

# Introduction

---

You are about to embark upon an exciting journey. You will go to fascinating places and meet some amazing people. You will hear stories of faith, courage, endurance, and victory over seemingly impossible odds. You will experience wonderful stories and hear challenging ideas that could truly change your life.

You are about to embark on a study of the story of mankind.

We hope to accomplish these goals with this curriculum:

1. We want to honor God. He made everything, and He has been extremely good to us. We are thankful that we get to encourage families in their great quest to rear children to the glory of God. To Him be all praise.
2. We want to help you understand world history, especially how God has been at work in it. The story of our world is the story of what God has done and what people made in His image have done. We find it a fascinating story, and we hope you approach it with anticipation, eager to turn every page and to learn something new.
3. We want to open your heart to some good books and to help you enjoy reading. The books we have chosen are uplifting and worth reading. We hope your eyes will flash and your pulse pound as the words and thoughts leave the page and go into your life.
4. We want to help you understand the Bible better. We have placed a great emphasis on the story of the Bible, from Old Testament times through the period of the early church. The Bible studies included with the units are intended to help you see how relevant the Bible is to the study of history and to our lives today. The more you get into the Word, the more God will change your life for the better.
5. It is our prayer that you will be a better person, a better Christian, for having invested the time in this material. You will only get out of it what you put into it, so give it your best and you will receive great blessings from it.

## How We Present Scripture

The most important material in this curriculum are the studies from God's Word. We believe in the inspiration and authority of the Bible. Our desire is to present the Bible in all of its truth, wisdom, and power. We have no denominational bias or agenda that lies behind what we present. We strive in all we do simply to be Christians. We are on a relentless quest

to understand the truth that God has presented in His word and in His creation. We believe that eternal truth does exist, but we do not claim to know it all. If you read a statement or thought that differs from what you believe, we humbly encourage you to study the Scriptures with us to determine the truth. If you believe that we have written something in error, please e-mail me so that we can learn together the truth that will set us free.

This has been a family project for us. I wrote most of the lessons and guided the overall project. My wife, Charlene, and our older son, John, have contributed several lessons each. I want to give a special thanks to John for his diligent search for pictures to include in the text. His hard work in combing through many different sources has made the curriculum more effective and enjoyable. Our oldest daughter, Bethany, wrote most of the review questions on the lessons for the *Quiz and Exam Book*. Our second oldest daughter, Mary Evelyn (Mev), wrote the Grammar Points. The five of us have all been involved in molding the curriculum. Our three youngest children, Liz, Hannah, and Daniel, are still homeschooling and have cheered us on to complete the project.

As we have worked on this curriculum, time and again we have seen God's wisdom, power, and love displayed in the story of mankind. We are convinced anew that Jesus really is the answer for every individual and for human society. We see this curriculum as an opportunity for us to make friends with other homeschooling families and to explore together the wonderful story of world history. May God bless you.

*Ray Notgrass*  
*Gainesboro, Tennessee*  
*ray@notgrass.com*

# How to Use This Curriculum

---

We have tried to make this curriculum student-friendly and parent-friendly. A student can complete it with as much or as little involvement by parents as the parents choose to give.

The curriculum provides credit in three high school subjects: world history, English (world literature and composition), and Bible. Each of the 30 units has five lessons and represents a week's work. The unit introduction gives a brief overview of that unit, outlines the lessons, tells you the books you will need for that unit, gives you the choices for your writing assignment, and introduces you to the book you will be reading.

Compressing the history of the world into one year of study was a challenge, so we have provided historical overviews along with focused lessons on key events, concepts, and people. We have also included surveys of daily life and culture. The Bible study lessons allow you to concentrate one day a week on the spiritual implications of what you have been studying.

For each day, you will read the lesson, work on your writing assignment, and complete all the reading assignments at a pace that will enable you to finish them in the specified time. Reading assignments include several books of the Bible, thirteen full-length books both old and new, and original sources from *In Their Words*.

Most lessons have a Bible Study Question. You can handle the question however you wish. The student can simply think about it, or discuss it with his or her family, or develop a complete written answer. Most lessons also have a Grammar Point to help you write more correctly and effectively. The Grammar Point does not have an assignment. We simply encourage you to put it into practice in your writing.

If you are using the *Quiz and Exam Book* daily, you will need to answer the questions for each lesson. The *Quiz and Exam Book* also has a quiz on each unit and four exams over the course of the study.

- The history credit involves reading the lessons and the original documents (and answering the questions in the *Quiz and Exam Book* if that is the approach you are taking).
- The English credit involves studying the grammar points, completing the writing assignments, and reading the assigned books, as well as the poems, hymns, and short stories in *In Their Words*. Let your enjoyment of the books be a higher priority than worrying over details of plot, theme, vocabulary, and so forth. Give yourself time to do well on the writing. Make each week's writing assignment an opportunity and not a chore.

