

KEYSTONE

is the Journal of
Christian Home Schoolers of New Zealand.
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on page four.

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KEYSTONE is the journal of Christian Home Schoolers of New Zealand, a part of the Home Education Foundation, a Charitable Trust established to promote the concept of home education to the Christian community and beyond.

KEYSTONE is intended to inform, challenge, encourage and inspire. The Christian faith is being undervalued. Christianity alone is fully able to present a world view that is comprehensive, coherent, consistent and complete.

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beginning of wisdom,
a good understanding have all those
who do His commandments.
— Psalm 111:10*

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It was Henry R. Van Til, in The Calvinistic Concept of Culture (1959) who stated that "culture" is religion externalised. Look at the expressions of our culture today: hatred, violence, murder, infanticide, anti-Christianity, immorality, drugs and other crimes. The religion, the faith which our popular culture externalises is demonic.

Oh, Lord, please give us the wisdom and vision to home educate our children for Your Glory. May they not only live and work honourably as Christ-like role models in the midst of this crooked and perverse generation but also fearlessly, tirelessly, lovingly offer them Your Words of eternal life.

Amen!

Editorial



A major objective of *Keystone* is to help Christian home schoolers stoke up the fire in their bellies....to help refresh and renew the vision of all that home education can do for you, for your family, for each of your children, for the impact the children's lives will have on the future of this country and the rest of the world. The articles in columns like "The Faith of Us Fathers", "Exploring God's Creation", "Theologically Speaking", "In Line with Scripture" and even "Home School Research" are there to give us a wider perspective on home education from what, by the Grace of God, is a reasonably accurate Biblical assessment of various issues relevant to home education. Once we have a vision that burns within our bones, obstacles just seem to melt away or become little bumps and jiggles along the way or become exciting opportunities to explain once again our position and convictions to someone else who has asked about home schooling. Vision will carry us through when times get tough. Vision will allow us to see many more ways to "skin the cat" of teaching science or of getting motivated about grammar or of explaining the relevance of algebra. Vision is seeing by faith the lifetime of good works which the Lord has prepared for each of our children (Eph 2:10) and as a result being motivated to hone them into a condition of maximum usefulness as instruments of righteousness in the hands of the Lord (Rom 6:13).

I would love to hear of other really successful teaching experiences, such as the one on Page 22, that we could share with others for their encouragement.

There are two articles in this issue of *Keystone* on gifted children. I've been told of a Massey scholar, Justine Rutherford, who is looking for stories of accomplishments of children gifted in academics, sport, art, anything. She is looking for children with above average ability combined with, creativity and motivation. She can be contacted at: PO Box 31-432, Milford, Auckland, jgrutherford@hotmail.com.

Since early February the Waring Tour has visited home schoolers in Raglan, Rotorua, Raetihi, Stratford, Wanganui, Palmerston North, Otaki, Napier, Hastings, Masterton, Porirua, Blenheim, Port Ligar, Nelson, Westport, Hokitika, Wanaka, Te Anau, Invercargill, Dunedin, Oamaru, Timaru, Christchurch and by the time you read this, will possibly have done their final seminar in Auckland's North Shore April 1st and be off home after 7 months in Kiwiland. They even had 4 days on Stewart Island!! Diana's mum and two others flew out for the South Island portion of the Tour. The pace has been blistering, the logistics challenging and the speaking/sharing responsibilities almost non-stop. We all thank Bill, Diana, Isaac, Michael and Melody for your priceless contributions to home schooling in NZ. May God richly bless you and bring you back!

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**We are supposed to teach
"as regular and well as in a
registered school". If
that's all we achieve, I'll
consider ourselves failures.**

-- Craig Mortimer, Moerewa

Christian Home Schoolers of NZ Presents:

KEYSTONE, the Journal of CHomeS, which you now hold in your hands!

ChedNet, Christian Home EDucation NETwork Email Discussion Group. Discuss curricula from a Christian worldview, child development from Biblical rather than humanist presuppositions, discipline according to the Biblical pattern and for the Biblical reasons, time management, Christlike character development. Give praise to the Lord for His mercies, blessings and victories! All with like-minded people. Moderated by Craig Smith, National Director of Christian Home Schoolers of NZ since 1986. To subscribe send an email to: chednet@xtra.co.nz

CcedNet, the Christian Classical home EDucation NETwork email discussion group is for those Christian families who would like to train their children to think and not just concentrate on output. A thoroughly Christian, thoroughly Classical education, is one based on the approach known as the

Trivium. Moderated by Barbara Smith, Trustee of Christian Home Schoolers of NZ. To subscribe send an email to: ccednet@xtra.co.nz.

The Home Education Foundation Presents:

TEACH Bulletin (Thorough Education Achieved in a Caring Home) is a monthly newsletter of the Home Education Foundation. Articles deal with political developments which may affect home educators, statist and professional trends, correspondence with politicians and educationalists, and other items of general interest to home educators. Published since January 1997, **TEACH Bulletin** has been used to sound legislative alerts, rallying home educators to write submissions to their MPs and Parliamentary Select Committees when legislation unfavourable to home educators was introduced into Parliament. The four- to six-page newsletter comes out 11 times a year (none in December) for an annual subscription of \$16 or two years for \$30.

HefNet is the Home Education Foundation's email list discussion group. Established in July 1998, this group has expanded quickly and includes home educators with a wonderfully diverse range of political, religious, philosophical, and methodological views. This mix makes for some red-hot yet edifying debates! Subscription is free by emailing the message "subscribe" to hefnet@xtra.co.nz.

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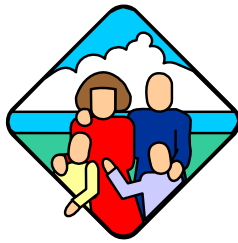
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Feature Family

Colin & Jenny
Jenkins
of Tauranga



There are two homeschool teachers in our house in the mornings. Both are mostly loved but sometimes the cause of great frustration. Both are looking a little worn. Both are working on this article together. One is called Mum. The other, just “the computer.”

Mum teaches the five and six year olds to read and do maths. The computer teaches them all their times tables and number facts. Mum teaches them to spell and do neat handwriting. The computer teaches them to type, and proofreads their stories and projects for spelling mistakes. Mum takes them to the library for copious numbers of books. The computer fills in any gaps from Encarta. Together they plod along, day by day, getting the job done.

I consider myself a plodder. Day follows day. Week follows week. The mornings full on with homeschooling. The afternoons as quiet and predictable as possible. I'm in it for the long haul and I need my afternoon rest, so that's when the copious library books come out. They are the children's afternoon teacher and probably their favourite. I've got very little idea what they learn in that hour and a half after lunch, although the books are screened by me before they leave the library. Even just randomly opening a book will reveal any unsuitable values surprisingly often. Non fiction books are equally as popular as fiction, and I am amazed at how much the children learn from them. They are becoming walking encyclopedias.

I sometimes wonder if the children don't learn more in the school holidays than during term. Afternoon teacher keeps them reading, the computer ditches the curriculum in favour of more interesting games, but often gets ignored as the Tauranga sunshine lures them outside to make huts and raid fruit trees.

Colin and I met at the Mount Baptist. I'd been a primary teacher for ten years but resigned to do a Y.W. A.M. Disciple Training Course at Pahi. Afterwards I returned to my parents' home near Mt Maunganui.

