

Welcome to Fiction, Fairy Tales, and Fun for Little Learners

Welcome! This Parent's Companion includes a simple checklist for all the stories, poems, and instruction. This checklist is organized by trimester (first, second, third) and roughly divided by difficulty level from easiest to most challenging materials. Feel free to work through the list according to your schedule.


Along with many stories, we provide an optional activity. Frequently, the activities pertain to the story; sometimes the activity is too good to miss. None of these are required. If they enhance your day, or build the bond between you and your children, you've reached the goal. If they cause stress and discontent, please, please don't do them. You are in charge!

Before You Start

We have several goals in mind for you, the teacher, this year:

We want you to enjoy your time with your little ones. We've searched through hundreds of children's books and found these few that our children (and we) love.

We want you to take control of your schooling. Part of the reasoning behind offering a checklist is so that you have the freedom to read and re-read the stories without a strict schedule. You will not fall "behind" (you can't be behind yourself, right?). If you read *Go, Dog, Go* to your children every day in the month of May, that's great! Your children have developed a love for a classic book. You are doing great!

We want you to understand more fully the philosophy of using real books for schoolwork. To that end, we've included quotes and tips we've found helpful in our homeschooling experiences. You can find these scattered throughout the Companion. Just look for the handprint symbol!  We hope they encourage and challenge you, and that your homeschool journey will be richer as a result.

Our goals for your children are simple:

We want your children to fall in love with books and to have some books that they request again and again.

We want your children to enjoy being with you.

How much time will this course take? It's up to you. In my house, I've found that if I read to my children for perhaps 20–30 minutes early in the morning (say, right after breakfast), they are quite content to play on their own afterwards, sometimes until lunch. They've spent time with mother and are eager to pursue their own interests. Play is healthy and necessary for young children. We usually have a healthy mix of both new books and repeats to read.

As a homeschooling parent, you have the privilege of talking to your children all day long. So please do! Speak to them in a normal voice (not a "child" voice) and use normal words. Answer their questions as best you can. Include them in your life.

Finally, here's a little plug for afternoon rest time. Whether your children will sleep or not, I recommend a one to two hour rest time in the early afternoon. In our house, the boys can listen to CD's and look at books, but they are to stay on their beds. This gives them a break from each other, and allows us to come back together refreshed.

A Few Other Notes

I invite you to visit our Sonlight® Forums at forums.sonlight.com. Here you can find encouragement and resources from other homeschoolers who have "been there." Come visit!

Sign up for our exciting and inspiring electronic newsletter "A Beam of Sonlight," which includes the most interesting and helpful discussions on our forums. Sign up at www.sonlight.com/subscribe.html.

And, finally, if while going through this program you think of another book we should consider, or an activity that you've found enjoyable or anything that we could do to improve this program, please let me know. My e-mail address is alykosh@sonlight.com. I look forward to hearing from you! Enjoy! ■



Get a few really good books, and read them together aloud. Set aside a good regular chunk of time. This will be one of the most rewarding and stimulating relationships in your life.¹

1. Macaulay, Susan S. *For the Children's Sake*, 1984. p. 19.

Checklist for Books

First Trimester

- ☐ Read a story a day from the Bible and/or *Family-Time Bible*.
- ☐ *Goodnight Moon* (Harper Collins Treasury of Picture Book Classics)
 - ✧ Cook and enjoy Cream of Mushroom Soup or Cream of Wheat.
- ☐ *Baby Says* (Harper Collins Treasury of Picture Book Classics)
 - ✧ Build with blocks.
- ☐ *Noah's Ark*
 - ✧ Ask questions about this book. Count the animals, name the animals, or make animal noises.
 - ✧ Put a blanket over a table and use the under part for an ark. Bring in toys that won't be left behind!
- ☐ *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* (Harper Collins Treasury of Picture Book Classics)
 - ✧ Bake cookies and eat them with milk for a snack.
- ☐ *George Shrinks* (Harper Collins Treasury of Picture Book Classics)
 - ✧ Try to put on your children's socks to see what something is like if it is too small. What would you be like if you shrunk? Could your children sit on your shoulders? How much would you eat? What would your clothes look like?
- ☐ *From Head to Toe* (Harper Collins Treasury of Picture Book Classics)
 - ✧ Sing "Head and Shoulders, Knees and Toes."²
- ☐ *Make Way For Ducklings* (Make Way for McCloskey: A Robert McCloskey Treasury)
 - ✧ Practice walking like a duck. Play follow the leader.
 - ✧ Draw your children's attention to the artist's illustrations. Each picture is linked to the previous page.
- ☐ *Blueberries for Sal* (Make Way for McCloskey: A Robert McCloskey Treasury)
 - ✧ Eat some blueberries.
 - ✧ Drop various objects into a tin pail or a metal baking tray and listen to the different sounds they make. See if you can figure out which objects makes which sound.
- ☐ "The Doughnuts" from *Homer Price* (Make Way for McCloskey: A Robert McCloskey Treasury)
 - ✧ Bake doughnuts or a dessert and share them with a friend or neighbor.



