

# FAMILY TIMES

A Home-school Newsletter for New Testament Christians  
Edited by Bev & Dave Hewitt and Karen & Dave Pratte

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## **TIME TO RENEW--SEE PAGE SEVEN!**

### **MIQUON MATH MATERIALS**

Reviewed by Cori Garrison

Jackie Winner, Ed.S., 8800 - 49th Street N., Suite 401, Pinellas Park, FL 33782; (813)545-3047

Miquon Math Materials were designed by Lore Rasmussen and her teaching team. I first heard of the program several years ago, when it was introduced in the private/gifted schools where I grew up. We considered several other math programs (Morenson, BJU, Math-U-See, Saxon) before selecting Miquon.

This is a secular 3-4 year spiral curriculum for grades 1-3. Miquon consists of six different workbooks (\$5.95 each) and three teacher's guides:

1. Lab Sheet Annotations (\$13.95)
2. Notes to Teachers (\$3.95)
3. First Grade Diary (\$5.95)

Twenty-two math operations are taught in this program with each workbook increasing in difficulty. Once a topic has been presented, it continues to be combined with other topics. Miquon introduces all four basic arithmetic operations within the first year. Although it is Cuisenaire rod based (metric), it promotes the use of other manipulatives, including number lines.

The program is designed so that a concept is taught, then students do the worksheets (usually independently) using the manipulatives, and then check their work. Eventually the rods are used only to check the answers, then finally students learn to picture the items mentally. Several ways to solve a problem are taught, allowing students to be creative, while proceeding at their own pace and reinforcing skills already learned.

We started using this program with our first grader, who is a "hands on" learner. To date, we have completed 1 1/2 books. Since I am not a math person, I was apprehensive about teaching my weakest subject. Although Miquon stresses that not every problem needs to be done, we have required it until I felt comfortable with the system and the results.

We purchased all three teacher's guides. However, I would suggest purchasing the Lab Sheet Annotations and the necessary workbooks. The Annotations book covers all levels, and the cross-referencing to the workbooks is easy to follow. You must, however, solve the problems in this book, as there is no answer key. It presents several ways to show your students problem solving, while showing some of the responses you may receive. It helps you to realize that your child thinks like a child!

The First Grade Diary is a record of what the Rasmussen class did. It was a helpful reference when I felt I had not presented a concept well. It is full of ideas, but is not necessary for those who are comfortable with math concepts.

The Notes to Teachers book explains the Miquon philosophy and math learning process. It was interesting reading, but was not necessary to implement the program.

The manipulatives needed to work the program are:

1. A set of 155 Cuisenaire rods (basic set)
2. A hundred board
3. A geoboard/rubber bands

#### 4. Base Ten blocks (for the last 3 workbooks)

We made the materials non-consumable by using clear plastic report covers and ultrafine dry erase markers. We photocopied sections specified as overall reviews/booklets and the lesson sequence chart, so we had portfolio information.

We have been advised that our children may not test well the first year, since standardized tests include problems with 3 or 4 digit numbers. However, by the second year students should be well advanced so they test well. Upon finishing the program, most students advance to Saxon Math 65. If a child progresses quickly in math, but is not able to handle the reading required in higher level books, the Rasmussens have written a series known as "The Key To..." workbooks. These offer operationally based, simply written text for ages 6-9, continuing the Miquon process. They are self-contained.

I have enjoyed teaching Miquon. We like the fact that the rods are metric, the materials inexpensive, and previously learned concepts are reinforced in later lessons. I am also learning to do math I was afraid or unable to do because I did not understand the fundamentals. This curriculum also does not use rote memorization — something else I was never good at.

Workshops and seminars are available. I have found them to be effective and practical. Helpful telephone responses are also available.

### **BAIZE FAMILY PROFILE**

My name is Ellen Baize. My husband, David, and I have 3 children. Our two eldest, Jody and Lisa, are married. Our youngest, Jonathan, is 15. I have known about home schooling since my children were little. I was active in the La Leche League and in a food co-op and through these organizations we met several families who chose to home school their children. Several times I thought about home schooling my children, but I had bought into the idea that I needed "my" time and I was afraid I would not be able to provide my children with an adequate education. Also, I was not impressed with the discipline of the children in most of these families.

At the beginning of Jonathan's 7th-grade year, the school decided to mainstream the gifted children. Jonathan spent a year repeating work he had accomplished in 6th grade. I talked with the counselor and she was sure that the principal would keep the gifted children mainstreamed. The principal did not, but fortunately I did not know that until after we had committed to home schooling. We decided we had nothing to lose by trying home schooling for a year.

