



An Explanation of Forms in A Gentle Feast

In Charlotte Mason's Parent's National Education Programmes, students were divided into Forms rather than our traditional American Grades or British Years. The benefit of this is great for families with multiple aged children, allowing for more shared learning among siblings. This also gives you, as the parent, more flexibility to select work that is up or down in other forms, depending on your child's (children's) educational needs and academic ability.

I have adjusted Miss Mason's forms into four groupings for greater simplicity.

The chart below explains the levels in **A Gentle Feast**. As you move through the cycles, you will follow the lesson plans for the form your child is in that current year.

	LOWER ELEMENTARY	UPPER ELEMENTARY	JUNIOR HIGH	SENIOR HIGH
AGF FORMS	I	II	II	IV
US GRADES	1-3	4-6	7-9	10-12
PNEU FORMS	I a and I b	II a and II b	III and IV	V and IV

Welcome to A Gentle Feast

Thank you for your purchase of *A Gentle Feast*. I pray your family will be blessed by this curriculum plan. Please know that what you have before you is meant to be a tool. I wrote *A Gentle Feast* because I wanted to share with others the freedom and peace I found in implementing Charlotte Mason's methods and philosophy into our home. It is not a prescription for success, as no curriculum could possibly guarantee that, and "success" is a very personal ideology. Our culture supports a factory model of education. It can certainly be tempting to follow a mechanical formula rather than thoughtfully thinking through methods and philosophy. Only the Holy Spirit can guide you as you teach your children. Relying too much on a guide can prevent us from hearing His still, small voice. I say all this because I want you to know that *A Gentle Feast* is not a box to neatly pack your family into with "shoulds" and "musts". We must always keep going back to Charlotte's first principle that children are born persons. You know your family best. Use the books, schedules, and plans to help as you prayerfully provide your family with a feast of living ideas.

I created *A Gentle Feast* because it is what I wish I had when I first started homeschooling. I had read "For the Children's Sake" by Susan Schaeffer Macaulay when I was still teaching public school. After reading that book about the Charlotte Mason method, I remember grieving because as much as I wanted to provide that kind of rich education she described for my students, I was unable to do so within the constraints of the school system.

When I started homeschooling my own children, I was overwhelmed with the different homeschooling options out there; but then I remembered that book I had read years before. As I searched for how to create the learning environment it described in our home, however, I longed for a guide. I wanted a resource that would show me how to create a homeschool rooted in Charlotte Mason's methods and philosophies with a user-friendly, family-centered design.

When I couldn't find anything that fit my family, I ended up spending hours trying to piecemeal a plan together. At the time, I had three kids under the age of three and was trying to homeschool two elementary children. I felt completely overwhelmed and ended up completely burning out. In those early days of homeschooling, I wished for a guide like *A Gentle Feast*. As it has developed, AGF has breathed life and beauty into our homeschool. It's truly created a night-and-day difference in our home, and I pray it will do the same for your family as well!



Blessings,

Julie H. Ross

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I. The Parts of the Feast

The Appetizer: Morning Time

WHAT IS MORNING TIME?

Morning Time is simply a focused, daily ritual that brings the entire family together to share in the feast of books, beauty, and Biblical truth. This practice builds a family culture around these shared experiences. In *A Gentle Feast*, Morning Time consists of two parts: **Bible and Beauty Loop**.

WHAT ARE "OPTION 1" AND "OPTION 2"?

On the plans, you will notice two options for Beauty Loop items such as: picture study, composers, poetry, and hymns. These are given so that the next time, you cycle through, you can study different selections.

HOW LONG SHOULD MORNING TIME LAST?

This will vary from family to family, but you want to be aware of the time so that Morning Time doesn't infringe on the rest of the feast. Here is a general time frame:

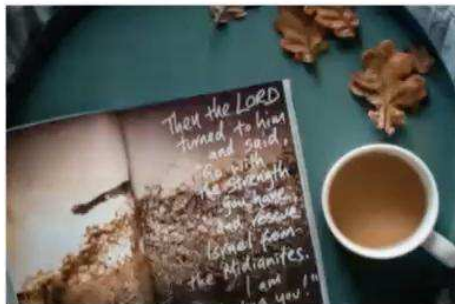
- Bible Reading and Narrations: 15-20 minutes, followed by prayer
- Beauty Loop: 5-20 minutes (depending on the day)

WHAT ELSE DO I NEED TO PURCHASE?

- Hymn Study book: [Then Sings My Soul](#).
- Fables and Biography books - You may choose to read one of the books for your entire family or have Forms II and up read their own books.
- Optional books for the artist and composer are listed if you would like to use them to enhance your picture/composer study.

Part 1: Bible

Gather the entire family for devotions, prayers, spiritual readings, or whatever else your family uses for religious studies. Four days of Bible readings are given. The other days can be specific to your denomination. You could include saint stories, catechism questions, missionary biographies, or habit-training, character-building lessons.



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HOW WAS BIBLE APPROACHED IN MISS MASON'S PROGRAMMES?

1. Bible readings are to come directly from the Bible and not a children's adaptation.

"We are apt to believe that children cannot be interested in the Bible unless its pages be watered down—turned into the slipshod English we prefer to offer them.... It is a mistake to use paraphrases of the text; the fine roll of Bible English appeals to children with a compelling music, and they will probably retain through life their first conception of the Bible scenes, and also, the very words in which these scenes are portrayed,"—Charlotte Mason, *Home Education*, p. 248-49

2. By age nine, children will have read "the simple (and suitable) narrative portions of the Old Testament, and say, two of the gospels,"—Charlotte Mason, *Home Education*, p. 249

3. Episodes are read and the children narrate these.

"Read aloud to the children a few verses covering, if possible, an episode. Read reverently, carefully, and with just expression. Then require the children to narrate what they have listened to as nearly as possible in the words of the Bible."—Charlotte Mason, *Home Education*, p. 251

4. After narrations, the teacher can emphasize points from the lesson.

"Before the close of the lesson, the teacher brings out such new thoughts of God or new points of behavior as the reading has afforded, emphasizing the moral or religious lesson to be learnt rather by a reverent and sympathetic manner than by any attempt at personal application."—Charlotte Mason, *A Philosophy of Education*, p. 163

5. Older students were to read through the entire Old Testament on their own. They would also read the New Testament, pairing Miss Mason's *Savior of the World* poetry collection with the Bible passages. The Epistles and Revelation were saved until the end of high school.

6. Bible recitations help children memorize larger passages of scripture in a natural manner.

"The learning by heart of Bible passages should begin while the children are quite young, six or seven....The whole parable should be read to them in a way to bring out its beauty and tenderness; and then, day by day, the teacher should recite a short passage, perhaps two or three verses, saying it over some three or four times until the children think they know it. Then, but not before, let them recite the passage. Next day the children will recite what they have already learned, and so on, until they are able to say the whole parable."—Charlotte Mason, *Home Education*, p. 253

HOW IS THE BIBLE APPROACHED IN A GENTLE FEAST?

In *A Gentle Feast*, Bible is done as a family in Morning Time. A four-year rotation is given that covers episodes in the Old and New Testament in chronological order. This is similar to what Miss Mason recommended. In addition, the Psalms and Proverbs are read, keeping with my belief that the rich language and deep truths greatly benefit all students. Your children would not narrate the readings from Psalms and Proverbs. You can access the four-year Bible rotation in the online resources. Older students are encouraged to have personal devotions before school, reading through the remainder of the Bible. Study Bibles, commentaries, and inductive studies can help older students understand what they are reading. In addition, longer portions of Scripture are memorized by and by like Miss Mason recommended. The same verse is learned over a twelve-week period.

Part 2: Beauty Subjects

If options are provided, do the first option during your first time through the cycle, and the second option during your second time through.

1. PICTURE STUDY OR COMPOSER STUDY

Steps to a Picture Study

In *Home Education* (pages 310-311), Miss Mason gives these steps for a "Picture-Talk"

Objects:

1. To continue the series of Landseer's pictures the children are taking in school.
2. To increase their interest in Landseer's works.
3. To show the importance of his acquaintance with animals.
4. To help them to read a picture truly.
5. To increase their powers of attention and observation.

She goes on to explain in detail:

Step I.—Ask the children if they remember what their last picture-talk was about, and what artist was famous for animal-painting. Tell them Landseer was acquainted with animals when he was quite young; he had dogs for pets, and because he loved them he studied them and their habits—so was able to paint them.

Step II.—Give them the picture 'Alexander and Diogenes' to look at, and ask them to find out all they can about it themselves, and to think what

idea the artist had in his mind, and what idea or ideas he meant his picture to convey to us.

Step III.—After three or four minutes, take the picture away and see what the children have noticed. Then ask them what the different dogs suggest to them; the strength of the mastiff representing Alexander; the dignity and stateliness of the bloodhounds in his rear; the look of the wise counselor on the face of the setter; the rather contemptuous look of the rough-haired terrier in the tub. Ask the children if they have noticed anything in the picture which shows the time of day; for example, the tools thrown down by the side of the workman's basket suggesting the mid-day meal; and the bright sunshine on the dogs who cast a shadow on the tub shows it must be somewhere about noon.

Step IV.—Let them read the title, and tell any facts they know about Alexander and Diogenes; then tell them Alexander was a great conqueror who lived B.C. 356-323, famous for the battles he won against Persia, India, and along the coast of the Mediterranean. He was very proud, strong, and boastful. Diogenes was a cynic philosopher. Explain cynic, illustrating by the legend of Alexander and Diogenes; and from it find out which dog represents Alexander and which Diogenes.

Step V.—Let the children draw the chief lines of the picture, in five minutes, with a pencil and paper.

Composer Study

On the first day of the term, read the composer biography ahead of time and paraphrase it for your children. You can also read the optional composer biography book a little bit each time or listen to the podcast from *Classics for Kids* (linked in the Resources if available). Links to the musical selections are provided in the Resources. Each week, you will simply listen to and enjoy the piece.