Colin was brought up on a market garden on the North Shore, trained at Lincoln, and spent a couple of years with M.A.F. as a kiwifruit adviser. Then he took a job managing a large kiwifruit / avocado orchard on the edge of Tauranga Harbour. We met, fell in love, and lived happily after.

I'd always wanted to homeschool. When I was a teacher, I wanted to take the kids home with me. Now finally I was a mother and there was no way I was going to send them off to school for someone else to

enjoy all day. I began teaching Chris reading and maths at four, doing about an hour and a half a day. He learnt effortlessly and was reading chapter books by his fifth birthday. By the time Kathryn turned five, Chris was pretty much teaching himself. He learnt typing off a “Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing” C D ROM we bought at Whitcoulls, and when he could type twice as fast as he could write, he graduated from it and began typing his stories instead of writing them. Now Colin regularly employs him to type reports for the orchard. Chris publishes a newsletter once a term and sends it to three penpals around the country. I expect him to type 200 words a day, and mostly he writes about the happenings of our family.

When Chris was almost seven we began the A.T.I., (Bill Gothard's) homeschooling programme. It is character based and Bible centred, and God has confirmed year by year that it's what He wants us to teach. For example, the study we were up to on the marriage covenant came in exactly the same week that we were invited to a wedding... “And bring the children to the ceremony so they can watch.” Then came the study on the police we did in the same week as the new Mount Police Station had an open day. One day we were just beginning a study on how eagles soar when I looked out the window to find a hawk soaring on the updraft above our front bank. And we were doing the study on opinion polls the week before the elections! It encourages me to “keep on plodding.”

When Chris was about eight, a friend from church came in on Saturdays to spend a couple of hours teaching him about the computer. During the week Chris would write down questions for him. After about six sessions Chris went solo and since then has done all our troubleshooting. Whenever there is a tradesman at our place, Chris is always at his elbow watching. He had paint spilt over him at six from being under the painter's ladder when the tin slipped; he was up the roof waiting for the chimney sweep, who could have sworn he'd left him on the ground at the foot of the ladder. He held a torch for the electrician in the attic and punched the numbers into the hand held computer of the meter reader. Any tradesman visiting our home or neighbourhood finds himself the guest speaker at an impromptu homeschool fieldtrip.

Chris, now eleven, is right into building huts, lighting fires, and climbing trees. His interests include science, astronomy, dinosaurs, rock and stamp collecting, blade skating, cricket, writing, computers, music, anything except art! After being inspired by Bill and Diana Waring I asked him “What would you like to study?” He chose Ancient Rome and has produced an excellent slide show on the computer. He treated us to a toga clad Roman meal which we reclined in the lounge to eat. You should have seen the amazement on Andrew's face (he's two) when he emerged from a late afternoon nap to find us reclining there eating dinner. He thought we were doing it to have him on.

Kathryn taught herself to read over the Christmas holidays at five and a half years old. I had only done six months of phonics with her. Her reading age advanced

three years in just five months -- without a lesson. She'd fallen in love with books and read up to three hours a day. She also read stories to Jaime and Rachel. Unfortunately, she had weak eyesight and her focus locked in at a book's distance away. By the time we realised it was happening she needed glasses, but if we'd restricted her reading time from the start it would have probably saved her distance vision. Kathryn, now nine, is a poet. This one's my favourite:

A man walked in a giant's mouth, he thought
it was a cave.
He sat down on that giant's tooth, and he
went to his grave!

Kathryn loves "make believe" games, especially with her sisters and the dolls. She wears her heart on her sleeve and is able to influence the mood of the whole family. Instead of writing a story about our recent visit to the Moscow Circus, she typed an act by act description in a letter to her great-grandmother, and it was SO appreciated.

Jaime, seven, was a bit of a late starter when it came to learning to read. I'd known she would be. She was late walking and talking so I wasn't too concerned when we plodded along through the phonics drills day after day with little apparent progress. But when reading readiness came, she too was away. Everything I'd laboured to teach her and wondered if she'd forgotten was still there! Now she reads stories to Rachel and Andrew.

Rachel at five is a bundle of joy and laughter. She and Andrew are great companions and can often be found rolling together in a giggling heap on the trampoline. She loves to be tickled, but when I oblige, she immediately responds with, "Now it's your turn!" I probably don't do much more than two hours of school with her in the mornings, as she needs my help for most of it. I will be able to build up to a full morning's work by the time she's six, as she shows signs of being an early reader. When Jaime turned six, I enlisted Chris to read her A Beka science and health books to her until she could read well enough herself.

Andrew, our youngest, spreads happiness wherever he goes. Sometimes he surprises me by bursting into song, like a midget tenor in an opera. He sings a whole song through, watching me with a twinkle in his eye, but it must be in Italian because I can't understand a word. Andrew loves to have people on. While I was cuddling him in bed this morning we had a competition. I tried to keep his thumb out of his mouth and he tried to put it back in. Finally he grabbed my hand, said "Me suck your thumb," put it into his mouth and started to suck contentedly. When I was taking off his pants this morning and found them wet, he said, "Me didn't do that. You did!" And talking about lies, what can I tell him when he gazes up at me from waist height, smiles, and says proudly, "Me a big boy, eh Mum!"

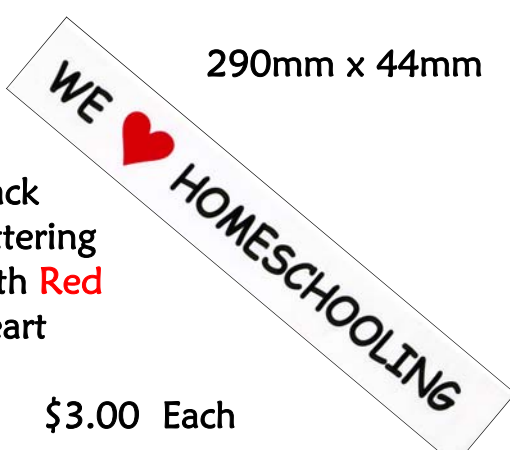
We are blessed to have a keyboard teacher willing to come to our home and teach the children music. The only thing we have to ferry them to is St John Cadets one night a week. During the two winter terms we join with four other homeschooling families in a private gym class. I met another homeschool family at a local pool twice a week last term to teach our children to swim. I have avoided Saturday sports teams. Our Saturdays are family days and a chance to get things done around home.

We keep our children with us in church, although our church runs an excellent children's programme. We feel that church should be a family thing, the children watching, listening, and learning as the Spirit moves in our hearts during worship, altar calls, etc. The children understand most of the sermons and remember the stories. We believe that as parents we are primarily responsible for the spiritual training of our children.

We begin each day at the kitchen table with Bibles open, taking turns as we read through a Psalm and a Proverb. This is followed by a family prayer time. We begin each school morning by singing a hymn or worship song together, a different one each month. The children have learnt many great hymns this way. After that, we each go to our rooms for a brief prayer time. When we come back, we work together for five minutes memorizing scripture. Then we begin our schoolwork.

Just before bedtime Colin calls the older children together and reads a chapter from a Christian biography. C.B.M., which sends flyers out with *Keystone*, has been a great source of books for reading aloud. I read a Bible story to the younger children and

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then put Andrew to bed. Then Rachel reads one to me from the Beginners Bible. The others read their own Bibles in bed before lights out. I have found The Wonder Bible to be a great bridge for a seven to eight year old as a full Bible is a bit daunting for them to read on their own. Chris is allowed to listen to Radio Rhema for a while on weeknights as they have great teaching programmes on after eight. Kathryn and Jaime tune in to Concert FM or put on a children's tape. Andrew goes to sleep with a Bible tape playing quietly.