This is our third year. Each year we find more reasons to keep home schooling. I love having my child around the house all day. I do not miss "my" time. My only regret is that we did not home school our first two children. We have found that it is easier to keep our lives family-centered. And as my two eldest fill me in on some of the things that happened during their high school years, I am even more thankful that we finally found the courage to home school. I believe that the humanistic philosophy of our society was gradually creeping into our home through the public schools. (Not the only source, but a big influence.) An example was when I found my eldest at a party where the kids were drinking. He was not drinking (I know because he breathed directly into my face to show me!), but he was there to be the safe driver. Because of the message "friends don't let friends drive drunk," he was confused about his responsibility as a Christian.

I think Dave and I know Jonathan better than we knew Jody and Lisa when they were this age. We have a closer relationship with him because of the time we spend together. These years of home schooling have been a blessing to us.

### **LINDA HAUGHT'S FITNESS CLUB**

reviewed by Terri Brinkley

This is a reasonably priced, 22-minute fitness tape available through Bob Jones University Press (Phone 800-845-5731). Call for exact price.

This tape is great for children. Linda Haught and five children, who are all clothed modestly in T-shirts and sweat pants, work out to instrumental, classical-style music. The routine is simple, yet challenging enough to build endurance and increase coordination. No special equipment is needed except a yardstick or a rolled-up newspaper.

The only problem there could possibly be with this routine would be some hopping that may bother some who want low-impact workouts. I don't see how it could hurt children of normal weight. I recommend this for the whole family, especially when the weather is too bad to play outside. Our kids love it.

## VIDEO OF THE FC MEETING

by David Pratte

In our last issue I mentioned the video tapes of the home-school meeting Mark Mayberry and I conducted during the recent Florida College lectures. This is just a brief review of the tape.

First, I was impressed with the professional appearance and quality of the tape. The Leggs have done an excellent job here!

Second, the sound quality turned out better than I expected. I had feared that the comments from the audience might not come through clearly because they were not close to microphones. However, the Leggs have done an excellent job editing the tapes and, as far as I can tell, everything everyone said is understandable.

Third, I was even more impressed than I was at the time of the meeting with the quality of comments made. The audience had some very helpful thoughts about the advantages of home schooling, overcoming the challenges, and getting started. I appreciated again the good work Mark did in the meeting.

Finally, there were advantages in being in the meeting, but there are other advantages seeing the video, just like there are advantages in being at a ball game but other advantages in watching it on TV. Being present gave us a chance to personally meet and visit with all the home schoolers who came. But the video actually gives you close-up shots of people as they speak. "Breaks in the action" have been edited out. And you can stop for an "instant replay" or take time to discuss and consider the thoughts people offer as they speak. Then you have the video to show to other people or to keep for future reference.

One "negative" is that the room looks sparsely populated, especially the second hour. That is because the meeting was conducted in a very large room and many people had to leave after the first hour. And folks came and went during the program.

Overall, I was quite impressed. I encourage all of you to contact the Leggs if you are interested in ordering. You can email bro. and sis. Legg at [leggw@cvn.net](mailto:leggw@cvn.net) or write them at Lakeside Video, 92 Meade Dr., Gettysburg, PA 17325.

## STUDY SHOWS HOME SCHOOLING CAN WORK FOR EVERYBODY

From: [Family\\_Research\\_Council@townhall.com](mailto:Family_Research_Council@townhall.com)

Who says Americans need government involvement to reach high education standards? "There are two — and only two — keys to educational success: hard work and parental involvement," said Michael Farris, President of the Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA) at a Wednesday press conference announcing the results of the largest study of homeschooling ever conducted.

The study, commissioned by HSLDA and conducted by Dr. Brian Ray of the National Home Education Research Institute, confirms past studies' conclusion that homeschoolers perform well above average on academic tests. But the new research supplies additional indicators of homeschooling's success that lead Farris to conclude, "homeschooling works for everybody":

- \* The longer children are homeschooled, the better they score.
- \* Homeschooling virtually eliminates the gap between public-schooled minorities' academic performance and that of their white peers.
- \* Teacher certification of parents does not significantly influence homeschooled students' performance. Even when homeschooling moms are not high school graduates, their kids still score 33 points higher on standardized tests than the average public school student. Farris challenged Secretary of Education Richard Riley to include homeschooling parents in his national forum on excellence in teaching this spring.
- \* Countering the perennial protest that homeschooled children do not have adequate opportunities for socialization, the study found that the average homeschool student has 5.2 outside activities each week.

A hostile media and liberal education establishment will no doubt continue to fight the facts on homeschooling. But their arguments may not pass the straight face test much longer.

