

ALL ABOUT HOMESCHOOL



SAMPLE CHAPTERS
"How to Set Up Your Homeschool Schedule"

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SHERI'S TIPS &
ENCOURAGEMENT
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SHERI GRAHAM

All About Homeschool – Sample Chapters

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WELCOME!

I am so excited to be launching a brand new ebook, **All About Homeschool, on September 19, 2016!**

Here are some sample chapters for you to enjoy, but it is only a taste of what the complete ebook will hold!

I have taken all that I have written about homeschooling over the years and compiled it altogether in this brand new ebook, along with helpful forms that you can use to plan your homeschool.

I have been homeschooling since 1998 (just a few years!), and have lots to share that will encourage you along this journey.

Mark your calendars for **September 19, 2016!** I'll be running a special launch sale, so you won't want to miss it!

Enjoy your free chapters!

In Christ,

Sheri

Chapter 7

How to Set Up Your Homeschool Schedule (Part 1 of 4) – Time Blocking!

Do you struggle with figuring out a homeschool schedule that works for you and your family?

Well, in this 4-part series I want to share some tips that have helped me and hopefully you will be able to glean something that you can apply and use in your own homeschool. Please just use these steps as a guide and apply what works for you! That is what makes homeschooling awesome — we get to make it a part of our lives, which will look a little different for each family.

Are you ready to dig in? Here is the first step to take to set up your homeschool schedule – Time Blocking!

Divide the Day Up into Blocks of Time

I have tried elaborate schedules before and they just didn't work for me. If you like that kind of thing and want to schedule your homeschool in 1/2 hour increments, go for it!

But what I have found that works the best for us is to **schedule our day in blocks of time**. Here are some suggested blocks for you to consider:

- **Chore Time Block**
- **Read-Aloud Time Block**

- **Together School Time Block**
- **Independent Work/Table Time Block**
- **Free Time Block**

Once you have decided on the blocks of time that you want to schedule for your family, then chart out what an ideal day would look like. Attach times to each of the blocks so that your day has a flow to it, being careful not to overlap the blocks. To give you an example, here is what our days mostly look like during the homeschool year:

- 8:30-9:15 – Breakfast & Together School Time Block
- 9:15-9:30 – Bedroom Chores
- 9:30-12:00 – Independent Work/Table Time Block
- 12:00-12:30 – Lunch
- 12:30-1:30 – Free Time Block
- 1:30-2:30 – Read-Aloud Time Block
- 2:30-4:30 – Free Time Block (If needed, finish up any homeschooling work first.)
- 4:30-5:00 – Chore Time Block (Pick up house and prep for dinner)
- 6:00-7:00 – Dinner and Cleanup
- 7:00-9:00 – Family Time

The wonderful thing about scheduling your homeschool in blocks is that if something comes up you can simply move the blocks around.

For example, let's say that one day one of the kids had a dentist appointment in the morning. You tried to set it in the afternoon, but they only had an opening in the morning. So you may choose to move your blocks around and do your Independent Work/Table Time Block in the afternoon instead of in the morning, and then do your Read-Aloud Time Block (a shortened version) before bed that night. Even though your day got messed up a bit because of the dentist appointment, you were still able to get in most of your homeschool work for the day. See how easy that is?

Ok, now that you've selected the time blocks you want to schedule and made a rough schedule for the day, it's time to look closer at actually scheduling the work for those time blocks. In the next few chapters in this series, I am going to outline a plan to schedule your Together School Block, Independent Work/Table Time Block, and the Read-Aloud Time Block. Those are the main ones that you will use for your homeschool, but the methods will work for any other block of time you want to schedule.

By the way, I would encourage you to NOT *schedule* anything for the kids during the Free Time Blocks. Only step in if they need help finding something to do. They need that down time where nothing is planned to unwind and rest. Don't we all?

Chapter 8

How to Set Up Your Homeschool Schedule (Part 2 of 4) – Together School Block!

