

# CSTHEA quick-start guide 2018

*At the expo, please seek out the ladies wearing the silk flowers if you have questions. These are veteran homeschool moms that are willing to help you.*

## To-do list for Home Education Expo

### **1. Register with a church-related school.**

- Aaron Academy (booth 143-145 )
- Homelife Academy – (booth 165-168)
- Gateway Christian Schools (booth 22-23)

These three church-related schools are represented at the Home Education Expo. Talk with their representatives to find the church-related school you prefer. The church-related schools can answer questions regarding Tennessee laws, record keeping, grading and curriculum choices. You have the option of registering with the superintendent of schools, but we don't recommend that option. Despite what you may have been told, Tennessee law does not require registering with the superintendent. The differences among the church-related schools include geographical areas they cover, local presence, cost, testing requirements and whether they offer online reporting and record keeping among others.

There are other church related schools that are not at our expo. You can find a more complete list at [MTHEA.org](http://MTHEA.org) or at [THEA.org](http://THEA.org)

**2. Visit the HSLDA booth.** The Home School Legal Defense Association is one you should join. You can receive a nice discount on the HSLDA membership if you are a member of THEA or registered with a church-related school. At the HSLDA booth you will find helpful getting-started guides. You can find them in booth 130-131 or online at [hsllda.org](http://hsllda.org) – loads of helpful resources at the quick navigation bar including special needs, pre-school, struggling learner, state laws

**3. Attend a helpful workshop.** There is a complete listing of workshops available in your expo brochure. Possible workshops to consider if you are getting started with younger children and some for getting started with high school are:

Friday —

**4. Look for an email inviting you to opt in to our new digital Esprit Newsletter.** Our free newsletter will keep you informed of issues, events, provide some inspiration, and keep you connected to our community. After you opt in, it will arrive in your inbox 9 times

a year at no cost.

**5. Sign the new to homeschooling list.** We will contact you if there is a meeting organized. Be sure to check the "need support" box if you do not have someone helping you get started.

## Different approaches to homeschooling

### Traditional Textbook/Workbook Approach

This approach uses textbooks and workbooks. Examples of curriculum using this method would be Abeka, (booths 41-45, 62-66) Bob Jones (booths 89 - 91, 110-112) Rod and Staff (booths 24-27), Alpha Omega (booths 143-146, 148- 151), Landmark Freedom (booths 35-36) and ACE (booths 53-55, 74-76). Some questions to ask yourself before trying this approach are listed below.

Did my child perform well in a classroom?

Does my child like to complete assignments and to have defined goals?

Will my child complete assigned tasks with a minimum of prodding from me?

Am I the kind of person who will follow through with the lesson plans and pace of the course of instructions?

Does my child read well and have good comprehension skills?

Can my child work well independently?

Does my child learn without a lot of variety to the teaching materials?

#### **Strengths of the Textbook/Workbook Approach**

Everything is laid out for ease of use

Follows a standardized scope and sequence

Has a definite milestone of accomplishments

Testing and assigning grades is easy to do

#### **Weakness of the Textbook/Workbook Approach**

Is geared to the generic child. Does not take into account individual learning styles, strengths and weakness, or interest

Is teacher directed and seatwork oriented

Expensive when teaching multiple children

## Classical approach

Based on three stages of learning called the trivium. The first stage (the Grammar Stage) covers early elementary ages and focuses on reading, writing, and spelling; the study of Latin; and developing observation, listening and memorization skills. The second stage (the Dialectic Stage) covers middle school ages and teaches logical

discussion, debate, and how to draw correct conclusions and support them with facts.

The final stage (the Rhetoric Stage) covers high school and seeks to produce a student who can use language, both written and spoken, eloquently and persuasively. Examples

of curriculum using this method would be *The Omnibus* by Veritas Press, *The Well Trained Mind* by Susan Wise Bauer, and *Teaching the Trivium: Christian Homeschooling in a Classical Style* by Harvey and Laurie Bluedorn. You may want to check out local groups such as Veritas or Classical Conversations (booths 39-40). Some questions to ask yourself before trying this approach are listed below.

