

So, What Do You Think?

Want to give it a try? Think through the various options. Find what will work: **JUST FOR YOU** and **JUST FOR YOUR BOOK**. Get those supplies. Then, bind away!

What About Illustrations? Ideas To Get You Started!



One of my greatest deficits with my own writing is my lack of skill with art. BUT! This is definitely not a hindrance in the great field of publishing! Here are some great ideas that even the most "CHALLENGED" young artist can use to make books special with illustrations!

For Illustrations...

- ♥ **Use your own original drawings!** Our children have both enjoyed illustrating their own books. On some of the pictures, they had drawn them ahead of time and decided during the writing of the book that they were perfect in the story. Other pictures were drawn specifically for a spot in the book while we were setting up the pages and story in the final format. Their original artwork made each of the books very, very special.
- ♥ **Make your OWN illustrations using a digital camera!** One of our greatest investments ever was our digital camera. We have enjoyed using it to snap pictures for our books, magazines, and articles for publication. If you will take a look in the back of this book, the pictures showing step-by-step instructions on how to create your own homemade books were taken with our digital camera and inserted into the book using clip/paste. My son's newest book on the history of the Glock Auto-pistol begged for original pictures of the different models and uses. In his section detailing how to clean a weapon, the digital pictures perfectly illustrated each step, enhancing his verbal instructions. Some books require other illustrations, but don't forget to use your digital camera to make your own original illustrations as much as possible!
- ♥ **Add clip-art from computer programs and clip-art books!** Yep! Another of my favorite ways to adorn a book—can you tell by this page? The border is from a clip-art program by D.J. Inkers. The chapter title is a font from a

clip-art program designed by *Creating Keepsakes* (They have several great programs available!). The cute little bears on the shelf at the beginning of this chapter comes from *Graphic Garden*. It is just a touch, but a touch of clip-art can make the book that you write develop your personality!

- ♥ **Add pictures from their notebooks!** This has been one of the most popular ways that we have collected great illustrations for our books. Matthew loves to collect pictures, maps, art prints, sketches, etc. in his notebook. Inevitably, these same treasures have made their way into his books that developed from his most favorite topics. In his book, *Famous Copywork From the Civil War*, he chose to use old photos of each of the men quoted in each section. It was easy because he had collected so many of them in his notebook. He chose his favorites, scanned them using a computer scanner, then paste/clipped them into his book. He did the same with his book *Fearless Warriors: A Chronological History of the US Marine Corp*. The pictures were perfect illustrations for the book.
- ♥ **Make a collage!** Maybe your book is a recipe book or a family story book. You may want to make some pages with a collage of pictures. If you will look at this book, the pages with samples of children's books are just one sample of what you could do. Just let your imagination go!
- ♥ **Decorate with rubber stamps!** Rubber Stamps are perfect for adorning the pages of your books. You can now find great borders for your pages, cute quotes, and of course, really nice pictures. Plus! The investment can keep on giving and giving because rubber stamps can be used for Scrapbooking, card-making, etc!
- ♥ **Add cute stickers!** Want a easy and cute touch to your pages? Why not add stickers? We wait for specials at our local craft stores. Then, we stock up! You can use stickers as sweet accents, neat borders, bullets for your lists, etc. The sky is the limit!
- ♥ **Use die-cuts for a special touch!** Talk about the sky being the limit—die cuts are just abundant! You are sure to find the perfect die-cuts to accent your books. Many craft stores or scrapbooking shops have dies available for you to use at any time. Take your paper, punch away! Elisabeth

and I have spent whole evenings punching with their alphabet dies to use for our scrapbooks and books. What a great way to accent with the perfect accents and for hardly any investment at all!

- ♥ **Pull out those old stamp pads!** Yes! You can use different colors to make your books perfect. You can also use lots of fun techniques straight from your scrapbooking classes to make your pages special.
- ♥ **Decorate using stencils!** OH! Don't forget your stencils! You may have stencils from other fun projects already. Or you may find some great stencils that beg for use in your book. Keep them handy as you work. You never know when it will make the page just perfect!
- ♥ **Add a special touch by embossing!** Talk about one of my NEW passions! This is SO fun! It does not take much of an investment to begin embossing, but that small investment opens the door to an elegant touch to your books and scrapbooks. Just begin small, but you are sure to become addicted!
- ♥ **Draw or color with regular or brush markers!** Whether drawing or coloring free-hand or using stamps and stencils, you will soon be addicted to illustrating as you use a good variety of markers. Remember to use 110 lb. paper for any marker illustrations.
- ♥ **Sketch with black or colored pencils!** Oh, yes! Don't forget your pencil sketches. Simple black pencil sketches make pages very special. Add colored pencils and you will find yourself addicted to sketching! You may even have to begin other great books because you will want to keep on sketching!

