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Three Strategies for
Helping Reluctant
Writers

Non-Traditional Colleges
for Non-Traditional
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Teaching Your Dyslexic
Child to Read

The Art of
Movie Magic

Using NaNoWriMo
in Your
Homeschool

Climate Action
Challenge

October 2019



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Three Strategies for Helping Reluctant Writers



Do you have a reluctant writer? If so, you know that starting a new writing assignment can be a source of intense anxiety, frustration, and possibly even some tears. Staring down a blank page can be intimidating, and the nature of writing means that writers are tasked with juggling many different skills simultaneously in order to get their thoughts together and onto the page.

One of my favorite roles in my professional life has been the time I spent working in college writing centers. If you've never used a writing center, let me set the stage for these magic spaces. Students bring in their writing assignments at any stage in the process (from brainstorm to polished, complete draft) and get help with the next steps. Writing center consultants sit down one-on-one with students and coach them through the writing process, reading their work with them and helping them to leave with a plan for what to do next.

This role is by far the most gratifying teaching I have ever done. Students would come in frazzled, frustrated, and convinced they couldn't do an assignment. By the end of the hour, they were leaving confident and with a plan of action. The best part about it was that the plan was always their plan crafted out of their words.

The guiding principle for writing center theory is that the work belongs to the writer. Consultants are not editors. We're not ghostwriters. We're not even teachers in the traditional sense. We're simply there to offer a helping hand and give students a framework for bringing forth their own ideas in a way that makes sense.

My time working in these centers taught me several strategies for helping reluctant writers that I have used in many different settings. I've used them in college classrooms with adult learners who struggled to get their thoughts on the page. I've used them with elementary students who were just learning to write academically for the very first time. Truth be told, I've used them with myself when I was struggling through my own writing tasks.

In this article, I'd like to share three tried and true strategies for helping reluctant writers move past the early stages of writing and get to the point where they have ideas on the page.

Strategy 1: Scribing

Scribing is a common accommodation for students with dyslexia or other learning differences that may make the physical act of writing or the mental task of organizing thoughts to get them on the page difficult. It is also often used as a way to let young children with advanced interests participate in more challenging material when their fine motor or literacy skills are not as fully developed as other areas.



Scribing is simply writing down what the learner says. As a tool for writing instruction, scribing can be helpful for writers at any age—including adults.

When I scribe for a brainstorming writer, I work to write down exactly what they say. However, I may sometimes do some reorganization on the fly if I see patterns emerging. If their ideas are jumbled together, but I can see some categories, I might start taking my notes in columns, writing their exact words under different sections of the page. I also do not feel pressure to write everything they say when they're brainstorming. I can start to eliminate some of the filler that's cluttering up their thoughts.

I'll then show them the notes and say something like, "It sounds like you're talking about three different categories of things. What do you think?"

Often, writers will not believe the words are their own. They'll think that I "fixed them up." When I insist that these are their exact words, they start to feel more confident in their own ideas.

Here are some signs that scribing might help a writer:

- They like to talk. They like to get their ideas across through speaking and often have a lot more to say when asked a question rather than writing it on the page.
- They respond better to verbal questions than written ones.
- They say things like “I don’t have any good ideas” or “I can’t keep my thoughts straight.”

Strategy 2: Voice to Text

This one is a lot like scribing, but it takes out the interpersonal element. Some writers really struggle with sharing their unfinished work with others. They feel judged and self-conscious when they’re working through early drafts, so scribing can cause anxiety because they have to share early thoughts before they’re polished.

These writers could still benefit from the basic function of scribing by using voice to text. Most smartphones come equipped with this feature, and many web browsers have it built in as well. They don’t need to buy expensive transcription software because they aren’t trying to get a perfect, grammatically correct account of the words. They’re just trying to get something on the page.



Writers who are staring down a blank page and getting nowhere should try turning on voice to text and simply talking through their ideas. Chances are that a lot of it is going to be jumbled nonsense. That’s fine. Getting jumbled nonsense onto the page leaves room for clearer ideas to come out eventually.

A good strategy is to talk for a few minutes, re-read what came up, and then start over on a fresh page with more focus. Usually by the second or third round, the ideas will start to be clearer.

Here are some signs that voice to text might help a writer:

- They find typing or writing on blank pages intimidating.
- They struggle to talk over their early stage ideas with another person.
- They say things like, “I don’t know what to write.”

Strategy 3: Get Moving

We often treat writing like a quiet, subdued activity. Our images of writing are of people hunkered down in silence, furiously typing or writing away.

Not everyone thinks best in those conditions, and it’s crucial to remember that writing (especially in the early stages) is thinking. If you have a writer who has high sensory needs or who is very active, it doesn’t make sense to expect quiet stillness to produce the best thinking.