At the end of each year we put together a family mini-concert, including a dance or ribbon dance, a Christmas skit, a song or two and a couple of keyboard items. Then we perform it at a local old folk's home. The last two years we joined with a group of older folk from church who hold a regular monthly service there, and afterwards gave out Christmas cards or small packets of sweets, or one year, flowers the children had picked. Music and dance are not areas that I'm naturally gifted in, but the old folk are such an appreciative audience that it's worth the effort. I feel that the children get so much poured into them during the year that it's good for them to give a little back. It's also training them in evangelism tools for the future.

Homeschooling is demanding, exhausting, stimulating, fulfilling, and absolutely, totally worth the effort. The biggest enemy is discouragement. Never compare yourself to the homeschool (or school!) down the road - you only see it from the public viewing platform. Instead say, "God, you called me to homeschool, so... help!"

The Faith of Us Fathers



Children as Instruments of Dominion

By Rev. Brian M. Abshire

Dominion and Commission

God created man for dominion, to act as his vice-regent over creation, governing and ruling it for His glory (Gen 1:28ff.). The Garden in Eden was a pilot project, begun by God but then entrusted to man to tend and care for. As Adam's family grew, they would have eventually moved out of the Garden, extending its beauty, harmony and order over the rest of the earth. Even Adam's sin can be seen as an attempt to exercise dominion, albeit by ungodly means. In his own time, God himself would have raised up Adam to know good and evil. But such knowledge would be the result of Adam's proving himself by diligent labor and faithful service. But instead of service, Adam chose rebellion against God's authority, wanting dominion on HIS terms, and thus brought judgment upon the creation.

God's curse on Adam and Eve did not negate the Dominion Mandate; it simply made the task more difficult. The land still had to be tended, but now man had to contend with thorns. The woman would still bear children, but now with great pain in childbirth. It is significant that God gives Noah the exact same mandate in Genesis 9:7 after the flood that He had given to Adam many generations previously. Man was created for dominion.

Even the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19-20 is a re-statement of the Dominion Mandate. The means of being fruitful and multiplying and filling the earth now includes evangelism. But the end remains the same. Through the preaching of the Word, whole nations are to be brought to submission to Christ. (How sad that this crucial passage is so often so badly misunderstood. The Great Commission commands us to disciple NATIONS, not individuals!). As those nations convert to faith in Christ, and are disciplined to obey Him in all things, His rule and dominion are spread throughout the earth.

Inescapable Dominion

Dominion is therefore an integral part of man's nature and is inescapable. The only question is whether dominion will be sought for the right reasons and by the right means. If Christians do not seek dominion by pressing the claims of Christ Jesus in all areas of life, and instead withdraw into a religious ghetto, ungodly men will seek dominion in our place. All of human history can be interpreted in light of ungodly men's seeking to fulfill the Dominion Mandate in ungodly ways. Wars, conquests, political, economic and social tyranny are all the attempts of ungodly men to

Puzzle



Three women (named Anna, Babs and Cora) were questioned about the robbery of Dana. One of the three women committed the crime, the second was an accomplice in the crime, and the third was innocent of any involvement in the crime. Each of the following three statements was made by one of the three women:

- 1) Anna is not the accomplice.
 - 2) Babs is not the thief.
 - 3) Cora is not the innocent one.
- I. Each statement refers to a woman other than the speaker.
- II. The innocent woman made at least one of these statements.
- III. Only the innocent woman told the truth.

Which one of the three women was the thief?

(Answer on Page 13.)

unlawfully exercise dominion over others. And since sin always brings death, ungodly dominion invariably leads to disaster (cf. Dt. 28:1ff.). When Christians fail to exercise godly dominion, they simply create a vacuum that ungodly men fill with wickedness. Let there be no misunderstanding here: ungodly men do not build free, prosperous or safe societies. Inevitably, when the ungodly take dominion, the average man loses his wealth, his family and his freedom (Rom. 1:20ff.).

Many Christians fear the word “Dominion” because they have been so influenced by humanism that they understand the word only in humanistic terms. For the ungodly, dominion equals domination: a top-down imposition of power over others against their will. Hence, many Christians think that to exercise dominion means revolution, violent attempts to gain political power, or oppressive governments. Since they rightly reject such concepts, they also reject any sort of dominion, withdrawing into the personal, subjective areas of life, literally leaving the world to go to Hell.

When Christians fail to exercise godly dominion, they simply create a vacuum that ungodly men fill with wickedness.... Inevitably, when the ungodly take dominion, the average man loses his wealth, his family and his freedom.

But godly dominion is achieved through godly means. We do not preach violence or revolution, because revolution is by its very definition antithetical to the gospel. Adam was the first revolutionary when he rebelled against God’s law. Eating the forbidden fruit was an attempt to gain knowledge, power and dominion through a revolutionary act, rather than earning dominion through faithful service. Christian dominion, rather, MUST result from Biblical truth. Mark 10:45 is clear power comes to those who serve. Christians will be GIVEN dominion, when we demonstrate that we are capable of handling it. We EARN dominion by being faithful in little things and then God will grant us dominion over greater things (e.g., Mt. 25:21).

Dominion and the Christian Family

Character transformation begins with the Christian family. As Rushdoony notes, the family is a child’s first school, church and state. It is within the context of the family that we learn the basic skills that will eventually lead to social, political and economic dominion. In the home we learn diligence, discipline, hard work, responsibility, morality and character. The Scriptures are clear that if a man cannot manage his own household, he cannot manage the household of God (1 Tim. 5:5). If he cannot manage the church, then he certainly cannot manage the state. Hence a true restoration of Christian civilization begins with learning how to run our families properly. Once we have demonstrated faithfulness here, we can expect God to grant us increasing responsibility in the broader society. Hence the key to national transformation is found in the Biblical means of the Dominion Mandate; we are to be “fruitful and multiply, to fill the earth and subdue it.” Please notice the sequence here. We will subdue the earth when we have been fruitful and multiplied. Now it

can be reasonably argued that this multiplication must include more than natural generation; we also multiply through evangelism. But the point here is that we have God’s own promise that He will bless our covenant seed (Ac. 2:38-39). As Christians take the Dominion Mandate seriously, as they enjoy the blessings of marital love, normally speaking (and with exceptions duly noted) God will grant us children, many children, children of the covenant. And as those children grow up in disciplined, godly homes, and develop their callings, and marry other covenant children, and faithfully serve their Lord, they too will be blessed with many covenant children. Generation by generation, the principle of compound interest works in our favor. Over time, God will bless Christian families with many offspring who will eventually multiply and fill the earth.

It was God’s great promise to our father Abraham that he would be the father of many nations (Gen. 15:5). Through one man, He created a family that within just a few generations became a mighty nation. With the coming of Jesus, many nations were adopted into Abraham’s family and began to spread

throughout the earth. Generation by generation, God is multiplying His people. The ungodly, on the other hand, actively destroy their future through birth control and abortion. This is God’s judgment on them even as it is a guarantee of our future. Even though Christians are presently outnumbered and oppressed, eventually, if we just value our children, train them, and resist the modern temptation to limit their number, within just a few generations, we could exercise dominion over the entire nation.