Get Ready to Publish... Creating Your Own Book!



*Ready to make this manuscript into a real book? Let me take you step-by-step through the process. There are some things to consider quickly before you move on. Hopefully, I will make you think of all of the details needed for your book. If you think of others, jot those down too! So, now it is time to pull out your **Idea Notebook**. We need to work on some more planning so we will be ready to publish! Here we go...*

Time for final decisions...

_____ **Manuscript?** Will it be handwritten or typed on the computer?

_____ **Binding?** What type of binding will you use?

_____ **Page size?** Will your pages be 8 1/2 X 11—like this book? 8 1/2 X 5 1/2? Another size? Can you produce this easily?

_____ **Fonts?**

_____ **Cover**—Which fonts for your cover? Title? Your name? Description on the back?

_____ **Type/size of font?** For chapter titles? Text? Captions?

_____ **Borders?** Choose page borders. Choose special caption borders.

_____ **Page numbers?** How will you set them up on your page? What font? What size?

_____ **Illustrations?** Are they ready? How will they be placed throughout the manuscript? If you are handwriting your manuscript, how will they be added? If you are producing your book by computer, have you scanned in your pictures? Clipped them in? Where will they be added to your pages? Plan out placement. Alternate for interest and effect.

_____ **Your thoughts...**

Set up Text...

_____ **Leave room to bind.** (This is where I **HIGHLY** recommend that you use a great program like *Microsoft Publisher* that has pages designed with

margins for binding. If you do not have a program or that particular program, we recommend going to your local printer to ask for specific help with your specific binding. Of course, you can also use our templates on our CD to get you started.

_____ **Begin each chapter on the right side (or consistently) throughout the document.**

_____ **Vary the page setup throughout the document.** (Look at your favorite books to see the various page setup options. Also, see examples throughout this book of other children's books.)

_____ **Determine page breaks for your manuscript and where you will place illustrations along the story.**

_____ **Your thoughts...**

Cover Design...

_____ **Does it coordinate with your book?**

_____ **Does it include everything?**

_____ **Title**—Catchy? Fit? Bold enough? Too bold?

_____ **Illustration**—Look ok? Correct size?

_____ **Author's name and age**

_____ **Back cover description**—Does it answer all questions? Does it tell what to expect from the book? "Sell" the book without you telling anything about it? Does it include—title of the book, tell what to expect, answers to questions the reader may ask, how to contact your company for more books, the price of the book, a picture of the author, a biographical sketch about the author?

_____ **What type of cover?** Full color/laminated? Hand-sewn/fabric? Paper (cardstock with black copy)? 3-ring binder with inserts (full-color/black copy on color-cardstock?)

Make a Mock Up..



What IS a "mock-up?" This is where I bring you on further into the publishing world! Don't you just LOVE IT?

A "mock-up" is a nice term that book writers and publishers use to describe a "rough draft" or "rough copy" of the book setup. It is the preliminary "hard copy" of the book before it is completely ready to go into print (or in other words, be completed). This means that you will see a sample of how the book should look printed up.

A "mock up" is absolutely essential along the way. I usually make several "mock-ups" of my books along the way for several reasons. First, so I can see the reality of my vision—my book—as it grows! I love holding a "mock-copy" when I am in the middle of editing and set-up. Something about it just gives SO much fulfillment!

Not just that, the "mock-up" also serves for many practical benefits. I find that regardless of how hard I look at my text on my computer, I just miss spelling, grammar, punctuation, and even set-up flaws. It helps to have another option for seeing details when working on the book completely on the computer. Seeing the book in print, I can see those things that I miss on the computer screen. It is very helpful to get a look at little things—set up, fonts, various quirks—before actually attempting to go to print with a document. Often, it helps me to see these little things before I get too far into my book setup just so I can avoid re-doing too much of my work at the end of the project. Just imagine finishing the book, printing the hard-copy only to find that the font throughout the book does not work or the page border prints funny. Trust me, this is one great tip for making your homemade books great!