- The Bible credit involves answering the daily Bible Study Question (in your mind, verbally, or on paper) and reading the Bible study lesson for each unit. A considerable portion of the first third of the curriculum is Bible history. These lessons are also included in the Bible credit.

Two to three hours per day should be enough time to complete all of the work. Reading the books might require a bit more time if you read relatively slowly, and some composition assignments might require more time.

### **The Nation Project (Optional)**

The Nation Project is a series of research and writing assignments that will help your study of world history take on even more meaning by digging deeply into the story of one country. It allows you to focus on one country (other than the United States) and to use it as the basis for your writing assignments.

Several factors might influence your choice of what country to study. One or both of your parents might have extended family in a foreign country. You or someone you know might have done mission work in a particular country. You might have traveled to a foreign country or plan to visit one. Perhaps a favorite book is set in a country that has always fascinated you.

One choice for the writing assignment each week is intended to help you with this Nation Project. The Nation Project assignments cover a wide range of historical and cultural topics. If you do the Nation Project, you will probably want to keep a notebook or make a directory on your computer so that all of your assignments about this country will be in one place. Think seriously about whether this is the approach you want to take with the writing assignments for the entire year. Look at the Nation Project assignments in each of the thirty unit introductions to see whether this is something you would like to do. Make sure that you can find information on all of the topics assigned before you select a country. Of course, you might decide to do another writing assignment some weeks; and if at some point during the year you change your mind about doing this project, you won't have lost anything.

# Tips on Writing

---

Good writing is both a science and an art. The science of it involves word usage and sentence construction that reflect standard usage. The art involves writing something with feeling or insight that clicks with the reader.

The best way I know to improve as a writer involves three aspects:

1. Read good writing. You don't need to imitate your favorite writers, but you can learn what successful writers do. Reading the literary assignments in this curriculum will help you become a better writer.
2. Write, write, and rewrite. It is good discipline to write every day. Winston Churchill said a person just has to sit down and force himself to write for a given amount of time each day. Don't expect the finished product to flow from your pen or your keyboard the first time you sit down. Sometimes that happens, but more often it takes writing something, then coming back to it later, and being willing to revise and recast sentences and paragraphs. Ask yourself if this is how your favorite author or a newspaper reporter would express this thought. If a passage seems clumsy or unclear, it probably is and needs to be rewritten.
3. (The hardest one) Have someone who will be honest with you to read your writing and offer helpful critiques. This might be a parent, an older sibling, or someone outside your family. Don't take the criticism personally. Use it as an opportunity to do better.

The Grammar Points that come at the end of four of the lessons each week in this curriculum highlight key ideas to remember when you write. I highly recommend reading and digesting *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk and E. B. White. It is a small book that can make a big difference in your writing ability. If you need a more thorough study of English grammar, I recommend *Easy Grammar Plus* for high school.

Here are some other tips for your writing:

1. Write with passion. Believe strongly in what you are writing; otherwise, don't take your time or the reader's time. If some of the suggested writing assignments in this curriculum don't touch a nerve, decide on a different one that does. You can feel the impact of a piece that has been written with passion. Writing with passion will also help you to write faster because you can't wait to get your thoughts down on paper.

2. Develop your paper in an orderly way. I can't tell you the number of times I have written sentences in a paragraph as they came to me, then gone back and moved one or two sentences to make the paragraph flow better. Know where you are headed and how you want to get there; otherwise, you and your reader might both get lost.
3. Avoid as much as possible (a) using the phrases "there is" or "there are," (b) starting a sentence with and or but, and (c) asking questions in your writing. These are constructions better suited to a speech. We have used some of these in this curriculum, but we have rewritten many others out.
4. Concentrate on short, simple sentences. Reading a long sentence wears a person out and sometimes causes him to miss the point. Vary the way you construct your sentences, and avoid the passive voice as much as possible (It is better to say "I moved the glass" than "The glass was moved by me").

Being able to write well is one mark of a well-educated person and can be a blessing to others. Keep trying, and you might find out that writing is fun!

## Literature List

---

*Students read the following books as they study Exploring World History.*

- Units 1-2—*Mere Christianity* (C. S. Lewis)
- Units 3-5—*The Cat of Bubastes* (G. A. Henty)
- Unit 10—*Julius Caesar* (William Shakespeare)
- Units 13-14—*The Imitation of Christ* (Thomas a Kempis)
- Units 16-17—*Here I Stand* (Roland Bainton)
- Units 18-19—*Pilgrim's Progress* (John Bunyan)
- Units 20-21—*A Tale of Two Cities* (Charles Dickens)
- Units 22-23—*Pride and Prejudice* (Jane Austen)
- Unit 24—*Heart of Darkness* (Joseph Conrad)
- Units 25-26—*Eric Liddell: Pure Gold* (David McCasland)
- Unit 27—*The Hiding Place* (Corrie Ten Boom)
- Unit 28—*Animal Farm* (George Orwell)
- Unit 30—*The Abolition of Man* (C. S. Lewis)