

This document will give you a nutshell version of the Heart of Wisdom Teaching Approach.

For details see *The Book The Heart of Wisdom Teaching Approach* and our Web site <http://HomeschoolUnitstudies.com>

Blue Text indicates an active link.



The Heart of Wisdom Approach will teach you to:

- Develop a habit of daily Bible reading
- Read through the Bible with your family once a year
- Create a Portfolio
- Create a Time Line Book
- Use Bible study tools (concordances, lexicons, dictionaries, etc.)
- Know biblical history and geography
- Integrate writing and grammar skills with Bible studies
- Find the way to righteousness
- And more.



THE HEART OF WISDOM TEACHING APPROACH

The HOW Teaching Approach is a combination of the teaching methods listed below

Bible First	The Bible is the center of education, and all subordinate studies should be brought into the circle of light radiating from the Bible. Academics play an important part, but they are secondary. Students spend a large portion of the school day studying God's Word, and the other half studying God's world in the light of His Word. See details in <i>Far Above Rubies: Wisdom in the Christian Community</i> .
A Return to Biblical Hebraic Education	The Bible outlines how we should teach our children. The ancient Hebraic aim of education was ethical and religious. Study is a form of worship. The method of instruction in the home was oral, and learning was accomplished by practice. The ancient Hebrews taught no distinction between sacred and secular areas of life. Every detail of life, therefore, must be set aside and consecrated to the glory of God. The primary purpose of education was to train the whole person for lifelong, obedient service in the knowledge of God (Prov.1:7; Eccl.12:13).
Living Books Charlotte Mason's Philosophy	Students should develop a love of learning by reading real books—literature—as opposed to twaddle, or “dumbed-down” literature. This method also incorporates copy work, narration (the assimilating of information), retelling (sorting, sequencing, selecting, connecting, rejecting, and classifying), creating a Time Line Book, and developing a “Nature Diary.”
The 4 Steps	These four steps are a cycle of instruction based on the Four Learning Styles developed by Dr. Bernice McCarthy. This system is an organized method for using all of the approaches listed on this page.
Integrated Unit Study	The “unit” or “theme” part of the name refers to the idea of studying a topic as a whole instead of as several “subjects.” A unit study takes a topic and “lives” with it for a period of time, integrating science, social studies, language arts, and fine arts as they apply. This method is ideal for multi-level teaching.
Lifestyle of Learning	An approach outlined in <i>Wisdom's Way of Learning</i> by Marilyn Howshall. The emphasis is on parents relying on the Holy Spirit's guidance to provide the needed resources so that children can develop expertise in their fields of interest. Howshall explains how using these simple and natural tools (with the emphasis on the process of learning rather than the product of learning) will allow your children to begin to develop their own lifestyle of learning.
Delight-Directed Learning	Students acquire basic concepts of learning (reading, reasoning, writing, researching, etc.) during the process of examining the topic they are interested in. Education ought to be about building learners' abilities to do useful things. The focus is on the development of learning tools, not gaining content.
Writing to Learn	Students think on paper—to discover connections, describe processes, express emerging understandings, raise questions, and find answers, encouraging higher-level thinking skills. Students learn to Research, Reason, Relate, and Record.
Notebook or Portfolio Method	Students create a Bible Portfolio, Unit Study Portfolios, and Time Line Books. As the family re-reads through the Bible every year, each student creates a new Bible portfolio. The Unit Study Portfolios reflect the student's collecting, reading, writing and projects on specific topics. Each year, the portfolios will reflect changes in the student's ability, depth, focus, and spiritual growth.

AIMING FOR A HEART OF WISDOM

*Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom:
and with all thy getting get understanding.*
(Prov. 4:7)

To teach true wisdom, a curriculum should require the student to spend a significant amount of time in God's Word. *For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart* (Hebr. 4:12).

The home-school movement has brought about (or restored) many superior, efficient, exciting teaching approaches. These methods verify, as explained in this book, that we need to renew our thinking concerning education. Not only must we renew our thinking about the content and biblical context of what is taught but also about the method of what is taught (Josh. 24:23; Prov. 3:5-6; Matt. 6:19-21; Rom. 12:22).

David Mulligan explains the importance of Scripture-centered curriculum in a chapter of his book *Far Above Rubies: Wisdom in the Christian Community*. He also reveals the surprising hesitancy Christians feel about this approach to curriculum. He states:

The idea of spending a lot of school time on the study of Scripture may at first be disturbing. We are so used to dividing "religious" activities from the rest of our time it seems as if Bible study just does not fit, except in a minor way, in our regular school day. We think of Bible study as suitable for family devotions, church services, Sunday school classes, and if the study gets "deep," in the seminary. How much Bible can children get without detracting from other studies?

In asking this question we uncover in ourselves something of the tension that exists in the Western world between learning and religion. We know somehow the question is not right; we should be giving first place to Scripture, but can not quite let go of the other side of things. And rightly so! The other side, God's creation, is vastly important, but still Scripture should come first, and all other studies find their place in relation to it. We should turn the question around: "How many secular studies can a student pursue without detracting from his knowledge of God's Word?!"

...Christian education must be built upon a pattern that maintains Scripture at its center and bring all subordinate studies into the circle of light radiating from thence.

And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

(Deut. 6:7-9)

THE HEART OF WISDOM TEACHING APPROACH

- The Bible is the main textbook.
- The portfolio is a chronicle of the lessons and concepts studied.
- Learning takes place as the portfolio is created.
- God's Word is the thematic focus out of which academics naturally flow.
- The lessons include several interrelated studies:
 - spiritual training.
 - academic training.
 - character training.

The Bible passage home-schoolers lean on, Deuteronomy 6:7-9, is not just a mandate to teach our children. It is a command to teach them God's Word. We also claim the wonderful promise in Malachi 4:6a: *And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers...* but often forget that verse 4 tells us the promise will happen when we remember God's ways: *Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments.*

The ultimate desire for Christians should be for their children to have a heart of wisdom—true wisdom from God. The philosophy described throughout this book has progressed into a teaching approach called the Heart of Wisdom Teaching approach.

This chapter gives an overview of methods utilized by the HOWTA approach in an effort to motivate parents to make the Bible the main focus of the school day. The details of this philosophy will be explained in a book titled *The Heart of Wisdom Teaching Approach*. You can use this approach and adapt it to the methods and curriculum you are using. (This approach does not cover math.)

HEART OF WISDOM TEACHING APPROACH

The first goal of the HOWTA is to inspire students to become “hearers” and “doers” of God's Word; to encourage students to search the Scriptures and apply them to everyday situations. The second goal is to teach them a love of learning that will last a lifetime.

TWO-SIDED CURRICULUM BASE

There are, from man's point of view, two distinct areas or realms of study: God's Word and God's world. Since our criteria for education must flow from Scripture as the highest and most authoritative source of knowledge, the two realms are approached in different ways. All studies involved with increased understanding of God's Word are designated “direct studies.” Since our knowledge of God's world must also be directed by Scripture and our principles of interpretation derived from God's Word, those courses that directly study God's world are designated “derived studies.” This gives us a two-sided curriculum base.

In this approach, the Bible is the main focus and the core of the curriculum, with the secondary focus dedicated to developing academic skills. Students spend half the school day studying God's Word (direct Bible studies) and the other half study-

ing God’s world (derived studies—history, science, etc., using a unit study approach). Language arts are practiced throughout the day along with Bible and academic studies. Although we use the term “one half the school day,” we don’t mean three hours of Bible followed by three hours of academics, because students work in the Bible in all studies (hence half the school day).

GOD’S WORD		GOD’S WORLD		
DIRECT STUDIES	DERIVED STUDIES			
BIBLE STUDY	GOD’S PLAN	GOD’S WORLD	GOD’S KINGDOM	
	HISTORY, CULTURE	SCIENCE	THEOLOGY, LAW, HUSBANDRY, ECONOMICS	
LANGUAGE ARTS				

To form a mental image of this approach, imagine four stacks of books: Stacks A, B, C, and D.

- ◆ Stack A includes Bible, Bible tools (Bible dictionary, atlas, customs and manners reference, lexicons, etc.) and a writing handbook.
- ◆ Stack B includes books related to a history theme (reference books and literature).
- ◆ Stack C contains books related to a science theme (reference books, textbooks, and science project books).
- ◆ Stack D includes books related to life skills (self-help, marriage, parenting, interior design, car repair, etc.).

You will use the books from Stack A (Bible) exclusively the first hour or two of the school day (depending on your students’ ages). You will use Stacks A (Bible) and B (history) the second half of the school day for a number of weeks. Then, Stack C (science) replaces Stack B for a number of weeks. Stack D (life skills, used with Stack A) is not used until the high school years (when the school day is longer).

Writing, spelling, grammar, capitalization and punctuation, handwriting, vocabulary, phonics, and critical-thinking skills are not learned as separate subjects, but integrated into each study.