Not only that! A mock-up is also needed before taking the final copy to print as a "hardcopy." I print many, many "mock-ups" of my book along the way

so I can edit while I work on the book. My final mock-up always gives me a copy of the book the way it should look once it is finished. The final edit is always a last look over the book to insure that everything is "Go" for printing the hard-copy (the copy that I make copies from).

So, How Do You Create a Mock Up?

A "mock-up" is easy to do. Here is how you do it...

- ⇒ **Set-up your book and get ready to print (or print a "mock-up" along the way).**
- ⇒ **Print a copy of the book in its format that you will be using for your book** (front to back, one-sided OR two-sided print, in order).
- ⇒ **Print samples of your cover** (The next chapter will give more tips on designing your cover—an actual cover or a temporary cover will do. I like to print a cover to see how it looks too. There are many times that it has helped me to decide on a final cover just seeing my options ON THE BOOK.). Laminate if you prefer.
- ⇒ **Bind.** (Another thing you may want to do is try out the various bindings that you may be considering to see which look you prefer with your book. That is how the final decision was made on THIS book! ☺)
- ⇒ **Use for a "mock-up" or "rough draft" of the book.**
- ⇒ **Don't throw away! Keep for your memories!** We have several "mock-ups" of our children's books that we keep in their notebooks just to see the hard work in preparing their manuscript and set-up. Those are precious to us now! I love seeing their editorial notes to themselves and seeing how they have matured and no longer make the same mistakes! So, keep those treasures!

Time to Design Your Book Cover!



Ready to design your cover? Your cover will “make” or “break” your book. Your cover is the very first thing to invite your reader to join you. The same material inside of a book will not be as appealing without a great cover. We want to make the cover of your book the best ever. So, let’s look at some considerations and tips to make it great. Let your creative juices flow!

- ♥ **Coordinate your cover with your story or manuscript.** Make sure that your colors, design, graphics, and fonts all flow with your manuscript. Make sure that your cover truly communicates your style of writing and your personality.
- ♥ **Design your cover with your binding style in mind.** Remember that your cover options are limited by your style of binding. For comb-binding (like this book), your options would be either full-color cardstock covers (we recommend laminating) or a black copy on colored cardstock (we recommend always having color on your covers—we would also recommend laminating these covers for longevity). You could have hard-back covers printed for your comb-bound books, many cookbooks do. However, you would have difficulty using tapestry or cloth covers. For booklets, your options would be limited to either full-color copies or black copies. You could not laminate those covers without those covers being more likely to pop open all of the time. These options would never work for a hand-sewn hardcover book. Be aware of what will work with your binding style.
- ♥ **Be sure to include the NECESSITIES!** The front cover should include: the title, author, illustration, border, and background. The back cover should include: the book title, information about the book, reviews, information about the author, price of the book, picture of the author, where to order the book or contact the author, and coor-

dinating background.

♥ **Enjoy creating!** There are so many ways that a cover can be created. Any style cover can be created and then copied for publication. Try what you enjoy:

⇒ **On your computer!** Use your favorite borders, lettering, clip-art, or personal photos.

⇒ **Scrapbooking!** Oh yes! Try various papers, borders, rubber-stamps, stickers, embossing, textures, die cuts, etc!

⇒ **Design your own art print!** Paint your own, use a siblings' print, use copyright-free prints (otherwise, get permission).

⇒ **Wallpaper!**

⇒ **Fabric covers!**

⇒ **Stencils with acrylic paint!**

Easy Laminated Covers...



- ♥ **Design your covers on a computer.** Use complementary background and fonts. Include all that is needed for the front and back cover (see our checklist).
- ♥ **Print covers on 110 lb. cardstock paper.** If printing with lots of color, use white cardstock (similar to the cover of this book). If your cover is all black ink, print on a nice coordinating 110lb color cardstock paper.
- ♥ **Laminate covers.** We recommend using laminating sheets and a heat laminator. We bought ours from Sam's Club Warehouse. Sam's has refill packs of laminating sheets in big packets. These are easy to use and last the best of any options out there. We call our covers "peanut butter and jelly proof" because they are used so commonly at the kitchen table that is used for lessons and food! Investing in a good laminator will be worth the investment almost immediately. If you can't do that, check in your local area for school supply stores or office supply stores that laminate using industrial laminators. They will usually advertise that they laminate posters. Their lamination services are much more reasonable than those that only laminate by the sheet for you.
- ♥ **Trim excess from the covers.** Using the laminating sheets similar to ours will produce a nice laminate that can be trimmed. Experiment with your options. You should be able to trim the excess from your pages. Look at the cover of this book to see how closely you can trim your covers.
- ♥ **Punch and bind with book!** Yep! That is all! It is ready to bind!