Does my family like to read good literature?

Are my children intellectually oriented and comfortable with a rigorous academic approach?

Am I a learner? Am I comfortable learning alongside my children so I can teach them things I never studied?

Do I like to study and discuss ideas that **have influenced civilization**?

**Strengths of the Classical Approach**

Teaches thinking skills and verbal/written expression

Creates self learners

Has produced great minds throughout history

**Weakness of the Classical Approach**

Requires a scholarly teacher and student

May overemphasize ancient disciplines and classics

## The unit study approach

This approach takes a theme or topic and delves into it deeply over a period of time, integrating language arts, science, social studies, math, and fine arts as they apply. Some examples of curriculum using this method would be Amanda Bennett, *Five in a Row*, *KONOS*, and Valerie Bendt. Some questions to ask yourself before trying this approach are listed below.

Am I a creative person?

Do I like trying to make everything interesting and fun?

Do my children have a variety of interest and learning styles?

Can I live with the fact that there may be “gaps” in my children’s education?

Do I have the time and energy to be the driving, creative force behind the development of units?

**Strengths of the Unit Study Approach**

All ages can learn together

Children can delve as deeply or as lightly into a subject as they like

The family’s interest can be pursued

Students get the whole picture

Intense study of one topic is the more natural way to learn

**Weakness of the Unit Study Approach**

It is easy to leave educational “gaps”

Hard to assess the level of learning occurring

Record keeping may be difficult

Prepared unit study curricula can be expensive

Do it yourself unit studies require planning

Too many activity-oriented unit studies may cause burn-out of the teacher and student

Subjects that are hard to integrate into the unit may be neglected

## Literature-based approach

Uses study guides and classic children's literature. An example of curriculum using this method would be Sonlight, or Tapestry of Grace. Some questions to ask yourself before trying this approach are listed below.

Does our family like to read, both alone and together through reading aloud?

Am I comfortable with more of a "free form" approach to learning?

Do I trust my children to learn on their own?

Strengths of the Literature-Based Approach

Exposes children to a wide variety of books

Encourages curiosity, creative thinking, and a love of learning

3. Eliminates meaningless tasks, busywork

Weakness of the Literature-Based Approach

Time consuming

Can be difficult to stick to the schedule

Sometimes hard to find books

Prepackaged curriculum including all the pre-selected books can be expensive

## Living book or Charlotte Mason approach

Mason's approach to academics was to teach basic reading, writing, and math skills, then expose children to the best sources of knowledge for all other subjects. This meant giving children experience like nature walks, observing and collecting wildlife; visiting art museums; and reading real books with "living ideas." She called such books "living books" because they made the subjects "come alive" unlike textbooks that tend to be dry and dull and assume the reader cannot think for him/herself. Some examples of curriculums and resources using this method would be Amblesideonline.org, CMI's The Alveary, SimplyCharlotteMason.com, Charlotte Mason: a Study Guide by Penny Gardner, Charlotte Mason Companion by Karen Andreola, and Charlotte Mason Education by Catherine Levison. Locally there is a Charlotte Mason support group, yahoo group (CMersinTN) and Chattanooga Charlotte Mason Facebook group. Exhibitors who feature this method are Simply Charlotte Mason (177-180). Some questions to ask yourself before trying this approach are listed below.

Does our family like to read both alone and together through reading aloud?

Am I comfortable with more of a "free form" approach to learning?

Will I follow through with exposing my children firsthand to nature, music, and to great art?

**Strengths of the Living Books or Charlotte Mason Approach**

Stresses formation of good character and habits

Exposes children to real objects and books instead of interactions with distilled information

Encourages curiosity, creative thinking, and a love of learning

Eliminates meaningless tasks, busywork

### **Weakness of the Living Books or Charlotte Mason Approach**

May neglect higher level studies because of emphasis on art, literature, and nature study

May become too eclectic

May not provide enough structure if you are geared that way

Other options

If you are not comfortable teaching a particular subject, you can seek out the assistance

of groups such as classes, co-ops or tutorials listed on the service page of Esprit newsletter. Tutorials represented at this expo are Hilger Higher Learning (booth 141), Classical Conversations (booths 39-40), Michaels Homeschool (booth 169), and Hamill Homeschool and Tutoring (math – booth 139). There are also booths that offer art, music, sports and other classes to meet specific needs.