BIBLE-FIRST PHILOSOPHY

The most important aspect of a Christian life is Bible Study. The Bible is God’s instruction book on how to live life. The core of the Heart of Wisdom Teaching Approach is reading the Bible through once each year and the creation of a Bible Port-

HEART OF WISDOM METHODS

1. Read the Bible daily.
2. Read through the Bible with the family once a year.
3. Develop the student’s writing skills:
 - a. content and context
 - b. form
 - c. mechanics
 - d. editing and revision
4. Develop the student’s spelling skills by creating a personal spelling dictionary from student’s writings.
5. Develop the student’s handwriting skills by practicing writing Bible verses.
6. Develop the student’s critical thinking skills:
 - a. managing and using information to solve problems
 - b. interrelating knowledge
 - c. effectively communicating learning outcomes.
7. Reinforce phonics instruction using Bible storybooks (younger children).
8. Develop the student’s character through assignment completion:
 - a. attentiveness
 - b. commitment
 - c. confidence
 - d. decisiveness
 - e. efficiency
 - f. faithfulness
 - g. perseverance
 - h. promptness
 - i. responsibility
 - j. self-control

"In the Biblical sense, wisdom is the ability to judge correctly and to follow the best course of action, based on knowledge and understanding"

—Lockyer, *Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (p. 1103).

The wisdom teachings of the Bible flow from the these two great themes:

1. Ten Commandments
2. The Greatest

Commandments of Jesus: love God and our our neighbor as ourself

SEVEN STEPS TO ACQUIRING WISDOM

1. Seek wisdom. Proverbs 2:4; 8:17.
2. Meditate upon God's Word. Proverbs 2:1; 3:1; 4:20.
3. Obey principles of Scripture. Obedience is essential for acquiring wisdom. Proverbs 2:7; 8:33; 10:8.
4. Pray for wisdom. Proverbs 11:2; James 3:5-6.
5. Observe how God works in His world. Proverbs 6:6; Matthew 6:26; Proverbs 14:16.
6. Heed godly counsel. Proverbs 12:15; 19:20; 15:31.
7. Associate with wise people. Proverbs 1:10.

folio and a Time Line Book. This teaching can be the most important undertaking in your child's entire life.

As Christians we are expected by God to be knowledgeable in the Word of God. For example, Paul told the Ephesians, *do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is* (Eph. 5:17). We should strive just as much as the first-century Christians did to find and know God's will for mankind.

With the Bible First Philosophy, parents and students of all ages are active in an ongoing project based on reading through the Bible every year. The Bible is studied daily as students compile a chronicle of their developing concepts and beliefs. Student learn to use Bible study tools, enabling them to embark on their own search for truth, preparing them to follow the mandate in 2 Timothy 2:15, *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth*. This important foundation (often neglected in favor of academic studies) is the ultimate preparation a student needs for life. Not only will God's Word renew their mind, it will teach them to confront the idols of our time, as Al Greene explains to: "to discern and recognize idols such as statism, materialism, technicism, scientism, and all the other "isms" where faith is placed in something other than God." (Language arts skills are practiced daily while completing assignments.)

As the family re-reads through the Bible every year, each student creates a new Bible Portfolio and adds to their Bible Time Line Book. Each year, the Portfolio will reflect growth in the student's ability, depth, and focus. The first year, a younger child's Portfolio will contain drawings, handwriting samples, memory verses, dictated summary pages, photos of a play costume, pages from a Bible coloring book, etc., while older students' Portfolios will contain character and event summaries, research papers, essays, computer printouts, time lines, maps, sketches, etc.

Instead of looking at state standards when teaching your children, seek God and ask Him what He would have you teach them. Listen to the Holy Spirit. God promises us wisdom if we ask for it. Following God's guidance will not only lead you in what to teach your unique, individual child; you will learn to walk a surrendered life, by faith. Scripture should come first, and all other studies find their place in relation to it. The HOWTA approach leads progressively to a renewed mind and to a self-chosen commitment to a life of intellectual and moral integrity. After all, the Bible is instruction for life. *All scrip-*

ture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

A RETURN TO BIBLICAL EDUCATION

The frustrations of modern teaching methods have motivated Christian educators to return to better ways. Many have turned to the Greek classical methods—language and literature-focused studies. (Language and literature are important, but they should not be the foundation of life.) The HOWTA is a return to better methods, and, like the Hebrews, we reject the Greek education model. Instead we desire a return to Hebraic teaching methods, which are Bible-focused. Abraham Joshua Heschel summarized the differences between the two approaches by saying that “The Greeks study in order to understand while the Hebrews study in order to revere.”

Education for people in the biblical world was more than a simple matter of memorizing information and passing tests. It was the search for the hidden plan and presence of God. Educational goals in Israel as recorded in Scripture always involved the whole person—amoral intellectualism did not exist. The ancient Hebrews taught that education which does not begin with the fear of the Lord leads to foolishness. An old Hebrew saying states **“One who acquires knowledge but knows not what to do with it is no more than a donkey carrying a load of books.”**

The primary purpose of education should be to train the whole person for lifelong, obedient service in this knowledge just as it was in ancient Israel. The Hebrews taught their children 613 commandments—248 positive commands and 365 negative ones from the Torah (first five books of the Bible). These commands are instruction on how to live life; topics include: God, the poor, employers, employees, parents, children, animals, marriage, sex, family, food, business practices, holidays, judicial procedures, property, criminal laws, agriculture, taxes, worship, war, illness, etc. The 613 commands are instructions for life. (But not all 613 commands were for all people; some were specifically for priests, some for women, etc.)

The aim of education in Biblical times was ethical and religious. The education of youth was an obligation of the parents, and was intimately associated with the performance of ritual observances and with learning the Mosaic Law. In the educative process, both father and mother were

Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her. Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her. The LORD by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens. By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew.
(PROV. 3:13-20)

“Proverbs is a book of godly wisdom. Someone once described Proverbs as ‘the Ten Commandments in shoe leather.’ It often contains the very practical and homespun wisdom of secular proverbs, such as ‘a stitch in time saves nine’ or ‘a fool and his money are soon parted.’ But the wisdom of Proverbs goes far beyond mere worldly wisdom. It contains the revealed truth of God, Creator of heaven and earth.”

—Bob Beasley,
The Wisdom of Proverbs

“Discovery after discovery has established the accuracy of innumerable details [in the Bible], and has brought increasing recognition to the value of the Bible as a source of history.”

—W.F. Albright

To pray for wisdom is to come to God in humility, acknowledging our need for His wisdom. The world often looks down on the one who acknowledges his weaknesses. God will never find fault in a prayer from a humble heart, for *God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble*. See Job 28:12-28; Proverbs 3:13-18; Romans 1:22; 16:27; and 1 Corinthians 1:17-21; 2:6-8.

‘It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible.’
—George Washington

We must listen to the Word of God:

1. Eagerly
2. Attentively
3. Trustfully
4. Expectantly
5. Prayerfully
6. Humbly
7. Purposefully and
8. Joyfully

But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.
(1 COR. 2:14)

“The Bible is the one supreme source of revelation, the revelation of the meaning of life, the nature of God and the spiritual nature and need of men. It is the only guide of life which really leads the spirit in the way of peace and salvation.”
—Woodrow Wilson

equally concerned, and both were to be equally honored (the Fifth Commandment). The method of instruction in the home was for a long time oral, and learning by practice, and these methods were continued outside the home in gatherings and assemblies held for both worship and instruction. (Collier’s Encyclopedia)

Like a typical first-century rabbi, Jesus did not deliver formal sermons, but as he traveled the country with his disciples he commented upon situations such as Martha’s anxiety or the widow’s contribution of two small coins (Lk. 21:1-2). Jesus typically used such incidents as springboards for his teaching, prefacing his remarks with “I tell you,” and concluding with a pair of parables to illustrate and confirm the teaching. Jesus taught that only “one thing” is important. The “one thing” is to desire above all else God’s rule and salvation in our lives and in the lives of those around us (Matt. 6:33, Lk 12:31). (Read more about Biblical Education in Chapter 4 and 9.)

MULTI-LEVEL UNIT STUDY

The HOWTA is designed for designed for teaching multiple topics to multiple ages simultaneously. Students study the same topics, each on their individual level. The multi-level approach saves a tremendous amount of time in preparing, teaching, and correcting work.

A family of three using the traditional approach (textbooks and workbooks) must prepare, plan, teach, and correct work for 21 or more subjects (seven subjects for each child). This can be a nightmare for the teacher. In history, one child could be studying the American Revolution, another the Civil War, and another ancient Egypt. In science, one child could be studying animals, another planets, another physics. In Bible, one student could be studying the Ten Commandments, another the life of Christ, another Creation.

With a multi-level unit study approach, all subjects except math and language arts can be taught together. Each child studies the topic at his or her own level. This saves over half of your preparing and teaching time. All children can go on field trips together, many projects can be done together and writing assignments and vocabulary words will be about the same topic, but on different levels. For example, while studying animals, a younger child may be able to classify birds, mammals, and insects, while an older child would classify animals in much more detail (arachnids, crustaceans, etc.). The older

child learns and helps to teach the younger while the younger learns from the older.

