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Saint Kosmas Homeschool Community

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Charlotte Mason:
A Lifestyle of Learning Approach to a
Classical Style of Education



Charlotte Mason (1842-1923), a British educator, began her teaching career following the classical model as it was practiced throughout England in her day for the upper class. During the early years of her teaching career, she began to develop her own vision for “a liberal education for all,” using more unique methodology. English children in the 1800’s were educated according to social class: with the poorer taught trades, and the wealthier taught a much broader classical curriculum. Charlotte’s developing methodology envisioned a generous and broad curriculum for all children, rich in the liberal arts, regardless of social class.





The educational model followed throughout England for the upper class at this time was classical, with the ancient literary works presented in their original languages of Greek and Latin. English schools tended to be quite rigid, with the primary emphasis on memorization and rote learning. Charlotte Mason continued to include classical content in her schools, but presented it in English to make it more accessible to a broader range of students. She also revised the methodology in order to bring joy back into the learning process. In this respect, she would be called a 'neo-classicist,' re-interpreting a traditional classical style of education in a new way to better meet her pupils' needs.



In 1891, Charlotte moved to Ambleside, England and formed the House of Education, a training school for governesses and others working with young children. By 1892, a Parents' Review School had been formed (later known as the Parents' Union School), utilizing Charlotte Mason's educational philosophy and methods. Originally the primary purpose of this school was supporting students who were educated at home. But as it gained in popularity, actual brick and mortar schools were also established.



“Education is an atmosphere, a discipline, and a life.”



One day an elder was asked: "How can you recognize a good person?"

The elder replied: "It is not what he says, and not what he seems, but the atmosphere that is created in his presence."

This is a testimony, for no one is able to create an atmosphere that does not belong to his spirit."



From The Science of Spiritual Medicine, by Metropolitan Heirotheos Vlachos:

“I firmly believe, however, that what a child receives in the course of his upbringing is not the knowledge that his parents happen to have or the advice they give, however wise it may be, but above all, what his parents themselves are. We do not offer children what we know; rather, we offer them what we ourselves are.”

“It is very important to create an atmosphere of prayer in the home, because an atmosphere of prayer and spiritual health has a profound influence on children’s lives.”



*The Advantages of Charlotte Mason's Approach for the Orthodox Christian
Homeschool:*



*Charlotte Mason's philosophy harmonizes well with Orthodox teaching.
(See Parts 1 and 2 of this slideshow series at paideaclassics.org)*



It emphasizes primary sources and ‘great books,’ instead of modern, and often very biased, textbook interpretations of history.



It is very easy to add specifically Orthodox content.



It more easily allows multi-level teaching and is easier to manage for a mother with many children.



It is a method, rather than a curriculum, that is extremely flexible to the needs of the family. Though on one hand it encourages a discipline of good habits, it also creates a lifestyle of learning that allows for other opportunities of learning besides structured, parent-led teaching. And it can more easily handle and adjust for schedule disruptions than other more rigidly structured approaches. It is a method that uses classical content, but approaches it as a set of disciplined habits of learning rather than a formal system of education.



Charlotte Mason:

“The mother who takes pains to endow her children with good habits secures for herself smooth and easy days; while she who lets their habits take care of themselves has a weary life of endless friction with the children. All day she is crying out, ‘Do this!’ and they do it not; ‘Do that!’ and they do the other.”



St. John Chrysostom:

“If we imbue them with sound principles from the beginning, from an early age, no great effort is required later, because habit will become the rule for the children in the future.”



St. John Chrysostom:

“Habit is a difficult thing, and it is hard to break and hard to avoid...Therefore, the more you understand the power of a habit, the more you should endeavor to be rid of a bad habit and change yourself over to a good one.”



And while the traditional classical educational model has historically depended on tutors, more structured classes, and professional educators at the higher levels, Charlotte Mason's method, because of its encouragement of self-learning, continues to work well in a homeschool environment, even without outside professional input.



Rather than a curriculum approach, the Charlotte Mason method establishes a 'discipline of habits' as a means of engaging with a broad range of subject matters—literature, science, art, music, history, language, nature, etc. This is liberating in the Orthodox Christian homeschool, freeing it from the need of developed curriculum which is presently lacking for Orthodox Christian education. It is also liberating for the mother, helping her in the acquisition of peace and harmony in the home.

It is this process of developing habits of learning, of striving towards virtue and good habits for life, which is one of the greatest strengths of the Charlotte Mason approach.



Charlotte Mason:

“We have already considered a group of half physical habits—order, regularity, neatness—which the child imbibes, so to speak, in a way. But this is not all: habits of gentleness, courtesy, kindness, candor, respect for other people, or—habits quite other than these, are inspired by the child as the very atmosphere of his home, the air he lives in and must grow by.”



The Charlotte Mason method develops in the students, both their natural curiosity and love for learning, as well as a good work ethic, attention to detail, and self-discipline. These qualities will help them excel in higher education and in life. Though some criticize Charlotte Mason as less rigorous than other more traditional forms of classical education, it has proved itself as an excellent preparation for higher education. The most important part is that children become self-learning, self-motivated, and self-disciplined. The lifestyle of learning that this philosophy encourages does not end with graduation, but continues throughout their lives.



Parents are less prone to burn-out because it stirs their own curiosity and interest in learning as well. Rather than the mother focusing on the child to keep him/her on track with his/her education and curriculum, she becomes a more active participant in the learning process—learning alongside with the children and sharing in their enthusiasm for the subject. Her enthusiasm helps motivate them and their enthusiasm helps motivate her. Rather than a battle of wills, there is an opportunity to grow and learn together—turning education into an adventure to be enjoyed rather than a task that must be completed. Developing enthusiasm for learning is more important than memorizing facts because, while memory can fade over time, such enthusiasm can last for a lifetime.



How Lessons were Taught in a Charlotte Mason School:

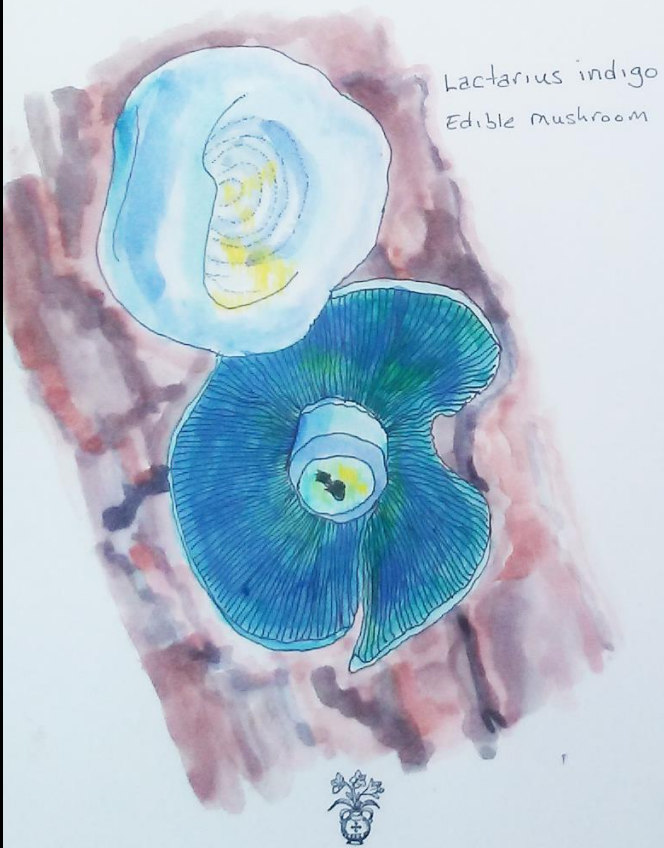


Short Lessons:

In Charlotte Mason Schools, lessons for Grades 1-3 were only 15-20 minutes long. Grades 4-6 were 20-30 minutes long and Grades 7-9 were 30-45 minutes maximum.

Though Miss Mason included a very broad range of studies, the time spent on each subject was quite short. Today, because of technology, attention span is becoming an increasing issue for many people. The style of education Mason recommended is very easy to transition into, because of its shorter periods of required attention. While at the same time, the short, interesting lessons build the habit of attention.

Glory to Thee for the warmth and tenderness of the world of
nature!



Glory to Thee for the numberless creatures around us!

Members of the genus Lactarius produce
a milky latex when cut or bruised. Lactarius
means "milk mushroom".

Lactarius indigo is delicious when fried
in butter. If cooked with eggs, it turns
them green.

Lactarius indigo is blue but turns to green
when cut and exposed to air.

It is found around the world in both conifer
and deciduous forests. In the United States
it is found throughout the southern and
eastern North America, but is most common by
the gulf coast.



Example page from "Glory to God For All Things" nature journal.



Quality over Quantity:

Many of Charlotte Mason's methods were intended to cultivate good habits, particularly the habits of attention and perfect execution—a child giving his best effort.

It is better for a child to strive for perfection for a short period rather than to get tired and strive to only get the assignment done over a longer period of time.



A Varied Order of Subjects:

Subjects would alternate throughout the day, utilizing different types of skills and learning styles. This kept the child fresh and more attentive to the lesson at hand.

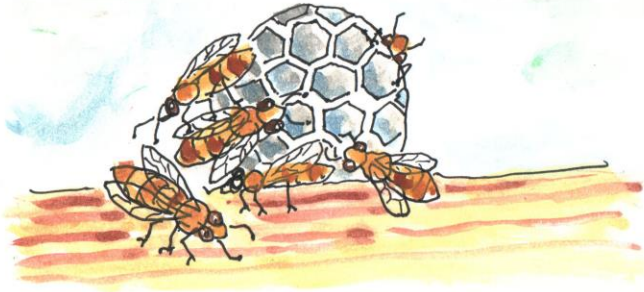


From Conversations with Children,
by Sister Magdalen of Essex:

“...parents must ensure the child's education is as rounded as possible. This can mean extra lessons in music or dance, or time off housework to relax or do homework in peace, or enriching family activities, so that life is as balanced as possible between intellectual effort and other less demanding forms of conscious learning. St. Innocent of Alaska taught theory and practical skills together, enjoying exploring the seaside and doing carpentry with his children.”



