

Tips for Homeschooling with Few or No Resources

How to teach on a shoestring, if money is tight or if the economy collapses



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Use your best and last money to educate your children. However, if and when all money runs out, and/or there is a total collapse of the economy, here are some tips.

For starters, use what you HAVE. It is the old Biblical principle of the loaves and the fishes. Just start with what you HAVE and your Heavenly Father will multiply other materials to you as you conquer the ones you already have, first. If you are overseas, use any God-honoring book that was written in English. You can read to young children from it; older children can take dictation from it, narrate back to you what they have heard, and write about it. If they are young, they can learn the alphabet and how to read from it word by word. They could even add and subtract by counting all of the words on the page, dividing them, multiplying the lines of them, estimating how many are on the next page, summarize a page of it at a time, outline it, etc. Some moms might be prone to think with a sigh, “I don’t have COMPLETE course work for all of the children” and might use that fact to be tempted to do nothing at all. But just use what you CAN get your hands on, until THAT is conquered.

Pray for other materials, with the confidence that the LORD is more interested in educating HIS children, through you, than you are even as the parent! Perhaps some tourist visitors centers might have maps you could have to study from. Learning scale, mileage, directions, and locations. But the computer, alone, has inexhaustible content. By using material online (that you print out for them) children can compare retail prices on various objects, look up and study geography of various regions, study financial charts and trends, double or triple online recipes, research health herbs, summarize the news in written reports, etc.

Another idea: Try to remember everything that you as parents were taught in school and teach THOSE concepts and skills to your children from your memory. The way you find out what those areas are is to think, what can I do that my children can't do? Turn around and teach it to them. The important thing is to move the children along with something NEW academically every day... some new little task that they have never done before.

Order our downloadable [*The Right Stuff*](#) E-Book and tear into the last pages...lists of spelling words. If every one of your children could read, write and spell those 1,000 frequently most used words perfectly, they would very nearly be CONSIDERED completely educated in all of their daily interchanges and email-writing to ANYONE. You can thoroughly conquer the spelling of these words, and then proceed into oceans more of helpful free materials that are out there! Print out maps of all of the continents, from online sources, and have your children draw them and list as many cities and natural features as possibly, progressively adding a few more each day. After scores of practice doing this they will be considered very nearly brilliant. All of this costs you Zip. Zilch. Nothin'.

How to homeschool using only the Bible:

When each of her 17 children turned five years of age, Susanna Wesley took them into a private room and began to educate them. She used only the Bible and she started at the beginning, teaching her children to read echoically (with echoes). "In, (in) the (the) beginning (beginning)..." The child spoke the words after her and pointed to each word as he said it. He saw, heard and spoke each word, thus employing three senses for strong recall. The child picked up the phonics, subliminally. Although teaching phonics directly is far easier, nevertheless this method worked for Susanna. Charles and John Wesley are a tribute to her unflagging discipline and resolute determination to have well-educated children to the glory of God. When asked by her husband why she explained the same math problem to her son 15 times (at which time the child finally understood it), she replied, "If I had quit at the 14th time, I would have lost all of my beginning energy."

She educated her children almost single-handedly while her husband was away on long preaching trips. Visitors to the home said it was well-ordered, quiet, and mentally disciplined.

Historically, some people have had only the Bible with which to educate their children. Long ago, the Waldenses who were persecuted and hid in the Alps kept their children educated by means of the Bible alone. We can be grateful that they were one of the primary means of keeping the Scriptures alive during the Middle Ages. They took on occupations as traveling merchants so that they could smuggle their family's handwritten copies into villages.

Hebrew children, too, were educated primarily by means of the Torah, having it largely memorized by the age of 12. And during the Reformation, Martin Luther and John Calvin deliberately arranged to teach large classes of boys the catechism (Calvin's Westminster Catechism involves 100 questions of doctrine) using only the Bible. Many six-year-olds knew these answers thoroughly before graduating to the next level of Bible. Our [*Child's Grip of Biblical Doctrine*](#) is available electronically to cover much of this content.

With academic instruction, nothing happens if the content just lies on the page, be it in the Bible or in any other text. There must be INTERACTION with the text for real education to take place.

A parent grows her child's academic/mental muscle in the same way that an athlete grows a physical muscle, by presenting it with increasingly difficult mini-challenges, day after day. These mini-challenges are increased both in complexity and duration.

So by using the Bible alone, and having an understanding of how a parent/tutor grows mental muscle in a child (by presenting it with increasing mini-challenges associated with the text), your child can become significantly educated!

Here now is a list of how one COULD use the Bible to educate one's child, if it was all the material that he had to work with. Math and world news would have to be supplemented via information printed out from the Internet if no other materials were available or money was too tight to purchase better materials. But Internet materials should be a parent's last choice. (Warning: all Internet materials should be screened and hand-picked ONLY by the parent and PRINTED OUT for the child

to use...as in maps, Wikipedia information, etc. Sitting a child in front of the Internet is a real strain to a child's developing nervous system, and in our opinion should not be done with any frequency until adolescence.)

How to use the Bible as a source text for the majority of a child's education:

(Use large print and easy versions of the Scriptures for younger children.)

Read it (echoically to begin with, out-loud; do it quietly later, after they have learned to read; at least 15 minutes per day).

Take dictation from it. This is powerful learning. The parent reads a paragraph from the Bible, while the child writes it down from only HEARING it. Then parent and child correct this written dictation together. Immediately, the child will learn proper punctuation, even for dialogue markings, correct spelling, phrases, and clause markings, etc. As well as grow in attentive, accurate listening skills.

Outline a chapter.

Summarize a chapter.

Study all the maps at the end of the Bible. The child can draw them from memory, day after day, progressively labeling more and more cities and land forms, rivers, mountains, from memory, until she totally master these maps.

Make speeches from it: A very young child just stands up on a sturdy box, or chair or table and reads a passage aloud with enthusiasm and inflection in his voice. He repeats the reading after learning correct pronunciations of all the difficult words. Older children read the passage and then comment upon it (sort of like preaching for beginners!), standing upon the same sturdy box or stool. Ask:

- ___ What does this passage mean?
- ___ What should a person DO based on this passage?
- ___ What does it tell us God is like?

Memorize verses.

Meditate on a verse and then put it into my own words.

Rewrite the Proverbs/Psalms in rhymes.

Find and list (write out) all the passages that directly came out of God's mouth, word for word.

Draw the Wilderness Tabernacle to scale, and all of the articles that were in it.

Make a time line from Genesis to Revelation. Fill it in progressively, day after day, as you read.

List all the key people in the entire Bible; compile the list gradually, as you read through the entire Bible. Alphabetize the list; write a biographical synopsis of each person; map their travels; etc.

List all the key events in the entire Bible.

List all the key places.

Copy the whole Bible in your best handwriting 15 minutes a day from Genesis to Revelation until it is done.

Learn Hebrew letters by heart.

Come up with a title in your own words for every chapter in the Bible.

And on and on it goes.....

Conclusion?

Even though the educational methods described above may be useful during hard times, we recommend using the curriculum offered by ACE ([Accelerated Christian Education](#)) if at all possible. Frankly, in a normally functioning world, moms weren't meant to have to carry such a load as figuring all of this out themselves, in addition to everything else you have to do. Sell the extra things you've packed away in your basement or storage shed to purchase it. With ACE, you'll achieve the same ends (a thorough godly education), but by a far easier route. It won't extract a pound of flesh from mom.

This is a production of Homeschool How-To's, by Renée Ellison

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