Unit studies, sometimes called “thematic units” or “integrated studies,” are very popular with homeschoolers. The child learns by actually experiencing or discovering through different methods and activities, rather than by simply reading a chapter from a textbook. A unit study takes a topic and “lives” with it for a period of time, integrating science, social studies, language arts, math, and fine arts as they apply.

The “unit” or “theme” refers to the idea of studying a topic as a whole instead of several “subjects.” For example, most people think of water as a science subject. One way to look at water is as H₂O—a chemistry subject—but it can also be art (a beautiful waterfall), history (the Red Sea), economics (water bill), theology (baptism), language arts (babbling brook), geography (the location of bodies of water), etc. When one studies the “whole” he can see how it relates to the Creator.

GATES OF LEARNING

The process of the student as he matures under instruction moves through three stages of Knowledge, Understanding, and Wisdom. We cannot think of these as watertight compartments of intellectual development like the Greek stages of abstraction (they are far too interrelated for that) but rather as the emphases given in instruction that correspond to the way a child “sees things” as he matures in judgment and practice.

The Heart of Wisdom approach refers to “gates of learning” (gates because they are different ways to enter). These gates are built upon a biblical foundation. They liberally represent grade levels:

1. The Knowledge Gate roughly corresponds to traditional grades K-4. Emphasis is on rote learning and exposure to a wide range of experiences.
2. The Understanding Gate roughly corresponds to traditional middle grades 5-8. Students compare, contrast, make connections, and learn to discern.
3. The Wisdom gate roughly corresponds to traditional upper grades 9-12. This is where knowledge and understanding are put to use. The student makes evaluations of difficult situations and arguments. He is directed towards holiness, right relationships, fruitfulness, and productivity. He takes his place in the lifetime pursuit of more wisdom.

Wisdom is both an end and it means to an end. Knowledge, under-

KNOWLEDGE GATE

The knowledge stage is the age of learning by rote. The basic facts and skills that will culminate in practical wisdom have to be given and practiced until they are familiar. If one were to train as a cabinetmaker, he could not begin with furniture design or even the details of joinery; he must begin by being able to handle a hammer, square, and saw. The same is true with all education. The raw material has to go in before we can ask much to come back out.

UNDERSTANDING GATE

The emphasis of understanding is discernment and comprehension. The basic curricular departments remain the same, but the emphasis in each is changed. The student begins to grind understanding out of the grist of knowledge. It is not so much to complexity of the material that marks the progress (although the material will grow more complex) as it is the ability to approach material in a different way. Learning is taken on a new face - the student begins to understand that he knows and knowledge understanding grow together.

WISDOM GATE

The root idea that wisdom is an actual application of truth. It arises from correct relationship to God.—The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom—and is manifested by habitual obedience to God’s revealed will in complexities of daily life. True wisdom requires a right way of looking at things, right decisions concerning them, and right actions as we carry out our intentions.

—David Mulligan, *Far Above Rubies: Wisdom in the Christian Community*

"Karl Barth was once asked to sum up the thousands of pages of his dense theology in one sentence. He paused. Then he said, 'Jesus loves me! this I know, for the Bible tells me so.'

"When we study God's Word with a view toward obeying it, we become wholly submissive to God and can then walk in the Spirit, not in the flesh. In such a state, there is no condemnation to us, for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has freed us from the law of sin and death (Rom. 8:1, 2)."

—John Garr
Restore! magazine

"Upon the knowledge of these great matters—History, Literature, Nature, Science, Art—the Mind feeds and grows. It assimilates such knowledge as the body assimilates food, and the person becomes what is called magnanimous, that is, a person of great mind, wide interests, incapable of occupying himself much about petty, personal matters. What a pity to lose sight of such a possibility for the sake of miserable scraps of information about persons and things that have little connection with one another and little connection with ourselves!"

—Charlotte Mason, *The Original Homeschooling Series*, Vol. 4, p. 78

"A true intellectual life is not achieved by exercising children's minds as if they were nothing but memory machines."

—Karen Andreola,
Charlotte Mason Research
and Supply Company, 1998

standing, and wisdom are not setup like a three stage rocket where each drops off as you are ready for the next stage. Rather they are three different ways of looking at the world. We see through the eyes of knowledge, through the eyes of understanding, and through eyes of wisdom. One absorbs and reacts with each other.

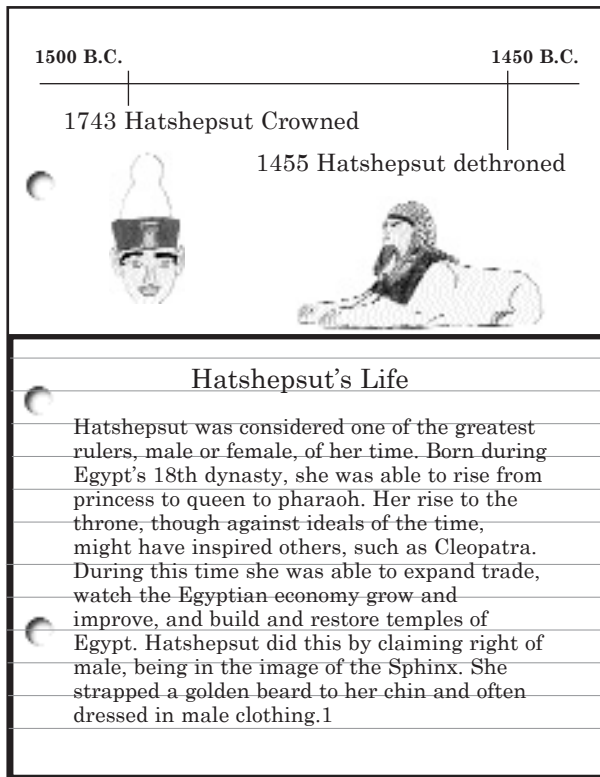
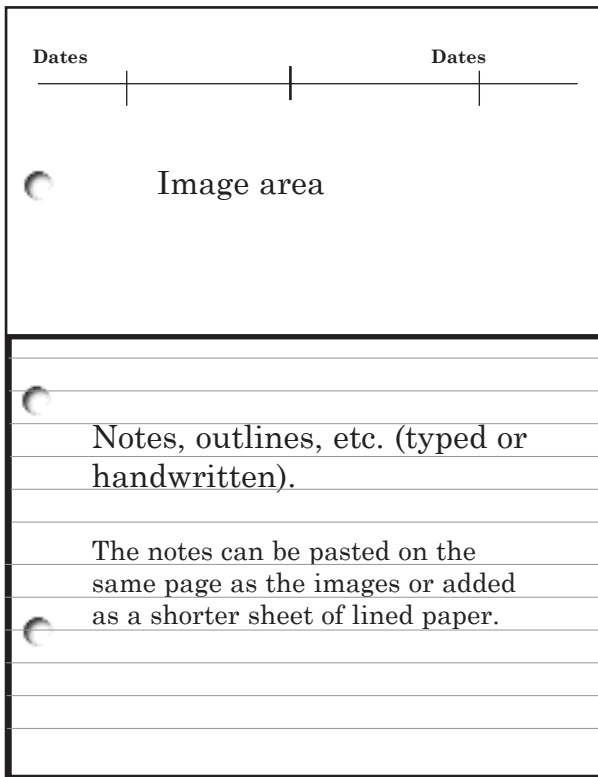
The Heart of Wisdom approach includes a suggested course of study that can begin at any age and is then repeated every four years (see page 140). The family with multiple ages will appreciate that they can jump in and start anytime. Students of all ages can study together in this setting, each studying the topic at his or her own level. The Bible is studied every year. History units are studied chronologically, and science units are studied in the order of creation. Practical life-skills studies are added during the high school years. All students complete 5-7 history units and 4-6 science units per year. This suggested course of study can be easily adapted to fit different families' needs.

LIVING BOOKS / CHARLOTTE MASON'S PHILOSOPHY

Charlotte Mason was an educator in England during the nineteenth century, and her methods are currently experiencing a rebirth among American home schools. Mason believed that children should be educated through a wide curriculum using a variety of real, living books. "Twaddle" and "living books" are terms coined by Mason. "Twaddle" refers to dumbed-down literature; absence of meaning. "Living books" refers to books that are well written and engaging—they absorb the reader, while the narrative and characters "come alive;" living books are the opposite of cold, dry textbooks. Charlotte Mason's concern was for students to develop a lifetime love of learning. She based her philosophy on the Latin word for education, *educare*, which means "to feed and nourish." This method focuses on the formation of good habits, reading a variety of books, narration, copying work, dictation, keeping a nature diary, keeping a spelling notebook, and preparing a time line book.

Time Line Book

Charlotte Mason's students created a Time Line Book (originally called a Museum Sketch Book; sometimes called a Book of the Centuries) to help them pull together seemingly unrelated information. As students learn historical facts, they make notes and sketches in their book on the appropriate page about famous people, important events, inventions, wars, etc. (See illustration on the next page).



