

about the prints and artists AND because I have (so far!) been able to look up any artist that I run across and their narrative is IN THERE! There is a smaller, introductory size available that pulls out the Christian artists from the big volume. It is titled, *God and the Christian Artists*. If you want the "ultimate" art resource, the big volume is WELL worth your investment. Want a sampling to get you going with a good beginning? Try the smaller version. Then...all you have to do is pick an artist and dig in to one of his/her prints!

"Copy and re-copy the masters."

Edgar Degas

- ⇒ **Show the children...**I teach my children all at the same time! We cuddle up like we do when we read aloud, pull out a print, and take plenty of time to look and enjoy. It's that easy!
- ⇒ **Discuss the print with your children...**DO NOT lecture or explain! LISTEN! It is AMAZING how much children can "see" with their own eyes.
- ⇒ **Turn the print over and let the child describe the details from memory.** This can be in the form of a Narration or drawing or discussion. Children are REMARKABLY ATTENTIVE! They see incredible details! This encourages them to notice even greater details. Give them a blank sheet of paper to let them have a chance to try to recreate the print themselves. Keep the drawings and Narrations in their notebook. If you have extra prints, you can even let the children have their own for their notebooks as well! I recommend trying to get prints for each of your children to collect in their notebooks. (more on that in a minute!)
- ⇒ **Turn the print back over to see how accurate they were!**
- ⇒ **Leave the print out for the children to come back to it during the week.** At the end of the week, we usually discuss the painting and details that we have enjoyed from the print. If the print is religious in nature, we look up and read the Bible account in Scripture. (For example, when we studied Rembrandt's *The Raising of the Cross*, we looked up the gospel account of the crucifixion. This adds to the emotion of the print and helps us to actually go back in time to Rembrandt's studio...as well as, the cross.)
- ⇒ **Bring out certain prints at certain seasons.** We love bringing out

prints like *The Raising of the Cross* by Rembrandt and Cimabue's *The Crucifixion* at Easter, Fabriano's *The Adoration of the Magi* and Duccio's *The Nativity* during Advent. They compliment our decorations and our festive moods! Also, I do this with music such as Handel's *Messiah* for Christmas every year.

- ⇒ **Help the children to begin their OWN collection of fine art!** This need not be expensive. We have found great prints at our local Wal-mart in the "ready-to-frame" section. The 8 X 10 pictures are perfect to glue onto a bright cardstock piece of paper and add to their notebooks. They only cost \$.97 each! Another option is to be on the "look-out" for calendars, postcards, and books with prints for your children to collect. Old encyclopedias often have the classics that can be cut out. On those "hard to find" prints, we find ours online. Most of the major art museums are online with "virtual museums" FREE for you to "tour." "Right click" your mouse, copy and paste the prints into any of your document programs and print off for an art print at only the cost of your ink! Our children have found entire galleries of their favorite artists. Just add to their notebooks and before long they have a nice collection that is JUST THEIRS!
- ⇒ **Read stories or biographical sketches about the artist!** Keep narrations and pictures in the *Art Notebook*. They may want to compile a timeline for each artist OR for all of the artists they study. They could add mini-copies of their art prints, details about their lives, pictures of the artists, etc.
- ⇒ **Oh...Don't forget your child's original art work!**

Music Notebook...

Are you thinking..."Now, woe Cindy...there is NO way you can include MUSIC in a notebook TOO!?" Oh! Yes! YES! We sure can!

For a long time, this was an area that I was left scratching my head as to HOW we could document on paper what we were really learning. Finally, I ran across some of our favorite resources that are PERFECT for Notebooking...*Color The Classics*. EVEN my High School SON loves these! We use the narratives and songs as Copywork, adding them to our notebooks. The pictures are perfect to

copy on 110lb. white cardstock, so the children can use markers or paints if they desire. They can also be reduced and added to our timelines. In fact, another great option is adding a timeline to the *Music Notebook* for all of the composers/musicians OR for the life of EACH one studied.

If you want help getting started with Music Studies AND Notebooking those studies, here are some quick tips...

- ⇒ **Pick one composer to study every six months...** You may prefer to cover more composers. Some moms study a different composer every six weeks! Another option is to go through the *Color the Classics* series. They are based on topics...*Hymn writers, Godly Composers, Patriotic Songs, and Christmas Songs*. Try listening to only one of his/her great works to get you started!
- ⇒ **When interest peaks, read a biography about the composer and allow the children to narrate a sketch of the composer for their Music Notebooks!**
- ⇒ **Once the family is pretty familiar with the composer's work, introduce more works by that composer.**
- ⇒ **Help children to begin their own collections of Classical music.** Begin your collection with one great collection such as Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* or anything by Mozart! You can find collections very reasonable at stores such as Kmart or Wal-mart!
- ⇒ **Listen every day to Classical Music for about 1/2 hour minimum...** Play gently in the background during chores, naps, as going to sleep, travel, leisure, school-work, meal preparation, playing, drawing, nature walks... Gradually the child will prefer the truly great and beautiful to that which is shallow and ugly! Plus, they will really enjoy anticipating the measures!
- ⇒ **Try copying narratives from *Color the Classics* into their Music Notebooks.** The coloring pages included in their books are PERFECT for adding into the notebooks too. If you want some easy music lessons for

on-the-go, try tapes such as *Classical Kids* or *Moments with the Masters* to teach biographies of composers in a fun way!