Susannah Wesley raised 19 children, including John and Charles Wesley. Through much adversity, she dedicated her life to instilling a sense of Christian Destiny into each of her children. Her children went on to change the world.

Susannah's 16 house rules:

1. Eating between meals not allowed.
2. As children they are to be in bed by 8 p.m.
3. They are required to take medicine without complaining.
4. Subdue self-will in a child, and those working together with God to save the child's soul.
5. To teach a child to pray as soon as he can speak.
6. Require all to be still during Family Worship.
7. Give them nothing that they cry for, and only that when asked for politely.
8. To prevent lying, punish no fault which is first confessed and repented of.
9. Never allow a sinful act to go unpunished.
10. Never punish a child twice for a single offense.
11. Comment on and reward good behavior.
12. Any attempt to please, even if poorly performed, should be commended.
13. Preserve property rights, even in smallest matters.
14. Strictly observe all promises.
15. Require no daughter to work before she can read well.
16. Teach children to fear the rod.³



"If you really read the fairy tales, you will observe that one idea runs from one end of them to the other—the idea that peace and happiness can only exist on some condition. This idea, which is the core of ethics, is the core of the nursery tales."⁴

3. Wesley, Susannah. "Rules," <http://pastorbrouwer.wordpress.com/2007/03/13/rules-susannah-wesley-had-for-her-home/> (accessed August 27, 2007).

4. (Chesterton, G.K. "Fairy Tales," <http://www.online-literature.com/chesterton/all-things-considered/31> (accessed July 10, 2007).

2. You can find this song at: <http://www.mamalisa.com/blog/?cat=828>.



JC Ryle's Duties of Parents

- 1 First, then, if you would train your children rightly, train them in the way they should go, and not in the way that they would.
2. Train up your children with all tenderness, affection, and patience. I do not mean that you are to spoil them, but I do mean that you should let them see that you love them.
3. Train your children with an abiding persuasion on your mind that much depends upon you.
4. Train with this thought continually before your eyes—that the soul of your child is the first thing to be considered.
5. Train your child to a knowledge of the Bible.
6. Train them to a habit of prayer.
7. Train them to habits of diligence, and regularity about public means of grace.
8. Train them to a habit of faith.
9. Train them to a habit of obedience.
10. Train them to a habit of always speaking the truth.
11. Train them to a habit of always redeeming the time.
12. Train them with a constant fear of over-indulgence.
13. Train them remembering continually how God trains His children.
14. Train them remembering continually the influence of your own example.
15. Train them remembering continually the power of sin.
16. Train them remembering continually the promises of Scripture.
17. Train them, lastly, with continual prayer for a blessing on all you do.⁵



"You may have tangible wealth untold:
Caskets of jewels and coffers of gold.
Richer than I you will never be—I had a mother
who read to me."⁶

5. The first 17 points in this list written by Ryle, J.C. "The Duties of Parents" <http://www.anglicanlibrary.org/ryle/parents/> (accessed July 10, 2007).

6. Gillilan, Strickland. "The Reading Mother" *Best Loved Poems of the American People*. New York; Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1936.