Time to Edit! Yes! YOU! An Editor!



Ok. Have everything completed, but need to check back over your book to be sure that it is ready to print? Below, I have drafted a checklist to help you remember to check back over all of the details that will make your book great.

Remember earlier when I shared about the importance of proofreading? Well, at this point, this is where you will proof the book. Once you get accustomed to this process, this will help you in all of your writing projects or in little things that you prepare. It will train you with a "seeing" eye that seeks for details. So, ready for a checklist? Here goes...

The Book Format

Borders/page set up—Consistent? Fit on the page?

Fonts—

Chapter Titles—Same font? Same size?

Section/Caption Titles—Same font? Same size?

Text Fonts—Neat? Easy to read? Large enough? Same size throughout the book?

Illustrations—All added into the document? All inserted where needed?

Include and finished each section?

Deleted all unnecessary text blocks.

Everything neat?

The Book Cover

Title font—Catching? Fit? Bold enough? Too bold?

Illustration—Look ok? Correct size?

Include author's name—(Also age, if a child)

Back cover description—Does it answer all questions? Does it tell what to expect from the book? "Sell" the book without you telling anything about it? Does it include—title of the book, tell what to expect, an-

swers to questions the reader may ask, how to contact your company for more books, the price of the book, a picture of the author, a biographical sketch about the author?

Text

Go back through your text on a "hunt" for the following...

- ___ **Gaps**—Did you leave out any important information? Did you explain terms and all background information?
- ___ **Topic**—Did you stick to the topic? Did you cover all that needs to be known about the topic? Is everything included?
- ___ **Outline**—Did you include all of the points on the outline?
- ___ **Flow**—Logical? Unity? Detailed? Awkward? Jumping all over the place?
- ___ **Tense**—Did you stick with the same tense throughout the book? Past tense, present tense, future tense?
- ___ **You/your**—Did you avoid writing in second person: with "you" and "your" throughout your book?
- ___ **Spelling errors**
 - ___ Go back through and circle any questionable words—look up!
 - ___ Check for commonly misspelled words
- ___ **Problems with punctuation**
- ___ **Subject/verb agreement**
- ___ **Weak words**—Expressive? Wordy? Repeated too many times? (Use a thesaurus)
- ___ **Repeated words**—Choose synonyms from a Thesaurus
- ___ **Sentences**—Eliminate all run-on sentences and incomplete sentences. Vary sentence style.
- ___ **Capitalization**—Check for your common quirks.
- ___ **Paragraphs**—5-7 sentences in length? Strong introductory sentence? Strong ending sentence? Points supporting introductory and concluding sentence?

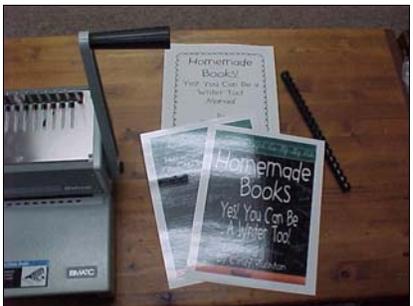
Making a Comb-bound Book!



Ready for the how-to's for making a Comb-bound book? Of all of the styles available, this is THE ONE that we recommend. It is easy and economical to produce. It does not take long to learn how to bind. If you do not have the equipment, you can take it to an office supply store that offers binding and they can bind them quickly for you without setting back your budget. Best of all, if you are like me, you will want to save your originals safely and just make copies of the books that can be shared with others. This process makes this possible. You will love it! Let's jump in...



⇒ **Assemble your materials, equipment and tools.** For a comb-bound book, you will need the guts of your book, your book covers (see instructions earlier) prepared to bind, comb to fit your number of pages, and your comb-binder.



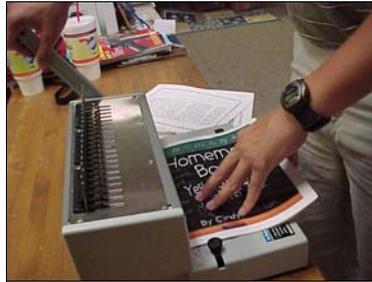
⇒ **Cut pages and cover to size.** This is especially needed for books of special sizes.