2. POETRY RECITATION

Students will recite the poems included in the Morning Time Packet. Form IV students have speeches and other selections from Shakespeare. Each poem is listed for 4-6 weeks, but I suggest you work at your child's pace. Have your child focus on speaking eloquently. They may memorize the poem by and by, but the focus of recitation is on speaking clearly and with emotion.

"She told me that her niece could repeat to me any of these poems that I liked to ask for, and that she had never learnt a single verse by heart in her life. The girl did repeat several of the poems on the list, quite beautifully and without hesitation; and then the lady unfolded her secret. She thought she had made a discovery, and I thought so too. She read a poem through to E; then the next day, while the little girl was making a doll's frock, perhaps, she read it again; once again the next day, while E's hair was being brushed. She got in about six or more readings, according to the length of the poem, at odd and unexpected times, and in the end E could say the poem which she had not learned. "I have tried the plan often since, and found it effectual. The child must not try to recollect or to say the verse over to himself, but, as far as may be, present an open mind to receive an impression of interest. Half a dozen repetitions should give children possession of such poems as—"Dolly and Dick," "Do you ask what the birds say?" "Little lamb, who made thee?" and the like" —Charlotte Mason, [Home Education](#), p. 224-225

3. POET STUDY

During this time, you will read a selection from the term's poet. Poems are included in the Morning Time Packet. In Cycle 1, the poems are from Elizabethan era. If you only have a Form I child, they may be too intense. You can substitute

selections from the book [Sing a Song of Popcorn: Every Child's Book of Poems](#), edited by Jan Carr, or [A Child's Garden of Verses](#) by Robert Louis Stevenson. Each year's poets correspond to the time period studied that year.

"Poetry reveals to us the loveliness of nature, brings back the freshness of youthful feelings, reviews the relish of simple pleasures, keeps unquenched the enthusiasm which warmed the springtime of our being, refines youthful love, strengthens our interest in human nature, by vivid delineations of its tenderest and softest feelings, and through the brightness of its prophetic visions, helps faith to lay hold on the future life." —William E. Channing

4. FABLES AND HERO TALES/ BIOGRAPHIES

Read these to your Form I children during this time. (Older students can read the selections independently.) Those students in Forms III and IV will probably need to find time other than morning time to finish their weekly readings. If you prefer, you can chose just one fables book to read to the entire family.

DAY 5: HYMN STUDY

Read the background information in [Then Sings My Soul](#). You can use the lyrics from the book or find them in the Morning Time Packet. I recommend making a copy of the lyrics for each child. Sing through this hymn for six weeks during this loop time. Hymns are chosen to correspond with the time periods being studied. Hymns links are provided in the Resources page.

Soup & Salad Language Arts

DAILY: COPYWORK

Your child will do a few lines of the week's copywork passage in the student packet each day. Form I students may wish to start out with only a word at a time. Focus on accuracy and perfection over speed. (If this is your child's first year doing formal lessons, use a handwriting curriculum instead of copywork.) Depending on your child's ability, he or she may or may not be able to finish the entire passage in a week. This is fine; simply move on once the week has ended. Again, I aim for quality over quantity. They will build up their stamina over time.

WEEKLY: DICTATION

Each day, your child will study the passage to prepare for dictation. The aim is to help the child visualize the selection until he can "see" it in his mind. At the end of the week, you will dictate the passage to her using the steps listed on the next page.

In Form I, the words are chosen from common sight words (plus a few interesting words). Your child will use these words to fill in the blanks on the Dictation sheets as you slowly read the passage to them. Students in Form II and up can work up to the entire passage.

WAYS TO STUDY WORDS FOR DICTATION:

There are many ways to do this. Let your child try several ways and find the one that works well for them. Variety keeps studying interesting.

1. Make the words in a tray of sand, salt, shaving cream, etc.
2. Make the words out of letter tiles, Banagrams, or Scrabble pieces.
3. Make the words on a chalkboard or dry erase board and erase a letter each time.
4. Play Hangman.
5. Rainbow write the words- write the word in pencil and then trace it with every color of the rainbow.
6. Use letter stamps or stickers.
7. Use a Magna Doodle.
8. Fill a big Ziplock bag with paint and tape it shut, and have your child write the words with a Q-tip onto the bag.
9. Use letter beads and have your child string the words on a pipe cleaner.
10. Use neon glow-in-the-dark gel pens and black paper.



Steps to a dictation lesson: (as described by Miss Mason in Home Education)

Dictation lessons, conducted in some such way as the following, usually result in good spelling.

1. A child of eight or nine prepares a paragraph, older children a page, or two or three pages. The child prepares by himself, by looking at the word he is not sure of, and then seeing it with his eyes shut. Before he begins, the teacher asks what words he thinks will need his attention. He generally knows, but the teacher may point out any word likely to be a cause of stumbling.
2. He lets his teacher know when he is ready. The teacher asks if there are any words he is not sure of. These she puts, one by one, on the blackboard, letting the child look till he has a picture, and then rubbing the word out. If anyone is still doubtful he should be called to put the word he is not sure of on the board, the teacher watching to rub out the word when a wrong letter begins to appear, and again helping the child to get a mental picture.
3. Then the teacher gives out the dictation, clause by clause, each clause repeated once. She dictates with a view to the pointing, which the children are expected to put in as they write; but they must not be told 'comma,' 'semicolon,' etc.
4. After the sort of preparation I have described, which takes ten minutes or less, there is rarely an error in spelling. If there be, it is well worth while for the teacher to be on the watch with slips of stamp-paper to put over the wrong word, that its image may be erased as far as possible.
5. At the end of the lesson, the child should again study the wrong word in his book until he says he is sure of, and should write it correctly on the stamp-paper.

A lesson of this kind secures the hearty co-operation of children, who feel they take their due part in it; and it also prepares them for the second condition of good spelling, which is—much reading combined with the habit of imaging the words as they are read.—Charlotte Mason, Home Education, Volume 1, p. 247



THE PARTS OF THE FEAST: DICTATION

WEEKLY: COMPOSITION

In Forms I and II, for each Copywork passage, there is a drawing and creative writing prompt. It may be helpful to look up a drawing tutorial online. This weekly composition is a time for your child to explore ideas, words, spelling, and genres. This is not to be corrected. Set a time limit of 10 minutes. This doesn't need to drag on. NO CORRECTIONS OR CRITIQUES. This exercise can be a great use of time if you are working with other children and need something that others can do independently.

"Nobody can teach creative writing—run like mad from anybody who thinks he can. But one can teach practices, like finger exercises on the piano; one can share the tools of the trade, and what one has gleaned from the great writers. It is the great writers themselves who do the teaching." —Madeline L'Engle

In Forms III and IV, students have composition assignments in their student packets. These are based on their readings and include a variety of written genres. This is the time to teach them some elements of effective written communication. Students in these forms will also have a separate composition time in their schedule to work on longer written narrations and/ or make final drafts of a weekly narration.

DAILY: READING

PHONICS

For additional information on first reading lessons, see Volume I of Miss Mason's homeschooling series. Phonics (sight and sound lessons) should be done daily for 15 minutes. If you have a beginning reader, I recommend starting with the AGF resource, 100 Gentle Lessons in Sight and Sound. Students who are reading can do the phonics and grammar work in the Form I student packets.

READING

Once students are able, they should read daily. At first this can be from the readers listed on the booklist. See the booklist for suggested readers by grade. For Forms I and II, set the timer for 15-20 minutes and have them stop reading when the timer goes off. If advanced readers would like, they can read more in the afternoon or evening. Literature suggestions are given for grades 3 and 4-6. Use these suggestions if they work for your child's reading ability and pacing. Sticking to the time tables takes precedence over finishing the scheduled reading.

LITERATURE

Form III and IV students have scheduled readings from several classics and modern works. Students also have a weekly reading from a literature overview book to help them gain understanding of the authors and literature from the historical period they are studying. As always, adjust the amount of reading based on your child's ability.



THE PARTS OF THE FEAST: LANGUAGE ARTS

BOOK TALKS

On the lesson plans, you will see a scheduled "Book Talk" after your child finishes a book. It is a time for you to discuss the book with your child AFTER they have given you an oral or written narration of the book. I use the weekly narration notebook time to write down my younger children's narrations. I have my older children type their narrations of each book.

You don't have to have read the book in order to discuss it with your child. Websites like Sparknotes and Schmoop give great summaries and even discussion questions. I take my older kids out for "coffee chats." You can call them "cookie chats," "tea talks," "ice cream interviews," or some other creative name, but food is usually well received.

Here are some general questions that can be used with any book:

1. What was your favorite part?
2. What surprised you?
3. What in the story reminds you of any other books you have read?
4. Describe the main character. How does this character change or evolve through the story?
5. If you could ask this author one question about this book, what would it be?
6. If you could change anything about this book, what would it be and why?
7. What new things did you learn? What more would you like to know about this topic?
8. How did you feel while you were reading this book?
9. What made the setting unique or important? How would this story be different if it took place in a different time or place?
10. How did you feel about the ending? What did you like? What did you not like? What do you wish had been different?
11. Which characters did you relate to most, and what was it about them that you connected with?
12. Did the book change your opinion or perspective about anything? Do you feel differently now than you did before you read it?
13. To whom would you recommend this book to and why? If you don't recommend it, why not?
14. What were the major conflicts in the story? How were they resolved?
15. What was your favorite or a memorable passage?
16. Older students: Why do you think the author chose to tell the story from the perspective that she/he did? Who would you have chosen as the narrator? How did this choice of narrator affect the story?
17. Older students: What themes were in the book? What do you think the author's purpose was?
18. Older students: What type of tone does the author convey with his/her word choice? Is it optimistic, pessimistic, cautionary, humorous, satirical, metaphoric, descriptive, etc.?
19. Older students: What was more important, the characters or the plot? Was the plot moved forward by decisions of the characters, or were the characters at the mercy of the plot? Was the action believable? Was the story chronological? Was there foreshadowing and suspense?
20. Older students: What types of symbolism do you find in this novel? What do these objects really represent? How do characters react to and with these symbolic objects?

