently out 5th year, 3rd year and 1st year 'students' are all reading the Pony Rider books.

To save costs, browse your local used book sales for some of the titles - often the great oldies go for under

$1.00. You'll find others worth owning as well.

The public library still has some of the original classics (such as Alcott's lengthy books, Little Women, Little Men) that you could borrow rather than print.

One *advantage to printing* your own 'old' books is being able to enlarge the print, especially valuable for younger eyes. Another advantage is that the books you print and put in binders are more 'user friendly' than the old and aging copies one can purchase. Binders don't suffer if left open, and individual pages that have been damaged can be reprinted and inserted back in. Books that you own are also more likely to be reread and you can't acquire library fines for them!

Printing for the First\Second Year

Let's look, for instance, as you asked, specifically at what the printing requirements might be for a *first year student*. If a child is progressing slowly it will be *first and second* year.

I have listed the books previously, under the section Teaching Younger Children: Literature for the first year that you will find in the Robinson Curriculum. There is a total of 28 books plus Penmanship Practice pages. This is a total of **5,214** pages.

Dr. Robinson has also included two of Josephine Pollard's history books (in one syllable words) early in the reading list and if you were to include these in the first year the book total would be 30, the page total would be 5,509.

What will this cost? How much time will it take?

Well...this will depend to a great extent on your printers capabilities and where you purchase paper and ink (see Printing Recommendations) - we estimate our costs to be about 1 cent a page (not including the cost of the printer). To print all 30 of the first year books it cost us $110.30. Binders can be found at real discounts once you have your 'eye out' for them. So far, our first 50 binders have cost from $0 .00 to $1.00 a piece. (See: http://www.binding.com/binding.cfm for more professional type binding equipment. They have binding machines that start at only $60.00 and will bind up to two inches thick.) Our shelving is brackets and boards (painted white) in a 'user friendly' basement.

Does this seem formidable? At this 'stage' of reading (1st year), I think it is absolutely possible to use the library to the maximum if printing costs are a hindrance. If you don't own the McGuffey Readers already be sure to print these out as well as the Josephine Pollard books. Using your own careful discretion you could make a reading list for your youngster. Be sure to gradually increase the level of difficulty (vocabulary and length of story) and include fiction and non-fiction (children's bibliography is probably your best resource. Books Children Love, A Guide to the Best Children's Literature by Elizabeth Wilson is our best used one.

When a child is 6 years old, the focus is to get them to read, to *love* reading, and to increase their ability to

read. Then they can move forward in their quest to *learn* more and more and more.

In conclusion, the assumption, regardless of age, is always... the *best* literature available. And, I believe, the books offered in the curriculum are a large part of why our children have come to *love* reading.

Support - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Frequently Asked Questions

question

Where are the prices of the Saxon Math Books?

answer

On the back of the installation sheet - do not throw it away. With each order you will receive a new order form.

question

Where do I place my child(ren)?

answer

Nobody but you can decide where the children fit in. You could just look at the material and start them where they belong according to the work they have been doing. I would not worry much about starting a older child too early in the Curriculum as the book are quite interesting and enjoyable to read. However you also do not want to run out of time to finish. Thus an older child should work on mastering the vocabulary from the beginning on as this will make a big difference on SAT exams.

A more objective way of determining their placement in the Read Order is by using the vocabulary flash cards to determine their reading comprehension level. If they do 80% or better on the first pass through the vocabulary flash cards (Words and Definitions) they can skip ahead in their reading. However they should master all the vocabulary words regardless.

To know where to start older children in Saxon Math, you can click here to find the free placement exams.

See Where to Start an Older Child for more.

question

How long will it take to get my Curriculum?

answer

The Curriculum will arrive 2-3 weeks from when you place your order. It will arrive by Priority Mail from the USPS. If you paid extra for Express delivery you will recieve your curriculum within 3-4 business days.

question

I installed the 1st CD but I cannot get the other CDs to install?

answer

Once you install the program from Disk 1, you only insert the other CDs when you choose the book you want to read - see the Disk number on the right side of your screen.

question

How do you get to the Math and Phonics Flash Cards?

answer

Go to the Vocabulary tab at the top of the screen and then click on the Print Flash Cards tab at the bottom of the screen.

question

My child has read all the books - what are some more that they could read?