Need some help scheduling your Together School Block? I'm here to help!

In Part 1 of this series, I covered how to divide up your day into blocks of time. In the rest of this series we will be looking at those blocks and digging into how to schedule them! Today we will be covering how to schedule the Together School Block! Ready? Let's go!

Schedule the Together School Block

Decide on the subjects you want to teach.

The subjects in this block are going to be those that you can teach all your kids together, but are not part of your main homeschool studies (like history or science). These are going to be things that you want to teach your children but can't ever seem to fit them in. Some that I have done during this block of time are: Bible, Composer and Artists Study, Character, Manners, Poetry, Literature, Bible Memory, Missionary stories or biographies. The ideas are really endless.

I like to use this time to cover subjects that sometimes get forgotten about. Now don't try to do everything at once though! I always do Bible, and then usually add two more things that we read together. When I do my interval planning, I plan out what we are going to be reading during our Together School that interval, and try to change it up from interval to interval to make it more interesting.

So take some time right now and jot down a list of subjects that you may want to cover with your children. Once you are done, move on to the next step!

Choose the materials you are going to use.

Most of the time this is going to be a book, but it could be an audio book, a CD for composer study, etc. I have to confess that most of the time I run across a book online or in a bookstore and say to myself, "That would be a great one to read together with the kids!" I'll usually take that book then and add it to my collection of "Together School" stuff that I want to schedule.

So take a look at your list of subjects you want to teach during Together School and see if you already own something you can use to cover that subject. If you don't already own something, then take some time to look through some homeschool catalogs or websites online for ideas. Once you have found something you want, go ahead and buy it.

But before moving on to the next step, make sure you have a list of the subject areas you want to cover, and then a list of books/resources you want to use under each subject.

Plan out your Together School for the first 6-7 weeks of your homeschool.

For me personally, I try to make our Together School as simple as possible. We do the same thing each day until we finish a book and are ready to begin something new.

To give you an example, here is what I have planned for the first 6 weeks of our Together School once we start our homeschool next month:

- Read a story out of The Child's Story Bible (Bible)
- Read a story out of one of the Scripture Sleuth books (Devotional)

- Read a chapter out of Tales from Shakespeare (History-we are studying the Renaissance and Reformation this year)

This only takes 15-20 minutes total and is a wonderful way for me to get in some more learning with the kids!

If we finish up a book before the end of the interval, then I just go back to my Together School list, put a check mark and the date by the book we finished, and then choose another book from the list (can be either the same subject or a different one). Easy!

I hope you can see how effective this time block can be in your homeschool!

Chapter 9

How to Set Up Your Homeschool Schedule (Part 3 of 4) – Independent Work / Table Time Block!

Need some tips on scheduling your children's independent or table time work?

In Part 2 of this series, I covered how to schedule your Together School Block. Today we will be covering how to schedule the Independent Work / Table Time Block! Ready? Let's go!

Schedule the Independent Work / Table Time Block

This time block is going to be used for all the subjects that your child needs to work on either independently or with mom. You will include things like: phonics, reading, language arts, math, penmanship, etc. So let's get into the nitty gritty of planning out this block of time!

Take one child at a time and figure out what subjects they need to work on during this time block.

The first step in scheduling this time block is to make a list of what each child needs to work on. So get out a piece of paper (or type a list on your computer), and jot down all the subjects each of your children need to cover the coming year. Look at where each child is in their learning process and select the subjects that are specific to their needs.

Then figure out what curriculum you are going to be using for each of those subjects. Add that information to your list as well.

Once you have that done, you are ready to move on to the next step!

Decide how many days a week you will have them work on each subject.

In order not to overwhelm younger children especially, you may need to spread the subjects out over the week. For example, they may do math and phonics every day, but then do language arts three days a week, and penmanship two days a week.

So take a look at the subjects that each of your children need to work on and figure out what they will do each day of the week.

Divide up the material and make a note of how much they need to cover each day.