**ACTION:** To order a copy of "Strengths of Their Own — Home Schoolers Across America: Academic Achievement, Family Characteristics, and Longitudinal Traits," contact the National Home Education Research Institute, P.O. Box 13939, Salem, Ore. 97309; (503) 364-1490; e-mail: [mail@nheri.org](mailto:mail@nheri.org). To contact the Home School Legal Defense Association, call (540) 338-5600.

## THE FAMILY READING BOOKLIST

Reviewed by Conny Calvert

Order from: Pratte Publications, 841 Hillandale Dr., Antioch, IL 60002; Phone (847)395-8937.

David Pratte put together this modestly priced, 26-page booklet to provide an “excellent source of wholesome entertainment” for families. The books reviewed, however, will also educate and build virtue in those children and adults who read them.

This booklist includes over 300 brief reviews of wholesome books for children to read on their own, for parents to read to children, or for families to read aloud together. It includes most of the better-known children’s books, some “classics,” biographies, science books, and many other less-well-known books. Each book is reviewed using his criteria for wholesome qualities instead of negative content.

The books are listed in alphabetic order, followed by a separate alphabetic listing of authors. Especially good authors are noted. The high standards used in evaluating these books makes the booklist very helpful.

The book is unique in that it is written from the perspective of a faithful New Testament Christian. Using it will get you started in evaluating other books yourself and determining your own family’s reading standards. There are many older books that you will especially want your children to read instead of some of the newer, less desirable, books. The booklist has helped our family find some delightful books which we would not have discovered on our own.

## CLASS FUNDING

by Sharon Ayres

First let me introduce my family. We are Paul and Sharon Ayres. Paul is preaching for the Lord’s church in Warner Robins, GA, and has recently been overseas in Kenya, East Africa, on a preaching trip. Along with homeschooling and keeping the home, Sharon is one of the editors of “Contents of the Weaker Vessel,” a monthly a publication for Christian women by Christian women. Our oldest son Shaun is a freshman at Florida College. We have a son, Brian, who is in 11th grade in ps. We are homeschooling Cara, 8th grade, and Paul, fifth grade. We are finishing up our second year hsing.

I have been using Christian Liberty Academy for my curriculum. I wanted to share some newfound info. with you. I recently went to a curriculum fair near Atlanta. Dr. Lindstrom, superintendent of Christian Liberty Academy, was one of the speakers. He told us about CLA starting Christian schools in Moscow and other countries, as well as inner city Detroit, to reach out for Christ. He said these were financed by CLA.

Afterwards I approached him to clarify this. I asked him, “Were you saying that some of the funds we send you for tuition are used for financing your ‘mission’ trips?” He was very happy to tell me, “Yes!” I was disappointed to learn this. I do not want my money to support the Calvinism they teach.

[Editor’s note: This is a concern I have had about CLASS for over 15 years. They gave me essentially the same answer when I asked them a similar question 15 years ago. Each family will have to consider the matter yourselves, but we believe you deserve to know this, if you are considering using CLASS. CLASS is a “ministry” of the Church of Christian Liberty, a highly Calvinistic church. They make no distinction between church funds and CLASS funds, so home-schoolers’ money may end up financing any or all of their church activities — Dave Pratte]

reviewed by Donna Craig

Greenleaf Press, 1570 Old LaGuardo Rd., Lebanon, TN 37087; Edupress, P.O. Box 883, Dana Point, CA 92629

About two years ago I wrote a review of the ancient Egypt study package from Greenleaf Press. I recommended them for those of you who did not want to study history “textbook style” but wished a more unhurried approach. I also wrote that I was looking forward to receiving my study package on ancient Greece. So why did it take me two years to write a review of it?

First, the main text for the ancient Greece study is very different from the main text for ancient Egypt study. This is where the famous Famous Men. . . books begin and they seem to all have thirty chapters or so. For another thing, the study guides for the Famous Men books are also different. One difference is that the study guides are not divided into lessons, but are divided into the same chapters as the Famous Men book that accompanies them. Another difference is that the study guides do not always tell you when to read the pages out of the supplemental books in the packages. (This is especially true of the Usborne books in the packages.)

What you get in the ancient Greece package is *Famous Men of Greece*, *The Greenleaf Guide to Famous Men of Greece*, *The Greeks*, *The Children’s Homer*, and *The Last Days of Socrates*. *Famous Men of Greece* begins with some of the characters of Greek mythology, gradually telling about some Greek heroes who may have lived, but most certainly not as the Greeks like to remember them, and finally into actual historical characters of which we have written records. Greenleaf does point out the difference between myths and legends and “real” people so children will not be confused. The *Greenleaf Study Guide* begins with the geography of ancient Greece and then proceeds to cover the Famous Men book as the study guide for ancient Egypt did with the noted exceptions.

