

are an exhausted, weary, wore out, disgusted veteran who is ready to quit...you are having fun and just want less guilt from having so much fun...WHATEVER, you will find this to be one of your favorite treasures! In my opinion, an absolute MUST! In fact, we offer a guarantee with this book! Your homeschool (and life!) will never be the same after reading it! \$10.00

Transcripts and Diplomas by Barb Shelton... If you are struggling with how to actually document learning for transcripts and how to get your child ready for graduation and have no idea where to begin, why not check out this book. It is a quick read with lots of help. Of course, it is not necessary if you have the NEW **Senior High: A Home-Designed Form+U+La** or if you are planning to buy it. If you are not planning to get the big book, this book will give you some quick help with those basic questions. \$4.00

Also check out Barb's audio tapes...MUSTS!

Choosing Your Own Senior High Framework and Filling It With Good Stuff By Barb Shelton...This set has offered me that final "umph" to convince me that we COULD do this for the "long-haul!" I used my time with this set as a mini-retreat to evaluate where we were and to seek God for where we are going in these last few years. Not sure about whether you CAN teach during these years? Not sure how to teach your child? Not sure what REALLY needs to be covered? Have no clue how to document your child's real life? This set is a must for you! \$10.00

Out of Fear and Bondage: Into Freedom, Refreshment, and Refocus by Barb Shelton...Has all of the above scared you to death? This is YOUR set! I remember the first time (Yes, I typed that accurately because there have been MANY times that this set has found its way into my head-set!) I listened through this set. My fears, bondage, and frustrations seemed to just melt away. Want some freedom...refreshment...focus? This is your set! \$10

Real Life Record-keeping by Barb Shelton... Of all the resources I have ever seen written or taught on Record-keeping, this has to be the best and most comprehensive out there! Just as I have been called the "binder queen," Barb has to be the queen of record-keeping! This set comes with a full packet of handouts that are ALL reproducible and FULLY explained by Barb! This will be the best spent money EVER for the mother who has no clue where to begin documenting REAL learning in the homeschool! You key to really designing an individualized education based on real life! \$12.95

For other resources by Barb, see our catalog! They are ALL great!

Finally, I want to encourage you. When we come face to face with God's plan for the education of our children versus our plans, ideas, hopes, and dreams; I believe that there is a dying to self. There is a crucifying of our flesh. This is never, ever easy. In fact, it is the hardest place in the process toward living in complete surrender to God in the area of homeschooling.

My beloved friend, God is not disappointed in your son...his abilities...his interests. God knew him before you even knew that you had conceived him. He has planted within him a special purpose and ALL that he needs to fulfill that purpose with anointing.

As a fellow mom, I want for you to know that it is SO worth it all (all the pain, fears, frustrations, walking in the dark with only a glimmer of light to follow... worth it all!) to abandon ourselves and our plans for the awesome plan that God has for our children. You can trust Him. You can rely on Him. You won't be disappointed. How do I know this? He has a promise for you. I will leave you with that promise. Love ya! Cindy...

"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you."

Hi!

My name is Linda and we met in College Station while you were here. Thanks to God, you used my question on your last *Time for Tea* newsletter. I am ashamed to admit this...but I have been in DEEP prayer about this and am STILL in need of encouragement. My prayer is constant. I started implemented a CE guideline using a CM approach. We couldn't be anymore unhappy. Moreover, any less at peace. I know that comes from God. I'm having a very difficult time letting go of my fears that my children will not be academically prepared if I don't follow some guideline like CE.

I have read, reread and even put tabs on your book LAEW! I have really enjoyed that book.

Questions:

History- How did you go about it? Did you follow the history from the beginning according to the Bible or all of world history that includes Eastern civilization or whatever came up of interest? My heart DOES NOT feel at peace with having my children narrate from world history at the young age they are. My gut tells me this is the time to instill all Godly matters. So I lean towards history as told from the Bible. The rest can come later in life. Having been a college graduate, I know looking at world history as taught by the CE, it will be necessary. What they recommend for the kids to learn will throttle them passed their peers when it comes to class time in college. It will be chicken feed to them, whereas, like most of us it was "I had no idea..." So I see the value of learning that but question the timing of learning it during what I call the VERY impressionable years. I would feel much more comfortable have them read that later.

Spelling- Did you not use ANY spelling program? I have used nothing thus far (my dd is seven.) Can I depend on copywork and dictation to do it for us. Do I rely on correcting, looking up rules as she misspells words as she writes from dictation? One thing I know that has changed in my household, is that since we included "subjects" in our schooling it has become busywork. It takes time away from "life" and reading. BUT, I do not want my children NOT to be poor spellers either like their Mama:>

Writing- Did you solely rely on the copywork and narration for teaching the kids writing or did you supplement with something like Writing Strands?

Schooling has become just that..."schooling." Yuk. This is not what I intended to do. Yet here I am, afraid to let go for fear of my kids not being prepared for college. I

squeaked by in college. I was annihilated on ALL my papers for failure to write good papers or having terrible Grammar skills. I KNOW my daughter learns more the CM way. Having my background experiences in college, I want to prepare them not to go through what I did. That is why I turned to Classical Education using the CM approach. It's still yucky. CM alone is delightful for both my daughter and myself. THAT IS WHY I have been in deep prayer. I am actually stressed about this.

Honestly, I would love to have my kids continue the childhood of wonderment and exploration. Instead, I now have my dd sitting at the kitchen table all morning and some of the afternoon doing seat work. AUGHHHHHHH. Even I secretly can't stand that.

Hi!

Thanks for your note! I pray that you will be encouraged in this issue of *Time for Tea*. You have been in my prayers for several months. I am praying that God will give you the wisdom, assurance, encouragement, and peace that only He can give! I do have some thoughts in reply to your letter.

I was exactly where you are as we were first beginning to hear God in our homeschool. My dear, that is a frightening place. You are having to journey in an area that is not as commonly traveled. I loved the illustration I once read by Liliias Trotter about this part of the path...

"...as the mountain path grows narrower...it matters more and more, the higher we go, where we set our feet—but there is always, as it narrows, a wider and wider outlook, and purer, clearer air."

What we do matters so much. We are training up precious children. Souls. Children only loaned to us. This is a very important calling. A call with much power.

I completely understand your concerns about not missing one thing with your child. I also understand how difficult it is to choose the best materials. Want my recommendation? I would recommend that in everything that YOU or YOUR husband have a natural love, appetency, and gifting, teach what is in your hand...who you are. You will do a better job than the finest book or the most well-trained teacher. Make those things your greatest priority. In those areas that you find yourself at a loss or without a clue of where to begin, buy the best resources out there to help you out.

Let me give you a practical illustration that I hope will illustrate this in a vivid way. I love to write. I love to read. I love to plug into great people to KNOW what they know. I love research. I love collecting information and organizing information so it is MINE! Soooo, these are some of my greatest tools...those that I MUST pass on to my children. Every single time I have tried to use "curriculum" or "an approach" to substitute for what we do *naturally* as a family, I always have more stress and frustrations than I can handle! It just does not work for long.

