Creating the Notebooks

In This Chapter
- Bible portfolio.
- Time line book.
- Unit study notebooks.
- Spelling, vocabulary, Greek and Hebrew notebooks.
- Scrapbooking to learn.

Notebooking, a practice which allows children to create and update a variety of notebooks as they learn, is a fun and exciting homeschool technique. Notebooks are more than binders used to store a student’s work. The notebooking approach is a way to teach students how to learn, as they to plan, develop, classify, categorize, construct, and organize a project for display. Children can create their own notebooks on all the different topics they study.

Notebooks are focused on the areas of the child’s interests. School subjects are blended into a theme, in context, so they make sense. School subjects are taught as part of the topic, without the child noticing, resulting in a lifestyle of learning.

George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson all kept personal learning notebooks. This natural approach to education encourages your students to be life-long learners.
Heart of Wisdom unit studies utilize the four-step system of instruction (referred to in a previous chapter):

- Step 1: Introducing and arousing interest in the topic
- Step 2: Finding out the facts
- Step 3: Doing something with what has been learned
- Step 4: Pulling it all together. Sharing with others

In Step 3 students choose an activity to work on that will become part of their notebook. In Step Four students share their notebook with someone.

The Heart of Wisdom approach recommends that each child develop and maintain the following:

1. Bible Portfolio
2. Unit Study Portfolio
3. Time Line Book
4. Spelling Notebook
5. Vocabulary Notebook
6. Greek and Hebrew Notebook
7. Creation Dairy

**Supplies Needed for All Notebooks**

- Three-ring notebooks with a clear-plastic pocket cover
- Variety of paper (lined notebook, plain white, colored, cardstock)
- Top-loading sheet protectors (for photos, brochures, maps, etc.)
- A three-hole punch.

**Always Include Your Student’s Best Work**

Some writing may be acceptable in its first draft, but only completed work (rewritten and corrected) should be included in the notebook/portfolio. Our use of the term
portfolio is not accidental. The portfolio of an artist or photographer is a collection of his or her best work, whether the pages are loose or kept in a 3-ring notebook.

Creating the portfolio will be a reflexive process, as well as a reflective one. Papers may be corrected and rewritten a number of times before they are included. As the papers will define (to an extent) what has been learned, a compilation of these papers will also cause rethinking, reflection, and sometimes, reevaluation.

All work (copy work, letters, summaries, essays, etc) should be placed in either a portfolio or a Drafts Notebook. Only finished work should go into the portfolios. This work should be complete, including all corrections, rewrites, and other improvements. This work will demonstrate correct grammar, punctuation, spelling, and vocabulary usage.

Place all unfinished work into the teacher’s Drafts Notebook. This work can stay as drafts or be completed at another time. Writing drafts are works that have not been corrected. Your Draft Notebook can be a valuable teaching tool. Use unfinished work to teach revising and editing in later weeks. Allow students to edit each other’s work.

Do not require all work to be finished! For example, in five days of teaching you might have five to ten work items (three to five from Bible study and five from unit study work). Of these items several will be some type of copy work or original writing. Of these items, choose at least one (that’s one item per week per subject) to refine to the finished product stage. The other work items should go into the Draft Notebook. You can certainly do more if your student is eager to do so but if you require completed work for every day, both you and your student will be frustrated.

The writing process includes five steps:

1. Prewriting  
2. Writing  
3. Revising  
4. Editing  
5. Publishing, or storing the finished product

The type of work will depend on your child’s age and ability. Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>K–4</th>
<th>Coloring pages</th>
<th>Dictation</th>
<th>Cut out pictures</th>
<th>Copy work (word to sentence length)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5–8</td>
<td>Illustrations</td>
<td>Dictation</td>
<td>Summary writing</td>
<td>Copy work (sentence to two paragraphs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9–12</td>
<td>Journal writing</td>
<td>Summary writing</td>
<td>Essay writing</td>
<td>Copy work (two to six paragraphs)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
You can be very creative with your portfolios. Some students thrive on creativity. For them we suggest scrapbook supplies (memory albums, stickers, die cuts, paper, cardstock, scissors, pens, punches, templates, rulers, idea books, etc.) Students can decorate papers with illustrations, stickers, frames, etc. See Scrapbooking To Learn later in this chapter.