Hence Biblical dominion requires a future orientation and a willingness to sacrifice our own personal peace and prosperity for the sake of generations yet unborn. It means we look not just to our own desires and expectations, but to a time yet to come when the whole earth will be full of His glory. This is not a new idea. Most Americans can trace their ancestry to immigrants who gave up everything in the Old World to move to America. Very few of that first generation achieved the “American Dream.” Often, their living conditions were initially worse than what they had left behind, as they carved a new life out of the wilderness. But our ancestors moved here not just for their own personal comfort, but because of their commitment to their children, and grand-children and great-grandchildren’s future. They sacrificed everything to give their posterity a future and a hope. And because of that sacrifice, their children built on their parents’ work and created the freest, most prosperous and godly nation in history.

If we want to reclaim what we have lost, we must first reclaim the dedication of our ancestors and their vision of godly dominion. Our children are our arrows into the future. Through them we have the ability to shape the direction of American culture for the next thousand

years. Yes, it means personal sacrifice and perhaps even a lower standard of living than that of the average American two-income family that sends its children into the citadels of humanistic public education. But our sacrifice now could mean the restoration of a genuine Christian civilization here and the evangelization of the entire world.

Of course, this requires us to have a different view of the family than is common in even broad evangelical Christian circles. God does not give us children as an experience to be had, or as a means of reliving our own childhood. Instead, He entrusts His covenant children to our hands, that we might love them, teach them and prepare them for victory. They are His warriors, and it is our duty to equip them to exercise dominion in His name, by His means. We have to protect them from being propagandized by humanism: we give them a genuine Christian education. We have to equip them spiritually, so we catechize them and conduct consistent family worship. We must prepare them for their callings, give them Biblical models of godly masculinity and femininity, leave them an inheritance, etc.

Most importantly, we must give them a future orientation. We do not live just for ourselves, but for the thousands of generations yet unborn. We cannot escape the Dominion Mandate. If we do not prepare our children for dominion, the humanists and God-haters and idolaters will exercise dominion in their place. The God-haters will continue to rebel against Him and bring His judgment down on their heads and society will grow more wicked, more corrupt and perverse. And to a large extent, it will be our fault.

Generations to come will look back to our day and rise up and bless our commitment to dominion, or they will curse us for what we could have done but would not do. Our children are the means God has given us to exercise victory and dominion in the earth. We must ask God to give us many of them. We must love them. We must train them. And we must prepare them for dominion.

(Rev. Brian M. Abshire is the pastor of Reformed Heritage Church in Modesto, California, U.S.A. He can be reached at (209) 544-1572 or abshire@ix.netcom.com.)

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Learning Disabilities



The ABCs of Learning Disabilities (Part 1)

1. The facts about learning disabilities.

The term “learning disability” describes a neurobiological disorder in which a person’s brain works or is structured differently. These differences interfere with a person’s ability to think and remember. Learning disabilities can affect a person’s ability to speak, listen, read, write, spell, reason, recall, organize information, and do mathematics.

Because learning disabilities cannot be seen, they often go undetected. Recognizing a learning disability is even more difficult because the severity and characteristics vary.

A learning disability can’t be cured or fixed; it is a lifelong issue. With the right support and intervention, however, children with learning disabilities can succeed in school and go on to successful, often distinguished careers later in life. Parents can help children with learning disabilities achieve such success by encouraging their strengths, knowing their weaknesses, understanding the educational system, working with professionals and learning about strategies for dealing with specific difficulties.

Facts About Learning Disabilities

- Fifteen percent of the U.S. population, or one in seven Americans, has some type of learning disability, according to the National Institutes of Health.
- Difficulty with basic reading and language skills are the most common learning disabilities. As many as 80% of students with learning disabilities have reading problems.
- Learning disabilities often run in families.
- Learning disabilities should not be confused with other disabilities such as mental retardation, autism, deafness, blindness, and behavioral disorders. None of these conditions are learning disabilities.
- Attention disorders, such as Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and learning disabilities often occur at the same time, but the two disorders are not the same.

Common Learning Disabilities

Dyslexia - a language-based disability in which a person has trouble understanding words, sentences, or paragraphs.

Dyscalculia - a mathematical disability in which a person has a difficult time solving arithmetic

with a curse. (Malachi 4:5-6).

far outweighed by the blessings of children who shine like brilliant stars in the sky.

Dads, we have a unique duty and opportunity. Our land will be blessed or it will be cursed, depending on us. Let us faithfully and consistently turn our hearts toward our children and secure the blessing of God for our children, our grandchildren, our nation, and our world. If we do, we'll find that the burdens along the way are

Answer to Puzzle (from page 7.)

Because each statement refers to a different woman, the innocent one did not make all three statements; otherwise, she would have spoken of herself, contradicting (I). So the innocent one made either one statement or two statements, from (II).

If the innocent one made only one statement, then only that statement is true and the other two statements are false, from (III). But this situation is impossible, because if any two of these statements are false, then the remaining one has to be false, as follows:

- A) If (1 and (2 are false, then Anna is the accomplice and Babs is the thief. So Cora must be innocent, making (3 false.
- B) If (1 and (3 are false, then Anna is the accomplice and Cora is innocent. So Babs must be the thief, making (2 false.
- C) If (2 and (3 are false, then Babs is the thief and Cora is innocent. So Anna must be the accomplice, making (1 false.

So the innocent woman made two statements. From (I) the two true statements were made by the only woman not referred to in these two statements:

- D) If statements (2 and (3 are true, they were made by Anna. Then Anna is the innocent one. But (1, being false, identifies Anna as the accomplice. This situation is impossible.
- E) If statements (1 and (3 are true, they were made by Babs. Then Babs is the innocent one. But (2, being false, identifies Babs as the thief. This situation is impossible.
- F) So statements (1 and (2 are true, and were therefore made by Cora. Then Cora is the innocent one. The falsity of (3 is consistent with this conclusion. Since Cora is the innocent one and (1 is true, Babs is the accomplice. Then Anna is the thief. (2, being true, is consistent with this conclusion.

In Line With Scripture



Do you see a man skilful in his work? He will stand before kings; he will not stand before obscure men. — Proverbs 22:29

by Craig S. Smith

Now there is a promise of a passport to greater things! And our Lord God Himself is making this promise.

This Proverb is a promise with a condition. The promise is to stand before kings. And we are talking plural here. A skilful man will stand in the presence of mighty and powerful leaders, political leaders. He will stand before them, not crawl or bow down. He will look them directly in the eye on the same level as a peer. It is as if they summoned him to them. And this makes sense, for he is a skilful man, possessing some skill they obviously do not possess. They are looking to him for his services for they acknowledge his superiority in some area.

But he will not stand before obscure men. What? Is he too good for regular folks like you and me? No, the way the word “stand” is repeated gives it a similar context. Obscure men would not be comfortable asking such a skilful one for his help, perhaps because their objectives are so obscure almost anyone could lend a hand. Obscure men would be embarrassed to ask a man of such skill to help them, to take note of and help their unimportant projects because he is sought after by so many others of might, authority, power and renown. It would be cheeky, or more like something bordering on an insult. Why? Because the man of skill is so obviously in a much superior league than they. Now this does not mean he never lends his skill to lowly projects: assuming this man of skill holds other Christian qualities, he will most definitely lend his skill and acumen to projects his wife, his children, his church and his close friends are involved in.