2 week Honey Comb
Top Bar Bee hive



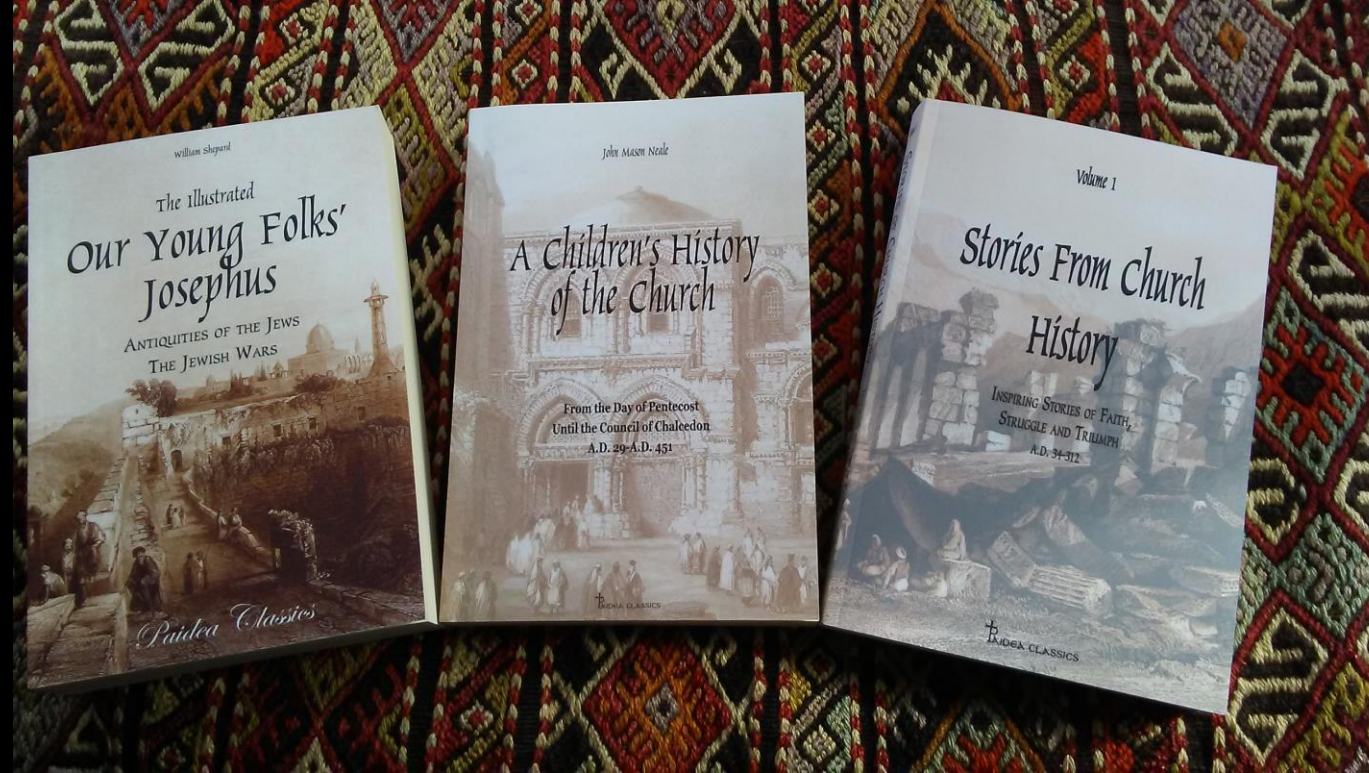
KONTAKION 3

It is the Holy Spirit who makes us find joy in each flower, the exquisite scent, the delicate color, the beauty of the Most High in the tiniest of things. Glory and honor to the Spirit, the Giver of Life, who covers the fields with their carpet of flowers, crowns the harvest with gold, and gives to us the joy of gazing at it with our eyes. O be joyful and sing to Him: Alleluia!



An example page from "Glory to God for All Things" nature journal.





Using 'Living Books':

Charlotte Mason insisted on the use of 'living books.' 'Living books' generally offer information as a part of a story or narrative form that engages the child's senses and draws him/her into the experience being shared, as opposed to dry, factual textbooks that require rote memorization. By engaging the emotions and connecting with the senses, as well as the intellect, factual details are more easily remembered and the subject "comes alive." The goal of reading 'living books' is to acquire the ideas behind the factual details and not simply rote memorization of facts.



St. John Chrysostom:

“When the child is tired, tell him worthwhile stories (children like listening to tales from the past) and so draw him away from childish behavior, because you are bringing up a Christian philosopher and athlete, a citizen of heaven. Begin your narration by saying, ‘Once upon a time a father had two children...’ After pausing for a moment, go on...The story should be pleasing in order to delight the child and not tire him...Continue enthusiastically (this is the art of storytelling).”

Narration:

She would have the students tell back in their own words what they just saw, heard, or read, helping them with attention and retention and preparing them for good writing skills. This was done orally or in written form, depending on maturity.



Example from "Glory to God for All Things!" nature journal.

Glory to Thee, covering the earth with peace!

Unidentified Mushroom



This mushroom stood out with its striking orange color surrounded by fallen scarlet red sumac leaves.



Glory to Thee for the last ray of the sun as it sets!

The mushroom is the elf of plants,
At evening it is not;
At morning in a truffled hut
It stops upon a spot

As if it tarried always;
And yet its whole career
is shorter than a snake's delay,
And fleetier than a tare.

'Tis vegetation's juggler,
the germ of alibi;
And like a bubble antedate,
And like a bubble hie. ~Emily Dickinson





Multi-Level Teaching:

Charlotte Mason divided her students into 'forms' rather than grades as we know today. These forms included up to three grade levels and the children in these forms learned the same period of history and other subjects simultaneously which encouraged discussion among different aged students and allowed the younger ones to learn from the older ones.

This is advantageous in the homeschool—simplifying teaching, fieldtrip outings, discussions at the dinner table, etc.



Subjects that work well for multi-grade teaching include:



History

Geography

Bible/Lives of Saints

Literature:

(selections and/or adaptations from
originals can be used for younger children
while actual literary works and primary source
documents can be used for
the older ones)

Poetry

Science (until the high school years)

Shakespeare

Art and Picture Study

Nature Study

Spoken Foreign Language

Citizenship/Virtue Study



Charlotte Mason:

“Perhaps the main part of a child’s education should be concerned with the great human relationships. History, literature, art, languages (whether ancient or modern), travel—all of these are the record or expression of persons; so is science, so far as it is the history of discoveries, the record of observations, that is, so far as it is to be got out of books. ... Before all these ranks Religion, including our relations of worship, loyalty, love and service to God; and next in order, perhaps, the intimate interpersonal relations implied in such terms as self-knowledge, self-control. ...

This is the whole picture of the content, or curriculum, of what a child’s education should be concerned with, and Religion is the first in rank followed by all the others.”

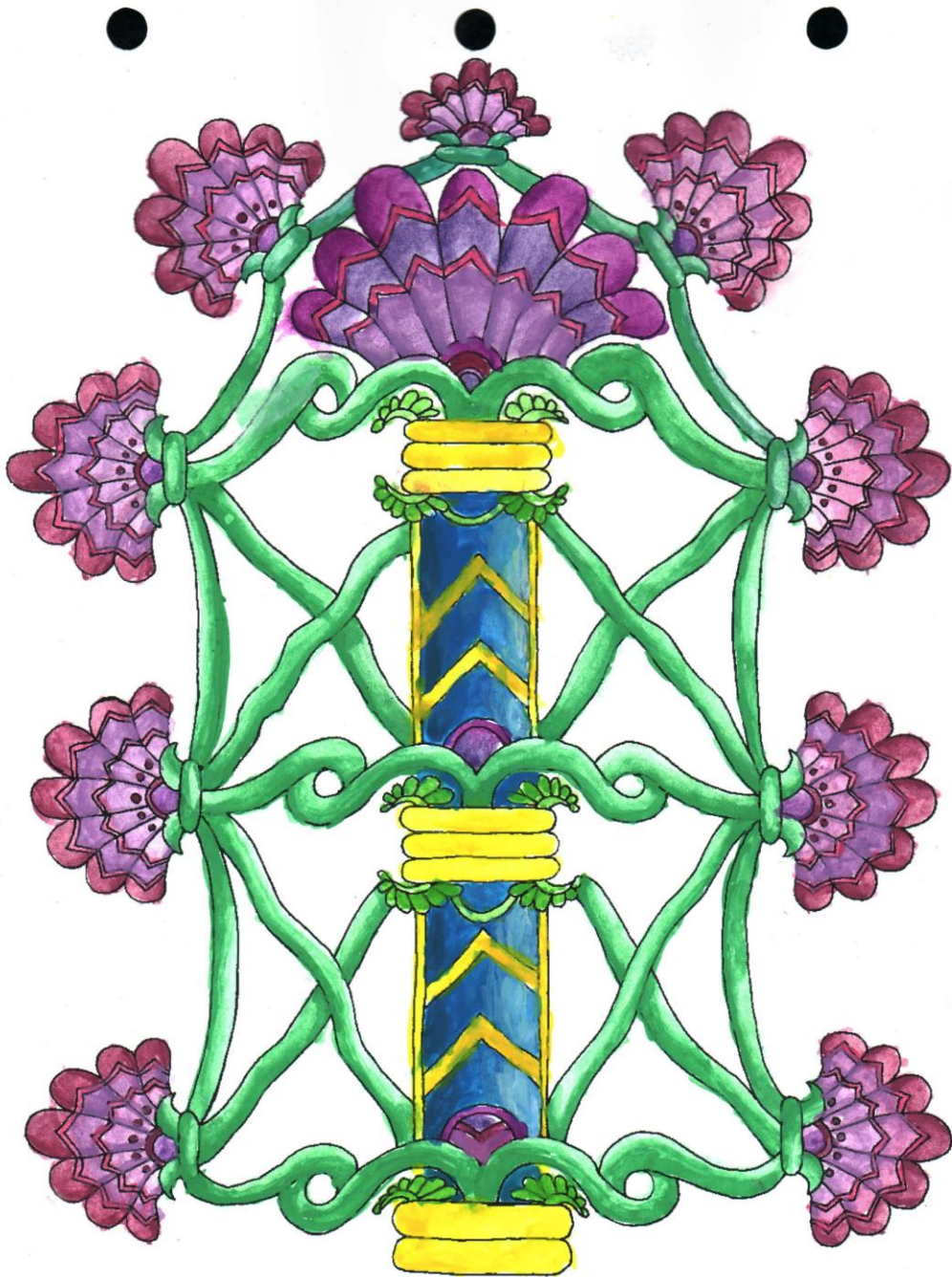


St. John Chrysostom:

