

Teaching Your Preschooler at Home



*Answers For Those Frequently Asked Questions
and Arguments About Homeschool Preschool!*



Introduction

There are many moms that just aren't ready to let go of their little ones just yet. There are other moms that have already made the decision to stay home with their children permanently. And there are moms that desire to homeschool their preschooler.

I'd like to share some information with you now, as well as answer some FAQ for new homeschool parents.

Topics Addressed:

But It's Too Hard!

But It's Too Expensive!

But My Child Will Lack Social Skills...

But I'm Not Smart Enough, I Don't Have A Degree...

The Parent's Advantage

The Homeschool Advantage

Free Resources

About the Author

Get Ready To Homeschool Preschool (From Our School Room to Yours)

We are excited about parents becoming involved in their child's life, and would love the opportunity to assist you in any way possible!

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Thank you for your cooperation, and feel free to contact us with your comments, suggestions, or questions anytime on our website – <http://www.Sonbeams.com>.

Blessings – Mrs. Candace



But it's too hard!!

First of all, don't be intimidated! You have been taking care of your child for many years now, living with them day in and day out... you don't become incompetent overnight! ☺

Homeschooling can be daunting, but if you educate yourself a little, set your mind to think like a child, with the right tools it's lots of fun and easy, too!

There are plenty of resources, either free or easy to order online, that you can access. Finding the right combination of products and at the right place is the key.

Look at the age of your child first, and observe what they DO know. Write these down.

Next write down where your child should be, or where you would want them to be in the next year. These are the areas that you would 'teach' on.

Some basic info:

- A 2 year old child should begin to recognize colors, shapes, numbers, and capital letters.
- A 3 year old child should begin to recognize and possibly even write their name. They should begin writing capital letters and numbers, recognizing up to 10.
- A 4 year old should learn how to write their name, know their address and telephone number, begin writing capital and lowercase letters, recognizing and writing numbers to 20.

Always keep in mind, these are PRESCHOOLERS, not school age children. They don't need to have an 8 hour school schedule. They don't need to have book after book to work in. They don't even have to have worksheets!

That said, if your child enjoys these – great! Go ahead and buy a book or two, allowing them to work through it. Just don't make school a burden at this age – keep it fun!



But it's too expensive!!

Yes, homeschooling done a certain way CAN be expensive, but it can also be done on a 1 income family budget.

Don't be deceived that you have to buy every single book and product out there for preschool age children. I personally have bought some really cute stuff for our homeschooling, but I never paid full price for it!

Always check in the clearance departments at larger retail stores, or keep in mind that the smaller stores such a Dollar General or the Dollar Tree have wonderful products that only cost \$1 or a little more. It's not all cheap, junky stuff in there!

Shop eBay for used curriculum, or keep an eye out on Craigslist. (www.craigslist.org) Many times people will sell their old material really cheap. Another place I've found great deals on school supplies was from local yard sales or thrift stores.

I found our chalkboard/ easel for under \$4 at the thrift store. At one yard sale, the lady wasn't selling her books very well, and when I asked – she gave me tons of books for FREE!

Get creative! Use old grocery ads and coupons to teach scissor skills. Your child can create a menu for a restaurant with the images they cut. Teach numbers and counting as you put a price on the 'food' and purchase a meal.

Turn paper towel rolls into telescopes and go on a Color Hunt! Pick a color of the day and find as many things as you can that are that color. Eat foods that color, wear clothes that color, paint and color with that color... the options are endless.



But my child will lack social skills...

Yes and No. ☺

Yes, your child might lack social skills around other children their age if you locked them in the house and never left! But this doesn't have to be the way it is. Many communities offer local homeschooling groups – where families get together for playdates and joint learning opportunities, even field trips.

And no, in another sense, your child will develop wonderful social skills. How is that you might ask?

In the homeschool light of things, many families take the freedoms of homeschooling to be around others in their communities and churches.

I remember from my own homeschooling years that we volunteered at the local soup kitchen. How many public school children learn to serve others in need in real life situations?

In homeschooling, you're able to come in contact with people of every age and part of life – thus developing much greater social skills than children that are placed in a closed room full of other children their own age.

What the public school children will learn from those they are surrounded by is how to act like that particular age. Does it really make sense for a 3 year old to learn how to throw tantrums from another 3 year old? Or to learn how to talk back and disrespect adults?

As a former preschool teacher, I can assure you that it's not the 'good' children that teach the bad ones, but the other way around! The wrong influences always rub off on the other children!

Now look at the homeschooled child. They are constantly surrounded by people of every age. They see how Mommy must be responsible for many things – cooking, laundry, keeping the house in order.