Sample page from a Time Line Book.

See a sample page from a Bible Time Line Book on page 139.

You can purchase a blank *Book of the Centuries* published by Small Ventures Press, available through most home-school suppliers, or make your own with the instructions below.

TO SET UP YOUR TIME LINE BOOK:

- You will need:
- A three-ring notebook with a clear-plastic pocket cover
 - Blank 8.5" x 11" pages
 - Smaller lined pages (8.5 x 11 cut down to 8.5 x 9)
 - A three-hole punch
 - Glue sticks

Decide upon the units of time you will use (decades, centuries, etc.) to divide your time line into segments. A time line documenting the period from Adam to the Messiah will begin with Creation (before 2000 B.C.) and end with the resurrection of Christ (c. A.D. 30). (The nice thing about the notebook-style time line is that it's cumulative; every year's study can be added in. You can continue this time line as you study later periods by adding pages.) As you study each period, there will be times when you will document decades on one page, and other times when you will document several centuries on one page. Place the appropriate section of the time line across the top of each 8.5" x 11" page to represent increments. The shorter lined pages will go in between these pages to hold notes. If there is not room on your time line to include all of your chronology, cull some of the dates or add pages with larger segments that leave more room.

"We do not want our children to merely acquire a love of accomplishing academic goals. Our ultimate desire is for our children to develop a love of learning and a love of truth. Rather than the superficial gain of knowledge common to the experiences of today's youth, we want to encourage a true development of their intellect. We want to equip them with the tools of learning that will enable them to embark on their own search for truth. Most importantly, we desire our children to grow as individuals who will walk in God's purpose for their lives and are prepared to do His work."

—Marilyn Howshall,
Seasons: God's Time-Design

PRAYING FOR WISDOM

Use this passage according to Ephesians 1:17-20 to pray for your children, spouse, or others needing wisdom:

"Dear God, Give unto _____ the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of God. Let the eyes of _____'s understanding be enlightened, that _____ may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places."

Narration

Narration is literally "telling back" what has been learned. Students are instructed to read a passage from the Bible, text from a suggested resource, or content from a Web site and retell what they have learned, either orally or in writing. This process involves sorting, sequencing, selecting, connecting, rejecting, and classifying. Narration increases the student's ability to remember, making review work unnecessary.

Copy Work and Dictation

Copy work and dictation are underrated. Both provide ongoing practice for handwriting, spelling, grammar, etc. Both are also good exercises for teaching accuracy and attention to detail. In copy work, students discover things about the text they are copying that they would be unlikely to notice otherwise. In dictation, the child writes as the parent reads. Students learn correct spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and other language mechanics when they compare their work to the original and correct their mistakes.

LEARNING STYLES AND THE 4MAT SYSTEM

Scientific studies show that different people take in or perceive information differently and process information differently. The way we view the world is the way we perceive information. Some learners 1) need to "see" things concretely (through the five senses) to understand information. Other learners 2) can understand information abstractly (visually understand what cannot be seen). How we process what we learn is the way we use the information. Some learners 3) process reflectively while other learners 4) process actively. When you combine the ways in which one perceives and processes information, the results are four basic learning styles.

Studies show that 70 percent of children do not learn well the way the schools teach—lecture/textbook/test; most students need more. The 4Mat System, developed by Denise McCarthy, is a way to teach to all four of the learning styles described above. It does not isolate one type of learning but, instead, teaches in all ways so that students relate to the subject in the way that is the most comfortable for them, and discover how to learn in other ways.

There are four basic steps to The 4Mat System. The amount of time necessary for each step will vary from a few minutes to a few days depending on the activities chosen. You can improve any Bible study, unit study, or even textbook curriculum by adapting it to these four steps, since the steps teach to all four

learning styles and both brain hemispheres. Studies show that this four-step method motivates students to comprehend the material better and retain the information longer.

Step 1 Excite: (This is a critical step which is skipped in school.) Create an interest. Motivate students by making the lesson meaningful to their lives. Many students need to know why it is necessary to learn a topic before they will learn it. When I asked a room of several hundred home-school parents (including several public school teachers) this question, “Why does your student need to know that proper nouns must be capitalized?” The only answer given was, “Because it’s a rule.” If we first explain the reason that we capitalize proper nouns, students would remember the rule longer. We capitalize proper nouns to distinguish them from other words. For example, the word “mountain” refers to any mountain, but the “Rocky Mountains” are specific, so we use capital letters to show that they are a specific set of mountains. Therefore, in Step One of each lesson (Bible history, math, etc.), discuss what the children may already know about the topic, why they should learn about it, and what they would like to find out. You can use any of the following methods: Brainstorm, make lists, mindmap, outline, etc.

Step 2 Examine: Find out the facts. This is the traditional step used in schools with textbooks. We suggest several different resources (Bible, Bible reference books, Christian books, reference books, literature, living books, Internet sites, videos, etc.).

Step 3 Expand: Students do something with what was learned. The lesson is reinforced by completing an assignment or creating a project. Projects can be simple ten-minute activities or elaborate three-day endeavors. Studies show that students must do something with what is learned in order to retain the material.

Step 4 Excel: Pull everything together. The student shares what he has learned, through narration (verbally or in writing), a project, or sharing his time line or portfolio. When a student can teach someone else what he has learned, it is evidence that he knows the subject.

DELIGHT-DIRECTED LEARNING / LIFESTYLE OF LEARNING

The Bible instructs parents to recognize that each child is a unique individual, with a “way” already established that needs to be recognized, acknowledged, and reckoned with by means of the truth of Scripture.

“The wisdom tradition was swallowed up by the Greek standards for education and culture. ‘Even Christian’ education is essentially secular education, preparing one for success in the world, or in the more traditional schools, to be civilized, a polished gentleman of the Western world. The challenge from Christian education is to replace and build on the tradition of biblical wisdom, without destroying the good of western learning. That calls for a restructuring of the model for education.”

—David Mulligan, *Far Above Rubies: Wisdom in the Christian Community*

“If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible, our country will go on prospering and to prosper; but if we and our posterity neglect its instructions and authority, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us and bury our glory in profound obscurity.”

—Daniel Webster

“Self-control is an everyday necessity. We need it every hour...children will not need arithmetic at all times in all places, but they will need this cardinal nature. It may be well for them to learn the bones of the human body, but it will be a vastly greater service for them to have their powers under complete control. They will need the latter, morning, noon and night, from this time until the close of life, while the former is used in certain times and places. It has been claimed that a man can govern a state more easily than himself. Self-control is an indispensable virtue.”

—William M. Thayer, *Gaining Favor with God and Man*

“Biblical Wisdom does not depend on Greek Intellectual knowledge or rationality. Wisdom ultimately rests in our relationship with Jesus Christ, in having the mind of Christ (1Cor. 1 and 2). Biblical wisdom embodies a love for the author of wisdom and for what He enables us to know, and therefore supplies the knowledge with compassion and justice.”

—Harro Van Brummelen,
Steppingstones to
Curriculum: A Biblical Path

“Nineteen wide centuries have come and gone and today He is the center-piece of the human race and the leader of the column of progress. I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched and all the navies that ever were built, and all of the parliaments that ever have sat, and all the kings that ever reigned put together have not affected the life of man upon this earth as powerfully as has that one solitary life, Jesus of Nazareth.”

—Unknown

Proverbs 22:6 says *Train up a child in the way he should go, Even when he is old he will not depart from it.* This verse shows us that a parent’s training must be based on knowing his or her child. The Hebrew text is written with the personal pronoun attached to the noun “way.” It reads, “his way” and not simply “in the way he should go.” “Way” is the Hebrew *derek*, “way, road, journey, manner.” Parents need to recognize the way each of their children is bent by the way God has designed each of them. If parents fail to recognize this, they may also fail to help launch their children into God’s plan for their lives.

All children love to learn—at least all children love to learn before they go to school. Forced learning can destroy the natural love for learning that our children are born with. Children locked into studying something they find boring are no different than adults locked into boring, irrelevant meetings. If adults cannot see the relevance of the material covered in a meeting, they will “tune out” or “drop out.” If children do not understand how the subject will help to address the concerns of their lives, they will tune out. Would you, for example, read this page if it were titled “Basic Plumbing Concepts”? You might if you had a kitchen-sink leak or a basement full of water. In the same way, students need to have an interest in the topic they are learning.

Delight-directed learning places students in charge of their own learning, helping them to find something that they want to accomplish. The HOWTA uses natural curiosity to motivate the student. The student acquires basic concepts of learning (reading, reasoning, writing, researching, etc.) during the process of examining the topic of interest. Less control can lead to more learning.

Marilyn Howshall’s Lifestyle of Learning approach is based on leaning on the Holy Spirit and delight-directed learning. She explains,

If the goal of your instruction is love from a pure heart (which will only come with an emptying of self) then you will provide a strong foundation of character in your children that will enable them with your help to acquire a strong and unique, God-designed education which will include creative vocational purpose. If you want godly fruit, you have to know God and do things His way. You won’t learn what

His way is until you decide you want to know what it is and surrender your will to become completely teachable of the Holy Spirit.

