

# A Few of the Many Ways to Approach Educating your Child(ren) Pre-K – 2nd

The knots in your stomach will come and go as you determine what works and what does not work. Creating a sit-down-because-that-is-how-schools-do-it will not get you to the next level up of engaging enjoyable learning, so skip that model right off. Keep the desk work like St. Anthony and words – use them sparingly and only when absolutely needed.

[Read books on teaching pedagogy](#) to fully understand the various models that interest you in order to create your own blend of how you will educate your children. If you are like most homeschoolers, you will create a blend that perfectly fits your family.

Be sure to use the search bar on the Faithful Scholars and Umbrella Skye websites to locate helpful articles such as [Counting the Days or Making the Days Count](#).

The younger the child, the fewer textbooks need be used and the more screens need to be limited if not eliminated. I have never seen online learning make a child better at anything but wanting more screentime unless used as a tool to add detailed learning to something they are doing in person with their hands like building a Lego creation (age 4) or building a bookshelf (age 5) or repairing a small engine (age 6). This [article about online learning](#) is a must-read.

Children learn through movement and play until around the age of 7, so play well and move often. The rule of thumb is that later is always better than early. Early readers make us proud, but later readers love reading for a lifetime -unless they are an only child or working a farm/homestead and reading is one way they are able to enjoy a break, and then this rule of thumb does not fit. Same with writing and math. That does not mean to avoid it, but simply not to push through it as early as you might. Yes, the child can. They want to please you, but their early years are better spent solving curious riddles that they are guided to observe and sort through.

Until around grade 3 for girls and grade 4 for boys, when a child naturally begins to comprehend sentence structure as gained from reading, it is best to avoid workbook/sheet worship and focus on parent-led lessons such as pointing out and picking out great sentences to happily discuss what makes it great. You can go on treasure hunts for parts of speech making a Verb Day and being silly by making a great verb into a boring verb and vice versa. All parent led engagement – exactly what your child wants – your attention focused on them!

Classic literature from ancient to modern is the place to naturally teach your child great sentence structure as well as the beginning of critical thinking. Brain candy is determined by those that traditional children are reading with the goal of reading is reading, so the material does not matter. That depends upon what you are wanting out of the material. If just to keep a child turning pages without having to think.... Or is it to think and occasionally turn a page-

We love Children's Classics for elementary level (PreK-2<sup>nd</sup>) to become familiar with the story and character. Then the Puffin classics to take it deeper with more complex story lines and stronger grammar. Finally, the original for the most thoughtful reading of a story they have loved since they were wee.

Some days come with the utter sense of failure. It is going to happen, and being prepared for this helps but does not allow you to avoid it. Take those days off, observe and write down all of the things that your children do during 'free play' that are based upon what you have taught or is learning of their own making. Truly, allowing them time to play is giving them another, and extremely important outlet of learning that is sorely missing in traditional school. Once you catch your breath, continue to take the day off, and dive back in the next day.

Most often, the changes that are needed are within ourselves. Putting our phones down, lowering our expectations of self/spouse/children, organizing our day to eat the 'slimy toad' first thing, eating better,

being more engaged, etc. Where we often go to avoid this self-work is researching/buying new curriculum, re-organizing our spaces, doom scrolling, -avoiding.

Rule of thumb: If it is on fire, attend to it. If it is out of order, attend to it. If it is going along smoothly, enjoy the flow!

**Seeking rhythm** is the Holy Grail of every homeschooler. We catch a glimpse of it only to lost it again or discover it is not sustainable. Multiply this by the number of children you have, your spouse, your pets, and for each of those, scale back your list of 'must-imparts' by one.

Create a skeletal outline for wake/nap/sleep/eat, fit lessons/play/chores in between, and season with joy/engagement/attention to discover the best days of organized chaos!

Want to read more on this topic? [Daily Rhythm Pre-K to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade](#)

## **OUR FAVORITE BOOKS, METHODS, CURRICULUM**

Book suggestions are limited as there are so many wonderful books!

My suggestions are based upon richness, price, time, beauty, & efficiency

**MATH** CAN BE TAUGHT THROUGH A BEAN BIN. LITERALLY, A BIN FILLED WITH VARIOUS AND SUNDRY BEANS THAT YOU COUNT, ORGANIZE, PUT TOGETHER, TAKE APART, GROUP, DIVIDE.

