

Time for Tea  
Reprint Book of  
Articles From  
Volume 3



By Cindy Rushton

# Time for Tea

## Reprint Book for Volume Three!

By Cindy Rushton

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<http://www.cindyrushton.com>

# Table of Contents...

Letters We Love...Page 2  
Education is an Atmosphere...Page 33  
Homemaking on TOP Huckleberry Hill...Page 38  
Great Resources for Homeschooling Homemakers...Page 42  
Unschooling and Charlotte Mason...Page 43  
The Formation of Habit...Page 49  
The Importance of Routine...Page 54  
A Typical Day at the Rushton's...Page 56  
Schooling OR Educating? How to Get FREE From School-at-Home...Page 58  
Preparing Your Home for a Lifestyle of Learning...Page 65  
A Christmas Tea Party...Page 73  
Creative Packaging for Your Gifts...Page 77  
Quick and EASY Gifts...Page 78  
At Battle...Page 79  
Education is a Life...EVEN for Mom! Page 85  
Worldviews...For Such a Time as This! Page 90  
Education is a Life: The Presentation of Living Ideas...Page 94  
Choosing Resources for Read Alouds...Page 103  
The Process of Learning...God's Way! Page 105  
Real Education...Charlotte Mason Style! Page 113  
Relationships...Ahhh! Marriage Page 118  
What About Teaching the Older Child?? Page 125

# Letters We LOVE!

Dear Cindy,

Thank you for the Newsletters. I read the August issue today. I enjoyed it, it was a great help to me. I started to put into practice narration with my children. *Narration at Crooked Pines* By Mary E. Woodis was very helpful to me, for my 7 year old. Thanks!

You said to keep you posted. In my last letter, I told you that we weren't going to have school for a couple of weeks so mom could read and pray. The 7 year old Allan has had Science everyday. He loves bugs and animals. (They all love animals.) Allan caught a large, yellow moth. (We still haven't found it in a book to give it a name.) She laid little yellow eggs. About 10 days later, they hatched into little yellow caterpillars. Allan drew pictures of them and narrated a little about how he caught the momma moth. I wrote it in his notebook. Maria, my 11 year old, helped him measure the eggs and caterpillars.

Allan found baby bunnies in the yard, we go out everyday and look at them. We are watching them grow. They are so cute.

He brought in a Cecada and we watched its wings develop. That was interesting. Many other things have been in his bug jar the last few weeks...Praying Mantes, Katydid, grasshoppers, etc. We have all learned from Allan's finds. They were having some school and didn't know it. We all enjoyed the last 2 weeks, it was great!!!!

Thank you again for the newsletters!! You have been such a blessing and given practical help to me. Thanks, TC from Tennessee

PS. It was great to talk to you today, Aug. 10. I can't wait till Sept. 12th. I have been so excited all evening and calling everyone I can think of to tell them about the workshop--I can barely sit still to finish this letter I am so antsy (my word for not being able to sit still...wiggly, etc.)--like my children waiting to open a Christmas Gift.

The Lord is so good to send you and your family into our lives. Even though you are 2 1/2 hours away, you are still an encouragement to us. Can't wait to see you all in September!!!!

## From the Rushtons...

What a sweet letter! I cannot wait until I can meet little Allan! He will really enjoy my little ones! I am looking forward to our visit to Chattanooga. I am not sure who is more encouraged here! I think it is reciprocal! Love ya and see ya soon, Cindy

Dear Cindy,

As I set this morning enjoying a cup of coffee, I am finally able to really read the *Time for Tea...* Thank you very much for sending it my way. I have set down to read it many times, but my mind is usually very crowded. So I am having trouble grasping the information I would like for this year.

Writing has really been a down fall in our school. I try each year by starting with Journaling and a month or two into it, it usually falls apart.

As you said in your June letter, workbooks have taught some, but I truly don't think they are the answer either. My reason, is when I look at my children's writing, what I have taught them in grammar, and spelling, is not applied. So it is not learned. Your story about Matthew is exactly the same as for my children. If I were to ask Elysha to write a report, she would burst into tears, and say she didn't know how. When you talk about

your little girl, that is exactly how Kimberly learned in her first two years of school. I was so busy teaching my older children, so she learned by osmosis.

My children really don't like to read or write for that matter. As I read on in your news letter and you talk about Matthew's progress, that is where I had envisioned my children to be after teaching them for this length of time. But it is not so. Oh, they tested well. But they could not begin to do what Matthew has accomplished. Keith and Matthew are the same age. Elysha is 14 and Kimberly is 9. I would really like to see this kind of progress.

Still trying in Oregon, Becky V.H.

### From the Rushtons...

Dear Becky,

HI! I consider it such an honor to have you as a subscriber! It is even a bigger honor to hear from you! I am so excited about some of the changes that you are implementing in your homeschool. I think this year you will see many changes in your children as you teach more naturally by focusing on their areas of delight. I think that was the change that made a difference with Matthew. It took me moving aside long enough for him to pursue his interests before he really took off. He is now a completely different child. Writing is now a mutual interest for us instead of a subject in school. This *excites* me beyond words!

One thing that helps to build a great writer is giving our children plenty of time to really soak in the knowledge in the areas that they want to pursue. It may not become a topic of writing or it may develop into a book...whatever the result of their intake, you will find their writing abilities increased as they glean information...writing styles...and confidence that they truly do know something that would interest others! I share in my writing workshop that the process of learning takes time. It may take many years of input and discernment before you will find the children spilling out onto paper. Be patient and you will find the fruits are worth the wait! Have fun!

Cindy,

In the letter (to Dorene) that follows, you said Copywork, dictation and reading. I believe I understand how to do the Copywork now. But I am not sure about the dictation. When to start it, how and so on.....

I was planning on using the *Daily Grams* this year. My plan, before I had decided on the "Charlotte Mason Approach", (that I am learning from Mary) was to dictate these sentences to them. Then teach, what was not learned. Would this, in your opinion, follow under the dictation you refer to???

Thanks for you help, BVH from Oregon

### From the Rushtons...

*This is the letter I wrote Dorene to answer her questions about teaching spelling...*

Dear Dorene,

My suggestion for you is the same as for a 1st grader...if we want to have great writers, we need to have them about writing daily. There are two philosophies of writing...the textbook approach or the wholebook/modeling approach. I believe that you all know my opinions of the textbook approach...so let's look at how you could easily approach teaching your older child with the whole book/modeling approach. You shared that you were already using a curriculum with him. Allow his Copywork (yes, **\*\*\*I\*\*\*** still do Copywork! They never get too old to copy passages into a journal...that should become a way of life for all people...especially those we want to write!) to come from his assignments. READ lots for him and require

him to READ continually! Use passages of his Copywork for dictation at least once a week!

Just READING and COPYWORK and DICTATION will be a help for the spelling trouble. Charlotte Mason said in her works that bad spelling comes from sparse reading. Spelling must be in the mind...they must "see" that spelling in their mind before it can be on paper. Cut the extras and go back to the tried and true basics...Copywork, dictation, and old-fashioned reading of great books!

Another thing we did with my COLLEGE EDUCATED husband...was to buy him a spell checker. He used it profusely for years and now is a great speller!!! Hooray! Try that too! Love, Cindy

Hi! There is a little blurb in the last issue on Charlotte Mason's Approach to Dictation. I will be a little more specific. I find that Dictation is a wonderful technique for teaching spelling. I think you could easily use your *Daily Grams* for your Dictation exercises. We have saved our money by just using Bible Verses, Poems, and Neat Quotes for our passages. These are favored with our children because they are special already. Just choose short passages for beginners...shorter than the passages that they can copy on their own. As they get older, they will take down whole speeches and chapters of Scripture. You can use passages from their Copywork or as they grow older you can use longer passages that you want written into their Notebooks.

Formal Dictation should only be used at the most on a weekly basis. Many families only require Formal Dictation biweekly. We use other forms of informal Dictation as I dictate impromptu grocery lists...or lists of to-do's to my little ones!

It is really interesting to me that my son struggles more with Dictation than his little sister. She tends to struggle more with Copywork than he ever did. You may find that your auditory learners will struggle more with the spelling aspect than your visual learners. Elisabeth can "see" a word in her mind more easily than Matthew, which enables her to take Dictation with ease. Matthew prefers the written copy to model after! I find that using a mixture of Copywork, Dictation, Narration, and Reading Great Literature stretches and disciplines these two very different children into great writers!