WRITING TO LEARN

One of the best ways for a student to understand a topic is to write about it. Students must comprehend the material, restructure the new information, and then share their new understanding. “Writing to Learn” is much more than an accumulation of report writing; it helps students think and learn carefully and completely. Writing assignments are about creating both ideas and learning. During writing assignments, students learn how to assess information and determine its appropriateness, and to evaluate and compare, analyze and discern, add their own feelings, organize information, and communicate conclusions. Through these processes, students learn to manage and use information to solve problems, interrelate knowledge, and effectively communicate learning outcomes. Students develop excellence in achievement by producing the required quality assignments; they develop diligence by continually practicing clarity, accuracy, relevance, prioritizing, consistency, depth, and breadth through writing activities.

Charlotte Mason’s narration methods for younger children involve “telling back” favorite stories read by parents. In later years, students progress to reading passages and “telling back” in verbal or written form what they have learned. “Talking it out,” whether aloud or on paper, helps students think.

Often, teachers use writing as a way of testing. They use it to find out what students already know, rather than as a way of encouraging them to learn. But the active processes of seeking information, compiling notes, and evaluating, analyzing, and organizing content, as well as the processes of personal reflection, choosing and constructing words, and expressing ideas in writing, are valuable learning tools which students will use the rest of their lives.

Catherine Copley explains in *The Writer’s Complex*:

Writing provides food for thought—it enables you to knead small, half-baked words and sentences into great big loaves of satisfying thought that then lead to more thoughts. Developing ideas involves getting some ideas—in whatever form—onto paper or screen so you can see them, return to them, explore them, question them, share them, clarify them,

“Believe me, sir, never a night goes by, be I ever so tired, but I read the Word of God before I go to bed.”

—Douglas MacArthur

“Almost every man who has by his life-work added to the sum of human achievement of which the race is proud, of which our people are proud; almost every such man has based his life-work largely upon the teachings of the Bible.”

—Theodore Roosevelt

“We need not labor to get children to learn their lessons; that, if we would believe it, is a matter which nature takes care of. Let the lessons be of the right sort and children will learn them with delight. The call for strenuousness comes with the necessity of forming habits; but here again we are relieved. The intellectual habits of the good life form themselves in the following out of the due curriculum in the right way. As we have already urged, there is but one right way, that is, children must do the work for themselves. They must read the given pages and tell what they have read, they must perform, that is, what we may call ‘the act of knowing.’ We are all aware, alas, what a monstrous quantity of printed matter has gone into the dustbin of our memories, because we have failed to perform that quite natural and spontaneous ‘act of knowing,’ as easy to a child as breathing and, if we would believe it, comparatively easy to ourselves. The reward is two-fold: no intellectual habit is so valuable as that of attention; it is a mere habit but it is also the hallmark of an educated person.”

— Charlotte Mason

LOGIC AND REASONING

Human reasoning is a reflection of God's likeness in man. It is a gift from God that was not designed to function independently from Him. The Greek classical approach focuses on logic without moral absolutes.

The Hebrew position is one that acknowledges the need for objective leading from God. The mind of man without leading of God's spirit, has limitations. God provides the signals and our job is to read them properly. The Hebrews were free to use their reasoning abilities making decisions and determining direction in life but they were obligated to stay within the borders provided by God's Word. Reasoning without these borders leads to man's reliance on his own understanding.

Man's reasoning without God can say man needs more than one wife because animals have more than one mate. Homosexuality is another example of man's reasoning without God.

Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. Proverbs 3:5

Studying the Bible is the ultimate lesson in reasoning skills. Teaching students to think critically as they confront different information resources is the core of resource-based learning. Christians don't need expensive analogy workbooks. We have the depth of God's Word: the parables Jesus taught, the foreshadows in Bible holidays, the significance in numbers, the symbolism, the types, and passages such as Isaiah 53 revealing Christ, etc.

change them, and grow them. It really is almost like growing plants or kneading bread and waiting for the results: plant the seed, start the process, and then let your mind, including your unconscious, take over. Go to sleep and let your dreaming continue to develop your ideas. Humans were born to think; it's almost impossible to stop us. Writing helps us to bring all that activity into consciousness, helps to clarify and direct our thinking, and generate more thinking. Writing, thinking, and learning are part of the same process.

With the HOWTA approach parents correct spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, sentence structure, subject/verb agreement, verb tense, and word usage in all writing by marking each error with a number that corresponds with a rule from a writing handbook. (We recommend any of the Write Source Handbooks: *Write One*, *Write Away*, *Writer Express*, *All Write*, or *Writers INC*—depending on grade level.)

SUMMARY

The Heart of Wisdom Teaching Approach is for those who want to return to the biblical education method and make the Bible the focus of all learning. More details and resources for using this approach are available on our Web site and in the book *The Heart of Wisdom Teaching Approach* (due to print, Lord willing, in 2004).

The next few pages give ideas on how to implement this approach.

IMPLEMENTING THE HEART OF WISDOM TEACHING APPROACH

As discussed previously the HOW Teaching Approach has a two-sided curriculum base: God’s Word (Bible studies) and God’s world (academic studies). This chapter contains practical ideas for Bible study and a brief overview of the academic studies.

GOD’S WORD: BIBLE STUDIES

Using the HOW Teaching Approach, we show our children the importance of God’s Word by making it the first priority of the day and continually referring to it throughout the day. The Bible was designed to be stimulating, interesting, delightful, challenging, comforting, and calming. Embarking on this path will provide you and your children with the wisdom all of us need for life.

The wise Solomon instructed us to search the Word of God for hidden treasure as we would seek after silver. In Matthew 6:33 we read, *Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.* God wants us to diligently seek after His Word. Our desire is to be preferred over necessary food, raiment, or riches, (or state standards), or any enjoyment of life. We must make it first in importance. Everything else must give way before its demands.

Jesus said, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind* (Matt. 22:37; also see Mark 12:30, Luke 10:27). To love God intellectually is to become a student of God—a student who takes a sincere interest in God. John Garr, founder of the Restoration Foundation, explains that study is the highest form of worship:

The decision to study God’s Word in order to do His Word is a meaningful act of submission and reverence—in short, it is worship. Study carried out with this motive is the very essence of Biblical learning. This is not study in order to understand; it is study in order to do.

Study of God’s Word in order to mold one’s lifestyle to that Word is also worship in the truest sense of the English word worship, which means to “ascribe worth to.” When we fully submit our lives to God’s Word, when we study what He has said with complete devotion and intensity, we do, indeed, ascribe worth to Him: we worship Him.

The importance of studying the Word of God is seen in Paul’s instructions to Timothy: “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly

LEARNING STYLES—

Be cautious studying learning-style theories. As with other truths, non-believers take a discovery (as the secular world often does), and distort the principle to fit their secular world view. This does not mean we must discount facts because non-believers discovered them, just as we would not discount discoveries such as the automobile, eyeglasses, or other things we use daily that may have been discovered by an unbeliever.

The Bible describes how different people are given different gifts and talents. Anything you read about learning styles should line up with God's Word and never be an excuse for sin or shortcomings.

The 4Mat System Studies have proved the four-step system outlined in this book provides:

- Improved Retention
- Higher Achievement
- Increased Motivation
- Improved Thinking Skills
- Lower Remediation

—Excel, Inc.

For further reading see:

- The 4Mat System, Teaching to Learning Styles with Right and Left Brain Processing Techniques* by Bernice McCarthy;
- 4Mat in Action* by Susan Morris and Bernice McCarthy;
- The 4Mat System Workbook*;
- The 4Mat Developer Software* by Excel, Inc.

dividing the word of truth...from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Timothy 2:15; 3:15-17).

Intense study is necessary to avoid the shame of inaccurately interpreting God's Word. This is in keeping with David's description of the righteous man: *His delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night* (Psalm 1:2). The meditation to which David refers is not Eastern Monism's meditation. It is the repeating over and over again, of the words of God until one so ingests the Word that it becomes a part of the very fiber of one's being.

The Bible is not just a valuable collection of ancient documents. It is not just the annals of history. It is not just literary genius. It is not just an assemblage of entertaining stories. It is God's Word to us. Bible study is a transforming process. As we respond in obedience to what God speaks to us, then we will participate in the transformation whereby we become more and more like Jesus, our Lord.

READING THROUGH THE BIBLE EACH YEAR

It only takes fifteen to twenty minutes per day to read through the Bible in a year. We suggest that you set aside one to two hours each day (depending on your children's ages) for the Bible lessons. During these lessons, students will be learning to learn by referencing Bible tools. Having the tools on hand will make your studies more convenient and simple. Perseverance, persistence, and dedication are important. Your attitude toward the studies serves to motivate and inspire your students.

