

“Magic Seeds”

Inspired by Daniel, my 6-year old boy neighbor with the boy imagination.

Homeschool HUDDLE: August 10, 2018

Schedule of Awesome-Sauce

<i>Time PST</i>	<i>Workshop</i>	<i>printable</i>
9:00- 9:45 am	<i>Catch the Dream</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Homeschool goals, KWL
9:45- 10:00 am	<i>Q&A</i>	
10- 10:45 am	<i>Inside Out Homeschooling</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Character first, heart of homeschooling,
10:45-11:00 am	<i>Q&A</i>	
11- 11:45 am	<i>Multiple Ages and Stages</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
11:45- 12:00 pm	<i>Q&A</i>	
12-12:45 pm	<i>Magic and Keeping it Fun</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
12:45-1:00 pm	<i>Q&A</i>	

Who am I



My name is Bekki, I've been the blessed wife of <<< this guy for almost 30 years.

We have FIVE amazing sons ranging from 25 and newly married down to 13.



<< our youngest just turned 13-years old.

I've always said, "The Lord saved this one for last so there would be six people watching over him!"

Thank you for Joining my community of Homeschoolers

Let's get boring out of the way...

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- No part of this document may be reproduced without permission from me, Bekki Sayler.
- Yes, you may print extra copies for yourself, especially if the kids destroy the original. But, NO printing copies for your best friend, pediatrician, or anyone else. Simply send them to <http://abetterwaytohomeschool.com/> to get their copy.

Thanks bunches!

Other resources included by [Inspired Elementary](#)

Pre-Huddle Prep

Blue activities for your kids:)
Yellow Note pages for you

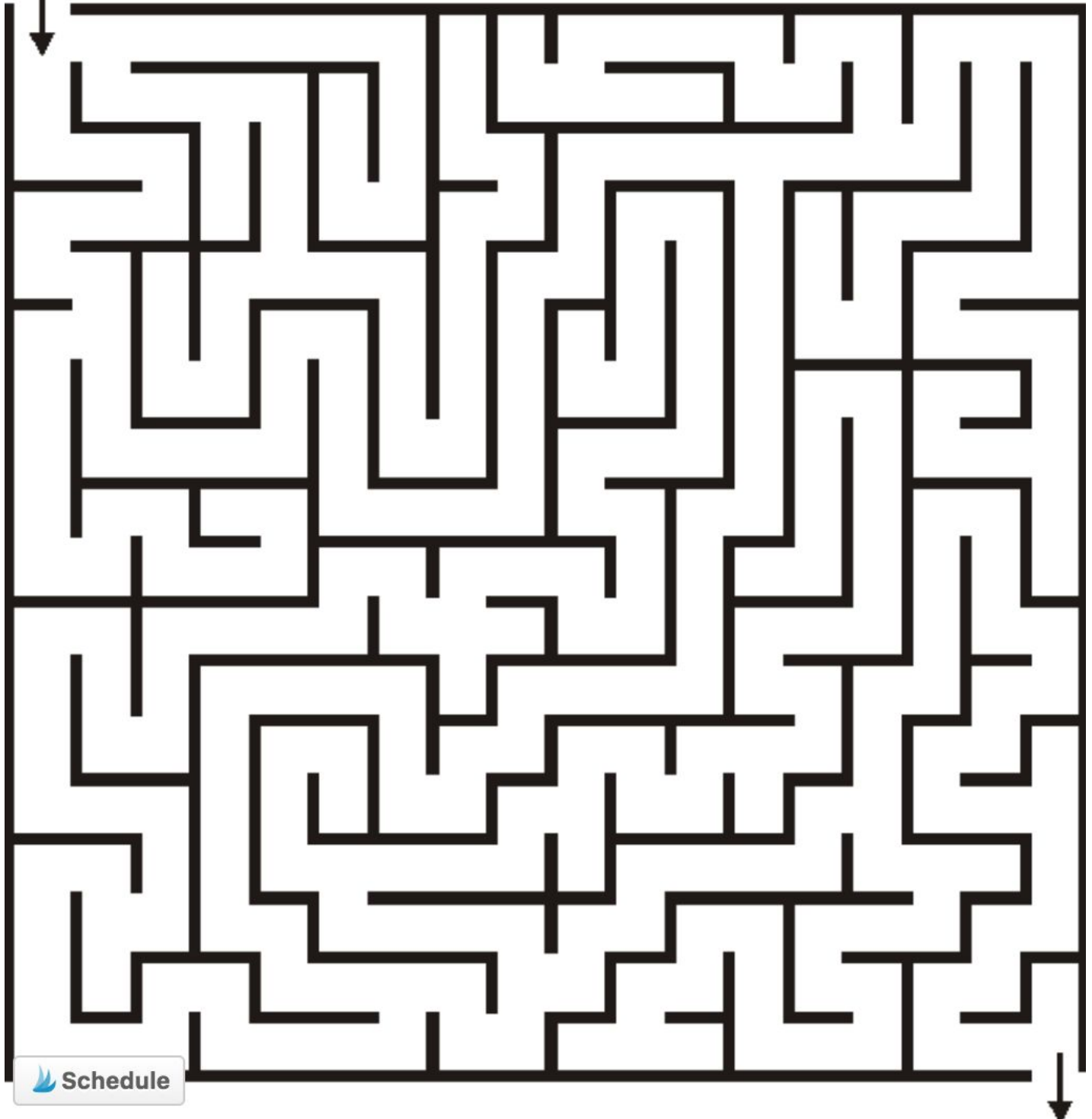
For the Kids: Scavenger Hunt

- ☐ Something fuzzy
- ☐ Something round
- ☐ Something sharp (don't move it)
- ☐ Something smaller than a dime
- ☐ Something larger than your leg
- ☐ Something special
- ☐ Something black
- ☐ Something noisy
- ☐ Something quiet
- ☐ Something rough
- ☐ SOmething clean
- ☐ Something dirty
- ☐ Something glittery
- ☐ Something tall
- ☐ Something with a triangle
- ☐ A book with a bear
- ☐ A toy that rolls
- ☐ Something alive
- ☐ Something that opens
- ☐ Something that snaps
- ☐ Something that zips
- ☐ Something with a buckle
- ☐ Something dull
- ☐ Something shiny
- ☐ Something boring
- ☐ Something fun
- ☐ A rubber band
- ☐ A newspaper
- ☐ A picture of a giraffe
- ☐ A book with the name Paul
- ☐ Bonus: what page number does Genesis begin in your Bible?