⇒ **Assemble book in order.** Place covers in place. Be sure that you have all of your text pages included and ready to bind.

Homemade Books! Yes! You CAN Be a Writer Too!

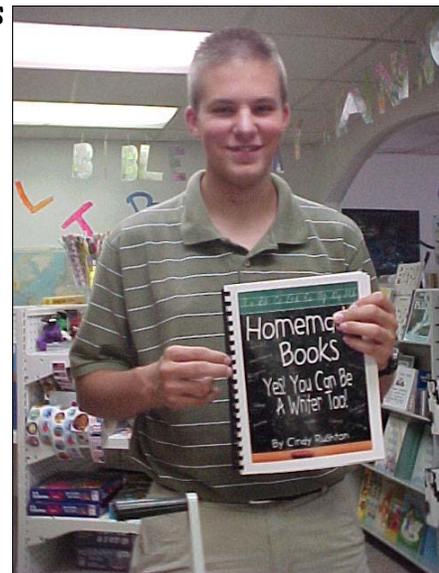
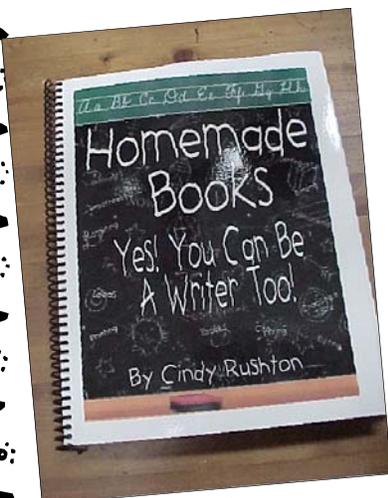
⇒ **Punch holes.** Our binder only punches 15-20 pages at a time. We punch our pages beginning with the front of the book. As the pages are punched, we place them in the comb, facing down.



⇒ **Bind in combs.** Bind while you are punching holes in the other pages.



⇒ **Close comb and dust off book.** That is all! Now... **YOU ARE DONE!** That easy!



Share Your Treasure!



Oh! I am SO excited for you! Now, you have a wonderful new book! Make the most of your hard work. Let's share it! Have no idea how? Here are some ideas you will love...

- ♥ **Gifts!** You probably have no idea of how special your book will be to those that you love the most. Make a copy for EACH of your parents. Don't forget to give a copy to your brothers and sisters. Your book will make a great Christmas or birthday gift. Oh, don't just stop there! Remember your grandparents—talk about thrilling them. Nothing could make a grandparent more excited than a sweet gift of your hard work. How about giving copies to others in your family: aunts, uncles, cousins. The list goes on!
- ♥ **Book Swap!** Swap with friends. Not only will they love your book and what you know, but you will learn so much from their books too!
- ♥ **Book Club!** Why not begin a Book Club with your friends? Maybe you have a lot of friends who are creating books too? If they live close-by, join together during the whole process. Help each other brainstorm. Take a look at one another's manuscript to help with editing (everyone has different "quirks" so it really helps to have friends who help you edit your work). As you finish books, share them with your Book Club!
- ♥ **Begin a Book Business!** Yep! Others may be looking for a book just like yours! My son, Matthew, wrote a book that includes his favorite Copywork from the Civil War. His book has been a favorite of moms and students wanting to study the Civil War, but also wanting a good selection of great quotes for their notebooks while they study the time period. Perhaps your book may also be a great resource for

other families. Why not make them available for sell? Who knows! You may have a best-seller!

- ♥ **Give to siblings as readers.** Can you imagine how special a book written by you could be for your little brother or sister to use when practicing their reading? Maybe they are just learning their sounds. Why not make a neat book for them to see examples of those sounds? You may have neat family stories. Those would be fun to use as readers. Maybe you have wild and crazy stories. Your little siblings would have a great time reading your books while they practice their reading skills. Don't be shy! Bless them with your great work!
- ♥ **Look for other great ways to share your book. List some here...**

Oh! Help Me
Make It Great!



Bear buddies read together

Let's Keep an Idea Notebook!



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

Why Keep an Idea Notebook?

Keeping an *Idea Notebook* is a must! Here are a few of my favorite "perks" that I think will convince you...