**Organize Your Notebook Supplies**

It’s important to keep all your notebooking supplies in one convenient place. Don’t impede your child’s creativity by not having the materials handy. If you homeschool at the dining table, as we do, consider using a basket or even a carry-on suitcase for supplies (they make suitcase-like containers for scrapbookers). Be on the lookout for pages or pictures from magazines or web sites that your children can use to illustrate copy work. Place them in file folders and keep with your notebook supplies.

Any oversized artwork can easily be stored by folding a piece of poster paper in half, stapling the sides perpendicular to the fold (which has now become the bottom), and slipping artwork in through the top.

**Label Each Portfolio**

You don’t want this precious work to be misplaced or lost. Neatly label each portfolio with the student’s name, age, address, and telephone number on the inside cover.

**Create New Portfolios Each Year**

Begin a new portfolio for each child every year. A comparison of the portfolios year by year will allow you to view your child’s spiritual and academic growth.

**Creating a Bible Portfolio**

The Bible portfolio is used to store the student’s work as you read through the Bible each year. It will include writing assignments, artwork, small collections, letters, photos, brochures, maps, etc. Begin with a 3-ring vinyl notebook that has clear pockets on the outside so the children can design their own covers.

Each child should have his or her own Bible portfolio. I highly recommend Mother having her own personal Bible portfolio too! The contents of your student’s Bible portfolio will vary depending on the age of each student. Younger children’s portfolios will contain more drawings or pictures of crafts. Older students portfolios will contain more writing assignments. Mother can use her portfolio to keep a journal of the Bible stories read and reactions of each child to particular stories.
**Bible Portfolio Cover**

Students can create a cover by drawing on paper with markers or crayons, making a collage, using pictures from the Internet, or enlarging a color photo at a local copy center. Students can then slide the finished product into the pocket covering their notebook. If your student experiences a block in creating a cover design, leave the cover blank until he or she feels inspired.

**Understanding the Whole Picture**

Teaching the structure of the Bible is the secret to getting a comprehensive overview of the Bible. If you want to build a building you begin with a blueprint. To learn the Bible well, you need to understand its structure. When you try to read through the Bible as one story—or even just the Old or New Testament—it can be overwhelming. There are 66 books in the Bible, which can be divided as follows:

**There are 39 books in the Old Testament:**
- The first seventeen books are historical
- The next five books are poetical
- The next seventeen books are prophetical

**There are 27 books in the New Testament:**
- The first five books are historical
- The next thirteen books are Pauline Epistles
- The next nine books are General Epistles

The secret to teaching your children a good overview of Bible chronology is to teach the 12 Eras of Biblical History. Using this one simple method from *30 Days to Understanding the Bible* by Max E. Anders has help me understand and teach the chronology of the Bible more than any other technique. Have your children use these eras to create a title page for each section of their Bible portfolio!

The following pages contain instructions to how to divide the Bible portfolio into twelve historical eras. I really like the simplicity of this
division. In *30 Days to Understanding the Bible* by Anders explains how to study the Bible through these twelve historical eras using helpful pictorial symbols that will give inspiration for title page illustrations.

