

Homeschool Resources

Favorite Websites for Curriculum:

1. christianbook.com

- Has a homeschool section with a very large variety of homeschool specific curriculum.
- Has a section within the homeschool resources for classical curriculum.
- Has good prices. Often items are marked cheaper than from the actual curriculum website.
- If you sign up for emails, they almost always have free shipping codes (sometimes with a minimum purchase, but usually very low).
- This is a great website to go to if you do not know of many different homeschool curricula.

2. memoriapress.com

- I purchased some curriculum from this website once and now every year around Christmas, Memoria Press sends me a gift card (coupon) for \$10. They also will often give a free gift with a purchase around that same time.

3. Most curricula have its own website and many offer free shipping with a minimum purchase or at certain times.

Curricula Suggestions:

*These are mostly specific elementary and middle school age.

Math:

1. Saxon

- Constantly reviews concepts and math facts.
- Uses many manipulatives that you can purchase from Saxon. It also uses many items around the house.
- Completely scripted lessons, but you of course do not need to follow as scripted.
- I use Saxon, but I have not ever used the Kindergarten level because I have found it unnecessary. I always begin with the first-grade level. The teacher at our classical school mentioned to me that she also found the Kindergarten level to be unnecessary.
- There is a big jump in what is expected of the child between level 3 and level 4/5.

2. Math Lessons for a Living Education from Master Books

- One single book used by parent as well as child.
- Incorporates a story about a family throughout the levels to help children understand the ways in which we use math concepts every day.
- There may be some gaps between levels that need filled in.

3. Math with Confidence from Well Trained Mind Press

- Has been recommended to me and looks good from the description.
- Only goes up to a third-grade level.

Phonics:

1. Teach Your Child To Read in 100 Easy Lessons, by Siegfried Engelmann

- This is not a complete, comprehensive curriculum, but a great place to start.
- One single book used by both parent and child together.
- It is very inexpensive.

2. All About Reading from All About Learning Press

- Teaches the reading/spelling rules.
- Works in conjunction with All About Spelling.
- I have heard it is great for children with dyslexia.

Spelling:

1. All About Spelling from All About Learning Press

- Teaches why we spell words the way we do very well.
- Does a good job of teaching spelling and spelling rules as opposed to just lists of words to memorize.

Latin:

1. Prima Latina & Latina Christiana from Memoria Press

- This is ecclesiastical Latin.
- It does a great job of incorporating parts of the liturgy and prayers into the curriculum.

2. Minimus from Cambridge University Press

- This is classical Latin.
- It teaches Latin through the use of telling about a real family that lived in England around 100 AD.

Grammar:

1. Well Ordered Language from Classical Academic Press

- A great step-by-step process of teaching the grammar of sentences as well as diagramming sentences.
- Has jingles that you may purchase audio for to help learn parts of speech.
- Is easy to follow and has extra resources if wanted, but not completely necessary.
- I recommend beginning this around age 9 or 10.

2. Shurley English

- Completely scripted curriculum that teaches well the grammar of sentences.
- Has jingles to help learn parts of speech.
- Does not teach sentence diagramming.

3. First Language Lessons from Well Trained Mind Press

- A good introduction to grammar by teaching parts of speech.
- Not a curriculum to teach grammar itself.
- Recommended for children up to age 8 or 9.

Writing:

1. Structure and Style for Students from Institute for Excellence in Writing
 - Teaches students how to write with examples in a step-by-step process.
 - Should be used in conjunction with one of the theme based writing lessons books.

History:

1. Story of the World from Well Trained Mind Press
2. Ancient World Echoes; Old World Echoes; New World Echoes from Classical Conversations (classicalconversationsbooks.com)
3. Biographies and Picture book biographies.
4. A lot of read alouds of your choice.

Science:

1. I don't use any science curriculum, I just send my children outside, take them to museums, take them on hikes, cook with them, etc.

Religion:

1. I teach my children the catechism, do devotions, and take them to chapel and church services throughout the week.

*There is not really any Lutheran based curricula for homeschoolers.

Podcast Recommendations:

1. Wonder World
2. Withy Windle
3. Read Aloud Revival with Sarah Mackenzie
4. Your Morning Basket with Pam Barnhill
5. 10 Minutes to a Better Homeschool with Pam Barnhill
6. Classical Et Cetera with Shane Saxon (through Memoria Press)
7. Hillsdale College K-12 Classical Education Podcast
8. Christian Culture Podcast with Christian Preuss (through Luther Classical College)
 - This is a podcast mostly about cultural issues with a bit of classical education thrown in. This is not a podcast about homeschooling.