For the Kids: a-MAZE-ing



Help Sprocket find his treat



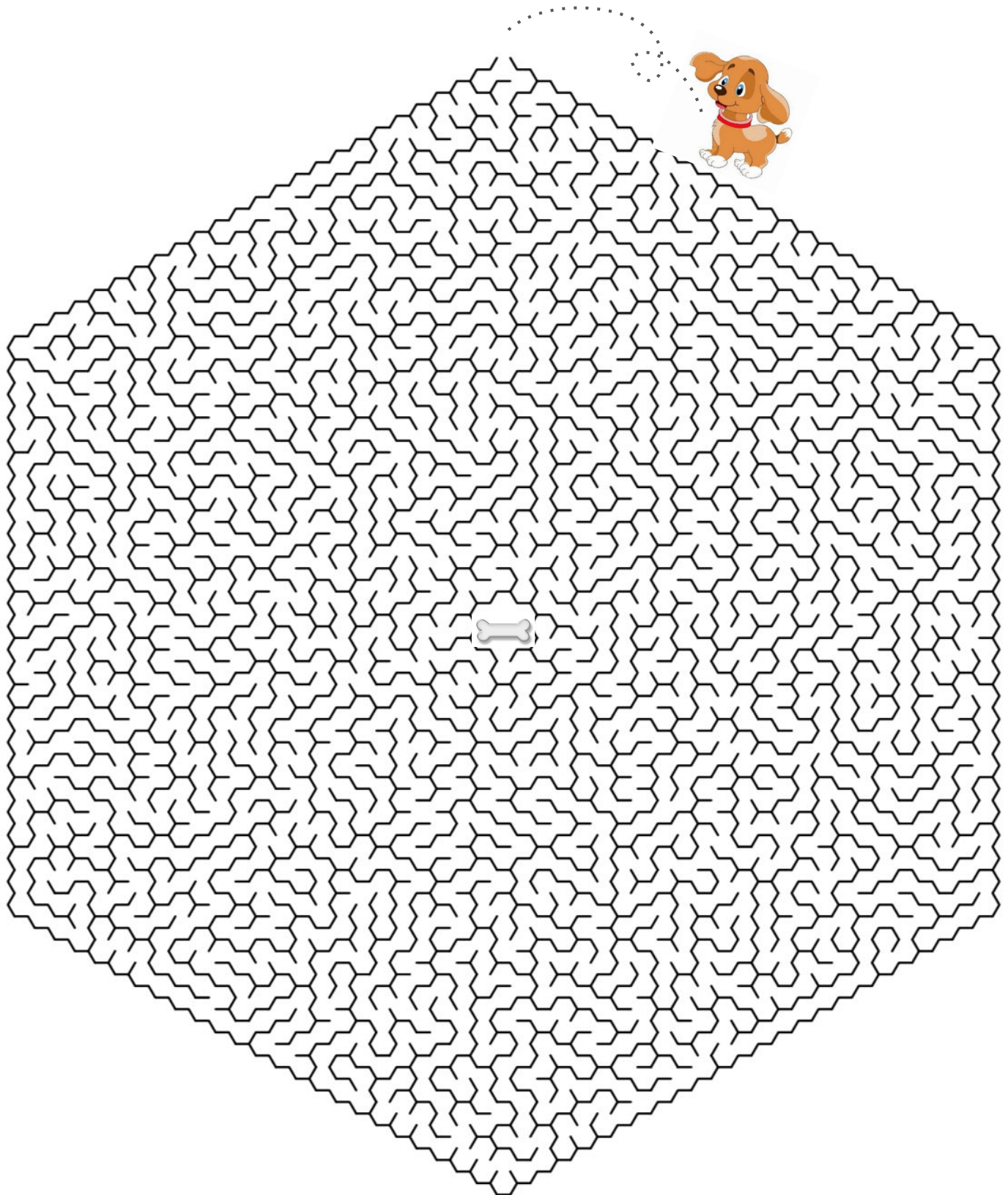
 Schedule

A BETTER WAY TO HOMESCHOOL

what if we focus on character 



For the Kids: a-MAZE-ing
Help Sprocket find his treat



For the Kids: Paper Plane Contest

Instructions for folding [by Fold N Fly](#)

Easy Planes

Medium Difficulty Planes:

Hard/expert Planes

Let's see how far you can make your planes fly!

1. Chose 1-3 planes from each category
2. Label each plane
3. Create a starting line
4. Gently toss the planes, one at a time.
5. Toss each plane 3 times

plane	Toss 1	Toss 2	Toss 3	average

For the Kids: Zentangle art

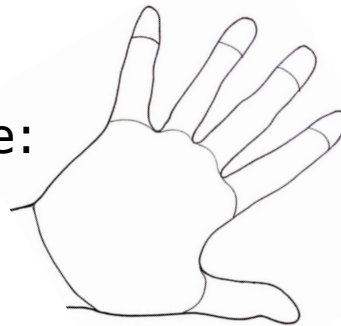


First

Trace your Hand onto a blank piece of paper

Second

Subdivide the hand drawing like:



**Be as creative as you can and have as many subdivisions as you wish.

Third

Fill in each section in a different way.

Vary the thickness of lines, patterns, and designs.

Catch the Dream

Doodling keeps your brain engaged:

Inside Out Homeschooling

Using blue ink increases your memory.

Questions for Bekki

Scribble them out, she can't see your paper:)





















Catch the Dream

My Homeschool Goals

Academic

[illegible]

Life

[illegible]

Links: Homeschool Goals

Academic

[Master Math Facts](#)

[Love to Read](#)

[Read the Classics](#)

[Excellent Writing Skills](#)

[Excellent Oral Skills](#)

[Know Learning Style](#)

[Practice the Scientific Method](#)

[Understand Our History](#)

[Understand our Government and
Participate](#)

[Manage a Calendar and to-do list](#)

[Break down projects into
manageable pieces](#)

Life

[Maintain Your Faith](#)

[Be Others Centered](#)

[Balance a Checkbook](#)

[Balance a Budget](#)

[Create a Menu](#)

[How to Grocery Shop](#)

[Master 20+ Recipes](#)

[Master an Instrument](#)

[Learn to Dance](#)

[Exercise](#)

[Learn to Garden](#)

[Basic Survival Skills](#)

[Basic Car Maintenance](#)



Click for
resources

My Homeschool Goals

Master Goals: Vision	This Year's Goals
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	Bible
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	Reading
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	Writing
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	Math
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	History
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	Science
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	

Topic: _____

What I Know	What I Want to know	What I Learned

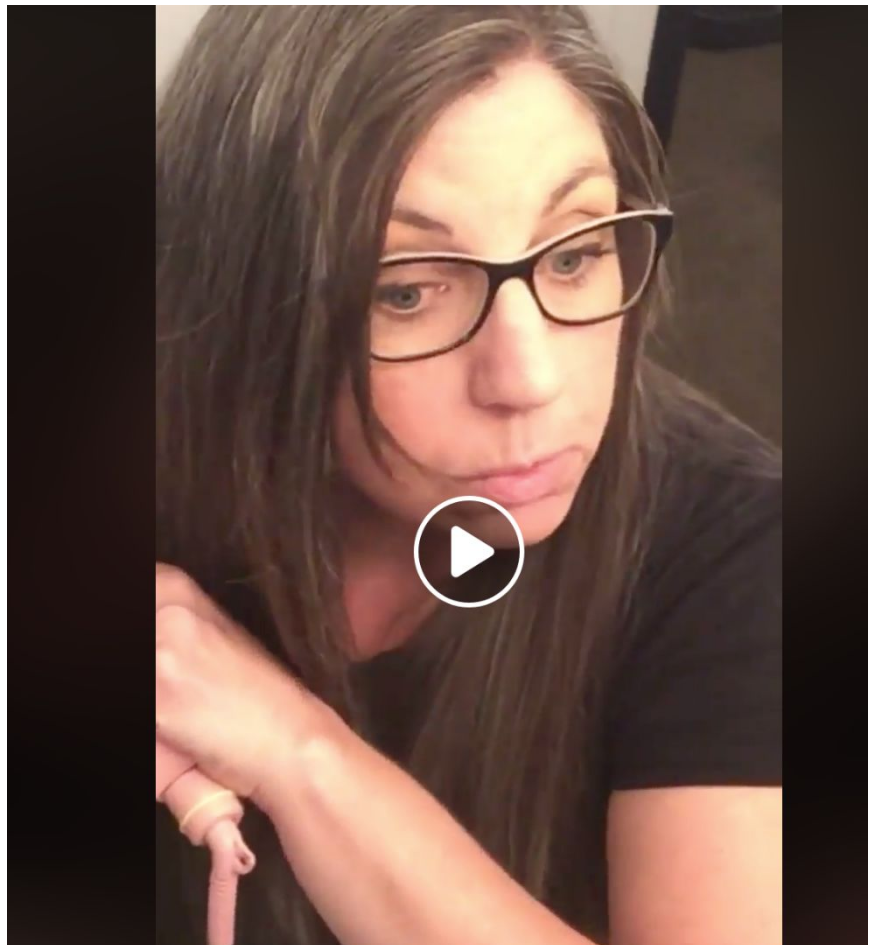
Inside Out Homeschooling

Inside Out Homeschooling

Because the heart matters most...

- ☐ Attitude
- ☐ Expectations
- ☐ Spaghetti
- ☐ Three letter word
- ☐ Teamwork

Sometimes it's necessary to skip the lipstick.
Hey, I have a story about that!



Inside Out Homeschooling

Because the heart matters most...



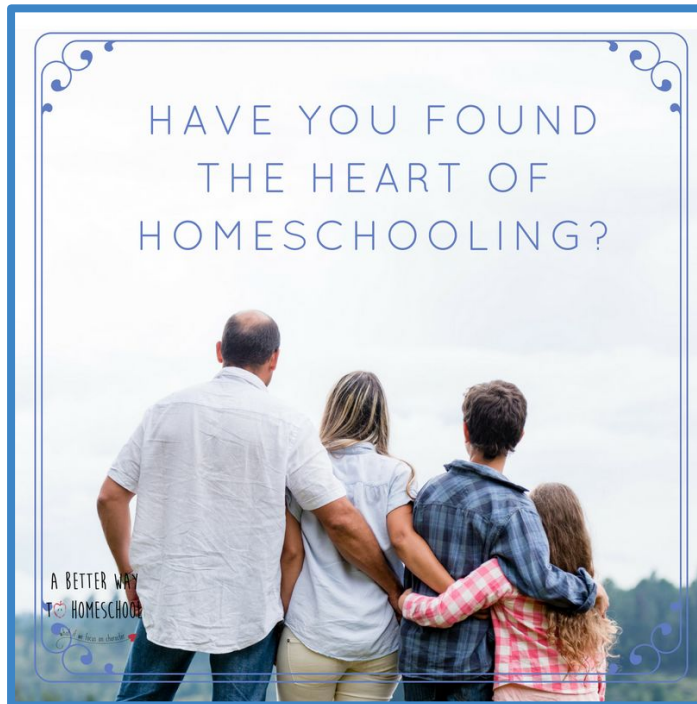
In Character First Homeschooling you'll discover

- The Best Measure of Parenting and Homeschooling Success
- The #1 Mistake Homeschoolers Make with their Kids
- One Powerful Phrase that will change the way you homeschool forever

<https://a-better-way-to-homeschool.teachable.com/p/character-first-homeschooling>

Inside Out Homeschooling

Because the heart matters most...