Dictation is perfect for preparing the children for college or even for sermon note-taking! If you are busy and you prefer to have your dictation assignments ready for the children to work on, you might want to try making tape recordings of their Dictation's. Just read slowly, spelling any words or punctuation that might be questionable. Require that they copy their model at the beginning of the week into their copybooks or choose a passage for dictation that comes from the Copywork that they choose themselves. They will need to read back over it throughout the week to completely familiarize themselves with the assignment. The day of the Dictation lesson, let them look back over any questionable areas so that they are familiar with all spelling and punctuation. At that time, you may want to share any Grammar rules that would help them to write the passage correctly. During your early sessions of dictating passages, you will want to spell any words that could cause difficulties and dictate any punctuation. It is better to go further helping them, than to instill any errors! As time goes on, you will see that Dictation will bear much fruit in your little writers without much ado by you. Happy Writing! Love, Cindy

Cindy,

I have been away for awhile so I received your newsletter today. If I had to explain how I'm inspired to write it could be - "He fills my soul with so much, that it simply must spill out." Thank you for sharing this! Handmaiden...Sitting at His Feet, JR

Cindy,

Thanks so much for the emailed *Time for Tea*. I have a request for maybe a future topic for your newsletter, something I am grappling with. I just re-read a letter you had sent out in June re: Support Groups,

and you said something that rang SO true: “I think it (group of CM/WWOL moms) will be the heart of bringing freedom in Christ to our area homeschoolers.” That pierced my soul! Of course, it’s not just for us, for education and character building-what is the goal of what we are doing? That’s it! (1 Timothy 4: 12, 15, 16)

How I need freedom, and how I long to see others come into freedom, not even knowing there’s something that can free them! Not that I have all the answers, but there’s so much CM that the Holy Spirit wants us to regain in our walk-simplicity, knowing what the Father is saying and doing, and obeying that, (not what someone else is doing that seems to work), building relationships (thus strengthening Christ’s body), getting un-busy so that we ’ll have time for friends and neighbors, and on and on.

My Frustration is that I know I’m a part of the body, but you go to Homeschool support groups, and you realize that you really are on a different page completely. My question is, how can we facilitate unity (via relationships, etc.) so that Christ’s body can be knit together, when you feel like you have to pull away from the body in order to do what you are called to do? (my husband just clarified it for me-Jesus didn’t withdraw from society, just into solitary times with the Father.) We must be strong when we find ourselves in a solitary place, and encourage one another...I just sense the heart of the Father is to knit us for His glory, and I get sidetracked seeing the vast majority of Christian homeschoolers in a different place. We surely must be living testimonies, just as I need to see Christ living in someone else, when I’m weak.

Sorry for the lengthy note, just was so inspired to be reminded that what we’re doing is ultimately to walk out Galatians 5:1, that He will be exalted. If we can exhort one another that that is our goal, for ourselves, our children, and other believers, not to mention the unsaved, let’s walk the straight and narrow together, and be living sacrifices, holy and acceptable. Many thanks for all you’ve given... Off my chest

### From The Rushtons...

Thanks soooo much for your letter! First, I would like to thank you for your request of this topic! I hope that others will do the same. This is not just my forum...it is yours as well! So, do write in!

Although the Lord changed a little of the direction of the newsletter, your note was on my heart while I wrote this issue of the newsletter. I had written a whole different newsletter and my dear friend Mary seems to think that the reason that I felt a check about sending it out was because it needed a little development into a book! Yea, yea! I am at it again! Did I say, I would not write another book for a while...BUT, this month I will be trying to finish this one! ha! Many are the little plans in our hearts!

I think that you will see how kindred our hearts are as you read some of my thoughts here and there in this issue! One thing that I thought of as I read back through your letter was a verse that the Lord blessed me with during my needed time of rest last month. I have prayed for 6 months for the Lord to give us a mission statement for our ministry. Most of you know our key mission statement for our Homeschool is from 1 Timothy 1: 5. I was just sure that the Lord would give us the perfect verse as our mission statement and purpose for our ministry.

Well, the other day during my quiet time, He illuminated Colossians 2: 2-3. I think that this verse is the perfect verse to challenge each of us in dealing with others in our support groups as well! It says in the NIV,

***“My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely Christ, in Whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”***

Isn’t that SO good?

Struggles in support groups are inevitable. I was told by a friend that her husband opened her eyes to the fact that most homeschoolers are a little “free-spirited” and “rebellious” to authority to a little degree in one

way or another. They must be to go against the flow of our culture. Even though they are right in their decision to go against the flow of “authorities” wanting rights over the children, they can still have a struggle with wanting others to relate to “their way” or they won’t listen or even associate with them.

I found this when I began to teach seminars and workshops. Although firmly believe that the philosophies of Charlotte Mason, Marilyn Howshall, or even mine can benefit any Homeschool because they are based on the Word of God, I find that so many moms will throw out the “baby with the bath water” and miss the wonderful challenge to grow in their own personal philosophy!

How do you deal with this? HUM! Well, we have a support group in our area that we began back in 95. I was the only CM mom that I knew at that time. I was very lonely except for my kindred spirits in print! It has been such a blessing to see the first meetings of our CM/WWOL group with so many moms who range from veterans to newbies who are walking into homeschooling with these ideas! I also treasure the support that I get from our online Charlotte Mason and Wisdom’s Way of Learning Discussion Groups. I won’t mention that I also get a wonderful benefit of having additional support by mail from so many of you dear subscribers.

I have to agree with your husband. There is a time to be in solitude. If you have never read Marilyn Howshall’s book *Secrets of Solitude* or at least the last chapter in *Wisdom’s Way of Learning*, you owe yourself the treat! I had to go through the wilderness more on my own...I also spent the last 6 years searching for just one more mom locally to share with. Now, I have found that being faithful to follow God first at home (which I know you do!), then you have something to offer those who are weary from the tough walk out there in the flesh! Keep sharing your enthusiasm. Help them to be encouraged in their hearts! Also, seek to find ways to point the group back to Jesus! It may be by recommending time to pray before big decisions (our group is doing that this month...I admire the godliness of our ladies in spite of our differences of beliefs!)...or time to study the Word for questions that are going to arise! Point them to Jesus and He will unify even those who do not believe similarly. Probably in time, the Lord will bring freedom to those in your area as well!

I really feel blessed by your insights! Thanks for sharing. If any of the rest of you have ideas...send them in! You know this is a long distance tea party and all tea parties have great discussion! With Love, Cindy

Cindy - I have been meaning to e-mail since Saturday to let you know I received my book. I have read through 1/2 of it and it is great! So much of what you say (and have found in your own HS experience) sounds like me!

I must confess that Copywork, Whole Books, etc.... are very new to me, but here is the awesome thing (awesome because I believe God is orchestrating this!) I have been pondering using these type techniques even before I heard of them!

I am an English major and I cannot stand the way Grammar, etc. is taught. I truly believe writing is necessary. I love the idea of Oral Narration and then using a "Transcript" of that to be copied. My 6 year old gets "tired" of writing at times and my soon to be 11 yr. old who be overwhelmed by a blank page. She tells wonderful stories and is great at recapping orally what she reads or hears. However, her writing is forced and flat.

My only "problem" will be persuading her to do this. She loves workbook -they represent accomplishment to her. This is our first year to HS and we still have some "weaning" to do concerning school "work". I am going to make a deal with her to try this for a couple of months - without the workbooks, which I see as useless. I think she will try it and I believe she will see the benefits over time. Thank you for all your hard work on this book. It is a great resource!

## From the Rushtons...

Dear Barb, What a dear letter! I think that when we moms relax to follow God, we tend to find the SAME ideas naturally! I read that Thomas a'Kempis was said to have copied the Bible 4 times in his life. That blessed me as I can read his work and SEE how much of God's Word is hidden in His heart. What a wonderful model to follow after!

One thing that you brought out in your letter, that may be a question of other readers is that love for workbooks. I know that I personally take great pride in completion of work. Children are no different. I do believe that the key is for them to begin to produce their OWN notebook on a topic of interest to them. We began with just a Copybook of their own "Copywork." As the years have gone by, they have found that their Copybooks could be divided into several Copybooks on different topics. My children LOVE to share their Copybooks with others. It gives them a purpose beyond just practicing their Language Skills OR just collecting data. It is "their" very own textbook on each subject!

Keep us posted as you continue to learn! I will be looking forward to your updates! Love, Cindy

### Second Letter from Barb...

Well, I finally had a chance to finish the book -- even went back and re-read some sections. It really is very good.

I think I told you that we have been doing the Bible Sentences as Ruth B. suggests in *A Strong Start to Language* - I guess we have been practicing this about 3 weeks and it has gone really well.