⇒ **Read stories written around compositions** such as *The Nutcracker*, *Peter and the Wolf*, *Carnival of the Animals*. Put narrations of those stories in their Music Notebooks!

Music Notebooks can go even further. Your children do not have to limit their entries to works by others, they can add their own original songs...critiques about symphonies, concerts or field trips that they may attend...pictures taken or collected of composers and symphonies...memorabilia from symphonies/concerts...etc. These notebooks are greater as they reflect the interest of each individual child!

Some other variations...

1. **Hymn Notebook**...Copy or photocopy hymns from hymnal. Mount on pretty paper. Add hymn history or narrative about writer. (You can find hymn histories online by searching for "Hymn History")
2. **Great Composers Notebook**...Copy information from *Color the Classics* or *The Gift of Music* or an encyclopedia. Read biographies and write out narrations about composers.

Field Trip Notebook...

One of my favorite years of homeschooling goes back to a COMPLETELY broke and lonely year. Harold had taken the job with the State of Alabama as a State Trooper Trainee, which required six LONNNnnnnnnG months in the academy. Besides being at half pay during his academy training period, we were also separated from one another except for weekends. I lived in our camper only about 10 minutes from the academy, to save money AND to see him faster than if he had to drive to our hometown every weekend. Although I was close by, it seemed that the weekends always went by in a blur while the week-days were at snails pace!

The benefit of six months living in an area that would not be home after training was that we were living in a constant vacation/field trip! We learned

more about Alabama and American History than we have the WHOLE time we have been Homeschooling. How? You want that SURE-FIRE resource too? Here goes! Field trips!

We found resources that had been at our fingertips all those other years in our hometown, but I had never realized how great the material really was. Check in your area at your local Chamber of Commerce, museums, aquariums, Living History Museums, Art Museums, etc. I was thrilled to find goodies PERFECT for our notebooks. We were given great coloring sheets, information packets, booklets, maps, articles, posters, on and on! Your children can also add their reviews, narrations, mementos that they buy, pictures taken, etc. to their notebooks. Some other variations of this notebook would be...

1. **A Museum Notebook**...Include mementos, sketches of exhibits drawn during visits, information copied during visits, narrations of what they learned, photographs taken...
2. **Living History Notebook**...Same idea as Museum Notebook, plus you may want to add any pictures of the children at events.
3. **Travel Notebook**...We keep a Travel Journal with our children. We have tried to collect postcards that best represent what WE saw in areas that we travel to. They also sketch in their journal to remind them of special things that they see. Elisabeth is our "flower child." She adds pressed flowers/plants that she finds in our travels to her journal.

Extra-curricular Activity/Hobbies/Special Interest Journal...

Want to seize your child? Build a notebook based on their interests! EVERYTHING is game! Want a place to begin? Why not their extra-curricular activities and favorite hobbies? They could keep how to's...their personal journey...information about the hobby or activity or special interest...a log of what they do in any projects based on interests...research...or even a scrapbook of THEM doing it!

Anything is game: baseball, business ventures (Matthew has had a knife business since he was 12 years old. The information on this interest is abundant

and BEGGED to be Notebooked!), ballet, sailing, tea (History of tea, recipes, types of tea, famous tea rooms, tea etiquette...), building, wood-working, architecture, automobile repair or restoration (neat for a scrapbook, step-by-step), farming (gardening, animal care...) photography, sewing, drama (include plays or skits either created by the student or collected and copied), football, tennis, scouts, coin collecting, stamp collecting, 4-H, music...on and on!

What would they add? Well, take baseball as an example...encourage them to keep cards, stats, bios of players, history of the game...on and on! No limits!

Holiday Notebook...

Want a great unit study OR maybe you already have tons of information floating around without a "place" for it to be kept! Any holiday is game! Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving...oh, all of them! Research and notebook customs, stories, Bible verses, memories, recipes, family pictures, ideas, crafts...on and on! Don't give this area to satan and miss all of the blessings.

Sewing Notebook...

The very first "binder queen" that I knew was my husband's grandmother. She was the one who completely addicted me to Notebooking! One of her notebooks was JUST dedicated to stitches/techniques for sewing. She used a bright colored sheet of paper for each stitch. On it, she would jot down the stitch used, stitch length, stitch width, thread, needle, machine used, and any other pertinent information...then, she would staple a piece of material with a sample of what the stitch was supposed to look like onto the piece of paper. When she needed her how-to's for a specific stitch it was right at the tip of her fingertips or in the pages of her Sewing Notebook! This is a super idea for that student whose delight is in the area of Sewing, but you are not sure how to DOCUMENT her learning! There are other options too...