The Heart of Homeschooling God's Way Master Class

<https://a-better-way-to-homeschool.teachable.com/p/teaching-your-kids-diligently-in-the-way-they-should-go>

This is for all homeschoolers, ***even those who have worn their shoes*** out on the path...

- ☐ Grab hold of the homeschooling reigns
- ☐ Remind you of the heart of homeschooling
- ☐ Encouragement for those days when you want to hide in the closet with a bag of Oreos
- ☐ How to get your kids to move past "I can't"
- ☐ Homeschooling multiples without losing your mind
- ☐ And much much more.

Designed to be enjoyed in bite sized lesson over a cup of something wonderful.

Multiple Ages and Stages

Multiple Ages and Stages



Multiple Ages and Stages

- Establish Family Homeschool Goals
- Top down teaching
- Choose an area of focus (not “chapters 1-4”, rather “weather” or “Native Americans”)
- Eat Elephant one bite at a time: Organize by Reporting Periods (RP)
 - Pick Project
 - Identify Standards or objectives
 - Map out RP by week
 - Complete project!
- Reflect often. What is working? What is not? Homeschooling is a living thing. What works today will not likely work tomorrow: Be flexible!
- Simplify down to Core Subjects: Math, English, History, Science
- Limit extra curricular activities. If all 5 of my boys belonged to different clubs and teams we would never get anything accomplished. Choose wisely!

Multiple Ages and Stages

Our Unit Project will be:

Examples: power point, research paper, creative writing, art project, history pockets, lapbooks, notebooking journal, display board, poster, scrap book, model, youTube Video, oral presentation, etc

Week 1 goal: _____

Week 2 goal: _____

Week 3 goal: _____

Week 4 goal: _____

Week 5 goal: _____

Week 6 goal: _____

This Project is due on this date: _____

The student will share this project with _____

Magic: Keep it Fun

Magic and Keeping it Fun

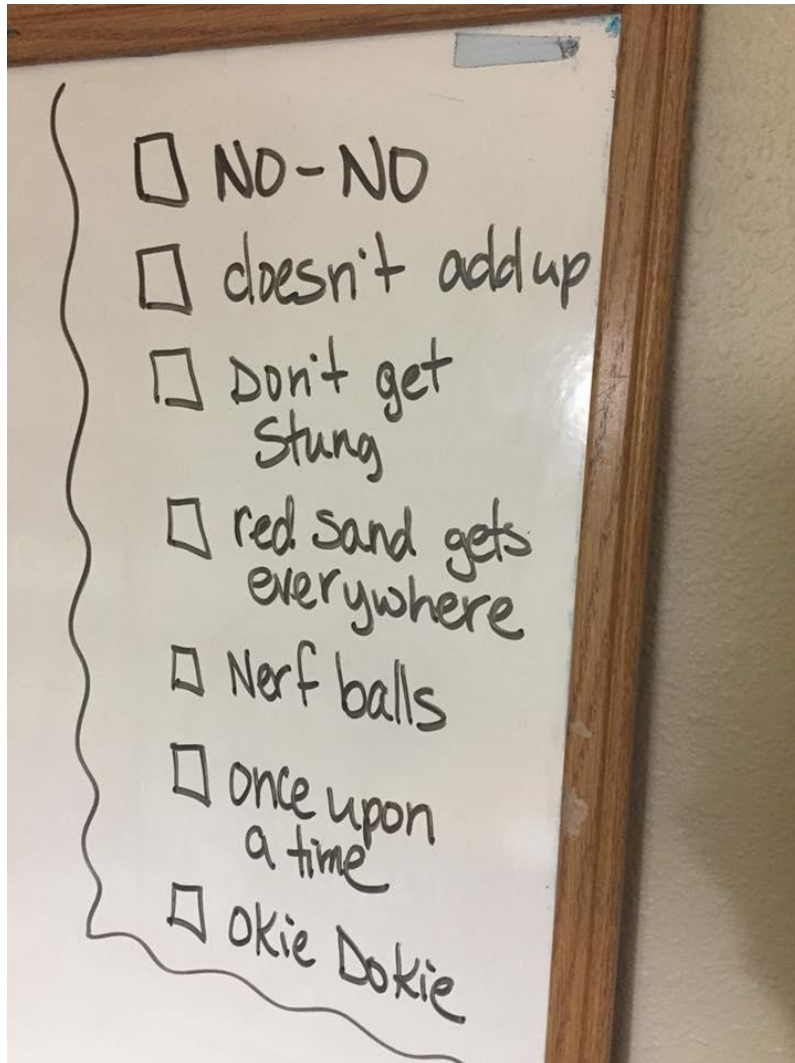


Can I tell you a story? (click)
Lessons from Daniel's Awesome Potion

Hidden in a glass jar filled with sludge...

- PE
- Scientific Method
- Communication
- Creative Writing

Magic and Keeping it Fun



Keep 'em guessing...

Not gonna tell you what everything meant. It's way too much fun to keep you guessing too.

I had over 3,000 moms guess and like my sons, no one got them all:)

But I'm not mean. [I did write about it here.](#)

Magic and Keeping it Fun



Lapbooks

Foldables

Powerpoints

Act it out

Read in the park, under the table, in a fort

Check out the 70 Creative Ways Mini eBook at the end.

Magic and Keeping it Fun

Doodling keeps your brain engaged:

After the Huddle:

- ❑ Email Bekki at abetterwaytohomeschool@gmail.com and let her know what she thought!
 - ❑ Be sure to ask for an invite for next free huddle!
- ❑ Did you take pictures of your kids in action? She'd love to see!!
- ❑ Bookmark the Homeschool Huddle Site:
<https://a-better-way-to-homeschool.teachable.com/p/homeschool-huddle>

Teaching with Littles eBook

Establishing a routine

FOUR Building Blocks to homeschooling
Success, even if you have no idea where
to begin!



Teaching with Littles
without losing your sanity

...even if you're
brand new to homeschooling or simply expanding your family

A BETTER WAY TO  HOMESCHOOL

what if we focus on character 

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Disclosure

This eBook/workbook contains links to other products or services that I have created for homeschoolers.

Thank you so much for supporting A Better Way to Homeschool in this way and partnering with me as we encourage homeschooling families in their journey together!

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No need to scroll! Click and go:)

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Relationships: Set your Foundation on the Rock

New homeschoolers are itching to get started. “Let’s learn to read, write, and solve some fancy math.”

The Lord says, “what does it profit if you gain the whole world, but lose your soul?”

From the very beginning, set your relationship priorities in order. Decide right now whom you will serve and order your life accordingly.

As a lover of Jesus and a believer in the Word of God my priorities are:

1. God
2. Hubby
3. Children
4. Home (including homeschooling)
5. Work
6. Ministry

As a believer, this is the not-so-secret key to sanity. When we keep our relationships in their proper places, we are able to see our days and weeks more clearly. When our Lord, husband and children are first, we can make decisions about what works for our family best.

I learned this lesson the painful way. I spent years with upside-down relationships and it always caused my days to melt into chaos.

Task:

Decide what your relationship priorities truly are from the core of your heart. Write them down and begin to filter your day through those relationship priorities

Routine

I remember watching my friend hold her 3-year old as she struggled. My friend calmly ignored her fits and kept right on chatting with me as our other kids played.

“We can’t always be home for naptime, so I am teaching her to fall asleep in my arms in different places,” she explained.

If you’ve never followed a strict sleep training routine, you may not realize how brilliant this is. I had been sleep training a few kids and I had a common challenge. My baby would fight, and wiggle, and scream at naptime if I didn’t lay him in his crib. He LOVED his bed and knew that once he was tired it was time to sleep. In English, that meant if I wasn’t near his crib, he wouldn’t sleep.

I learned the magic of routine from 4 homeschool moms who came to my home every Friday for “Friday prayer and play”. Each week, we’d come together from 12-4pm and our kids would eat, nap, and rotate through learning activities while the four of us enjoyed coffee, laughed, cried, and prayed.

Our collective 18 kids would eat and then the kids 5 and under would nap and the older kids would do storytime, and art activity or whatever the highly creative mom had organized.