- ☐ *Katy and the Big Snow (Mike Mulligan and More)*
 - ✦ Talk about snow. Ask your children what activities they could do when it snows.
- ☐ *Busy Timmy (Eloise Wilkin Stories)*
 - ✦ Get ready for bed or bath time.
- ☐ *Guess Who Lives Here (Eloise Wilkin Stories)*
 - ✦ Guess where something is (this could be a family pet, a sibling, even mom or dad!)
- ☐ *Baby Listens (Eloise Wilkin Stories)*
 - ✦ Give your children a wooden spoon and some pans or Tupperware to play "drum."
- ☐ *Baby Dear (Eloise Wilkin Stories)*
 - ✦ Play with a doll, visit the baby nursery at church, or look at your children's old baby clothes or pictures.
- ☐ *Baby Looks (Eloise Wilkin Stories)*
 - ✦ Play "I spy."
- ☐ *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom (The 20th Century Children's Book Treasury)*
 - ✦ Talk about letters, practice the ABC's, and so on. Perhaps read this every two weeks. Use plastic alphabet letters on the fridge as great practice tools!
- ☐ *Freight Train (The 20th Century Children's Book Treasury)*
 - ✦ Talk about colors, count cars, make train sounds such as "chug, chug," and whistle.
- ☐ *A Boy, a Dog, and a Frog (The 20th Century Children's Book Treasury)*
 - ✦ Run, hop, bark, wear a pail or pot on your head, take a bath.
- ☐ *Guess How Much I Love You (The 20th Century Children's Book Treasury)*
 - ✦ Show how much you love each other: how high, how wide, how deep. Teach children opposites—the difference between high and low, a lot and not much, big and little.
- ☐ *I Hear, I See, I Touch (The 20th Century Children's Book Treasury)*
 - ✦ Touch rough objects and soft objects. Look for small and big objects. What is loud? What is quiet? Can you be as quiet as a mouse?
- ☐ *Titch (The 20th Century Children's Book Treasury)*
 - ✦ Grow a seed, dig in the sandbox, beat a drum, or ride a tricycle.
- ☐ *Good Night Gorilla (The 20th Century Children's Book Treasury)*
 - ✦ Eat bananas, oranges, make animal noises, or sleep with a stuffed animal.

- ❑ *Ten, Nine, Eight (The 20th Century Children's Book Treasury)*
 - ✧ Play counting games. Count your toes, fingers, nose, etc.
- ❑ *I Am a Bunny (The 20th Century Children's Book Treasury)*
 - ✧ Talk about seasons. What season is it now? How can you tell?
- ❑ *Thumbelina (Hans Christian Andersen's Fairy Tales)*
 - ✧ Put a face on each of your thumbs with a pen and pretend it is a puppet (perhaps on fingers, too.)
 - ✧ Play "Where Is Thumbkin."⁷
- ❑ *Whose Mouse Are You? (The 20th Century Children's Book Treasury)*
 - ✧ Play a sorting game. For example: Place silverware, socks, mittens, buttons in a basket. Have your children match pairs.
- ❑ *Dan the Dunce (Hans Christian Andersen's Fairy Tales)*
 - ✧ Organize objects from big to little, such as toys, fruits, stuffed animals, etc.
- ❑ *Emperor's New Clothes (Hans Christian Andersen's Fairy Tales)*
 - ✧ Play dress up.
- ❑ *The Ugly Duckling (Hans Christian Andersen's Fairy Tales)*
 - ✧ Hard boil some eggs for breakfast so your children can explore how an egg feels.
- ❑ *The Nightingale (Hans Christian Andersen's Fairy Tales)*
 - ✧ Practice "flying." Flap wings around and chirp. This would be a good outside activity.
- ❑ *The Selfish Giant (A First Book of Fairy Tales)*
 - ✧ Feel the green grass in the backyard or a park.
 - ✧ Care for a plant. Perhaps as a family project, build a garden.
- ❑ *Jack and the Beanstalk (A First Book of Fairy Tales)*
 - ✧ Plant a bean seed.
- ❑ *Sleeping Beauty (A First Book of Fairy Tales)*
 - ✧ Cut an apple sideways to see the star and eat it for a snack.
- ❑ *The Frog Prince (A First Book of Fairy Tales)*
 - ✧ Hop like a frog.
- ❑ *Diamonds and Toads (A First Book of Fairy Tales)*
 - ✧ Hop like a toad or slither like a snake.
- ❑ *The Fisherman and His Wife (A First Book of Fairy Tales)*
 - ✧ Serve fish for dinner. Talk about what other types of fish live in the sea.

