

Conventional Method

Systematic: Following a standardized scope and sequence

- Each subject taught individually using textbooks, workbooks, worksheets, correspondence programs or online courses
- Highly structured
- Requires less preparation time for the parent-teacher; may take less time for the student

Unit Study

Integrated: all subjects are covered while studying one topic

- Utilizes hands-on projects, experiential learning, dramatization and “real” books
- Enhances knowledge retention, giving a broader understanding of a subject
- Facilitates teaching several grade levels simultaneously

RESOURCE

How to Create Your Own Unit Study, Valerie Bendt

Learning Lifestyle

Eclectic: a lifestyle developed around a family’s educational pursuits

Over time, experienced homeschoolers find the lines blurred between “school” and “home.”

RESOURCE

The Simplicity of Homeschooling, Vicky Goodchild

Unschooling

Unstructured: children learn naturally following their curiosity and interests

- Provides a rich learning environment including books and other resources
- Formal teaching is pursued as the need arises

RESOURCES

Learning All the Time, John Holt
Homeschooling for Excellence, David and Micki Colfax

Classical Method

Progressive: following natural stages of mental development with rigorous, systematic study

- Follows the classical pattern of The Trivium (language-focused rather than image-focused; all knowledge interrelated)
- Grammar stage (K-5): observing, listening and memorizing facts
- Logic stage (6-8): organizing, analyzing and debating with supporting facts
- Rhetoric stage (9-12): developing and expressing conclusions in both written and oral form

RESOURCES

The Well Trained Mind, Susan Wise Bauer

Rediscovering the Lost Tools of Learning, Doug Wilson

Charlotte Mason

Gentle: balancing “masterly inactivity” and direct teaching

- Education through firsthand experiences and observations -- museums, nature walks, play and exploration
- Reading great literature rather than textbooks
- Child narration to develop understanding, retention and self-education

RESOURCES

For the Children’s Sake, Susan Schaeffer Macaulay

A Charlotte Mason Companion, Karen Andreola

Principle Approach

Reflective: evaluating the purpose of everything in God’s universe to develop a Christian worldview

- Stresses living according to the biblical principles modeled by the Founding Fathers
- Emphasizes America’s providential Christian heritage
- Cultivates self-education using “The Notebook Approach” to “research, reason, relate and record”

RESOURCES

Teaching and Learning America’s Christian History: The Principle Approach, Rosalie J. Slater

The Principle Approach, James B. Rose

Delayed Academics

Unhurried: a low-stress approach delaying formal academics until child demonstrates readiness

- Delay of formal education (the three Rs) until child is emotionally, physically, and mentally matured, typically between ages 8-14
- Promotes the concept of “Integrated Maturity Level,” the point at which the brain, vision, hearing, perceptions, emotions, sociability and physical growth all function cooperatively
- Academics balanced by work and service

RESOURCES

School Can Wait and *The Successful Homeschool Family Handbook*, Dr. Raymond and Dorothy Moore
For the Children’s Sake, Susan Schaeffer Macaulay