It was amazing to watch and I quickly decided to simply duplicate their parenting... Because it was peaceful. Imagine having 18 children in a 1200 square foot house (mine) and laying down 8-10 littles for naptime without drama. (well, very little drama... they are real kids after all)

That is where I learned the power of routine.

Every family is different, but we all need the same categories of activities in our day:

- Eating
- Sleeping
- Quiet-time
- Creativing
- Working
- Busy Physical Activity

Routine

Task:

Study your family and identify the cycles of activities in your day.

	Time of day: weekday	Time of day: weekend
Eating		
Wake time		
Quiet-time Activities (Not naps)		
Creativing		
Working		
Busy Physical Activity		
Naps/quiet time		
Bedtime		

Routine

	Type of activity
6 am	
7 am	
8 am	
9 am	
10 am	
11 am	
12 pm	
1 pm	
2 pm	
3 pm	
4 pm	
5 pm	
6 pm	
7 pm	
8 pm	
9 pm	

Goals

I am target shooting an archer, not a hunter.

Like walk through the wood with a quiver on my hip, archer.

Can you imagine how dangerous it'd be for me to walk outside and simply shoot an arrow into a random direction? Plus, how could I gauge my accuracy unless I has a steady way to measure my progress?

Establishing master homeschool goals is one of the single greatest tips I can share with you.

I go into goals setting in depth in the [Heart of Homeschool God's Way Master Class](#) and in my book [A Better Way to Homeschool](#).

To get you started on the right track, you'll want to establish 4-7 master homeschooling goals. Not page numbers and curriculum, but

What do I want My kids to know by the time they graduate High school?

Task:

Grab your [Goal setting Printable](#) and start thinking and praying about your master homeschool goals.

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1FdaV_ISsva_cT4MJr9axjD5NLguAfpW0EvMi0NQl8XA/edit?usp=sharing

Keep it Fun and Memorable

Keep your eye on the goal.

We want our kids to be educated, right? We can fall victim to the pressure of making our kids perform academically though, rather than instilling in them a desire to learn, nurturing their minds to be problem solvers, and encouraging delight in exploring new ideas.

Yes, there's absolutely a time for sitting at a table and holding a pencil properly, but if they're little... Oh, Mama, please hear me...

If they're little, they need so much more than ABC's and 123's

Spend those first few years exploring, digging deep into things they love, and marinating them in experiences.

[Make it memorable](#) {Printable}

And become a student of your kids.

- What makes them sing, dance, and belly laugh?
- What causes frustration, confusion, and meltdowns?
- What books do they look at, or read, over and over and over and over?
- Where are their natural talents?

What makes your kids tick?

Curriculum

This is the smallest, most insignificant part of homeschooling, and yet it's where most of us begin.

We do hours of research online, ask all the homeschool moms we can find, “what are you using to teach math? Science? Language?”

“Are you a Charlotte Mason, fun-schooler, un-schooler, or _____-schooler?”

While these are all great questions, they cause new homeschooler, or mama's with littles to get lost in the weeds.

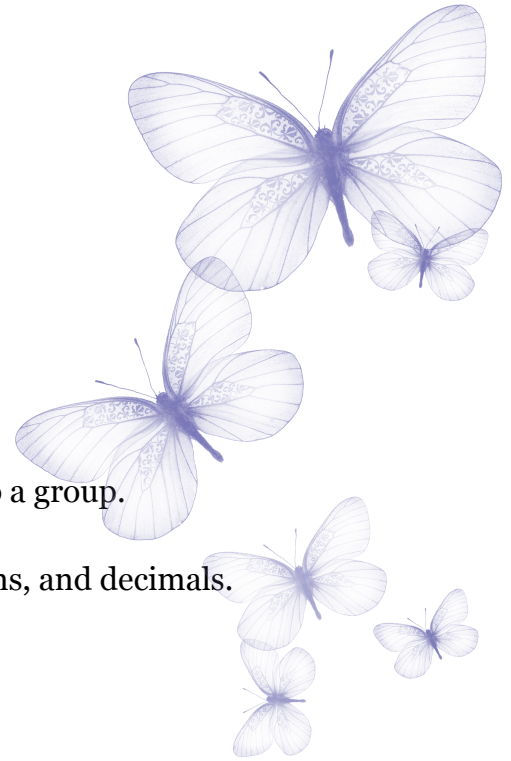
The beauty of focusing on the “**core four “pillars of your homeschooling foundation**” is that your vision clears a bit about curriculum.

- Relationships
- Routine
- Goals
- Experience based learning, and sometimes use curriculum

Once you KNOW your goal is teaching fundamental math fact, for example, you can close your eyes and think about what facts you already know inside out and start there. Curriculum is a great add-on, but doesn't need to be the center of how you teach math.

What if by the time you finish teaching your kids...

- ☐ They are **kind**.
- ☐ They are **confident**.
- ☐ They look people in the eye when spoken to.
- ☐ They **befriend** the new kids.
- ☐ They put down their phone when others are in the room.
- ☐ They are *strong and hard working*.
- ☐ They **know** how to cook, chop wood and change the oil on a car.
- ☐ They are compassionate and caring.
- ☐ They **LOVE to read** and devour the written word.
- ☐ They never text and drive
- ☐ They hunt down information when their interests are piqued.
- ☐ They can balance their checkbook and manage a budget.
- ☐ They can break down a project into a workable timeline.
- ☐ They can manage a calendar.
- ☐ They can create power point presentations and present their ideas to a group.
- ☐ They know **how to receive** instruction.
- ☐ They can add, subtract, multiply, and divide whole numbers, fractions, and decimals.
- ☐ They can measure accurately using various tools.
- ☐ They can take a disappointment in stride.
- ☐ They lose with dignity and **win with humility**.
- ☐ They pass on compliments (... "my dad taught me that")
- ☐ They can manage their own small business, like lawn care.
- ☐ They put things back where they found them.
- ☐ They acknowledge that a great team is worth its weight in gold.
- ☐ They master the art of harmony- working together blending talents and abilities for the greater good.
- ☐ They are **self-sacrificing** of their time.
- ☐ They are dependable in a time of need.
- ☐ They do not whine: when folding laundry, going on a million errands, or picking up dog poop.
- ☐ They are experts at something: art, music, design, gardening, physical fitness, writing, programming, etc.
- ☐ They can write legibly.
- ☐ They visit people in real life, talk to them in person on the phone, and text only when necessary.
- ☐ They value life and place the highest value on loving God and others.
- ☐ They are informed and involved in their community.
- ☐ They open doors for ladies, stand in the presence of their elders, and play with small children.
- ☐ They rejoice when **others** succeed.
- ☐ They run to do the right thing, even though they might be afraid.
- ☐ They know that there are only two kinds of information: things they already know and things they can learn.
- ☐ They are not afraid of learning hard things.
- ☐ They know the difference between needs and wants.
- ☐ They refuse to live in debt, but instead work hard and save.
- ☐ They are the first to volunteer and the last to leave when work needs to be done.
- ☐ They still love Jesus



More resources from me to you:)

Homeschooling can be overwhelming and a bit lonely for us, so I write via email 1-2 times a week to encourage us in our journey.

Join the coffee chat email list here:

<http://abetterwaytohomeschool.us1.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=26fb576ec0381fa76fbd64eaf&id=d7c057c8ec>

Bookmark this page on my website,

A Better Way to Homeschool because it's loaded with resources for you to read while nursing babies:).

<http://abetterwaytohomeschool.com/homeschool-tips>

Homeschool Handbook for Moms, even if you have no idea where to begin:

[A Better Way to Homeschool eBook](#)

Master Class for Homeschoolers who are tired of being overwhelmed by “how to homeschool”

[The Heart of Homeschooling God's Way](#)

Preschool:

[Preschool as easy as 1, 2, 3](#)

[How to homeschool your preschooler and kindergartener](#)

[The best List of delightful books for preschoolers and their parents](#)

70 Creative Ideas for Homeschool eBook



HOMESCHOOLING

WHEN

**ALL THE
KIDS
WANT TO DO**

IS JUMP

ON THE SOFA...

A BETTER WAY
TO HOMESCHOOL
what if we focus on character

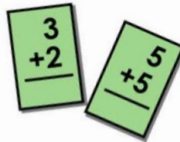
**70 Creative Ideas for Homeschool
Pencil and Paper NOT Required**

Make it Memorable

Use food	Buy an ant farm
Make recipes from the stories you read	dance
Share smells (kids love bad smells)	Learn chants to
Sing it	Make collage
Find songs from the time period in history	Play with Le directions
Share food from the time period in history	Play with color

Instead of Jumping on the Sofa...

Instead of this...	
Doing work with paper and pencil	Grab a dry
Completing a worksheet, figure out the "core" of the lesson	Do th
	Create a
	Jump r
	Hop
	Use a subtr
	Create



Writing math facts and doing math drills

Instead of Jumping on the Sofa...