answer

The Sugar Creek Gang Series (30). Laura Ingalls Wilder stories (5). Grandma's Attic Stories (10). Wilson Rawls: Where the Red Fern Grows (glorious sad ending but very nice story) and Summer

of the Monkeys. Also see Teaching Younger Children.

question

What is the software support number?

answer

517-546-8780

question

Are the CDs ordered by grade?

answer

No. You follow the Read Order as per the Course of Study and are prompted to insert the correct CD when it is needed.

question

A few of the books will not "come up" and I do not know why. Have you had this problem? Is there something I can do to fix this?

answer

There is a rare problem that can occur if you change out the CD before going back to the Choose tab. It results in the book you were viewing not showing up afterwards. To remedy the problem, all you have to do it delete the robinson.ini file in the Windows directory.

1. Close the Robinson Curriculum program.
2. Choose: Start > Find > Files or Folders
3. In the dialog box enter the following:
    1. Named: "robinson.ini"
    2. Look in: "c:\"
    3. Include Subfolders: [CHECK]
    4. Click on [Find Now]
4. When the "robinson.ini" comes up on the list, click on it once and press the Delete key on your keyboard.

5. Confirm that you want to delete the file.

This problem has been corrected in the 2.2 release of the software available here.

Is there a way to assign course grades to subjects?

question

Is there a way to assign course grades to high-school subjects to help meet college admission requirements?

answer

Good scores on your SATs are often all you need. However, you can separate the curriculum books out by subject and add subjects that you think are needed.

question

I just upgraded my RC to 2.2 and am having problems printing the vocab exercises. All I'm getting is a totally black, ink-saturated page. I can print out other things just fine. What is happening?

answer

There is an error in the HP print driver that causes this. You can easily work around it by setting the Print Percentage to something other that 100% - try changing it to 99% or 101%.

question

One of our CD's has been damaged. How can we get a replacement of that CD?

answer

It would be helpful if you could check that CD (and any other that might appear to fail) on another computer to be sure it is the CD and and not that particular computer's CD drive that is failing. Some CD drives lose their tolerance for full CDs and so may work with some CDs but not all.

If the CD is broken or lost you can order a new one at the following link:

http://www.robinsoncurriculum.com/view/rc/#Message3336

question

Is there a support team for the student when they run across something that they and the parent don't quite understand? Or is it strictly individual?

answer

Everything is self-taught once they get beyond learning to read and they know their math facts through the twelves. The math books, for instance, point to the lesson where a concept was originally taught for each problem.

When our children run into a problem they are convinced they cannot understand, they skip it and come back to it later (after the rest of the lesson is done). If they still don't get it they come into a separate room (so as not to disturb the other children) and then read the whole problem (and the lesson if necessary) out loud as if they where teaching it to a class. This gets them over it every time. Oral learning is a powerful concept explained in full in the Course of Study. Keep in mind that the value of a problem is in learning how to overcome it. If someone shows you how to solve a problem the value of that problem as a learning aid is taken away.

More FAQs

For more Frequently Asked Questions see: Frequently Asked Questions from our About section.

question

I have had RC for over a year but have only recently begun printing in earnest. Sometimes it prints just fine and other times I have problems. I have gotten an error message several times. Can you tell me what's happening and what I should do about it?

answer

Some printers and print drivers are more prone to problems than other as manufacturers try to gain a competitive advantage by pushing the technology envelope.

As a rule, the print drivers that ship on the Microsoft Windows CD are more reliable than those that come with the printer. Thus, if you are having problems, look in you printer manual for information on which other printers your printer is compatible with. Then install the print driver(s)

for those printers (My Computer - Printers - Add Printer). Print drivers for earlier models may be simpler, more thoroughly tested, and thus more reliable.

Try a driver from an earlier model of the same line of printers from the Windows CD. That will usually work.

Also, in order to avoid problems while printing, we advise that print spooling be disabled when printing from the Curriculum. With the spooler disabled, pages will print directly to the printer without first being cached on your hard disk by the Print Manager.

To disable spooling, click through the following sequences:

1. My Computer
2. Printers
3. Highlight a printer
4. From the Menu choose File - Properties
5. In dialog box click Details tab
6. Spool Settings...
7. Click "Print directly to printer" (note: this may be grayed out if your printer is shared).