Now...if you were to come into my kitchen, you would find that I cannot cook a meal

without a recipe book. Whereas my grandmothers and mother can take ANYTHING and make it into a mouth-watering, healthy meal, I do not have that natural gift. So, I buy great cookbooks. Do I feel guilty? Heavens, no! There are those that KNOW nutrition like I know great books! They are the experts, I don't have to do the thinking, planning, or researching. Now, I DO have to be careful how I choose my cookbooks. I have some goals I want to achieve with the meals I serve my family.

Goals like...

- ♥ it *tasting great* (We are not ones to withstand many meals that taste like cardboard boxes, no matter how healthy it may claim to be—in other words, I will never choke Carob down my family!!)
- ♥ being *EASY to prepare* (I am not one to drag things out just for the sake of martyring myself!)
- ♥ being *QUICK to prepare* (I prefer cuddling and reading to working in the kitchen...IF YOU DON'T—listen to audio books in the kitchen with your darlings!)
- ♥ and being *INEXPENSIVE* so my dollars stretch.

Not EVERY cookbook will match up to *my goals*. I have many that I have bought through the years only to find them collecting dust on my shelves. However, I have a few that have spent EVERY holiday with me, used to teach my children how to cook, and continue to train me to become a better mother.

Apply this to materials that you need for homeschooling. You have natural abilities, talents, and interests that are far superior to anything written in a curriculum manual because it is WHO you really are and WHAT you naturally teach! Don't worry about resources in those areas. You will only be frustrated. In those areas that you are drawing a blank, look for materials written by those with the same *goals and heartbeat* as you. (That may be why you are struggling with the CE books/ideas...you seem CLOSE to their philosophy, but there are things that you don't like about their philosophy. Soooo, take those that you like, find something else for those things you DON'T like!)

If you need help with Language Arts or Nature Study and are a kindred spirit with me, you will LOVE my books LAEW and NSEW! If you are needing help with teaching drawing or art history, why create your own curriculum when Barry Stebbing has already done it? If you have no idea where to begin teaching history and you want the best (and easiest to teach) resources available, check out the queen's of History—Diana Waring and Gail Schultz (*Lessons From History*). Want something easy, but fun for Music? *Color the Classics* can't be beat! Have no idea how to teach Geography? No one has more ideas than Cindy Wiggers, writer of *The Ultimate Geography and Timeline Guide*. I could go on and on. The point is to find the writer who is SO passionate about their topic that they see it EASY to teach EVERYTHING in the world from the starting point of that topic!

They are the mentors that will be your real help! You will find yourself much like I find myself in my kitchen, throwing away all the fluff and sticking to my tried and true books that REALLY help me! (Oh! I know you are wondering...which COOKBOOKS are you

talking about???) I LOVE my Sue Gregg cookbooks...healthy, easy, affordable...AND perfect teachers of GOOD THINGS, like food!)

Now...to your questions!

History- How did you go about it? Did you follow the history from the beginning according to the Bible or all of world history that includes Eastern Civilization or whatever came up of interest? My heart DOES NOT feel at peace with having my children narrate from world history at the young age they are. My gut tells me this is the time to instill all Godly matters...So I see the value of learning that but question the timing of learning it during what I call the VERY impressionable years. I would feel much more comfortable have them read that later.

History has been a "natural" subject for our family. It is another one of those things that are "just the Rushton's." We talk ideas and worldviews over dinner. We find ourselves at museums during our family vacation times. Our children, even my teenager, still dress up and "play" (oh, the word for this age is RE-ENACT) the History that we read. And books...well, you already know that part about us. We have MORE books lining our shelves on History than any other subject!

How did we begin? The same way that you are describing here. That same way God has already breathed on your heart although you may not see it as clearly as your words speak forth. We gave our children a very strong foundation in Bible History. We began with the Bible and have continued to bring all of History back to the Bible as we teach through any study. The fruit is unbeatable!

As for your concerns about including those tough parts of History, my children are now 10 and almost 14. There are still things that we are not real interested in studying through just for the sake of a "perfect education." Much of those materials and books seem to be contrary to our own beliefs.

How have we addressed this? Well, up to this point, we have been very up-front and honest to use the errors of willful lives and ungodly cultures to point back to the truth and prophecies of God's Word. No, we have not and probably will not spend our precious time reading through all of the "classics" that are recommended just for the sake of reading ALL that is available.

I am quite concerned with the lists that are available for CHRISTIAN parents to read to their children. There are many other ways you can educate your children so they are familiar with what is common to our culture and what has shaped our culture than to spend the very few moments you have with them muddling through a book that, very simply, undermines all that you believe to be right. Let me share a quote that affirms what I am saying. Keep in mind that this quote was written over one hundred years ago...

"Benjamin Franklin read an infidel book, by Shaftesbury, at fifteen years of age, and it demoralized his religious opinions for years. But for the excellent books he read before, his infidelity would have blasted his life. As it was, his influence became baneful over two associates, whom he made as thorough

skeptics as himself. One of them became a drunkard, and died in disgrace; the other lived without moral principle, holding the Christian religion in contempt. In ripe manhood, the good lessons of his boyhood, in a Christian home, asserted themselves, and Franklin, confessed his grave mistake, and became a defender of Christianity.”

William Thayer, author of ***Gaining Favor with God and Man***

Is this the only instance of literature having a profound effect on a life? No. William Thayer, ***Gaining Favor With God and Man*** also wrote about another instance of literature having a devastating effect on the life of another great man...

*“In his early manhood, Abraham Lincoln had several boon companions, who were infidels, and they influenced him to read Paine’s **Age of Reason**, and Volney’s **Ruins**. The reading of these two books caused him to doubt the truth of the Bible, so that, for a time, he was at one with his companions in their hostility to religion. He even wrote an essay upon the unreliability of the Bible, which he read to his associates. But, after a few years, he saw his folly, renounced his skeptical opinions, and returned to his early familiarity with and confidence in the Scriptures. Those two books well-nigh unsettled his moral character, and robbed the republic of a good president.”*

My dear friend, listen to that still, small voice that is directing you. God has set you as the “KEEPER” of your home. You are the one who is ultimately responsible for guarding those precious children in your home. Just as you would NEVER dare to set before your children infidels as playmates, so guard the influence of their books. Truly books are greater influences than the most influential of friends!

NOW! Saying all of this, I DO want to stress the importance of studying History...all of it. We did a study years ago through the book of Daniel. I was stunned at how much I did not know about Ancient World History. Without a thorough foundation in the Word of God, History simply seems to be without purpose. However, without a thorough foundation in History, we simply do not understand God’s Word completely! Hummmm... now, what to do? I decided all of those years ago that I would seek out the greatest resources that could give us that foundation in History WITHOUT taking us through the vile and filth so abundant even in Classical Literature. One thing that I found was that there are lots of great materials that are written by Christian writers who have really studied out History as adults, when some of this more questionable material is a little better understood. They give us the perfect balance to keep our hearts pure while teaching us an extensive background in History from a Christian Worldview. Some of my favorites?? As I shared above, Diana Waring would have to be my most favorite. Her resources are great for all ages. We have them profiled in this issue because I have mentioned them so many times (AND they are on special!). I also love ***Lessons From History*** by Gail Schultz. They are easy lessons that are perfect for all ages. But, best of all, they are written by a Christian mom!

So, you CAN give your children a FULL education that is still completely Christian. Don’t agree with studying things for the sake of filling your children with material so they excel the WORLD??? Go ahead. Be Faithful. God will honor your heart’s desire for a good education as you seek FIRST His kingdom and His righteousness...THEN, and only

then will you have ALL things added unto you!

Spelling- Did you not use ANY spelling program? I have used nothing thus far (my dd is seven.) Can I depend on Copywork and Dictation to do it for us. Do I rely on correcting, looking up rules as she misspells words as she writes from Dictation? One thing I know that has changed in my household, is that since we included "subjects" in our schooling it has become busywork. It takes time away from "life" and reading. BUT, I do not want my children NOT to be poor spellers either like their Mama:>

Isn't this so typical? I think that the hardest thing to do is TRUST the simple ways to work. My dear beloved friend, YES! Reading, Copywork, Dictation, and Greek/Latin studies have WORKED! Charlotte Mason said that poor spelling is a sign of sparse reading. Want a great speller? Let them READ! I go one step further. Let them SEE words! Let them SEE words correctly spelled! Then, you will find that they "see" with their minds the words spelled correctly when they have to spell on their own.

*Writing- Did you solely rely on the Copywork and Narration for teaching the kids Writing or did you supplement with something like
Writing Strands?*

Well, at first, I bought workbooks and used them for all the areas of Writing—Spelling, Grammar, Vocabulary, etc! What was the fruit? Well, only stress—for me AND him! No memory—it did not mean anything to him. Atrocious spelling—well, worse than that! No interest in learning—rather do ANYTHING but sit there doing those pages! It goes on and on.

Then, I cried out to God asking Him for direction. (TWO YEARS into the process! ☺) He led me to Copywork, but I did not TRUST it at first. So, I mixed Copywork lessons with the workbook pages, only to find a very tired child, who was growing closer and closer to burnout. ☹ Well, except for his growing love for Copywork, that seemed to be salvaging his spirit. As I began the following year, I decided to use Copywork as a major element of our studies. I did not completely trust it yet, so I did use a "curriculum" for Language (LLATL—still one of our favorite Language curriculums.). As that year went on, I learned how to teach language by the step-by-step directions. The only problem I saw with LLATL was that my children seemed to *delight more* in finding their own material to copy. The rest is History and our book *Language Arts...The Easy Way*.

I really have a quirk (well, attitude is a better word! ☺) about Spelling programs, Spelling tests, Grammar programs, and Grammar tests. Researching the History of Education and how children have been taught different disciplines such as Writing, brought a strange finding for me. Language was never broke up into all of these different elements until the more recent frenzy of publishing. More divisions of subjects, more money. It is that plain and simple.

I realize that so many of you really do love the how-to's...specific how-to's. I know that it really helps those of you who are struggling with Language or other subjects as much as those cookbooks help me! I would recommend trying out Copywork and Reading, *alone*, for many years to give it TIME for the fruit to grow into its fullness. Any struggles at that point can easily be remedied by Dictation lessons, which would serve as a course in Notetaking and Spelling for your older writers.

Until then, let me assure you that this DOES work! It just takes time and a lot of faith! It is worth the long wait!

My friend, I want to encourage you to really listen to the desires that God is placing in your heart for the education of your children. High School does not mean that our approach MUST change.

If there is one thing that current day writers on the Charlotte Mason Approach have not addressed well enough, it is the fruit of the High School years after the child has been educated with a Charlotte Mason Education for the other years. This is the time of FRUIT. I can tell you that as we have entered into High School and College level work at home, it has been just as fun as the early years only I have had much less stress!

We have not changed our daily schedule...or our techniques...or our convictions...or even our style of teaching/learning. The studies are more in-depth than they were just 5 years ago, but nowhere near as much confusion and stress as those years I spent wandering around in fear, worried about whether this would work, afraid the children might not get ALL that everyone else covered in their homeschools, on and on.

Now, please realize that 10 years ago when we began homeschooling, I was not here! In fact, I made mistakes that I really did not believe God could redeem. But, my dear friend, He has! The children love learning. This is just what our family does. Our children choose to learn, not just because they homeschool and it is part of our daily assignments.

I challenge you to do what you would do IF you had no examples to follow...no one looking into your homeschool...no college to prepare for...no one or nothing to consider except what you hear from God. Why? Because, this is your only REAL consideration if you are to be faithful to your calling. The rest is just STUFF. The rest of the junk is just a hindrance, a distraction! Our enemy wants for us to be so distracted...so pre-occupied...so encumbered that we miss the joy of living a life of glory to God. My friend, sit at the feet of your loving Father. Listen to His still, small voice. Step out on the path even though you don't see where it is leading. It won't be long and you will be tasting the milk and honey!

Hi Cindy,

I don't know if this is too "schoolsy" (HA) but this year I'm having the boys keep 2 sets of 3x5 cards on the metal rings that open. Each day they are copying 1-2 verses of Scripture they have already memorized and after hole-punching them, putting them on their Scripture ring". They decorated their own cover card with their names on it so we could tell them apart.

Several years ago I began keeping our Scripture verses on a large ring so we could

review them easily. I even subdivided them into categories, such as salvation/evangelism, wisdom (such as Proverbs), the Holy Spirit, etc.

The other ring is subdivided by colored 3x5's and includes:

1-- Roots/prefixes--one per card (the root is on the front and the definition and examples are on the back). They do 1-2 roots per week.

2--Grammar (punctuation and spelling, etc.) rules--one card per rule, including such things as how to make plural nouns, possessive, etc. We're getting these from a \$2.50 workbook by Instructional Fair called *Grammar* (3rd grade level). They're those "half-size" workbooks.

3--Geography--we're learning the *Geography Songs* tape (countries of the world), so once a week they'll write out the countries for one song to review later.

4--History--possibly keep a card on each important person we read about this year or important information they want to remember.

5--MISC--anything they need to review.

These cards are handy for taking with you in the car. I'm "scheduling" in a review time each week (~10 minutes).

We've basically stopped doing Copywork since they're copying Scripture cards daily, but usually do Dictation ~3-4 times per week--I'm thinking we should also do Copywork. How do you recommend combining all three--the Scripture file cards, Copywork, and Dictation? The problem with the file cards is that the lines are so small, so they don't get their best penmanship on them. Although our boys have a pretty penmanship, they don't want to handwrite a lot. Do you have any ideas for increasing their speed?

I've begun having them spend ~8-10 minutes (3-4 times/week) typing out Scripture chapters/long passages that they've memorized in the past. I'm considering including some good literature passages, as well. What's your opinion on this? Does their "Copywork" NEED to be done by hand, or can they receive the same benefit by typing good literature? I teach them at an early age to learn to type using *Type It*--a phonetics based typing manual. We take a water based marker and write the home keys on the corresponding fingers--they love seeing A-S-D-F and J-K-L-; on their fingers. My just turned 6 year old has begun learning type--he only types 3 lines a day but is doing great! :)

Regarding my "writing" insecurity, after praying about it, this is what I've come up with. I was able to purchase an older version of *Writing Strands 3* for \$5 last spring, so we're going to begin doing 3 weeks of *Writing Strands* (20 minutes daily for 4 days/week) and then the next week they'll write a book report or report (science or history related). All of their writing is done on our computer.

They are finishing up a report on a famous baseball player from the encyclopedia. I needed for them to do this to face MY insecurity in this area. The 5th grader's ended up having close to 350 words! We just made outlines from 2 encyclopedia articles and then he wrote the paragraphs. I have the Institute for Excellence in Writing manual and learned how to vary sentence openers (subject, adverb, preposition, _ing word, and

clausal), so I helped him quite a bit in his editing. How much help from the mother is OK when you're just starting out?

Finally, when I read aloud to the children, after about 20 minutes or so, my throat starts becoming hoarse and even sore. Is there something I can do to read longer? We hate to get into a great book and then have to wait for my voice to return (or throat to stop hurting).

I look forward to hearing from you.

HI!

Thanks for these great ideas. There are so many things we could do with this idea!

Digging into your questions, I will just answer them bit by bit. First though, I want to really encourage you to look at teaching language as a process. In spite of what is common to our culture, that process CAN be led by the Holy Spirit. I want to really encourage you to hear the Holy Spirit as He faithfully directs your path. Your path WILL be different than my path...or that of your best friend...or that of the public schools. Be willing to walk day by day in faith, that which you don't SEE, so you may truly listen to God each step of the way.

Okey...digging into those questions...

"How do you recommend combining all three--the Scripture file cards, Copywork, and Dictation?"

We do all kinds of writing each day in our home. To answer your question, let me give you a peek into our home. My children wake up every day to their own quiet times. In their quiet times, they keep Bible journals (notebooks) in which they log their Bible reading, favorite verse, prayer requests/answers, and any other thoughts they have. This is one form of writing. Then, as they settle into table time, the lessons that we have are primarily written work as they work on daily language lessons (each day is different with a variety of Copywork, Narrations, Dictation, Scrapbooking, or working on various Notebooks), Math, and Bible Study as a family. As they wrap up lessons, usually we work (or play) as a family. Matthew and Elisabeth both work with our ministry. Work, which includes writing and real life practice of what we pray they have been learning in their lessons. In their free time, our children busy themselves with things that they enjoy doing. The funny thing is that almost daily our children spend their free time using the skills that they have been learning to devour studies of interest. Once again, writing as a means of learning.

As I share our day, I want for you to see writing as a natural part of every single day. Now, in the early years, of course our children were not able to write this much. Both of them really struggled at the beginning with learning the basics without losing their natural love for writing, which is SO foundational to what they are doing now. This is the first step.

Learning how to form letters. Learning how to talk to mommy and others, so they learn that their thoughts are very, very important. Learning that their ideas and thoughts are so important that others want to know what they know. Learning how to find out what they want to know. Learning that writing is putting what they are learning or what they want to know on paper so they will have it in the future or so others can learn what they know. Practicing writing so that they develop the physical and mental endurance that is necessary to keep and develop those thoughts that are beloved to them and put them on paper for others to see!

Our first book, *Language Arts...The Easy Way*, set forth some of the most crucial disciplines of a great writer. These disciplines do not have to be practiced every day or even every week. They fit in with what you are already doing or as a complete program by itself. Does it work? YES! Not only does this approach work for teaching the skills of writing, but it does more than any other book you could try because it stresses meeting the child where they are and letting God lead you down this path each step of the way.

I have to stress anytime I talk about my book that I HAD to stop somewhere. I wanted to give the strengths and how-to's for many other techniques for teaching language, but I would have never finished the book. Your file cards are a perfect example of doing the same thing. There are countless other ways to teach the skills of writing and practice language every day. Our children have written our own books on topics we have studied together and others on topics that they have studied on their own. Matthew has written speeches and articles. They write letters by regular mail and email. They do research papers. They write book reviews, fictional stories, poetry, essays, information sheets, on and on.

As you can tell, there are so many ways for our children to learn how to write and practice that skill with a nice variety of assignments. My greatest concern, as a fellow mother, is the mentality that we have to limit learning to the modes of learning that we grew up with in the schools we attended. Personally, I have had to die and re-die day-after-day to the training I had in schools to assume that schools knew how to teach writing.

When we want for our children to learn how to work on cars, we let them watch someone (usually their dad) who works on them, work on the part themselves, and ask lots of questions. The person who is the expert at working on cars is THE ONE who teaches them about working on cars. When we want for our children to learn ministry, we put them under a ministry (ours) so they can learn from the ones DOING it as a lifestyle. When we want for our children to know anything, we put them in direct contact with the person, the expert (or with what they need to learn about—nature, etc).

Yet, I battled for years with the most natural thing in the world, writing. First of all, that was one thing that was in MY HAND (pardon the pun...this is the words that God used when beginning to use Moses. He used what was in Moses' hand! Convenient for me that the answer to teaching Language Arts to my children was what was in MY HAND! hehe!) already. I could teach what I KNEW. I could pass on my passion. This is God's

perfect plan for my children.

Now, you say, "BUT CINDY! I am not a writer and I have not even got any idea of where to begin or how to teach writing at all!" This is where I want to point you to great literature! Why would we exchange the few moments that we have with our children to teach them how to write AND to love writing passionately for books that are written by committees of people who are experts at teaching, schooling...but have never published one article or one book??? My choice, hands-down, is to introduce my children to Robert Louis Stevenson... Martha Finley... Isabella Alden... Christophe Von Schmid... Elizabeth Prentiss...

Give them the Bible. Give them great literature. Encourage them to develop the disciplines that mark the great writers.

My dear friend, great writers write daily. It keeps their minds fresh and keen. If they can't think of something original, they copy great quotes and read widely to fill their minds and research areas of interest. They take notes. They ask questions. They think. Want a great writer? Find out about the lifestyle of writers and bring those disciplines home as elements of the education of your child.

"The problem with the file cards is that the lines are so small, so they don't get their best penmanship on them. Although our boys have a pretty penmanship, they don't want to hand-write a lot. Do you have any ideas for increasing their speed?"

Hummm...this deals with several different things all at once. Let's go to the beginning. Our number one concern with writing is to develop EXCELLENCE at what they are doing. If the lines on what you are putting together are too small for their best writing, they are not ready for that particular project. Find another way to do the project you want for them to do. For example, when we began using *English From the Roots Up*, my daughter was not able to write neatly and easily on index cards, as suggested by the book. I tried bigger cards to no avail. Just as I was ready to postpone beginning the book with her, it clicked in my mind that I COULD use the program any way that I wanted to use it! Duh! We decided to use what worked for us, again that thing that was in MY hand—NOTEBOOKING. We made our own Latin/Greek Notebooks, then all fell into place.

I would recommend finding a way to give them enough space to write clearly and well. The speed will come as time goes by. The important thing to look for now is excellence... not amount or speed.

"I've begun having them spend ~8-10 minutes (3-4 times/week) typing out Scripture chapters/long passages that they've memorized in the past. I'm considering including some good literature passages, as well. What's your opinion on this? Does their "Copywork" NEED to be done by hand, or can they receive the same benefit by typing good literature?"

There are two different skills here. I type a good bit, almost all day long every day,

but when I write by hand, I give out physically. ***I*** need to do both. How much more do our children? There are indeed benefits of literature that come just by reading great literature. Typing literature is great too because it sticks even better if you are looking deeper at the passage as you type it in. Memorizing literature is great...you have it with you for life. ALL of these skills are super. AND literature is the most perfect content for learning the skills because you are always getting more than typing ASDF_ or reading for a comprehension test. BUT, beloved, there is sooo much more that is taught in each and every one of these means. There are so many reasons to use each of these timeless models.

I believe that this is the reason that the schools of our day are so inferior. They have taken away the techniques that were taught by God all throughout Scripture and used for millenniums to educate the world. They have stripped lessons of their "ideas" that feed the heart, soul, and mind. Now, we have no idea what we are to do or why we are to do it.

Copywork is rich. There is so much taught by that one little discipline, that I could write another whole book JUST on the riches of Copywork. I would recommend taking a look at the chapter in LAEW on Copywork, it is even free on our website (www.cindyrushton.com).

To answer your question, I would not substitute typing for handwriting. I consider them two different and very valuable skills. I recommend having BOTH in your curriculum. If I had to choose ONE for a young, reluctant writer, I would still choose handwriting. They will never do anything in life that will not require good, clear penmanship. In addition, their character and literacy is judged by their penmanship. The key to creative writing and self-education, which will come as they get older, is developing endurance to read, study, and record every day in these younger years. These are the years that they need to learn not only how to write, but how to build those muscles up so they can write as long as their mind thinks later!

How much help from the mother is OK when you're just starting out?

Oh, my dear, darling friend, this is another area that I believe school has hindered us from being mothers. A mother naturally teaches. I am not so sure a college graduate naturally teaches...they must learn to teach on the job. In our day and time, this is just not the same as when our grandparents were little—there is too much strain on the teachers for them to truly teach.

Mamaw used to tell me about her precious school teacher when she was a little girl. She said that every day she looked forward to her "cuddly" teacher pulling her up into her lap to hold her as she practiced her reading aloud...learned a new math concept...or answered questions for her tests. Her teachers had TIME to teach one-on-one.

How much help is ok? ALL YOU HAVE! Beloved, you can give all you have! Your children will only be greater! I used to feel "guilty" when Matthew was learning to read. For one thing, I know that you are from the South, so your children have that same

Southern draawwwllllll. I jokingly say that ANY mother who teaches a Southern child phonics, deserves an extra crown in heaven because she is going to be there for a WHILE for each sweet, little lesson!

Matthew would get tired soon into reading, but I began to notice that IF I ALSO READ a portion of the material, it would give him a rest so he could come back during his turn fresh and ready to read with more expression and understanding. Oh, did I feel like I was somehow cheating...somehow doing it for him...not teaching correctly! UNTIL, I thought back to my education...our teachers let the WHOLE class take turns reading aloud each day. I read LESS ALOUD as I was learning to read than my child.

Now, he is almost fourteen (EEK!). Does he have effects from our one-to-one time? YES! He loves reading...he reads expressively and well...he chooses to read, when children in schools choose drugs, sex, and video games. AND we have sweet memories that come from learning together.

Is there something I can do to read longer?

I don't remember how old your children are at this time. We now take turns reading. Elisabeth begins our read alouds with the Bible passage for the day. Then, we all take turns reading together, especially on days when I might not feel too good or have a sore throat. It is neat to hear them read aloud. They read with the same expression and emphasis as me. In fact, I would recommend taking turns as reading as your children get older. It is simply too precious to hear them read aloud! Oh, I am excited for you! You have many treasures coming to you! Soooo, have fun! Enjoy! These lessons are the foundation of an education that God has planned for your family!

Dear Cindy,

When I recently received the two volumes of the back issues of the newsletter, I was thrilled with the binderized books. I was not expecting anything so nice. Thank you for the current newsletter you chose to send, as well. The articles are so refreshing and encouraging--I love to be pointed back to Jesus and my husband. Isn't God's way always perfect?!? (*Editor--YES!*)

Now for some questions--we have 4 sons (10, ~9, 7 1/2, and ~6) and have homeschooled the whole way. At times, I still struggle with confidence after all these years! Your articles are so helpful to calm anxious and fearful thoughts. We're trying to get back into a "routine" after the summer and my husband's recent back surgery. He's returning to work this Thursday, so that should help us get to bed earlier and thus more reading aloud. As you mentioned, there's just something about reading aloud as a family that settles us down and draws us closer again.

I read and re-read your articles and get encouragement, but then seem to struggle with the implementation. Currently, my two oldest boys are VERY interested in baseball, especially the Braves. They brought home over 20 different biographies of baseball players that they know. I am not thrilled with this interest, but would like to "go with it"

Godly women will get tired and weary! Making a home is tough work. Often this is the

for the time being. Is there any "good" baseball literature for Copywork?!? Do you have any ideas how to incorporate writing assignments and notebooks with their passion?

Writing is the area I am most insecure about with them. They aren't opposed to writing and don't have a "bad" taste for it--they just haven't done much at all. I told myself that I would concentrate on writing this year (to "face my fears" and to give them experience with writing) but then I seem to procrastinate--wondering how to start. Do you have any suggestions? We have done Copywork and Dictation several times a week, but I want them to be able to write reports and more. Each one wrote a short paragraph on their favorite baseball player, using the Internet to get the information. They type their writing assignments on the computer. I was an ace with Grammar and Punctuation in school, but had no confidence in writing--the typical all A's student. I really wasn't taught HOW to write.