Anders explains in American history we can view a specific time period in a chart such as the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Era</th>
<th>Key Figure</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Story Line</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colonial</td>
<td>Ben Franklin</td>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>As the 13 colonies long for independence, Franklin leads the formulation of necessary strategy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the same way, we can study the Bible through charting the main periods (or eras), the central figures, the main locations, and a summary story line. The story line is divided into the twelve main eras with a central figure and main location for each era. This would be a type of overview for each time period. This overview can be placed on the divider page as a list of contents or just inside the divider page. The amount of detail you include is up to you. Below is a sample without the storyline, with a list of major events. Keep it simple enough to get an overview at a glance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Era</th>
<th>Key Figure</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Storyline Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creation</td>
<td>Adam</td>
<td>Mesopotamia</td>
<td>Creation, Fall, Tower, Flood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patriarch</td>
<td>Abraham</td>
<td>Ur to Canaan</td>
<td>Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exodus</td>
<td>Moses</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Deliverance, Law, Kadesh Barnea (12 Spies), 40 Years Wandering</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here is an example with a storyline.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Era</th>
<th>Key Figure</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Storyline Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creation</td>
<td>Adam</td>
<td>Mesopotamia</td>
<td>Adam created by God, but he sins and destroys God’s original plan for man.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patriarch</td>
<td>Abraham</td>
<td>Ur to Canaan</td>
<td>Abraham is chosen by God to father a people to represent God to the world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exodus</td>
<td>Moses</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Moses delivers the Hebrew people from slavery in Egypt, then gives them God’s Law.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your students’ Bible portfolios will include essays, reports, stories, poems, songs, Bible verses, journal entries, book reviews, dictation lessons, photographs of projects, computer-produced graphics, memorabilia, recipes, maps, Internet printouts, illustrations, etc. For more creative ideas see Scrapbooking To Learn later in this chapter.

Your children and you will learn as you divide the notebook into the twelve eras with index dividers or colored paper dividers, and make a title page for each section. In addition to the 12 eras, you may want include these sections:

- Poetical Books
- Prophetical Books
- The Epistles

### Creating a Time Line Book

In her writings, Charlotte Mason recommended preparing a handmade Time Line Book (originally called a Museum Sketch Book; sometimes called a Book of the Centuries). This activity is based on one of the major keys to motivation—the active involvement of students in their own learning. Students learn by doing, making, writing, designing, creating, and solving. Creating this Time Line Book is a marvelous way for students to be actively involved and pull it all together and grasp the flow of biblical and other historical events.
In a short period of time students can complete an illustrated time line page that tells a story and gives immediate feedback that is satisfying and rewarding. Then, as your students learn historical facts, they will make notes and sketches in their books, on the appropriately dated pages, about famous people, important events, inventions, wars, etc. (Work that includes undated information about a time period, such as daily life, education, etc., fits better into a portfolio, but you can combine the books if you wish.)

You can purchase a blank Book of the Centuries published by Small Ventures Press 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

One option is to choose a color for the pages of each unit (e.g., peach for Mesopotamia, pink for Rome, blue for Israel, etc.).

Decide 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 and ascension of Christ (c. A.D. 30).

History Divisions

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.

Notebook Pages

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 enough 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.

In the image area you can add illustrations. There are thousands of illustrations, maps, Christian clip art, etc., available for free on the Internet. A few examples are shown in this chapter. You can also draw your own illustrations, use illustrations from the web, or trace or photocopy illustrations.

On the lined area you can add notes or outlines about key events or people. Write a brief summary for each event, development, or invention. Include: Who did it? When did it occur? What it was. Where it occurred. Why it was important. Write a short biography for each person you research. Information that you may want to include: what they did that was important, birth and death dates, where they were born, where they died, etc.

**Unit Study Portfolio**

Work from your Bible reading as well as your history and science unit studies can be included in the Time Line notebook, but you will have a lot of work science and life skills topics that will not fit into the Time Line notebook. Make a separate notebook for these. Consider making one notebook for science each year and one for life skills.
Science Portfolio

If you want to include a full year of science into one notebook you can divide it into themes such as Heart of Wisdom’s first year of science, which is arranged in the order of the days of Creation:

- Creation
- Light
- Energy
- Matter
- Motion
- Electricity

Life Skills Portfolio

A life skills notebook can be divided as follows:

- Wisdom
- Homemaking
- Gardening
- Economics

Create the unit study portfolio following the same general directions for the Bible study portfolio. The size (width) of your notebook will depend on your child’s interest in the topic and how many topics you place in one notebook. If your family is really interested in studying Creation, you can make a 1” to 3” notebook just on Creation. Possible divisions: Creation Days, Creation vs. Evolution, Darwin, etc. If your daughter is really into cooking, you may want to make an entire notebook for cooking. Possible divisions: main courses, soups, desserts, cooking tips, etc.