WEEKLY: ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE ARTS

GRAMMAR

Form I- Even though Miss Mason didn't have students start formal grammar until Form II, some basic grammar principles are included in the Form I Student Packets, but this shouldn't take longer than 15 minutes once per week. You can do these pages orally or do the writing for your child.

Form II- Grammar lessons are included in the student packet and may take 10 to 20 minutes once or twice per week. Optional reading assignments are given from the book [GrammarLand](#) by Nesbitt for 6th grade students.

Form III- Students will have grammar lessons twice per week for about 20 minutes.

Form IV- At this age, most students will have a firm handle on proper grammar. If your child needs more support or grammar is a requirement, I recommend Kahn Academy's Grammar as a great SAT/ACT prep. (My preference, though, is to review the grammar they have already learned through composition.)

WEEKLY NARRATION NOTEBOOK

Students in Forms I and II will keep a weekly narration notebook. You can use an 8x11 multimedia spiral-bound sketchbook or a 1 inch binder for this purpose. At the end of the week, you will have your child pick one lesson from the week to paint or draw and narrate. It is helpful to review the week and bring out some of the books used. Your child can dictate their narration to you as you copy it into the notebook. If you are transitioning an older child, to written narrations, you can write the narration on a separate piece of paper and then have the child copy it. If you wish, 5th and 6th grade students can try writing their own narrations.



The Main Course Academic Block

HISTORY

Miss Mason said that history was the spoke upon which the entire curriculum turned. I have patterned *A Gentle Feast* with this in mind and used a similar rotation to what Miss Mason used in her programmes. The following are important points to notice about how history was approached in the Parent's National Education Union (PNEU).

1. History instruction should begin with the history of the child's home country. These lessons should include hero tales, biographies, and other living books to inspire the child's imagination.

"The early history of a nation is better fitted than its later records for the study of children, because the story moves on a few broad, simple lines; while statesmanship, so far as it exists, is no more than the efforts of a resourceful mind to cope with circumstances. In the early years, while there are no examinations ahead, and the children may yet go leisurely, let them get the spirit of history into them by reading, at least one old Chronicle written by a man who saw and knew something of what he wrote about and did not get it secondhand. These old books are easier and pleasanter reading than most modern works on

history; because writers, know little of the 'dignity of history;' they purl along pleasantly as a forest brook, tell you 'all about it,' stir your heart with the story of a great event, amuse you with pageants and shows, make you intimate with the great people, and friendly with the lowly. They are just the right thing for the children whose eager souls want to get at the living people behind the words of the history book, caring nothing at all about progress, or 'statutes, or about anything but the persons, for whose action history is, to the child's mind, no more than a convenient state. A child who has been carried through a single old chronicle in this way has a better foundation than if he knew all the dates and names and facts that ever were crammed for examination." —Charlotte Mason, *Home Education*, p. 281

I

In Vol. 1, Miss Mason discusses reading *Tales from Westminster Abbey* and then taking the children to see these spots for themselves. I think this is one of the benefits of starting with your own country's history. Opportunities for field trips to see the world of the past abound. My children have visited a log cabin like Lincoln lived in, attended a lesson in an old one-room school house, and traversed the streets of Colonial Williamsburg. They still talk about these trips (and others) which gave them tangible experiences and images of the past. The books used in Form I are of high literary quality and are read to the child.

"The child of six in Ib has, not stories from English History, but a definite quantity of consecutive reading, say, forty pages in a term, from a well-written, well-considered, large volume which is also well-illustrated. Children can-not of course themselves read a book which is by no means written down to the 'child's level' so the teacher reads and the children 'tell' paragraph by paragraph, passage by passage." —Charlotte Mason, Vol 6, p.172

2. In Form II (grades 4-6), students added on the history of a neighboring country following the same chronological progression. They also started studying Ancient history in 5th grade. Form III (grades 7-8) follows this same pattern.

"Form II (ages 9 to 12) have a more considerable historical programme which they cover with ease and enjoyment. They use a more difficult book than in IA, an interesting and well-written history of England of which they read some fifty pages or so in a term. IIA read in addition and by way of illustration the chapters dealing with the social life of the period in a volume. We introduce children as early as possible to the contemporary history of other countries as the study of English history alone is apt to lead to a certain insular and arrogant habit of mind. Naturally we begin with French history and both divisions read from the First History of France, very well written, the chapter contemporary with the English history they are reading."

"The study of ancient history which cannot be contemporaneous we approach through a chronologically-arranged book about the British Museum." —Charlotte Mason, *A Philosophy of Education*, p. 175

3. In Forms IV and up (high school) we see English history and General history (part contemporary world corresponding to the English history and part Ancient studies). In these forms, literature is highly integrated to the time period being studied.

"But any sketch of the history teaching in Form V and VI in a given period depends upon a notice of the 'literature' set; for plays, novels, essays, 'lives,' poems are all pressed into service and where it is possible, the architecture, painting, etc, which the period produced." —Charlotte Mason, *A Philosophy of Education*, p. 177

4. We are not "responsible" for teaching every aspect of history to our children. We are given the task of preparing the feast from which our students may linger and imagine and progress at a leisurely pace, being firmly acquainted with the persons and places of a time well gone.

"The fatal mistake is the notion he must learn outlines, or a baby edition of the whole history of England, or of Rome, just as he must cover the geography of ALL the world. Let him, on the contrary, linger pleasantly over the history of a single man, a short period, until he thinks the thoughts of that man, is at home in the ways of that period. Though he is reading and thinking of the lifetime of a single man, he is really getting intimately acquainted with the history of a whole nation for a whole age." —Charlotte Mason, *Home Education*, p. 280

Volume 6 pg. 178: "It is a great thing to possess a pageant of history in the background of one's thoughts. We may not be able to recall this or that circumstance, but the imagination is warmed; we know that there is a great deal to be said on both sides of every question and are saved from crudities in opinion and rashness in action. The present becomes enriched for us with the wealth of all that has gone before." —Charlotte Mason, *A Philosophy of Education*, p.178

5. Narration is an integral component to history education. Narration can also be done through drawing and even playing.

Volume 1 pg. 292: "History readings afford admirable material for narration, and children enjoy narrating what they have read or heard. They love, too, to make illustrations. Children who had been reading Julius Caesar (and also, Plutarch's Life), were asked to make a picture of their favourite scene, and the results showed the extraordinary power of visualizing, which the little people possess. Of course, that which they visualize, or imagine clearly, they know; it is a life possession." —Charlotte Mason, *Home Education*, p.292

BOOK OF CENTURIES

Students in Forms II and up will keep a Book of Centuries where they will record people, places, and events from their readings and draw pictures of artifacts from that time.

This is NOT a timeline! Students will keep this throughout the remainder of school, so I recommend purchasing a quality one like the one from Riverbend Press. You can also make your own with a hardbound sketchbook. Edwin Tunis has a great series of books for help in finding/drawing these artifacts.

TIMELINES

When I first started homeschooling, I bought a timeline kit with hundreds of pieces for me to cut out and keep track of. My kids colored the pieces and we glued them in their appropriate spot, but I wondered if all the work was worth it as they didn't seem to connect with it. Later, when I read Miss Mason's thoughts on history, I realized I was doing all the work. In the PNEU, Century Wall charts were used by older students who could decide what to include on it and when to fill in for **THEMSELVES!** Form III and up students will be able to make a neat and detailed timeline. This will especially help with the Genevieve Foster books, which jump from country to country but stay in the same time period. Riverbend Press also sells an excellent wall timeline.

HISTORY BY FORM

Form I - These books can be read to your child, or you can have your child read them to you. After reading, have your child tell back what they remember.

Form II - Students will be studying American history. The readings are split over 2 days. Starting in 4th grade, students will add an additional stream of British history. Ancient history starts in 5th grade. Your Form II student may be able to read these texts independently and then narrate (either orally or in writing). Students in this form will start a Book of Centuries, in which they will record people, places, and events from their

readings and draw pictures of artifacts from that time.

Forms III and IV - Students will be doing American history with corresponding world history. They will also have a separate stream of ancient history. Students in this form will keep a Book of Centuries where they will record people, places, and events from their readings and draw pictures of artifacts from that time. A written narration for each stream can be required weekly. It is recommended, that students be reading weekly about current events and narrating those readings. See the appendix for awarding high school credit for the different history streams.



18

GEOGRAPHY

In the PNEU, the subject of geography was taught through reading living books, noting the locations of their lessons, and map drills. The students started with learning about their locality and expanding outward through the years. In *A Gentle Feast*, students start making maps of their home and by the end of Form III will have mapped the entire world.

Form I - This form includes two levels of geography plans. Grades 1 and 2 focus on Physical Geography and beginning map skills. Grade 3 covers the United States. You can choose the year based on your child's grade or prior geography knowledge. Students in this form are completing a variety of hands-on projects to learn about mapping and the world around them in concrete terms. A variety of living books will help them to delve into this "panorama of delight."

Form II - Students will dig deeper into the geography of the United States and that of neighboring countries.

Form III - One day, each week, students will read from the Geography reader to become better acquainted with people and places around the world.

The other day, they will complete map work. Weekly map work is located in the Resources. During map drills, students will learn about the countries and landforms of the world. In order to drill these, give your student a packet of several blank maps. They will add on several countries or features each week. Each successive week, review the previously learned countries and add more.

Form III - One day, each week, students will read from the Geography reader to become better acquainted with people and places around the world. The other day, if your child already completed the map drill in Form III, he or she can review using the Seterra app.

"But let him be at home in any single region: let him see, with the mind's eye, the people at their work and at their play, the flowers and fruits in their seasons, the beasts, each in its habitat: and let him see all sympathetically, that is, let him follow the adventures of a traveller: and he knows more, is better furnished with ideas, than if he had learnt all the names on all the maps."

—Charlotte Mason, *Home Education*, page 275.



NATURAL HISTORY

"The real use of naturalists' books is to give the child delightful glimpses into the world of wonders he lives in, reveal the sorts of things to be seen by curious eyes, and fill him with desire to make discoveries for himself."
—Charlotte Mason, *Home Education*, page 64.