*The Greeks* is a wonderful book on the lifestyle of the ancient Greeks. The reading level is geared for upper elementary and junior high, but is still usable for younger children. Read the description of it in the Greenleaf catalog. They are not exaggerating. It is the best I have seen.

*The Children’s Homer* and *The Last Days of Socrates* are a bit difficult for children to read through although my nine-year-old loved *The Children’s Homer*. If you have a reading time with your children, an avid reader, or children in junior high, then do get *The Children’s Homer*. You could choose to read selected passages from *The Last Days of Socrates* if the Homer book is all your children can handle. It really can be hilarious at times. Of course, if you are a history buff or trying to upgrade your children’s choices of literature, then both of these would be excellent additions to your library.

Additional books that I purchased from Greenleaf Press and highly recommend are *Macmillan Book of Greek Gods and Heroes*, *The Trojan Horse ... or How the Greeks Won the War* (for the younger elementary crowd), and Usborne’s *Make This Model Trojan Horse* (only for older children who are good with their hands, otherwise it may only serve to frustrate them). If you want more hands-on projects for your elementary students, then you might consider buying *Ancient Greece Activity Book* from Edupress.

The ancient Rome study package includes *Famous Men of Rome*, *The Greenleaf Study Guide to Famous Men of Rome*, *The Romans*, and *City*. The first three books are the same format as their ancient Greece counterparts. What I am about to say about *City* may surprise you. I like the David Macauley books, but my children really do not. If you struggled through *Pyramid* with your elementary-aged children, then I do not recommend *City*. (Older children should be able to handle the information and style of writing much better.)

A book which would substitute for *City* is *See Inside A Roman Town* which is part of the See Inside series edited by R.J. Unstead. You should be able to get this through your local bookstore (we got ours from Barnes and Noble). It is much more readable for younger children, but be sure to look through it yourself first and edit the pictures as you see fit.

Other books which I recommend that can be purchased from Greenleaf are *Pompeii ... Buried Alive!* (for the younger elementary-aged), *The Secrets of Vesuvius* (for about ages 10 and up), Usborne’s *Make This Model Roman Amphitheatre* (again, only for those older children who are good with their hands), and for literature *The Bronze Bow*.

*The Bronze Bow* is a great book. My nine-year-old book lover who is now ten said it was the best book that she had ever read. There are a few scriptural errors in the book, but they are easy to point out to your young readers if they do not point them out to you first.

I also recommend Dorling Kindersley's *Action Pack: Rome*. In it you get a press-out model of a typical Roman town house (fantastic), a poster of the Colosseum, a guidebook, a mosaic to create, a diorama of different types of people in Roman society, three mini-models to press out and assemble of a triumphal arch, a Roman temple, and an aqueduct, a Circus Maximus board game, and two facsimile documents of a map of Rome and a 15th century Latin alphabet. I bought mine through Rainbow Re-Source Center, but you would probably do just as well to order through your local bookstore, especially if you have a Books-a-Million nearby. And if that's not enough hands-on yet, then Edupress also has an ancient Rome Activity book.

During the ancient Rome study, the subject of Christianity is brought up repeatedly — you can probably figure out why — and you will want to point out that *Famous Men of Rome* is a bit too liberal in its application of the word Christian. You may also want to do a bit of research on Constantine as there is some discrepancy in the Famous Men book and *The Romans* concerning when he “became a Christian,” which actually he never did.

I still find that doing history “the Greenleaf way” is the best way for my family to study history and there are nine of their books on the Middle Ages sitting on my shelf waiting to be devoured next fall. (Actually, my ten-year-old has read almost all of them already.) Please consider using their materials.

### **Seven Keys to Raising Godly Children (a series, continued)...**

## **KEY #2: PLANNING**

If we wish to succeed in any important endeavor in life, first we must determine our *goal*. Then we must develop a *plan* for reaching our goal.

When our children were small, L. A. Stauffer gave us this advice about raising children: “Just keep *thinking* and you’ll be all right.” This oversimplifies, but it shows that being a good parent requires thought and planning.

To develop a good plan, we must do the following:

### **I. ACCEPT THE PROPER AUTHORITY.**

An old joke tells about a man who said: “Years ago I had no children, but I had seven theories about raising children. Now I have seven children and no theories!” The joke implies there are no workable rules for raising children. We laugh, but is this really a valid idea?

Many people think it is impossible to know the best way to raise children. Is there a sure guide? Can we KNOW the best way?