Our goal in reading through the entire Bible is to grasp the whole picture. There is nothing special about the one-year (or fifty-two week) time frame. You should read the Bible at a pace you feel comfortable with; you may decide to spend two years or longer. The Bible Reading Check List in this book is simply a framework to get you started. Rely on the Holy Spirit to guide you through the readings. The most important thing for us to remember is not to focus upon the quantity of information we learn, but to remain faithful to whatever spiritual truth God has entrusted to our care. Your Bible study should

be life changing, meaningful, and applicable to your daily struggles, tests, and challenges; it should not be just academic knowledge. An academic study of God's Word will produce little benefit apart from the Holy Spirit. Good study methods alone will not produce good Bible study. It takes a sincere heart with the right kind of attitude as well. The student who has a hunger and thirst for the Word of God will find that God will meet Him.

The Bible Reading Check List in Section IV arranges the Scriptures chronologically, in the order that the Bible events occurred. These portion divisions are from *The Narrated Bible: In Chronological Order*. *The Narrated Bible* is not a paraphrase or translation; the central text is composed entirely of Scripture using the New International Version. Narrative commentary is included in a separate and distinct typeface and color. Throughout the presentation of Scripture, chapter and verse designations are placed in the margin for easy reference. The narrative commentary is written in such a way as to be part of an unfolding story. The text in *The Narrated Bible* can be used for dictation and copying lessons (teaching handwriting, grammar, capitalization, and punctuation), because it is written in everyday English. Families with very young children may decide to use *God's Story* or Bible storybooks (explained later in this chapter). You can use any Bible version by referring to the chapters and verses listed in the Bible Reading Check List.

You Will Need:

- KJV Bible for Reference
- A chronological Bible to read aloud, such as *The Narrated Bible* (for younger children, *God's Story* or Bible storybooks)
- Write Source Handbook (proper age level)
- Spelling Notebook for each student (spiral-bound notebook divided alphabetically)
- Vocabulary Notebook for each student (spiral-bound notebook divided alphabetically)
- Art Portfolio for each student (Poster board stapled together to protect large artwork)
- Materials to make the Portfolio and Time Line Book (a three-ring notebook for each with a clear-plastic pocket cover, and a three-hole punch)
- A note book for the teacher to jot down ideas and thoughts
- Bible Tools
 - Bible Dictionary (Child or Adult)

STEP 1 EXCITE

- Brainstorm
- Mindmap
- Observe a video
- Discuss
- Make lists
- Draw tentative conclusions

STEP 2 EXAMINE

- Read the Bible
- Look up items and words in a Bible handbook
- Refer to a commentary
- View Bible maps
- Interview father or pastor

STEP 3 EXPAND

- Write a song
- Write poetry
- Make a poster
- Create illustrations
- Make a salt-dough model (lamp, menorah, etc.)
- Play interactive software
- Do a science experiment
- Create a puppet show
- Make a diorama from a shoe box
- Write a letter from a character
- Write a letter to a character
- Write a newspaper article about an event
- Trace a journey on a map
- Create a costumed play
- Make a booklet or pamphlet

STEP 4 EXCEL

Share and Explain a Project:

- Writing activities
- Portfolio
- Artwork
- Oral stories
- Recite poetry
- Sing a song

“The most important activity for building knowledge and skills eventually required for reading is that of reading aloud to children.”

—Marilyn Adams,
reading expert

Reading the Bible each day causes children to come to you all day long with questions.

This gives you an opportunity to do what God commands us to do in Deuteronomy 6:7: *And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.*

Bible Versions

We recommend the 1611 authorized King James Version Bible for Bible study, along with lexicons to look up Greek and Hebrew words. However, for daily Bible reading, we think of *The Narrated Bible* as a “story book” to read aloud, giving the children an overview of the entire Bible. It reads like a novel and is easy to understand.

- Bible Handbook (manners and customs)
- Bible Atlas (map book)
- *Strong’s Reference Book*
- Hebrew Lexicon (older students)
- Greek Lexicon (older students)

The specific Bible resources we recommend are listed at the end of this chapter.

THE FOUR-STEP BIBLE LESSONS

There are four basic steps to the HOWTA. The amount of time for each step will vary from a few minutes to a few hours depending on the activities chosen. These four steps teach to all four learning styles and both brain hemispheres. Studies show that this four-step method motivates students to comprehend the material better and retain the information longer. The steps will occasionally overlap each other; they are just a general outline to organize the lessons.

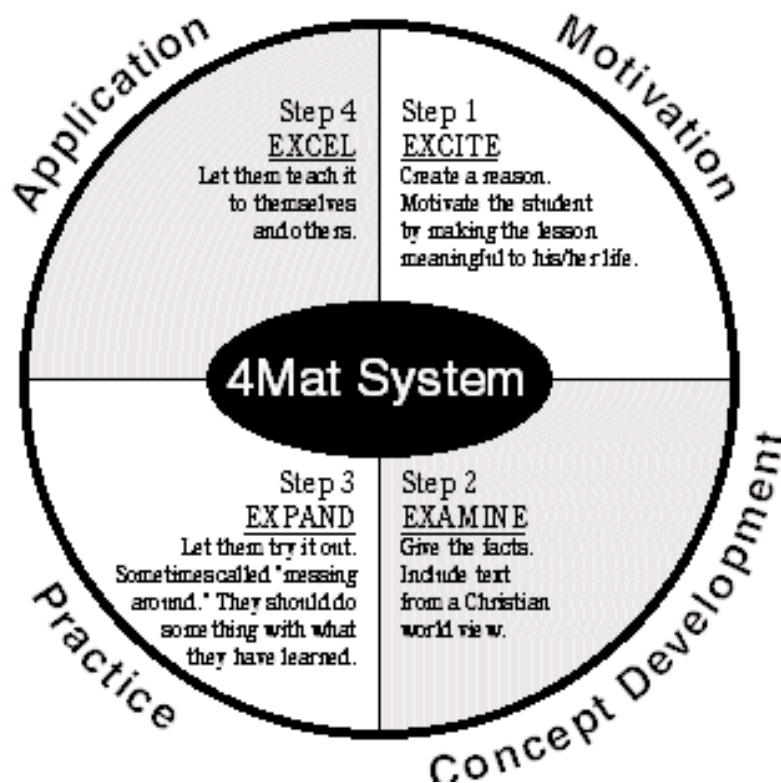
Explain to your children what a privilege it is for us to know God through Jesus, and how relationships are based on communication. God communicates with us through His Word; we communicate with God through prayer. Before beginning the school day, talk to God through prayer. Devote your day to Him and ask His blessings. During your studies, stop at any time you have difficulty with a passage. Remember that God promises us wisdom when we ask for it (Jam. 1:5); therefore pray for wisdom. Prayer comes from a humble spirit that is willing to ask for assistance and acknowledge need. Praying shows that you recognize your dependence upon God (Prov. 11:2; Jam. 3:5-6).

STEP 1 EXCITE: CREATE AN INTEREST

Motivate students by making the lesson meaningful to their lives. (5-10 minutes)

Before Beginning a New Book of the Bible

Get a clear overview of the book as a whole before trying to dissect it into different smaller parts. Discuss the author, time period, and overall theme. Refer to handbooks: *What the Bible Is All About for Young Explorers* and *The Amazing Expedition Bible*; both include an outline and list of the main people in each book, helping you to see the contents of that book in a nutshell. They also include time lines that show you when events happened. You’ll find summaries of sections within

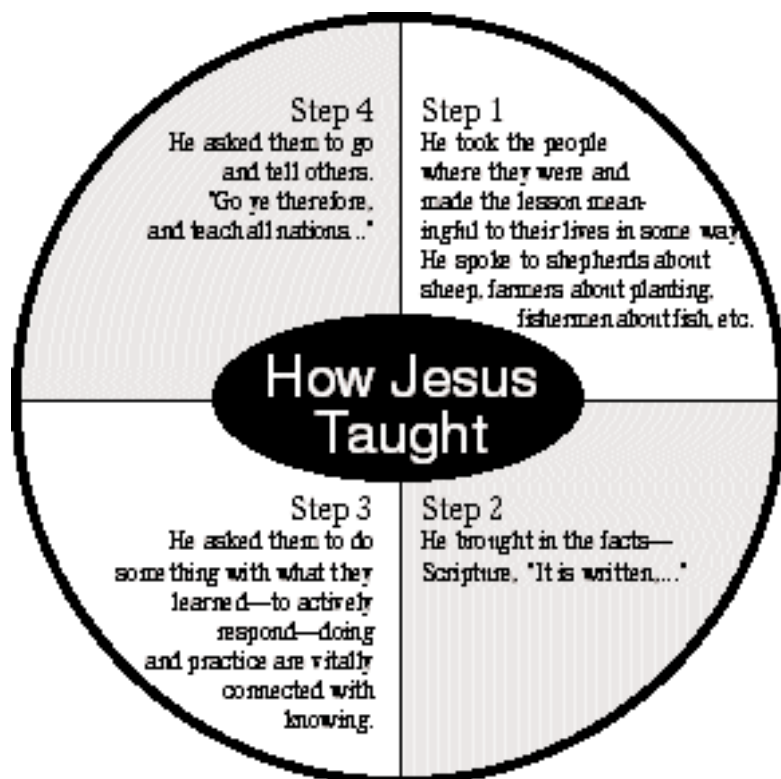


The 4MAT® model consists of four instructional goals:

1. Motivating students
2. Teaching ideas and facts
3. Experimenting with concepts & skills
4. Integrating new learning into real life

It addresses four styles of learners:

1. Those who learn by listening and sharing ideas
2. Those who learn by conceptualizing—integrating their observations into what is known
3. Those who learn by experimenting—testing theories in practice
4. Those who learn by creating—acting and then testing their new experience



The 4Mat lessons are designed so that all learning styles are addressed, in order that more than one type of student may be permitted to both "shine" and "stretch." Each lesson contains "something for everybody," so each student not only finds the mode of greatest comfort for him/her, but is challenged to adapt to other, less comfortable but equally valuable modes.