“In order to divert the child's eyes from obscene sights, you should show him beautiful things, like the sky, the sun, the stars, flowers, meadows and well illustrated books. Let his eyes find pleasure looking at these and many beautiful and harmless sights.”



The Charlotte Mason Approach Includes a Wide Range of Subjects:



A Neo-Assyrian design of the Tree of Life.

History:

Teach history through 'living books,' written in an engaging narrative style, rather than through textbooks. It can be approached as a family pilgrimage and adventure to different times and places.

A 'book of centuries' is kept to document history learning. It traditionally included a time-line and allowed for illustrations and mapping. Modern versions can also include written narrations, copy work, poetry, written biographies, and more, to more thoroughly document the child's work.

Student painted illustration is from Barbara Shukin's "Ancient History Portfolio Junior," a 'book of centuries' inspired curriculum developed by an Orthodox Christian.



Geography:

Living books, such as adventurous travelogues, can also be used for geography. Keep a globe nearby. Whenever reading a 'living book' or filling the 'book of centuries' go to the globe and find where the events took place. Having students label blank outline maps as a part of their 'book of centuries' is another option.

1. Athens

3. Delphi

2. Sparta

4. Mount Olympus

Illustration is from Barbara Shukin's "Ancient History Portfolio Junior," a 'book of centuries' inspired curriculum developed by an Orthodox Christian.

THE
ORTHODOX
STUDY BIBLE

LEATHERSOFT™ COVER



Ancient Christianity
Speaks to Today's World

ANCIENT FAITH EDITION

Bible:

Actual Scripture reading is preferred. Have children narrate what has been read following the reading. Readings from the Synaxarion or Prologue can also be included with this.



St. Seraphim of Sarov:

“One should nourish the soul with the word of God; for the word of God, as St. Gregory the Theologian says, ‘is angelic bread,’ by which are nourished souls who hunger for God. Most of all, one should occupy oneself with reading the New Testament and the Psalter, which one should do standing up. From this there occurs an enlightenment in the mind, which is changed by a Divine change.”



St. Justin Popovich:

“If you wish, the Lives of the Saints are a sort of Orthodox Encyclopedia. In them can be found everything which is necessary for the soul which hungers and thirsts for eternal righteousness and eternal truth in this life, and which hungers and thirsts for Divine immortality and eternal life. If faith is what you need, there you will find it in abundance; and you will feed your soul with food which will never make it hungry. If you need love, truth, righteousness, hope, meekness, humility, repentance, prayer, or whatever virtue or podvig, in them, the Lives of the Saints, you will find a countless number of holy teachers for every podvig and will obtain grace-filled help for every virtue.”



Art/Picture Study:

Choose an artist and select one of his/her works. Tell the children the artist's name and name of the picture. Have everyone look at it carefully and study every detail in it. Then after removing it from view, have them describe the picture with as much detail as possible.

Drawing the picture from memory is another option. Do one picture every week or two this way. Orthodox artists and iconography can also be included in this study.



Handicrafts and Life Skills:

Handicrafts were a standard part of a Charlotte Mason curriculum and many traditional handicraft skills were taught. Children should learn carefully and slowly with an emphasis on precision, patience, and good technique.

Choose developing skills that challenge but are not so difficult that they frustrate. It should bring them enjoyment and a sense of accomplishment. Teaching important life skills can also be included.



Foreign Language:

Charlotte Mason believed in teaching foreign language in the same way children learn their native language, not as a grammar, but as a 'living speech.' Reading and writing came later. Using this approach, children learned foreign language much earlier. She recommended learning half a dozen new words a day and having, if possible, a half hour daily with a native speaker. And she recommended employing narration in the process of learning a foreign language.



Literature:

'Living books' that are engaging narratives are preferred. Charlotte Mason also incorporated actual pieces of great literary works. Her reading list contained many 'great books' from antiquity up until her time period. The one thing her curriculum was lacking, however, was patristics. As Orthodox Christian educators, including more carefully selected patristic works would be an important addition.

Quite a few adaptations of 'great books,' intended for children, were written around her lifetime. Sexually explicit and other inappropriate content was removed in these adaptations for a younger audience.



St. Basil the Great:

“Perhaps it is sufficiently demonstrated that such heathen learning is not unprofitable for the soul; I shall then discuss next the extent to which one may pursue it. To begin with the poets, since their writings are of all degrees of excellence, you should not study all of their poems without omitting a single word. When they recount the words and deeds of good men, you should both love and imitate them, earnestly emulating such conduct. But when they portray base conduct, you must flee from them and stop up your ears, as Odysseus is said to have fled past the song of the sirens, for familiarity with evil writings paves the way for evil deeds. Therefore the soul must be guarded with great care, lest through our love for letters it receives some contamination unawares, as men drink in poison with honey.”



Music:

Music Study is done similarly to Picture Study. One composer is studied every six weeks. The composer's music can be played in the background while busy with other activities (like filling out the 'book of centuries'). A good biography of the composer can be read together and then the children can narrate it.

Hymn study is another alternative option that can be taught this way.



Fr. Seraphim Rose:

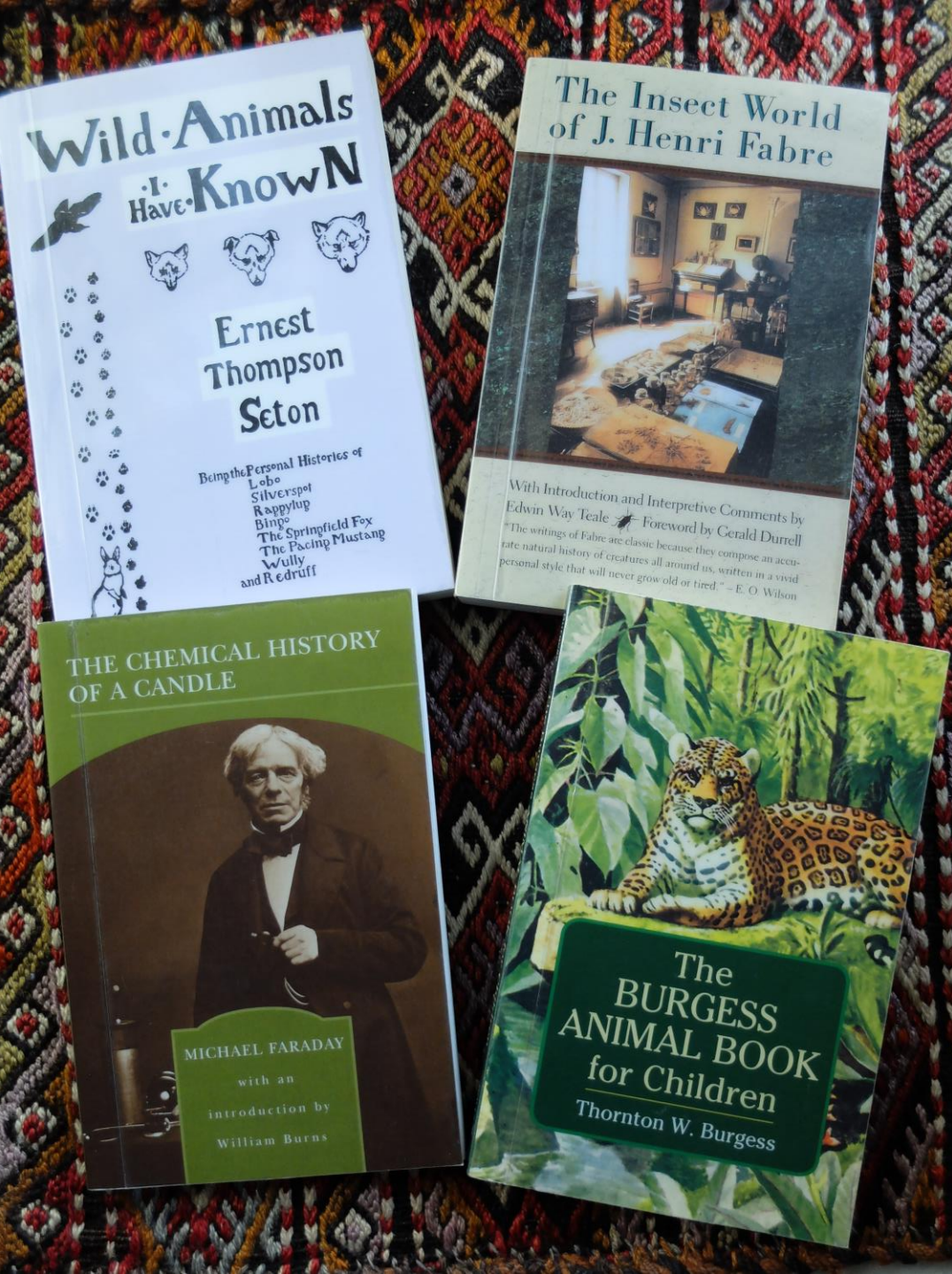
“The education of youth today, especially in America, is notoriously deficient in developing responsiveness to the best expressions of human art, literature, and music, as a result of which young people are formed haphazardly under the influence of television, rock music, and other manifestations of today's culture (or rather, anti-culture);”



Poetry:

As with Picture Study and Music Study, Charlotte Mason's approach to Poetry was primarily for appreciation and not for analysis or critique. One poet can be studied every six weeks. Or readings can take place from an anthology of poems from different poets instead. Charlotte Mason's schools read a poem each day.