So how did this man become skilful in his work? He was disciplined. He was focused. He not only studied the finer theoretical aspects of his work, but he constantly practised to finely hone and perfect his senses and abilities as they relate to this work. It is said that the great Louis Armstrong, the trumpet player without equal, still practised up to eight hours a day, even while travelling the performance circuit. The man was surely only competing against himself, constantly pushing the boundaries outward.

Natural talent does not make someone skilful. Concert pianists constantly play the piano. Olympic athletes are obsessed with training. Professional writers are profuse writers. The finest engineers are found in engineering shops. Skilful men have mastered certain arts to a degree beyond the common or average. They may be able to perform physical feats of strength or skill or

possess mental capabilities such as concentration, memory or spatial conceptualisation that leave the rest of us for dead. There are many experts whose skill lies in the way they see things, and some who are famous for their finely discriminating sense of smell. Whatever natural talent they may have started with, they had to develop it through constant practise and training.

There are at least three applications here for us home educating parents.

First, we need to impress upon our children the need for training, for follow-through, for self-discipline. We need to help them learn how to focus on a task, to concentrate, to filter out distractions, to know when to press on without a break and when to step back for a moment to shake out the stress and check that the whole thing is in perspective. Our children need to learn how to strive for an acceptable standard of excellence in what they do. “Whatever your task, work heartily, as serving the Lord and not men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward; you are serving the Lord Christ.” (Colossians 3:23-24).

Second, it is our privilege to observe our children and spy out those natural talents and personal passions the Lord has put within them. We can direct and train their tendencies into usable channels. This includes knowing how to discern whether an obsession with computer games is an unhealthy addiction to fast-paced and violent visual and mental stimulation or an urge to conquer ever-greater challenges in the areas of logistics and strategy. “For by the grace given to me I bid every one among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment ... Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them.” (Romans 12:3 & 6). We parents should be providing a fair measure of that sober judgment and helping our children to identify their gifts.

Third, we ourselves need to be setting the example and the pace when it comes to the standard we accept for the things which are our responsibilities. One tendency I see in my own life is to let the little things slide so I can concentrate on the bigger, more important items. But the Word of our Lord Jesus Himself says, “He who is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much; and he who is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much.” (Luke 16:10).

Faithful home schooling parents have the unspeakable honour and privilege of working in cooperation with the God of the Universe in moulding His children into men and women of God who, because of their surpassing skill in various areas, will stand before kings and help change this country back round the way it should be. And what is more, they like St Paul will have the opportunity to speak the words of eternal life into the ears of the highest leaders in the land.

Tough Questions People Throw Your Way



Surely you home educators cannot expect the rest of us to accept that love for your child and an impressive library is a valid substitute for a teaching degree?

Ok, ok, I can already hear all you veteran home educators out there choking and gagging at this one. But let's break it down and examine it.

The stated issue is that trained and certified teachers are obviously superior teachers to untrained parents. The assumptions behind this are many: that certified teachers are far more knowledgeable than parents about what constitutes education; that the money and resources behind certified teachers in registered schools is clearly superior to what all but the more financially endowed parents can provide; that the entire school environment, from dedicated Ministry personnel and curriculum developers to textbook providers to overworked school administrators and board of trustee members to the enthusiastic teachers at the coalface and the brilliant variety of peers within the typical classroom, that all these things combine to provide a palpably well-rounded and comprehensive educational experience the like of which an isolated mum at home with only some out-dated School Certificate passes could never hope to match.

These assumptions, however, are all false for they are based on the false foundational idea that politically conceived, taxpayer-funded, secular and compulsorily-attended mass schooling is equivalent to even a basic education. Leaving aside completely the argument as to whether Christians should allow their children to attend secular schooling institutions, let us examine the simple logistical advantages of one mum teaching a small number of her own beloved children at home compared to the conventional classroom situation.

Most of us are aware of cases where teacher certification has not meant the same as teacher competency. In addition, there is the almost unrecognised fact that classroom logistics can make even the best teacher's efforts an exercise in futility: over-crowded classrooms, lack of discipline, unsupportive administration, inability to give needed individual attention, time restraints which force them to move on to new material before the previous material is comprehended. Teacher certification does not ensure a quality education. In fact, many students who do not

catch on at school must go home and get their parents to help out. There are already many parents out there who do the real teaching at night after school while the certified teacher gets the credit.

Home education is a tutoring or mentoring situation. One mum can give her full attention to one or two or three children at a time for whatever period of time is practical and comfortable for them all. Or she can focus on just one child for a piece of time and move to the next and then to the other. Overall she will have far, far more significant one-to-one time than what occurs in the typical classroom where the teacher can expect no more than ONE MINUTE of significant one-to-one time per pupil per day. Because of this the home school mum can cover a vastly increased measure of subject matter in the same length of time even though she may be dealing with a range of ages, possibly including a toddler and a newborn. She can assess more exactly whether each child has grasped the concepts or mastered the skills for she is observing the child for most of the waking day, is far more concerned for the child's welfare and future prospects and is intimately in tune with the child, being her own flesh and blood, than even the most highly trained and skilled professional teacher could ever possibly be. The enthusiasm, commitment, love, vision, intimate knowledge, and one-to-one tutoring situation of the home school mum, combined with the God-given heart-desire of the child for its mother, ensures that the average home education teacher/parent is starting with vast logistical and relational advantages the classroom teacher can only dream about.

So what does a true and useful education consist of? For the school teacher it is in a politically determined mix of subjects pitched a certain way for a classroom full of children from all sorts of backgrounds and filtered through legal and other socio-political parameters with the aim a producing an outcome in students' lives which matches a stated objective in a Ministerial document. If the powers that be decide a change is necessary, it will be a good seven years before the drafts are formulated, trialled, assessed, redrafted, approved, adopted and actually introduced and implemented. By then of course the initial problem has mutated beyond recognition and the target children have passed through the system and a new set are being served a special mix designed for a situation and a time which no longer exist.

For the home educating mum it consists of those basic skills plus general and specific knowledge she knows are required to get on in the world: she and her husband and extended family talk about what it's like out there to be a worker, an employer, a homemaker, a spouse, a parent. They know the character qualities employers want, that they have always wanted throughout history, and that neither School Certificate exams nor university degrees impart those qualities. Christian parents in particular are individually crafting unique children to serve the God of the Universe according to the syllabus He has provided in the Scriptures. They are not that impressed with the state's attempts through the schools to improve children, the

country's most valuable resource (right up there next to chilled lamb and green-lipped mussels), or with the socialists' attempt to inculcate the simplistic non-judgmental vision of tolerating every perversion under the sun, somehow making our global village a better place in which to live.

The home educating mum knows that rooms, desks and books are dead things. It is imparting life from her heart to her child that makes an education. The most important lessons in her life she did not learn in the classroom but in the school of hard knocks. This is what she imparts. The children are not left interminably to interact with books or CD ROMs, but are encouraged to interact with mum and dad and other siblings and people in the real world of the home, the marketplace, the workplace and the community. They don't only do word problems from a text book, but do real-life problems like working out the week's menu from the available budget.

In short, marriage, parenthood and homemaking are probably the best teaching credentials one could have.