Percival Everett, a prolific and award-winning fiction writer, works on a ranch, and he says that the physical labor of the ranch gives him the opportunity to brainstorm and think through his next writing project.

I could often identify students who needed to move in the early stages of writing by their physical agitation during the brainstorming stage. They were the ones literally crumpling up their papers, wiggling in their chairs, scribbling ferociously until pencil tips broke off. They were trying to think, but the confinement and quiet of the space was a barrier rather than a sanctuary.

I’d tell these writers to get moving. They could go walk around outside. Even better, they might go lift weights or run. As long as they spent some time looking at the paper prompt before they headed out, they would almost always come back with some ideas and a much clearer path forward for their draft.

The most important thing is to follow the movement up with some actual writing so that all of those good ideas don’t get lost. If they go for a run and then come home and play video games or watch TV, they’re going to lose a lot of the work they did. Jot down the brainstorms first.

Here are some signs that a writer might benefit from moving during brainstorms:

- They show signs of physical frustration while trying to write. They wiggle, crumple paper, slam their hands on the keyboard, break pencil tips.
- They need a lot of physical activity generally.
- They say things like, “It’s too quiet in here” while writing.

Experimentation is Key

Writing is a very personal process. There’s no right way to do it, and what works well for writing one type of assignment might not work out for writing something more challenging. It’s important to give writers a lot of room to experiment as they build their own set of strategies for writing well.

The early stages of writing are often the hardest, but they are also the most important. This is where writers start to develop their ideas, and the momentum built in the brainstorming stage can often carry through challenging stages of later writing. If a writer finds an idea they truly believe in, they’ll work harder to finish it well.



Don’t be afraid to experiment. Try out different drafting strategies and remember that there is no “right” way to write. There is only the way that works for each writer.



Michelle Parrinello-Cason has a Ph.D. in English and has taught as a home educator and college professor. She homeschools two delightfully energetic children and runs [Dayla Learning](#), a site dedicated to “homeschooling the humanities with humanity” that provides full-semester high school writing classes. She focuses on reaching learners where they are and giving them the foundational tools to learn well no matter what the future holds.

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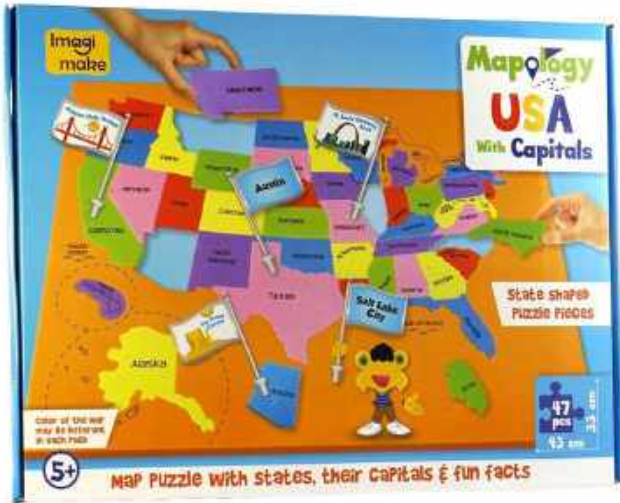
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16 Educational Toys that Make Great Gifts for Elementary Students



[Imagimake: Mapology USA with Capitals](#)



[ETI Toys 101 Piece Educational Construction Engineering Building Set](#)



[Educational Insights Design & Drill Activity Center](#)