For detailed instructions relating to copying and dictation methods, read chapters six through ten in Ruth Beechick's *You Can Teach Your Child Successfully*.

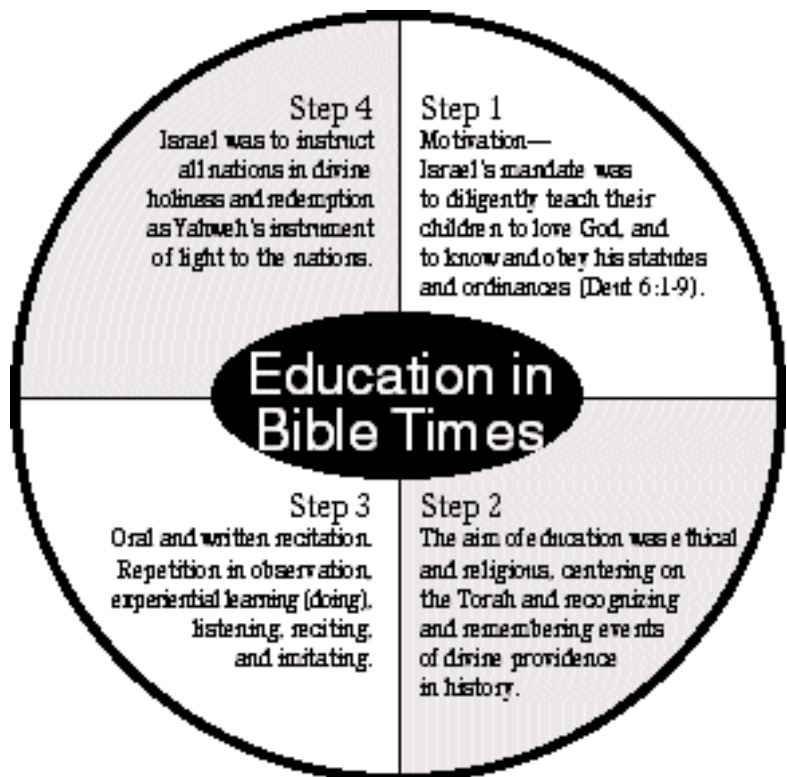
LISTENING TO BIBLE READINGS

If you are reading Bible text to older children, the toddlers may not seem to gain much from the reading time, but this period is an excellent opportunity to teach children to sit still and be quiet.

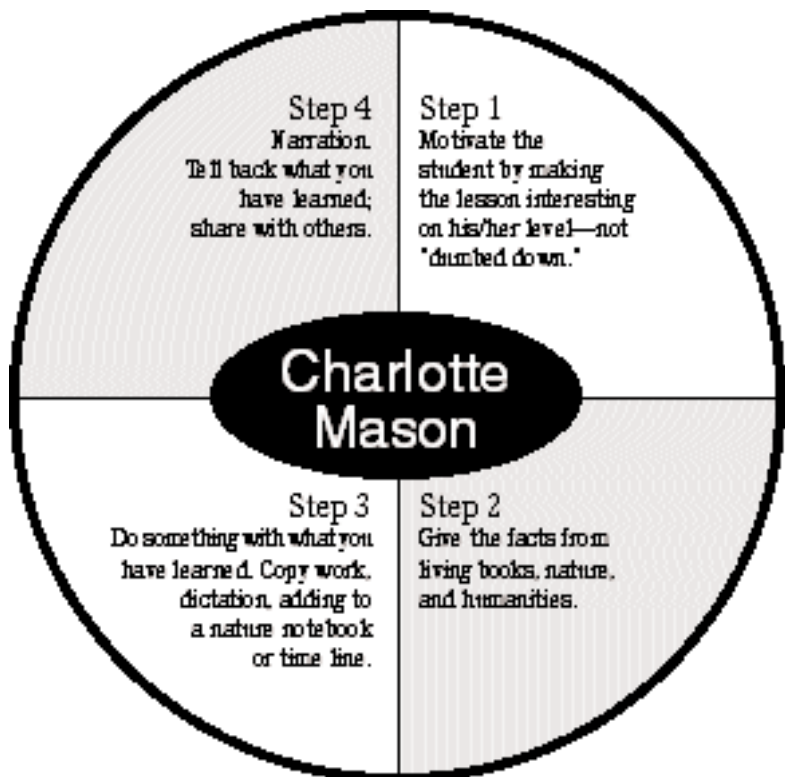
Sometimes we practice being still, and sometimes I provide a set of wood blocks or coloring books for younger children (only available to them during this reading time).

WRITING PROMPTS

- Write a newspaper article for an event that happened in the Bible story. Include who, what, where, why, when and how.
- Contrast the life of the people in the Bible story with your life today. How are they alike and different?
- Give examples of cause and effect in the event.
- Write about a character that displayed qualities of bravery. Tell what you would have done if you had been in that character's place.
- Write an editorial expressing your opinion about an event.
- Choose characters from the Bible reading and give a report on them.



Modern-day science may have come up with the 4Mat System, but is it really a new way to teach—or have we had this pattern all along?



The Heart of Wisdom Teaching Approach creates lesson plans using Charlotte Mason's methods and teaching to the four learning styles. It's a new, creative way to organize Charlotte Mason's unique methods.

each book that show how each section fits into the big picture, illustrations that show events in detail, and maps that show you where it all happened.

Step 1 Suggestions:

- Brainstorm, ask questions, and discuss what the children may already know about the passage.
- Make a list of what they would like to find out.
- Share with them what the passage meant to you when you read it for the first time.
- Talk about the previous events (from previous day's readings).
- Have each student begin a mind map (see our Web site for samples—<http://HomeschoolUnitStudies.com>) which they will add to after the reading.
- Have each student begin an outline.

STEP 2 EXAMINE: READ THE PASSAGE AND USE BIBLE TOOLS

If you are using the Bible Reading Check List, the suggested readings contain several different stories. Example: One reading includes pages 23-30 in *The Narrated Bible*. These pages include the following stories:

1. The Call of Abram
2. Abram Dishonors Himself in Egypt
3. Separation of Abram and Lot
4. Defeat of the Kings
5. God's Covenant with Abram

It may be easier to complete one of the stories, using the Bible tools, then continue on to the next story.

Step 2 Suggestions

Each student may do one or several of the following:

- Look up the area where each story took place in a Bible atlas. *The Holman Atlas* (also set up chronologically) includes maps and historical text that will illuminate each story.
- Look up selected words in the Bible dictionary. Jot down unknown words for the next step.
- Look up manners and customs (such as circumcision) in a Manners & Customs book.
- Use a Bible concordance to expand the study.
- Use a book like *Who's Who in the Bible* to learn about character and trials of a person's life.

Several Bible storybooks are available in Christian bookstores:

Hear Me Read Bible storybooks are available on two levels. Each story consists of 15 to 25 words that are repeated often to help children develop a sight vocabulary. There are currently 26 books in the series.

The *Arch© Bible Storybooks* consists of a set of inexpensive, lively, rhyming poems, and -colorful illustrations for children preschool to kindergarten. The books in this series published before in the 1980s, include realistic type illustrations. The newer illustrations are too "cartoony" for our family. There are over 44 books in the series.

Now You Can Read Bible Stories are delightfully written and illustrated. The new series (from Thomas-Nelson) consists of nine books; however, we were able to find several books that used to be in this series (originally published by Rourke) from used book stores.

The *Biblearn* Series are good read-aloud hardback books with nice illustrations. Currently there are 24 books in this series. Books include several stories each.