Rather than studying poetry as a separate subject, it could be incorporated in the 'nature journal' (studying nature poetry) or 'book of virtues' (studying poetry pertaining to virtue and vice) or 'book of centuries' (poetry from a particular time and place also being studied).

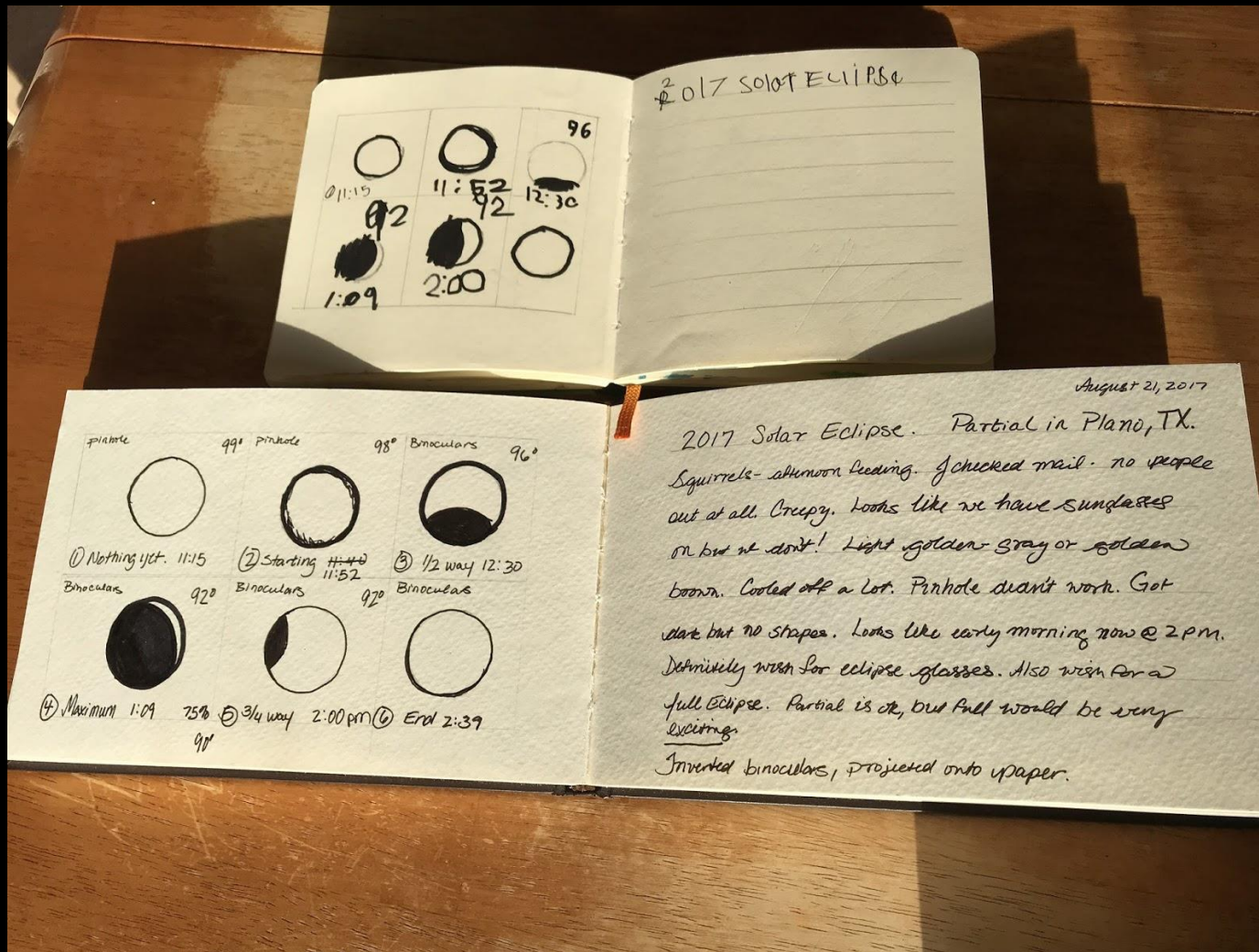


Science:

Look for science books written in a narrative style that engages the student.

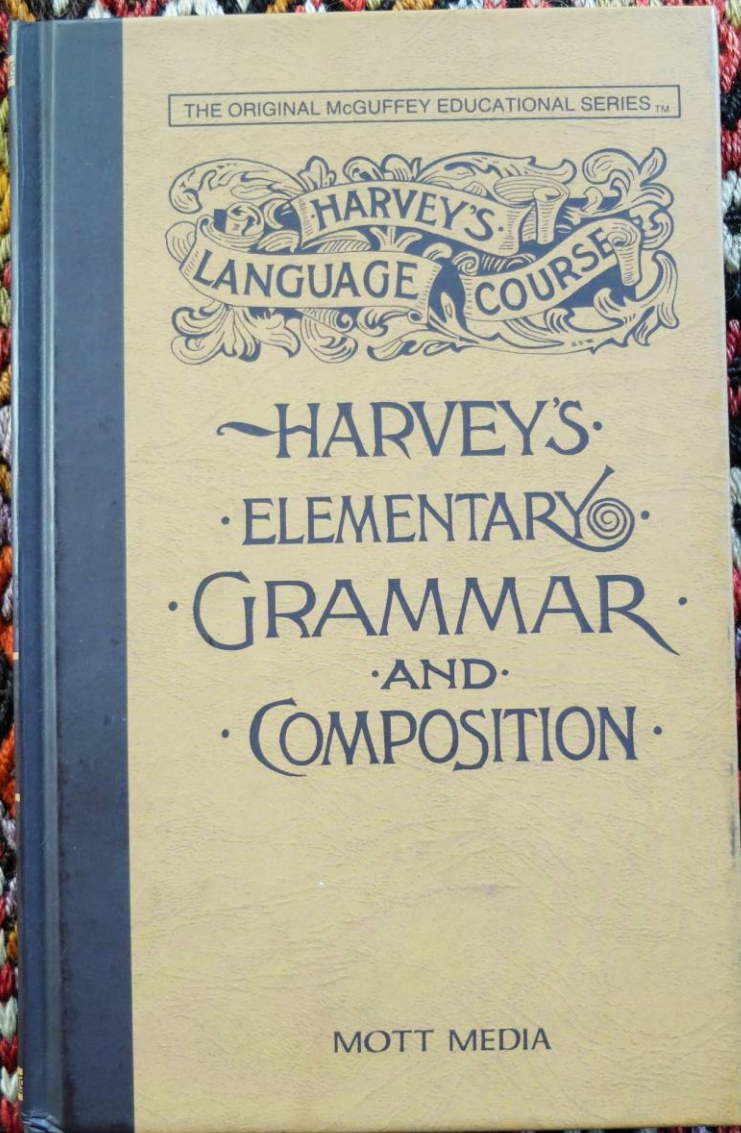
Search out hands-on learning opportunities.

Examples of some of the books used for learning science in Charlotte Mason's schools.



Experiencing a solar eclipse.





Language Arts:

Copy Work:

Used for developing handwriting skills. Five minutes a day of concentrated effort is better than lengthy copy work. Scripture, poetry, hymn lyrics, sayings of the fathers, and excerpts from favorite living books are all good material for copy work.

Narration for Composition:

Oral narration leads to written narration. Written narration leads to good composition skills.

Grammar:

Usually not taught in Charlotte Mason schools until ages 9 or 10. A 'living book' approach is preferred.



Spelling:

Charlotte Mason did not teach spelling until children were 9 or 10 years old. She would give a child a passage and help him identify any words he had difficulty spelling. Then those words were to be studied. The student would also look at the capitalization and punctuation of the passage. When he was ready, the passage would be dictated to him, a short phrase at a time, while he would write it down. This would be a once or twice a week activity.