Another interest they enjoy is dogs, and they recognize over 100 different breeds. We recently toured our police department here and were able to see 2 K-9 patrol dogs. How can I tie in Writing and Notebooking with their interest in dogs? When they do Copywork from a book they like, such as a James Herriot book, how much do they copy? Is it favorite passages or an entire chapter--do you just let them decide? Is it for a set time each day, such as 10-15 minutes?

How do you get them interested in choosing their own copywork? Also, they seem to have lost some of their desire for reading that they used to have. Do you have any ideas to help them re-gain it?

How do you plan what history to cover? I struggle with feelings that my 10-year-old is "behind" as we haven't studied History chronologically (or much at all last year). They love biographies and enjoy History, so I was going to begin with the Explorers and cover American History. Of course, then I read *The Well Trained Mind*, where history should "IDEALLY" (HA) be studied on a 4 year rotation--that's when the insecurity began again. My husband said just start somewhere and stop getting paralyzed with the best way to do it [Was that a word from the Lord, or what! :)]. After my outpouring regarding my insecurity, he offered to teach History at night (read to them) using Abeka's and/or Christian Liberty's texts as a foundation, but then I said that I would teach it. I was scared that he might not teach enough, or just read through the textbook, and of course, we cannot do that, can we? HA! Can you believe me??!!

In closing, (THANKS for reading all of this!), sometimes I just want to give myself permission to just read to them for several days and play with them. They're all "ahead" in their math books, so why won't I let myself just read and work on writing with them? It's just that we haven't been on a routine of any kind this summer (they did do some math off and on throughout the summer, so they're "ahead" now), and I want some kind of routine for us. WE all need to know what's expected when. Right now, no one really knows what's expected in the way of school, so we take more time than is necessary doing it.

I would like for them to enjoy learning, so what's my problem? I've told God that He must be sick of hearing my requests for guidance and direction in teaching His sons. I

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feel guilty that I've wasted so much time in this area of deciding what to cover and trying to plan. Please pray that I will HEAR His words to me and walk in His confidence.

Thanks again for any advice you want to share. I appreciate your openness and humility and SIMPLICITY.

HI!

WOW! What a letter! I guess you know that I will not be able to answer all of this in depth this issue. The homeschooling section of our next issue will focus on teaching History the EASY WAY! Hold on for those details...well, actually not just those details. I would like to begin answering by just sending a long distance hug...and saying sweetly slllllloooowww down! ☺

When we began really hearing God in our homeschool, I was as overwhelmed as you are. There was SO much to teach and SO little time. One of the things that God spoke to me during that time was for me to begin with the first step...hearing Him and His way. My response was, "OK...God SPEAK!"

Beloved, God did not come right out and say, "*THUS, THIS is how you shall do it all for all the years of your homeschool* (thunder sounding in the background!)." He has led me much as He led the Israelites in the wilderness. I have seen Him as my "*Cloud by Day*" and "*Pillar of Fire*" by night...having to simply follow obediently, trusting Him. At the point that I felt I could not go on--that I MAY have missed God along the way, He always gave me what I call lovingly "Holy Moments." Those moments where He would bring me to the mountaintop and let me look back over the journey to see how faithful He is and how far *I* have come!

You can trust God. He may not give you all of your answers for EVERYTHING today. But, He will work along the way to show you step-by-step AS YOU NEED HIM!

Where do you begin? Learn to enjoy your children. Have that fun that you wrote about...

In closing, (THANKS for reading all of this!), sometimes I just want to give myself permission to just read to them for several days and play with them. They're all "ahead" in their math books, so why won't I let myself just read and work on writing with them?

Why aren't you giving yourself permission to just read and play? Hummm...you sound just too kindred. Want my guess? It sounds like MY OWN testimony. Want to know what my problem was? There were several issues I had to deal with:

- **I was laboring in my own strength.** I was trying to earn good (perfect) kids...the best (AND DO I MEAN BEST!) education for them...praise from all who looked in on homeschooling...and most of all, God's approval! The good news came as I learned that ALL has been paid for by God! All I needed could be found by resting in Him and allowing HIM to be our Teacher!
- **I was competing with others.** Yes. I hate to admit that. It makes me blush even

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though I am sitting here behind my screen! I, like so many other mothers, want the very best for my children. That is great! That makes me the BEST teacher of my children. BUT...the down side is that if I let my flesh get in there, I am never satisfied! I do not just want excellence. I want it at all costs! I do not just want for my children to do as well as those their ages, I want them to EXCEED them! The pressure that mindset put on me was nothing to the pressure that it put on the children. My children began to detest learning because they could not meet my unreasonable expectations.

- **I was afraid I would miss something important!** Yes! With my PERFECT children! ☺ They had to know EVERYTHING! After all, weren't they a reflection on homeschooling? How else would the world KNOW that homeschooling worked??? The pressure was too much. In the midst of my struggles God showed me that there was no possible way my children could ever know EVERYTHING. In fact, in just one area of learning, they could spend their entire life trying to learn all on that topic and never know it all. The only all-knowing being is our precious God. While He wants for us to subdue and have dominion over our world (which means that we need to introduce our children to as much knowledge, understanding and wisdom as possible), we have to realize how utterly sinful it is to want to attain knowledge at all costs. (Remember the fall?) God wants for us to purpose to know one thing before all else, Christ and Christ crucified. The rest must be given by God or it is all vain. Peace could be mine. All I had to do from that point is seek Him...all the rest has been added unto me!
- **I needed to renew my mind!** My dear friend, this is THE KEY of all keys! We have been influenced by our culture. We need a constant cleansing and re-filling if we are to renew our mind. Much of my struggles in the early years resulted from believing the "lies" that have made us so dependent upon the educational system of our day. Those lies resulted in fears, which resulted in bondage, confusion, and high places. Sitting at the feet of God began to shatter those strongholds in my life. It hurt so much at first. I had no direction. I had no assurances that this would work. Well, until I kept sitting at His feet. He poured His vision for my children into my heart. He began showing promises after promises that were mine for the taking! Freedom came! Peace came! Rest came! Passion came!

My dear friend, enter into a season of seeking God. Ask Him to show you what His Word says about teaching, training, and disciplining children. Ask Him to give you HIS MIND and HIS VIEW of education. Let Him knock down the high places that block you from seeing His plan...those high places that you are sacrificing your children upon. Let Him uproot all of the false teaching that hinders you from peace, joy, and rest! God won't fail you!

Now, to the practical...you asked about two areas that your boys have interests—how to make those areas educational? How to use those areas for learning. My dear friend, they are already educational. I will use Audubon as an example to help us see value in the

~~and making sure that to share. Share therefore, making your words get about~~

interests of our children. I am sure there was a point in his life that his mother must have felt the same feelings that we feel...

Why can't this boy be interested in mechanics?

Why can't he be an inventor?

If his head is going to be in the sky, why can't he be naming all of the constellations?

What am I going to do with all of these sketches of birds? WHY CAN'T he write more like other children????