They see how to care for someone in the neighborhood that's sick. They can help prepare a meal, pick flowers, draw a card – then see how touched that person is when receiving such attention.

They see their older brothers or sisters, and will learn from following them. An older sibling will be able to teach a younger one much better than another child of the same age. But of course this applies best if you have properly trained your older children!



But I'm not smart enough, I don't have a degree.....

First of all, these are preschoolers you're talking about, not college students. (Smile) Learning at this age isn't about book knowledge, because children learn best by doing.

You also didn't have a degree when you had your child, and all of the time you've been raising them – and they are probably just fine, aren't they?

Homeschool at this time is a fun time! It's a time when you can get in the floor and learn through play. You get to make green eggs and ham – reading silly stories and eating silly things – just so your child can learn to recognize the color green! How fun is that!

Take a break from parent life, sit in the floor with your child and see what they see. More than likely, it won't be two seconds before your child is in your lap. This is good – you are on their level, not teaching down to them. They will relate better to you, work by your side, and learning will come naturally.

At Sonbeams, our homeschool preschool curriculum doesn't teach children to write ABC's by sitting with a tablet at a desk, practicing until they get it right. No! They first learn what the letter looks like, feels like – for example, make ABC cards and then glue and glitter each letter. Your child can then trace the outline of the letter – hand / eye coordination.

Have you ever heard someone say 'just let me do it with you and I will learn it'?

Well, if you're child can 'draw' the letter with you, by tracing and feeling how it's shaped, they will learn it.

Teaching shapes can be made easy by relating them to things children know and are familiar with. Circles are bubbles, they always go round and round. Ice cream cones (waffle cones) are triangular in shape. You can teach squares and rectangles by cutting sandwiches, or folding washcloths.

There are endless LIFE opportunities with which to teach your child – in your home – at no cost to you! (And no college degree either...)



The Parent's Advantage

Did you know there's one advantage that you have in teaching your child over anyone else? There's one thing that qualifies you as the best teacher over anyone else?

It's the fact that this child is YOUR child, you love this child, and you sincerely desire the very best for them! No one on earth can match this love. No one can match this desire of wanting your child to succeed.

There's a special bond between you that no one else has! You will be able to find creative ways to teach your child, ways that only you will know simply because you are their parent.

No one will be able to see like you when your child is struggling with something, and be able to stop and take the time to help them through it.

You know what makes your child think, and what makes things click with them. You have the advantage of helping your child talk through questions and answers, teaching them to think for themselves.

Many children in public schools miss out on this opportunity – to think for themselves. There's just simply not enough time for a teacher to stop and help 25 to 30 children every time one hits a bump in the road.

The Homeschool Advantage

YOU are in control of your child's education! You have a much more relaxed atmosphere in which to learn. There are no concerns of negative behaviors on a DAILY basis. There are no worries about what you're child is taught, or is not taught.

You are able to spend time with your child, watching them learn, watching them succeed! You are able to teach them character, versus being in school where they learn to be characters.

You become their role model, you are the one they look up to and admire. You are the one they bring their problems to, you are the one they want to be one day.

In Proverbs, you'll read "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." Proverbs 22:6

What a blessing to be able to focus on your child's strengths, to train him in those, and know that he will hold tight to the values you've taught him!



Free resources

One family favorite website is www.starfall.com. They have learning games and books for children as young as 18 months maybe – up to 5 or 6 years old. Phonics, visual letter recognition, and even ABC sign language are a part of this FREE website.

Our children have also enjoyed watching a show on PBS called “Word World”. Each 30 minute show has two segments – teaching letter sounds and how to put them together to ‘build a word’. This show is best suited for children ages 2 to 5 or 6. Check your local listings for airtimes.

Another show that teaches sign language is Signing Time. I have been so encouraged by what my children have learned from this show! You can support us by visiting their link on our website, www.Sonbeams.com. We usually start our babies on Signing Time around 12 to 15 months.

We also have a links section on our website, and will add new links as we discover them!

A little about the author:

Former homeschool student and preschool instructor, “Mrs. Candace” is now a stay at home mom to three preschool age children, one in kindergarten, and one angel with the Lord.

Seeing the need for my own children to learn/ wanting to learn, and the desire of many other moms to begin teaching their preschoolers at home, Sonbeams was created. Part of Sonbeams is a Christian based homeschool/ preschool curriculum guide, designed to help moms know how and what to teach their children.