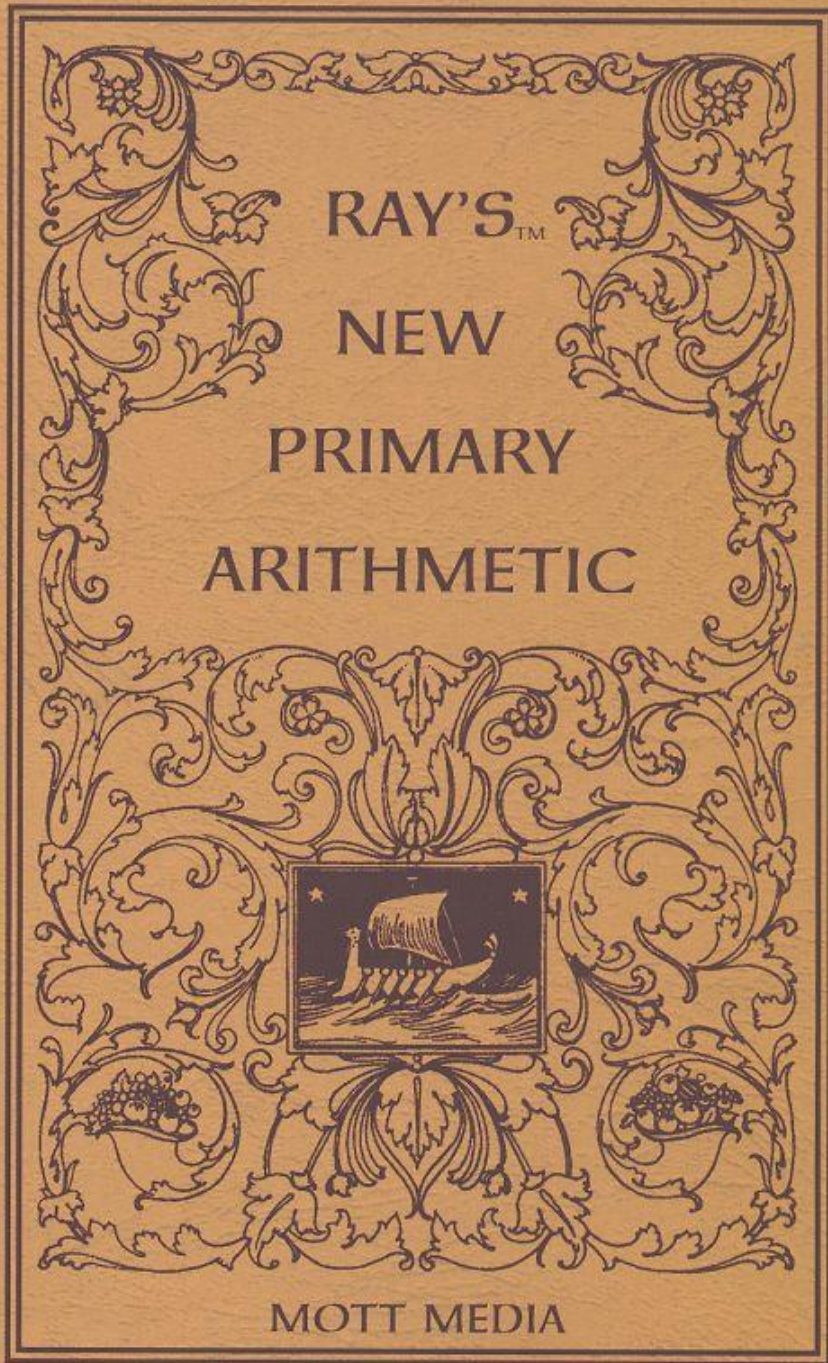


Shakespeare:

Miss Mason advocated reading Shakespeare. Plays can first be read in story form as an introduction to the plot and characters. "Tales from Shakespeare," by Charles and Mary Lamb, and "Beautiful Stories from Shakespeare for Children," by E. Nesbit, are recommended resources for this.

Then read through part or all of the play in its original language. This can be done by reading aloud with children reading different parts. Finish by watching a presentation of the play, either live or recorded.

It is important to use discretion when selecting plays to ensure appropriateness.



Math:

Charlotte Mason advocated math curriculums rich in word problems where the students had to figure out whether they were required to multiply, divide, add, or subtract in order to find the solution.

“The chief value of arithmetic, like that of the higher mathematics, lies in the training it affords the reasoning powers, and in the habits of insight, readiness, accuracy, intellectual truthfulness it engenders.”—Charlotte Mason

“Carefully graduated teaching and daily mental effort on the child’s part at this early stage may be the means of developing real mathematical power, and will certainly promote the habits of concentration and effort of mind.”—Charlotte Mason

Ray’s Arithmetic follows
Charlotte Mason’s Philosophy



Nature Study:

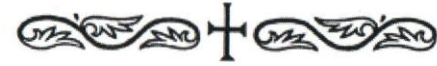
At least once each week, go outside and enjoy nature. Give each child a sketchbook to record observations or drawings of their outdoor discoveries. Charlotte Mason recommended using 'dry brush painting' (watercolor with minimal water) because of the time and concentrated effort it requires. Nature Study teaches observation skills, and stirs curiosity which lays a foundation for future science. Children can study freely outside, or focus on specific topics. This can take place in the woods, meadow, garden, or wherever there is nature.

Glory to Thee, O God, from age to age!

Morchella
true morel mushrooms
choice edible



Appears First
Week of April in our area



KONTAKION 4

How filled with sweetness are those whose thoughts dwell on Thee; how life-giving Thy holy Word. To speak with Thee is more soothing than anointing with oil; sweeter than the honeycomb. To pray to Thee lifts the spirit, refreshes the soul. Where Thou art not, there is only emptiness; hearts are smitten with sadness; nature, and life itself, become sorrowful; where Thou art, the soul is filled with abundance, and its song resounds like a torrent of life: Alleluia!



From "Glory to God for All Things!" nature journal.

Eastern Red Cedar

- Dioecious - separate Male + female Trees

Juniperus virginiana

Red heartwood + white Sapwood

Popular for Christmas Trees

Fragrant wood keeps insects away



Found on dry Hill sides,
along Fence Rows + sometimes
near Creeks.

Maybe a Shrub or
tree up to 50 ft.
tall.

Osage-Orange ~ *Maclura pomifera*

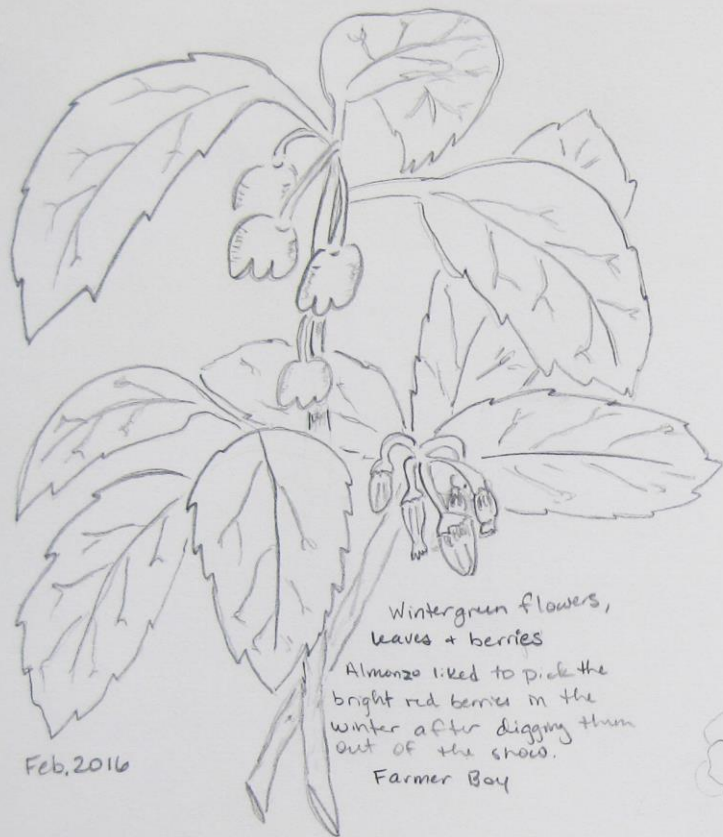
- AKA Horse Apple, Bois D'Arc, Bodark

- Dioecious - male flowers small and
greenish in many flowered elongated clusters
at leaf bases; female flowers similar but
in rounded clusters.

twigs - slender, light orange brown with a
stout thorn at leaf base up to 1" long.
Milky Sap turns black when dry making twigs
look dead.

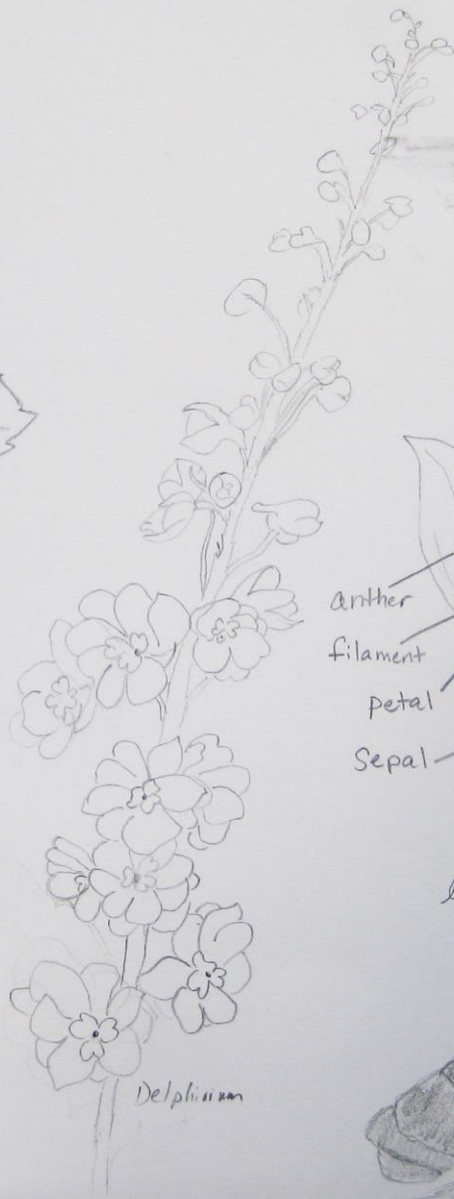
Bark - Light orange-brown, thin when young,
becoming thicker with broad longitudinal
ridges peeling into strips separating into
furrows.