Contents will depend on the subject. You can include essays, reports, stories, poems, songs, Bible verses, journal entries, book reviews, dictation lessons, photographs of projects, computer-produced graphics, memorabilia, recipes, maps, Internet printouts, illustrations, etc.
Science unit study notebooks will include: lab reports of experiments, drawings of scientific topics (weather cycles, atmosphere layers, etc.), copy work from science topics, outlines of science chapters, graphs and diagrams on collected scientific information, biographies of famous scientists, summary writing, etc.

The potential content of life skills notebooks is endless. I began a three-ring notebook when we first began building our home. It was a great organizer. Divisions included floor plans, layout, lighting fixtures, kitchen appliances, etc. I had a section titled Progress. Every week I visited the site and took pictures. I documented the progress with my digital camera and compiled photos, from the digging of the basement to completion of our home a year later. What began as an organizer later became a beautiful scrapbook of memories.

**Utilize Your Computer**

The computer is a great asset for creating notebooks. There are hundreds of images online available at the click of a mouse. With the new digital cameras it’s fairly easy to photograph projects, then print them out and include them as illustrations in your notebook.

The advent of computers and desktop publishing software has enabled the aspiring artist to create presentations, brochures, posters, business cards and stationary, and personalized birthday cards. This type work may motivate your student to take a course in desk top publishing. Several online courses are available.

**Creating a Vocabulary Notebook**

To set up your student’s Vocabulary Notebook, divide a spiral notebook into 26 sections (one for each letter of the alphabet), allowing two or three pages per letter. Read “Improving Vocabulary Skills” in Writers Inc. It’s best to keep vocabulary in a separate notebook from the unit study portfolios, because many of the new words your student will learn will not be specific to any specific thematic unit.

Vocabulary notebook pages can be helpful for students to observe their progress and to establish increasing awareness in their reading. Research has shown that it is much easier to remember words in context than in simple lists. Computer option: students can keep their vocabulary words in a file on the computer.

Each day, students should make a vocabulary list of unknown words found while reading. At the end of the reading, students will be expected to make vocabulary entries into their notebooks. If the student does not come across any new words, choose new words from the vocabulary section of the current unit study.
Etymology (Word Roots or Origins)

Etymology is the study of the origins of words. The word etymology is derived from the Greek *etumos* which means real or true. The ending *ology* suggests the science study as in biology or geology. Etymology is the study of the origins of words; how they developed.

Etymologist try to reconstruct the history of words from the source, and how their form and meaning has changed. Students should look up the etymology of vocabulary words. It is fun to note the etymology of a word, and noting it helps you understand how the word has come to the modern meaning. One-third of our words are descended from Greek or Latin. For example, the Latin root *tele* means to distance, and this root is found in many English words, such as telephone, telescope, etc. The best way to learn the Greek and Latin roots and prefixes is to learn in context—study the etymology of the words as you come upon them.

The etymology of *grammar* is from the Greek *grammatike tekhne* “art of letters,” from stem of *graphein* “to draw or write.” Middle English *gramarye* also came to mean “learning in general, knowledge peculiar to the learned classes” (c.1320), which included astrology and magic; hence the secondary meaning of “occult knowledge” (c.1470), which evolved in Scottish into *glamour*. A grammar school (1387) was originally “a school in which the learned languages are grammatically taught. In the U.S. (1860) the term was put to use in the graded system for "a school between primary and secondary, where English grammar is taught.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary Entry</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Write the word.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Include the sentence where the word was first found with the date.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Write the definition of the word from the context.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Write the antonym of the word as derived from the context.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Etymology of the word.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Write a sentence using the word.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Word: intact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Found: “The Lawgiver” p. 239. “The deck was torn and scattered, but the precious engine was intact.” (7/9/03)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Definition: unharmed, untouched.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Etymology: c.1450, from Latin intactus “untouched, uninjured,” from in- “not” + tactus, past participle of tangere &quot;to touch&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Sentence: I was pleased to find my house intact after the tornado warnings had passed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If you have computer access there is a free etymology dictionary online at http://www.etymonline.com. An etymology dictionary is just as valuable as a English dictionary. A good reference is *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*.