1. **"How-To" Instruction Sheets...**Your child may want to collect how-to's for different techniques. I have several notebooks filled to overflowing with how-to's from classes that I have attended and taught on sewing, smocking, embroidery, etc. With a digital camera, a student could even document an entire project step-by-

step for their notebook. CUTE!

2. **Patterns**
3. **Embroidery Stitches and How-to's...** Same idea as Mamaw's notebook, only include samples of Embroidery stitches. I have a notebook with my instructions AND samples of what it is supposed to look like. On those days that I need a refresher, this is a treasure!
4. **Smocking Plates...** Even before I thought about notebooking for homeschooling, I had notebooks filled to overflowing with Smocking Plates that I have collected over the years. I actually have my plates divided into several notebooks. One has Picture Smocking Plates, another has Geometric Smocking Plates, and another has Smocking Plates with special embroidery stitches/techniques. This helps me have a "place" for my plates so that I KNOW where to find them when I need them!
5. **Sewing/Smocking Magazines...** You have got it! I have mine archived by titles and in chronological order. The spine is labeled so I can easily find the one that I am looking for. This idea works for any hobby that your child may have. There are magazines for most hobbies and interests.

Homemaking Notebook...

Resource Recommendations!

Need some great reproducible pages for these notebooks? Check out our NEW Make Your Own Notebook Pack:

Make Your Own Recipe Notebook

Make Your Own Brain-in-a-Binder

The Ultimate Mommy Menu Planner

Elisabeth's Cookbook

Have a child who is taking increasing responsibility with the many homemaking duties in the home??? This is a wonderful notebook for them. Anything can be kept in this notebook. Your child may have lists and list of tips for homemaking. They fit nicely in the notebook. Maybe they are interested in home decorating. Again, plans and finished work can be kept in their notebook (need that digital camera again!).

If they are planning meals...or the family schedule...or hospitality...or family ministry to those outside of your home; their plans can be kept in their notebook.

You may already have reproducibles that are perfect for this project right in your home already. Regardless of your preference,

this is the perfect "place" for your children to keep those that they plan for the family.

Some variations to consider...

1. **Herb Notebook**...Include research on how to grow, how to use, recipes, remedies, medicines, Bible verses, etc....
2. **Nutrition Notebook**...Research food groups, diseases, remedies, etc....

Recipe Notebook...

This notebook follows along the same lines as the Sewing Notebook or Homemaking Notebook. I love this one so much PROBABLY because I remember the dilemma I faced as I married Harold and had NO idea where to begin cooking.

How do ya do it??? Collect copies of recipes. Add pictures of the step-by-step process preparing the recipes. Any nutritional research or Bible studies on food and health can also be added to the notebook. Imagine beginning a home with a FULL notebook!

Resource Recommendations!

Need some great reproducible pages for these notebooks? Check out our NEW Make Your Own Notebook Pack:

Make Your Own Recipe Notebook

The Ultimate Mommy Menu Planner

An Idea Notebook!

Robert Louis Stevenson was noted for always carrying three books with him at all times. Being remembered one of the most beloved authors of all time, we could learn much from his "book bag!" Yes, Robert Louis Stevenson, acclaimed and prolific author, carried three books with him at all times—one to read, one to copy neat quotes and gems into, and one in which to brainstorm his ideas for original writing projects. For the budding young author, this is a MUST!

Do you have a young writer who is possibly interested in writing as a profession? Do you have a reluctant writer who needs LOTS of help? My personal advice is the same for either. An *Idea Notebook* is a must! Here are a few of my favorite "perks" that I think will convince you...

⇒ **Ideas have their own "spot!"** No more digging around for scraps of

paper with ideas brainstormed on them. No more losing ideas that come...and go. Ideas will have their own spot. Ideas can be developed and kept safe! Writing will happen!

⇒ **The brain can get a break so it can fully concentrate on the current project!** Nothing breaks my concentration like the fear that a great idea will slip away. Writing down great ideas, whether topics or even complete outlines, gives my brain rest and allows my complete focus on my current project.

⇒ **Keeping an *Idea Notebook* helps develop the current book project.** An *Idea Notebook* is the perfect place to brainstorm ideas for books, ideas for what to cover in your book, outlines, and ideas. Not only that, I find that my book projects always need quotes or research information included. I keep all of that information in my *Idea Notebook*. Nothing helps my books take a nice, consistent form like setting up my ideas in a notebook first.

How???

Convinced? Ready? Here's how to begin an Idea Notebook today...