We are taking a short break this week - last week was a doozie around here. After planning a very simple, laid-back Christmas, the ice storm blew in to change our plans. My Mom lost power on Tuesday, so she and my great-aunt who is a wheelchair bound stroke victim moved in with us. (Her power was restored on Saturday!) Then, we lost power around 3 a.m. 12/24 and, fortunately, regained it around 8:30 p.m. 12/24! Still having extra folks live in your house throws everything for a curve! My daughter no longer wishes to live in the olden days without electricity! My husband and I truly appreciate our bed after spending several nights on the couch - especially since we stayed up keeping a fire going in case the power went out again!

I had planned to jump back into school this week, but I am going to use the time to refocus what we are doing instead. We will be doing Copywork - in a way! I am letting my 6-year-old "dictate" his thank you notes for presents and then copy them neatly onto notecards we made on the computer. My 10, soon to be 11, year old is writing them as a rough first draft in pencil; working with me to clean up Spelling and Punctuation (hopefully learning as we do this!) and then copying them - IN PEN! - onto her cards. I think that counts as school - don't you! (*Editor: Definitely!*)

I really love the idea of Notebooks. I have to admit that like the Copywork idea, I had been toying with Notebooks long before I had heard of them being used this way! I really believe this was God's way of pointing my interests in the direction I need to go! I think we are going to start with one large notebook and divide it (at first) into a section for Copywork and a section for everything else - just until we see what direction we are headed! I have several ideas for my 6-year-old son. He is so fascinated right now with space ships, space shuttles etc. I hope maybe I can tie together a general History of the space program and some study of the stars and planets. We do have a Science curriculum - a great one I believe that allows a great deal of freedom. It is *Considering God's Creation* - I think it provides a nice frame work or outline and some great ideas for projects/experiments, without "lecturing" as textbooks do - no fact memorization, etc. I like that.

I am not so sure where my 10 year old daughter will head with her Notebook -her interests are varied and fleeting at the moment! She loves the idea of Copywork. I told her how I use to find neat quotes or Bible verses or poems and copy them for fun. She likes that idea a lot! Plus, I told her she could illustrate them!

I also think we will start Reading Notebooks. My son has taken to reading like a duck takes to water in that he has the skills; he just hasn't realized what possessing those skills can mean for him! My daughter (age 10) on the other had has reading difficulties. She is one of those kids that don't click with Phonics. She learned the rules, but has trouble hearing the sounds. She has finally learned them, through tutoring while still in school (remember this is our first year to HS), but she still has troubling decoding - although I must say she is rapidly improving! She feels so much more relaxed at home - no pressure to do well in front of other kids. No embarrassment at taking longer to read etc. But she has not discovered reading for "fun" - it has been too much work for her.

Now let me quickly say that both our children have been read to since day one! My husband has a terrific picture of our daughter propped up against me as I read *Good Night Moon* to her at 3 months of age. At 1 year she could sit for 30-minute intervals and listen to me read anything to her! Our son likes to be read to also, but he is more of a wiggle worm! We still do lots and lots of read alouds around here and will continue to do so, but I really want my kids to discover the magic of reading a book alone and escaping into that world. I recently checked out *A Lion to Guard Us* to use as a read loud and my daughter actually saw it, scanned the back and started reading it! I told her that when she finished it, she can tell her brother and I the story (Narration!). Of course, I will tape or copy her Narration and then let her use it for Copywork for her Reading Notebook! (This is a wonderful idea!)

What else - I had so much to ask/tell you...Question - do you use the same read alouds for your children at the same time? If I read your book correctly, your children are 4 years apart in age - correct? That is the same age difference as mine (although I believe my 2 are 1 year behind your 2!) Anyway - I question whether to be reading the same books to both. I really do not doubt my younger child's ability to assimilate what I read to his sister, but I do like the idea of giving her something a bit more challenging. Also, there are books I have already read to her and would like to read to him - I am not certain she will want to hear them again.

Copywork question - how many times do you have your child copy something -until it is neat enough? Written without error???? I want their work to be its best, but I do not really want them to burnout on copying one thing 5 times!

Also, do you ever break down something long into short copy lessons? I was thinking of this with *Paul Revere's Ride*. We are about to hit this point in our history reading and I thought I would let my daughter copy, basically at will, and illustrate this poem.

OK - I know I had more comments and questions, but my brain is shutting down. I hope you do not mind all my ramblings? If it is OK, I will probably write again as I start to "plan" (loosely) what we will be doing this next month.

Oh - so funny! I was reading the section where you mention using poems to copy and you suggest *A Child's Garden of Verses* - the next day the copy I had ordered arrived! Too Funny! Thank you for your "help" and input in our HS journey.

Oh yes, one more question -- can you tell me what your newsletter deals with -is it mainly just general HSing inf. or more specific in nature? Thanks!

PS I remembered something else - my daughter received one of the *Dear America* books (are you familiar with these - they are good for history) She as reading the booknotes and it told that the girl had received a new Copybook. Katherine (my dd) perked up and said, "Like we are going to do!" She likes the fact that this is a tried and true method and not some new fangled idea! Let's hope she likes the "work"!

### From The Rushtons...

Dear Barb, Thanks for this wonderful letter! You have so many wonderful ideas...I just HAD to share them with everyone else! Thanks!

My children are 3 years apart in age and 4 years apart in grade levels. Matthew is 11 and will be 12 in July 99...Elisabeth turned 8 in September of last year.

We have reading material on their age level (Matthew reads mostly adult History Books.) that they may choose from during their Productive Free Time. During our Family Reading Time, we use the King James Version of the Bible for Daily Bible Reading (we are reading through the Bible in a year) and different Read Alouds. We are STILL finishing *Winnie the Pooh*...we took a break for Christmas AND we also are reading C.S. Lewis' *Screwtape Letters* as a family. Our Family Read Alouds are our time to share with them books that we feel are necessary to developing their Worldview...our Family Memories...AND for educating them as we feel God is leading. I have always taught them together. I found that Elisabeth was ready for REAL meat in Literature much earlier than Matthew was...I think it was because she has always had it!

Copywork...We usually only require one copy. If it is just completely unacceptable, we make them re-do it. We have rarely had to do this. One thing that you may want to consider is to keep it, as it is...yes, messy. As they continue, they can look back to see that they were not doing a very good job. It will help them to see the importance of doing nice work at all times. My son has RE-COPIED passages that he was not pleased with...Six months after the original copy session! We kept it all in his Copybook to show his improvement!

If you have continued messy work, cut back on the amounts that are required until you have a nice product. It may be ONE word for beginners...BUT that is one word executed perfectly! YEA! We want excellence and a feeling of accomplishment! Then, the delight in learning will come!

About cutting up a passage...SURE! We have done that with Narrations...Poems...Passages of Scripture...so on! I LOVE to see illustrations in the Copybooks. My daughter has been copying lines from Psalm 23 and illustrating them. I can tell by her illustrations that this verse is meaning SO much to her. I love it!

As you can see, you NEVER know what you get with the newsletter! ha! Well, my main purpose in producing this newsletter is found in Colossians 2: 2-3...

***“My Purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in Whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”***

We purpose to allow God to use us as His vessels to encourage you all in heart and to encourage you all to look a little deeper into God's Word for answers to the problems that you face each and every day! We try to balance the newsletter with Scriptural teaching...How-to's...and Encouragement along the way! Hope it blesses you! Love, Cindy...Oh! Thanks for your awesome letters! Keep us posted!

Hi Cindy,

I finished reading your wonderful L.A. book and will recommend it highly at our next CM meeting!

In your children's sample pages I noticed it looked like Italics and saw that your son had no samples of cursive. Have you or when will you introduce cursive?

My girls, 7 and 8, use the Italics workbooks 2-3xs a week and copy everything in sight, straight from the book. I feel like their handwriting needs a lot of improvement. They read incredibly well (perhaps 5th grade level) but dare I call their handwriting atrocious? (Not to them of course!)

I would like to start making models for them to copy from but I'm wondering if I should stop them from all the copying from books. Christian is working on a recipe book from *The Peter Rabbit Cookbook* and others and Natasha is copying fairy tales for a gift. They do copying from books every day, but it has not improved their handwriting much.

So, after all that!... Should I curtail this type of copying and just use models written by me (and ditch the workbooks entirely) for a time?

Also, I noticed on the CM loop (I also get WWOL-list) that you had a Tubal Reversal! I did too and I'm 8 months pregnant with a baby boy to be named Everett! It took us a year to conceive and then I miscarried (I understand this can happen after a reversal, even in cases like mine here there is not a history of miscarriage. It seems after a successful birth, this is usually not a problem again). The Lord really used that time to do a work in me. A few months later I conceived again and have been praying for a boy since before the reversal (to bless my husband.)