The next step is going to take some figuring, so get those brains working! You will need to do this for each of your children. Look at the material that they will be covering, and the number of days a week they will be working on that subject.

- **Figure out the total number of lessons/pages** they need to complete for the subject.
- **Figure out the total number of days they will be working on that subject** during the whole school year.
- **Divide the number of lessons by the number of days.** (For example, if there are 120 pages to be done in their language arts workbook, and you figure they will be working on language arts 3 days a week that would be 108 days during the school year (3×36 weeks). To figure out about how many pages they need to complete each day, do the following (120 pages divided by 108 days = about 1.1 pages per day. So that means that you will want to schedule at least 1 page a day and sometimes 2.

Once you have that figure (how many lessons/pages they need to complete per day), then record that next to the subject on your list.

Do this same procedure for each of the subjects for each child. When you are done, you will have all the information you need to move to the next step!

Chart out the daily work on a calendar for each child, but only schedule out the first 6 or so weeks of school.

Now you are ready to begin actually scheduling out your child's homeschool work during this time block. I don't know what you use to do your lesson planning, but I like to purchase an Intentional Monthly Planner (<http://sherigraham.com/begin-planning-your-homeschool-year-with-my-new-intentional-monthly-planner>) for each of my children. I use that planner to record their daily assignments on. It has worked great because I can easily see what each child needs to work on and they can check it off as they complete them.

You can also just use a spiral notebook. Simply write the date and then the assignments underneath. You will probably have room to get a whole week's assignments on the front and back of a page.

So what you will do is look at your list you made in the previous step and jot down on each day what your child will be doing. For example, this is what one week may look like:

Monday

Math – Lesson 1

Phonics – Lesson 1

Language Arts – Page 1

Tuesday

Math – Lesson 2

Phonics – Lesson 2

Penmanship – Lesson 1

Wednesday

Math – Lesson 3

Phonics – Lesson 3

Language Arts – Pages 2-3

Thursday

Math – Lesson 4

Phonics – Lesson 4

Penmanship – Lesson 2

Friday

Math – Lesson 5

Phonics – Lesson 5

Language Arts – Pages 4

I want to encourage you, though, to not go overboard on scheduling out your child's work. I would highly recommend that you only schedule the first 6-7 weeks of school. That way you will be able to determine if you scheduled too much or too little and adjust when you plan out the next interval of your homeschool.

I hope you can see how beneficial this can be scheduling out each of your children's table time work ahead of time. It takes so much stress off of you when it is all planned out!

Chapter 10

How to Set Up Your Homeschool Schedule (Part 4 of 4) – Read-Aloud Time & Free Time Blocks!

Would you love to teach some subjects to your children through a read-aloud time? Do your kids struggle to find something to do when they have free time?

In Part 3 of this series, I covered how to schedule your Independent Work / Table Time Block. Today we will be covering how to schedule your Read-Aloud Time Block and also look at a few tips for your Free Time Block! Ready? Let's go!

Schedule the Read-Aloud Time Block

Decide what subjects you want to teach using read-aloud books.

The first step is to decide which subjects you want to teach your kids using read-aloud books. Some obvious subjects are: history, science, geography, and literature. Once you have decided on the subjects you want to teach this way, then you are ready to move to the next step...selecting books!

Research and make a list of the books you want to read out loud to cover each subject.

Once you have chosen the subjects you want to cover in your read-aloud times, you are ready to begin selecting books. I have a lot of different resources that I use when looking for books. Here are a few:

Curriculum catalogs

- Sonlight - <http://www.sonlight.com/>
- My Father's World - <http://www.mfwbooks.com/>)

Websites with book lists

- Ambleside Online - <https://www.amblesideonline.org/curriculum.shtml>
- Simply Charlotte Mason - <https://simplycharlottesmason.com/planning/curriculum-guide/>
- Storyformed - <http://storyformed.com/>
- 1000 Good Books List - <http://www.classical-homeschooling.org/celoop/1000.html>

Books with book lists

- Read for the Heart - <http://sherigraham.com/amazon-links-books-mentioned>
- Honey for a Child's Heart - <http://sherigraham.com/amazon-links-books-mentioned>
- All Through the Ages - <http://www.nothingnewpress.com/books/all-through-the-ages-2/>

For a ton more ideas and resources, check out Section 4 on starting a read-aloud time!