Instead of this...	
	Have the kids...
	Act out the story as you read it aloud
	Simply listen to the story being read aloud
	Close the book at an exciting part
	Have them ask YOU questions about the story
	Create picture showing 3 favorite: characters, events, foods, places
	Write a mini-book and write descriptions of characters, setting, plot using only 10 words
	Great quotes from the book and use as copywork, dictation, or narration
	secretary. Write down their to your questions
	pet show to reenact the story
	news report about one of the

Instead of Jumping on the Sofa...

Instead of this...	
	Have the kids...
	Use a highlighter for find examples on a newspaper or magazine page
	Cut and paste examples from old magazines
	Point out that word, or word type, sentence type in your read-aloud
	Create a word search using keywords from the lesson
	Redesign their grammar lesson
	Draw the lesson
	Create the lesson out of clay/play doh
	Sing a song (this is why YouTube was invented)
	Read a story about the concept (Ruth the teller?)
	Create a word web
	the lesson with dry erase markers on window or mirror
	Write a recipe while watching out for examples that demonstrate today's concept
	Index cards, label things around your
	Write a grammar scavenger hunt in their story/mail



**HOMESCHOOLING
WHEN
ALL THE
KIDS
WANT TO DO
IS JUMP
ON THE SOFA...**

A BETTER WAY
TO HOMESCHOOL
what if we focus on character

**70 Creative Ideas for Homeschool
Pencil and Paper NOT Required**

**Want a
FREE
copy?**

Make it Memorable

We all want to be that fun, creative, amazing homeschool mom.

Sometimes we're just too darned exhausted and overwhelmed to come up with more than

- Sit down
- Be quiet
- Do this assignment neatly.

That's where community comes in.

I had learned about Native American grinding stones from a homeschool mentor of mine, and fully intended to organize a field trip to go see them...

But that didn't happen.

Instead, On a whim and **in a moment of desperation**, I had the boys bake cookies and we hopped in the car. I knew we'd implode if we tried to finish our day in a typical school-like way.

I didn't tell them where we were going or what we were doing.

All they knew was the had warm cookies and I grabbed the "boring book".

When we arrived, they excitedly explored.

We talked, they guessed, and we marveled at the work of the people who once lived within 10 minutes of our home.

When I pulled out the "boring book" they enjoyed cookies, ground acorns, and listened with eagerness.

It was a homeschool grand slam.

To make homeschooling memorable:

- Be a collector of ideas and locations of interest within a few minutes of your home.
- Collect materials and keep a stash of fun art supplies
- Think, "how can I have the kids see, hear, touch, smell and taste this topic?"
- Experience first, then teach. This is golden homeschooling advice. I am forever thankful for to the teacher who taught me that skill...

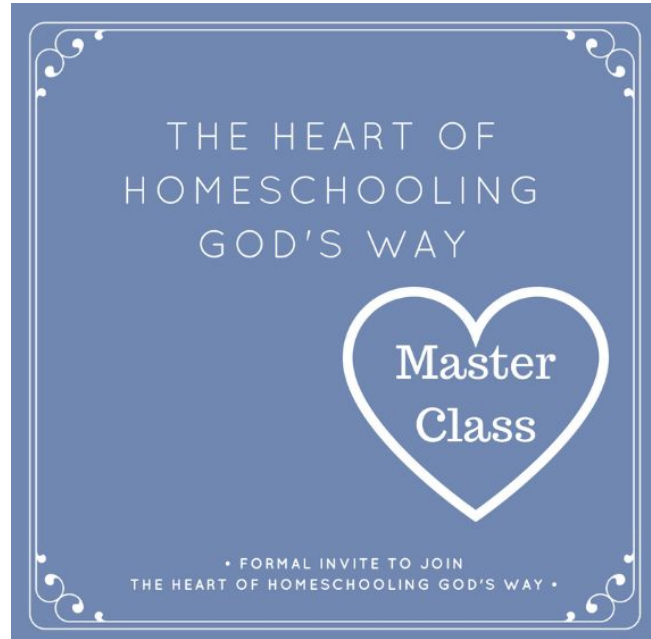
Looking for a community of homeschool moms to glean ideas?

- Join us at [Our Lives as Homeschool Moms](#) (on Facebook)
- [Homeschool Huddle](#) (subscription group)

A BETTER WAY TO HOMESCHOOL

what if we focus on character 

More Homeschooling Resources From [A Better Way to Homeschool](#)



70 Creative Ideas for Homeschool
Pencil and Paper NOT Required

I am not against paper and pencil.

Being able to sit and complete a lesson is an important life skill for most of our kids to master between the ages of 8-18. Every child is different.

Don't let the **core of an assignment** or the **joy of childhood** cause you to pull your hair out.

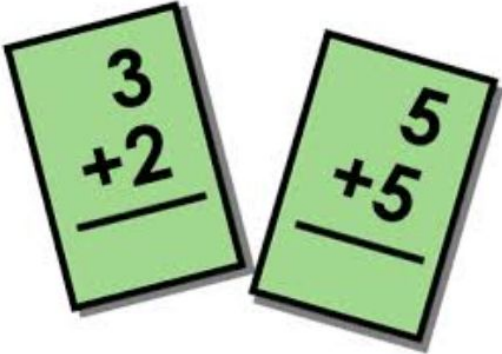
It's normal for kids to want to play, act-it-out, jump, run, hop, explore.

Instead of requiring them to sit still and write neatly, embrace this side of childhood.



Ditch the pencil and paper and try to get your kids to approach the core concept a different way.

- Use as many senses as possible.
- Get creative! How can they sing, dance, draw, feel, hear, taste, and explore the idea of the lesson.
- Use paper and pencil as a last resort on those “jumping on the sofa” days, or better yet, try again tomorrow...


Instead of Jumping on the Sofa...

Instead of this...	Have the kids...
Doing work with paper and pencil	Grab a dry erase marker and do work on windows or mirrors
Completing a worksheet, figure out the "core" of the lesson	Do their work on a whiteboard
 <p>Writing math facts and doing math drills</p>	Create a long hopscotch and "jump their facts"
	Jump rope while reciting math facts
	Hop on one foot and skip count
	Use a deck of cards and flip and add, subtract, multiply, divide, fractions.
	Create representations of math facts with Legos, beans, or blocks
	Math Wraps
	Do "one breath math": take a deep breath and recite as many math facts as possible with one breath
	Read a math story
	Create a math foldable
	Sing a math song
	Go on a math walk. Bring flashcards and complete a few cards every 50 feet
	Play a game

Instead of Jumping on the Sofa...

Instead of this...	Have the kids...
 <p>Reading and answering questions on paper</p>	Act out the story as you read it aloud
	Simply listen to the story being read aloud
	Close the book at an exciting part
	Have them ask YOU questions about the story
	Create picture showing 3 favorite: characters, events, foods, places
	Create a mini-book and write descriptions of characters, setting, plot using only singles words
	Grab great quotes from the book and use them as copywork, dictation, or narration
	Be their secretary. Write down their answers to your questions
	Do a puppet show to reenact the story
	Do a mock news report about one of the characters
	Create text messages between two characters
<p>A BETTER WAY TO HOMESCHOOL</p> 	Create a food that represents the reading
	Find songs that would make a good movie score for the story or “documentary if it’s non-fiction