So we are very thankful! I prayed for over 5 years for a reversal and for my husband to let me do this, that is why I especially desired a boy for him for allowing me to do this. He also wanted more but it never seemed to him to be the right time.

Well, sorry to go on, just thought you'd like to hear a bit of our story. I will be ordering a couple of things from you soon. Do you plan to carry the Christmas book next year? Have a wonderful Christmas and thank you for sharing all your ideas! Joanna

### From The Rushtons...

Hi Joanna! I am sure little Everett is due about any moment! You are in our prayers! I appreciate your testimony about your reversal AND all the goodies that you sent me about infertility and herbal alternatives! THANKS! God has used you mightily to give us answers! We are now taking herbs and already feeling sooo much better! We eagerly anticipate God opening our womb again!

Copywork Out of Books...I have found with my daughter that she needed a model for Copywork more than Matthew did. She could copy neatly if she had an exact model, but copying from books presented challenges since it confused her about letter formation. We have just switched over this year to allowing her to copy from books rather than my model and I do see a little shift in her writing...BUT I think it will pass. Her whole heart is into her work, so I will just give it time!

Handwriting...Yes, in Copywork, Matthew rarely copies in cursive. We have a funny story. It goes back to his first years of handwriting...we about burned him out for good. I call him "pencil resistant"...that was his response to my beloved hobby! In Second Grade, we scrapped all of the workbooks and began Copywork. We also began to use *Making Math Meaningful* ORALLY! I would assign a small passage of Copywork per day...follow that by a small oral lesson of Math in which I wrote down his answers. That was all! In Six Months he asked to write down the Math answers too...yes, the ice was melting! But, I told him no. In Nine Months, he BEGGED to write the answers down! I let him write just one or two a day. It was only a few lessons longer until he proudly proclaimed, "I can do this myself!" YES! YES! That is JUST what I wanted!

During that time, we healed the fears and the failures. We also established good habits (short lessons, complete concentration, success, and excellence in work...so on!) that I believe are the basis of the Self-Education we now enjoy. We have never had dawdling over Math lessons or any other lessons since then. We also find that this time established good study habits...full concentration, thinking, reasoning, and perfect execution.

About the Cursive...Matthew's work was atrocious as well! It is funny to see you use that word! That is EXACTLY what I thought about his work! We slowed down to establish the habit of nice work. I never felt he was ready for cursive until last year...he needed to be printing well in italic BEFORE adding joins. Well, last year, he developed a problem with his hands that made ANY writing very, very painful. HE WAS ALLERGIC TO WASHING DISHES! Ha! REALLY! The dish liquid broke out his poor little hands. We did not find the true cause until the end of the year...so; we postponed Cursive until his hands got better.

The funny thing is how EASY teaching cursive was after that! He wrote his book and was ready to share it with the public...BUT could not autograph it! Ha! Well, he asked me one evening just how to write in

cursive...I sat with him FIVE minutes and he learned how! Now, he primarily practices his cursive while autographing his books...a PURPOSE! Ha! I asked him a while back why he was not using cursive in his Copybooks...he said that they were so special that he wanted to keep them consistent. I liked that reason, so we will wait until he feels more comfortable with his cursive until he uses it more.

I believe that some things are just a process...writing is one of them. I find that the key is to give it TIME...encourage a love for writing...and give opportunities for them to use their interests to develop their skills!

Oh...we will have the Christmas book in our stock at all times. It has lots of recipes that we use at all times! For more information on resources that we have available see the back of the newsletter! We have certainly been BUSY!

Keep in touch! We will keep you in our prayers! Love, Cindy!

Dearest Cindy,

Oh, how your newsletter hit home! But, I'll get back to that in a minute.... I read your article in *Sarah's Promise, Encouragement for the Mid-Winter Blahs*...this was sooo good! I would like to make copies to share w/ my Hs group, about 10-12 ladies. Would I have your permission to do this? Please let me know! (Of Course! Just keep me posted! If you ever use it in a newsletter or magazine...please just note where you found the article and how to get in touch with us! AND send me a copy!)

Now to your newsletter...I have read it through once; I must go back and read it again (and again...!) It is so meaty and so convicting. I have fallen so short w/ my family; I have let them down so many times w/ my FLESH. But, I know these trials must bring us back to the throne of Jesus. there I am now, just laying at His feet...we all have the stomach flu, the van has broken down AGAIN, we are in the middle of a torrential rainstorm, our HS is less than stimulating...and the list could go on and on.

Up until practically this moment, I have had no peace because I have let down my armor, my beat up, shoddy armor. But re-reading your letter and the corresponding Scriptures have given me HOPE again. I must gird myself up again (even w/ a fever and aching bones, God 's Spirit can still flow through me!) I reach now for the PEACE which "passeth all understanding." It is coming, like a dear friend in the Lord used to tell me " the Holy Spirit is only a breath away." HE is breathing new life into me.it won't come all at once and it won't all be easy...but I TRUST it will come.

I had a couple of questions, if I may...under 're-newing your goals'. Could you give examples of "real life ministry and missions in their daily lives?" I feel we are really lacking in our outreach to others. Also, how have you figured out each child's "giftings and talents?" My children are 11, 10 5, 4, and 6mos. and I am clueless. I have not even figured out MY gifts and talents yet and I turn 40 in a few mos. Shouldn't I have figured this out by now?????! Should I have some other life purpose than wifehood and motherhood? It used to be that my career defined me (I was an RN, even went for a Master's...one day coming home from school, newly married, Jesus spoke in that still small voice and asked, "Lori, what is your goal in this life?" I answered, "YOU, Jesus." He said, "You don't need a Master's degree to know me." I left school w/ only 18 units to finish! Nursing was never my career choice it was my parent's...I haven't practiced in 11 yrs.) Should something else be my 'Life's purpose' other than Godly womanhood? I don't know...I continue my search for an answer. Anyway, thank you for YOUR ministry, it has certainly ministered and been a blessing in my life! Have a blessed day! Love, Lori Vidal

### From The Rushtons...

Dear Lori,

I am now in tears! How tender and sweet! Thanks! We have been a little puny this month too! We are trying to take it a little easier! It is working! At least for my spirit!

Real Life Ministry...This becomes so varied from family to family. BUT, I believe that all families are first and foremost called to just be godly family members! The Fathers becoming Godly Fathers...the Mothers becoming Godly Wives and Mothers...and the children becoming Godly Children! As our families are intact, we find that we have something to offer our culture!

Each member of our family plays a vital part in our speaking and writing ministry. From behaving so mommy can work...to addressing envelopes...to carrying boxes...to speaking at seminars and conventions. NOW, this is not for every family...but in a way it could be. I received this in my email while ago...

### *Will You Work for Me?*

Mary was studying her Bible quietly at her desk. A still, small voice began to speak to her. "Mary?" "Yes, Lord?" Mary had been walking with the Lord and recognized His still, small voice, especially in His Word.

"Mary, what if I were to ask you to go to work for me?" "Oh yes, Lord." Mary answered anxiously. "To France, perhaps?" as she gazed at the globe on her desk, pointing a finger decidedly to Paris. "What if I were to ask you to go to work for Me in an obscure place?" "Ah, yes, Lord." Mary sat dreaming while moving her finger down a bit. "Africa. The jungle..." Her mind wandered to the missionary stories she had read, "perhaps where Elisabeth Elliot worked." "Mary, what if I were to ask you to go to work for me in an even more obscure place?" "Hmmm.. even more obscure. South America, Lord? or innermost China?or perhaps Indonesia? Is that what you mean, Lord?" "Mary, what if I were to ask you to go to work for me in a home?" "Ah, now I understand, Lord. A home for handicapped kids." "Mary, what if I were to ask you to go to work for me in an obscure home?" "An obscure home? Perhaps a home for orphaned children in Mexico or South America?" "Mary, what if I were to ask you to work for me in your own obscure home?" "Here Lord? Here? All I do here is scrub, vacuum, wipe noses, wash clothes, sing lullabies, pray with toddlers, change diapers, cook meal after meal, sweep and dust, stretch the money, mop and mop; oh, and then over and over the very same thing again, sometimes more in one day than I can count. This can't be the obscure home You mean, Lord!" "Yes, Mary, this is the home. Will you do it for me? When you do it for the least of these, you do it for Me. Will you do it for Me, Mary?" "No one is going to notice it, Lord, not even the ones I am doing it for. None of them really even care, Lord. Everything I do, they undo. And then I have to do it all over again. Don't you think Paris is kind of obscure?" "Mary, I have chosen you especially for this work in this specific place. I have Leaders and Warriors being raised here. Will you wipe these noses for me, Mary? Will you bring your children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, Mary? Someday I may send them out to places like China, Indonesia, South America, Mexico, and yes, perhaps even Paris. Will you do this work for me, Mary, in this obscure home of yours?" Spinning the globe gently, Mary bowed her head. "Yes, I will, Lord. Yes, I will." "I'll do it through you, Mary. Keep coming to me for your strength. It is a very big job raising My Warriors; but I will walk with you through it every step of the way. I will be your Helper, and I will be your Strength."