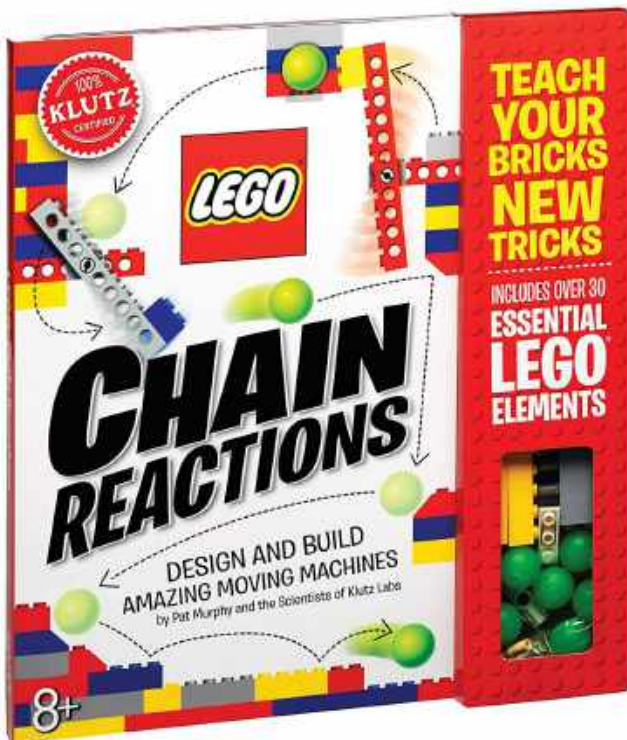
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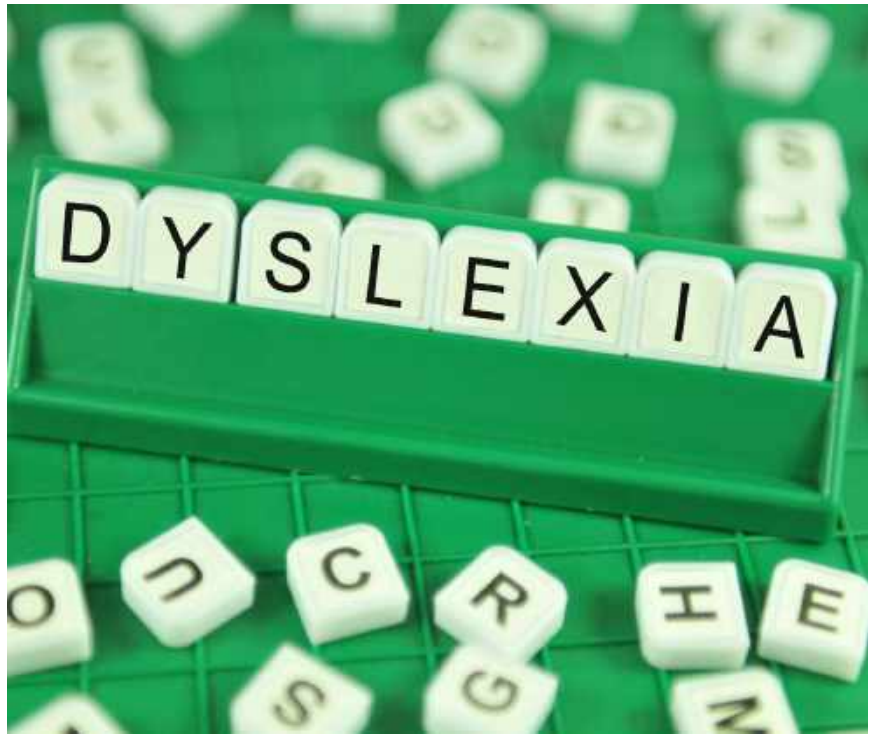
Unit Studies

Templates to make student and educator ID cards

SEAHomeschoolers.com/membership-group/

Teaching Your Dyslexic Child to Read

By Pamela Brookes



When we first decided to homeschool, I knew I'd be creating stuff to help my kids learn. A hundreds chart or multiplication table for math; a water/oil/fake maple syrup experiment to teach density; you know, all the standard stuff we homeschooling parents do. What I didn't expect is I would write my daughter a series of phonics books (nearing 80 with probably twice as many to come) that would eventually be recommended on both literacy and dyslexia websites around the world.

Sixty-five percent of U.S. fourth-grade kids that go to school are not proficient readers. The reason? Their teachers were not taught how to teach reading using evidence-based methods. Up to 20% of children have dyslexia. Most teachers probably can't even tell you what dyslexia is. The way kids with dyslexia learn to read is with the same phonics progressions that work for most kids, they just need a lot more repetition and finesse. (Which means a lot more money if dyslexia specialists are hired.)

Our homeschool group is filled with kids who were failed by the local school system. So many kids that cannot read and were often belittled because of it. Their parents take them out of school to teach them at home, but then they don't know how to teach them. Our daughter never went to school, but from the time she was two, I suspected she had dyslexia. I didn't know how to teach her and spent many a despondent night because I could not find the answers I needed.

Because I have the tenacity of a homeschooling mom, I have had the good fortune to have reading and dyslexia experts enter my life. I have learned so much that I wish I'd known just a few years earlier. To help other families that are struggling with teaching

their children to read, I have taken the most essential information and shared it in several books. The two Parent and Teacher Guides, 1) *How to Teach a Struggling Reader: One Mom's Experience with Dyslexia* and 2) *How to Use DOG ON A LOG Books to Teach Reading*, are available as free e-books.

Let's talk about the progression of learning to read and look at some examples of how systematic reading slowly progresses. If you want more detail, please download my free e-guides. Both were edited by Dr. Nancy Mather, a professor of reading, writing, and learning disabilities.