#### **A. WE MUST NOT RELY ON HUMAN THEORIES.**

Many parents follow advice given by psychologists, sociologists, government officials, social agencies, and other child-raising experts. Other parents raise their kids the way their own parents raised them. Without thinking, we just naturally treat our children according to what we are familiar with — we act the way we saw our parents act.

These are human authorities, so truly many of their theories do not work, especially not if our goal is to raise *godly* children.

Proverbs 14:12 — There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.

Jeremiah 10:23 — O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps. This includes all the child-raising experts, including our parents. If they don’t follow God’s guidance, they cannot tell us about raising godly children.

1 Corinthians 1:19-21; 2:4,5 — In matters of godliness and righteousness, we must reject all human theories and follow divine wisdom. This does not mean human advice is always wrong. Sometimes it agrees with the Bible. But it is always wrong whenever it disagrees with the Bible.

Christians generally know we must not depart from God’s pattern to follow human theories for worship, salvation, the church, etc. We have no more right to follow human ideas about raising godly children than we do in any of these other areas.

#### **B. THE BIBLE IS GOD’S GUIDE FOR RAISING GODLY CHILDREN.**

2 Timothy 3:16,17 — We seek to raise righteous children, and the Scriptures instruct us in righteousness. This is a good work commanded by God, and the Scriptures will provide all good works. [2 Pet. 1:3]

Joshua 1:8 — Joshua prospered in the work God gave Him when he followed God’s word, not departing from it to the right or left. Likewise we will prosper in the work God gives us if we follow His word.

Often in the Scriptures, God's relationship to His children is compared to a father's relationship to his earthly children (Matt. 7:9-11; Heb. 12:5-11). This is why the term "father" is used both for God and for an earthly parent. As we proceed in this study, we will learn many things about our role as parents by observing how God our Father treats us.

Cars and appliances come with operator's manuals from the maker. So the One who invented the family tells us how best to relate to one another in the family. Does it make sense to follow the ideas of fallible humans, rather than following the wisdom of the all-wise God who created us and the family relationship?

Philippians 4:13 — I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. We do not need to be confused constantly about how to raise children. We can have the strength and guidance we need, but not through human wisdom. We must turn to Jesus.

## **II. DEVELOP A PLAN FOR CHILD RAISING BASED ON THE BIBLE & PRAYER.**

It is not enough just to recognize the Bible is God's will. We must also study it and use its teachings as the basis for our plan for raising godly children. We must pray diligently for God's blessings.

### **A. EVERY IMPORTANT WORK NEEDS TO BE PLANNED.**

\* God planned many aspects of our salvation even before the world began (1 Peter 1:18-20; Eph. 3:10,11; 1:7-9).

\* If a business is to succeed, it must have a goal and a plan for reaching that goal.

\* In building a house, one must have a blueprint to follow.

\* Consider the years of planning required to send a spaceship to the moon.

Often we fail to reach our goals because we fail to develop a clear plan for reaching them. This is particularly true in raising children. How much time and effort have you and your spouse spent in discussing and determining exactly what rules and principles you will follow in raising your children?

James 1:5 — We need to pray for wisdom. This wisdom will come as we study God's word. But we must be diligent in praying that we will be able to apply His word properly for the good of our children.

For each child, you only have one chance to raise him/her properly, and the time lasts only a short while. When he is almost grown, it is too late to go back and start over if you haven't done it right. To succeed, we need a plan.

### **B. FATHER AND MOTHER SHOULD DISCUSS THEIR PLAN & AGREE.**

Both the father and the mother must be involved in raising the children.

Ephesians 6:4 — Fathers are told to bring up children in nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Ephesians 6:1 — Children should be obedient to both parents.

Proverbs 1:8 — Mothers have authority over their children as surely as fathers do.

To accomplish their goal and to avoid provoking children to discouragement, it is essential for father and mother to work together in handling the children. The family rules must be consistent. This takes discussion and agreement.

It is best if these plans can be made before problems arise. A couple should discuss their principles and beliefs about child raising even before they marry. Then they should continue to talk about what their rules will be and how they will handle problems. Then when specific problems arise, they can handle them quickly and confidently.

Parents need to learn to out-think their children. Too many parents are manipulated by their own children. "I just don't know what to do with them." As parents, it is our responsibility to study God's word and apply it so we know how to raise godly children. (to be continued further...)

## **EDITORIAL NOTES**

Our great appreciation to all who contributed to this issue of *Family Times*. We want to especially thank Ellen Baize for her family profile and all the many contributors this month who have submitted reviews. Our thanks to Donna Craig, Cori Garrison, Conny Calvert, Sharon Ayres, and Terri Brinkley.