You see, each member of our family realizes that our ministry is NOT Mom's ministry...but our FAMILY MINISTRY. We all have a crucial part to play. I have very little to offer others in and of myself. BUT, our family can offer a unit of people who truly love the Lord and His people! Also, our ministry does not begin or end with seminars or newsletters or books...it involves every aspect of our lives. It is how we interact as we shop in Walmart...Eat at Restaurants...Buy our Gas...Go for Coffee at the Local Coffee Shop...go about our daily chores and responsibilities...OR minister to one another within the walls of our own home when no one else can see within!

All of the greatest work OUTSIDE of the home is a poor substitute for the work inside of the home. Just this weekend, we were in Atlanta. I REALLY enjoyed our visit and the seminar with so many of you dear friends. BUT, I do not get near the joy from ministering outside of my home that I feel bubbling out of my heart as I share my Lord with my children. Those moments of ministering to their souls are the most powerful moments of my life...that is where all begins to fit. The crowds... the books...the money...the friends... are all poor substitutes for the fruit of my womb. I know that they are part of my calling...BUT not THE CALLING!

A friend of mine told me years ago that we should not go around looking for a “ministry” BUT instead we should minister within our home and the Lord will bring our opportunities for ministry out of our home! This is sooo true! This is what we are doing with our ministry. I simply live each day with my family...what we do pours not only into my children...but, outside of my home into your homes as well! I hardly value any aspect of ministry before the Lord as any greater than any other aspect. The moments of tenderness in the middle of the night tending my little restless babies were foundational to all that we do today. The moments that I stand before mothers speaking and sharing our precious Lord are all foundational to preparing my children for their calling. Even those moments that my children see me break down in deep prayer of repentance and renewal of my spirit are lessons that teach more deeply than any book that we could use.

I really believe that we must look at every aspect of life as ministry. It may be the little unappreciated duties of motherhood...it may be the long, dreary moments of instilling good habits with your little children...It may be taking your children door to door evangelizing your neighborhood...or It may be simply smiling and sharing cheerfulness with others as you do business in town!

How do we find God’s purpose for ourselves or our children? Well, I think it is crucial to first find what His Word has to say about the purpose of the Body of Christ. In Scripture, we find in Ephesians 4: 12-15 that Spiritual gifts are given...

***“For the perfecting of the saints (yes, these little saints), for the work of the ministry, (you might say “which is...”) for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ:”*** (The goal...becoming like Christ, Christ is THE STANDARD, not the church or others!) ***That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;”***(Another Goal...they will KNOW what they believe...and will not be carried about by false teachings!) ***But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.”***

The Body of Christ does not begin at the Church house! It begins in our homes. The easiest way to find the gifts of our children is to really LOOK at their strengths and to take a close LOOK at the downside of their personality. For example...I have a daughter who is simply crushed if she cannot do little things for you. She gets the greatest joy out of cleaning up after others...not because she has to...but when it will be a shocker! She writes little special notes to EVERYONE in our family and to all of her friends! She would DIE if she could not serve and encourage others! Yes, her gifts are Service, Giving and Encouragement!

Meanwhile...she gets very anxious IF she has to sit still and CANNOT do for others! If we require her to be quiet, she about busts! She loves to talk to all sorts of people and never meets a stranger! She cannot hold on to even one dollar without using it for others! She must be allowed to encourage or do for others OR she gets very frustrated! Guess what her dreams are? To be a mommy of LOTS of grandchildren just for me! That works for me!

My son has this strange little manner of taking charge and rebuking any who do not do things correctly. He loves to study and write. His passion is for the hearts and souls of people. Sometimes he is entirely too

simple minded as he thinks that it is just this simple...do right! One morning last year he came up to me in one of my tizzies...YES, they happen more frequently than I would like to document! ha! He gently offered to help Elisabeth with her lessons so that I could have my quiet time. He knew that I had been busy with interruptions every since I had waken. He could detect the need in my spirit more than I could! One guess? Which giftings do you see? Well, my guess is a combination of Prophecy...Teaching...Evangelism...Discernment of Spirits...and Administration! I believe that with this kind of combination that he will probably continue forward with the call that he feels the Lord has for him on the Mission Field.

Just take a close look at the little ones in your home. Your greatest challenge before you IS to train those future servants of the Lord! I love Proverbs 22:6 from the Amplified Bible..."

***“Train up a child in the way he should go [and in keeping with his individual gift or bent], and when he is old he will not depart from it.”***

You can find descriptions of the Spiritual Gifts in passages such as 1 Corinthians 12: 1-31 or Romans 12: 4-8.

These giftings are not given to practice in our churches only...they are given to build the body of Christ and to bring it to maturity...to become like Christ! The biggest influence that we can have on our culture is through our healthy, happy, sincere families! If our dependency is upon Christ, we can rest assured that others will want what we have! Lori, I am convinced that this is the greatest calling...to live so that others are drawn to Christ! You are on your way! Many blessings!

Dear Cindy,

Congratulations on your new book! I love it! I read it within two days and felt very inspired. Thanks so much for the idea of Binderizing and Notebooking. My girls loved the idea of having their work all categorized and protected with plastic sheets in their own special binder, something to be proud of and I am thrilled too because now I have a great record of their work. My 6yod Julia just began a journal with her dad, they write back and forth to each other, quite special!

Well I must get to bed early tonight, my 11yo nephew is staying with us for ten days and I must see him off to the school bus at!!! 7:15 am!!! Poor guy, I wish he could stay at home with us, we could have so much fun! Keep up the great work, God Bless, Cathy Voortman

### **From The Rushton's...**

Dear Cathy,

I LOVE this! Thanks for sharing this precious idea with us! I read this one to my husband and he LOVED it! I sense a little memory in the making! Thanks! Love, Cindy

Dear Cindy,

I wanted to let you know that I received your book. It is wonderful. I have been digesting it and the issue of ***Time for Tea*** all week. I must tell you that you have struck a chord in my heart with both the newsletter and the book. I think perhaps God is using you to teach me what He wants me to do.

This is my fourth year of homeschooling and I have had a Charlotte Mason philosophy since the beginning. A dear friend told me to read ***For the Children's Sake*** when I first decided to Homeschool. I knew this was the way I wanted to teach my children. For the most part this is what I have done. But, I have so many friends who have "school at home", using textbooks etc... Their children seem to excel in ways my children do not (of course in my weak moments I "forget" all the ways my children do excel.) For the last

year or so, I have been like the man James discusses who is driven and tossed about by the wind. I know that God has called me to this life and I want more than anything to do it well, but you have made me see that I have been striving in my flesh. This is not always the case, but I lack a consistency of faith and trust in what God has for me and my children.

All this is to say thank you for your book and for the newsletter. I know that you must sacrifice much for this ministry, but please know that God is using you.

I love the new year. I don't make resolutions per say, but I love to look at my life and see what needs to be renewed or changed. You have given me much to work with.

I hope you won't mind if I write you occasionally for support and ideas. Also, I would like to subscribe to and receive back issues of the newsletter. I wasn't sure how many there are available. Could you let me know? Thanks again, Donna

### From The Rushtons...

Oh, Donna! Thanks for sharing your heart! Of course I do not mind! You must know what a treat it is to hear from all of you on days that I am a little weary OR need to get a little more hyper!! Your letters are truly a breath of fresh air! KEEP THEM COMING!

Back Issues...If you will turn to the last page of the newsletter; we have listed all of our resources. *The Reprint book* contains all the articles from the first two volumes of *Time for Tea*. Right now, this issue is the sixth issue in Volume 3. At the end of Volume 3, we plan to bind all of the articles from Volume 3 into a reprint book for Volume 3.

All of our resources are produced right here on Huckleberry Hill! For this reason, they are simple...but we keep them this way in order to make them accessible and affordable! We GREATLY appreciate all of you as you are constantly teaching us that simplicity is OK even in these days of entertainment! Thanks for all of your support! We truly believe that our subscribers are the BEST in the world! We love you all dearly!