- ⇒ **Ideas have their own "spot!"** No more digging around for scraps of paper with ideas brainstormed on them. No more losing ideas that come...and go. Ideas will have their own spot. Ideas can be developed and kept safe! Writing will happen!
- ⇒ **The brain can get a break so it can fully concentrate on the current project!** Nothing breaks my concentration like the fear that a great idea will slip away. Writing down great ideas, whether topics or even complete outlines, gives my brain rest and allows my complete focus on my current project.
- ⇒ **Keeping an *Idea Notebook* helps develop the current book project.** An *Idea Notebook* is the perfect place to brainstorm ideas for books, ideas for what to cover in your book, outlines, and ideas. Not only that, I find that my book projects always need quotes or research information included. I keep all of that information in my *Idea Notebook*. Nothing helps my books take a nice, consistent form like setting up my ideas in a notebook first.

How???

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

- 1. Get your supplies!** These supplies are probably already on hand. Gather your supplies and set up your notebook using the following: a 3-ring notebook (I use 3-ring binders that have front and back loading pockets that enable me to create my own cover and spine for each book project), dividers (I use dividers for dividing out my chapters, paper, pens, and sheet protectors (to protect research and important quotes, illustrations, etc.),
- 2. Include IDEAS...** This is where an Idea Notebook will probably grow. For some writers, one notebook is enough. For my projects, by the time I am writing a book, I have so much information in my notebook that I have to keep one notebook for my information. If you were to see the notebook that I have developed for this particular book, you would see a 3-inch notebook PACKED full of great information! As sections have gotten more and more in focus, I have narrowed down my information. In other sections, my information has grown and expanded—much like this book. I also carry another *Idea Notebook* that has my other brainstorm for articles and other books. This is a lifestyle. It makes all of the difference in the world. Even now, I have other *Idea Notebooks* that are busting at the seams, begging to be books! I love that they can "keep" my ideas safe while I concentrate on this project. When an idea is really strong, I can jot it down and add it to those binders when I get a chance. It helps my brain! Have your notebook? Add to it! Add list of fun book topics. Some you may never pursue, others will become your future projects. Keep those lists—it may shock you later to see how many become books! Jot down book/story outlines. One great benefit for keeping an *Idea Notebook* is that outlines tend to be better developed. "Seeing" the vision for the book helps to be sure that there are no blaring gaps in the manuscript. Add neat quotes, Bible verses, and mottoes. Use them in the text, in margins, or to adorn the pages of the book. Keep lists of resources (page numbers), copies of articles/information, websites (lists of recommended websites and copies of research from those sites), booklists, etc. Keep illustrations or CD with clips/scanned images/pictures in the notebook with its corresponding project. And...anything else that may help you produce your book!

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

4. **Use the *Idea Notebook* to develop your current book...**One my best "helpers" for developing my books is my *Idea Notebook*. Not only can I brainstorm ideas without losing them along the way, but I can also see glaring gaps in my manuscript. In this book that you are reading, my *Idea Notebook* has helped more than anything to help me set up my chapters and see the flow of my text. Use your notebook to develop your book. Use it to trigger your ideas and brainstorm your book's details . Use it to jot down ideas and organize your research. Use it to help your book take form! Who knows...you may be the next Robert Louis Stevenson!

Secrets to Your Own Style: Read! Read! Read!



You have probably heard the saying, "You are what you eat." If you eat healthy foods, you will be healthy. Your body will be nourished to be all that it can be. If you eat junk food, then it will not be very long before you will become very sluggish and run down. Your health will suffer.

As a writer, you are what you read. You will only be able to write what you read. Your pen will only pour forth what you know. For this reason, if you want to write beautifully, then you must read excellent literature. If you want to develop your own writing style, then the best way is to read what you enjoy. How can you use your own reading material to develop a great writing style? Here are some tips...

♥ **What do you like?** What do you like to read? What do you enjoy learning? What style of writing do you enjoy? Enjoy. Read constantly in that area. Then, consider writing along that genre. You may have a knack that you were unaware of before! Things should fall into place. You will develop your own style.

♥ **Become an avid reader!** Read widely. Never get stagnant. Although we all have our favorite types of literature, as a writer, we will grow by reading widely. Find new favorites. Develop your style. Dig for new information. What you read will always benefit what you write!

♥ **Pursue your delights.** What do you find yourself reading when you have a free evening? Is there a certain topic or subject that just draws you? History? Facts? Biographies? How-to's? Science? Sewing? Baking? Baseball? Is there a certain type of writing that you just love? Humor? Facts? Fiction?