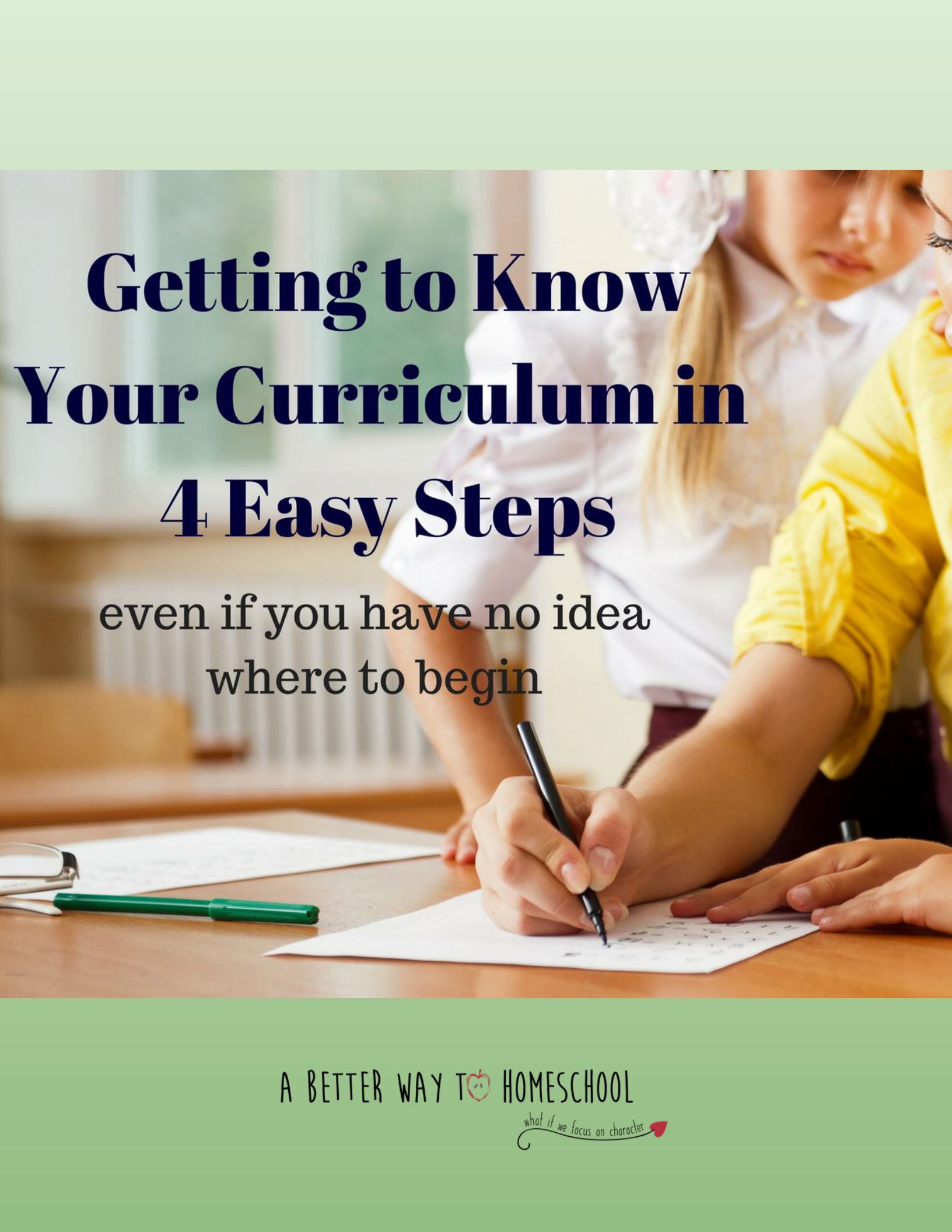
Instead of Jumping on the Sofa...

Instead of this...	Have the kids...
 <p>Doing a grammar worksheet: You study the concept, then...</p>	Use a highlighter to find examples on a newspaper or magazine page
	Cut and paste examples from old magazines
	Point out that word, or word type, sentence type in your read-aloud
	Create a word search using keywords from the lesson
	Redesign their grammar lesson
	Draw the lesson
	Create the lesson out of clay/play doh
	Sing a song (this is why YouTube was invented)
	Read a story about the concept (Ruth Heller?)
	Create a word web
	Do the lesson with dry erase markers on the window or mirror
	Cook a recipe while watching out for phrases that demonstrate today's concept
	Using index cards, label things around your home
	Go on a grammar scavenger hunt in their favorite story/mall

Make it Memorable...

Use food	Buy an ant farm
Make recipes from the stories you read	dance
Share smells (kids love bad smells)	Learn chants to help you learn
Sing it	Make collages
Find songs from the time period in history	Play with Legos, before you follow directions
Share food from the time period in history	Play with blocks, before you group them by color
Involve kids in making food and talk about reactions (science)	Play with toys, before you learn to classify
Have kids double recipes (math)	Grab a brown bag and go on an exploring walk. Pick up cool things
Notice food is powerful: I have five boys, I know!	Put a letter, sound, or number in your minds and try to find them all day
Go to the beach and hunt for shells, before you learn about mollusks	Rhyme as often as you can for one whole day
Go to the zoo and make faces at the apes before you write a paper about them	Learning about pirates? Talk like pirates all day, me hearties.
Go sailing before learning about tacking	Color, paint, mold what you are learning
Ride roller coasters before you talk about physics	Watch a movie about what you will learn
Ride a boogie board before learning about wave mechanics	Watch a movie about what you just learned
Get a butterfly garden	<i>*Embrace glitter!! Embrace food! Embrace Music!! Embrace Fun!!</i>

BONUS Resources



Getting to Know Your Curriculum in 4 Easy Steps

even if you have no idea
where to begin

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No need to scroll! Click and go:)

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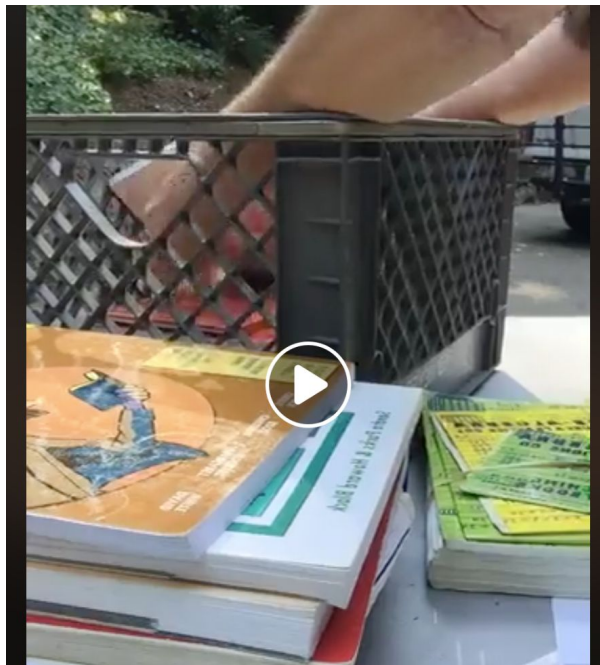
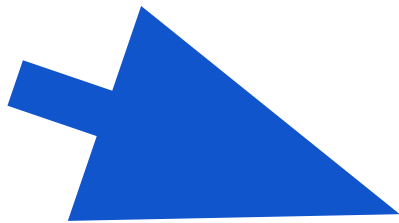
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Want to watch me go through this process?

I unpacked a math curriculum LIVE on our facebook page and unedited so you could see me go through the steps myself.



<https://www.facebook.com/ABetterWayToHomeschool/videos/2551166131567535/>

You are sitting in front of your kid's homeschool curriculum. Now what?

Whether you bought a prepackaged kit, pulled resources from the library, or received a hand-me-down box of goodies, the feeling are the same for most of us:

- ☐ Excitement. The fantasies about how amazing the next homeschool year will be float around in our peach colored mind.
- ☐ Nervousness. Can I really teach all these subjects without messing up my child's education?
- ☐ Overwhelm. Wow, where do I start?
- ☐ Panic. Forget it, this is way too hard
- ☐ Resolve. "I guess I need to figure this out all on my own."

In the first couple years of homeschooling, I learned a trick that's helped me get familiar with a new curriculum. Find it's core and create a plan of attack to teach.

Each step is meant to be done in a session, either over a few hours, or spread out over a few days/weeks depending on difficulty.

One subject and level at a time.

First things first.

- Creating a learning plan takes time.
- Understanding curriculum (or learning materials) takes time.
- Schedule "planning sessions" into your week
 - Master planning for a few weeks before beginning school (in hour bursts, a few days a week)
 - Ongoing planning throughout the school year every 1-6 weeks depending on your experience, learning style and number of kids

I personally spend a few weeks in the summer reviewing our goals and learning materials to find the vision for the school year: themes, basic course goals, etc.

- Understand curriculum
- Search for creative add-ons, activities, and field trips
- Map out six weeks of school at a time

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The following steps can be used for any grade, any curriculum, any subject.

For the sake of being easy to follow, I am going to use a boxed curriculum as our example.

Follow each step:

- ☐ For each subject
- ☐ For each level

Materials needed to plan out a school year

- Master goals
- Teaching materials, books, or curriculum
- Paper
- Post-its
- Imagination
- glitter:)
- Lesson planner
- Student Planner
- Organizational system (example. Hanging files)

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Step One

- ☐ Unpack curriculum and dig for the core piece, usually a text book or main student workbook.
- ☐ Place everything else aside
- ☐ Open main text to the **table of contents**.

Things to note:

- ☐ How many Chapters or Units?
- ☐ Read the chapter titles
 - ☐ What do you already know?
 - ☐ Place post-it notes on chapters you need to study
- ☐ Take note of how you feel (you want to identify any negative attitudes YOU may have toward a subject)
 - ☐ Do you understand the subject?
 - ☐ Is it something you enjoy?
 - ☐ Do you need to learn?
- ☐ Repeat with each subject and grade. You can do this step all in one power session or spread out over a few days.
- ☐ Take a break. Let your mind think about just the general overview of topics for a day or two (or more)

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Step Two

- ❑ Do NOT look deeper into the curriculum!
- ❑ Take a second look at the Table of Contents
- ❑ Copy the "Ways to Explore" worksheet (One for each Unit or chapter for each subject)
- ❑ Get Creative! Do a fast brainstorm and search for activities that go along with each chapter's main topic.
- ❑ Search for 1-4 extension activities to approach the topic with food, art, music, etc...