1. **Get your supplies!** These supplies are probably already on hand. Gather your supplies and set up your notebook using the following: a 3-ring notebook (I use 3-ring binders that have front and back loading pockets that enable me to create my own cover and spine for each book project), dividers (I use dividers for dividing out my chapters, paper, pens, and sheet protectors (to protect research and important quotes, illustrations, etc.)),
2. **Include IDEAS...** This is where an Idea Notebook will probably grow. For some writers, one notebook is enough (for now!). For my projects, by the time I am writing a book, I have so much information in my notebook that I have to keep one notebook for my information. If you were to see the notebook that I have developed for this particular book, you would see a 3-inch notebook **PACKED** full of great information! As sections have gotten more and more in focus, I have nar-

rowed down my information. In other sections, my information has grown and expanded—much like this book. I also carry another *Idea Notebook* that has my other brainstorm for articles and other books. This is a lifestyle. It makes all of the difference in the world. Even now, I have other *Idea Notebooks* that are busting at the seams, begging to be books! I love that they can “keep” my ideas safe while I concentrate on this project. When an idea is really strong, I can jot it down and add it to those binders when I get a chance. It helps my brain! Have your notebook? Add to it! Add list of fun book topics. Some you may never pursue, others will become your future projects. Keep those lists—it may shock you later to see how many become books! Jot down book/story outlines. One great benefit for keeping an *Idea Notebook* is that outlines tend to be better developed. “Seeing” the vision for the book helps to be sure that there are no blaring gaps in the manuscript. Add neat quotes, Bible verses, and mottoes. Use them in the text, in margins, or to adorn the pages of the book. Keep lists of resources (page numbers), copies of articles/information, websites (lists of recommended websites and copies of research from those sites), booklists, etc. Keep illustrations or CD with clips/scanned images/pictures in the notebook with its corresponding project. And...anything else that may help you produce your book!

3. **Carry your *Idea Notebook* WITH YOU!** I carry my *Idea Notebook* with me everywhere. I carry a tote with my notebook inside everywhere I go. Why? Because you never know when a delay may happen that gives plenty of time to work on a project. It may be writing a chapter in the book. Or, it may be just enough time to brainstorm out a chapter or a section of the book. Or, a break in the day may offer just enough time to edit back over a section of the book. Whatever that break may allow, books are built bit-by-bit. Carrying my *Idea Notebook* with me helps me to seize every free minute to help make my book the best it can be! Encourage your young writer to carry their *Idea Notebook* everywhere and seize those free moments along the way!

4. **Use the *Idea Notebook* to develop books or current writing pro-**

jects...One my best "helpers" for developing my books is my *Idea Notebook*. Not only can I brainstorm ideas without losing them along the way, but I can also see blaring gaps in my manuscript. In this book that you are reading, my *Idea Notebook* has helped more than anything to help me set up my chapters and see the flow of my text. Teach your child to use their notebook to develop their writing projects—whether a research paper, book, article, or speech. Use it to trigger ideas and brainstorm the book's details . Use it to jot down ideas and organize the research. Use it to help projects and books take form! Who knows...your child just might be the next Robert Louis Stevenson!

YOUR Mommy Journal...

Last, (I hope you know that we could go on and on and on!!!!) but not least, I know that many of you live in states that are very difficult to please with accountability. For this reason, I want to share some ideas for things that you may want to keep in a journal of YOUR OWN! Even if you are not having to satisfy stiff requirements, I think you will treasure having "a place" for all of the records of your child's education. Soooo, here are some things that you may want to keep in a notebook of your own...

1. **Daily logs of what is done each day...** I log all that we do throughout the day in a spiral notebook. I keep them at the end of the year in a large 3-ring notebook with other goodies (mentioned in a minute!)
2. **Plans...**Goals, curriculum used, book reading lists, prayers, Bible verses...
3. **MY Continuing Education...**Workshops, classes and seminars attended; books read; research on education; studies...
4. **Meal planning...**
5. **Schedule for the day, month, and year...**calendars, assignments, local newsletters with events and field trips that you attended, extra-curricular activities
6. **Awards, certificates, evaluations, achievements** (articles written/published...research projects...science fair...spelling bee...)

7. **Pictures...**
8. **Samples of work...**Photocopy samples from each of their notebooks.
9. **Resources ACTUALLY used...**Books, Unit Studies
10. **Apprenticeships and businesses participated in...** Evaluation, pictures

**Resource
Recommendations!**

Need some great reproducible pages for these notebooks? Check out our NEW Make Your Own Notebook Pack:

**Make Your Own
Brain-in-a-Binder**

Need help recording all of these goodies? Find great reproducibles that are out there waiting to help you! (some are listed in our Appendix) Represent your entire year and what is REALLY being done in your Homeschool. There is NO right way to do YOUR notebook...just YOUR way!

"Thus speaketh the Lord God of Israel saying, 'Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book.'"

Jeremiah 30:2...

Hummm...Just
in Case You
Need a Bit
MORE Help!



Bear buddies read together

"We write this to make our joy complete."
1 John 1:4

Hey! What ON EARTH is Copywork???



