

Homeschooling Resource & Tips List

Homeschooling

- These are primarily Presbytera Maria's suggestions but Kh. Elizabeth has also added some notes.

The Well-Trained Mind by Jessie Wise and Susan Wise Bauer

This is great book to read before embarking on homeschooling. The authors are a mother/daughter team that tell their story while guiding you to start your own classical education program in your home.

A Charlotte Mason Companion by Karen Andreola

This is a lovely abridged and personalized introduction to Charlotte Mason style teaching. I found it very inspiring when I began homeschooling.

Patterns for Life: An Orthodox Reflection on Charlotte Mason Education by Lisa Rose and Laura E. Wolfe. Unfortunately, since I never have time to read anymore, I have not read it yet! – Kh. E

The Deliberate Dumbing Down of America by Charlotte Thomson Iserbyt

Dumbing Us Down: The Hidden Curriculum of Compulsory Schooling by John Taylor Gatto

The Story of the World by Susan Wise Bauer

I have used this history program since the beginning of our homeschooling journey, and I still love it. It is meant to be used in the elementary years, middle school, and high school. It can be tailored to your children's needs and grade requirements with fun activities and a recommended reading list for additional learning. The activity book has maps for geography, coloring, and activity sheets. Auditory disks are available, as well, although I don't have them.

Note: Please see this blog post for additional notes about this series: [Imaginative Homeschool Blog](#)

First Language Lessons for the Well-Trained Mind by Jessie Wise

These are 15-minute, scripted lessons. I really enjoyed doing this with my older children. I hope to continue using it again, but it was pushed to the wayside during our middle stressful homeschooling years. You really get a lot out of it for the time spent. One thing I loved was that it worked on memorization of prepositions, which was helpful for the next program we used.

Easy Grammar by Wanda C. Phillips

The title says it all. It really simplifies grammar.

Five in a Row by Jane Claire Lambert

This was one of my favorite things to do when I was young and zealous. This is another thing I would like to reignite with my little girls. This book comes with a list of picture books. You read the same book for 5 days in a row and there are different lessons to choose from on each of the days. It covers math, grammar, social studies, science, and art.

Phonics Pathways by Dolores Hiskes

I think this book was recommended, along with Learning to Read in 100 Easy Lessons, in The Well-Trained Mind. I couldn't be happier that the second recommendation was out of print at that time.

I have used this with all my children. We would just on the couch for 15 minutes a day reading together. It can be used to reinforce spelling and be used as a tool for dyslexia and stroke rehabilitation.

Explode the Code by Nancy Hall and Rena Price

This is a series of workbooks I use this alongside Phonics Pathways to reinforce phonics, spelling, and reading.

Right Start Mathematics by Joan A. Cotter, Ph. D

This program came highly recommended by some seasoned homeschooling parents. This uses manipulatives, such as a specific abacus, colored tiles, blocks, and popsicle sticks. It also comes with several decks of cards w a book of games to go along with them. This really helped me understand math, beyond rote memorization and processes. I am grateful for those benefits, but if I did it over, I would focus on the math games. The games are extremely beneficial and there would've been far less blood, sweat, and tears. Ms. Cotter offers scripted lessons, and my children rarely gave the expected response. I talked to a homeschooling father, a math teacher by trade, and he told me that he also used this program with his children. His children did not respond as expected, also. He wrote the author about this and received no response. I still think this really lays a strong foundation for math if you have the time and patience. I have used it through 4th grade, and we still play the math games. – I agree that this program was very hard to use with my children, but it taught ME to understand the math so that I was able to successfully teach other programs that were less time consuming to my subsequent children.

-- Kh._E

Teaching Textbooks.com

I don't remember who authored this program. We have tried Saxon and Singapore math programs, but for my sanity we have consistently used this program. They sell the textbooks and disks, or you can pay to stream for the year. They have a family plan that caps the price at 4 students. There is a recorded lesson for each day, and everything is graded for you. They also provide printable grade sheets for the portfolio at the end of the year.

Math Mammoth

- I don't like using the computer for math so have not used Teaching Textbooks. Math Mammoth has a "Singapore"-type approach and has lessons written in with the exercises. It's very easy to use and is inexpensive but has way too many problems in each lesson for most children. Have your children do half the problems so that they (and you) do not go crazy. – Kh. E

The Law of God by Archpriest Seraphim Slobodskoy

This offers simple lessons on our faith for home or school. We really enjoy reading this along with the Orthodox Calendar Company's Daily Lives, Miracles, and Wisdom of the Saints & Fasting Calendar.

The Wellness Mama podcast number 624 is on homeschooling. I haven't listened to it yet, but author Katie Wells has some really creative ideas and plans on making her own curriculum.

Things We Would Have Done Differently

Find a co-op or start your own.

Embrace the flexibility.

Aim for a complete week, as opposed to a complete day. This applies to school and housework.

So cliché, but seriously try to just enjoy the moments you have together.

Read aloud.

Read Pollyanna aloud every couple of years. It's a great lesson on joy and gratitude.

Switch subjects or take a break when frustration sets in and learning stops.

Remember that you can't do it all perfectly.

Remember in January and February when you want to give up that this is how everyone feels. The kids are going crazy and the parents do to!

Don't forget that being constantly confronted with children's weaknesses and our own failings shown through our children is a great blessing. We are granted the opportunity to help our children fight the spiritual fight and to overcome our own sins.

A quiet time and consistent bedtime are helpful to everyone.

Know your own weaknesses. I plan my entire year in the summer because I know I won't keep up with it on a day-to-day basis.

Give younger children attention first. Keep special activities for them when you need them occupied. (Sand, math tiles, paints, etc.)

Use teachable moments as they come. (Talk about nutrition while preparing dinner.)

Make your school supplies easily accessible.

Don't blame your husband or your children for your bitterness or frustration. As an Orthodox Christian you can't blame others. You can only choose how you will respond.

Think outside of the box-hiking, baking, field trips.

Making lunch ahead of time really helps the day flowing and minimizes cleaning up.

Read Theology, history, or science during lunch.

Avoid burnout. This doesn't mean you need to schedule regular pedicures, although it might for you. Take care of yourself and do things that you love, aside from caring for your family.

Love and embrace your children.

Don't compare yourself to other women. No one is doing it all, no matter what it looks like.

Everyone has strengths and weaknesses. Find yours and make the most of them.

Write out your planner in pencil and reuse it for each of your children. There are often enough columns in a planner that you can leave a few blanks for pertinent information for each child.

Make a desired daily schedule for your family but then remember that you will rarely follow it since our Orthodox Christian lives are filled with constant interruptions, unexpected events, and lots of weekday church services!

Prioritize what is most important in your family with your husband.
Don't expect what you don't inspect.

Don't isolate yourself. Find other people in your community or just have a friend to talk to on the phone.

Pray more! Love the Akathist for Mothers.