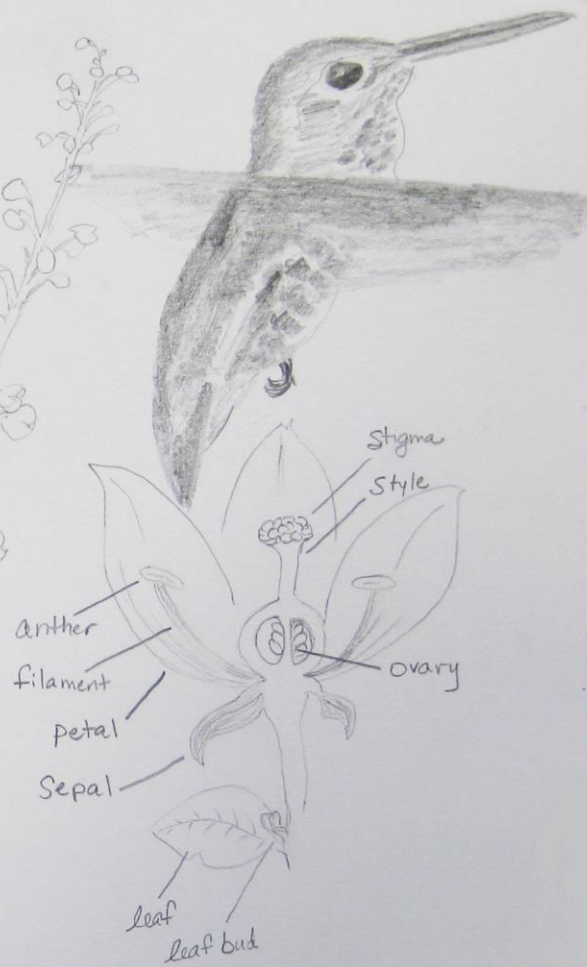


Wintergreen flowers,
leaves + berries
Almonzo liked to pick the
bright red berries in the
winter after digging them
out of the snow.
Farmer Boy

Feb. 2016



Delphinium



January 16, 2018 mid-morning

-Rufous-Crowned Kinglet-
(drawn from Bird book)

We saw this tiny bird
with striking red streak
on its head, flitting about
the kitchen window and
checking the window sills
and crevices for seeds,
crumbs, insects,?

We watched it for
ten minutes as it
soured every sill
and the cracks
in the concrete at
the patio table
& chairs. We
put out
seed, but
it ignored us
then flew off.



Red-headed Woodpecker
Jan 24, 2018



Maple leaf 9/27/12
leaves and fruits
leaf margins



smooth



serrate



doubly serrate



leaf branching



lobes
pointed tips

Leaf Parts



bud
margin
midrib
vein
petiole
stem
single leaf



alternate



opposite



whorled

10/22/12 Trees

Simple



Singly compound
once pinnate

Compound



trifoliate



palmate

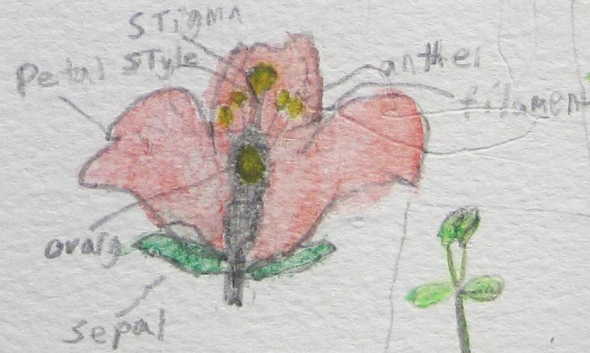


twice pinnate

Tri-pinnate

interesting insect

Flower parts



stigma
petal
style
anther
filament
ovary
sepal



22/7/14



apple seedlings
13/7/14

"The grass withereth, the
flower fadeth: but the
word of our God shall
stand for ever. Isaiah 40:8



Common Broomweed?

Yellow flower clumps covered the
field at Wiggley Field. Flower edges
were ragged + spiky and somewhat squared.

Grass + Yellow Flowers
at Wiggley Field Sep 12, 2016



Star Aster Oct 2016
Dry Brush water color

March 14, 2018, 3P
Timbers Preserve Park
Minn. 70°F, Sunny Clear, Calm wind
Doves, Hawks, Crows, Chickadees,
Mockingbirds. Heron at far end
of pond. Grasshoppers. Daylight
strong just ended, looks like morning though
Sun is clearly at afternoon position.
Turtles sunbathing on North bank.
They slide into water when people walk
by. Leaves on Pecan tree coming
back in little clusters of buds. Pear
trees covered in white blossoms.



The image shows the front cover of a dark grey notebook titled 'My Book of Centuries'. The title is printed in a gold-colored serif font at the top. Below the title is a small, intricate gold-colored decorative emblem. The notebook is placed on a colorful, patterned fabric background. A small blue tab is visible at the bottom left corner of the notebook.

My Book of Centuries



Book of Centuries:

The 'book of centuries' was a nicely bound book where each two page spread is dedicated to one century of history. One page was blank for drawings (usually of objects observed in the British Museum) and the other page was divided into 20 lines of five columns, so that there was a specific block dedicated to each year in the century. There was no formal teaching or curriculum for the book of centuries, but it was a journal for each child to record what stood out to them personally in their own studies and visits to museums.

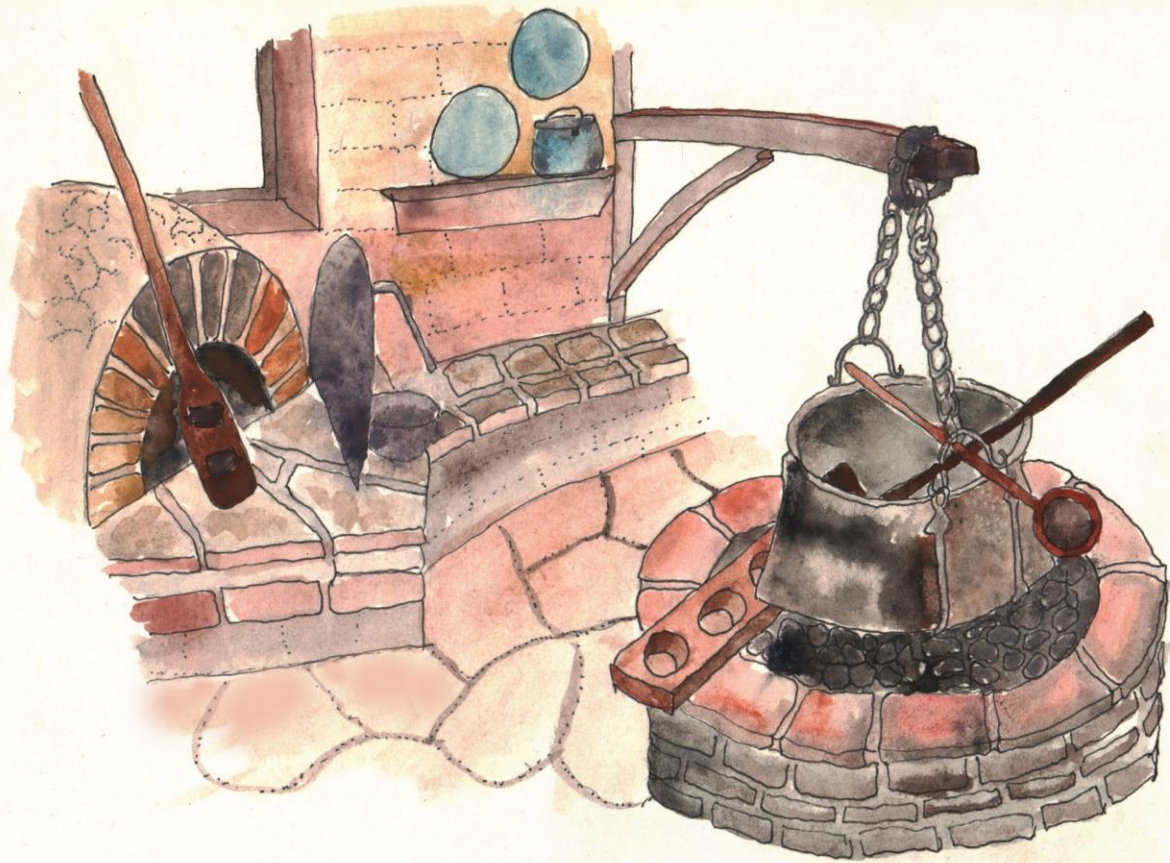
There were additional pages in the back for historical maps and notes about the maps.

Also, the 'book of centuries' was designed not for one semester's use or even a year's study, but a book that was begun around age 12 (depending on maturity, penmanship, artistic ability, etc.) and continued for life. One child might choose to focus on weapons and armor throughout the centuries in his drawings, another might draw traditional costumes and apparel and how it has changed, while a third might be fascinated by coinage and document that in their book.