Form I - Read to your child from the scheduled books, and ask him or her to narrate these readings. You may want to suggest drawing a picture in their nature journals to go with the lesson.

Forms II-IV Your child will read and narrate these books independently.

SCIENCE

"So much attention is now given to the practical and systematic study of science in schools that the valuable influence of descriptive scientific literature is apt to be overlooked. An intimate knowledge of the simplest fact in nature can be obtained only through personal observation or experiment in the open air or in the laboratory, but broad views of scientific thought and progress are secured best from books in which the methods and results of investigation is stated in language." —Edward Fourier, *The Wonders of Physical Science*.

Form I - Students in this form do not have formal science lessons. Their nature study and outdoor time are the primary focus. If you have older children, you may wish to include your Form I students in the family science experiments.

Forms II and III - Students in these forms will be doing the family science lessons. These can be completed together with some readings each week assigned only to a certain level.

Form IV - Even though Miss Mason recommended using multiple streams of science throughout high school, I realize that is not what most families are comfortable with. Therefore, I have divided this schedule based on what most families do. Students at this age should be keeping a Science Notebook of narrations and lab pictures, diagrams, etc.

- Grade 9 - Biology
- Grade 10 - Chemistry
- Grade 11 - Physics
- Grade 12 - Advanced Human Anatomy and Physiology

"It is reassuring to see methods that we have pursued for over thirty years with admirable results recommended thus authoritatively. The only sound method of teaching science is to afford a due combination of field or laboratory work, with such literary comments and amplifications as the subject affords. For example, from Ethics of the *Deist* children derive a certain enthusiasm for crystals as such that their own unaided observation would be slow to afford. As a matter of fact the teaching of science in our schools has lost much of its educative value through a fatal and quite unnecessary divorce between science and the 'humanities!'" —Charlotte Mason, *School Education*, page 223.

SINGING

This is a delightful aspect of the feast for younger students. Solfa lessons and folk songs are scheduled for Form I. Foreign language songs should also be sung weekly.

PLAY OR SWEDISH DRILL

You can use this time as a play break or take a go at Swedish Drill, which is the kind of physical activity Charlotte Mason used. See these videos for more: <https://vimeo.com/170226792>

CITIZENSHIP

Form I - Citizenship was not scheduled for this age; rather, students should be encouraged to see character qualities displayed in the fables and folktales that are read to them.

Form II - Students will read about famous men and women and begin learning about US Civics.

Form III - Students will read through *Ourselves* by Charlotte Mason. They will read a small section each week, following the chapter divisions given by Miss Mason. I've also included more modern books on morals and habit training.

"Ourselves our Souls and Bodies (by the Writer) is much used in the U.S.; as I know of no other attempt to present such a ground plan of human nature as should enable the young student to know where he is in his efforts to 'be good' as the children say. The point of view taken in this volume is, that all beautiful and noble possibilities are present in every one, but that each person is subject to assaults and hinderances in various ways of which he should be aware in order that he may watch and pray." —Charlotte Mason, *A Philosophy of Education*, page 189

Form IV - Students will read philosophy, world view, economics, and civics books during this time. (If students have not finished reading *Ourselves*, I recommend that they complete reading that first.)



FOREIGN LANGUAGE

In the PNEU, students started learning French at a very young age.

"The daily French lesson is that which should not be limited. That children learn French orally, by listening to and repeating French words and phrases; that they should begin so young that the difference of accent does not strike them, but they repeat the new French word all the same as if it were English and use it as freely; that they should learn a few - two or three, five or six - new French words daily, and that, at the same time, the old words should be kept in use - are points to be considered more fully hereafter: in the meantime, it is so important to keep tongue and ear familiar with French vocabularies, that not a lesson should be admitted." —Charlotte Mason, [Home Education](#), page 80

In Form I, students are taught a language by learning a few new words per day, playing games, and listening to stories, songs, and rhymes in the new language.

"I have no hesitation in saying the M Gouin's work [[The Art of Teaching and Studying Languages](#)] is the most important attempt that has yet been made to bring the study of languages within the sphere of practical education... Again, it is incontestable that the ear, and not the eye is the physical organ for apprehending a language, just as truly as it is by the mouth, and not the ear, we appropriate food... Equally important is his third position, that the verb is the key to the sentence and more, is the living bridge between thought and act. He maintains, too, that the child thinks in sentences, not in words; that his sentences have a logical sequence." —Charlotte Mason, [Home Education](#), p. 302

In [A Gentle Feast](#) Resources, foreign language plans are given for French and Spanish. If you have a Form I child, you will start in Year I. All older children will start in Level II. If you would like to teach a different modern language, you can adapt these principles to the language you wish.

LATIN

In Miss Mason's school, Latin was started in about 5th grade. You will want your child to have a firm grasp of English grammar first. I recommend waiting until 6th grade to start Latin, unless you have a very advanced child.

"Latin is taught at the House of Education by means of narration after each section has been thoroughly studied in grammar, syntax and style. The literature studied increases in difficulty as the pupil advances in grammar, etc. Nothing but good Latin is ever narrated, so the pupil acquires style as well as structure. The substance of the passage is usually reproduced with the phraseology and style of the original and both students and children learn what is really Latin and realize that it is a language and not a mere grammar." —Charlotte Mason, [A Philosophy of Education](#), p. 213



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The Dessert

TEA TIME

Every day in [A Gentle Feast](#) ends with tea time. This is a delightful way to end the day, and each day has a different tea time activity. Don't worry though, you don't have to use fancy tea cups; you can just have milk and cookies with plastic plates and cups. What is important is that it gives you a time to gather together as family allowing you to end each school day on a positive note. If you are unable to have tea time in the afternoons, this can be an evening activity as well. This is a great time for the older children to give their oral narrations and younger siblings to listen in. Here are some of the activities included in tea time:

I. Poetry - This is a very simple activity. Students select a poem to share with the family and everyone takes turns reading great poems. You can find out more about this practice at [poetryteatime.com](#).

II. Read Alouds - Each Form I student listens to a read aloud 3 days per week. Form II students can either join them, or if there are older siblings, join Forms III and IV for Shakespeare or Plutarch. A Shakespeare play is studied in Terms 1 and 2, and one of Plutarch's Lives is read in term 3.

III. Drawing - You may wish for Form I students to complete brush drawing lessons. Form II can keep practicing brushwork or use "How To Draw" books. Students in Forms III and IV have lessons scheduled from [Artistic Pursuits](#).

IV. Nature Study - I've scheduled lessons from [Exploring Nature With Children](#) for Cycles 1 and 2.

Feel free to adjust the schedule based on your area or do whatever topics interest your family. I include nature study in the afternoon during tea time for the younger students. This is a great time for them to paint in their nature journals. One afternoon per week, our family takes a long nature hike. Other families prefer to do a little outdoor nature study everyday. Find a time and rhythm that works best for your family, but by all means, do not neglect this vital component of a Charlotte Mason education!

V. Handicrafts - Charlotte Mason emphasized these important aspects of children's handicrafts:

- that they should not be employed in making trifles such as pea and stick work, paper mats, and the like;
- that they should be taught slowly and carefully what they are to do.
- that slipshod work should not be allowed;
- and that, therefore, the children's work should be kept well within their compass." —Charlotte Mason, [Home Education](#), p. 316

Handicraft recommendations by form are provided in the Resources.



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II. Principles for Scheduling a Gentle Feast

1. SHORT LESSONS

"This idea of definite work to be finished in a given time is valuable to the child, not only as training him in habits of order, but in diligence; he learns that one time is not 'as good as another,' that there is no right time left for what is not done in its own time; and this knowledge alone does a great deal to secure the child's attention to his work. Again, the lessons are short, seldom more than twenty minutes in length for children under eight" - Charlotte Mason, *Home Education*, p. 142

In Charlotte Mason's schools, lessons were kept short to build the habit of attention. If lessons are too long and the students start daydreaming, this will become a habit. By learning to pay attention for small amounts of time, the students build up the fortitude to pay attention for longer periods as they grow. I have reflected this principle in my suggested schedules. Setting a timer may help you as you first start to do short lessons, but some students get stressed by it. In the plans, I have given a suggested sequence of page numbers or chapters. This may be helpful for some students, but for others you may wish to stick solely to the timetables, putting a bookmark in after the set time is up regardless of the number of pages or chapters read.

"And now we will take a look at the carefully arranged time-tables. Practically all the bookwork is done in the morning when the children are fresh and ready to tackle the more arduous part of their work."
—Miss O'Ferrall "The Work and Aims of the Parents' Union School," PR Vol. 3, No. 11, 1922

2. VARIED LESSONS

"Never let the child dawdle over a copy-book [penmanship] or sum, sit dreaming with his book before him. When a child grows stupid over a lesson, it is time to put it away. Let him do another lesson as unlike the last as possible, and then go back with freshened wits to his unfinished task. The lesson must be done, of course, but must be made bright and pleasant to the child" (Vol. 3, p. 143).

Different subjects use different parts of our brains. By alternating subjects, you give the students' minds time to rest while still learning. If you do one read-narrate subject after another, the students will quickly start to lose attention. But if you break this up with a subject that uses a different part of the brain, like math, copywork, etc., the student will remain more alert.

3. COMBINING FOR MULTIPLE CHILDREN

I have given hints throughout this guide on which subjects can be combined for multiple children. By using forms instead of grades, there is also more overlap for a family. Morning time, the Beauty Loop, and Tea Time are frequently scheduled to be completed together.

4. AFTERNOONS IN A CHARLOTTE MASON EDUCATION

"Five of the thirteen waking hours should be at the disposal of the children; three, at least, of these, from two o'clock to five, for example, should be spent out of doors in all but very bad weather. This is the opportunity for out-of-door work, collecting wild flowers, describing walks and views, etc. Brisk work and ample leisure and freedom should be the rule of the Home School. The Children's Day will, on the whole, run thus: Lessons, 1 1/2 to 4 hours; meals, 2 hours; occupations, 1 to 3 hours; leisure, 5 to 7 hours, according to age. The work not done in its own time should be left undone. Children should not be embarrassed with arrears, and they should have due sense of the importance of time, and that there is no other time for work not done in its own time. Should the children flag at any time, a day's holiday, a little country excursion, should refresh them" (From Suggestions which accompanied the PNEU Programmes).