"The more we acquaint ourselves with that which is truly great and beautiful, the more we will dislike and turn away from that which is shallow and ugly."

Betty Carlson,
The Gift of Music

Set up a Home Library...

One of the best ways to be sure to read a lot is to develop your own home library.

Wondering what you need? Here is our quick list...

Shelves/Book basket

Books (purchased and your own creations!)

Reading nook—couch, window seats, bean-bags, rocking chairs, futon!

Books on tape or CD/tape recorder/CD player

Notebooks/Idea Notebook/Sketch book

Good lighting!

How-to's? Look toward the area of your delight for your writing projects. You will find writing to be easier and to just flow out onto paper.

- ♥ **Read inspiring literature!** Every book affects us for good...or for bad. William Thayer, author of *Gaining Favor with God and Man* wrote, "A book that starts a young person off in a life career, good or bad, is a power. Nothing is more to be coveted or dreaded. The inspiration of a single book, or a few, has made preachers, poets, philosophers, authors, and statesmen. On the other hand, the demoralization of a book has sometimes made infidels, profligates, and criminals." What you read will completely affect what you write...or don't write. If you are wanting to write, read inspiring literature. If you want to encourage your child to write, be sure that what they read inspires them. As they are inspired, they will naturally begin to pour into the lives around them.

Choosing the Very Best Resources for Read Alouds...



Sold! Want to read more? You see that reading would really help you to freshen up that writing style, but where do you begin? There are often a multitude of opinions and voices giving thoughts and ideas about which books are best. It can be so confusing. Here are some ideas to help make choosing books and using those books practically painless!

- ♥ **Make it simple!** Find something interesting that YOU may want to know and understand more fully! Read! Enjoy! That is all there is to it!
- ♥ **Look for the best!** The best books are usually those old goodies that have stood the test of time. Dig out your favorites from your childhood! Hit the antique stores looking for the older treasures. The oldies are certainly the REAL GOODIES!
- ♥ **Look for life!** Twaddle is empty and void of life! Most textbooks of today are mere twaddle. Want a great read aloud? Look for stories that are full of life. It may be living history...or it may be living literature...or it may be an art print book. Go for the LIVING books!
- ♥ **Don't judge by size or shimmer!** Great books cannot be judged by appearances. The greatest books can be slim or thick...shiny or old and musty. My favorites are the "old, try and true" with copyrights before 1900 's. Take a peak inside to see if you can find literary power!
- ♥ **Look for books that bring you to look at past and present ideas!** Ideas will build character and feed the mind. Enjoy books that keep us in touch "with great thoughts by which the world has been educated." As you look at the past, you are able to gain understanding of our present. This adds depth to your Homeschool and gives your student something to try to re-

produce in their own books!

- ♥ **Let children dig!** Charlotte Mason recommended that children DIG for their knowledge for two reasons... "What a child digs for is his own possession" ...and, "ideas must reach us directly from the mind of the thinker, and it is chiefly by means of the books they have written that we get into touch with the best minds." So, why not let the children dig into lots of books!

Why not let them get direct contact with original resources and turn them loose to DIG?

Books are like people: fascinating, inspiring, thought provoking, some laugh, some meditate, others ache with old age, but still have wisdom; some are disease-ridden, some deceitful; but others are a delight to behold, and many travel to foreign lands; some cry, some teach, others are lots of fun. they are excellent companions, and all have individuality— Books are friends. What person has too many friends?
Unknown

- ♥ **Teach children how to USE BOOKS...**

Charlotte Mason said that "until they have begun to use books for themselves in such ways (narrate, outline, analyze, trace cause to consequence or consequence to cause, discern character, perceive how character and circumstances interact, get lessons of life and conduct, get knowledge which makes for science, write their own questions from the passages), they can hardly be said to have begun their education!" Whole books are great for building real study skills and real writing skills which are the basis for a complete education. Instead of requiring children to practice skills in a dull drab workbook, let them practice their skills of spelling, composition, and creative writing springing from a wonderful piece of literature that they can turn into a fun homemade book project!

- ♥ **Don't limit read-alouds to your student's reading ability!** Children need read-alouds *beyond* their level from early ages. Even more so, they will need the gift of family reading! The tendency of parents is to read aloud to children only until the children are able to read for themselves. OH! Don't stop then! Read to all your children...all their lives! I dream of the treasure of my grandchildren gathered around my fireplace listening to read-alouds. This makes reading aloud a heritage not just another subject!