Introduce younger to etymology with a book like *Abracadabra to Zombie: More Than 300 Wacky Word Origins*. This is a fun book explaining the origins of 300 words. Also interesting *Who Put Butter in Butterfly and Other Fearless Investigations Into Our Illogical Language* by David Feldman and *Horsefeathers and Other Curious Words* by Charles E. Funk.

**Vocabulary Ideas**

Once a week, verbally go over a random list of words. Ask the student to use each word in a sentence. Check off the words that the student masters. Review all words at the end of the semester. Make a checklist of things you want to achieve with your vocabulary notebook. Here are some possibilities by grade level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Activity 1</th>
<th>Activity 2</th>
<th>Activity 3</th>
<th>Activity 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K–1</td>
<td>Add one word a day into notebook.</td>
<td>Practice and write the letters in the word.</td>
<td>Help Mom think of a sentence with the word.</td>
<td>Tell Dad the meaning of the word.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2–3</td>
<td>Add one or two words a day into notebook.</td>
<td>Copy each word.</td>
<td>Dictate a sentence using each word.</td>
<td>Make up a silly sentence with the word.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4–8</td>
<td>Add three words a day into notebook.</td>
<td>Give a synonym for each word.</td>
<td>Help Mom think of a sentence with the words.</td>
<td>Write or tell a silly story with all the words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9–12</td>
<td>Add five words a day into notebook.</td>
<td>Give a synonym for each word.</td>
<td>Write a sentence using each word.</td>
<td>Look up the root of the word.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Creating a Spelling Notebook**

To set up your student’s Spelling Notebook, divide a spiral notebook into 26 sections (one for each letter of the alphabet). Add any words that the student has trouble spelling. Read “Steps to Become a Better Speller,” “Spelling Rules,” and “Commonly Misspelled Word List” in *Writers Inc*. Each time you notice a misspelled word in a student’s written work, write the word on a list for the student. (Remember to add misspelled words that the spell-checker finds in work written using a word processor.) If the word is again misspelled in written work, the student must add it to his/her Spelling Notebook.
Overcoming Continually Misspelled Words

Has anyone ever told you, “If you can’t spell it look it up in the dictionary?” How do look up what you can’t spell? How to Spell It: A Handbook of Commonly Misspelled Words by Harriet Wittels is an excellent resource. You can look up a word the way they think it should be spelled, then find the correct spelling in the next column in red. Every conceivable spelling of a word is included in this terrific reference that’s also a great learning tool. Try using this book with students. Have them place a small mark by each word they look up. You may see a pattern.

If students turn in work with the same words misspelled over and over, you may need to become more firm. Businesses and corporations are continually faced with employees who cannot spell, and use different methods for correcting this problem. One effective example, although a bit extreme, is used by the Orlando Police Department. Police officers in training are required to write lengthy reports (back and front of a page in ink) that are turned in to their sergeants for review. The sergeant reviews the report with a red pen, circling any misspelled words. One error results in the officer rewriting the entire report (back and front). The trainee officers quickly learn to carry a pocket dictionary and carefully proofread reports.

We’re not suggesting that you use this approach—you don’t want to discourage writing—but you can modify this approach by allowing students to use erasable ink. Hand back papers with spelling mistakes and ask for corrections. Encourage students to proofread aloud, always with pencil or pen in hand, and to proofread backwards.