In the following plans, I have tried to keep to the general time table described above for morning lessons and afternoon occupations. Plenty of time should remain for free play, which is essential for allowing a child to properly digest their feast of daily ideas.

5. THE YEARLY SCHEDULE

The year is divided up into three 12-week terms. After each term, a few days should be spent on exams. The exam questions are given during the normal lesson times. Once exams are complete, students (and teachers) can take a break for the remainder of the week. There is more information later in this packet on exams.

Sample schedules are given in the Appendix.





A Gentle Feast
LESSON PLANS

"Self-education is the only possible education; the rest is mere veneer laid on the surface of a child's nature."

*Charlotte
Mason*



Term 1 Attendance

WEEK #				
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
EXAMS				

The question is not, -- how much does the youth know? When he has finished his education -- but how much does he care? And about how many orders of things does he care? In fact, how large is the room in which he finds his feet set? And, therefore, how full is the life he has before him?

- Charlotte Mason, *School Education*

Habit Training

Mom

Children

Field Trip Ideas

Field Trip Ideas

TERM 1 EXAM WEEK

"A system of continuous assessment is an essential part of the PNEU Home Education Division. Its purpose for the pupil is to give him an opportunity to show what he has learnt and what progress has been made. The extent of progress in the syllabus contained in the PNEU programmes will be recorded by the teacher on the Assessment Form which also contains a section for comments on special features such as specific education difficulties or achievements. One of the uses of assessment over a period is for diagnostic purposes and the teacher will refer to earlier entries in order to bring to our attention any particular points which require explanation. Specimens of current work will accompany the form as specified below. Personal development will also be recorded."

(The PNEU School Teacher's Handbook, p. 33)

The end of the term is a great time to celebrate a term well done. For her exams, Miss Mason would list several tasks that were to be done with Father - have Father pick a poem for recitation, show Father an example of your work, have Father pick a passage to read, etc.

For a great family night celebration, consider the following:

- Recite poetry.
- State their Bible memory verse.
- Sing songs.
- Display drawings, nature journals and handicrafts.
- Have a special dessert.
- Enjoy family movie night, possibly the Shakespeare play (always preview those) or another movie related to your course of study.
- Write your children cards praising them for how they have grown this term.
- Gift your children with school supplies, books, art supplies, nature equipment, etc.
- Include Dad or any other family members or friends to celebrate this festive night.

SEE APPENDIX FOR EXAM QUESTION TEMPLATES AND STUDENT ASSESSMENT FORMS

TEACHER SELF ASSESSMENT FORM

TERM: _____ YEAR: _____

WHAT WENT WELL THIS TERM:

AREAS OF THE FEAST I WOULD LIKE TO IMPROVE ON NEXT TERM:

MY MOTHER CULTURE GOALS FOR NEXT TERM:

PERSONAL HABITS I NEED TO FOCUS ON NEXT TERM:

MY FAVORITE MEMORY FROM THIS TERM:



NEVER BE
WITHIN
DOORS
WHEN
YOU CAN
RIGHTLY BE
WITHOUT.

CHARLOTTE MASON, HOME EDUCATION

Term 2 Attendance

WEEK #					
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
EXAMS					

The question is not, -- how much does the youth know? When he has finished his education -- but how much does he care? And about how many orders of things does he care? In fact, how large is the room in which he finds his feet set? And, therefore, how full is the life he has before him?

- Charlotte Mason, *School Education*

Habit Training

Mom.

Children

Field Trip Ideas

Materials Needed

MATERIAL	SOURCE	PURCHASED

Books Needed

TITLE	AUTHOR	SOURCE	LIBRARY

TERM 2 EXAM WEEK

"To pass competitive examinations is rapidly becoming more and more the end and aim of education. There is hardly a form in any of our great schools in which you will not find some boys for whom extra tuition is provided in view of some competitive examination. And the one faculty which examinations force, (I will not say develop, for the effect is very temporary) is that of memory, and with regard to that, every teacher knows that the great majority of children in Board Schools, and schools where the system of Government examination exists, would fail to pass in the work of a lower standard than that in which they had been temporarily coached. What a happy word is that—"coached"—and the picture it presents, the vehicle of knowledge drawn by the children on from stage to stage. There is only one weakness in the simile. **The horses are not changed at the end of each hour of toil and application. We change the coachman and the load instead (give them a new master and new subject), and drive on towards the next competition hill with fresh vigor to the whip...**"

Parents' Review, The Spirit of Competition—Should It Be Encouraged? (Discussion by the Forest Hill Branch of the P.N.E.U., February 1981) Volume 12, 1901

The end of the term is a great time to celebrate a term well done. For her exams, Miss Mason would list several tasks that were to be done with Father - have Father pick a poem for recitation, show Father an example of your work, have Father pick a passage to read, etc.

For a great family night celebration, consider the following:

- Recite poetry.
- State their Bible memory verse.
- Sing songs.
- Display drawings, nature journals and handicrafts.
- Have a special dessert.
- Enjoy family movie night, possibly the Shakespeare play (always preview those) or another movie related to your course of study.
- Write your children cards praising them for how they have grown this term.
- Gift your children with school supplies, books, art supplies, nature equipment, etc.
- Include Dad or any other family members or friends to celebrate this festive night.

SEE APPENDIX FOR EXAM QUESTION TEMPLATES AND STUDENT ASSESSMENT FORMS

TEACHER SELF ASSESSMENT FORM

TERM: _____ YEAR: _____

WHAT WENT WELL THIS TERM:

AREAS OF THE FEAST I WOULD LIKE TO IMPROVE ON NEXT TERM:

MY MOTHER CULTURE GOALS FOR NEXT TERM:

PERSONAL HABITS I NEED TO FOCUS ON NEXT TERM:

MY FAVORITE MEMORY FROM THIS TERM:



"THE QUESTION IS NOT, -- HOW MUCH DOES THE YOUTH KNOW? WHEN HE HAS FINISHED HIS EDUCATION -- BUT HOW MUCH DOES HE CARE? AND ABOUT HOW MANY ORDERS OF THINGS DOES HE CARE? IN FACT, HOW LARGE IS THE ROOM IN WHICH HE FINDS HIS FEET SET? AND, THEREFORE, HOW FULL IS THE LIFE HE HAS BEFORE HIM?"

Charlotte Mason

Term 3 Attendance

WEEK #					
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
EXAMS					

The question is not, -- how much does the youth know? When he has finished his education -- but how much does he care? And about how many orders of things does he care? In fact, how large is the room in which he finds his feet set? And, therefore, how full is the life he has before him?

- Charlotte Mason, *School Education*

Habit Training

Mom.

Children

Field Trip Ideas

Materials Needed

MATERIAL	SOURCE	PURCHASED

Books Needed

TITLE	AUTHOR	SOURCE	LIBRARY

TERM 3 EXAM WEEK

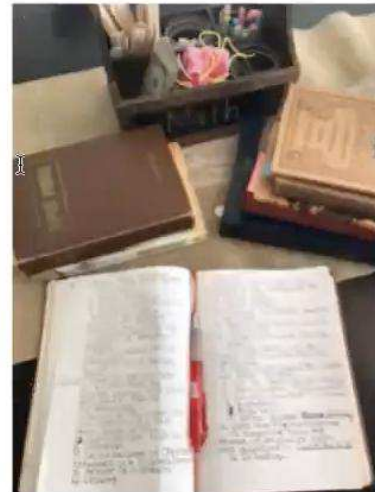
"We all want knowledge just as much as we want bread. We know it is possible to cure the latter appetite by giving more stimulating food, and the worst of using other spurs to learning is that a natural love of knowledge which should carry us through eager school-days, and give a spice of adventure to the duller days of mature life, is effectually choked; and boys and girls 'Cram to pass but not to know, they do pass but they don't know.' The divine curiosity which should have been an equipment for life hardly survives early schooldays." (Vol. 6, p. 57)

The end of the term is a great time to celebrate a term well done. For her exams, Miss Mason would list several tasks that were to be done with Father - have Father pick a poem for recitation, show Father an example of your work, have Father pick a passage to read, etc.

For a great family night celebration, consider the following:

- Recite poetry.
- State their Bible memory verse.
- Sing songs.
- Display drawings, nature journals and handicrafts.
- Have a special dessert.
- Enjoy family movie night, possibly the Shakespeare play (always preview those) or another movie related to your course of study.
- Write your children cards praising them for how they have grown this term.
- Gift your children with school supplies, books, art supplies, nature equipment, etc.
- Include Dad or any other family members or friends to celebrate this festive night.

SEE APPENDIX FOR EXAM QUESTION
TEMPLATES AND STUDENT ASSESSMENT
FORMS



TEACHER SELF ASSESSMENT FORM

TERM: _____ YEAR: _____

WHAT WENT WELL THIS TERM:

AREAS OF THE FEAST I WOULD LIKE TO IMPROVE ON NEXT TERM:

MY MOTHER CULTURE GOALS FOR NEXT TERM:

PERSONAL HABITS I NEED TO FOCUS ON NEXT TERM:

MY FAVORITE MEMORY FROM THIS TERM:

Sample Schedules

In the membership page, there are customizable schedules so you can edit them to suit the needs of your family. Though these schedules are just guidelines, it is important to stick closely to these time tables.

* Please note, I do not recommend doing a 4 day schedule in high school. If you are doing a co-op, you will want to substitute out the classes your child takes there to make this schedule possible.

