



California Homeschool Network

Strengthening the Voice of California Homeschoolers™



**Laughter is the sun that drives
winter from the human face**

Victor Hugo

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February 2021

The CHN Board of Trustees wishes our families health and safety. We are here for homeschooling support. Visit our website at www.californiahomeschool.net

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Have questions about homeschooling?

Join California Homeschool Network live as our long-time homeschool parent volunteers discuss all things homeschool & answer your questions.

Our **CHN Homeschool Talk Tuesdays** occur on the **Second Tuesday of Each Month from 12:00pm to 1:00pm.**

Join us on Tuesday, March 9, 2021 at 12:00pm for our next one!

Please be sure to [register in advance](#) for the meeting date of your choice.

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.



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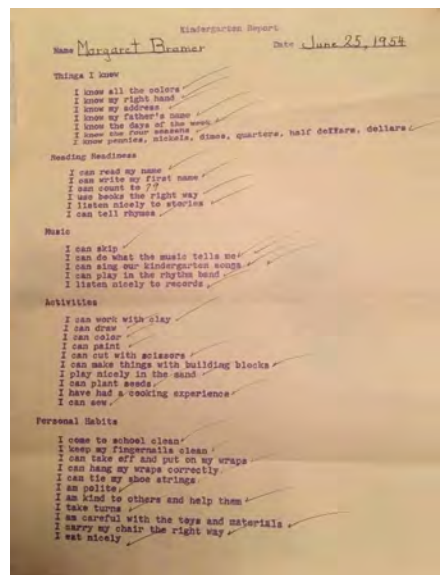
Requirements, Resources and Recommendations

Questions about preschool and kindergarten are some of the most frequently asked homeschooling questions we hear at CHN. Many parents have been given "expert advice" from family, friends, coworkers and even complete strangers on the proper ways to educate their children. These well-meaning people do not realize that the law, requirements and expectations have all changed over the years. So what your grandma experienced sending her children to school is very different than what it is like today. This means it is important for you, as a parent, to understand all of your options and make the best decision for your family, based on their needs.

To begin with, in California, neither preschool nor kindergarten is mandatory. In fact, your child legally doesn't have to be enrolled in any school, public or private, until the fall of the year where they are 6 years old on September 1st. At that point, they will be placed in either kindergarten or 1st grade, depending on when they turned 6. In California, children are placed in grades according to their age.

We also know that what kindergartners are expected to learn over the course of the school year is much different than it used to be. You can see from the picture of this kindergarten report card from 1954 what was required at the time. If you look closely, you will see that reading was called "Reading Readiness" and students were only required to be able to read their own name by the end of kindergarten. Mathematics was simply the ability to recognize different coins.

Today, as schools push children to learn more information at a younger age, the standards have become much broader. Today, teachers



are tasked with working towards completing the "I can statements" by the end of the school year. You can search the internet for these, along with the grade you are looking for, to see what they are. We found a link to the kindergarten "I Can" list from a CA school in PDF format [here](#).

Kindergarten "I Can" Statements for Reading and Writing Reading for Literature

- I can ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
- I can retell what I read, using key details.
- I can tell you about characters, settings and the main parts of the story.
- I can ask and answer questions about words I don't know in the text.
- I can recognize different types of texts, including stories, poems, fantasy and real texts.
- I can name the author, illustrator and tell you what each one does to help tell the story.
- I can describe the relationship between the pictures and the story.
- I can compare and contrast what happens to the characters in the story.
- I can read stories in a group and use what I already know to connect to the text and use the pictures and situations to make predictions about the story.

Reading for Informational Texts

- I can ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
- I can retell what I read, using key details and tell you what the story is mostly about.
- I can tell you about the connection between two characters, events, ideas or pieces of information in a story.
- I can ask and answer questions about words I don't know in the story.
- I know how to find the front and back cover of a book and where the title page is.
- I can tell you who wrote the story and who did the pictures and how they worked together to make the story.
- I can tell you how the pictures and the story are connected.
- I can tell you reasons why the writer said a certain thing in the story.
- I can tell you what is different and the same in two stories on the same thing.
- I can read stories in a group and use what I already know to connect to the text and use the pictures and situations to make predictions about the story.

As you can see, the current standards take up 5 pages, rather than one, and they are much more detailed and specific in what they want children to learn academically during their kindergarten year. This can be daunting and even damaging for a child who isn't developmentally ready. Additionally, the I Can Statements are designed to work towards and with the annual assessment testing that public school funding is based on. Children start taking these tests in the 2nd grade in public schools, but the groundwork is begun in kindergarten. This has caused an outcry from parents because they feel their children are being taught to the test, rather than for retention and knowledge. And

because of this pressure to perform at such an early age, many parents have opted to homeschool their children, beginning with the preschool and kindergarten years.

Choosing to homeschool for preschool and kindergarten allows you to customize your child's education, matching interests, levels and abilities specifically to your child. You also gain flexibility and control over their schooling and can set a pace and schedule that works for you and your child. You will find many free and inexpensive curriculum and educational



activities you can use in your homeschool experience. And best of all, it allows you more time to decide if public school is the route you want to take with their education, or if homeschooling has more to offer them.

A customized education is what homeschooling provides your child. You aren't trapped by set curriculum that must be doled out in predetermined chunks. You don't have to do what the public schools are doing. Use, find or create what works best for your child. It doesn't have to be worksheets at a desk. Learning can happen seamlessly throughout your normal day. If for instance, your child loves dinosaurs, then use dinosaurs as a theme to learn new concepts and ideas. Use pictures or toy dinosaurs to learn colors, practice counting and do basic math. Read all about the dinosaurs, make up stories on your own, act out scenes or create plays about dinosaurs. Plant a dinosaur salad garden, go on fossil hikes, visit a museum, watch some fun movies or documentaries about them. You can take this kind of learning forward with any interest, incorporating the learning seamlessly into your daily lives.



Homeschooling also gives you more flexibility and control, allowing you to set a pace and schedule that works best for you and your child. If your child is struggling with a concept or taking more time to learn something like letter sounds, it's alright. You are not forced to keep pace with 30 other children in a classroom. You can take the time you need to work on something until it is mastered. There is no "behind" when homeschooling. It is not a race. Similarly, if your child has jumped ahead and is ready to move on to more advanced learning, go for it. You aren't having to wait for anyone else to catch up.