Sixth Century
AD 501-600

Sixth Century
AD 501-600

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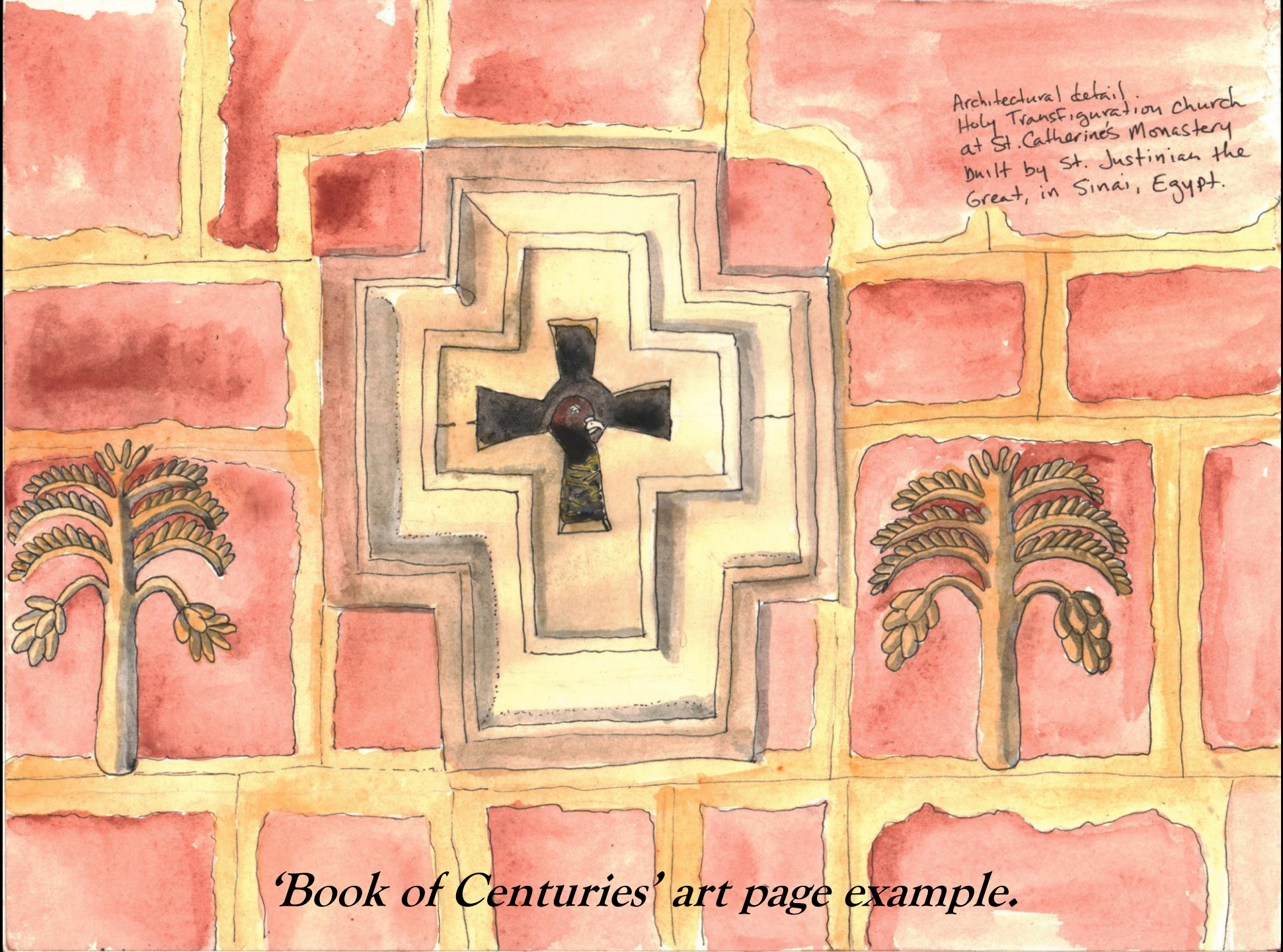
Ancient Kitchen
Meteora Monastery
Greece



Carved stone
Ancient Prosfora Seals
Museum in Istanbul, Turkey

Paidea Classics plans to put together a series of source books (i.e. Byzantine Source Book for the Book of Centuries, Russian Source Book for the Book of Centuries, etc) that includes photos of artifacts and locations around the Orthodox world to aid in the illustration of a book of centuries including Orthodox history and culture.

Architectural detail.
Holy Transfiguration church
at St. Catherine's Monastery
Built by St. Justinian the
Great, in Sinai, Egypt.



'Book of Centuries' art page example.

‘Book of Centuries’ Alternatives:

Alternative forms of 'book of centuries' have been developed over the years to allow the documentation of a wider selection of students' work. Some can include artwork, written narrations, biographies, maps, as well as a timeline. These versions can be maintained individually, or as a family. Some are as simple as a blank sketch book organized to allow more documented work, others are purposely designed for this purpose. Barbara Shukin's History Portfolio series is an actual curriculum inspired by 'the book of centuries' with specific direction for writing, illustrations, mapping and more.

Illustration from Barbara Shukin's
"Ancient History Portfolio Junior"



Egyptians Gathering Grapes



Dionysus Aboard His Ship: From a kylix by the artist Ezekias

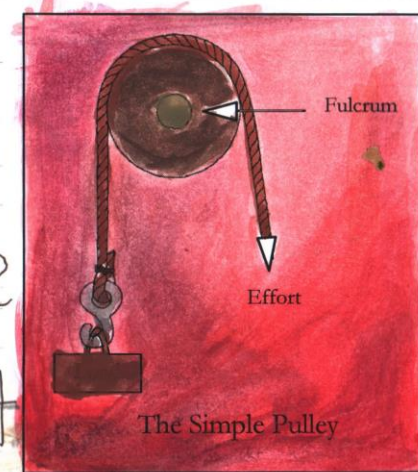
Sample pages from Barbara Shukin's
"Ancient History Portfolio Junior"



King Ashurbanipal Hunting

The royal lion hunt
of King Ashurbanipal.
North Palace of Nineveh.

The simple pulley was
invented to lift more
weight with less effort

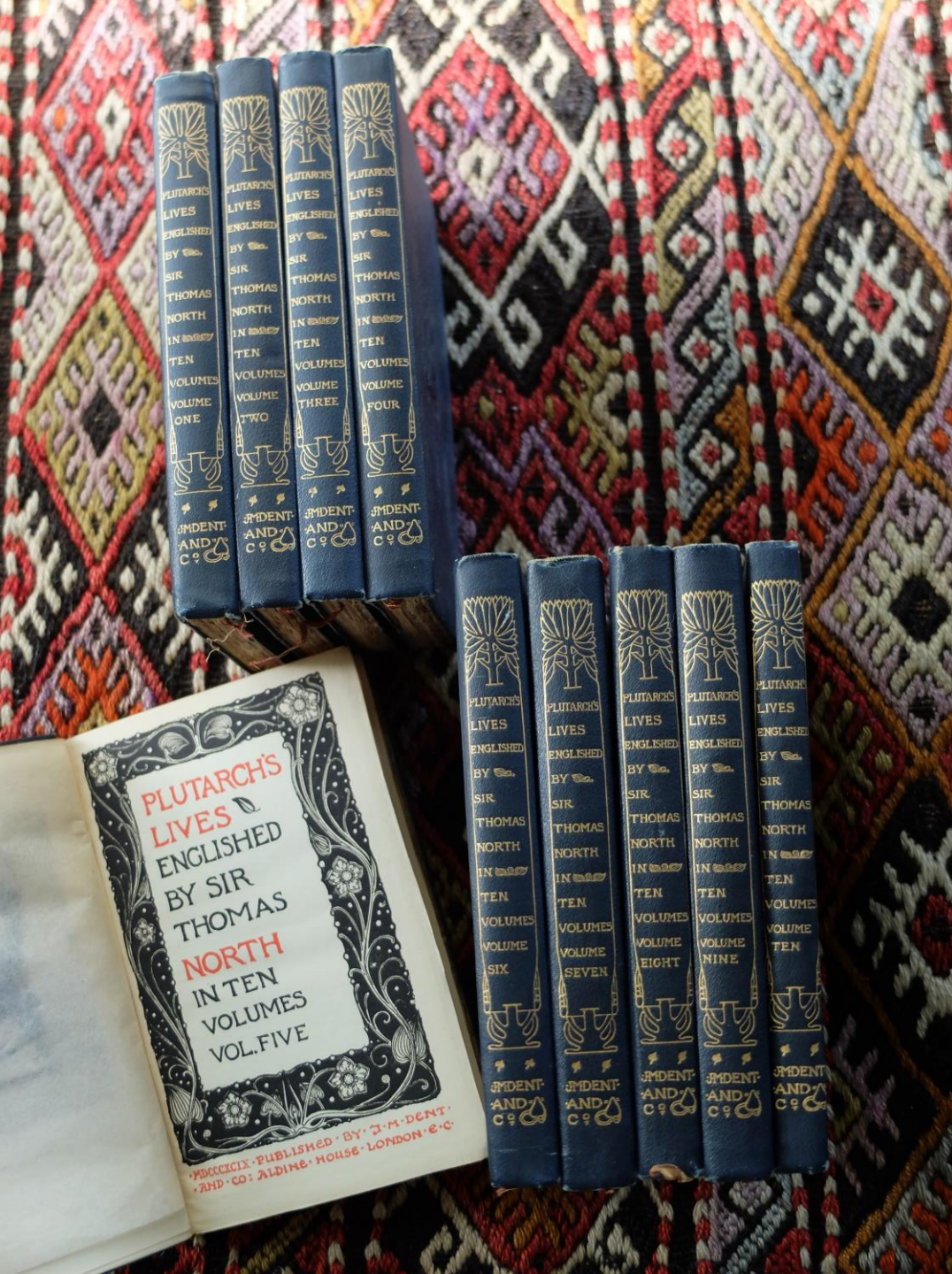


The Simple Pulley



Recitation:

Have children memorize and then recite passages of Scripture, poetry, sayings of the fathers, etc. This will help the children prepare for public speaking later as well.



Citizenship:

Charlotte Mason included citizenship in her students' studies by having them read selections from Plutarch's Lives. Plutarch was a Greek writer who lived from A. D. 46-120. His most famous work is Plutarch's Lives, which consists of paired biographies of famous Greeks and Romans. Shakespeare used Plutarch's Lives as a source for his Roman history plays.

Charlotte Mason's students would read and examine the lives and choices of these major historical figures critically. Simplified retellings are available. She also included readings from her own work, Ourselves, book 4 of her six part series, which is an extended allegory of the soul, personified as the Kingdom of Mansoul.

Lives of Saints can be included here as well, in place of or in addition to Plutarch. A traditional classical education would normally include Plutarch.



St. Basil the Great:


“Since we must attain to the life to come through virtue, our attention is to be chiefly fastened upon those many passages from the poets, from the historians, and especially from the philosophers, in which virtue itself is praised. For it is of no small advantage that virtue become a habit with a youth, for the lessons of youth make a deep impression, because the soul is then plastic, and therefore they are likely to be indelible.”