I

Form 1

5 DAY SCHEDULE

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
DAILY 15 MIN	Bible	Bible	Bible	Bible	Bible
DAILY 10 MIN	Picture Study/ Composer Study	Hymn Study	Poet Study	Fables	Poetry Recitation
20 MIN	Language Arts Student Packet / Grammar	Language Arts Student Packet	Language Arts Student Packet	Language Arts Student Packet	Language Arts Student Packet
15 MIN	Foreign Language Lesson (Oral)	Natural History Book 1	Foreign Language Lesson (Oral)	Natural History Book 2	Handicraft
20 MIN	Geography	History	Geography	History	Weekly Narration Notebook
15 MIN	Play or Sweedish Drill	Play or Sweedish Drill	Play or Sweedish Drill	Play or Sweedish Drill	Play or Sweedish Drill
15 MIN	Readers or Phonics	Readers or Phonics	Readers or Phonics	Readers or Phonics	Readers or Phonics
25 MIN	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
10 MIN	Folk Song	Foreign Language Song	Folk Song	Foreign Language Song	Sol Fa
AFTERNOON TEA	Read Aloud Handicraft	Read Aloud	Poetry Tea Time Work	Read Aloud Drawing	Nature Study

TOTAL MORNING HOURS: 2

Form 1

4 DAY SCHEDULE

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
DAILY 15 MIN	Bible	Bible	Bible	Bible
DAILY 10-15 MIN	Picture Study/ Composer Study	Hymn Study	Poet Study & Poetry Recitation	Fables
20 MIN	Language Arts Student Packet / Grammar	Language Arts Student Packet	Language Arts Student Packet	Language Arts Student Packet
20 MIN	Foreign Language Lesson (Oral)	Natural History Book 1	Foreign Language Lesson (Oral)	Natural History Book 2
20 MIN	Geography	History	Geography	History
15 MIN	Play or Sweedish Drill	Play or Sweedish Drill	Play or Sweedish Drill	Play or Sweedish Drill
15 MIN	Readers or Phonics	Readers or Phonics	Readers or Phonics	Readers or Phonics
25 MIN	Math	Math	Math	Math
10 MIN	Folk Song	Foreign Language Song	Folk Song	Sol Fa
AFTERNOON TEA	Read Aloud	Read Aloud Handicraft	Poetry Tea Time Work	Read Aloud Drawing
ADDITIONAL	Natural Study			

TOTAL MORNING HOURS: 2-2.5

Form 2

5 DAY SCHEDULE

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
DAILY 20 MIN	Bible	Bible	Bible	Bible	Bible
DAILY 10 MIN	Picture/ Composer Study	Hymn Study	Poet Study	Fables	Poetry Recitation
20 MIN	Language Arts Student Packet / Grammar	Language Arts Student Packet	Language Arts Student Packet / Grammar	Language Arts Student Packet	Language Arts Student Packet
25 MIN	Foreign Language	Citizenship	Foreign Language	Nature Reader	Foreign Language
20 MIN	Geography	British History	Geography	Ancient History 5th/6th Paper Sloyd 4th	Weekly Narration Notebook
15 MIN	Play or Drill	Play or Drill	Play or Drill	Play or Drill	Play or Drill
20 MIN	Reader	Reader	Reader	Reader	Reader
30 MIN	Arithmetic	Arithmetic	Arithmetic	Arithmetic	Geometry
25 MIN	Science	American History	Science	American History	Science
10 MIN	Folk Song	Foreign Language Song	Folk Song	Foreign Language Song	Sol Fa
20 MIN (6TH)	Latin	---	Latin	---	Finish any reading
AFTERNOON TEA	Read Aloud Handicraft	Read Aloud w/ Form I or Shakespeare/ Plutarch's Lives	Poetry Tea Time Work	Read Aloud Drawing	Nature Study

TOTAL MORNING HOURS: 3.15

Form 2

4 DAY SCHEDULE

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
DAILY 20 MIN	Bible	Bible	Bible	Bible
DAILY 20 MIN	Picture Study/ Composer Study	Hymn Study	Poet Study	Poetry Recitation
20 MIN	Language Arts Student Packet / Grammar	Language Arts Student Packet	Language Arts Student Packet / Grammar	Language Arts Student Packet
25 MIN	Latin (5th/6th)	Foreign Language	Latin (5th/6th)	Foreign Language
20 MIN	Geography	British History	Geography	Weekly Narration Notebook
15 MIN	Play or Drill	Play or Drill	Play or Drill	Play or Drill
20 MIN	Reader	Reader	Reader	Reader
30 MIN	Arithmetic	Arithmetic	Arithmetic	Arithmetic
25 MIN	Science	American History	Science	American History
10 MIN	Folk Song	Foreign Language Song	Folk Song	Sol Fa
25 MIN	Fables/Biography Reading	Nature Study	Ancient History (5th/ 6th) Paper Sloyd (4th)	Science
AFTERNOON TEA	Read Aloud	Read Aloud w/ Form I or Shakespeare/ Plutarch's Lives	Poetry Tea Time	Read Aloud Draft
EXTRA	Handicrafts	Drawing	Work	Natural History

TOTAL MORNING HOURS: 3.45

Form 3

5 DAY SCHEDULE

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
DAILY 15 MIN	Bible	Bible	Bible	Bible	Bible
DAILY 10-20 MIN	Picture/Composer Study	Hymn Study	Poet Study	Poetry Recitation	Fables
20 MIN	Language Arts Student Packet / Grammar	Language Arts Student Packet / Grammar	Language Arts Student Packet / Grammar	Language Arts Student Packet / Grammar	Language Arts Student Packet / Grammar
30 MIN	Foreign Language	Foreign Language	Foreign Language	Foreign Language	Foreign Language
30 MIN	American/World History	American/World History	American/World History	Ancient History	Composition
45 MIN	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
25 MIN	Geography Reader	Geography Drill	Citizenship	Nature Reader	Current Events
30 MIN	Science	Science	Literature	Literature	Science
30 MIN	Literature	Literature	Book of Centuries		
AFTERNOON TEA	Book of Centuries Handicrafts	Shakespeare/Plutarch's Lives	Poetry Tea Time	Art	Nature Study

TOTAL MORNING HOURS: 3.8

Form 3

4 DAY SCHEDULE

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
DAILY 15 MIN	Bible	Bible	Bible	Bible
DAILY 10-20 MIN	Picture/Composer Study	Hymn Study	Poet Study	Poetry Recitation
30 MIN	Language Arts Student Packet / Grammar	Language Arts Student Packet / Grammar	Language Arts Student Packet / Grammar	Language Arts Student Packet / Grammar
30 MIN	Foreign Language	Latin	Foreign Language	Latin
30 MIN	American/World History	American/World History	American/World History	Ancient History
45 MIN	Math	Math	Math	Math
25 MIN	Geography Reader	Geography Drill	Citizenship	Nature Reader
30 MIN	Science	Science	Science	Composition: final draft of weekly narration
30 MIN	Literature	Literature	Literature	Literature
30 MIN	Current Events/Book of Centuries	Fables Reading		
AFTERNOON TEA	Art	Shakespeare/Plutarch's Lives	Poetry Tea Time Handicrafts	Nature Study

TOTAL MORNING HOURS: 3.8

In Form III, you will need to reduce the amount of assignments to fit in a 4 day schedule. Keep to the time tables and adjust your lesson plans accordingly.

Form 4

5 DAY SCHEDULE

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
DAILY 15 MIN	Bible	Bible	Bible	Bible	Bible
DAILY 10-20 MIN	Picture/ Composer Study	Hymn Study	Poet Study	Poetry Recitation	Fables/ Biography
20 MIN	Student Packet	Student Packet	Student Packet	Student Packet	Student Packet
40 MIN	Foreign Language	Latin	Foreign Language	Latin	Foreign Language
30 MIN	American History	British History	American History	Ancient History	Citizenship, Government & Economics
45 MIN	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
30 MIN	Geography Reader	Geography Drill	Composition	Nature Reader	Literature
45 MIN	Science	Science	Science	Science Lab	Composition Final Draft
30 MIN	Literature	Literature	Literature	Literature	Current Events/ Book of Centuries
AFTERNOON TEA	Finish Biography Reading	Shakespeare/ Plutarch's Lives	Poetry Tea Time	Art	Nature Study
EVENINGS	Free Reading	Outdoor Hours	Music Lessons	Handicrafts	

TOTAL MORNING HOURS: 4.10

Please Note: I do not recommend doing a four day schedule in High School. If you are doing a co-op, you will want to substitute out the classes your child takes there to make this schedule possible.

ASSESSMENT

WHEN DO YOU GIVE EXAMS?

In the PNEU, students were given their exams during the regular lesson time during week 12. In order to accomplish one-on-one exams, extra teachers, would be hired to help give the exams, especially with the younger children. Since I can't do that in my home, I give exams during week 13. We do exams for 2 or 3 days and then we take the rest of the week off. I typically use that time to help me prepare for the next term, gather books and resources, and maybe take a nap!

HOW DO YOU GIVE EXAMS?

For Form I children, you will give exam questions over the course of a few days. I record my students' answers on my phone and then type them up later. If you have more than one child in this form, I would alternate the time they are giving oral answers to you with tasks they can do independently like drawing, copywork, math problems, etc. Form II students can do a combo of oral and written exams. Form III and up will have all written exams, about a page an answer. They will have more detailed, specific, and varied questions. All students should answer their exam questions in the same time table as that subject would normally occupy. The PNEU Examination Regulations state, "the questions must not be read beforehand to the children." Therefore, for your older children, give them one subject's question(s) at a time.

WHY GIVE "END OF TERM" EXAMS?

Exams put the term's work in focus for the student. They also provide the teacher vital information on how to improve the feast and give encouragement for areas that went well. You may be wondering how to evaluate your child's exams and what to do about grades.