One biblical principle of education that I use with my children comes from the life of Paul. With those he taught, he met them where they were. If they were the religious of the day...he could appeal to them based on their religion. If they were superstitious, he knew their beliefs and could begin his teaching in their area of interest and draw them into TRUTH!

This principle is great for evangelism, but we can also use it within our own homes. If your children have ANY interest—birds, dogs, baseball, history, military, clothes, art, music, literature, travel, auto mechanics, farming, sewing, on and on—we can use those topics to practice skills AND as the foundation of their education. No study is more important than another. That thinking is based on our misunderstanding of education which comes from the public schools of our day.

School, education, is supposed to prepare our children for their life-calling. I am afraid that preparation for their life-long calling is the last thing that is achieved in a school. In fact, it is sad to say, but preparation for their life-calling is far too often one of the last goals in too many homeschools.

Why? I think we struggle with copying the same system that we feel to be inferior educationally. If we are ok with that, then we still miss the mark by getting sidetracked keeping up with friends or the newest curriculum/book on the market. We miss the whole point that if we are to prepare our children for their life calling, we must encourage individuality. Preparing them for their life-calling begins with respecting the child, with all of the little giftings, bents, interests, talents, strengths and weaknesses that make that child uniquely individual.

Enjoy those interests of your children. When you think that their interest is "not" educational, think about what else they are learning. If they are reading lots of great books, they ARE reading. If they are collecting cards or information, they are learning basic skills that will help them in the future to pursue ANY study of interest. If they are digging into the lives of people, they are well on their way to learning history (the story of how the lives of people weave together to work together toward God's plan for man). If they are learning how to find information about any animal, they are learning where to find information, a gift that will set them on the path to learning about anything they need to know.

I would give up a lot of the fluff...a lot of the books on our shelf (and we have what I believe to be the best in print), before I would sacrifice meeting the children at their

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interests. Why? Because this is one of the foundational elements of a lifestyle of self-education. I want for my children to have that passion for learning. I want for them to know that ANYTHING that they want to know can be sought out through real life, real people and real literature.

Currently, my two oldest boys are VERY interested in baseball, especially the Braves. They brought home over 20 different biographies of baseball players that they know. I am not thrilled with this interest, but would like to "go with it" for the time being. Is there any "good" baseball literature for Copywork?!? Do you have any ideas how to incorporate writing assignments and notebooks with their passion?

There is so much you can do to teach "subjects" with your children's interests. Any topic of study can naturally teach "subjects," especially language. You said they had checked out books. This is one of the keys to great writing. A must for any great writer. See how naturally you already were teaching Language? You are asking about great literature for Copywork on the topic of baseball. First, this is not an area of interest in our home, so I will be definitely brainstorming. ☺ Why not copy quotes from the books you are reading? Information? Historical facts? Narratives/biographical sketches of the players? Character qualities that they exhibit in their lives? Bible verses that remind your children of the player? On and on.

You can dig into any topic and find MUCH to add to their notebooks. You may want to find pictures of the players (cards, of course) and let the children narrate from the books they are reading about these people. Let them copy or type up the narration over a period of days into their "Baseball Notebooks." This would be much like Matthew's "Great Men of the Civil War Notebook." If the study becomes very indepth, you could let them make up a timeline of the history of baseball, games, and the players for their notebook. Since your children love the Braves. They could collect autographs and photos in their notebooks, stats, pictures taken AT the games, or any other memorabilia. Ideas go on and on. Getting the picture here? Same concept here with the study on dogs...

How can I tie in Writing and Notebooking with their interest in dogs? When they do Copywork from a book they like, such as a James Herriot book, how much do they copy? Is it favorite passages or an entire chapter--do you just let them decide? Is it for a set time each day, such as 10-15 minutes?

I would begin small with beginning or reluctant writers. Require excellence more than worrying about amounts or time. Some children do their best work in 2 minutes...others in 20. Also, some children want for you to help them choose a selection, write out a model, and let them copy those. (especially young children) As they get older, they will enjoy Copywork more if they can choose their own selections based on interests and delights... not on assignments or subjects. Move away from trying to imitate a school by having "timed" lessons or mother-directed studies. You have the freedom to encourage a love of

learning. You can have lessons as a natural part of every day...something you just "DO." Then, the burden will lift so you don't have to worry about the details...and so they can direct more and more of their education. It is true that *"there is no education, until self-education."*

How do you get them interested in choosing their own Copywork?

Probably the best way is to develop the daily discipline of copying every morning. As it becomes a part of what they do, you will begin to see them finding great nuggets to add here and there to their notebooks. If you want a great way to begin Copywork, I would recommend beginning Bible Notebooks. They could copy one Scripture a day (again the focus being on quality NOT quantity!). Their notebooks will grow very fast...children like this!

Transitioning into letting them choose their own Copywork will be a neat process. Until that point, it is just a "do it because I say so" type of discipline. When they begin to have ownership by choosing the material that builds their education, you will watch all of the training fall into place.

My caution...don't expect this overnight. I have no idea how much healing needs to be done...how many bad habits need to be overcome...or how long it will take for them to "get it." These elements have much influence on how well your child takes to this approach.

Also, they seem to have lost some of their desire for reading that they used to have. Do you have any ideas to help them regain it?

Make reading FUN! Read TO them! Let them have plenty of time unplanned by you so they CAN read. Beware of distractions that entertain rather than encouraging a thirst for digging up knowledge. These things should help recapture the love of reading.

How do you plan what History to cover? I struggle with feelings that my 10-year-old is "behind" as we haven't studied history chronologically (or much at all last year). They love biographies and enjoy history, so I was going to begin with the Explorers and cover American History. Of course, then I read TWTM, where history should "IDEALLY" (HA) be studied on a 4-year rotation--that's when the insecurity began again. My husband said just start somewhere and stop getting paralyzed with the best way to do it [was that a word from the Lord, or what! :)]. After my outpouring regarding my insecurity, he offered to teach history at night (read to them) using Abeka's and/or Christian Liberty's texts as a foundation, but then I said that I would teach it. I was scared that he might not teach enough, or just read through the textbook, and of course, we cannot do that, can we? HA! Can you believe me??!!

I am with your husband here! There is NO way you could be "behind" in History,

especially if you are reading through Biographies and they already enjoy History. Don't get hung up when you read the overview plan of different writers. Yes, we do have a "plan" for History. I wanted to cover the full range of History while they were in Elementary School one good time, a survey in Jr. High (where we are now), and once again while they were in High School even deeper, with more research by my children.

For Matthew, we will only go through the entire study three times...for Elisabeth, we should have time to go through it three more times. I am not hung up on it. Even though this is what is on my heart, I will trust God for these plans. We die to plans every day and it is well worth it!

My HEARTBEAT was for them to LOVE History. My philosophy is that if they love History, they will always want to learn History. It is not all on my shoulders to teach them all I can by the time they leave home "in case" they don't ever crack open a book again. I know that they are SO addicted to learning, they won't ever stop!

