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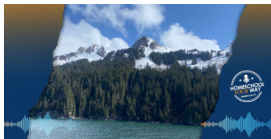
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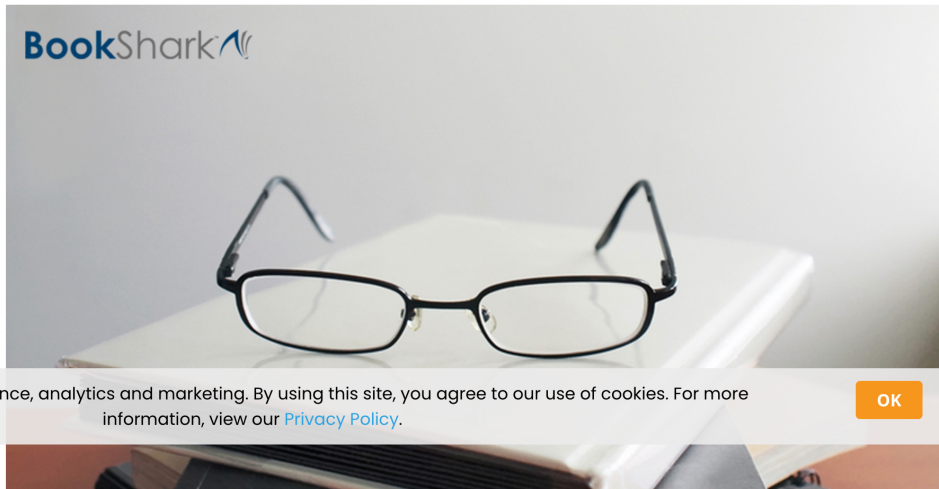
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A Curriculum Primer for Beginning Homeschoolers



By Demetria Zinga

Oct 22, 2015



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OK

Why do many homeschool families feel overwhelmed at the beginning of a new school year? The main reason, in my experience, is **choosing curriculum**. Curriculum choices abound and choosing what to teach your children each year can be overwhelming. Couple that with countless homeschool curriculum publishers each with catalogs and websites, homeschool friends' advice and opinions, and myriads of workshops and conventions geared toward homeschoolers who may not even be sure which homeschool method will work best for them, and you surely have [a recipe for confusion](#).

But have no fear: choosing curriculum doesn't **have** to be a chore. First off, there's the little known fact among many experienced homeschoolers that the curriculum you start off using at the beginning of the year may not last you a full semester before you [realize it doesn't work well for your kids or for you](#), for that matter.

Ease Into It

So my first piece of advice is to **tiptoe** your way into the world of curriculum instead of taking a plunge! In other words, dabble around with different workbooks, texts, and kits until you find several that seem to fit your family the best. For our family, trying a myriad of curriculum gave us a feeling for what was out there so that we could use the process of elimination to discover what was going to be the best fit for us.

Know Your Style

Next, figure out your homeschooling style. If you're not sure what that is, do a little research on the various homeschooling methods. Which method suits your kids best? How would you like to see your homeschooling look on a daily basis?

You can make a better informed decision on curriculum if you know your chosen method or style of homeschooling. It really helped our family to determine which homeschool publishers to take a second look at when we knew exactly which programs would fit our needs that year.

For example, one year we knew we wanted **virtual homeschooling** for my oldest and an **eclectic approach via our charter school** for my youngest. What this meant was that at homeschool conventions we shopped virtual school booths to compare them. For my youngest, we knew chose a variety of curriculum with different styles and approaches—some classical, some Montessori, and some traditional workbooks—to meet her needs.

In a previous year, our family wanted to travel a bit and use [a literature based program like BookShark](#) as our method of choice, so we took a long look at the different options among that category before we invested in our product of choice. And during the year I had a kindergartner, we used a lot of preschool and kinder-oriented workbooks published by companies that specialize in reaching younger children. So, take a good, long look at your children's stage in life and the methods you think you might employ that year.

Do Your Research

Finally, research, research, research. The only way to know which curriculum will work for you each year is to do a little digging. Find friends who are willing to let you borrow copies. Find libraries that circulate the books you're looking for. Many [libraries](#) do hold some

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homeschool curriculum.

Read homeschooling magazines to get an idea of what's out there.

Check out books on homeschooling and read recommendations. Find

curriculum review sites and research potential items you might want to buy. Find book excerpts in Google or search for the table of contents on preview-enabled books in Amazon to help you make a decision about what to buy.

Eventually, you will decide that your purchase was the best choice or that it didn't work for your family. Either way, you won't know unless you try. Homeschooling is all about taking minimum risks, and much of this journey is trial and error. At the end of the day, you'll find out what works and what doesn't work, and that's the beauty of it all. Much luck finding the curriculum that works for you this year. Happy homeschooling!



REQUEST A FREE PRINT CATALOG

Learn more about BookShark's literature-based, 4-day curriculum packages.

[CLICK TO REQUEST](#)

About the Author

Demetria is a homeschooling mompreneur and tech enthusiast who lives in the Silicon Valley with her husband, two daughters, and a dog named Shaggy. She currently runs the Christian Homeschool Moms Podcast, blogs, writes music, and spends lots of time at coffee shops.

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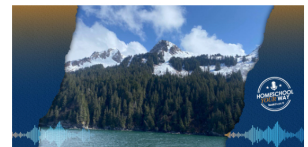
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