Teaching Tips



Helping Your Highly Gifted Child

Part II

by Stephanie Tolan
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(In this second and final part of her paper, Stephanie continues to deal with some areas of concern and provide a few practical suggestions based on the experience of other parents and the modest amount of research available.)

Lack of Fit

The difficulty with highly gifted children in school may be summarized in three words: They don't fit. Almost all schools organize groups of children by age. As we have seen, the highly gifted child is many ages. The child's intellectual needs might be years ahead of same-age peers, although the gulf may be larger in some subject areas than in others.

Imagine 6-year-old Rachel. She reads on a 12th-grade level, although her comprehension is "only" that of a 7th grader. She does multiplication and division, understands fractions and decimals, but counts on her fingers because she has never memorized addition and subtraction facts or multiplication tables. Her favorite interests at home are paleontology and astronomy; at school her favorite interests are lunch and recess. She collects stamps and plays chess. Although she can concentrate at her telescope for hours at a time, she cannot sit still when she is bored. She cries easily, loses her temper often, bosses other children when they "don't do it right", and cannot keep track of her personal belongings. She has a sophisticated sense of humor that disarms adults but is not understood by other children.

Putting Rachel into a regular first grade without paying special attention to her differences is a recipe for social, emotional, and educational disaster. Even if a gifted program is available (they commonly begin in third or fourth grade), it is unlikely to meet her extreme needs.

Educating a highly gifted child in school is like clothing a 6X child in a store where the largest available garment is a size 3 (or with a gifted program, a 3X). Parents have to

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resort to alterations or individual tailoring of whatever kind they can manage.

In dealing with school issues, it is important to remember that you know more about your child than anyone else. Your knowledge, information, and instincts are useful and important, and they should be recognized in designing a school program. Your child needs individual attention. Anything else may be directly and seriously harmful. There is no ideal school pattern for the highly gifted child. However, when normal school patterns lead to difficulty, it is important to obtain real differentiation.

Acceleration

Placing a child with older children who share interests may be socially and intellectually beneficial and result in a more appropriate curriculum. Allowing highly gifted children to stay in a class that meets few if any of their needs may do serious and long-term damage.

Another type of acceleration is subject matter acceleration. A child may take mathematics four grades ahead, reading two grades ahead, and physical education with age peers. This type of acceleration takes into consideration the varying developmental ages of the highly gifted child. For further flexibility, you might consider evening classes or weekend classes at a high school or college.

The Home Schooling Option

For many highly gifted children home schooling is a nearly ideal solution to the problem of fit. Instead of laboriously altering ready-made programs, parents can tailor an education precisely to the child's needs. Clubs, sports, scouting, and other activities supply social interaction with other children while parents serve as teachers or facilitators or engage tutors or mentors in various subject areas.

Home schooling is seldom an easy choice. In some districts it is either illegal or beset with regulations that make it almost as rigid as classroom schooling. When both parents or the single resident parent must work, it may be impossible. Some parents and children find the level of togetherness stifling, while others cannot avoid pushing and demanding too much. However, home schooling may be a positive choice for many families. Many children move surprisingly smoothly from home schooling in the early years into high school or college when their intellectual needs outgrow the home environment. One of the major benefits of education at home is the maintenance of self-esteem, which is highly problematic in a school environment.

Social/Emotional Needs

It is sometimes hard for highly gifted children to find kindred spirits, hard for them to feel they fit into the only world they know.

Highly gifted children may have trouble establishing fulfilling friendships with people of their own age when there are few or no other highly gifted children with whom to interact. As a high school student told his

mother, "I can be that part of myself that is like my classmates, and we get along fine. But there's no one I can share the rest of me with, no one who understands what means the most to me". For most highly gifted children, social relationships with age peers necessitate a constant monitoring of thoughts, words, and behavior.

What else can you do to help highly gifted children find friends? It helps children to understand that there are different types of friends. They may play baseball, ride bikes, and watch TV with one person; talk about books or movies with another; and play chess or discuss astronomy with another. Some of these friends may be their own age, some may be younger or, more often, older. Only in school is it suggested that people must be within a few months of each other in age to form meaningful relationships.

Conclusion

Raising a highly gifted child may be ecstasy, agony, and everything between. Adults must perform almost impossible feats of balance--supporting a child's gifts without pushing, valuing without overinvesting, championing without taking over. It is costly, physically and emotionally draining, and intellectually demanding. In the first flush of pride, few parents realize that their task is in many ways similar to the task faced by parents of a child with severe handicaps. Our world does not accommodate differences easily, and it matters little whether the difference is perceived to be a deficit or an overabundance.

We have covered only a few issues in this space, but the most important help you can give highly gifted children can be expressed in a single sentence: Give them a safe home, a refuge where they feel love and genuine acceptance, even of their differences. As adults with a safe home in their background, they can put together lives of productivity and fulfillment.

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Developing a "Can-Do" Attitude

A local New Zealand home educator recently told me how he one day had an idea: as the food bill was about \$25 per person in the family each week, he and his wife gave each child their own \$25 to feed themselves for five days. They were required to plan a menu of three meals a day, buy the food (no sweets allowed) and cook for themselves. They were allowed to use the family salt, spices, utensils, etc.

The children, boy-girl-boy aged 12, 10 and 8, all thoroughly loved the exercise. Each one did this during a different week to avoid chaos in the kitchen. It engendered a lot of discussion and comparing among themselves.

The oldest especially enjoyed doing his own cooking and being in charge for himself.

The girl was most successful. She got a pineapple at a really good special and ate that for breakfast each day. That enabled her to splurge on Bar B Qued chicken wings and other meat specials at night.

Because the youngest liked pies, he went out and bought a six-pack but was sick of pies by the end of the week. He also bought and learned to enjoy cabbage, mainly because he cooked it himself.

The three really hunted well for the best buys in food and various specials. They learned the real cost of their favourite foods and also how to price various ingredients for making something from scratch. The whole experience of totally hands-on learning caused them to learn so many other things along the way, such as which spoon works better for measuring and which for stirring. They learned about the hidden extras in costing out a meal, such as the salt and other spices, the power, the many cooking utensils, the serving dishes and their time!

All three markedly enjoyed their own meals because they had planned, purchased and prepared them. They were really chuffed! It surely had something to do with successfully carrying an important responsibility for a number of days.

This home schooling dad said that the more inventive he can be, the more interesting, and incidentally the farther away he got from a formal curriculum, the better were the children's attitudes, their discipline and the more they appeared to learn.

He also noticed how it produced a "can-do" attitude in them all. Having been stretched beyond what they would have previously tackled on their own, they were now ready for another challenge, to take on a new project or responsibility. The fact that they didn't know how to carry it out was no longer a big obstacle: they knew they could learn how or find out as they went.

The True Millennium — and Other “Timely” Questions

Part II

When the papal bull of February 1582 decreed that 10 days should be dropped from October 1582, so that 15 October should follow immediately after 4 October, and from then on the new Gregorian calendar should be used, Italy, Poland, Portugal and Spain all fell in line with other Catholic countries following shortly after. Protestant countries, however, were reluctant to change, and the Greek orthodox countries didn't change until the start of this century.

In Bulgaria 31 March 1916 was followed by 14 April. In Russia 31 January 1918 was followed by 14 February. And in Greece the changes didn't take place until only 73 years ago when 9 March 1924 was followed by 23 March. This whole business is so confusing that sources disagree, some saying it took place in 1916, others in 1920.