Copywork? What is that? How do you use it at home? What do I use? Where do I start? You are going to LOVE Copywork! It is PERFECT for training up your young writers! And...I think you have come to the perfect place to get started—TODAY!

How We Stumbled Upon Copywork...

Copywork has been an answer to my prayers. I felt in my heart that workbooks definitely were not the answer for teaching grammar, writing, spelling, and appreciation of wonderful literature. What would do the job while doing it more naturally? Why...Copywork, of course!

We stumbled upon the idea of Copywork during some of the most trying days of my life. I think that we all have expectations of what our children can do in regards to writing. Our clash began as the combination of my expectations of my VERY verbal child met my personal love of writing and found a reluctant writer. It seemed that everything that I was doing seemed to be the wrong thing to do if I wanted to reach this little one. It was then that I ran across a God-send. I found Ruth Beechick's small but mighty little book ***A Strong Start in Language***. It seemed too simple! Certainly teaching children to how to write would need to be more difficult, right? Well....hear ye, hear ye!! I found that teaching Language can be as natural when teaching our children how to write as when we taught our little ones how to speak.

Only Ruth Beechick herself can fully explain why to use Copywork. In her book ***A Strong Start in Language*** she shares the following: *"This method is not new or experimental. It is an old and proven method, probably as old as writing itself. Great writers have used it and you have already used it with your child. But once children reach school age, we tend to shed the natural method for a slower, artificial method. Our society thinks grammar books or Language books somehow carry the secret of good writing, but few of them do."*

So how do we teach writing? What is the best way to begin writing your training your little ones? Want to help your reluctant writer, but have no idea where to begin? Well, the key is how we taught our children to speak. Ruth Beechick shares that there is a "parallel." She says, *"Listening and speaking are to spoken language what reading and writing are to written language."* She also says, *"Children learn to write by writing."* What better way to teach our children to write than by copying great models, then setting them up into a book of their very own?

Our Story...

When I began teaching my little boy, I tried to mimic my educators. The problem was that this method was laborious and when given opportunities to write, his work was difficult and very messy. The spelling was atrocious! I really saw this one-year at Christmas. When copying poems and writing letters, there were no blanks.

I decided to pull out Mrs. Beechick's book and use her method of copying to **supplement** my workbooks. It was not very long until Matthew (who was known to have a strong distaste for even holding a pencil!) fell in love with his work. He had a reason to write and it became a pleasure! Also, he was sure that the work was correct because it was taken from great literature--good examples to pattern after. He would proofread his own work using the model. By doing this, he was also learning one of the most important skills necessary for great writing—to proofread his own work. He took great pride in his work and soon began to keep special quotes, verses, passages, and poems in his school notebook. It was not very long until his work began to result in "finished" products—his own notebooks and homemade books.

There was a change in me too. I looked at his workbook with new eyes. This work was monotonous and did not really apply to what we were studying. I began to feel that all skills would be better learned if we could somehow make them apply to his studies because of his strong interest in them. That is exactly what we have done! So, here is what we are doing and how you can do it yourself!

Ready, Set, GO!

For the younger child, you will want to *start by letting them copy their letters and later their name*. For a fun notebook, make an **Alphabet Notebook**. Let them copy a letter per page and decorate that page with pictures cut out of a magazine or coloring book. If they are a little older, they can copy the letter and fill the page with examples of words using that letter. A fun and easy book!

Resource Recommendation!

Need some great reproducible pages for these notebooks? Check out our NEW Make Your Own Notebook Pack:

Make Your Own Alphabet Notebook

All you have to do for a Copywork lesson is just print neatly on the top of a page, then encourage them to make theirs look like yours. I remember doing this with my mom when I was only a few years old. She would write names or words on paper in church for me to copy. Mom did this naturally...without any idea that this was a teaching approach. Now, the discipline is set in me—train up a child in the way they should go?

I was amazed at how much little ones learn from this. My little girl began on her own to teach herself how to write by copying signs and words on trucks as we would go down the road. She would copy from her storybooks, or even her brother's schoolwork. I was utterly shocked when this brilliant (Yep! I am biased!) four-year-old child began on her own to do Copywork. We were riding as a family to town when I looked back to see what was keeping her attention in the backseat. She was sitting there with a copy of *Charlotte's Web* copying the letters on the page. She had copied the title of the chapter and even several sentences without any prompting or even instruction. The only possible explanation of where she got the idea for this would be from this little genius catching the excitement from her brother's Copywork assignments! This was how painless it was to begin Copywork with a child.

As she got older, I continued to *copy her work in a model that I wanted her to copy*. She often chose the selections that she wants to copy, but most of the time I copied several weeks' worth of work for her to copy from. I always sat down to "hand-write" her models at this time because she struggled with the mechanics of letter formation. We did this for about 4 1/2 years.