Not only will children learn ABC’s and 123’s, but they’ll learn Scriptures as well! Songs, crafts, activities – all put together to compliment each other and teach your child effectively. The best part – it’s FUN and things you can do on a budget!

We also offer products encouraging character and Bible memorization. The best part is – it’s designed for parents on a budget! From being a teacher on a budget, to being a mom on a budget – Mrs. Candace has learned how to use what you have to effectively teach children.

For more information, visit www.sonbeams.com.



Getting Ready To Homeschool Preschool

Our homeschool preschool adventure began when our oldest turned 3 years old. The ‘school room’ was part of his birthday present. I had so much fun preparing it behind closed doors, and he was so excited when the door was finally opened and revealed the surprise.

I’d like to share some of what I did and how I did it. ☺

First of all, as you begin school, make this a fun time, a time of learning together with your child and not just teaching them. No stress, no worries, no strict schedule. You’ll quickly see that your child is not only picking up on their letters, numbers, and colors – but they are learning to know and love their Creator and Saviour!

Let me share that learning is not just bookwork, but learning as you live. So many opportunities are available to teach your child each day – from cooking, to laundry, cleaning, shopping, etc... These offer math skills, sorting skills, basic learning skills, reading, color recognition, and more!

Preparing For School

Be creative as you prepare your supply closet and school room! Many of my items I found at thrift stores (an easel/ chalkboard), yard sales (lots of ‘school’ books for young ones), or my children received for gifts (Magna Doodles, Aqua Doodles).

Instead of traditional presents, my oldest was THRILLED to receive ‘school’ stuff for his birthday when he turned 3. We gave him a backpack loaded with crayons, paper, markers, glue, scissors, etc...

For some items, I went to the local Dollar Tree. Poster board makes a great calendar, and they usually have teacher’s products that you can use to make the ‘days’ that you’ll attach on your calendar. (I’ll provide pictures of how I made things.)

That’s also where I picked up many workbooks. Books aren’t generally recommended for learning this early on, but my children LOVE to do them – so we do. They definitely are NOT necessary.



What I bought to get started:

- Colored baskets from the Dollar Tree to separate each child's books
- Construction paper
- Paint (found in clearance at Wal-Mart – check the ends of the aisles in the craft department)
- Paintbrushes
- Large chalk (doesn't break as easily)
- Easel/ chalkboard at the thrift store
- Desk and chairs (yard sale)
- Large crayons
- Plastic sleeves for pages (makes reusable worksheets)
- Trifold display board
- Glitter (Dollar Tree)
- Heavy posterboard 8.5 x 14 packs from a dollar store

What I use from home:

- Cotton balls
- Pie pans (for paint)
- Old t-shirts (smocks for painting)
- Paper plates
- Old cereal
- Old flour
- Popsicle sticks
- Scrap paper

Daily Routine – From our School Room to Yours

Bible/ Prayer Time

Each morning, begin school together in the floor reading a Scripture passage. In our home, this was a chapter in Psalms. Although little ones might not understand, their souls will begin to soak in the Lord's Word.

If you waited until they understood, they'd be teenagers or older before they heard the Word of God! Begin young and they'll grasp quickly as the Spirit speaks to their hearts.

When I began doing this, my 'just turned 3 year old' would stop me every other verse practically asking what it meant. If your child does the same, take the time to stop and share with them.

Feel unprepared for this?? Pre-read the section the night before, and ask the Lord to show you what He's saying in that passage. The Lord will give you the answers for your children! As you finish reading, invite your family to circle together and begin your school day with prayer.



Board Time My Board



To make my cards, I traced scrapbook die cut templates (the card left AFTER you punch out the die cut) and then colored them in. I used a variety of colors to allow us to review those as well each day. To attach the cards, I bought and cut rolls of adhesive Velcro strips and attached one part to my board, and the other to the back of my cards.

**Begin your day by removing the prior 'day', and placing all the days together.*

Each day, ask your child how many days are in a week. As much as you'd like to help them, give them plenty of time to think and answer themselves. If they are right, praise them!! If they are wrong, simply encourage them to "count them with me and let's see how many there are!"

Point to each day as you say the name. Sing the days of the week to the tune of "Merrily We Roll Along", again, pointing to the correct day as you sing them.

Days of the Week Song –

*There are 7 days in a week, in a week, in a week,
There are 7 days in a week, and I can say them all.*

*Sunday, Monday, Tuesday,
Wednesday, Thursday, Friday,
Saturday is the last day – and I can say them all!*

Ask your child what day yesterday was, and point to it on the chart. What day do they think today might be? If they seem unsure, silently point to the 'next' day after yesterday (today), and see if they recognize it by "reading". If they still are unsure, slowly begin to sound it out – allowing them to finish if they suddenly remember, or you complete it and ask them to say it with you.