Michael's

"Garden of Virtues"

Journal



Virtue Study/Book of Virtues:

This is something that was not included in Charlotte Mason's approach, but we have added to our Charlotte Mason style homeschool in the past. It would include copy work, written narration, and visual illustrations of virtue study projects. A different virtue/vice could be studied every six weeks and working on the 'book of virtues' could be done one day a week.



For none of us lives to
Himself and no one dies
To himself. For if we live,
We live to the Lord, and
if we die, we die to the
Lord. Therefore, whether
We live or die, we are the
Lord's

- Romans 14:7-8



Self-re-nun-ci-a-tion

n. 1. The act of renouncing, or setting aside,
one's own wishes, claims, etc.; self-sacrifice.



Anna's

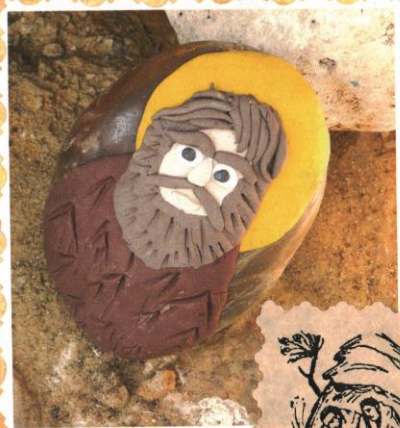


"Garden of Virtues"

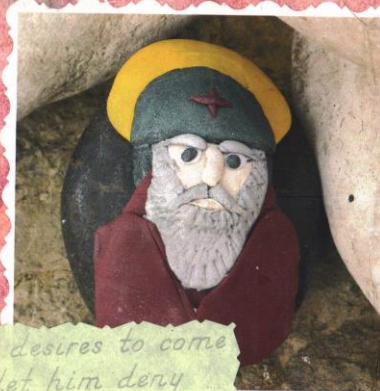
Journal



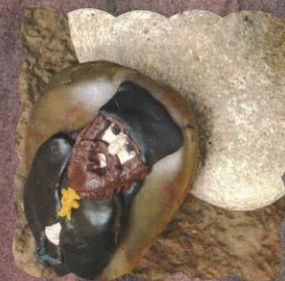
"They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented—of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth." Hebrews 11:37-38



"Do not the angels differs from us in this respect, that they do not want so many things as we do? Therefore the less we need, the more we are on our way to them; the more we need, the more we sink down to this perishable life." -St. John Chrysostom



"If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost?" Luke 9:23-25





“But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.” ~ 2Peter 1:5-7



St. John Chrysostom:

“The primary goal in the education of children is to teach, and to give example of, a virtuous life.”



St. John Chrysostom:

“Your children will always be sufficiently wealthy if they receive from you a good upbringing that is able to order their moral life and behavior. Thus, strive not to make them rich, but rather to make them pious masters of their passions, rich in virtues.”



Because of the breadth of options, Charlotte Mason's recommended content can be overwhelming. But it can be scheduled and customized according to the needs of the family.

As suggested by Charlotte Mason:

“The mother needs to acquire her own habit of training her children so that, by and by, it is not troublesome to her, but a pleasure. She devotes herself to the formation of one habit in her children at a time, doing no more than watch over those already formed.”

One by one, elements of Charlotte Mason's suggested content can be brought in, as the habit for the study of each is developed.

WEEK # _____ Dates: _____

DAILY:

| | | | | | |
|--|---|----|---|----|---|
| <i>Bible Reading (20 minutes)</i> | M | TU | W | TH | F |
| <i>Prologue Reading (20 minutes)</i> | M | TU | W | TH | F |
| <i>A Children's History of the Church (15 min)</i> | M | TU | W | TH | F |
| <i>Stories from Church History (20 minutes)</i> | M | TU | W | TH | F |
| <i>Patristic Reading (15-30 minutes)</i> | M | TU | W | TH | F |
| <i>Personal Literature Reading (15-30 minutes)</i> | M | TU | W | TH | F |
| <i>Copywork (15-20 minutes)</i> | M | TU | W | TH | F |
| <i>Math (20-30 minutes)</i> | M | TU | W | TH | F |

WEEKLY:

| | | | | | |
|---|---|----|---|----|---|
| <i>Nature Walk/Nature Journal (2 hours)</i> | M | TU | W | TH | F |
| <i>Book of Centuries (15-30 minutes)</i> | M | TU | W | TH | F |
| <i>Book of Virtues (15-30 minutes)</i> | M | TU | W | TH | F |
| <i>Language Study (15-20 minutes)</i> | M | TU | W | TH | F |
| <i>Art Study (15 minutes)</i> | M | TU | W | TH | F |
| <i>Music Study (15 minutes)</i> | M | TU | W | TH | F |
| <i>Narration/Dictation (15-20 minutes)</i> | M | TU | W | TH | F |
| <i>Poetry Recitation (15 minutes)</i> | M | TU | W | TH | F |

SPECIAL ASSIGNMENTS:

| |
|-------------------------------|
| <i>Biography Assignment</i> |
| <i>Plant a fall garden</i> |
| <i>Build a garden trellis</i> |
| <i>Sewing Lesson</i> |
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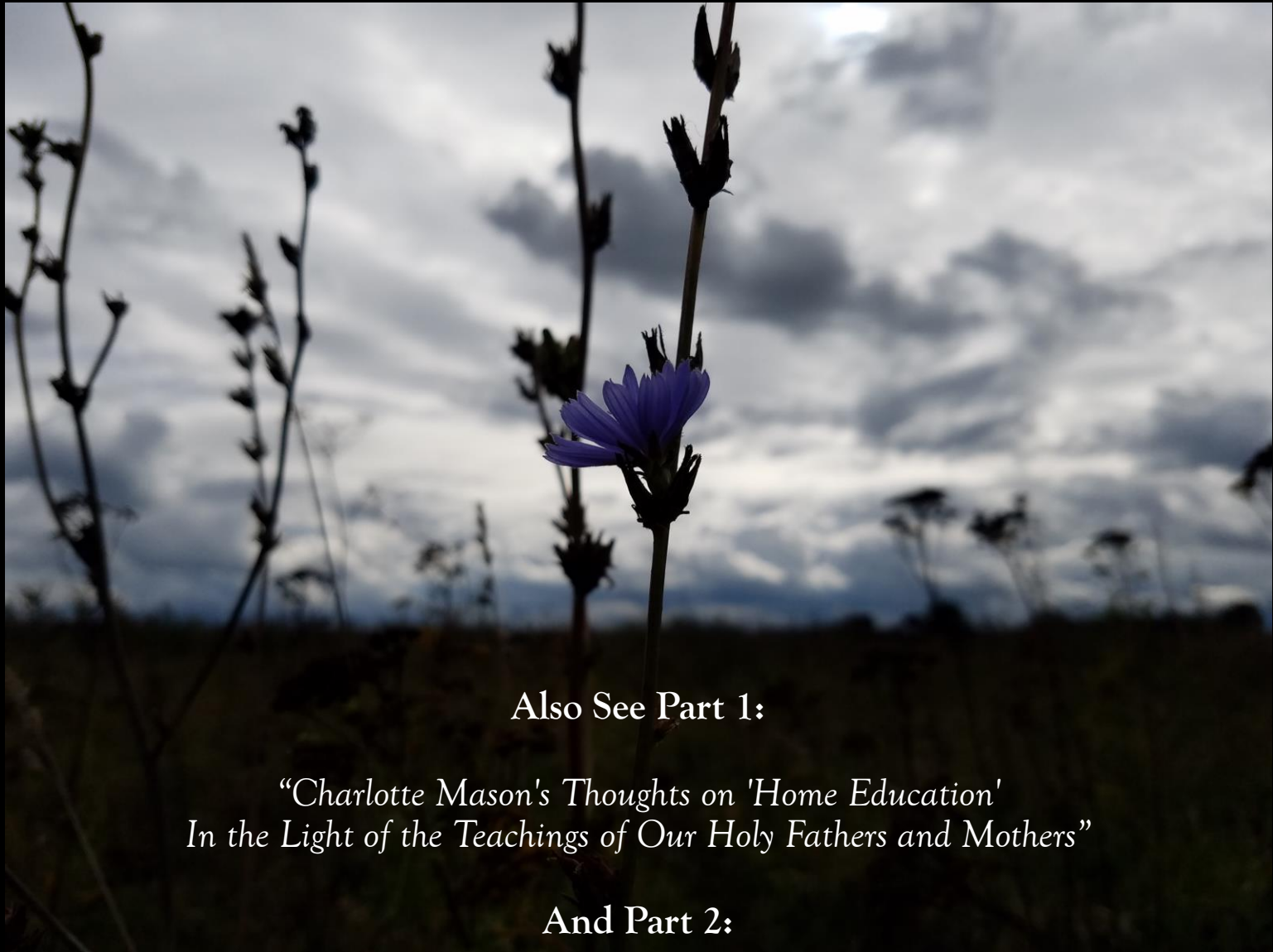
"Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it."

- Matthew 7:13-14

Academics can be completed in the morning, leaving the afternoons free for unstructured learning and other activities.

Charlotte Mason's schools normally ended structured teaching between 11:30 am-1 pm. The afternoons were free for nature walks and other unstructured activities. Unstructured learning can be as valuable as structured, allowing students time to develop their own interests and talents. The most important way to maximize the value of this unstructured time is to minimize non-productive entertainment and distractions that plague modern life today.

We want to offer a special thank you, both to the families who contributed photographs of their children's work, and to those who helped with the actual development of this slide show presentation. Their contributions are greatly appreciated.



Also See Part 1:

*“Charlotte Mason's Thoughts on 'Home Education'
In the Light of the Teachings of Our Holy Fathers and Mothers”*

And Part 2:

*“The Twenty Principles of Charlotte Mason
In the Light of the Teachings of Our Holy Fathers and Mothers”*