In that same vein, homeschooling doesn't have to take place from 8-3, Monday through Friday. Firstly, because it just takes less time to homeschool. Most teacher's time is spent in classroom management, not actual teaching. You will find that you accomplish your daily goals in much less time than it would take in a traditional setting. And secondly, a standard schedule does not work for all families. Sometimes parent work schedules, or the household schedule, or just the natural rhythm

of your child means that learning takes place during non traditional times. After lunch, in the evenings, on the weekends - anytime can be school time, if that's what works best for your family.

To help get you started, we have several bits of advice and recommendations for free and inexpensive educational activities, online sites and practical ideas you can use in your preschool and kindergarten homeschool experience.



- Read to and with your children everyday
 - [California Public Libraries](#) are wonderful free resources and can be used both in person and online. Most of them do limit you to 50 books at a time though.
 - [Bob Books](#) are a great beginning reader series
- Online Resources, Groups & Apps
 - [Reading Eggs & Math Seeds](#)
 - [ABC Mouse](#)
 - [Homeschooling Preschoolers Group](#)
 - [PBS Kids](#)
 - A mom-compiled list of online educational resources can be found [here](#).
- Teacher's Supply Stores have great items like craft supplies, math manipulatives, story telling tools, fine motor skill development toys and more.
 - [Lakeshore](#)
 - The Dollar Tree and 99 Cents Only stores are also good resources for educational supplies
 - Office supply stores carry some educational items as well
- Traditional worksheet practice & Curriculum
 - [Big Kindergarten Workbook](#)
 - [Get Ready for Kindergarten](#)
 - [See our list of learning styles and curriculum resources](#)
- Hands-on learning. Both preschool and kindergarten children need lots of hands on learning. Here are a few ideas to get you started:
 - Gardening

- Cooking
- Cutting and gluing
- Songs and dance
- Exploring your neighborhood helpers (grocery store, post office, fire station, etc.)
- Drawing, painting and art
- Sand, water & mud play
- Lots of sunshine and play time



Remember to keep things simple. That is some of the best advice we have for you. Most of all, during these early educational years, we want you to remember that time spent with your children is a beautiful opportunity to continue bonding and create connection and conversation about everything that's of interest to them. They are little sponges, soaking up and learning all that goes on around them. Enjoy your time with them. They will only be this little once.

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Legislative Update

CHN continues to monitor legislation to ensure that homeschooling remains a legal option in California.

Covid Reporting Requirement for Schools

In January, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) along with the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE) implemented a new system designed to guide schools to safely return to in-person learning. Some homeschool families received an email from their county office of education asking them to register their school in this new system.

All public schools, all charter schools, and all private schools listed in the public database got this email and are required to register with the new system and report in every two weeks letting the state know if they have returned to in-person learning.

Homeschoolers with less than 6 students who have filed a PSA are not listed in the public database, so they should not have received the email.

Some larger families who file PSAs may have received the email.

If you file a PSA and received this email, respond to your county department of education: "We believe we received this notification in error. Our school is a home-based private school. The school is exclusively for homeschooling our own family."

If your county office of education continues to send you notifications to comply, please contact legal@californiahomeschool.net

California Homeschool Network

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Book Recommendations for Black History Month

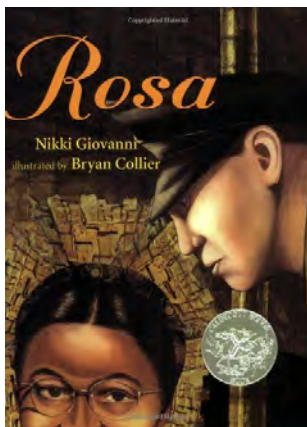
By Yedine Rodriguez and Michai Freeman

February is Black History Month. We have chosen several books that we recommend to help you celebrate, contemplate and dive deeply into this truly meaningful topic.

Grade School Recommendations



A beautiful picture book for sharing and marking special occasions such as graduation, inspired by the life of the first African American woman to travel in space, Mae Jemison. An Amazon Best Book of the Month!



Fifty years after her refusal to give up her seat on a Montgomery, Alabama bus, Mrs. Rosa Parks is still one of the most important figures in the American civil rights movement. This tribute to Mrs. Parks is a celebration of her courageous action and the events that follow.



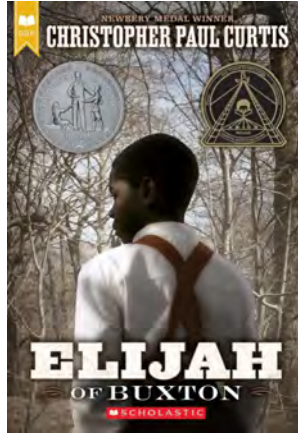
It's up, up, and away with the Tuskegee Airmen, a heroic group of African American military pilots who helped the United States win World War II.

Middle School Recommendations



Betty Before X is a powerful middle-grade fictionalized account of the childhood activism of Betty Shabazz, Malcolm X's wife, written by their daughter Ilyasah Shabazz.

"...absorbing...History comes alive in this illuminating portrayal of the early life of this civil rights activist..."
—Publishers Weekly



Eleven-year-old Elijah lives in Buxton, Canada, a settlement of runaway slaves near the American border. Elijah's the first child in town to be born free, and he ought to be famous just for that.