Next issue of *Time for Tea* has a special emphasis on teaching History...making timelines...and weaving History into all of your studies. Stay tuned for more information then.

I would like for them to enjoy learning, so what's my problem? I've told God that He must be sick of hearing my requests for guidance and direction in teaching His sons. I feel guilty that I've wasted so much time in this area of deciding what to cover and trying to plan. Please pray that I will HEAR His words to me and walk in His confidence.

Consider this a great, big hug! God never, ever gets tired of our coming to Him. A while back, I found myself feeling just like you describe. It was another area of my life... but I was whining about the situation to the point that ANY human would be wore thin. I remember lifting up the fears, frustrations, tears, anxieties, concerns...all that were loading down my cup. I felt ashamed that I was once more going around the same old mountain again. Then, I almost verbally heard God say to me, "*Cindy, I NEVER get tired of you coming to me...in fact, this is MY HEART'S desire...to listen to you until you can't talk anymore!*"

Now...for those that KNOW me, you are probably stunned that God cares that much. But, that is not all...He cares that much for all of us!

We can never wear Him out! We can never ask one question too many! He never tires of leading us!

My dear friend, I will certainly be lifting you before our precious Lord. He will be faithful. He already has answers for all of these questions. In fact, I may have completely failed to give YOUR answer in this entire newsletter. But, you have a helper to give the answers you need at any time, with any problem. Keep going to the throne. He wants to be your Teacher! I will leave you with the following passage. It is one of my most favorite passages...

“But you have been anointed by [you hold a sacred appointment from, you have been given an unction from] the Holy One, and you all know [the Truth} or you know all things...But as for you, the anointing (the sacred appointment, the unction) which you received from Him abides [permanently] in you; [so] then you have no need that anyone should instruct you. But just as His anointing teaches you concerning EVERYTHING and is true and is no falsehood, so you must ABIDE in (live in, never depart from) Him [being rooted in Him, knit to Him], just as [His anointing] has taught you [to do]. And now, little children, ABIDE (live, remain permanently) in Him, so that when He is made visible, we may have and enjoy perfect confidence (boldness, assurance) and not be ashamed and shrink from Him at His coming.” 1 John 2: 20; 27-28 (Amplified)



**Our MEGA
Issue
Spring
&
Summer
2001...**

What's Up With Rushton Family Ministries???

Oh, it is SO wonderful to be sitting down with a BIG CUP OF TEA to write this update to all of you! I had thought that other years were years of unprecedented growth, but this year has topped them all! We have been so humbled to watch God grow every area of our family life and family ministry.

The New Warehouse...

We are now all settled into our very own warehouse. I remember the moment I walked in to the warehouse for the very first time. I told Harold that I could NEVER use ~~---~~! Well, as we began the move, I realized that if you leave it up to a woman (who LOVES books!), you CAN fill up every square inch! I have NO IDEA where we were keeping all of this STUFF before the warehouse...I just know that we now have our home back and we are at home in the warehouse too!!

The move was quite a job. We had to completely remodeled the office area. The warehouse had been used for a Roadway Packaging Center years ago...then, waste management...AKA MEN. It was just dirty, stinky, and definitely not pretty. Harold and the children were simply precious as they helped me to scrub (did I mention that I worked in a Dental Office in my past life!!!), paint, fumigate (even our carpet "layers" gagged over the bathroom—made me a little relieved!), and set up our offices into what is now home for Rushton Family Ministries. You would LOVE our wallpaper border—it has a TEA SET with LINENS. Harold wants me to note that HE FOUND IT! ✕

The day I moved MY computer was the day that it hit me how a new chapter in our lives was opening and this old chapter was closing with a happy ending. I had debated over how much of the business to leave at home...how much to move. Harold told me that he wanted for me to take the ENTIRE business to the warehouse. My concern was that I would NEVER be able to write or email in such a "work" environment. Now, I know that I will ALWAYS be able to write! hehe! But, little did I know how much more I needed clear division of the ministry from our home and that within our home...especially in the months to come. We even moved our phone...talk about PEACE and QUIET! We can now snuggle up to great books with NO interruptions...they all wait for another day!

As we began the move, we also began a new computer system. All I can say is, *EEK! GLAD *I* don't have to use it!* Everything, for the first time in the ministry, began to shift ME out of the way for the new chapter! HOW would YOU feel?? Need a hint? The word is CHANGE. AND lots of CHANGE!

Now, we are computerized with our entire system! Oh, and they kicked ME out of the business! They said something about it being for EVERYONE'S best interest! ☺

Our Staff...

As the warehouse and computer system were being organized, we also hired our very first employees. I had announced that in the last newsletter. Well, what I failed to make VERY clear was ALL that they were having MUCH to learn as they came on board. WHEW! They sure got it socked to them! While trying to learn ME and the new computer system and how to best work THEIR way and all of the aspects of the business...our business grew 200-fold!

We appreciate ALL of you who stuck with us through the transition! You will never know how much we love you and appreciate your patience with all of the strange things that have happened!

We are also SOOOO appreciative of our wonderful staff. They are still not available for phone counseling, but that is something we HOPE to add by the first of the year (WON'T THAT BE GREAT???) with a 1-800 number. Until then, PLEASE keep using our website and phone order line to get in touch with us and place your order. We KNOW that it is hard to talk to a machine, but our answering machine is our personal secretary that we can work 24/7. We always check those messages as soon as we get in the office so we can get your things out to you! Help us balance our family life and ministry until the staff is ready for a phone ministry!

NEW BOOKS and TAPES!

Yep! Thanks to our wonderful staff, I have had more time to write and travel to conventions and local seminars. We have MANY new products that we KNOW you will LOVE! See our "sale" page for more details.

Pray for me as I continue to work on several pivotal manuscripts. Your prayers are treasures that are truly offering intercession from much warfare. THANKS!

This issue of *Time for Tea* ends our fifth year of the magazine being published. We already have the next issue "almost" ready for press. We will begin a new format with that issue. We will also be changing some of the departments as a result. Much time has been spent in prayer to hear God's vision for the magazine.

We took our dilemma of NEVER having enough room in each issue to the Lord and we believe He has answered us mightily! As a result, we are going to be introducing a FREE monthly (or as close as possible) newsletter online. It will be called *Homeschooling... The EASY WAY!* Each month we will be covering a topic. All issues will be archived at Yahoo, just like our current magazine archives from the past two years. If there are any of you who are not online, you are not being left out. We plan to also produce a Reprint Book Series for *Homeschooling... The EASY WAY!*

We have also been asked about having a "monthly mailing" of our tapes. Soooo, we are introducing *Time for Tapes*. (Cute huh?? Matthew came up with it!) Subscribers will receive a "tape of the month" each month. This will enable you to go on the road with us,