Dear Cindy,

School is going so well, I have to thank you for all the inspiration. We started "*A Time to Keep*" notebook (stolen from T. Tudor's title) to keep track of holiday and seasonal activities. For January, we read *Snowflake Bentley*, which is a wonderful picture book of a boy who was Homeschooled until the age of fourteen. He was free to pursue his passion for snowflakes and became the foremost expert in the field. It was very inspiring.

We are getting a book from the library, Snow Crystals, which is a book containing over 2,000 of his snowflake photographs. In our "*Time to Keep*" book, we have narration from the book, dictation, snowflakes cut from a Dover book and we will try Mrs. Sharp's method of snowflake cutting next. (We could do more if we weren't in snowless Texas!) February hold lots of ideas for our book with the Presidents' birthdays and Valentine's Day (we have a wonderful book from the library on the true story illustrated in Fresco style).

We are going to try Tasha Tudor's idea of a sparrow post, a doll's valentine party and a wedding for the birds. After we finish our snowflakes, our evenings will be often spent making valentines from old Victorian Papers catalogs, paper doilies, etc. This is all in addition to regular "school" of course where we are using lots of your Notebooking ideas there as well.

I hope to start the girls on their own "*recipe books*" that will include practical things from our cooking lessons as well, such as the proper way to set a basic table setting, etc. I'd also like to start a courtesy and manners book as well as we need much help there! I've gotten several things to work with from *The Parents' Review* on courtesy. I'm still trying to find our pace and work out scheduling kinks but we are doing so much better. The Copywork has improved also with working from my model. A newsletter was suggested on the

CM loop for record keeping and I might give that a try on a quarterly basis. Let me know if you'd like to receive it. (I understand if your mailbox is already overloaded!) Hope to hear from you soon! Joanna

### From the Rushtons...

Dear Joanna,

OH! This letter was SUCH a treat! I was busily scribbling down ideas to mention to my children! Please keep sharing your wonderful ideas! ANNNND I would LOVE to receive your newsletter! It is always a treat to be blessed with your dear letters, I can only imagine how many IDEAS that I could “legally STEAL” from your newsletter!! Oh, I was bragging JUST today to my husband about your beautiful NEW baby! Truly you are blessed as much as you bless others for our Saviour! Love ya! Cindy

Dear Cindy,

Although newly found friends, we share a likeness that goes deep within. You've blessed so many people by your coming to Lawrenceville (it wasn't really Atlanta to us). You're blessing people that didn't go to your seminar nor have read your book. You touched a few of us. We couldn't contain what you (and mostly God) filled us with. It has spread like hot syrup on pancakes. Hmm,hmm, good!!! We've started our own Charlotte Mason group in Conyers/Covington, Georgia. The first meeting was Feb. 15th at my house. The second official meeting is March 15. In the meantime, we can't stop the talk: Notebooking, Copywork, Dictation, Narration, No Homework, No Workbooks, Natural Way, Less Stressful Way.

Thanks so much for sharing your approach. I currently have 8 orders for your new book. But I want to order 12 because I know more people will want it. It's just too good to pass up. I like best the practical, get directly to it technique you presented. The quotes and poems in the back are very beneficial.

*The Fearless Warriors* sounds really good. I want a copy of that for myself. Tell Matthew that he's made a mark here on earth. Writing and publishing a book at his age. May his rewards be in heaven. If you have time, either by mail or email, we would like to know how you go about publishing a book. Thanks.

I pray the Lord will continue to bless your family's writing. May you all be lifted up in His Glory. Your CM Companion, Cindy Sheppard

### From the Rushtons...

Dear Cindy,

What a treat your letter was to me! Yes, we are certainly kindred spirits! Check my calendar...I am coming back to Georgia TWICE in May! I look forward to seeing you all again! Thanks for your sweet comments about the book and the workshop. I prayed that God would come alongside of all of you and bless you! How neat to see my deepest heart prayer answered!

I wanted to answer your letter via newsletter because you asked a good question that I am sure other BUDDING authors might be wondering about. We simply wrote our books on our computer and copied them off. We bound ours with a comb-binding machine at home and laminated the cover ourselves with our laminating machine. You could take yours to a local copy shop if you want multiple copies or if you want your covers laminated or your book comb-bound.

We actually only intended for Matthew's "audience" to be our family and a few of his best friends. It is NEAT to see his work bless the lives of others! BUT, your children have just this same ability! Find an area of interest to them. Let them enjoy the process of learning on that topic to the depth that they want to pursue. They may just want to begin with a picture book about their study...or they may be like Matthew and be ready to write "their" story including pictures that they collect for their notebooks on those topics of interests! Just have fun and Enjoy the Process of Real Learning!! OH! Send me a copy when you finish! With Love, Cindy

## Jumping into the Charlotte Mason Approach By Cindy Rushton

*A few months ago, we received a question on the Internet by Carol Laury, a homeschooling mom just getting started with the Charlotte Mason Approach. This fits in so nicely with this issue. Hope you enjoy!*

Carol Laury wrote...

My question is, how do I get my children started? I have been home educating for 7 years. But, I only have experience doing it the "traditional" way...I don't know how to begin.... Are there some good ideas about making the transition that have worked for others?

Cindy Rushton wrote...

Hi Carol! Welcome aboard! Your children are the perfect age to make the transition to the Charlotte Mason Approach. The transition will be a treat and will result in a love of learning in your little ones. I recommend first finding a great read aloud and adding that into our evening this week. They will love it and it will draw them into real living books! Many parents think that once a child is able to read they should be reading their own material...which is true.

However, the treat of the Charlotte Mason approach is that the children may enjoy the memories for a lifetime of times cuddled up reading as a family. I recommend that you or your husband read aloud as a family each day...this is the secret of all those great read alouds that you find these moms sharing about. If you need a list to get you started, go to Lynn's web site or check out Connie's magazine *Good Life and Good Literature*. We also have a simple list called *The Never-ending Rushton Reading List* that is published with the intention of helping families get started with great read alouds.

Another thing to bring in today is time out-of-doors. Your children will learn more today from time outside alone than they would learn from 12 years of twaddly textbooks! Let them have plenty of time outside each day to just be kids...to explore...to learn from God's creation. Also, plan a time this week...or just impromptu GO for a walk. Nature beckons us as we get out together for a nice leisurely walk out of doors each week. It need not be a mountain hike or fancy expedition...it can be a walk about your neighborhood taking in all the gorgeous wildflowers. It can take 15 minutes or all afternoon. Just have fun!

Another thing...slowly bring in the beautiful. Bring out a pot of tea or hot chocolate for your discerning manly types! Pull out a few art prints...a book of poetry...or just play beautiful classical music in the background of your conversation. The children will devour the beautiful and actually teach you so all you must do is present it to them and let them go!

Finally, when you are ready for back to school, just add in a table time a little at a time. Choose a Math curriculum that you can feel free to teach in short lessons. It could be *Making Math Meaningful*, which is sooo CM or it could be Saxon just eliminating all but the new problems. Limit those lessons to increase their attentiveness and efficiency. For your Language Arts, I recommend trusting our dear CM ideas on this. Use simple Copywork of Bible Verses, Poetry, Great Quotes or Narrations. Allow them plenty of time to narrate, tell back, the story that you read or the experience that you have or what they see in Nature or Art. Discuss those great thoughts with them and you will be on your way! You may want to OCCASIONALLY take down their narrations from their dictation to you so that they may read their "own story" and see how Narrations are really their own Composition without the worry of learning components of grammar or having to make up characters, vocabulary, or a plot. As your children grow older, you will have time to learn about how to add more complicated ways of learning Language Arts into your table time such as Dictation, Written Narration,

and Composition. In these early years of the approach, no matter the age, just stick to the simple ways and techniques to encourage a delight in learning!

Most of all, be sure to give them a daily time of reading through Scripture. Most who know me would be surprised to see this last. The other precepts must be laid to share the vitality of respecting the children's minds enough to give them direct contact with the Word of God so that they may be convicted of sin, come to repentance and be set on the path of coming to know God. This is our chief aim as parents and may we be faithful to this call!

I hope this helps you find an easy way to jump into some of the aspects of CM...these are more the how to's. Charlotte Mason was really mostly interested in the building of relationships, as our Saviour Jesus Christ was. Let this be your focus, use simple tools and take the time to enjoy your treasures! Love IN Christ! Cindy

Dear Cindy,

Thank you SO much for your post regarding writing. Just to give you a background of myself --we are missionaries in Japan. My daughter is in her first year of college after taking a year off. My son is 15 now. I Homeschooled both children-Dorcas through the 8th grade, Danny through the 3rd grade. At that point we moved to Tokyo and enrolled both children in a Christian MK school. Now we are homeschooling Danny again for the last two years. The school just did not work out for various reasons.