It seemed like overnight, but she was ready to *copy directly from great*

books. We had expected to transition her into copying her own work directly from the original source by typing her models on the computer using a font like Lucida Handwriting (or a program like ***Start-Write***). This might work great for you. Then, you can use the pages for other children. Just type on the computer in a larger font and leave lines for them to copy on underneath the model (we have some reproducible pages included on the CD that comes with this book for you to use for this). Do this for a bit until they are ready to copy those models directly into their copybook. Then, they will be unstoppable!

As I shared earlier, I began Copywork with Matthew when he was in the Second Grade and Elisabeth was Pre-school. It took watching the Copywork begin to produce fruit before I would trust it and throw away my workbooks ☹. We used Ruth Beechick's little book ***A Strong Start in Language*** to supplement our workbooks for the Second Grade. It did not take very long for me to see that it was going to really work for Matthew!

I ripped out the pages that he had finished in the workbook, put them in his Copybook, then only used Copywork for the rest of the year. He made improvements in every area immediately! The neatest area was the transition from pencil-resistant to addicted to writing!

As he began Third grade, I often wrote an model for him to copy that could give an example of how to write the passage. We also used ***Learning Language Arts through Literature*** for formal grammar instruction. Matthew loved the nice, large print models to copy from their book. He also copied poems, Bible verses, and passages from his library books. His handwriting, spelling, and even grammar all improved so drastically that Copywork sold me!

In Fourth grade, I focused real heavily on oral narrations (which also make great books—more on that in the next chapter!). The children would orally narrate their stories back to me while I took down dictation. I would re-copy the passages as a model for them to use for Copywork. It only took about 6 months of this before Matthew realized that **HE** could create his own writing. He wrote his first essay that year without having to have a formal class in grammar. I was so proud. It sounded as if an adult had written the essay...only an adult would not possibly have had all of the humor and imagination that this wonderful little boy poured into that essay. I saw this wonderful fruit and re-

alized that we were not only improving the basic mechanics of writing but we were also instilling a love of writing in this child. I was hooked!

Copywork healed this reluctant writer! In this short time, he was no longer frustrated, weary, reluctant, resistant! It was all beginning to fall into place!

In just a small bit of time, he was no longer scared of writing a bigger work like an essay! He considered it just as much of an adventure as curling up with a book, going back in time with an author's work. He had spent so much time gleaning from these wonderful authors that he was ready to pour his heart out on paper!

This time of oral narrations and continued Copywork brought us into the next phase of writing for our family. Matthew was then ready for longer passages of Copywork, which gave him a deeper discipline of writing each and every day. My husband casually mentioned one evening that it looked as if he were trying to skim by and copy the least amount he could. That was all it took for my 10-year-old to begin on his own to copy a full page a day!

He also was skilled enough to begin one of his greatest projects all on his own. One day he confided in me, *"Mom, have you ever noticed that these Marine books never have a complete history in one book? That information is in all of these books. There needs to be a book on the complete history of the U.S. Marines."* I listened as he went on, *"I guess I will have to write that one!"* I about fell out on the floor! I encouraged him to begin studying, that he would do a wonderful job with that. He began to take every minute of his free time to compile information for his book. His notebook was getting filled up more and more by the day. This was in addition to the regular Copywork he did each day.

As Christmas break neared, he began to write the story. During the Christmas break he finished the rough draft for the book in his notebook and typed it into the computer... all completely on his own without any help from either of us (Yep! This is MY reluctant writer!). I was so proud to read such a nice piece of work. We went back through with me reading it to help teach about editing. I showed him how to use Microsoft Word's Spelling and Grammar tool, which has a built in help function which tells you the rules that apply to your errors.

I also shared with him about how to develop a story by asking all of the questions that someone would want answered. I casually taught him that I was reading it as a novice (very ignorant mama!) wanting to know all about the Marines before I ended my time in his book (in which HE was the expert—vital if they are going to fill in all of the gaps!). I shared some questions about common words that he did not realize were not common to those who did not read as widely on that topic as he himself did. I was able to teach him that those were important gaps to be sure that his book detailed. I also shared questions that I had as I read. He was then off again writing his little heart out!

As Matthew wrapped up his Marine book, it set the stage for him to write other books on other topics of interest. The skills learned through writing that book prepared him perfectly for all other writing projects—notebooks on very neat topics, essays, articles, research papers, and of course, other homemade books!

Through the years, we continued to use Copywork (even now in the High School years!). Most Copywork lessons resulted in simple additions to their notebooks. But, we have also seen larger collections of copywork result in great homemade books. The text was there beggin to go into a special project. All that was needed was setup, illustrations (many were in the notebooks already), borders, and a special touch by the children to make it their own. To date, one of our company's best selling books is a book that was compiled from Matthew's favorite Copywork from the Civil War. *Famous Copywork of the Civil War* was created after homeschool mothers began to see Matthew's Civil War Notebook. They wanted some ideas to carry home to their young writers. The book was the perfect solution! Who knows? Your young writer may have a "best seller" just needing to be published!