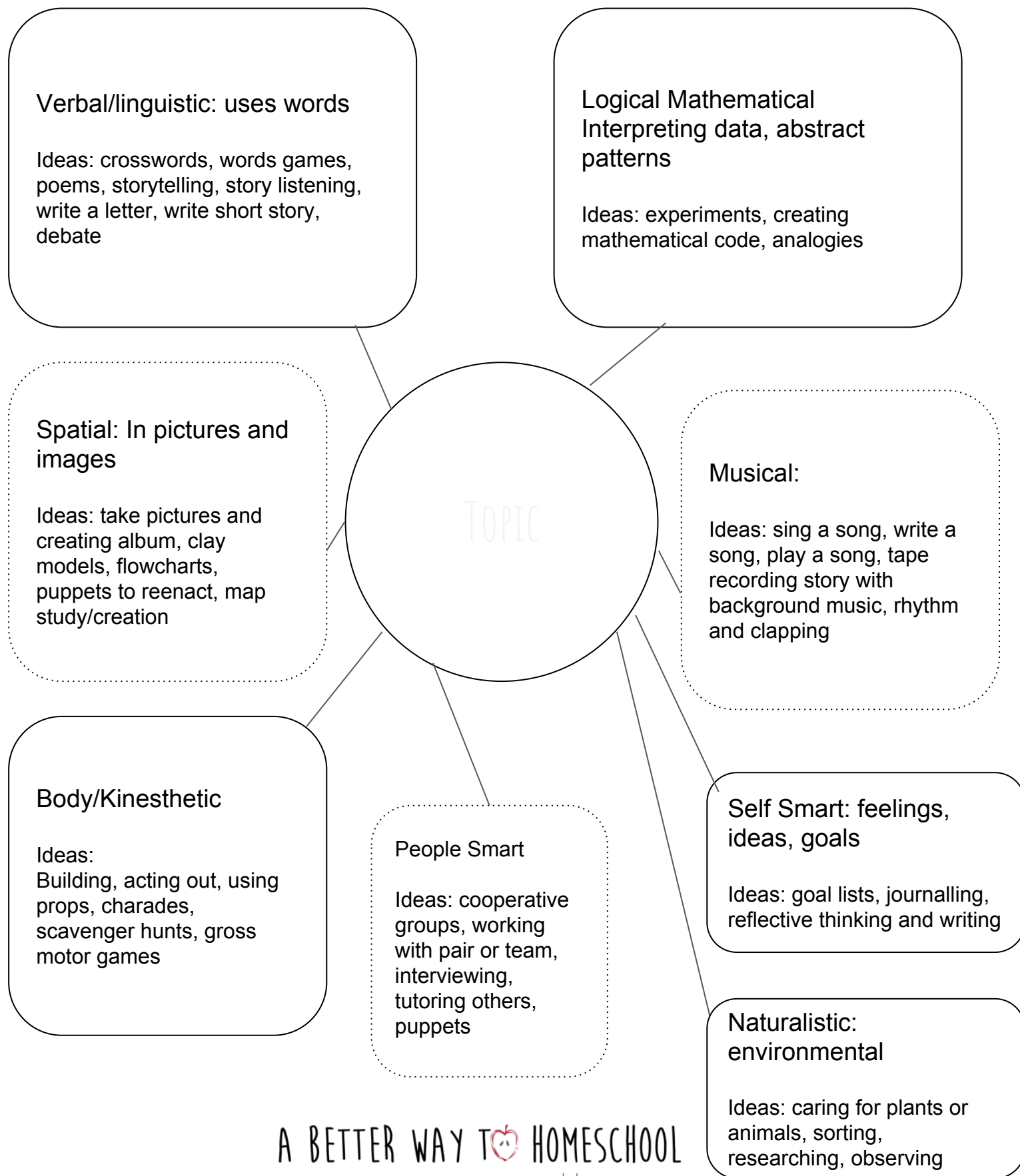
Multiple intelligences are some of the ways we can approach learning and processing information. If you really want to have a solid understanding of a subject, it helps to explore it from different angles and with "different intelligences".

This can be a very time consuming step. Take your time, work in several bursts rather than trying to do everything in one sitting.

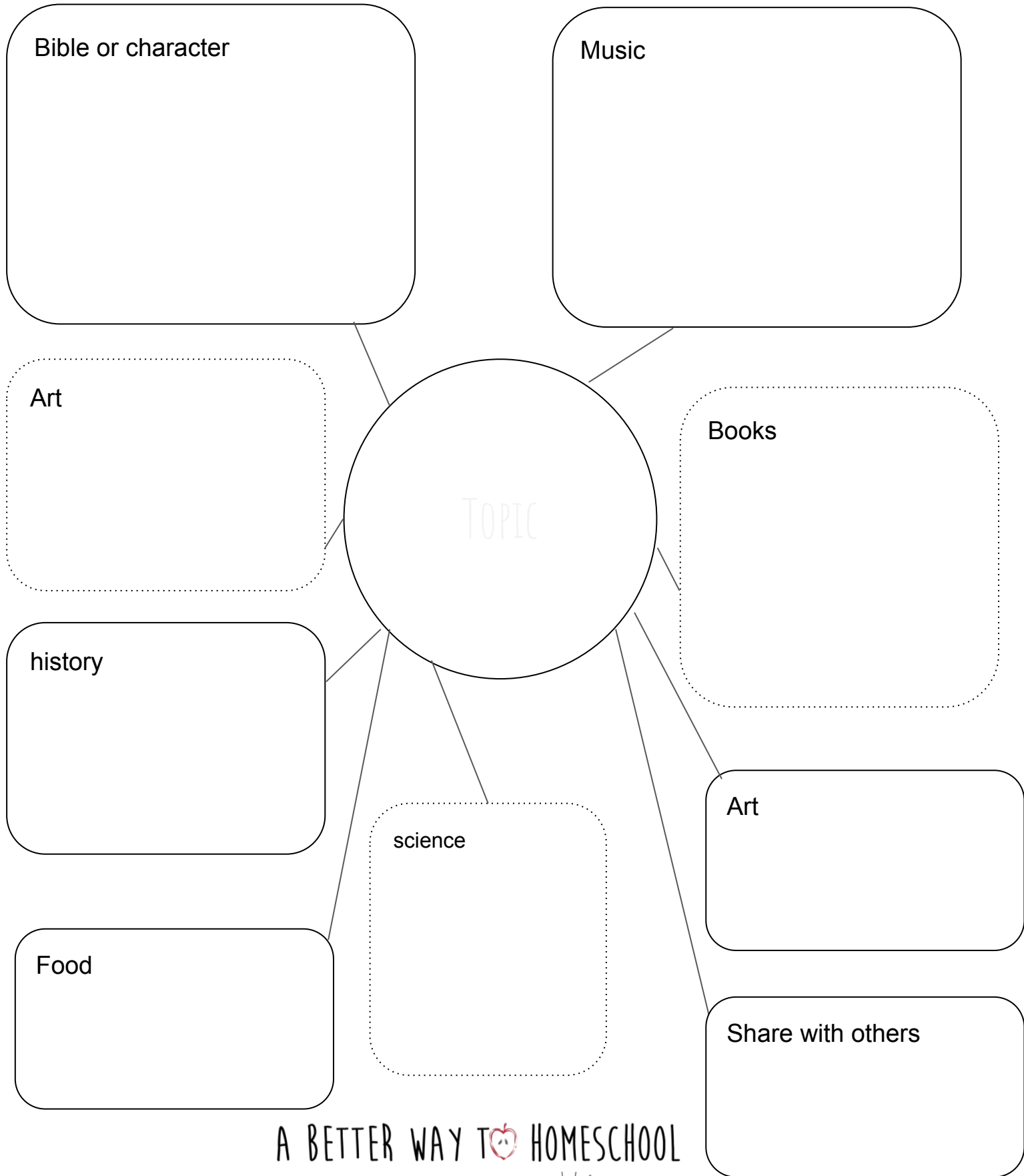
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Different Intelligences: the way we learn



Ways to explore



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Step Three

Organization for step 4

You're gonna need a way to store and organize your 2-6 weeks of ideas.

This is a highly personal activity. What works for me, may not for you.

One of my favorites is to get a crate/bin/drawer with hanging files. This is a good place to start while you search for a system that works for you.