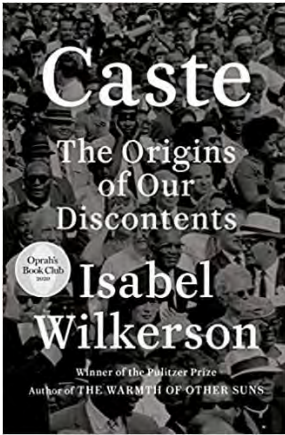
"This arresting, surprising novel of reluctant heroism is about nothing less than nobility." --The Horn Book



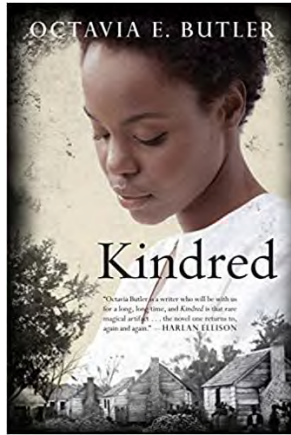
In this most authentic, highly personal account, Katherine writes her own story at the age of 100! . . . Katherine's intelligent, softly confident voice helps readers get to know her personally. Johnson makes her own story available for tweens, hoping to inspire the next generation to always do their best." -- School Library Connection

For additional titles, we encourage our members to visit [Eyeseeme](#) - an African American Children's Bookstore that specializes in promoting positive African American Images, Academic Excellence, and Cultural Pride.

High School Recommendations



In this brilliant book, Isabel Wilkerson gives us a masterful portrait of an unseen phenomenon in America as she explores, through an immersive, deeply researched narrative and stories about real people, how America today and throughout its history has been shaped by a hidden caste system, a rigid hierarchy of human rankings.



The visionary author's masterpiece pulls us, along with her Black female hero, through time to face the horrors of slavery and explore the impacts of racism, sexism, and white supremacy then and now.

"One of the most original, thought-provoking works examining race and identity."
—Lynell George, Los Angeles Times



Lewis presents March, a graphic novel trilogy. March is a vivid first-hand account of John Lewis' lifelong struggle for civil and human rights, meditating in the modern age on the distance traveled since the days of Jim Crow and segregation. Rooted in Lewis' personal story, it also reflects on the highs and lows of the broader civil rights movement.

Win one of these great books in our Black History Month book giveaway!

Keep an eye out on our social media pages for your chance to enter. CHN Members will receive an email link for an additional chance to win.

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Theme for 2020-2021

EXPLORE!

History, flora and fauna,
lost civilizations, and natural wonders.



Be Your Child's **BEST** Teacher



By: Carolyn Forte

I wasn't homeschooled. I went to school like most of you and had a variety of teachers, mostly OK, some not so great and some downright terrible. Two, however, were major influences in my life. The first was my eighth grade teacher at a small Lutheran School. I had come from the local public school and was woefully behind in math and English. I went from being a top student to far below that status and I was struggling.

One day, Mr. Scheele noticed my discouragement. He told me a story about another student like me and predicted that if I worked hard in his class, even if I didn't get all A's and B's, I would sail through my public high school with top grades. He was right. I went on to a very demanding high school where (without my knowledge) I was placed in the top track of college prep classes.

I worked hard but never struggled with English or math again. Mr. Scheele gave me the best gift a teacher can give a student: he showed me that he believed in my abilities and made me understand that he was going to be my coach and ally, not my judge.



Although Mr. Scheele was a good teacher, he was no superstar. The gift he gave me had little to do with his talent or training as a teacher. He encouraged and inspired me to learn, which is far more important than the content of his lessons. These are the essential gifts you can give your children as you homeschool. Most of the details of your curriculum or course of study will soon be forgotten, but if you inspire your children, they will keep learning and searching for answers.

Our school system is obsessed with minutia and testing. Many parents buy or sign up for a curriculum in hopes of teaching their children "what they should learn." The importance of one subject or study over another can be debated endlessly, but the real value in homeschooling is in learning to learn. Beyond that, a student must be inspired to learn to gain the most value out of his studies. I wanted to be a good student and I already had great curiosity, but Mr. Scheele encouraged and inspired me when I needed it most. You can drag your student through the most rigorous course of study known to man, but if you don't inspire him, his efforts will bring a lackluster reward.

My other inspiring teacher was a superstar. He was one of those rare and amazing teachers who can bring out talents his students did not even dream of. Dr. Dale taught a number of classes in the Music Department at Whittier College. Most music students complain that Music Theory is difficult drudgery. Dr. Dale made it easy and fun. I was certainly his least prepared student, having never studied piano, let alone harmony. Most of my classmates had studied those disciplines for years, yet there I was.



In fact, I was there only because Dr. Dale had noticed how I hung around the Music Department and participated in every vocal venue available. Although I loved to sing, I thought that since I didn't play piano, I could never major in music. One day, Dr. Dale invited me into his office and asked me why I wasn't majoring in music. He insisted that I could and should change my major to Music and showed me how it could be accomplished. He convinced me to enroll in his Theory class where he proceeded to teach us, almost effortlessly, how to listen to four-part harmony and write it down accurately like a secretary taking dictation.



The real lesson I learned from Dr. Dale had nothing to do with writing down notes. I learned that I could do anything I put my mind to if I would put in the effort and find the right mentors. This lesson should be a no-brainer for homeschoolers and their parents, but sadly, too many homeschool parents are still locked in the box of

schooling. I also learned that I could and should follow my passion and my talent. I was bored and frustrated for two years of college until I moved to the Music Department where I really belonged.

How many bored and frustrated homeschool students are slogging through a "standardized" curriculum, religious or secular, yearning for something that feeds their brains and their souls? It is a myth of modern schooling that you must learn a prescribed course of study before you enter college or the work place. Thousands, maybe tens of thousands of unschoolers, over the last 40 years, should have put that canard in its final resting place! If a student can read and write well, reason his way through an argument and do whatever math is required to do the job or pass the entrance exam, he can find employment or get into college. But no matter how many Carnegie credits he shows on his transcript, he is handicapped if he has not learned the lessons I learned from Dr. Dale and Mr. Scheele

Every parent can and should do what these two men did for me.

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Protecting Their Passions

By Roya Dedeaux, MFT



As a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, I've spoken to and worked with thousands of parents and their children about their mental health, communication, and relationships. Over and over again I keep seeing patterns that seem so crucial to overall health and well-being that I don't understand why they are not plastered mural-style on the front of every clinician's office. Parents, do you want to help decrease stress, anxiety, and depression in your children, and help increase confidence, self-esteem, and overall well-being? **Support their passions.**

It sounds simple. Most homeschooling parents I know are homeschooling in part because they understand the value of following their children's interests. The ability to provide more time for sinking into a passion in-depth is a huge draw of the homeschooling lifestyle. Homeschooling parents understand that connections can be made between subjects, that we learn in a variety of ways (not just from a book at a desk), and let's not forget that homeschooling parents are among some of the best resource providers I know. Want to find a workshop in an obscure topic? If a homeschooling parent can't find it within an hour drive, they'll just start their own.