"Children come into the world with a few inherent desires, the desire for power, for praise, for wealth, for distinction, for society and for knowledge. Education which appeals to the desire for wealth (marks, prizes, scholarships or the like) or the desire of excelling (as in the taking of places, etc.), or to any other of the natural desires, except for knowledge, destroys the balance of character, and what is even more fatal, destroys by inanition that desire for and delight in knowledge which is meant for our joy and enrichment through the whole of life." —Essex Cholmondeley, *The Story of Charlotte Mason*, p. 246

The goal of the exam is not a grade. You may need to give a grade for your state or for a high school transcript, but if you do assign grades, these shouldn't be shared with the child. You can grade based on a rubric or give a mastery-type grade (good, fair, excellent, etc.). The PNEU used the following grading scale:

Highest Marks, in each subject 100
Fairly Good Marks 75
Average 65
Below the Average 50 and under

Evaluating exams is solely for your benefit as the teacher. If your child's exams didn't meet your expectations, here are some potential reasons to consider:

1. Your questions were too vague.
2. You need to scaffold your lessons more. Are you writing key terms, names, places, etc. on a board before a lesson?
3. You may need to put more emphasis on certain skills - Grammar, Arithmetic, Maps, Copywork.
4. How are your child's normal narrations? Do they need more help in this area on a daily basis?
5. You need to focus on progress over perfection. (This is helpful after you have several exams to compare.)

SAMPLE EXAM TEMPLATE: FORM I

BIBLE

Tell the story of...

WRITING

Copy a sentence in neatest handwriting.
Write 2 lines of poetry from memory.

TALES

Tell the story of...

HISTORY

Tell how...

What do you know about...

FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Recite song or poem

Describe in (foreign language) these pictures.

GEOGRAPHY

What do you know about...

Define physical geography terms.

NATURAL HISTORY

Describe 2 plants and 2 animals.

Tell what you can about...

What do you know about...

SUMS

Do a few sample problems

BRUSH DRAWING

1. A picture of something you read about in your Tales
2. Two wildflowers (or other nature topics)

RECITATION

Hymn, poem, Bible verse

READING

Pick a passage from reader and have student read aloud

SINGING

Sing any song learned during the term:
folk song, foreign language song, and sol-fa

PICTURE STUDY

Describe your favorite painting from...

DRILL

Show moves to parent.

WORK

Show samples of handicraft.

SAMPLE EXAM TEMPLATE: FORM II

BIBLE

Tell the story of ____

Give an account of ____

Describe ____

WRITING

Copy a passage in neatest handwriting

Write 4 lines of poetry from memory

Dictation (unprepared)

Composition (describe favorite scene, tell a story about...)

GRAMMAR

Parse a sentence

Make sentences that show understanding of parts of speech

TALES/ HERO TALES

Tell the story of...

HISTORY AND CITIZENSHIP

Tell how...

What do you know about...

Give a short account of...

What was...

GEOGRAPHY

What do you know about...

Describe a visit to...

Label map of...

NATURAL HISTORY

Describe with drawings 2 plants
and 2 animals,

Tell what you can about...

What do you know about...

ARITHMETIC AND PRACTICAL GEOMETRY

Do sample problems

SCIENCE

Describe two experiments in...

Explain how ____ works

What do you know about...

FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Recite

Describe in (language) these pictures

Write sentences

Translate

Conjugate (Latin)

PICTURE STUDY

Describe your favorite painting from...

BRUSH DRAWING

1. A picture of something you read about in your Tales
2. Three wildflowers (or other nature topics)
3. A man or woman doing work

RECITATION

Hymn, poem, Bible verse

READING

Pick a passage from reader.

SINGING

Sing any song learned during the term:
folk song, foreign language song, and sol-fa

DRILL

Show to parent.

WORK

Show samples of handicraft.

SAMPLE EXAM TEMPLATE: FORM III

BIBLE

(3 questions) Tell the story of ____
Give an account of ____
Describe ____

WRITING

Write 8 lines of poetry from memory
Dictation (unprepared)

COMPOSITION

(Describe favorite scene, Tell a story about
____, Write some verse____, Write an essay
on ____)

GRAMMAR

Parse a passage of poetry or copywork
Make sentences that show understanding of
parts of speech learned.

LITERATURE (3 QUESTIONS)

Pick 6 interesting scenes from ____
Describe your favorite poem from ____ and
tell why you like it
Write an essay on ____
Write a scene between ____

HISTORY (3 QUESTIONS ON EACH STRAND)

Tell how...
What do you know about...
Give a short account of...
What was...

CITIZENSHIP

Write an essay on....
Name the kinds of courage with examples
Describe the conquest of...

GEOGRAPHY

What do you know about...
Describe a visit to...
Draw a map of...

ARITHMETIC, GEOMETRY, ALGEBRA

sample problems

GENERAL SCIENCE

Describe two experiments in...
Explain how ____ works
What do you know about
What is...

BIOLOGY AND BOTANY

Classify, describe, draw, explain

FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Recite, Describe in (language) these pictures
Write sentences, translate, conjugate (Latin),
Dictation of passage

PICTURE STUDY

Describe ____ painting

BRUSH DRAWING

1. Original illustration for book read
2. Three wildflowers (or other nature topics)
3. Figures

RECITATION

Hymn, poem, Bible verse

READING

Newspaper article

SINGING

Folk Song, foreign language song, and Sol-Fa

DRILL

Show to parent.

WORK

Show samples of handicraft.

SAMPLE EXAM TEMPLATE: FORM IV (GRADE 10-12)

BIBLE (3 QUESTIONS)

Sketch the character of...
Write on any of these 2 verses

WRITING

Write an editorial on...
Write blank verse about...

GRAMMAR

Parse a passage of poetry
Give rules for...
Use vocabulary words in sentences

LITERATURE (3 QUESTIONS)

Pick 6 interesting scenes from ____
Describe your favorite poem from ____ and tell
why
Write an essay on ____
Write a scene between ____
Write a letter as ____

HISTORY (3 QUESTIONS ON EACH STRAND)

Tell how...
What do you know about...
Give a short account of...
What was...
Write an essay on
Sketch the career of..

EVERYDAY MORALS AND ECONOMICS

Write an essay on...
Explain and illustrate from your reading the
principle of...
What is the connection...

GEOGRAPHY

What do you know about...
Describe the characteristics of...
Draw a map of...
Make a diagram of...
Classify...

ARITHMETIC, GEOMETRY, ALGEBRA

3 questions in each strand

SCIENCE

Explain how ____ works
What do you know about...
What is...
Diagram
Write an essay on...

FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Recite, Describe in (language) these pictures,
Write sentences, Translate, Conjugate (Latin),
Dictation

ART STUDIES

Describe ____ painting
Write a short account of the work...
Give examples of the architecture of..

PAINTING

1. An outdoor scene with perspective
2. Flowers or figures

MUSIC APPRECIATION

Mention six works of ____ and write fully on any one
of them

READING

unseen essay or poem

SINGING

Foreign language song

DRILL

Show to parent

WORK

Show samples of handicraft

STUDENT-ASSESSMENT FORM

TERM: _____ YEAR: _____

STRENGTHS THIS TERM:

PROCESS MADE FROM LAST TERM:

HABITS TO FOSTER:

AREAS TO IMPROVE ON NEXT TERM:

A FEW NOTES ON FORM IV

IS A CHARLOTTE MASON EDUCATION RIGOROUS ENOUGH TO PREPARE MY CHILD FOR COLLEGE?

I've received this question several times. Often when I ask how old their child is, I learn they are elementary age. Sigh! Homeschool parents often need to breathe deep when it comes to the thought of homeschooling high school.

The short answer to this question is yes, yes, and yes!!! I have been involved with teens at our public school, and what my kids are doing is far more challenging. Beyond that, I know my children are actually retaining what they learn because their imaginations are being fed on rich, living ideas instead of the sawdust of public school textbooks and worksheets. They are owning the material through narration rather than memorizing tidbits for a test. They are motivated by a love of learning rather than a GPA. Every homeschooler that I have met who was educated with these methods is a well-spoken, well-read, independent thinker, and life-long learner.

WHAT ABOUT GRADES?

Charlotte Mason cautioned about grades, rather than the delight in learning, becoming the motivation for the child. In high school though, grades are needed for transcripts and to calculate GPA. If you wish, you can keep these grades from your child so they don't become a stumbling block to actual learning. You don't need tests and worksheets to grade. You can grade the quality based on your expectations. I grade my kids' narrations as either a pass or a fail. Then I grade their end-of-term exams. I also grade their weekly final composition draft. (You can use the rubric in the Form IV student packet to help with grading.)

WHAT ABOUT TRANSCRIPTS?

Transcripts aren't as intimidating as they seem. They are simply a record of what classes your child took and the final grade. Look at the graduation requirements for your state and college entrance requirements for a few schools in which your child may be interested. This will help you determine what to put on the transcript. You will want your child's transcript to look as normal as possible. You can highlight the unique coursework your child completed in their application, interview, or essay. Most colleges want the transcript to look standard.

HOW DO I ASSIGN CREDIT?

The typical way to assign high school credit is by finishing the majority of a textbook or a course or by counting hours. Typical credit hours are between 120-150. For subjects like math and science, using the textbook method works. For subjects like art, you will want to count the hours devoted to picture study, composer study, art activities and reading, handicrafts, etc.

Here are typical subjects needed for graduation and the credits that can be earned from A Gentle Feast. Again, you will want to check with your state representatives for further verification.

- MATH 1, 2, 3, 4**
- ENGLISH 1, 2, 3, 4**
- SCIENCE**
 - BIOLOGY
 - CHEMISTRY
 - PHYSICS
 - ADVANCED HUMAN ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY
- SOCIAL STUDIES:**
 - WORLD GEOGRAPHY 1
 - US HISTORY 1
 - BRITISH HISTORY 1
 - GOVERNMENT .5
 - ECONOMICS .5
 - FINE ARTS 1,2
 - SPANISH OR FRENCH 1,2
 -

OTHER CREDITS YOU MAY NEED TO ADD IN (NOT INCLUDED IN A GENTLE FEAST): COMPUTERS, PE, HEALTH

Narration:

THE METHOD OF A GENTLE FEAST

1. NARRATION IS ESSENTIAL TO THE STUDENT'S SELF EDUCATION.

"As knowledge is not assimilated until it is reproduced, children should 'tell back' after a single reading or hearing; or should write on some part of what they have read" (Mason, Vol. 6, Preface and p. 155)

"The children, not the teachers, are the responsible persons; they do the work by self-effort. The teachers give sympathy and occasionally elucidate, sum up or enlarge, but the actual work is done by the scholars" (Mason, Vol. 6, p. 6)

2. NARRATION SHOULD BE REQUIRED AFTER A SINGLE READING. THIS BUILDS THE HABIT OF ATTENTION.

"He should be trained from the first to think that one reading of any lesson is enough to enable him to narrate what he has read, and will thus get the habit of slow, careful reading, intelligent even when it is silent, because he reads with an eye to the full meaning of every clause" (Mason, Vol. 1, p. 227)

3. SINCE NARRATION IS SO POWERFUL, THERE IS NO NEED FOR COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS OR ORAL LECTURES.