Further, the Gregorian calendar was introduced into Turkey on 1 January 1927, replacing the Islamic calendar. It replaced the Chinese calendar in either 1912 or 1929, depending on which authorities you believe.

The Roman calendar?

Remember from Part 1 of this article in the last issue of *Keystone*, that the Roman calendar was replaced by the Julian calendar in 45 BC, and this was replaced by the Gregorian calendar we use now. That old Roman calendar was such a mess, that much of our so-called “knowledge” about it seems to be little more than guesswork.

Originally, the year started on 1 March and consisted of only 304 days of 10 months (Martius, Aprilis, Maius, Junius, Quintilis, Sextilis, September, October, November, and December). These 304 days were followed by an unnamed and unnumbered winter period. The Roman king Numa Pompilius (c. 715-673 BC, although his historicity is disputed) allegedly introduced February and January (in that order) between December and March, increasing the length of the year to 354 or 355 days. In 450 BC, February was moved to its current position between January and March.

The Romans didn't number the days sequentially from 1. Instead they had three fixed points in each month:

“Kalendae” (or “Calendae”), which was the first day of the month.

“Idus”, which was the 13th day of January, February, April, June, August, September, November, and December, or the 15th day of March, May, July, or October. (You have heard of the need to “beware the Ides of March”? This was the 15th of March, when Ceasar was assassinated by his “mate” Brutus and friends.)

“Nonae”, which was the 9th day before Idus (counting Idus itself as the first day).

The days between Kalendae and Nonae were called “the 4th day before Nonae”, “the 3rd day before Nonae”, and “the 2nd day before Nonae”. (The first day before Nonae would be Nonae itself.)

Similarly, the days between Nonae and Idus were called “the Xth day before Idus”, and the days after Idus were called “the Xth day before Kalendae (of the next month)”.

Julius Caesar decreed that in leap years the “6th day before Kalendae of March” should be doubled. So in contrast to our present system, in which we introduce an extra date (29 February), the Romans had the same date twice in leap years.

January 1st Not Always New Year Day

When Julius Caesar introduced his calendar in 45 BC, he made 1 January the start of the year. However, the church didn't like the wild parties that took place at the start of the new year, and in AD 567 the council of Tours declared that having the year start on 1 January was an ancient mistake that should be abolished.

Through the middle ages various New Year dates were used. If an ancient document refers to year X, it may mean any of 7 different periods in our present system:

- 1 March X to 28/29 February X+1
- 1 January X to 31 December X
- 1 January X-1 to 31 December X-1
- 25 March X-1 to 24 March X
- 25 March X to 24 March X+1
- Saturday before Easter X to Friday before Easter X+1
- 25 December X-1 to 24 December X

Choosing the right interpretation of a year number is difficult, so much more as one country might use different systems for religious and civil needs.

The Byzantine Empire used a year starting on 1 September, but they didn't count years since the birth of Christ. Instead they counted years since the creation of the world, which they dated to 1 September 5509 BC.

Since about 1600 most countries have used 1 January as the first day of the year. Italy and England, however, did not make 1 January official until around 1750.

In England (but not Scotland) three different years were used:

- The historical year, which started on 1 January.
- The liturgical year, which started on the first Sunday in advent.
- The civil year, which from the 7th to the 12th century started on 25 December, from the 12th century until 1751 started on 25 March, from 1752 started on 1 January.

The Names of the Months

A lot of languages, including English, use month names based on Latin. Their Latin names and meaning are listed below. However, some languages (Czech and Polish, for example) use quite different names.

- January: Januarius. Named after the god Janus.
 February: Februarius. Named after Februa, the purification festival.
 March: Martius. Named after the god Mars.
 April: Aprilis. Named either after the goddess Aphrodite or the Latin word "aperire", to open.
 May: Maius. Probably named after the goddess Maia.
 June: Junius. Probably named after the goddess Juno.
 July: Julius. Named after Julius Caesar in 44 BC. Prior to that time its name was Quintilis from the word "quintus", fifth, because it was the 5th month in the old Roman calendar.
 August: Augustus. Named after emperor Augustus in 8 BC. Prior to that time the name was Sextilis from the word "sextus", sixth, because it was the 6th month in the old Roman calendar.
 September: September. From the word "septem", seven, because it was the 7th month in the old Roman calendar.
 October: October. From the word "octo", eight, because it was the 8th month in the old Roman calendar.
 November: November. From the word "novem", nine, because it was the 9th month in the old Roman calendar.
 December: December. From the word "decem", ten, because it was the 10th month in the old Roman calendar.

The Correct Way to Write Dates

Different countries have different customs. Most countries use a day-month-year format, such as:
 25.12.1998 25/12/1998 25/12-1998 25.XII.1998

In the U.S.A. a month-day-year format is common:
 12/25/1998 12-25-1998

International standard IS-8601 mandates a year-month-day format, namely either
 1998-12-25 or 19981225.

In all of these systems, the first two digits of the year are frequently omitted:
 25.12.98 12/25/98 98-12-25

This confusion leads to misunderstandings. What is 02-03-04? To most people it is 2 Mar 2004; to an American it is 3 Feb 2004; and to a person using the international standard it would be 4 Mar 2002.

If you want to be sure that people understand you, I recommend that you:

- * write the month with letters instead of numbers, and
- * write the years as 4-digit numbers.

The Origin of the 7-Day Week

The Christian, the Hebrew, and the Islamic calendars all have a 7-day week.

Digging into the history of the 7-day week is a very complicated matter. Authorities have very different opinions about the history of the week, and they frequently present their speculations as if they were indisputable facts. The only thing some academics seem to know for certain about the origin of the 7-day week is that they know nothing for certain.

The first pages of the Bible explain how God created the world in six days and rested on the seventh. This seventh day became the Jewish day of rest, the sabbath, Saturday.

Extra-biblical locations sometimes mentioned as the birthplace of the 7-day week include: Egypt, Babylon, Persia, and several others. The week was known in Rome before the advent of Christianity.

Names of the Days of the Week

These are closely linked to the language in question. Whereas most languages use the same names for the months (with a few Slavonic languages as notable exceptions), there is great variety in names that various languages use for the days of the week. A few examples will be given here.

Except for the sabbath, Jews simply number their week days.

A related method is partially used in Portuguese and Russian:

English	Portuguese	Russian	Meaning of Russian name
-----	-----	-----	-----
Mon.	segunda-feira	ponedelnik	After do-nothing day
Tue.	terca-feira	vtornik	Second day
Wed.	quarta-feira	sreda	Center
Thur.	quinta-feira	chetverg	Four
Fri.	sexta-feira	pyatnitsa	Five
Sat.	sabado	subbota	Sabbath
Sun.	domingo	voskresenye	Resurrection

Most Latin-based languages connect each day of the week with one of the seven "planets" of the ancient times: Sun, Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. French, for example, uses:

English	French	"Planet"
Monday	lundi	Moon
Tuesday	mardi	Mars
Wednesday	mercredi	Mercury
Thursday	jeudi	Jupiter

Friday	vendredi	Venus
Saturday	samedi	Saturn
Sunday	dimanche	(Sun)

The link with the sun has been broken in French, but Sunday was called “dies solis” (day of the sun) in Latin.

It is interesting to note that also some Asiatic languages (for example, Hindi, Japanese, and Korean) have a similar relationship between the week days and the planets.