7. You can find lyrics to this song on this site: <http://www.kiddiddles.com/lyrics/w010.html>.



If you're ever overwhelmed trying to find good picture books, consider checking out award winners from the library. Each year, one book is awarded the medal for "best in its class." The best picture book by an American author wins the Caldecott Medal, and a various number of other standouts receive a Caldecott Honor. See the list at <http://www.ala.org/ala/alsc/awards/scholarships/literaryawards/2007MediaAwardWinners.htm>. The best picture book by a British author receives the Kate Greenaway Medal. See <http://www.carnegiegreenaway.org.uk/greenaway/>.



"A rule of thumb for predicting future success is to know the number of books in the home."⁸



At a loss for what to read with your children? The Newbery Medal is given to "the most distinguished children's book by an American Author." See <http://www.ala.org/alsc/awards/grants/bookmedia/newberymedal/newberyhonors/newberymedal> for a list of all Newbery Medal and Honor winners. The British counterpart to the Newbery Medal is the Carnegie Medal. See <http://www.carnegiegreenaway.org.uk/carnegie>.

8. Home School Market Place, "The Importance of Reading Great Books" <http://www.homeschoolmarketplace.com/booklists/index.htm>. (accessed July 10, 2007).

- ☐ *The Princess and the Pea (A First Book of Fairy Tales)*
 - ✧ Eat peas for dinner.
 - ✧ Glue dried peas onto a sheet of paper to create a design.
- ☐ *The Snow Queen (A First Book of Fairy Tales)*
 - ✧ Put ice cubes in a bag. Hold them to feel how cold they are. Perhaps crush them and eat them.
- ☐ Social Studies: Richard Scarry's *What Do People Do All Day?*
 - ☐ Introduction (pp. 2–5)
 - ☐ Everyone is a worker (pp. 6–8)
 - ☐ Have your children help with chores. Take out the trash, feed the dog, or pick up toys, etc. Talk about how everyone is a worker.
 - ☐ Building a new house (pp. 9–14)
 - ☐ Build a house under the kitchen table. Leave room for a door.
 - ☐ Mailing a Letter (pp. 15–18)
 - ✧ Mail a letter to someone, go to the post office, or talk to the mailman.
- ☐ Science: *Usborne Flip–Flap Body Book, Part I: What Happens to Your Food?*
 - ☐ "What Is Food For?"
 - ☐ "What Should You Eat?"
 - ☐ "Is It Yummy?"
 - ☐ "What Happens In Your Mouth?"
 - ☐ "Into Your Stomach"
 - ☐ "Where Food Goes Next"
 - ☐ "Journey's End"
- ☐ Science: *Our Animal Friends*
 - ☐ Intro: 2 pp.
 - ☐ Cats: 6 pp.
 - ☐ Chickens: 4 pp.
- ☐ Poetry: *Poems and Prayers for the Very Young*
 - ☐ "Singing-Time"
 - ☐ "Dear Father, Hear and Bless"
 - ☐ "Clouds"
 - ☐ "A Child's Prayer"
 - ☐ "Father, We Thank Thee"
 - ☐ "Song"
 - ☐ "God Be in My Head"
 - ☐ "Peace Be to This House"
 - ☐ "All for Thee"
 - ☐ "Table Blessing"
 - ☐ "Out in the Fields with God"
 - ☐ "The Creation"
 - ☐ "Thank You for Summer" ■



Why build a personal library? "Although it may seem easier and cheaper to simply check books out from the library, children love to read and read and reread their favorites and they take pleasure in having copies of books that have become their special friends. Also, if you have a large family, the books become an investment to be passed down to each succeeding child, and perhaps even to grandchildren."⁹



According to a survey of homeschooling families, five major reasons families fail at home education are:

1. They lack the personal conviction to persevere through the difficult times;
2. The father is not involved;
3. The children are undisciplined and resist parental instruction;
4. The parents cannot handle the added responsibilities;
5. The family has unrealistic expectations."

Are any of these threats to your homeschool? For encouragement for numbers 1 and 2 above, visit forums.sonlight.com. For 3, there are a number of helpful materials available. My favorite parenting book is titled "The Pursuit of Godly Seed" available from <http://www.homefirespub.com>. If you do not delight in your children—and it's hard to delight in disobedient children—your homeschooling will not be a joy. House-keeping and meals are a part of number 4. If you do not have systems in place for housekeeping and cooking, you may want to develop some. The library has multiple titles to assist you.¹⁰

9. From <http://www.homeschoolmarketplace.com/booklists/index.html>.

10. From <http://www.homeschoolmarketplace.com/choosing/index.html>.