It's so important to take these steps, and really protect your kids' interests. From a developmental standpoint, children and teenagers are supposed to be self-centered. It is part of their psychosocial task work, to focus on themselves. That fact comes fraught with land mines, however. Take this

scenario for example -- Kid says, "Parent, I'm interested in Topic Y." Parent says, "Topic Y is a waste of time/money." Kid hears, believes, internalizes, "because Topic Y is stupid, I must be stupid for liking Topic Y." Also, importantly, the parent has put up a wall between trust and communication between them and their child, which is a critically important factor for resiliency and well-being overall.

You might have never outright told your child, "the thing you love is stupid," but very often we express the message that we don't value their interest in other ways. Those supposed-to-be-self-centered kids and teenagers use their developmental super powers to internalize that message - even if that was not our intended impact.

Homeschoolers tend to have a head start with supporting their children's passions, yet even among our incredible homeschooling community, I have parents coming to me expressing difficulty at following their children's passions. It usually comes down to logistical difficulties and emotional barriers. Those logistical barriers are almost always related to the emotional ones, and those emotional barriers almost always come down to fear. Having fears as a parent is an inescapable part of parenting. It is important, in that case, to really spend time exploring your own biases, values, and barriers so they do not get in the way of you showing that you value your children's interests, and by association, your child.



Here are a few ways to show you value what your child values:

Use kind language. If someone speaks harshly to us about something we love, we tend not to trust them with that information again. Don't use words like, "obsessed" or "addicted." They have negative connotations and are insulting. Re-frame it with words like, "invested" or "dedicated." Think about how you'd feel if your partner called something you loved "an addiction." It doesn't feel good.

Use specific language. Don't call it knitting if it's crochet. Know the jargon. Use the jargon. Love is in the details.

Give them time. It takes hours and hours and hours to become expert level at something. Look up the theory of "Flow" and try very hard not to interrupt your child when they are showing you with their behavior what they want to do with their free time. Assist them in spending even more time by bringing them food, and understanding the mechanisms of their interest so you know when a good time would be if you have to interrupt.

Examine how you represent your values. Where you spend money and other resources are representations of your values. Why are you loathe to spend more money on that particular thing? What does their physical space to do their interest look like? Could you make any changes that show you value their interest?

Work through your own fears, away from them. Most logistical barriers can be worked through with creative problem solving IF you don't have fears blocking that ability. Your worries are your own, from your own history, and really have very little to do with your child. Just like you wouldn't want to pass on math or art anxiety, try not to pass on Topic Y anxiety either. Work with a therapist who understands homeschooling, talk to other supportive and kind parents, process your emotions so that when you are face to face with your child you can be truly curious and interested in what they are interested in, and not reacting out of fear.



10 Statements to show your support of your kids' interests:

1. I'm impressed by your dedication
2. I've been noticing how focused you are.
3. I love watching you do that.
4. I'm so interested in this!
5. That looks totally fascinating.
6. That looks like it was a lot of work to get there.
7. You've really become an expert.
8. This reminds me of something I love.
9. I'll be right back, I'm just getting snacks.
10. I can't wait to see more.



10 questions to show your support of your kids' interests:

1. Can I see?
2. Can you show me how you did that?
3. Where did you learn how to do that so well?
4. What is your favorite part?
5. What is the hardest part for you?
6. Can I show off a photo to my friends?
7. Can you help me learn?
8. Do you have advice for a beginner?
9. Do you want me to help clean up?
10. Can I bring you any food?

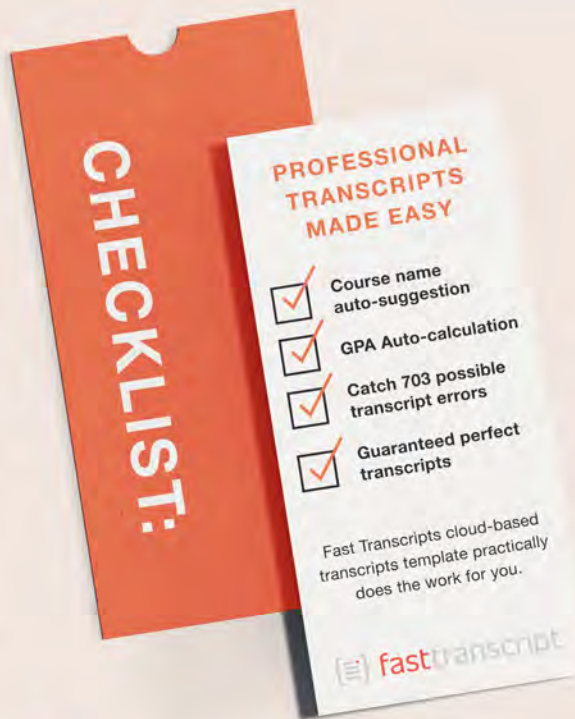


Roya Dedeaux is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (#95302) conducting in-person and online therapy out of Los Alamitos, CA. A grown homeschooler and homeschooling parent, she loves all things yarn (www.yarnofthemoth.com), teaching classes about play at CSULB, and helping parents protect their children's passions in every way she can. Follow Roya at www.royadedeaux.com or on Instagram at <http://instagram.com/royadedeaux>.

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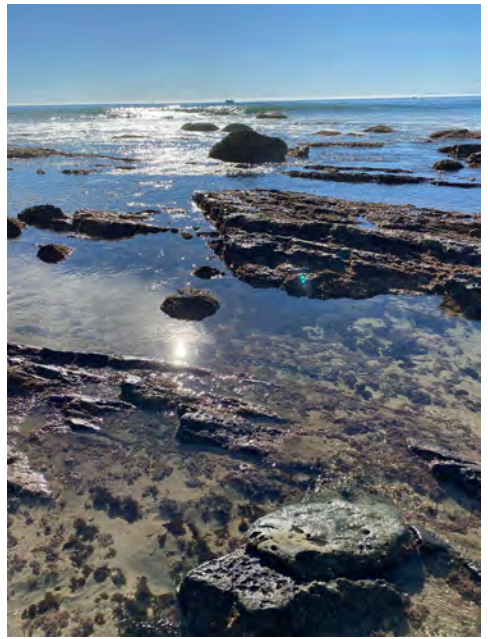
-Duanna Fike, Fredericksburg, VA

“I loved Fast Transcripts and would recommend it to anyone. You made it so easy to create a HS transcript. Thanks for the help you provided!”

-Kristy T, Fort Wayne, IN



Field Trip: Exploring California's Tidepools



Getting out in nature is vital for everyone's health. Making a field trip out of it makes it fun! A trip to the tide pools covers not only PE, but science too. With a little extra reading and research before or after, the field trip can include every area of study.



Possible areas of learning include:

- Tide charts
- How the moon affects tides
- Plants and animals found in local tide pools
- Hermit crabs
- Types of rocks
- Erosion
- Salt water vs fresh water
- Marine mammals
- Ocean birds

California's famous tide pools are located up and down the entire coast of the state. You can find a list of some of the most popular ones [here](#). If you aren't near one of the listed ones, a simple Google Maps search will find the tide pools closest to you. The best time to visit a tide pool is at low tide, so be sure to check the tide charts before going to the beach. You will also find that week days are less crowded.

Tidepooling is a slow and careful activity. Everyone needs to be cautious about where they step when visiting tide pools, so that you don't harm anything. It takes a sharp eye to spot all of the things beneath the water. Many of the creatures that live in tide pools camouflage themselves to blend in with their environment for safety.



Mussels, limpets, snails and even barnacles are living creatures that make their home in tide pools. So take your time and look carefully.

Remember not to pick up any creatures or shells, or to take anything home. There is a good chance that something is living in what you found and won't be able to survive away from the beach.



Water shoes or other sturdy footing can be helpful, as rocks are hard on bare feet and flip flops can get slippery if they get wet when you are exploring.



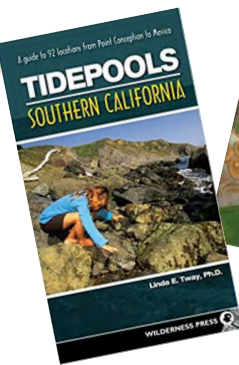
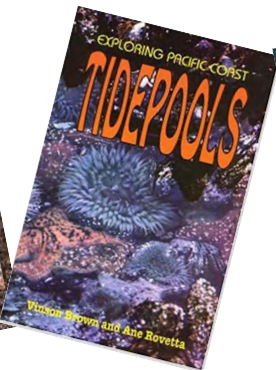
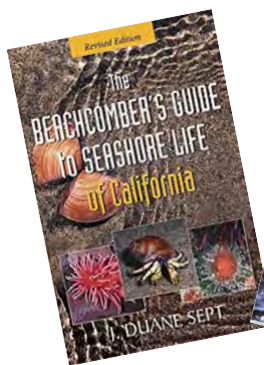
Keep an eye out for other camouflaged creatures on the beach too. Sometimes larger ocean mammals are relaxing in the sun and resting. Make sure to give them plenty of space and don't get too close.

Enjoy exploring and learning about one of California's amazing natural resources with your children. You'll be glad you did.

Book recommendations for tidepooling can be found on the next page.

Check your local library or used book store for some of these great books that can get you started tidepooling:

- The Beachcomber's Guide to Seashore Life of California by J. Dwayne Sept
- Exploring Pacific Coast Tidepools by Vinson Brown and Ane Rovetta
- Tidepools Southern California by Linda E. Tway
- One Small Place by the Sea by Barbara Brenner



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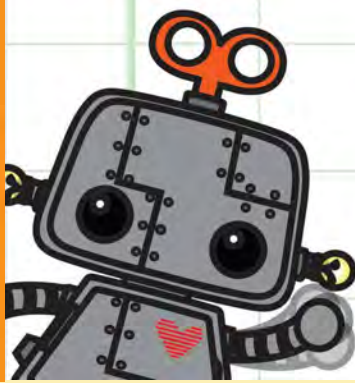
Music & Dance Program K-12

- Guitar
- Ukulele
- Violin
- Bass
- Voice
- Piano
- Drums
- Hand Percussion
- Cello
- Viola
- Music Theory
- Music History
- Bucket Drumming
- Band
- Worship Guitar
- Worship Team Fundamentals
- Worship Band
- Hip Hop
- Voice Ensemble
- Ballet
- Rock Ensemble

- Weekly Group Classes
- Live Online Classes
- Private Lessons
- In Home Lessons
- After School Programs
- Summer Programs



**FOUNDER
FRANK VELASQUEZ**



ENTER TO WIN!

Curious about electronics?
Or wondered if resistance truly is futile?

CHN is sponsoring a fun giveaway to get your future engineers and scientists tinkering with electronics!

The winner will receive a [Tinker the Robot Electronics 101 kit](#)! The kit includes everything you need to build 5 circuits and a wind powered mini-cart!



TO ENTER:

- ★ Follow [Tinker the Robot](#) on Facebook OR [Instagram](#)
- ★ Share this giveaway in your stories or as a post & tag @tinkertherobot
- ★ Tag all of your friends who would like to win - each tag is a separate entry!



California Homeschool Network

Strengthening the Voice of California Homeschoolers™

Giveaway ends Feb 17, 2021 Winner will be announced on CHN & Tinker Facebook Pages.

Do you have questions about *learning styles*? Are you searching for *curriculum* suggestions?

Find help HERE



California Homeschool Network

Strengthening the Voice of California Homeschoolers™

CHN FAMILY GAME NIGHT



Compete Against Other CHN Members in a Fun Family Online Game Night!

We will meet in Zoom on **Thursday, February 25, 2021**, at **7:00 PM** to play skribbl.io, a free multiplayer drawing and guessing game.

The game consists of a few rounds in which one family team has to draw their chosen word, and the other family teams have to guess it to gain points! The family team with the most points at the end of the game is crowned the winner!

How to Play

When it's your family's turn to draw, you will have to choose a word from three options and visualize that word in 80 seconds, alternatively when another family team is drawing you have to type your guess into the chat to gain points, be quick, the earlier you guess a word, the more points you get!

Please [register here](#) in advance for our Member ONLY Family Game Night.

After registering, we will confirm your [CHN Membership](#), and then you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining us for CHN's Family Game Night.



Since 1987 *The Concord Review* has published 1,394 research papers from authors in 46 U.S. States and 42 other countries. TCR remains the only quarterly journal in the world to publish the academic history papers of secondary students and believes that the pursuit of academic excellence in secondary schools should be given the same attention as the pursuit of excellence in STEM and other extracurricular activities.

Our Winter Issue (Volume 31, Number Two) contains 11 essays on various historical topics, and there is an essay on “The Freedmen’s Bureau” by a homescholar from Brentwood, Tennessee. We invite you to find out more information and to subscribe to the journal on our [website!](#)

Are you looking to help your homescholars further develop their research and writing skills? For 7 years now, TCR has offered intensive in-person and online workshops in historical research and writing for secondary school students. Hundreds of students have attended where they have worked with experienced instructors who coach them on formulating productive research questions; finding and making discerning use of primary and secondary sources; marshaling evidence to support one’s position or narrative; and writing and re-writing. Registration is now open for our popular summer programs, and you can find out more information and sign up on our [website!](#)



Dads

are
most
ordinary
men

turned by
love into heroes,
adventurers, story-tellers
and singers of song.

Pam Brown



Learn Handwriting Quickly & Easily with YouTube

Learning to write in cursive can sometimes be frustrating for both parents and students. If you have had trouble teaching your children, or haven't even started yet, because you aren't sure what curriculum would work best, here's a suggestion that might be useful.

This YouTube series has helped many homeschoolers learn and practice cursive writing with fun, short online lessons and free printable practice pages. They are older videos, but simple, and easy to understand.



There are 39 lessons in total, each lasting between 1 and 4 minutes long, each building on what was learned in the last lesson. All sample pages for each lesson are now hosted by The HEV Project and you can download and print them as needed.

This series won't teach everything, but it may be useful in helping your children learn the basics of cursive and give them the desire to refine their writing and learn more.

February 2021

WILD KIDS

SEASONAL NATURE EDUCATION FOR KIDS & THEIR GROWN UPS

Why Is It Illegal to Collect Feathers?

Crayon Box Nature Matching

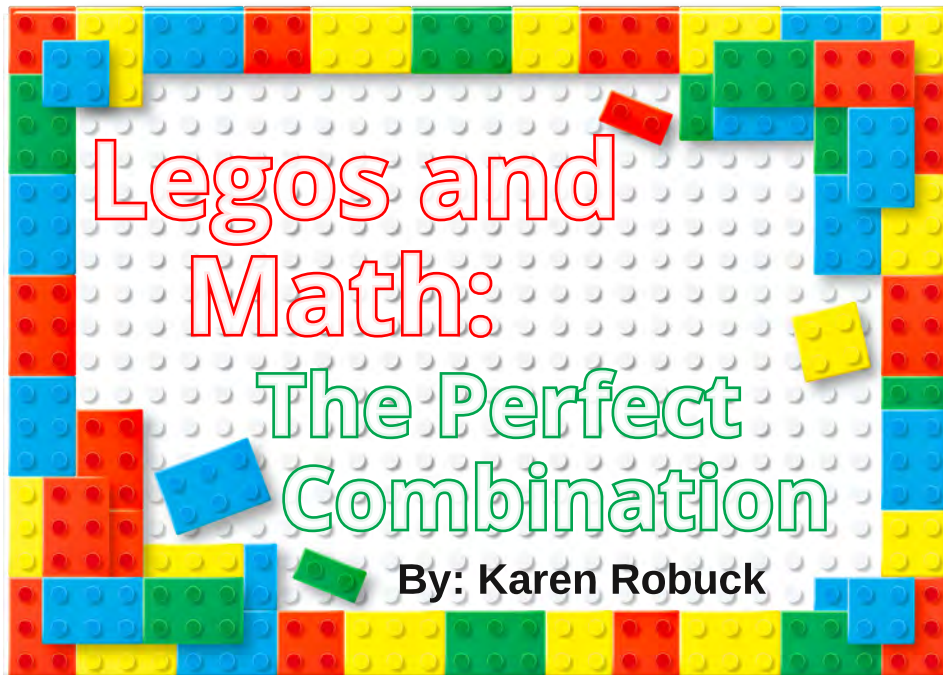
Learning Latin Lingo

Growing Columbines
& Wallflowers

Seasonal poems,
activities,
nature journal
pages and more!



Happy February! This month's issue of Wild Kids Magazine has the story behind why many countries made it illegal to collect feathers, a new nature art project, information about growing columbines and wallflowers, a worksheet to help learn some Latin names of common wild and garden plants, plus all the usual nature poetry, nature journal pages, foraging information and more.



You have a tactile-kinesthetic learner who has to touch everything. So when he was in preschool, you bought teddy bear counters. But now you need another type of manipulative; one that can be stacked, put together, taken apart. Before you buy anything else, take a look around your home. Is your tactile-kinesthetic learner also a LEGO lover? If so, you already have the perfect manipulative for teaching all sorts of math topics.

Some uses are obvious. Count them. Sort them by size, shape, or color. Add them. Subtract them. Multiply the studs. Use them to teach division concepts. Weigh them. If you celebrate the hundredth day of school, give your LEGO lover one hundred bricks and see what he or she can build.

Other uses may not be quite so obvious. Here are a few that readily come to mind:

Estimation - Put LEGOs in a container, and have your student estimate how many there are.

Greater Than and Less Than - Put LEGOs in two or more containers. Draw the greater than/less than symbol on a card, and have your student lay it correctly between the containers.

Make bar graphs.

Use them to teach ratio and probability - Pour a cupful of LEGOs; then ask questions such as, "What is the ratio of green to yellow? If you pull ten LEGOs out of the bin, what is the probability that one will be white?"

Use them to teach area, perimeter, and volume - One of our favorite books when my children were younger was *Spaghetti and Meatballs for All* by Marilyn Burns. When the time came for my son to learn area and perimeter, I adapted the suggested lesson found at the back of the book to include the use of LEGOs. You can read the full story here: (bit.ly/2lqche5). One change I would make to the idea in that article is to use a LEGO baseplate instead of graph paper.



To teach volume, have your student build a small box with LEGOs. Then use the formula $L \times W \times H$ to find the volume of the figure. Or have your student use graph paper to create a paper box the correct size to hold his creation. If you have more than one student working on this idea, have them trade paper boxes and rebuild their LEGO creation to fit the new box.

Here's how other homeschool moms have used LEGOs to teach math:

- Melanie of treevalleyacademy.com used them to teach money concepts: www.treevalleyacademy.com/math/lego-math-learning-money
- Diedre used them to teach fractions: jdaniel4smom.com/2015/02/lego-fraction-games-kids.html
- Sarah of frugalfun4boys.com used them all the time. Here's a link showing how she used LEGOs to teach place value: frugalfun4boys.com/lego-place-value-math-activity/
- You can use LEGOs to create number lines like Samantha did here: www.stirthewonder.com/how-to-build-a-lego-minecraft-number-line-game/. Although a simple number line is appropriate for teaching whole numbers, the idea could probably be adapted for number lines showing fractions, decimals, or negative numbers: creeksidelearning.com/lego-math-games-number-line-game/.
- Build or create your own equations, such as Stephanie did here: boymamateachermama.com/2012/09/18/teacher-mama-lego-structure-math/.
- LEGOs can even be used to teach algebra and geometry! Mary of homegrownlearners.com (one of my favorite bloggers) showed how to use LEGOs to demonstrate the concept of pi: www.homegrownlearners.com/home/learn-about-pi-with-lego.
- Susan thought her days of using LEGOs to teach math were over when her son began algebra. He proved her wrong. Read about what he did here: susanevans.org/blog/lego-algebra-learning-algebraic-formulas.

- Bethany, the mathgeekmama, used them to teach the Pythagorean Theorem: mathgeekmama.com/pythagorean-theorem-lego-proof/.

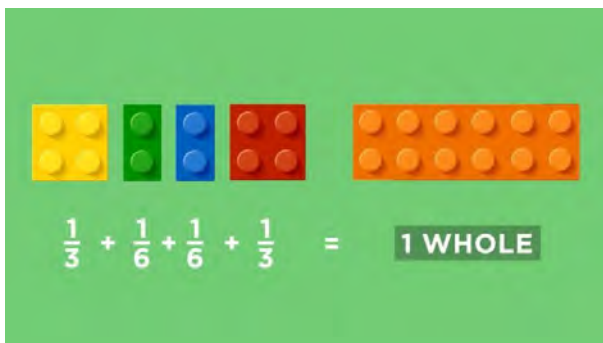
For more LEGO math ideas, check out my Pinterest board:

www.pinterest.com/nerak1116/lego-math/ or the following websites:

- homeschoolgiveaways.com/2016/01/lego-math-free-printables-and-ideas/
- www.happinessishomemade.net/lego-learning-activities/
- teachwithlaughter.blogspot.com/2014/02/building-block-fun.html
- bit.ly/2oWti8J

Convinced? Then have your tactile-kinesthetic learner bring a LEGO bin to math class tomorrow, and let the fun (I mean learning) begin!

Editor's Note: Karen also penned how to use LEGOs in your language arts teaching in a back issue here: bit.ly/2AFdTwr



Karen Robuck is a homeschooling mother of a tenth and seventh grader. She holds degrees from Blue Mountain College, a Christian liberal arts college in northeast Mississippi, and from the University of Southern Mississippi. She considers her homeschooling style to be literature-based eclectic. Formerly a teacher and librarian, she is currently a stay-at-home mom. She lives in Pontotoc, Mississippi, with her husband, two children, and two cats.

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Originally appeared in the Winter 2019-2020 issue of The Old Schoolhouse® Magazine, the trade publication for homeschool moms. Read The Old Schoolhouse® Magazine free at www.TOSMagazine.com, or download the free reader apps at www.TOSApps.com for mobile devices. Read the STORY of The Old Schoolhouse® Magazine it came to be.



In celebration of Black History Month, we are super excited to announce that [Outschool](#) has generously offered our members a special discount on a private class! We hope you can join us!

Join [Outschool](#), Outschool Instructor [Marisa Webster](#), and CHN for this exciting online learning event!

African American and Jazz History Combo: Who Is Louis Armstrong?



Students will learn about the influential life of the great jazz trumpeter Louis Armstrong! We will learn about his upbringing in the South, his journey as a musician, and we will discuss the major impact that his career had on jazz today and popular music in full. There will be some discussion on the discrimination



he experienced due to his race. These experiences made his journey to success as a musician much more difficult, but we will talk about how he overcame these challenges. We will also take some time to listen to some of his classics in music. This class will be taught in the form of a lecture (power-point), with lots of opportunities for questions and discussion. This class does not require any experience or prior knowledge to join! We have two class times for you to choose from:

Monday, Feb 15th 6:30pm - 7:15pm OR Tuesday, Feb 16th 6pm - 6:45pm

This class is normally \$10 but Outschool is offering our members an exclusive discount of \$5 off each student that registers for this class. Please fill out this **RSVP form** so we can verify your CHN Membership and get you your Outschool gift card for \$5 off!

Once you receive your gift card from Outschool you will be required to sign your students up for the class on the Outschool website. The link to the class registration will be emailed to you after you fill out our **RSVP form**. - ***Do not sign up for the class on Outschool until after you fill out our RSVP form and receive your \$5 gift card.***

Thinking About Homeschooling?



Many families who have recently been forced to try school at home are thinking about switching permanently to the homeschool option. Thankfully, California is a great state for homeschooling and provides several options for families to choose from.

In California, children who turn six by September 1 must be enrolled in a legal school. There are three primary options available to parents who want to homeschool.

- ▶ File a Private School Affidavit (PSA), effectively creating your own private school.
- ▶ Enroll in a Private Satellite Program (PSP).
- ▶ Enroll in a public ISP or Charter school with either a virtual or homeschool option.