Now that you have a good list of books for each of the subjects you want to teach, it is time to start scheduling!

Decide how you are going to schedule these subjects.

This is probably the trickiest part of scheduling your Read-Aloud Time Block — figuring out how to schedule it! There are different ways you can set up your schedule — you

can either do one subject at a time, or do more than one at a time. Let's look at each of these in more detail.

Schedule one subject at a time: If you have only one subject you are going to be teaching using read-alouds, then this won't be hard. Just make your list of books you want to read and put them in roughly the order you want to read them. Then when you have your Read-Aloud Time Block each day, just start in on the first book and read 1-3 chapters each day (depending on the attention span of your kids). When you complete that book, then move on to the next book on your list. Easy!

If you have more than one subject that you want to teach using read-alouds, then decide on a time-frame for each. For example, let's say you are studying Egypt and Rome for history this year, so you decide to cover Egypt the first half of the year, and Rome the second half. You will have your book lists for each one and like I explained above, you will just read through them in order until your time is up.

Schedule more than one subject at a time: If you want to cover two or more subjects simultaneously, then you'll have to be a bit more creative. You can choose certain days of the week to do a certain subject, and then read from that subject's book list on those days. Or another way you can schedule it is to read a little from each subject each day, but just read less from each book.

I personally have found that it works best for me and my kids to only schedule one subject at a time. When I tried to have too many different subjects going at a time, it was hard to stay focused. We preferred to read from one subject at a time, dig deeper into that subject, and read more chapters per day. But that was just what worked best for our family. You may find another schedule works better for you, and that's great! If you have littler children, it may work best to read short picture books and cover several different subjects at a time.

To give you an example in real life, here is my Read-Aloud plan for this coming year:

- Weeks 1-5 – Geography Study using Beautiful Feet (Reading Paddle to the Sea and Tree in the Trail and doing projects and map work along the way)
- Weeks 6-17 – Kansas State History (Using Kansas State History in Light of the Cross, reading Little House on the Prairie and a few other books too, also doing a notebooking project with this study)
- Weeks 18-22 – Geography Study using Beautiful Feet (Reading Minn of the Mississippi and Seabird and doing projects and map work along the way)
- Weeks 23-35 – Renaissance and Reformation Study (I have a list of books we will read for this study.)

So you can see how I broke up our Geography study into two parts to begin each half of the year. I did that because I knew it was going to be a little lighter reading and also have some fun activities to do with it. Starting the new school year and beginning back again after the holidays are both kind of hard times to get going. So I thought this would be a good way to get back in the flow of school again.

I hope this has been helpful for you as you plan out your Read-Aloud Time Block for this coming school year.

Tips for the Free Time Block

Many times your kids will be learning on their own during their free time. Kids need time to play, explore, and invent. They also need time to just “be”, to rest, and think.

But if your kids struggle finding things to do or you need more encouragement and ideas on what to do during free time, be sure to check out the huge list of free time activities your kids can choose from that are found in Chapter 18! There are tons of ideas here that will keep your kids having fun and learning for a long time!



<http://www.SheriGraham.com>

Our website is full of resources to help you be intentional in all you do! Life is too short and we want to be living with a plan and with purpose.

Feel free to check out the different areas of my site and be encouraged to be “Living, Learning, and Loving...Intentionally!”

You can find Sheri online at:

www.SheriGraham.com

(My main website, blog, and eStore)

www.SheriGraham.com/intentionalplanner

(The Intentional Planner website)

www.12weekholidayplanner.com/

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