Copywork is still a daily discipline—even as he finishes his Senior Year in High School. But, it is also a personal discipline. I can brag as much on the Copywork as my darling child because I know that Copywork took the artificial out of learning language. Now, Language Arts is alive with purpose! And...we also have tons of great notebooks and books!

What's So Special About Copywork?

There are a few things that happen when children copy passages. First, *they are able to see their own mistakes and correct them without it being a judgment about their personal work.* This is crucial if we want to encourage our young writers.

In the early years, it absolutely crushed my children if they thought that I was not pleased with their work. Although correcting their work was not personal, they simply could not separate correction from acceptance. They had worked so hard on their work, it was VERY "personal" to them. Copywork was the perfect way to just "check up" on their attentiveness, teach spelling and grammar, and instill the basics of writing in a non-confrontational way.

The writing style of the author contributes greatly to expanding your child's own style.

For a moment, just think of how much your children want to please you? Have you ever thought over what is happening during their school lessons? They pour out their heart in writing. Then, we take our permanent red markers and mark on their special creations. Disheartening! Frustrating! And...we wonder why they become resistant and reluctant to write MORE! ☹

Copywork takes away the "sting" of grading and correction while teaching our children important writing skills. When my children were young, checking their work FOR THEM and finding grammatical and spelling errors insulted them. Letting them copy a passage, go back over their work themselves finding the errors as they proofread the copy, helped me to transfer the process to them while they learned the skill of proofreading their work until they have excellence.

Another big plus for the Copywork is the good example. *The writing style of the author contributes greatly to expanding your child's own style.* Wouldn't you love for your child to have the benefit of sitting at the feet of Robert Louis Stevenson, William Shakespeare, Charles Dickens, Martha Finley, or Mark Twain? Well, they can! By reading, copying, and-later even narrating their great works, your child can be educated by the masters!

My favorite thing about Copywork is that my child is *taught correctly from*

the start. The work reinforces correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Chances are that if they SEE things done correctly, they will repeat it in their

"Children who know the most grammar are not necessarily better writers."

"...Students who are good writers can learn grammar better than students who are poor writers."

"You can teach the parts of capitalization, punctuation, spelling, sometimes grammar, and numerous other matters day by day in the dictation and copying lessons. Some of them you will consciously teach. Many others the child will learn without your conscious effort."

Ruth Beechick

own work. I love what Ruth Beechick has to say about this, "Children who know the most grammar are not necessarily better writers." She adds, "...Students who are good writers can learn grammar better than students who are poor writers." She finally says, "You can teach the parts of capitalization, punctuation, spelling, sometimes grammar, and numerous other matters day by day in the dictation and copying lessons. Some of them you will consciously teach. Many others the child will learn without your conscious effort." Isn't this far superior to learning what things are but not learning how to use it?

Looking at Matthew's progress can see this superiority. It really has been so natural for me to teach him what good writing looks like. No, we have not been diagramming sentences, but he can write a fantastic essay! No, we have not spent years working through boring workbooks, but both of our children write professionally for magazines in areas of their personal/professional interest. No, neither he nor I can still figure out what a split infinitive is, but he loves to write and make homemade books! Yes, I do think this is superior to using these years laboring over the parts of speech before putting the pen in his hand!

How to Begin (and Keep On Growing) With Copywork:

- ⇒ First, begin with teaching the child to copy their name or the alphabet. Keep each page in a 3-ring binder (with sheet protectors! ☺). Begin slow and continue steady!
- ⇒ Next, copy short one sentence phrases-Bible verses, quotes, mottoes, etc.
- ⇒ Continue working up to longer passages. Lengthy passages will take

several days to complete.

- ⇒ For challenging gifted and older writers, assign passages longer and more challenging than a standard paragraph such as dialogues, letters, news stories, speeches, historical documents, etc.
- ⇒ Share your favorites by creating neat books. Create books with collections of your favorite selections! What a fun and easy book project!

Easy? Yep...it is that easy! Now, want some specific help with some trouble spots? Need tips for those little details that make it all easy? Here are some of those tips:

- ⇒ **Look for great Copywork everywhere!** You may collect passages for copying from biographies, letters, Scripture, novels, poetry, history texts, classics, and so on.
- ⇒ **Get ready ahead of time!** It would be best to prepare the night before and prepare some work for each day, as writing should be a daily assignment. Just read through your favorite living book that you plan to use for your family reading time. You can take a small quote and copy exactly as you would have your child write. After reading your selection the next day, allow time for your child to copy and check his work. It is that simple!
- ⇒ **Use Copywork to teach grammar EASILY!** If you would like to have grammar lessons, you may want to explain why it is written that particular way, for example, today we might notice why all letters in the passage are capitalized and look up rules in a grammar text. Not only are they finding the reason for the particular use of that rule today in this passage, they are also hearing and thinking about other uses of capital letters as you read through the various rules. Talk about an easy and natural way to teach parts of speech, grammar, and spelling! It does not get any easier than this! In the early years, we used this method once a week to give the children a nodding acquaintance with the parts of speech. As the years have gone by, they have amazed me

by looking up rules all along the way—OUT OF CURIOSITY! Still, they will find something in their lessons that they have never seen (or noticed) and decide to look up the rules to figure out why it is “done that way.” I cannot think of a better way to learn the rules and RETAIN what is learned—which is far better than the way that I was taught growing up ☺.