\*\*\* Much of the information in the Learning Styles section of this guide was taken from the Elijah Co. catalog. Special thanks to the Elijah Co. (now defunct) for letting us reprint the information. \*\*\*

## Helpful websites for getting started

**<http://www.thehomeschoolmom.com>**

Here is a great place to get started. Very comprehensive with excellent pre-school advice.

Theteachinghome.com has lots of articles on getting started as well.

**<http://www.successful-homeschooling.com/>**

This website is comprehensive, well organized website that gives some good answers to the questions, “Why homeschool?” “How do I start homeschooling?” and “Where can I find the best homeschool resources?” She has sections on getting organized, saving money, working at home, and finding support. She also offers a free e-book

**<http://www.csthea.org/>**

This is the website for CSTHEA. It is a great site that will keep you up to date on what is happening in the realm of CSTHEA, which stands for Chattanooga Southeast Tennessee Home Education Association. This will include information on Events & Activities such as graduation, yearbook, Sports, and the annual Home Education Expo. It includes resources such as support group information and homeschool services.

## Helpful books

How to Homeschool: A Practical Approach, by Gayle Graham  
The Ultimate Guide To Homeschooling, by Debra Bell  
Choosing & Using Curriculum, by Joyce Herzog  
The Way They Learn, by Cynthia Tobias  
Educating the Whole Hearted Child, by Clay & Sally Clarkson  
Charlotte Mason Companion, by Karen Andreola  
100 Top Picks For Homeschooling Curriculum, by Cathy Duffy  
So You're Thinking About Homeschooling, by Lisa Whelchel  
Homeschooling the Early Years, by Linda Dobson  
The First Year of Homeschooling Your Child, by Linda Dobson  
The Ultimate Book of Homeschooling Ideas, by Linda Dobson  
The Successful Homeschool Family Handbook, by Raymond and Dorothy Moore  
For the Children's Sake, by Susan Schaeffer Macaulay  
Homeschooling for the Rest of Us, by Sonya Haskins

## Phonics

Simple —

Alpha Phonics, by Sam Blumenfeld  
Teach your Child to Read in 100 Easy Lessons

Delightful Reading, by Sonya Shafer  
Getting Ready for the Code  
Bob books  
Phonics Pathways  
Teach a Child to Read with Children's Books by Mark Thogmartin  
The Ordinary Parents Guide to Reading, by Jessie Wise Bauer

More Involved —

Sing, Spell, Read and Write  
The Writing Road to Reading by Romalda Spalding  
Phonics Museum by Veritas Press  
For dyslexia — All About Reading  
A more complete list and reviews are available at [cathyduffyreviews.com](http://cathyduffyreviews.com).

## Help after expo

- Join the CSTHEA fb page, our online community, or other local homeschool fb pages
- Join a support group and attend parent meetings. Support groups are listed in the Esprit newsletter. Free copies of current issue available at CSTHEA table
- To learn even more about the homeschooling method you have chosen, do a Web search on that style or that particular curriculum or fb page or group search.

- If you need more support, check that column on the sign up sheet and leave you email address. If we plan a getting started meeting, you will be contacted. Most support groups can help you find a mentor.
- Go through all the books and materials you purchased and get organized. There are many homeschool planners on the market.
- Chattanooga is remarkable for all the venues, clubs, organizations and attractions that cater to home educators — the zoo, aquarium, Children’s Discovery Museum, Hunter Art Museum. Look on their websites for options for homeschooling.
- Consider joining a local Yahoo group with veteran moms and new-to-homeschooling moms. On the Yahoo group page, do a search for the following names:
  - CHEF — Chattanooga Home Ed Fellowship
  - HomeschoolFunTN-GA
  - CMers in TN (Charlotte Mason)

NOTES: