



April 2011–March 2012

SONLIGHT

The way you wish you'd been taught.

Discover Sonlight's **5 Big Ideas**

p. 20

Love to Learn,
Love to Teach,
or your money back. p. 24



Academic Excellence & College Scholarships

p. 20 & 155

Free Shipping p. 24

Payment Plans

with no fee or interest p. 157

Easy-to-order packages
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Complete
Instructor's Guides:
"Sonlight has given my family
**a calmer,
saner mom...**"

pp. 132-135

27 REASONS
NOT
to buy Sonlight
p. 4



Dear Mom or Dad,



AWARD WINNING

- **Best Primers / Readers**
Practical Homeschooling 2011 Reader Awards
- **Best Kindergarten / Readiness /
Preschool Curriculum**
Practical Homeschooling 2011 Reader Awards
- **Best Elementary Curriculum**
Practical Homeschooling 2011 Reader Awards
- **Best Middle School Curriculum**
Practical Homeschooling 2011 Reader Awards
- **Best History**
Practical Homeschooling 2011 Reader Awards
- **Best Curriculum**
Most recent *Homeschooling Parent* Homeschool
Friendly Stamp of Approval
- **Best Overall homeschool company**
Most recent *The Old Schoolhouse Magazine* Award
- **Best History**
Most recent *The Old Schoolhouse Magazine* Award
- **Literature company of the year**
Most recent *The Old Schoolhouse Magazine* Award
- **Friendliest homeschool company**
Most recent *The Old Schoolhouse Magazine* Award
- **Most Unique homeschool company**
Most recent *The Old Schoolhouse Magazine* Award

My homeschool journey began in 1989 with a look at the family budget. Our three youngest children were approaching school age and we didn't know what to do.

My husband John and I served as California-based missionaries with an international missions organization. Tuition for our oldest daughter's private Christian school absorbed nearly half our income.

The public school where we lived was horrible. So with fear and trepidation I agreed to try the only option left: homeschooling.

What a blessed surprise to discover **we loved learning at home!** Sure, things got rough sometimes and I made my fair share of mistakes. But our children blossomed as they learned in a safe and stimulating family environment.

I researched curriculum non-stop that first year. I knew my children loved great stories. I knew those stories led to meaningful conversations. They gave my kids strong Christian heroes. My children actually remembered what they learned; they even wanted to engage with history, theology and virtue when presented in the context of stories.

So why were textbooks and manipulates the only curricula choices out there? Couldn't homeschooling center on great literature? My family believed it could.

A new way to homeschool

In 1989 and '90, we said goodbye to boring textbooks and, with the help of my friend Becky, John and I began developing the Sonlight curriculum you see today. We were pioneers in a new way of homeschooling.

Our original goal in starting Sonlight was to help missionaries overseas stay on the field for "one more year." We wanted to make homeschooling as rich and feasible as possible for these missionary moms. So we created Instructor's Guides that wove top-notch books into a complete curriculum and created packages with the materials moms needed for a fantastic year. With one order, moms could relax and enjoy teaching their kids.

"Sonlight gives us freedom and structure at the same time, so we can help our children become the creative people God designed." —Laurie B, Aug. 2010

Love to Learn. Love to Teach. Guaranteed.

John and I also hatched a crazy idea: what if we could guarantee parents didn't waste their money on curriculum? My first year homeschooling, I spent over \$2,000 on curricular materials. And over half of what I purchased just didn't work for my kids. Since I had opened and tried the goods, I wasn't allowed to return them.

I don't want you to waste your money like I wasted mine. So now, John and I hold it dear to our hearts to offer you a money-back guarantee you can actually use. I guarantee that your kids will love to learn and you will love to teach with Sonlight.

Buy any Core or Multi-Subject Package (i.e., a full curriculum package) and start using it. You have up to a year to use up to half a year's worth of your curriculum. If you and your kids don't love it—for any reason—return it and we'll refund your entire purchase price. Learn more on p. 24.

We can afford this radical and unmatched policy because, well ... once people try Sonlight, few ever want to return it.

So what's your story?

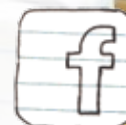
Are you a long-time homeschooler? A faithful "Sonlighter"? Maybe you're brand new to homeschooling. Whatever your situation, you are welcome here. Help is just around the corner if you ever feel overwhelmed or confused. Head to sonlight.com/SCA to speak with a Sonlight Curriculum Advisor, free of charge.

So please, grab a cup of coffee, flip through these pages and start on the path to your children's (and *your*) best year of education yet!

Sincerely,

Sarita Holzmant, President

P.S. On a practical note, you may notice that many of our Core Programs now have new labels. You'll see sequential letter names instead of numbers. Head to page 156 to learn more. ♦



Join the conversation
(and the fan club)
on **facebook**

www.facebook.com/sonlight

The Basics

Sonlight at a glance

- **Sonlight Curriculum helps families love to learn together.** Our deepest desire is to give you tools to raise children who love to learn, love God and have the academic preparation to do whatever Christ calls them to do.
- We provide Christ-centered, literature-based homeschool curriculum with an international focus.
- Our curriculum allows you to teach multiple children together and lets you spend your time teaching and enjoying your children instead of planning lessons and gathering materials.