Problem Spellers

I am a poor speller. The running joke in my house is how I am a creative speller. I can think of so many ways to spell a word, and I often include three or four ways to spell one word differently within one article. Amazingly, most of my children are very good
spellers—in fact, three of my children have done professional proofreading work—but unfortunately, the misspelling trait has been passed down to two of my other children. We are not alone. William Shakespeare, Thomas Jefferson, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Herman Melville, Woodrow Wilson, and John Irving were also poor spellers. Some people just can’t spell.

A recent article in the Washington Post, “Why Stevie Can’t Spell,” by Steve Hendrix shed light on my spelling problem. In his 14-year professional life as a writer Steve Hendrix has to rely on editors to correct his horrific spelling. A teacher convinced him the problem could be from his schooling and had him try a remedial program. He performed poorly on a pre-test, diligently studied for many weeks, and then did even poorer on a post-test. Steve ended up getting several brain scans. He found out that the recent ability to scan brains demonstrates how poor spellers can usually use the front reading part of their brains, but have a problem accessing the back spelling part. Twenty percent of the population has trouble accessing the spelling part of the brain.

J. Richard Gentry is an expert in spelling instruction. His site is http://jrichardgentry.com. If you or your children have trouble with spelling, get Gentry’s book My Kid Can’t Spell!. In this book Gentry offers timely and practical solutions to many of the problems parents face. It’s packed with tools, guidelines, and strategies that parents can use immediately: developmental guideposts to track children’s literacy, tips for helping children progress through early spelling stages, a test to determine children’s spelling levels, strategies to help children visualize words, ways to identify poor spelling instruction at school, how to recognize if a child has a spelling disability, and much more.

**Hebrew and Greek Notebook**

Several lessons in Heart of Wisdom unit studies include references to Hebrew or Greek words. Encourage students to look up Hebrew and Greek words in a lexicon. (See our web site for active links to Crosswalk’s New Testament Greek lexicon based on Thayer’s and Smith’s Bible Dictionary, and their Old Testament Hebrew lexicon based on Brown, Driver, Briggs, Gesenius Lexicon.) Your student should have an assigned place in a notebook to keep these words and their definitions, or in a section of his/her portfolio.

**Learning the Greek and Hebrew Languages**

It is my hope that learning the Greek and Hebrew words that are sprinkled throughout the Heart of Wisdom lessons will lead you to making a full study of the Greek and Hebrew language, beginning with Hebrew (Greek is much harder to learn).

There has been a recent homeschool renewal of interest in classical education methods and, along with it, a revival of the study of Latin, which can be beneficial in
understanding the roots of many English words. We recommend students learn the Greek and Latin roots when they learn the meanings of new words by looking up the etymology of the word. (See page 320).

Learning Hebrew can be very rewarding. Martin Luther said, "...the Hebrews drink from the spring, the Greeks from the stream that flows from it, and the Latins from a downstream pool." Hebrew is the only ancient language still alive today. To know Hebrew is to be enabled to benefit from having direct access to one of the world’s oldest cultures. Many people believe Hebrew was the first and only language before the tower of Babel. Jesus both spoke and read Hebrew, and all of the original authors of the New Testament were Jews who spoke and read Hebrew.

Hebrew is the original language of most of the Bible, which continues today to influence, in both direct and indirect ways, much of the world’s thought, literature and culture. Learning Hebrew gives you the ability to better understand the original biblical author’s words, rather than through a translator’s opinion of the author’s words. It is very difficult to understand the meanings of the New Testament’s messages without having an understanding of the Hebraic mindset of their authors. Major errors in exegesis and consequent doctrine arise because we approach with the Western mindset inherited from the Greek influences on Gentile society.

The Puritans viewed Hebrew as the mother of languages and it figured prominently in the Puritan movement in England. English Puritan emigrants were also instrumental in promoting Hebrew as part of the curriculum in such prominent American universities as Harvard, Columbia, Yale, Brown, Princeton, Johns Hopkins, Dartmouth and Pennsylvania. In fact, Yale, Columbia and Dartmouth still bear Hebrew inscriptions on their seals. In Harvard’s early years, more time was devoted to the study of Hebrew than Latin or Greek. This role of Hebrew in the curriculum endured until the 1820s. Graduates of the School of Divinity had to be able to read the Old Testament in the original Hebrew—a practice still required in Denmark.