English has retained the original planets in the names for Saturday, Sunday, and Monday. For the four other days, however, the names of Anglo-Saxon or Nordic gods have replaced the Roman gods that gave name to the planets. Thus, Tuesday is named after Tiw, Wednesday is named after Woden, Thursday is named after Thor, and Friday is named after Freya.

The planets have given the week days their names following this order:

Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, Sun

Why this particular order?

One theory goes as follows: If you order the “planets” according to either their presumed distance from Earth (assuming the Earth to be the center of the universe) or their period of revolution around the Earth, you arrive at this order:

Moon, Mercury, Venus, Sun, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn

Now, assign (in reverse order) these planets to the 24 hours of the day:

1=Saturn, 2=Jupiter, 3=Mars, 4=Sun, 5=Venus, 6=Mercury, 7=Moon, 8=Saturn, 9=Jupiter, etc., 23=Jupiter, 24=Mars

Then next day will then continue where the old day left off:

1=Sun, 2=Venus, etc., 23=Venus, 24=Mercury

And the next day will go:

1=Moon, 2=Saturn, etc.

If you look at the planet assigned to the first hour of each day, you will note that the planets come in this order:

Saturn, Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus

This is exactly the order of the associated week days. Coincidence? Maybe.

It is hard to say if the 7-day week cycle has ever been broken. Calendar changes and reform have never interrupted the 7-day cycles. It is possible that the week cycles have run uninterrupted since the days of Moses

(c. 1400 BC).

Some sources claim that the ancient Jews used a calendar in which an extra Sabbath was occasionally introduced. There is strong Biblical evidence for this, but scholars do not agree.

The Bible clearly makes Saturday (the Sabbath) the last day of the week. Therefore it is common Jewish and Christian practice to regard Sunday as the first day of the week (as is also evident from the Portuguese names for the week days mentioned earlier). However, the fact that, for example, Russian uses the name “second day” for Tuesday, indicates that some nations regard Monday as the first day.

In international standard IS-8601 the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) has decreed that Monday shall be the first day of the week.

Are There Weeks of Different Lengths?

If you define a “week” as a 7-day period, obviously the answer is no. But if you define a “week” as a named interval that is greater than a day and smaller than a month, the answer is yes.

The French Revolutionary calendar used a 10-day “week”. The Maya calendar uses a 13 and a 20-day “week”.

The Soviet Union has used both a 5-day and a 6-day week. In 1929-30 the USSR gradually introduced a 5-day week. Every worker had one day off every week, but there was no fixed day of rest. On 1 September 1931 this was replaced by a 6-day week with a fixed day of rest, falling on the 6th, 12th, 18th, 24th, and 30th day of each month (1 March was used instead of the 30th day of February, and the last day of months with 31 days was considered an extra working day outside the normal 6-day week cycle). A return to the normal 7-day week was decreed on 26 June 1940.

The French Revolutionary Calendar

The French Revolutionary Calendar (or Republican Calendar) was introduced in France on 24 November 1793 and abolished on 1 January 1806. It was used again briefly under the Paris Commune in 1871.

Their year consisted of 365 or 366 days, divided into 12 months of 30 days each, followed by 5 or 6 additional days. The months were:

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1. Vendémiaire | 7. Germinal |
| 2. Brumaire | 8. Floréal |
| 3. Frimaire | 9. Prairial |
| 4. Nivôse | 10. Messidor |
| 5. Pluviôse | 11. Thermidor |
| 6. Ventôse | 12. Fructidor |

The year was not divided into weeks, instead each month was divided into three “decades” of 10 days, of which the final day was a day of rest. This was an

attempt to de-Christianize the calendar, but it was an unpopular move, because now there were 9 work days between each day of rest, whereas the Gregorian Calendar had only 6 work days between each Sunday.

The ten days of each decade were called, respectively, Primidi, Duodi, Tridi, Quartidi, Quintidi, Sextidi, Septidi, Octidi, Nonidi, Decadi.

The 5 or 6 additional days followed the last day of Fructidor and were called:

1. Jour de la vertu (Virtue Day)
2. Jour du genie (Genius Day)
3. Jour du travail (Labour Day)
4. Jour de l'opinion (Reason Day)
5. Jour des recompenses (Rewards Day)
6. Jour de la revolution (Revolution Day) (the leap day)

The Chinese Calendar

Although the People's Republic of China uses the Gregorian calendar for civil purposes, a special Chinese calendar is used for determining festivals. Various Chinese communities around the world also use this calendar.

The beginnings of the Chinese calendar can be traced back to the 14th century BC. Legend has it that the Emperor Huangdi invented the calendar in 2637 BC. Like the Hebrew calendar it is a combined solar/lunar calendar in that it strives to have its years coincide with the tropical year and its months coincide with the synodic months.

Unlike most other calendars, the Chinese calendar does not count years in an infinite sequence. Instead years have names that are repeated every 60 years.

(Historically, years used to be counted since the accession of an emperor, but this was abolished after the 1911 revolution.)

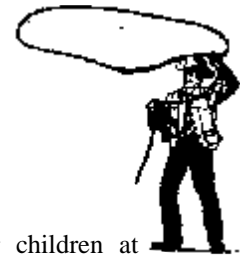
Within each 60-year cycle, each year is assigned a name consisting of two components. The first component is a "Celestial Stem" (these ten words have no English equivalent):

- | | |
|---------|---------|
| 1. jia | 6. ji |
| 2. yi | 7. geng |
| 3. bing | 8. xin |
| 4. ding | 9. ren |
| 5. wu | 10. gui |

The second component is a "Terrestrial Branch":

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. zi (rat) | 7. wu (horse) |
| 2. chou (ox) | 8. wei (sheep) |
| 3. yin (tiger) | 9. shen (monkey) |
| 4. mao (hare, rabbit) | 10. you (rooster) |
| 5. chen (dragon) | 11. xu (dog) |
| 6. si (snake) | 12. hai (pig) |

CHomes Roundup



Are Jews homeschooling?

Yes. Jews are teaching their children at home for many of the same reasons as non-Jews. Religious families who live far from Jewish day schools, families with negative school experiences, and those who believe that homeschooling offers more than even the best school, are all choosing to homeschool.

Are curricula available that are not Christian-based?

Yes, Calvert School, Oak Meadow and Laurel Springs offer complete elementary curricula that are not religiously based. Basic curricula outlines can be found at different books such as the "What Your 1st Grader Needs to Know" series, as well as Internet web sites. Some Jews have had success using commercially available Christian materials, simply omitting the religious content. Many Jewish homeschoolers fashion their curricula from a variety of sources. As of this writing, I do not know of any specifically Jewish curricula.

(From *Jewish Home Educator's Network*, a quarterly newsletter with ideas and how-to advice on home schooling. < <http://snj.com/jhen/> >)

Each of the two components is used sequentially. Thus, the 1st year of the 60-year cycle becomes jia-zi, the 2nd year is yi-chou, the 3rd year is bing-yin, etc. When we reach the end of a component, we start from the beginning: The 10th year is gui-you, the 11th year is jia-xu (restarting the Celestial Stem), the 12th year is yi-hai, and the 13th year is bing-zi (restarting the Terrestrial Branch). Finally, the 60th year becomes gui-hai.

The current 60-year cycle started on 2 Feb 1984. This means we are now in the year geng-chen, the 17th year in the 78th cycle (since the Chinese calendar began in 2637 B.C.): the year of the dragon.

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