Now for my questions-- Danny was diagnosed as ADHD and has significant learning disabilities mainly in writing and reading. His reading is much improved but he still needs things read aloud if he is to really understand what the book says. I have set aside any writing just to give him a break and because I have not known how to proceed. I am coming into this "natural learning" style very late but it has given me so much freedom and has taken the pressure out of our "schooling".

Where would you start with a boy like this who seems to detest any kind of writing? He does any assignment just to get it done. You mention Copywork. Would you start there? (Because of his learning disabilities Copywork is hard because he has a very short memory. When he copies his eyes are constantly moving back and forth from the text to the paper on which he is writing.) He seems to have plenty of ideas but it is the mechanics of getting it down on paper that is so hard. He may never be writer but I know that he needs to know the basics of writing, how to express himself on paper.

You have given me several ideas from your two posts but I just wanted more specifics for me and my situation. Thanks for any suggestions you might have, Georgia Landis

### From the Rushtons...

Dear Georgia,

If it helps any, we still read aloud to our children. They do read to themselves, but we have set a time each day that we read aloud to them. My son and I were talking the other day when he commented on the fact that when I read to him it is much different for him from when he reads to me or to himself. He said that he can really immerse himself in what is read whereas any other way, he has to work at reading and then listen to the story all at the same time. THAT IS WORK! I want for reading to be enjoyable, so we do have a combination of ways that we use Wholebooks...some read by them in their free time but most read aloud in our family reading time.

I read a few years ago in *What is a Family* by Edith Schaeffer about how she reads aloud to her children when they come back home. I kinda thought in my mind that her children might be around 30-40...but Susan is in her 50's or so! Isn't that a precious picture? Her book gave me a vision for reading aloud as an inheritance instead of just another subject to be covered!

It was around that time that my husband shared with me that he also prefers to listen to me read aloud. Yes, he DOES read and has a COLLEGE degree...but he loves to hear me read aloud to the family. These are sweet memories that can never be taken away. Enjoy these blessings as you build memories...an inheritance with the children!

About taking a break...I really think that this is wisdom. Writing is not an end. Writing is ONE means toward the end of expressing yourself to others so that we can bring glory and honor to the Lord. There are vast means to communicate the gospel to our world. It seems to me that often writing is put on such a high pedestal that we eliminate many other means of ministry just because of the little box that we put ministry into. It reminds me of the box that so many put "serving God" into...just in church or church related means.

Let me explain what I mean...my son has felt that God was calling him into missions since he was 8 years old. I remember God calling me about that age, but my call was buried under all my worldliness and selfish ambitions. My husband knew my heart for God and serving others but not the intensity of the call because I never really shared it with him as "a call." Well, one night about a year after Matthew made his call public, the Lord REALLY convicted me about putting Him off all these years. I repented bitterly and laid my life down to be used as God saw fit in any area of missions whether at our local Walmart...through writing...through seminars...or gulp, across the World in a foreign country. Well, now...how to tell my husband?? I did not have to. While I was fixing dinner, my daughter spilled the beans. I was shocked and devastated all at the same time especially since I had no idea how my husband would respond to my commitment! Well, he responded..."What can YOU do? I can build houses or churches...I think that **\*\*I\*\*** am the ONE who needs to do missions!" ☺ My heart was filled to overflowing as I realized that all I needed to do was surrender...that God could use our entire family with each and every one of our gifts to minister to others even more effectively than what we had always been taught within our churches.

Your son may have other giftings that need to be nurtured. Sure, he will need to know how to write. But, he really needs to know that all he does can bring glory and honor to the Lord. These are the last days. I feel certain that God does not necessarily want for our children to be brought up in a standard, customary way...He wants for them to be prepared to be used by Him.

One of my favorite verses is found in 2 Timothy 2 (Amplified Bible)

***“But in a great house there are not vessels of gold and silver, but also [utensils] of wood and earthenware, and some for honorable and noble [use] and some for menial and ignoble [use]. (ignoble means dishonorable, evil, common... Common means average, standard, traditional, familiar, conventional, customary.) Whoever cleanses himself [from what is ignoble and unclean, who separates himself from contact with contaminating and corrupting influences] will [then himself] be a vessel set apart and useful for honorable and noble purposes, consecrated and profitable to the Master, fit and ready for any good work.”***

While I LOVE Language Arts and Writing, I have to be REAL honest here that I do not feel that everyone has or needs to become a writer. Sure, we all need basic literacy...but even with literacy, I will never forget the glory and honor that one man in our church (about 10 years ago in Athens, Alabama) brought to the Lord. He humbly shared with our church body that he could not read. That was such a humbling experience for him. Some of our members began to teach him. You would not believe the metamorphosis that took place! This quiet, shy, very embarrassed man one day READ aloud his first verse in OUR Sunday School Class! I cannot tell you HOW moving it was to hear those simple words read by someone who was THRILLED to be reading them! It was a glory and honor to God! Actually, not to slam preaching, but it was more beautiful than the most articulate sermon!

I share this because your son can bring glory and honor to the Lord just in his humble use of his giftings and abilities. Sure, there is an unseen pressure for all of us to bring our children to a "standard" or "traditional" literacy level...but God just wants your gifts for HIM to use! He only wants for us to separate from the world and commit ourselves to HIM and HIS PLAN, then we can become vessels that God can use...***"set apart and useful for honorable and noble purposes, consecrated and profitable to the Master, fit and read for any good work!"***

About Copywork for the Older Child...Yes! Copywork is a wonderful discipline to use to develop the discipline and the skills necessary to write. I would recommend a couple of things. We began by using Scripture for Copywork. Doing this serves several purposes...

- We are hiding God's Word in our hearts!
- We are developing several disciplines at one time (the skill of writing, the daily discipline of writing and Bible Study and Journaling, getting in God's Word Daily, and keeping a collection of God's Word to rely on during tough times!)
- We are learning the basics of writing from the Greatest Author of all times!
- We are giving them a purpose for writing beyond merely teaching the skill!

To do this, you may want to purchase a three-ring binder/sleeve protectors/paper for him to keep notebook of Scripture...or you may want to purchase him a nice journal...or he may like to use a spiral notebook. We keep all three kinds. I usually keep my Copywork in a nice journal (Mary bought me one back a few months ago.) My son has most of his "Copywork" in a three-ring notebook...but his quiet time verses are kept in a spiral notebook that he uses to jot down sermon notes and verses that he wants to study more in-depth. I let him dictate what goes into his journals because I know that his standard is one of excellence so I can trust him to be self-directed in this area.

One other thing that can help with the discipline of Copywork is using a large print book or Bible or writing out his Copywork for him. My son still prefers to use large print editions because they do not strain his eyes as much. In our read alouds, I simply highlight the really good quotes as we read through a passage. They know that if they cannot find any good quotes for the day that they can always find great quotes in our read alouds. He might like doing that.

You said that he has difficulty looking at the paper with the model and then writing it down on his paper. My daughter is JUST LIKE THIS! My son needed years of Copywork to prepare for Dictation (speaking the model aloud while they write it down). My daughter could easily write down a passage from Dictation from the early years...WITH CORRECT SPELLING, although she could not read! Who can figure? Except my son appears to be a more visual learner like me...my daughter is very auditory. She can immediately figure the spelling by the sound. Try some Dictation with him to see if it helps any.

I was digging several years ago and found these easy to follow steps by Charlotte Mason in her Home Education Series. I hope that they help take the mystery out of Dictation. Here are the steps...

- The child prepares himself. You give him a model to study. Then, he familiarizes himself with words, punctuation, and form.
- Before beginning, ask if there are any words or punctuation that needs attention or explanation.
- Point out any words or punctuation that you feel needs attention.
- Put any words on the blackboard for them to see and let them erase when they feel that they know them.
- When the child is ready for dictation, give out clause by clause— only repeating each clause once. Dictate even the punctuation and spelling for the very young. (Do so after you have read the entire sentence in order

to give them time to get it correct.) The older child will be able to take dictation without giving them the punctuation or spelling.

· For evaluating work, allow them to read back the selection to you and then let them edit just as they do with their Copywork (use model to make correction, so on).

Georgia,

I appreciate you trusting me with your situation. You are such a dear and I LOVE being able to be used by God to share some ideas to help you. My encouragement to you is to continue to encourage your little one even if he is not so little anymore. His heart is so precious and God has placed his heart in your keeping. That is a tremendous responsibility but not one that you bear alone. God is with you each step of the way. He will give you direction that I cannot give because I do not know God's "scope and sequence" or "final objectives" for your children. But, your God does! And, I believe that He has planted that Vision within your heart.