- ☐ Add 35-40 hanging folders to the file.
- ☐ Label the first file "lesson planner"
- ☐ Label the next files 1-31. Those are your days of the month (March 4th would be file #4, etc)
- ☐ Label the last folders according to your subjects: Bible, math, language, history, science, art, etc.
- ☐ Label a folder Notebooking templates!
- ☐ As you gather activities, you will be able to place them into the correct day.

The goal for this step is to pick and choose activities and resources for each subject's "unit" or chapter.

The more you do this, the easier it becomes.

The boring, dull, and sometimes very necessary way to approach a chapter is simply to do the next lesson. If you're in a season of, just turn the page and do that... serve yourself some grace. Fantastic teachers gather activities and materials over the course of many years through trial and error, ditching what failed and keeping what works.

That's a side benefit of having a quiver full of sons, I've collected activities, lesson and ideas by watching what works and failed with the older boys and making adjustments for the next son.

Work on each subject, one at a time and decide how you want to teach that topic. If you need help, crack open the book to that lesson! *****This is the first time you should look at the book!! If you peek too soon, the creative side of your brain cripples itself.***

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Step Four

Fill up your lesson planner, files, and student planners! 2-6 weeks at a time.

I ALWAYS begin with math, because in the planners it's simply, "lesson 1, lesson 2, lesson 3..."

As the kids grew, I began having them fill in their planner.

I use my teacher's planner as a record keeper of sorts:

- ☐ I always plan in pencil, because... LIFE
- ☐ I write the least amount possible at first, and then journal what we complete as the days roll by.

Student planners: Since one of our goals is to teach the kids how to be organized, we teach them to run their school day by a planner.

- ☐ I fill in my kids planners for them until they are old enough to do it themselves (It's varied for every son, usually by high school)
- ☐ I guide my kids as they write in their goals and assignments, two-four weeks at a time
- ☐ Every Monday, we have a meeting to discuss what's on everyone's plate: school, worship practice, friends, doctor's, etc... A calendar sync.

I try to

- plan in pencil in 6 week chunks
- Look for activities and "fun" things to enrich a lesson weeks in advance
- Give myself a break. Life seems to catch up to me every year and we do less fun than I'd care to confess, but the key is to plan in advance... The more activities I find, or have the kids find, the more I am drawn away from traditional read and answer the question type learning.
- When in doubt, I grab a notebooking template for the kids to use.

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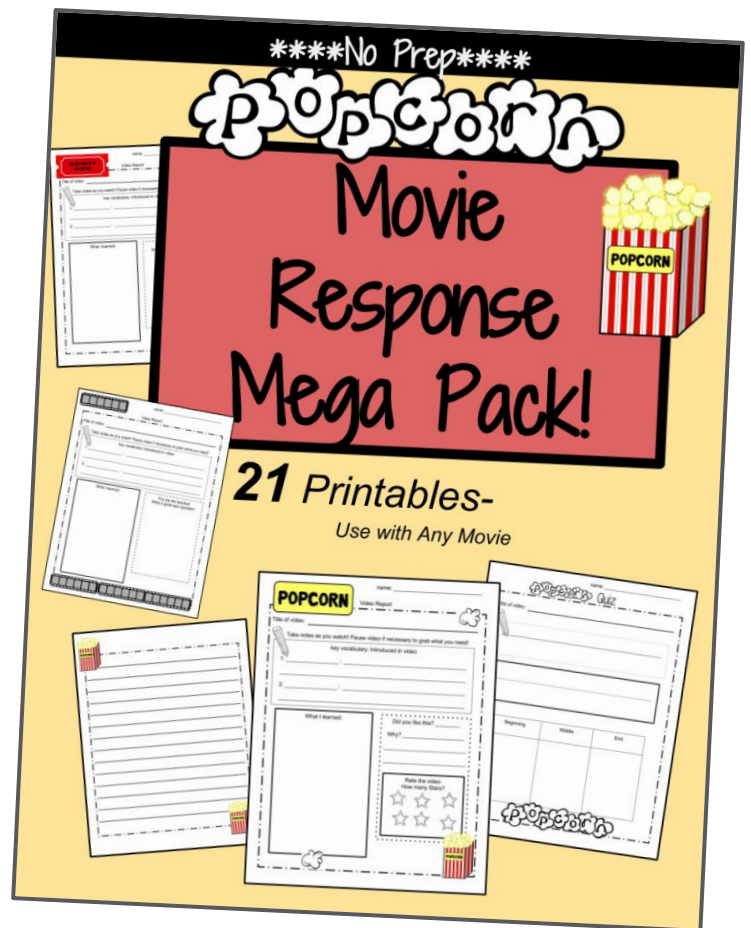
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Notebooking

I love creating journal learning where the kids read, watch or listen and then record what they've learned into fun journal pages.

Something magic happens when kids suddenly become captains of their education, and notebooking did that for my own kids.

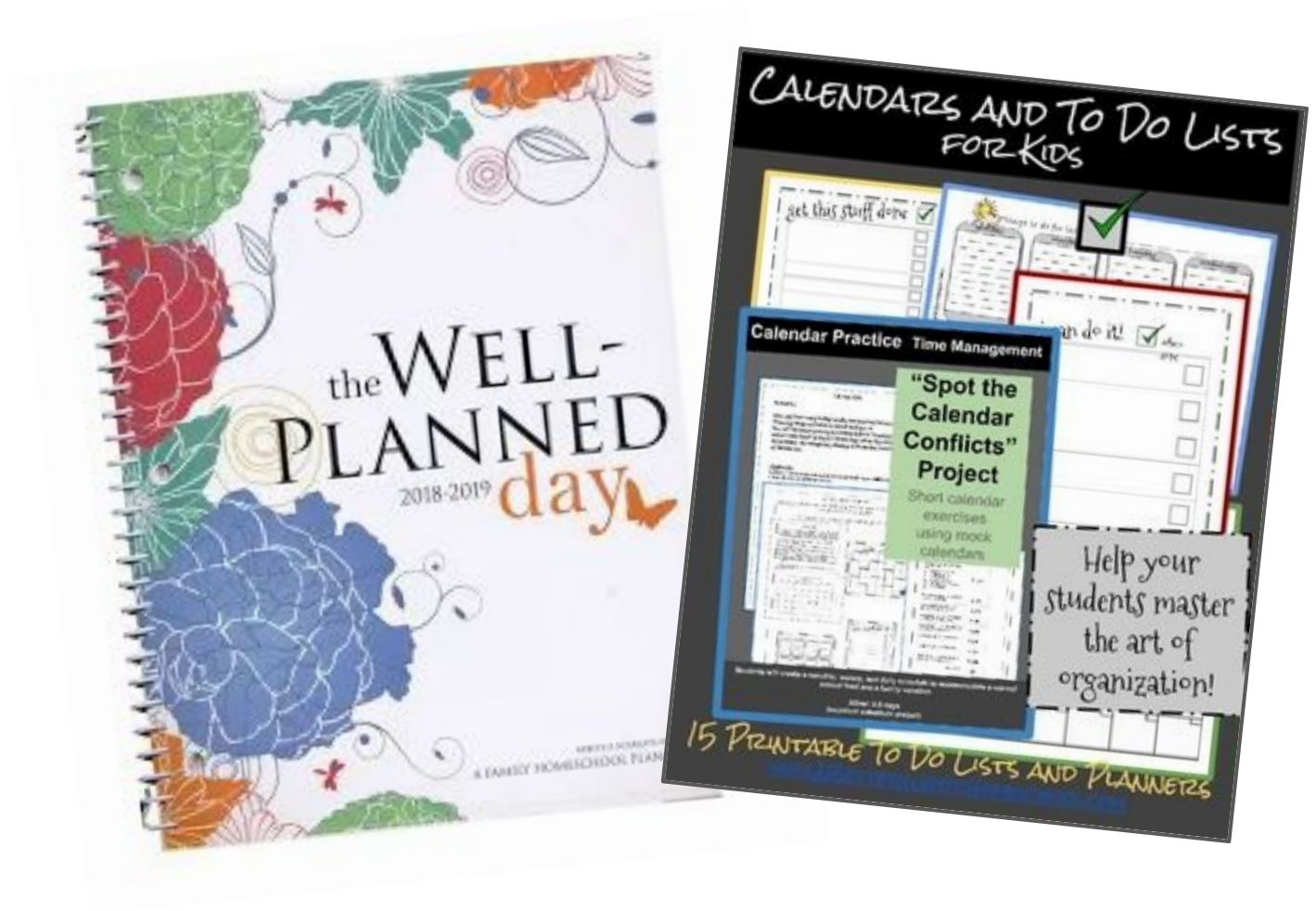
Click on each image to learn more.



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Planners



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