Book Recommendations:

1. Lutheran Education From Wittenberg to the Future by Thomas Korcok
2. The Core by Leigh A. Bortins (I also recommend The Question and The Conversation by the same author.)
3. The Well-Trained Mind by Susan Wise Bauer and Jessie Wise
4. The Read Aloud Family by Sarah Mackenzie
5. Teaching From Rest by Sarah Mackenzie
6. "To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany that They Establish and Maintain Christian Schools" by Martin Luther from Luther's Works, Vol. 45.

Answers to common questions asked to the district

*These are my own personal thoughts to these questions, take them as you wish.

Q. Where do we begin?

A. My answer with this is to do less. Do less than you think you need and do less than you even want to do, especially with young children. Parents will always have a fear that they need to do more than what they are doing and will never cover everything that their child needs, but teachers do not cover everything a child needs also. Learning is lifelong, and the important thing is to instill a love of learning so the child continues to learn throughout his life. (Many homeschool families are doing much less than you think they are doing.)

I also recommend beginning by reading books about homeschooling, listen to podcasts (if you enjoy doing that), go to seminars and/or conventions, and ask questions. Talk to people that you know that homeschool and ask them about what they do, what they have learned from their experience, etc.

Another recommendation is to come up with two or no more than three goals (kind of a main focus) that you want to accomplish from your years of homeschooling. Write those goals down and refer to them often. It is great, when things get crazy, or you get off track (or seem to be getting off track) to reread those goals to keep you grounded and focused.

One last recommendation is to read to your children. Read, read, read...there is so much that children learn from you reading aloud to them.

Q. What curriculum do we use? Is there Lutheran based curriculum?

A. There is not any Lutheran based curriculum, but there are many Lutheran resources that can be used for family devotions.

Q. Homeschool co-ops...How do we start one? How are they run? When/how often should we gather?

A. There is so much variance with homeschool co-ops. They depend on the preference of the families involved. Homeschool co-ops can be formal, very informal, and anything in between. We were involved in a co-op through classical conversations which was pretty formal. We met one day a week from 9 a.m.-12 p.m. and then stayed for lunch. The children aged 9-12 met after lunch from 1 p.m.-3 p.m. for an extra session teaching grammar and writing. Our morning co-op began with a little opening with everyone together that included some memory work, a family presentation, and announcements. We then split into small classes of no more than 8 children all around the same age (parents stay with their children and help out as needed). In the classes, we did memory work, a science project, an art or music project, presentations (which were basically show-and-tell), and review.

A homeschool co-op could be started with as basic and informal a model as parents getting together and having their children play together as moms socialize with each other. (It is a much-needed time for homeschooling moms.) Homeschool co-ops are typically headed by the moms and all the moms stay and help manage the kids. Usually, co-ops only gather once a week for a half or whole day depending on parents' wishes and children's ages. Most moms cannot afford to take more than one day to gather in a co-op. If the pastor up for it, you could begin the co-op with a chapel service. If and when the moms are comfortable with it, you can add in the other activities when you wish to add them in. These activities could include, but are not limited to, a science project, an art project, music, memory work, a presentation by each child, read alouds, or a Latin, Greek, or other language class if the pastor or a parent is comfortable teaching that.

Q. How can churches advertise/promote themselves as a place where homeschoolers can gather?

A. This answer may seem too simple, but the best way to advertise your church as a gathering place for homeschoolers is by word of mouth, especially in a small town. Those living in a small town will most likely

know of all the homeschooling families (if there are any others) in that town. You can reach out to those families and invite them to gather with you in your church. You can also put it on your church's Facebook page if it has one. You can advertise in the bulletins of circuit and neighboring churches as well. Co-ops do not have to be large. Your co-op may be very small, but it will still be just as needed and effective for the families involved as if it were ten times the size.

Q. What is the potential role of the LCMS pastor in the homeschool co-op?

A. The pastor could begin each co-op with a chapel service. Members of the congregation could join the service as well. I would not expect too much from the pastor, so you are not adding too many more tasks to his day, however, if the pastor feels comfortable and wishes to, he could teach Greek or Latin to the older children. The pastor's role could even just be offering the church as a place for homeschoolers to gather.