⇒ **Use as “text” for your homemade books!** Yep! What a great way to create a fun and easy book! Your Copywork book can be a collection of neat quotes like Matthew’s *Famous Copywork of the Civil War*. Or another idea is to take a favorite passage and use that as the text of your book. Create your own illustrations. Then, you have a fast and easy book! One example of this was a book that Elisabeth created. She took her favorite Bible Verse, The 23rd Psalm, and used it as the text for her book *The Lord is My Shepherd*. Each page has a phrase with an illustration. Cute and FUN! You may have many ideas similar to this. Really, the sky is the limit here. So, you can really let your brain go wild! Need some ideas? Check out our list of ideas at the end of this chapter. You are sure to find some cute ideas!

So...are you ready? Try your hand at Copywork. Use Copywork as the text for your notebooks. Illustrate the pages with cute borders and pictures that accent your passages. Make it fun and easy! The skills that they learn as they create their notebooks using their Copywork will help them to easily move to writing using their own creative writing. It will be as natural as when they learned to talk...and **you** will have guided them along the way!

Cute Notebook Themes Using Your Copywork!



Need some ideas to get you going? Have no idea where to begin with finding Copywork? Or...do you need some fun ideas for notebooks with Copywork? The following are some ideas that can get you started...

My Favorite Quotes Notebook...

About Airplanes
About Art
About Baseball
About the Bible
About Church
About Composers
About Dogs
About Farm Life
About Flight
About History
About Historical Figures
About Holidays
About Horses
About Indians
About Ocean Life
About Pond Life
About Sailboats/Sailing
About Space
About Time Periods
Animals
Bees
Birds
Butterflies
Bible Passages
Bible Stories
Bible Verses
By Artists
By Astronauts
By Astronomers
By Baseball Players
By Composers
By Evangelist
By Explorers

By Historical Figures

By Inventors
By Jesus
By Kings
By Military Leaders
By Missionaries
By Pilots
By Preachers
By Queens
By World Leaders
By Writers
Dinosaur Facts
Eagles
Gardening
Grammar Rules
Historical Documents
Nature
Mottoes
Prayers
Songs
Speeches
Spelling Rules
Weather

ABC Notebook...

Make an ABC Notebook of your favorite Copywork passages...one per letter!

Alphabet book (pictures
and Alphabet)

Alphabet word book (Letters
of the Alphabet/
words...you may also
want to add pictures)

All About Me ABC Book

My Family ABC Book

Funny Family Stories ABC
Book

ABC's of Airplanes

ABC's of American Government

ABC's of American History

ABC's of American Revolution

ABC's of Ancient Egypt

ABC's of Ancient Greece

ABC's of Ancient Rome

ABC's of Anatomy

ABC's of Animals (any animal—
or all animals you can
think of through the
Alphabet)

ABC's of Architecture

ABC's of Art

ABC's of Astronauts

ABC's of Astronomers

ABC's of Astronomy

ABC's of My Favorite Artist(s)

ABC's of My State

ABC's of My State Govern
ment

ABC's of Baseball

ABC's of the Bible

ABC's of Bugs

ABC's of Cathedrals

ABC's of Cats

ABC's of Castle Life

ABC's of Civil War Life

ABC's of Civil War Art

ABC's of Christmas

ABC's of Colonial Life

ABC's of Creation

ABC's of Dinosaurs

ABC's of Dogs

ABC's of Dolls

ABC's of Explorers

ABC's of Fine Art

ABC's of Fish

ABC's of Flowers

ABC's of Gardening

ABC's of Geography

ABC's of Holidays

ABC's of Horses

ABC's of the Human Body

ABC's of Insects

ABC's of Inventors

ABC's of Jobs

ABC's of Jungle Animals (see
Hunter Beck's Book!)

ABC's of the Middle Ages

ABC's of Mummies

ABC's of Nature

ABC's of Ocean Life

ABC's of Old Testament Life

ABC's of Our Solar System

ABC's of the Passover

ABC's of Our Presidents

ABC's of Pioneer Life

ABC's of Pilgrim Life

ABC's of Pyramids

ABC's of Snakes

ABC's of Space Exploration

ABC's of Space Shuttles

ABC's of Weapons

ABC's of Weather

ABC's of Westward Expansion

ABC's of Viking Life

My _____ Poetry Notebook...

Animal

Christmas

Christian

Civil War

Flowers

Nature

Ocean life

Psalms

Robert Louis Stevenson

Seasons

Weather

My Dictionary of...

Animals

Baking Terms

Bible Terms