The how-to's are simple precepts that we just follow bit by bit to lead our little ones. Some will work, others will not, some will work for a while, whereas others will be life-long disciplines. Trust the simple way that God is leading you and you will not go wrong. There are so many possibilities for teaching these disciplines...find what will work for your individual child. Find ideas that are pleasant and related to life for practicing the skills and you will find this little caterpillar bursting forth from his cocoon as a gorgeous butterfly with purpose and beauty that attracts others to Christ! I will be praying for you! Love, Cindy

Hi Cindy,

I'm on the CM loop. What I get from your book is more of a delight directed approach. Personally, I've been going for the delight-directed study. My 10 year old son has recently asked if we can study about W.W.I. I told him we would, after we get done with our California History. What do you do about determining which study is next? When to stop the study? I'd like your opinion on this. I had never heard of using a set plan with CM. Another reason I ask is that a friend from church has decided to Homeschool her three kids and just asked me where she could find out what to study and when to study it. I know you are working on your book so I won't be upset if you can't answer me. God bless you.

### **From the Rushtons...**

HI! Thanks for your sweet note! I will do my best to answer this for you... I have some things I would like to look up to add to this in a future issue, but I felt that it was a wonderful question to address since so many of you are praying about the direction of your Homeschool this coming year.

This is my two-bits for now and I will go a little deeper in an upcoming issue! I found some wonderful jewels in Charlotte Mason's writing which seemed to indicate to me that she was a strong advocate of delight-directed studies especially once they have attained the skills to become more self-educated. Until then, the parent sets the pace to establish the discipline needed for the child to be trained to learn on their own. I have primarily used the beginning years of teaching the foundations of phonics/math/handwriting so they can be more directed in their learning...but once they understood the basics, they were ready to go! In short, I did use a scope and sequence for math and phonics...I had my own in my heart for Language Arts (just a minute and I will explain).

My children know what is expected each day. They get up to do their quiet times (Established by me in the beginning and now on their own)...chores (I trained them in the early years and now they can do most anything around the house!)...then table time (As I said, I showed them the how-to's of their skills and now they use that in their own lessons...the only area that I still teach is in Bible...we are studying through the Book of Daniel and I have written out the questions for them to help them dig in.)...family time...productive free time (this is totally up to them UNLESS I hear the BORED word! ;-)) Then I help them to find things to

do...they pretty much pursue studies of interest such as Nature Study...or writing books...or reading on topics of interest...so on!)...Ministry (pretty much they are still learning with me in this area)...and Family Read Alouds ( I read aloud to them but the books are usually chosen based upon their interests or by my suggestion of books that I think they just HAVE to read!)

In your situation, I would recommend drawing the California study to a close for now so you can jump on into W.W.I. You will really enjoy the study! Usually when I see another interest starting to bud, I will draw our studies to a close so that we can pursue a new study. Now, that seems to jump around, but by bringing a study to a close, I mean that we finish any books or projects that we have going and begin the new study as a "treat" for finishing up!

I think that you will have as many ways of applying Charlotte Mason's ideas as people using those ideas. I did read that she encouraged her teachers to change up their books every year to keep them fresh. I got the impression that there was not a "scope and sequence" that they followed as much as a general overall plan for books that simply must be read! I think that this is wisdom. For one thing, if we are to have all of life as educational, there will be no limit to what we could or should study.

I believe that God has placed a "scope and sequence" in the heart of each parent. If they just listen, He shows the way. BUT, there are so many things that hinder them from listening to Him for each step of the way! I think that you will find in CM's writing that she trusted the parents to be the best ones to direct the studies of the children...I think it is because she never determined a set way to teach every single child. She respected each of them as totally individual and with interests that needed to be pursued.

I would recommend that your friend get in touch with some of the curriculum companies and ask for a Scope and Sequence. They will send them out for free. She can then take them...sit down to make a basic list of what is normally covered by most companies at that age. She could use those topics for choosing books that she uses each year. I did this when I first began on my own to choose our studies. I found that we were going so far beyond what the schools covered AND so much more in-depth that I relaxed into trusting the Lord and MY CHILDREN for our plan. It has been so much better since then! I can enjoy life and "go with the flow" more! But, this might help her to set her own plan up so that she can relax and trust these wonderful whole books and real life to be the wonderful teachers that they are! Love, Cindy

Dear Cindy,

I will tell you—I was so glad to receive my *Time for Tea!* (editor's note...January 1999 issue) But then to open it and read how you shared your heart with all of us...Thank you so much! The Lord has truly used you!

A while back, I tried to call you. This was not just a call about homeschooling or *Time for Tea*. It was a desperate plea for prayer. Sometimes it is easier to share with someone who is not so near; and I *knew* you would pray.

My husband was planning to leave by January 1st. He didn't want to be married any more. There were a lot of circumstances, but one was the Internet. He was very involved on it and I don't know what all. (Why don't people speak out more about the evils of the Internet?!) He did meet another woman that he was seriously talking to, even by way of telephone.

This was the reason that I left the Internet. Yes, I was getting pornographic messages too—but I am sure with time that could have been corrected. I couldn't keep it with the evil it has brought our marriage.

Well, the Lord did an amazing work (as only He can do!) and my husband decided to stay. He agreed to no Internet and he apologized for what had happened. (This was a major step, because he saw nothing wrong in it before.)

I had given up all hope for our marriage and was even quite ready for him to go. I am going to enclose a bit that I wrote about this on how the Lord worked on my heart.

This affected our homeschooling also, of course. I doubted if I was doing *anything* right. I am so thankful for this issue of *Time for Tea* to put me back on track.

Romans 8:28! We have to trust it! We all have our trials. Things are still hard. My husband claims to be saved, but there is no evidence. He wants nothing to do with God. The TV is on from the minute he gets home until he goes to bed. (but it used to be the Internet) What a struggle—but I want my life to be *real* before my husband and draw him to the Lord.

I write all of this to you because I so appreciate you sharing your struggles. I *know* that God is in control—if we allow Him to be!

Thank you for allowing me to also share my heart. May God continue to richly bless you. A special friend

### From the Rushtons...

I pray that this moment you will all lift one another up in prayer! My dear friend, I have lifted you before the Lord many times the last months! As I planned this issue, your testimony kept coming back to my heart! Homeschooling IS NOT going to be easy without a whole and complete marriage relationship! Thanks for sharing your heart even though it was so tough! Thanks for blessing me with this devotion. I believe that these precious thoughts are perfect for this issue! You are such an inspiration!

Dear Cindy,

May the Lord bless you and your dear family as you have blessed so many!

I wanted to shout in agreement after reading your article on Marriage Relationships. We are approaching our 13<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary this next week. The Lord has blessed us with 8 pieces of fruit from our marriage. Our 7<sup>th</sup> was a miscarriage. Although people look at us and think it is our decision to have “all these babies.” We know better- they’re from God and He didn’t have to give us any of them. We are grateful.

These thirteen years we’ve learned to love each other more and more each day. My heart leaps when he tells me he loves me. We both desire to have the relationship the Lord has designed for us. Our family’s goal is to do everything as unto the Lord and to have a good attitude doing it!

Early summer I was searching for the answer on how to get more done around the house using the children to help. My husband and I had good ideas like job lists and schedules. It didn’t seem like enough was getting done. Maintaining home, school, cooking, cleaning, and being loving too seemed impossible. I cried out to the Lord in despair and was convinced there would be an answer. There was, but not anything I expected! I got tendonitis in one elbow real bad. It hurt to even pick up a pencil! Then because of the pain I overused my other arm and got tendonitis in that elbow. My chiropractor told me it would take a month or more to heal with rest. I was devastated! I could already see the laundry and dishes piling up. I thought we were well on our way to training the children to help more...then this! My husband told me to dictate what I wanted them to do, be calm, and if they needed to be punished call on him. The first day went great! His plan worked. I was thanking the Lord for my tendonitis because as my husband instructed we all followed. Then the second day came (uh ooh). Frustration set in because I had to tell the children how to do things without being able to show tm. At our house we teach our children that “attitude is everything.” I was blowing it because I was not listening to my husband’s advice. I’m a slow learner but I did catch on that every time I dictated calmly and in a spirit of meekness and called him to discipline the children my arms felt better! (*Editor: WOOOE! Isn’t God so GOOD?*) But when I went against his loving advice, I had sharp pains! I realized the Lord sent tendonitis to make me a sweeter wife, which has resulted into an even sweeter marriage and a deeper love and respect for my husband. God knows what He is doing!

Our house got in order much faster with me out of the way physically so I could learn spiritual lessons and draw closer to Him. Also, before I got tendonitis, I thought I’d never get to sew again because I could never