Would you love Sonlight?

- Does the idea of **literature-based learning** appeal to you?
- Do you want to give your kids a **Christ-centered education** that encourages critical thinking?
- Do you want your kids to **love learning**?
- Would you appreciate a **1-year money-back guarantee** (p. 24) on your curriculum?

If so, flip to p. 146 and read about Sonlight's top ten goals. Then head to p. 4 for 27 reasons NOT to buy Sonlight. These articles have helped many know if Sonlight may (or may not) be a great fit.

Where to Start?

- When you're ready to choose curriculum, simply browse these pages or turn to p. 22 for a full explanation. The pull-out worksheet between p. 24 and p. 25 can help guide you through your process.
- If you have any questions at all, please **contact a Sonlight Curriculum Advisor** free of charge. A trained, experienced and friendly Sonlight mom will talk through your questions without pressuring you to buy. Call 303-730-6292 to leave a voicemail, email advisor@sonlight.com or visit www.sonlight.com/SCA.

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Featured on the Cover

"Sonlight provides such excellent tools to set the stage for relaxed, natural learning," writes Natalie P of Keizer, OR. "It allows me to relax and enjoy the experience along with my girls."

Natalie says she planned to stage some photos, but Lauren (5) and Amelia (3) were already laughing and enjoying the books without prompting. "And so it goes with Sonlight materials!" she says.

Natalie is using Core B for her family's first year of homeschooling.



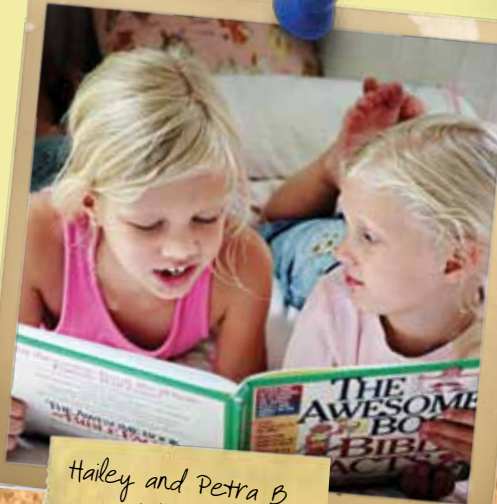
Measure the benefits your family gets from Sonlight.

Kids who love
to learn



zachary, Savannah, Monty and Mariah R
Lebanon, OH

Christ-centered
education



Hailey and Petra B
Ada, MI

Complete lesson plans,
schedules & materials

Your prep work is already done!



Kimberly S
New Port Richey, FL

Books your children
want to read



Reagan, Ryan and Reid L
Tempe, AZ

Quality family time together



Kyle, Leslie and Skyler M with dad Brent
South Africa

A college scholarship program

Lauren Dahl has used Sonlight since 3rd grade, nearly aced the ACT, is headed to Cornerstone University to prepare to work in Bible translation, and just won a scholarship from Sonlight worth \$20,000! Read more on p. 155.



Love-to-Learn Guarantee

One-year money-back guarantee (see p. 24) *Plus* →



Free shipping to the lower 48 states on orders of \$150 or more (see p. 152)



Interest-free payment plans (see p. 152)

Free personalized help



Curriculum Advisors
www.sonlight.com/SCA

Automated Internet Advisor
www.sonlight.com/SONIA

Community Forums
www.sonlight-forums.com

Sonlighter club benefits

buy a Core or Multi-Subject Package and get ...



free shipping on all orders (to 48 states) for a year



10% discount on all orders for a year



Free membership to the online Sonlight Forums



and more!

27 Reasons NOT to Buy Sonlight

Sonlight® is not the right curriculum for everyone. Find out why.

—By John Holzmann

Let's just get this out in the open: Sonlight Curriculum may not be a good fit for you. If it's not, what better time to discover that than now—while you're still just reading our catalog?

Here at Sonlight, we've heard from many, many customers in the past 20 years. Most feedback is very positive, but we appreciate the constructive and sometimes painful feedback as well. It helps us understand what we can do better and how we can help families make informed choices about our curriculum.

The following 27 reasons why you may not want to purchase Sonlight come from former customers who found our curriculum to be a poor fit for their families.

If only a few of the following reasons apply to you, know that many families happily modify Sonlight to fit their needs. You can ask questions about your family's situation and get helpful, realistic feedback from Sonlight customers at sonlight.com/choosing.

And if you buy Sonlight, start using it and then decide it's not for you, you can still return it for a full refund. (Learn more about that at sonlight.com/love.) But to minimize the possibility that you will be disappointed in that manner, please consider:

What are the main reasons people say they DON'T want to buy Sonlight curriculum?