MATERIALS TO MAKE THE BIBLE PORTFOLIO

- A large, sturdy three-ring notebook with a clear plastic front (designed to slip a cover sheet under the plastic) for each child.
- Three-hole-punched plastic protective covers (for photos, artwork, and flat collections).
- Plastic photo pages (for photos of plays, large projects, etc., in portfolio).
- Ten tabbed notebook dividers labeled:
 1. Law/Instruction
 2. Historical
 3. Poetry
 4. Major Prophets
 5. Minor Prophets
 6. Gospels
 7. Acts
 8. Paul's Letters
 9. General Instruction
 10. Prophecy

Optional supplies

- Colored pencils and/or washable markers and/or crayons
- Ruled and un-ruled paper
- Scissors
- Construction paper
- Three-hole punch
- Decorative paper
- Decorative stamps
- Various art supplies (charcoal, paint, chalk, etc.)

- If the student is unclear about a certain passage, he should use a concordance to compare Scripture with Scripture. One passage will shed light on another as he cross-references with other verses and passages.

STEP 3 EXPAND: DO SOMETHING WITH WHAT WAS LEARNED

Ask each student which section of the reading spoke to him. Allow each student to choose the story or passage that he is the most interested in (delight-directed studies) to expand on in this step.

Step 3 Suggestions:

Each student may do one or several of the following:

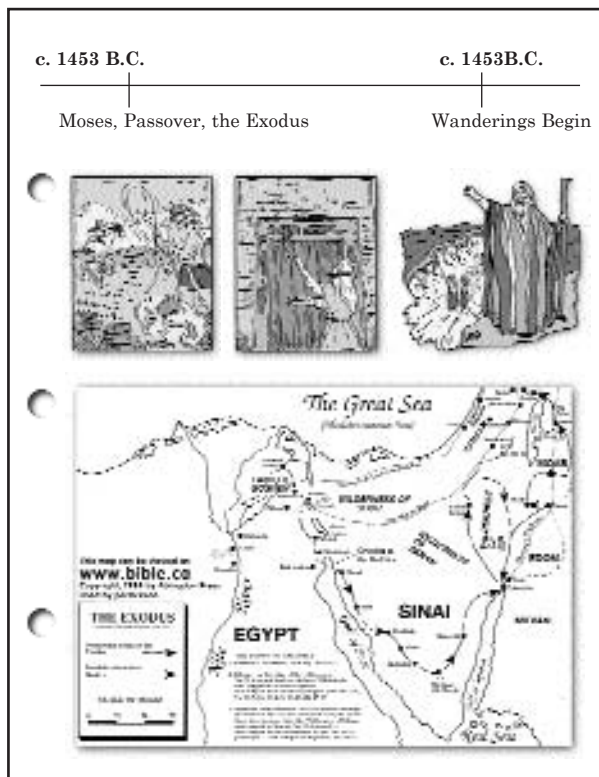
- Rewrite the story in his own words.
- Narrate the story (tell back) to someone.
- Copy an important passage (the older the student, the longer the passage).
- Have you dictate the passage to him (the older the student the longer the passage).
- Dictate the story to you (younger students).
- Illustrate the story.
- Make a salt-dough model of a map of the area.
- Create a diorama (a shoebox “scene”).
- Write a song.
- Write a poem.
- Trace a journey on a map.
- Make a booklet.
- Make a poster.
- Make a postcard.

STEP 4 EXCEL: PULL EVERYTHING TOGETHER

In this step, the student shares his work with another person. This can be done at the end of the week or end of each day. The goal is for the student to prepare each assignment with the object of sharing in mind. When a student can teach someone else what he has learned, it demonstrates that he knows the subject.

Step 4 Suggestions:

- Correct all spelling. Have students add misspelled words to their Spelling Notebooks.
- Have students record unknown words with their definitions in their Vocabulary Notebooks.
- Have students add the work to their Bible Portfolio or Time Line Book.
- Have students share work with others (father, grandmother, neighbor, home school group, sibling, etc.).



Sample page from a Bible Time Line Book

THE BENEFITS OF WISDOM

1. Gain in our knowledge and understanding of who God is (Prov. 2:4-5).
2. Get clear guidance and direction about life (Prov. 4:11-12; 10:13; 3:21-2).
3. God's divine protection (Prov. 4:5-7; 28:26).
4. Protects from evil (Prov. 14:15-16).
5. Protects us in our relationships (Prov. 2:10-22).
6. Protects us from making serious mistakes (Prov. 2:8-10).
7. Provides strength and power from God (Prov. 24:5).
8. Peace, contentment, and happiness will characterize our lives (Prov. 3:13-18).
9. Contributes to a good self-image (Prov. 8:32-35; 19:8). We can love our own soul because we have God's viewpoint about our value.
10. Prosperity (Prov. 8:17-21). Two kinds of wealth: spiritual and material.
11. Good health and a long life. (Prov. 3:7-8; 9:8-11; 15:24).

—Charles Stanley
Intouch.org

GOD'S WORLD: ACADEMIC STUDIES

The Heart of Wisdom course of study (see chart on the page 140) is a logical structure of history and science unit studies (for grades K-12) and life skill unit studies (grades 7-adult). The course is designed to be repeated every four years. History is taught chronologically and science is taught in the order of the days of creation. Literature, spelling, vocabulary, composition, character, and fine arts are taught, not as isolated subjects, but as interactive skills with each unit study theme. Math, grammar, and phonics are taught at grade level. Students in upper grades also study life skills units.

The Bible is studied every year. Students complete approximately five to seven history units and four to six science units per year. This suggested course of study can be easily adapted to fit different families' needs. The course does not have to be followed in order. You can rotate units according to the tastes of your children, or alter the course to the studies your child needs to complete his or her school year objectives.

The course of study can be followed as an outline to create your own unit studies, or as a guide to choosing preplanned

ACADEMIC COURSE OF STUDY

God's Plan	God's World	God's Kingdom
History	Science	Life Skills
Grades K-12		Grades 7-Adult
Year 1		
Adam to Abraham Mesopotamia Ancient Egypt Ancient Israel Ancient Greece Ancient Rome The Messiah	Creation Light Energy Matter Motion	Wisdom Diligence Personal Economic College/Apprenticeship Driving Vehicles
Year 2		
Early Church Vikings Middle Ages Renaissance Reformation	Weather Botany Geology Astronomy Oceanography	Virtuous Women Godly Men Courtship Marriage
Year 3		
Age of Exploration Thirteen Colonies Colonies to Country New Nation Civil War Reconstruction American West	The Cell Marine Zoology Ornithology (Birds) Entomology (Insects) Earth Zoology	Homemaking Interior Design Exterior Design Home Industries
Year 4		
Industrial Era World War I Depression World War II Holocaust	Anatomy General Brain/Nervous Skeletal/Muscular Respiratory Heart/Circulatory	Parenting Home Education Politics Spiritual Fruit

Designed to be repeated every four years.

studies. The book, *The Heart of Wisdom Teaching Approach*, includes a section explaining HOW's. Bible-focused teaching philosophies and a section describing how you can make your own lessons following the course of study. The book also includes many outlines, resources (living books), and suggested activities for all the units. It's a how-to book for those desiring a Bible-focused, family-centered program to teach students a love of learning.

Preplanned unit studies (creation, ancient Egypt, astronomy, etc.) by various publishers are available from several homeschool suppliers. Heart of Wisdom is in the process of publishing unit studies based on the philosophies outlined in Chapter 8 of this book. Twelve volumes are planned. Each HOW unit includes links to Internet sources. Each history volume includes five to seven units, while each science volume includes four to six units. Each unit is divided into twenty to forty lessons as well as: Overview, Objectives, Time Line, Vocabulary, Resource Lists, and twenty to forty 4Mat lessons (Excite, Examine, Expand, Excel).

At the time of this writing, the first book, *Ancient History: Adam to Messiah* (grades 4-12) is available in two forms: on the Internet and in a bound book. The first science and life skills volumes are due online in fall 2001. Lord willing, the other volumes will be created over the next few years. See our Internet site at <http://HomeschoolUnitStudies.com> for progress and sample lessons.

GETTING STARTED

To gain a fundamental understanding of Bible times, we suggest that the first year the family reads most of the Bible chronologically, intertwined with ancient history studies by completing the book, *Ancient History: Adam to Messiah*. The entire family learns how God's people interacted with and lived among each of the world's civilizations. These lessons are an introduction to the Mesopotamian world of the patriarchs, the Egyptian world of the Exodus, the Babylonian world of Daniel, the Persian world of Esther, and the many Bible stories that show us not only the faithfulness of our God, and the greatness of our privileges, but also the marvelous wisdom of the plan of salvation. With these studies we can train our children to have a personal knowledge of God and His instruction telling us how to live.

For More Read
Getting Started Questions
on our site.

Step 3 Activities

- Tape-record a section of the Bible reading you especially liked. Tell why you chose this part. Add background music to fit the mood of the passage.
- Create a political cartoon, caricature, or cartoon strip for some event or character in the Bible reading.
- Create a mural, diorama, three-dimensional figure, costume, or mobile to depict an event or person in the Bible reading.
- Make an acrostic using a character in the Bible reading. Tell about the character using each letter from the title.
- Make a time line for the events in the story.
- Create a travel brochure depicting points of interest in the Bible reading. Include transportation used, land-forms, kinds of housing, natural beauty, etc.