"When a child is reading, he should not be teased with questions as to the meaning of what he has read, the signification of this word or that; what is annoying to older people is equally annoying to children" (Mason, Vol. 1, p. 228). "The most common and the monstrous defect in the education of the day is that children fail to acquire the habit of reading. Knowledge is conveyed to them by lessons and talk, but the studious habit of using books as a means of interest and delight is not acquired" (Mason, Vol. 1, p. 227)

4. NARRATION IS A HABIT THAT TAKES TIME TO BUILD. BE PATIENT!

"The period of a child's life between his sixth and his ninth year should be used to lay the basis of a liberal education, and of the habit of reading for instruction" (Mason, Vol. 1, Preface)

"Supposing that between the child's sixth and his ninth year half a dozen well-chosen standard books of travel have been read with him in this way, he has gained distinct ideas of the contours, the productions, and the manners of the people, of every great region of the world; has laid up a store of reliable, valuable knowledge, that will last his lifetime; and besides, has done something to acquire a taste for books and the habit of reading." (Mason, Vol. 1, p. 276)

5. TIME FOR NARRATION IS BUILT INTO THE LESSON TIME.

"For this reason, reading lessons must be short; ten minutes or a quarter of an hour of fixed attention is enough for children of the ages we have in view, and a lesson of this length will enable a child to cover two or three pages of his book. The same rule as to the length of a lesson applies to children whose lessons are read to them because they are not yet able to read for themselves." (Mason, Vol. 1, p. 230)

6. NARRATION NECESSITATES QUALITY LIVING BOOKS USED FOR LESSONS.

"A child has not begun his education until he has acquired the habit of reading to himself, with interest and pleasure, books fully on a level with his intelligence. I am speaking now of his lesson-books, which are all too apt to be written in a style of insufferable twaddle, probably because they are written by persons who have never chanced to meet a child. All who know children know that they do not talk twaddle and do not like it, and prefer that which appeals to their understanding. Their lesson-books should offer matter for their reading, whether aloud or to themselves; therefore they should be written with literary power." (Mason, Vol. 1, p. 229)

7. PRE- AND POST-READING ACTIVITIES MAY BE OF ASSISTANCE.

Pre-reading Activities:

Step 1 - Ask the children to remember what happened during the last reading.

"Before the reading for the day begins, the teacher should talk a little (and get the children to talk) about the last lesson, with a few words

about what is to be read, in order that the children may be animated by expectation; but she should beware of explanation, and, especially, of forestalling the narrative." (Mason, Vol. 1, pp. 232, 233)

Step 2 - Write key names, places, words on a whiteboard so the students can refer to these during the reading.

"Proper names are written on the blackboard; and, at the end, children narrate the substance of the lesson" (Mason, Vol. 3, p. 280)

Post-reading Activities:

Step 1 - Have the students narrate. If you have multiple children listening, they can take turns. Do not interrupt, correct, or explain during a child's narration.

Step 2 - Review what was stated in their narrations. Illustrations or diagrams may be helpful.

Step 3 - Continue a brief discussion of the reading, if a natural conversation develops.

"When the narration is over, there should be a little talk in which moral points are brought out, pictures shown to illustrate the lesson, or diagrams drawn on the blackboard." (Mason, Vol. 1, p. 233)

"Then the teacher will read the Bible passage in question which the children will narrate, the commentary serving merely as a background for their thoughts. The narration is usually exceedingly interesting; the children do not miss a point and often add picturesque touches of their own. Before the close of the lesson, the teacher brings out such new thoughts of God or new points of behavior as the reading has afforded, emphasizing the moral or religious lesson to be learnt rather by a reverent and sympathetic manner than by any attempt at personal application." (Mason, Vol. 6, p. 163)

NOTES ON NARRATION IN FORM I

1. Wait until age 6 for formal narrations.

Younger students may listen in to older siblings' readings and be eager to narrate. This practice should not be discouraged, as long as it is voluntary rather than required before age 6. When getting started it may be helpful to encourage your child to narrate everyday life activities.

"Narrating is an art, like poetry-making or painting, because it is there, in every child's mind, waiting to be discovered, and is not the result of any process of disciplinary education. A creative fiat calls it forth. 'Let him narrate'; and the child narrates, fluently, copiously, in ordered sequence, with fit and graphic details, with a just choice of words, without verbosity or tautology, so soon as he can speak with ease. This amazing gift with which normal children are born is allowed to lie fallow in their education. Bobbie will come home with a heroic narrative of a fight he has seen between 'Duke' and a dog in the street. It is wonderful! He has seen everything, and he tells everything with splendid vigour in the true epic vein; but so ingrained is our contempt for children that we see nothing in this but Bobbie's foolish childish way! Whereas here, if we have eyes to see and grace to build, is the ground-plan of his education." (Mason, Vol. 1, p. 231)

2. Require narrations for only literature, at first; then gradually add on more subjects.

"I have already spoken of the sorts of old chronicles upon which children should be nourished; but these are often too diffuse to offer good matter for narration, and it is well to have quite fitting short tales for this purpose." (Mason, Vol. 1, p. 289)

3. Start with paragraphs, then add on more reading until they are able to narrate longer passages or an entire chapter.

"Probably young children should be allowed to narrate paragraph by paragraph, while children of seven or eight will 'tell' chapter by chapter." (Mason, Vol. 6, p. 191)

4. Begin with oral narration.

"Children of six can tell to amazing purpose. The grown-up who writes the tale to their 'telling' will cover many pages before getting to the end of 'Hans and Gretel' or 'The Little Match Girl' or a Bible story. The facts are sure to be accurate and the expression surprisingly vigorous, striking and unhesitating." (Mason, Vol. 6, p. 190)

5. Allow for a variety of methods for narrations.

"History readings afford admirable material for narration, and children enjoy narrating what they have read or heard. They love, too, to make illustrations. Children who had been reading 'Julius Caesar' (and also, Plutarch's *Lives*), were asked to make a picture of their favourite scene, and the results showed the extraordinary power of visualising which the little people possess. Of course that which they visualise, or imagine clearly, they know; it is a life possession." (Mason, Vol. 1, p. 292)

"Narrations can include acting out or role playing scenes with dolls or Legos.

"Therefore it is well that children should, at any rate, have the outlet of narration, that they should tell the things they know in full detail; and, when the humour takes them, 'play' the persons, act the scenes that interest them in their reading." (Mason, Vol. 5, p. 305, 306)

NOTES ON NARRATION IN FORM II AND UP

1. New narrators, see notes on Form I.

2. Oral Narrations

Narrations are done orally at first. Around age 9, you can begin to partner with your child to transition to written narrations. Your child can dictate their narrations to you while you write or type them out. Another option is to write a part and tell a part. You can then progress to making audio recordings of their narrations and have them listen to the recordings and transcribe parts of them with your help.

"For children under nine, the question of composition resolves itself into that of narration, varied by some such simple exercise as to write a part and narrate a part, or write the whole account of a walk they have taken, a lesson they have studied, or of some simple matter that they know." (Vol. 1, p. 247)

Even though written narrations are added around age 10, they do not take the place of oral narrations, which continue throughout school.

"Oral composition is the habit of the school from the age of six to eighteen." (Vol. 6, p. 269-270)

3. Written Narrations

Written narrations start around around age 10, but these are not formal composition lessons.

"Before they are ten, children who have been in the habit of using books will write good, vigorous English with ease and freedom; that is, if they have not been hampered by instructors. It is well for them not even to learn rules for the placing of full stops and capitals until they notice how these things occur in their books. Our business is to provide children with material in their lessons, and, leave the

handling of such material to themselves. If we would believe it, composition is as natural as jumping and running to children who have been allowed due use of books. They should narrate in the first place, and they will compose, later, readily enough; but they should not be taught 'composition.'" (Vol.1, p.247)

4. Frequency

In Form II, keep the written narrations to one per week. Then add on more subjects as the student progresses. In Form III, one written narration per day may be required.

5. Technology

One thing I do for my teenagers is have them use their phones to voice record their narrations and text them to me. You can also have your child video record their narrations.



"IF MOTHERS COULD LEARN TO DO FOR THEMSELVES WHAT THEY DO FOR THEIR CHILDREN WHEN THESE ARE OVERDONE, WE SHOULD HAVE HAPPIER HOUSEHOLDS. LET THE MOTHER GO OUT TO PLAY! IF SHE WOULD ONLY HAVE COURAGE TO LET EVERYTHING GO WHEN LIFE BECOMES TOO TENSE, AND JUST TAKE A DAY, OR HALF A DAY, OUT IN THE FIELDS, OR WITH A FAVOURITE BOOK, OR IN A PICTURE GALLERY LOOKING LONG AND WELL AT JUST TWO OR THREE PICTURES, OR IN BED, WITHOUT THE CHILDREN, LIFE WOULD GO ON FAR MORE HAPPILY FOR BOTH CHILDREN AND PARENTS. THE MOTHER WOULD BE ABLE TO HOLD HERSELF IN 'WISE PASSIVENESS,' AND WOULD NOT FRET HER CHILDREN BY CONTINUAL INTERFERENCE, EVEN OF HAND OR EYE-- SHE WOULD LET THEM BE."

CHARLOTTE MASON - VOL, 3, P. 33