*Understanding the Difficult Words* of Jesus by David Bivin and Roy Blizzard, Jr., quotes statistics to show that over 90% of the Bible was written in Hebrew, with about 1% in Aramaic, and the rest in Greek. For more on this topic see writings by Dr. Robert L. Lindsey at http://www.hakesher.org and Jerusalem School of Synoptic Research http://jerusalemperspective.com.

Hebrew is a simple and concrete language. Any seminary student will tell you that Hebrew is infinitely easier than the study of Greek. Hebrew is not a complex language but it is fascinating.

We offer several resources, including *The Greek and Hebrew Tutor* (interactive software) Jot and Tittle, at http://Homeschool-Books.com under Language Arts/Languages.
Scrapbooking to Learn

Many homeschooling moms are likely to be familiar with the scrapbooking trend that has swept the nation in recent years. The fastest growing craft industry in the United States, scrapbooking has exploded onto the scene with literally hundreds of new tools, stickers, markers, and decorative scissors, as well as thousands of books full of ideas for recording important moments and memories in scrapbook form.

Fortunately for the homeschool movement, the popularity and the tools and ideas used in traditional scrapbooking can be used to make notebooking an extremely fun and creative outlet for children. Traditional hobby scrapbooking is the practice of combining photos, memorabilia, and stories in a scrapbook-style album. When children are scrapbooking to learn, they follow the same procedures and create scrapbook pages that reflect the topics and subjects about which they are learning.

The Heart of Wisdom approach suggests using scrapbooking methods as a creative outlet for schoolwork. Combine scrapbooking techniques with Charlotte Mason’s copy methods for a great display or addition to your unit study portfolio. Scrapbooking is incredibly rewarding. Students show enthusiasm about almost any subject if they are able to scrapbook it.

A Step-by-Step Guide to Scrapbooking to Learn

Scrapbooking to learn is simple when you follow these easy steps:

1. Decide on your paper. Create a border page or colored design paper. You can use crayons or markers to make a border and designs or purchase decorative borders made for scrapbooking. There are several border pages available online to print out for free. You can also purchase special design paper from scrapbook suppliers.

2. Find one to five images to illustrate the concept you are teaching. It is recommended that you use odd numbers of photos on a page. Images are available on clip-art websites, in magazines, and by photocopying them from books. You can get access to free clip art from Usborne’s Internet-Linked books.

One possible source for images, especially on a Bible passage page, is to allow your children to create paper people that will tell the story. They can color and cut out the paper people as you read the Bible story to them.

3. Have your student copy a passage (scrapbookers refer to text as journaling) about the topic—a sentence, a few paragraphs, Bible verses, poetry, etc. Encourage their best handwriting, or let them type up the passage on the computer. (You can be creative with different fonts.) Practice copying the text on notebook paper, making sure the...
text is not too long for the space on the scrapbook page. Then, when you are ready, begin writing on the scrapbook page with pencil, then go over it with a black marker, or type the text into the computer, print it, and cut it to fit onto the scrapbook page.

4. Place the images onto the page in a logical sequence or wherever they are visually appealing.

5. Consider adding color to your page by matting images with colored paper. Any paper will do—you don’t need to use acid-free, lignin-free paper unless you’re working with photos. Use construction paper, special scrapbooking stationery, etc. Or, you could draw a frame around an image with markers, or crop the images in unique shapes.

6. Decorate your page using scrapbooking tools: die cuts, stickers, paper trimmers, borders, etc.

7. Add the page to the student’s portfolio. Use a three-hole punch or a sheet protector.

8. Scan the page or take a digital photo in order to share the page with others.

Notebooking—especially when creative scrapbooking and the creation of Bible portfolios are involved—is an easy and fun way to increase learning. You will be amazed at the creative pages your children will produce—and how much they learn in the process!
Sample Pages

Visit our student Gallery at ScrapbookingtoLearn.com