**BOOK SUGGESTIONS:** SINGAPORE MATH US EDITION WORKBOOKS A/B AND/OR LIFE OF FRED

CREATE MATH STORIES ABOUT ANY AND EVERYTHING IN THE SAME WAY. MATH IS NOT HARD, IT IS REALLY JUST A DIFFERENT WAY OF THINKING. BY BEGINNING WITH REAL AND MOVING INTO LINES AND SQUIGGLES ON A PAGE, YOU ARE MAKING MATH A FRIEND.

**READING**--WHEN YOUR CHILD BEGINS ASKING 'WHAT DOES THAT SAY?' OR, BETTER, WHEN THEIR BIG FIRST TOOTH BEGINS TO GROW IN, THEY ARE READY TO BEGIN TO LEARN TO READ.

IF YOU ARE EAGER TO BEGIN, START WITH PRE-READING LESSONS BY MASTERING THESE BASIC [SPELLING RULES](#). THIS WILL HELP THEM UNDERSTAND THE RULES OF READING AT A FASTER PACE AS WELL AS ENHANCE THEIR NATURAL SPELLING ABILITIES.

TAKE A FULL YEAR AND EXPECT THAT YOUR CHILD WILL RUN INTO 'WALLS' WHEREUPON YOU TAKE A BREAK FOR A DAY, WEEK, OR MONTH. THEY WON'T FORGET A THING. THEY JUST BECAME OVER-SATURATED AND NEEDED TO PROCESS/ABSORB.

**BOOKS SUGGESTIONS:** TEACH YOUR CHILD TO READ IN 100 EASY LESSONS

**READING COMPREHENSION:** AS YOU READ ALOUD, ASK YOUR CHILD(REN) QUESTIONS EVERY SO OFTEN, BUT NEVER ASK FOR MORE INFORMATION BEYONE A FULL PAGE OF MATERIAL. THIS WILL LET YOU KNOW THEY ARE LISTENING, LET THEM KNOW YOU ARE ENGAGED WITH THEM, AND BUILD THEIR LISTENING AND READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS.

**SCIENCE** AT THE PRE-K THROUGH ELEMENTARY LEVEL SHOULD BE STRICTLY EXPLORE/DISCOVER/OBSERVE/SKETCH/READ ALOUD OR HANDS-ON AND EXPLORATION OF PICTURE/REFERENCE BOOKS - LESSONS SHOULD NOT BE BASED UPON MASTERY BUT ON SATIATING CURIOSITY. EVERYTHING IS SCIENCE!

IF YOUR CHILD SAYS, "HEY MOM, COME LOOK AT THIS!" MAKE IT A RULE TO PUT ASIDE WHAT YOU ARE DOING (IMMEDIATELY AND NOT 'IN A MINUTE') TO GO SEE. YOU ARE BEING INVITED IN TO 1. CONFIRM THAT LEARNING IS AWESOME, AND 2. THAT YOUR CHILD IS A GREAT LEARNER. AND GUESS WHAT? THEY WILL STILL INVITE YOU IN WHEN THEY ARE IN THEIR TEENS, TWENTIES, AND BEYOND! [THIS SONG](#) ALWAYS REMINDS ME OF WHAT WE DO NOT WANT TO DO.

**BOOK SUGGESTIONS:** KEEPING A NATURE JOURNAL BY LESLIE C. WALKER AND/OR COMSTOCKS NATURE HANDBOOK AND/OR MADAM HOW AND LADY WHY AND/OR THE WATER BABIES

**HISTORY** IS BEST READ ALOUD-- LESSONS SHOULD NOT BE BASED UPON MASTERY BUT ON SATIATING CURIOSITY. EXPLORE BROADLY OR STUDY DEEPLY. THIS IS JUST AN INTRODUCATION OF A WORLD VIEW. REMEMBER THAT IF YOU ONLY READ AUTHERS WITH WHICH YOU AGREE, YOUR CHILDREN WILL NOT LEARN HOW/WHAT TO DEFEND.

HAVE YOUR CHILD DRAW AN IMAGE OF WHATEVER IT IS YOU ARE READING ABOUT (THEY CAN LOOK AT THE BOOK OR INTO THEIR IMAGINATION). AT THE END, HAVE THEM TELL YOU ABOUT IT, WRITE A SHORT NOTE ON THE BOTTOM, AND ADD TO THEIR OWN PERSONAL HISTORY BOOK THAT THEY ARE CREATING.

**BOOK SUGGESTIONS:** A CHILD'S HISTORY OF THE WORLD AND/OR SMALL READERS PER TOPIC AND/OR ANY BOOK BY HOLLINGS C. HOLLINGS