NEVER criticize your child for wrong answers!! Instead, gently correct them and explain what is right, and how you can tell what is right. Work with them and they will love school and succeed. Teach at them, and they will lose interest.



Review “yesterday was”, “today is”, and “tomorrow will be”.

Next, move onto the **weather** for the day. Look out the window and ask your child to “be the weatherman” and tell you what the weather looks like for the day. Keep it simple – sunny, cloudy, windy, storms, and snow.

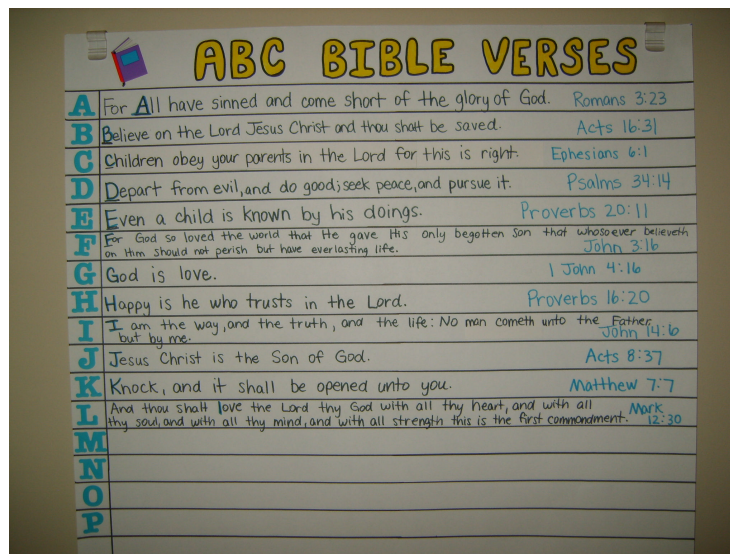
Colors – I found that our local Dollar Tree had a cute border with the basic colors. I cut them out separately and stuck them onto colored cardstock of the same color.

Review the color of the week – saying the name, asking your child to point to the color on the board, and then spell it together.

For our color song, we sing the “Colors of the Rainbow” song off of Signing Time (sign language for children). You can find more information about them on our website.

Letter of the week – say the letter name of the week, point to and trace it with your finger on the board as you sound it out.

Review ‘letter’ verse of the week on **Scripture verse chart**. (See below our example below)



ABC BIBLE VERSES		
A	For All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.	Romans 3:23
B	Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.	Acts 16:31
C	Children obey your parents in the Lord for this is right:	Ephesians 6:1
D	Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.	Psalms 34:14
E	Even a child is known by his doings.	Proverbs 20:11
F	For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life.	John 3:16
G	God is love.	1 John 4:16
H	Hoppy is he who trusts in the Lord.	Proverbs 16:20
I	I am the way, and the truth, and the life: No man cometh unto the Father but by me.	John 14:6
J	Jesus Christ is the Son of God.	Acts 8:37
K	Knock, and it shall be opened unto you.	Matthew 7:7
L	And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all strength: this is the first commandment.	Mark 12:30
M		
N		
O		
P		

Sing ‘letter’ verse song of the week from the ABC Bible Memory Verse Songs. <http://www.Sonbeams.com/abc-bible-memory-verse-songs.html> .

And finally, review **number of the week**. Pointing to it, and then playing a quick version of “find 2 red things in the room”. This allows your child to visually see the number in reality, as well as recognize the color of the week again.

After board time, we move over to the calendar...



Calendar Time



Begin by reviewing the current month. To begin with (for 4 or under), I wouldn't worry about the whole year at this point, just focus on each month as they come.

Next, ask them again what day it is – referring back to the board if necessary. Then together find and point it out on the calendar.

Count all of the days past in the month, pointing and saying each number as you count aloud together. This is important especially if you have younger ones, as they will listen to you and eventually pick up on the numbers themselves.

When you get to the current day (this is still blank on the calendar), ask them what number comes next – which number is 'today'. Prompt them only after they've had time to try themselves.

Allow them to stick up the current day after they know which number it is.

You've now completed your daily routine! This is important to stick to closely each morning – keeping letters, numbers, months, days, etc... fresh on their minds each day!

That about wraps it all up! I hope that you have been encouraged and inspired as you begin your own homeschool preschool journey! Please feel free to email me at: Candace@Sonbeams.com if you have any questions, and join us at <http://www.Sonbeams.com> often.

In Christ,
Mrs. Candace