1. They don't want a lot of reading.

When you use Sonlight, you and your children will read. A lot. Sonlight is thoroughly grounded in literature and reading.



"One of the things I love most about Sonlight is that my girls have truly developed a love for reading," writes Bettye W of Evansville, IN. "Read another chapter!" they chant as we snuggle in bed at night to finish reading our Sonlight books as bed time stories. Secretly, I love it when they chant for another chapter — but don't tell them or we'll never go to sleep!" Jessica (6) and Kylie (5) love Core A in their second year of Sonlight.

If you don't like to read; if you won't enjoy reading out loud to your young children; if your older children find no pleasure in reading, you may need to either find audio versions of Sonlight books or use a program other than Sonlight.

On an encouraging note: Many parents have used Sonlight in hopes that the great books will "hook" their reluctant readers. I can happily report that in the vast majority of cases this strategy has worked!

2. They want a curriculum that revolves around hands-on activities.

Several programs on the market advertise their strong activity orientation. While Sonlight has more options for hands-on activities in the elementary grades than most of our competitors, we have chosen a different primary emphasis.

We recognize that hands-on learning greatly helps many children, and we give parents specific tools to incorporate hands-on learning in many areas. Core P4/5 brims over with developmentally-appropriate hands-on activities that are simple to prepare and that truly help your children grow. Cores A through E (for ages 5-12) come with weekly suggestions of many activities to correlate with your learning.

Sonlight's Science programs are loaded with activities and experiments. We also emphasize hands-on activities in early elementary Math programs. Such activities are particularly helpful for kinesthetic learners; they help families with different types of learners all enjoy Sonlight together.

But on the other hand, we don't schedule time-consuming activities that put the emphasis on parent preparation. We've found these activities often don't have a strong enough educational payoff to make them worthwhile. When my wife was homeschooling, she'd come across suggestions to do things like make raccoon-skin caps, create playground-sized maps of the world, cook Pilgrim-era Thanksgiving meals and so on.

While these kinds of activities may, no doubt, be loads of fun, it is our opinion that their educational value is not worth the hours parents must spend doing preparatory work. So if you want to do them, we bless you in your desire. But we have not incorporated them into our fundamental educational program.

We find that as parents read dynamic and engaging books to their children, they fill their minds with strong mental images and challenging ideas. Then children decide on their own, what activities they want to do. And they prepare for those activities on their own with minimal guidance from us. (Ever seen what kids will do with a cardboard box? Or a stick? They create ideas without Mom or Dad preparing something for them!)

Our own four children and countless Sonlighters over the past 20 years have borne witness to these ideas. We have seen positive effects in many families when parents focus on reading great books with their kids and do few if any parent-directed hands-on activities.

So even though we do include lots of hands-on activities that tie directly into what you're learning, these activities are never the main thrust of our curriculum. They're more of an optional, child-directed, supplemental tool.

We realize, however, that your situation could be different from ours. Perhaps you've found your children need intense, parent-driven hands-on activities in order to master the material you're teaching; or maybe you yourself feel energized by such activities.

In either case, you may want to do one of two things. 1) Come visit sonlight-forums.com and find loads of activities your fellow teachers suggest for Sonlight programs. (There are many moms who love to prepare hands-on activities and use Sonlight Curriculum with joy and good success!) Or, 2) Purchase one of the activities-based programs on the market.

Continued on p. 139

Key to Catalog Listings

AUTHOR'S LAST NAME.

CONSUMABLE. You may want one for each student.

PUBLICATION AVAILABILITY:
S = Sonlight unique (to our knowledge, available for purchase at this time only from us).
X = Christian publisher.

☐ Leading Little Ones to God Schoolland. A classic devotional book for children focuses on biblical doctrines such as who God is, what He does, Christ's work, the Holy Spirit, prayer, the church. Full-color illus, 8"x10", Consumable, X, Pb, RA: P-5, R: 3-5

BINDING:
Pb = Paperback
Hb = Hardbound

Appropriate audience if Read Aloud by a competent reader with no additional explanation, commentary or discussion.

RETAIL PRICE as of catalog publication date. Subject to change.

ITEM #
BB01 \$20.00

Grade
3 to 5.

Appropriate grade-level if Read to oneself.

Note: "RA" and "R" listings take into account reading level and content to decide what age range is appropriate for a certain book. Some, like the best G-rated movies, engage your entire family—even if geared toward a younger audience. Other books may fit your child's reading level, but the content may better suit older or more mature students. We do our best to take all those factors into account with our listings.

Required: purchase these items separately to complete your program unless you already own them. Items labeled "REQUIRED" are integral to and scheduled as part of the program. They are not bundled with your Core as you may use them with multiple Core programs and don't need to buy them more than once.

Items labeled "Recommended" are great books or resources that enhance your learning experience, but are not scheduled as an integral part of your program.