A more stable operating system such as Windows 2000 Professional (or Windows NT) will be far less likely to exhibit spooler problems.

Helpful Links - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Resources

Saxon Math Publishers

http://www.saxonpublishers.com

The Robinson Curriculum recommends Saxon Math program. You can click here to find math placement exams and other information.

Home School Legal Defense Association

www.hslda.org

Join this organization for a nominal amount per year and you get to call them if anyone bothers you about home schooling your children. This is worth it just for the peace of mind.

Regional Associations - Local Homeschool Groups

http://www.kingsharvest.com/Support.html

King's Harvest has a very helpful page on State & Local Home School Organizations and Support Groups, including contact information and short descriptions.

Homeschool World

www.home-school.com/

The publishers of Practical Homeschooling. "the best homeschooling site on the web - contains articles, lists of homeschooling organizations and conventions, Homeschool Mall, Help back issues, and much more!"

Homeschooling R Us

www.homeschoolingrus.com

The Homeschooling Alternative...Because Education Starts at Home.

This website is a good overview all the good reasons to homeschool.

Economics and Technology and Intelligent Speech.

Some worthwile links for older students:

http://www.christrules.com

This website present many worthwhile MP3 CDs chock full or highly intellegent and worthwhile lectures and colloquies on a variety of topics.

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http://www.freebooks.com/docs/_bkssubj.htm#economics

Gary North gives you an explicitly Christian economic commentary of the Bible. This website presents

you with the full texts of the books in HTML format and DjVu formats.

Also see the Uncle Eric series by Richard Maybury at: http://www.chaostan.com/eric.html

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See George Gilder's Book of the Month list for mostly very worthwhile books:
http://www.gildertech.com/public/book.html

Helpful Links - Robinson Self-Teaching Homeschool Curriculum

Articles

Homeschooling: The Best Education Reform

by Isabel Lyman

http://www.cato.org/dailys/3-24-98.html

Homeschooling was the way the Founding Fathers received their education. Today's homeschooling movement continues to excel by producing literate students with minimal government interference at a fraction of the cost of any government program.

...

Before the Public Schools

by Gary Benoit

http://www.thenewamerican.com/tna/1997/vo13no15/vo13no15_public.htm

Not surprisingly, the education and opinion cartels claim that the demise of the public school system would mean the demise of education. They paint a bleak picture of a nation of unschooled illiterates who would not even be able to read and write, much less acquire technological or scientific expertise. As is the case with so much of what is presented as "conventional wisdom," however, the truth is exactly the opposite. ...

Deliberately Dumbing Us Down

http://www.eagleforum.org/educate/2000/feb00/dumbing-down.html

By Sam Blumenfeld

Charlotte Thomson Iserbyt's new book, *The Deliberate Dumbing Down of America*, is one of the most important publishing events in the annals of American education in the last hundred years.

Iserbyt has done what no one else wanted or could do. She has put together the most formidable and practical compilation of documentation describing the well-planned "deliberate dumbing down" of American children by their education system. Anyone who has had any lingering hope that what the educators have been doing is a result of error, accident, or stupidity will be shocked by the way American social engineers have systematically gone about destroying the intellect of millions of American children for the purpose of leading the American people into a socialist world government controlled by behavioral and social scientists.

more...

Transforming Family Life And Learning Through Homeschooling

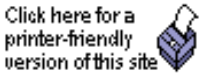
by Linda Dobson

http://www.hsc.org/mediaarticle02.html

After all enjoy their fill of oatmeal and fruit, and the last child laces up his boots and adjusts his hat against the winds, a mom and her three school-aged children wave at the school bus lumbering by and head off for a walk in the woods, instead.

The children grow increasingly excited as they spy the tracks of three different animals. Questions soon fly as freely as the snow. Mom knows she'll be busy for the next few weeks, possibly months, immersed in the study of weather patterns, drawing and photography, animal tracks and tracking, and the Native Americans who originally lived in the area. She'll soon shop for materials that compliment her children's natural curiosity and keep the wonder alive in their eyes - and hearts.

This family, like an estimated million others, delights in a revolutionary approach to learning. Known as homeschoolers, they have, for myriad reasons, decided to take responsibility for their children's education into their own hands.



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