To learn the details about these options, visit our "How to Homeschool" page on our website, download "Just the Facts" below, and watch the video on the next page.

JUST THE FACTS

New to homeschooling? Start by downloading our step-by-step guide to starting your homeschool!

DOWNLOAD JUST THE FACTS

How to Homeschool in California

By Laura Kazan Founder: CA Homeschool College Seekers



How to Homeschool in California



California Homeschool Network

Strengthening the Voice of California Homeschoolers™



Alternatives to Public School

Children between the ages of 6 and 18 must be enrolled in a public school or a specified alternative, and that is your decision to make! Kindergarten is not mandatory, but children who turn 6 by September 1st must enroll that school year (*California Education Code §48222, 48224*). Each family has unique needs and circumstances, so choosing an alternative will require considering your individual family situation and the needs of each child.

Your Options:

- **Private School** There are two home-based private school options:
 - Establish a Home-Based Private School by filing a [Private School Affidavit \(PSA\)](#) You may establish a private school in your home and enroll your child as an alternative to public school. This will give you the ultimate in control over your schedule and curriculum. If you establish a home-based private school, you will be the administrator responsible for record keeping, curriculum and all aspects of your child's education.
 - Enroll in a [Private School Satellite Program \(PSP\)](#) PSPs (formerly known as umbrella schools) file a California private school affidavit every year as part of their legal obligation to be in compliance with California Education Code. They can enroll families who want to homeschool. Some PSPs offer classes, both site based and online, curriculum packages and/or activities for their members. Others offer guidance and record keeping, but leave the day-to-day details to the parents. Fees, guidance and requirements vary widely with each school.

- **Public ISP/Charter School** Some public schools and charter schools offer independent study. These public programs are funded by tax dollars, so there is no fee to attend. Some offer a set curriculum you do at home or online. Others allow parents to select some materials. The curriculum will be aligned with Common Core and testing is required. If you enroll in one of these programs, you will need to keep the records required by your program and regularly meet with a credentialed teacher to turn in required paperwork. The amount of freedom you have in choosing what to study depends on the program's policies and your assigned teacher.

- **Credentialed tutor** A parent with an appropriate current California teacher's credential may teach his/her child under the private tutorial exemption. Parents may also hire a credentialed tutor for their child. Tutors are required to teach for a minimum of 3 hours each day, 175 days per school year, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8:00 am and 4:00 pm. (*California Education Code §48224*)

CHN Local Contacts

CHN Local Contacts are homeschooling families who serve as ambassadors to their local communities for California Homeschool Network. We will be happy to answer your questions about homeschooling, refer you to local support groups or private/public ISPs, and keep you abreast of the local legal climate in your county. We also organize homeschool information events and are available to provide you with information on local resources. If your county is not listed below, or if you are unable to reach your local contact, call the Homeschool Hotline toll free at *1(800)327-5339 for answers to your homeschooling questions.

COUNTY	NAME	CONTACT INFO
Alameda	Michai Freeman	510-326-8718 Email
Contra Costa	Michelle Tryner	Email
Humboldt	Brenda Lory	707-617-2538 Email
Imperial	Stephanie Laurean	760-693-7951 Email
Indio	Lynette Ridgel	Email
Kern	Terri Larner	Email
Kern	Laura Deatherage	Email
Los Angeles (Culver/Westchester)	Tina Janzen	310-902-7034 Email
Los Angeles (Culver/Inglewood)	Adrienne Quinn Washington	323-369-7669 Email
Los Angeles (San Gabriel Valley)	Vicki Giansante	Email
Los Angeles (Long Beach)	Siri Hirth	Email
Marin	Julie Schiffman	415-446-8844 Email
Orange	Laurel Ward	714-649-0657 Email
Orange (North)	Teresa Fitzpatrick	Email
Placer	Ariana Flamik	Email

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COUNTY	NAME	CONTACT INFO
Riverside	Maria Egbert	Email
Riverside	Lynette Ridgel	Email
San Bernardino (High Desert)	Erika Schron	Email
San Bernardino (Yucaipa)	Heather Martinson	909-446-5962 Email
San Bernardino & High Desert	Lynette Ridgel	Email
Shasta	Trina Reuber	Email
Tehama	Trina Rueber	Email
Tulare	Rhonda Hamilton	Email
Ventura	Christy Bruncker	Email
Unique Situations (Bilingual: Spanish)	Maria Egbert	Email
Unique Situations (Gifted)	Becca Orlowski	858-576-1239 Email
Unique Situations (Learning Challenges)	Erika Schron	Email
Unique Situations (Special Needs)	Pam Ragland	Email



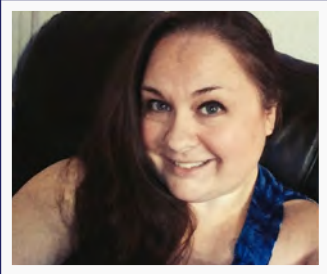
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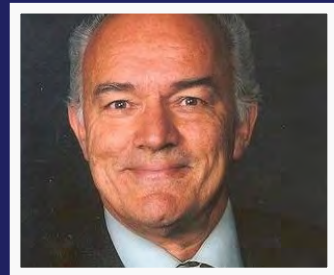
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CHNews

February 2021

We hope you found our newsletter helpful and that it provided information and activities that are useful on your homeschooling journey, whether you are brand new or a seasoned pro.

California Homeschool Network is an all-volunteer organization of energetic and dedicated homeschooling families working to preserve educational freedom. CHN monitors and responds to legislation which may pose a threat to homeschooling. We also inform and empower homeschooling families, educate the public and foster community among home educators in the state of California.

Thank you,
California Homeschool Network

JOIN TODAY!



California Homeschool Network was founded in 1994 by a statewide group of homeschooling families. We are an inclusive group, which means we serve families from all religious and ethnic affiliations that practice all homeschooling styles.

Submissions & Advertising

To submit articles, curriculum reviews, homeschool information or for questions about content or advertising in upcoming issues of California Homeschool Network's quarterly newsletter, please contact our editor at editor@californiahomeschool.net

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