The National Reading Panel reviewed 100,000 studies that examined reading instruction. What it found is that "[Systematic and explicit phonics instruction is more effective than non-systematic or no phonics instruction.](#)" What that means is you start with small pieces of phonics information, teach the child the specific information, and gradually add more.

The very beginning of the learning to read process is for young children to learn to hear individual words in sentences. You can do this with them by having them thump their elbows or knees once for each word as you read them stories or even when you're just talking with them. (I don't advise clapping because we'll do that with syllables.)



Once they can thump individual words, the next step is to learn about rhymes. Oh my gosh, we had so much fun with rhyming when our son was little. "Time for a bath-dath-smath." We rhymed everything. We tried that with our daughter for a long time, then gave up. Sadly, we did not know then that the inability to understand rhymes is one of the biggest red flags for dyslexia. With a lot of hard work, she learned to rhyme when she was nine.

After learning to rhyme, kids need to hear syllables in words. You and your kids can clap the syllables in words when you're reading or just talking. To help them hear syllables in words tell them to place their hand under their chin and talk. They will usually feel their hand go down with each syllable. This is because every syllable has a vowel and the way we produce vowel sounds with our mouths makes our chins drop.

After kids can clap syllables, it's time to start hearing the first sounds in words, then the last sounds, then middle sounds of three-sound-words. Their ability to hear the sounds really increases if they are taught to "tap" with their fingers as they make the sounds of each word.

Those steps might not seem so big or hard to us, but they are all critical. At our homeschool co-op, I was asked to teach a phonics class to some kids who were really struggling to read. They could read a bit, but not much. The slowest of the group was 9. I wrote my books *Before the Squiggle Code* and *The Squiggle Code* and created the first boardgames and other printable activities I give away for free just for that class. (Since then, I have created more printable boardgames, activities, flashcards, and more. They can all be downloaded for free from my website. Although they are companions to my books, they can also be used independently from my books. I even offer blank flashcards that can you can customize to your phonics progression or other educational needs.)

In my co-op phonics class, I covered all the skills I've mentioned above. My slowest student always combined a word's vowel sounds with the first consonant sound. I taught him how to "tap" the sounds with his fingers to separate the sounds. This made a HUGE difference in his ability to sound out words. We started learning about the letters in the order recommended by Dr. Mather. Then summer came. When we came back from our three-month break, I used the Quick Assessment Tool I made



for the free e-book *How to Use DOG ON A LOG Books to Teach Reading*. In three months, that aforementioned slowest kid had learned to read every single word on the assessment tool. That tool includes two-syllable words and multiple syllable types. He clearly does not have dyslexia. His mom attributes the remedial work I did to giving him the foundation for his reading to take off at supersonic speed. Obviously not every kid will have that kind of progress, but it really reinforced to me what a difference having those basic skills makes.

Once a child has learned those first pre-reading skills, they need to start learning small groups of letter sounds and how to blend them into words. Depending on the phonics

program you are using, the first letters a child encounters may be different. In The Squiggle Code, the first six letters are “a, s, m, f, t, n.” After learning the letter sounds, the kids learn to sound out a few words, then it is time for their very first sentence, “Nam Fam is tan.”

Some children will quickly learn the letter sounds and how to blend them into words. Other kids will take longer. A child with dyslexia will need so much repetition that learning the letter sounds could take weeks and weeks. With the right activities and repetition, children will learn the sounds and how to blend words.

Scientific research shows that children learn best when they are taught the phonics rules explicitly. In this short article I won't get into the specific phonics rules. I will just reiterate that for each phonics rule, new readers will need to have explicit instruction in the rules. How they receive that instruction will depend on the child. Maybe they need to practice with magnetic letters, maybe they need boardgames, flashcards, or worksheets. Some kids will need all those activities and more.

Once kids know basic letter sounds and how to sound out words with those letter sounds, it is time for their first real books. Sadly, most beginning phonics books are not decodable books. A decodable book has a specific set of phonics rules and a very limited number of sight words that can't be sounded out using the known phonics. There are very few books that are truly decodable and there are even less that are more than a few sentences long. When new readers have decodable books where they know all the rules and sight words, their frustration levels are much lower and they tend to be proud of their ability to read instead of embarrassed that they can't read.

A systematic series of decodable books slowly adds phonics rules to each subsequent book or set of books. This allows children to gradually practice and learn new phonics rules.



I started writing DOG ON A LOG Books because I could not find affordable decodable chapter books at my daughter's reading level. Bigger than that, I could not find chapter books that were part of a systematic series. I've already shared the very first sentence with from The Squiggle Code. Here are examples of paragraphs from the chapter books. You can see how the selection of words gradually progresses as the phonics rules and the explicitly taught sight words increase.

Step 1 (26 letter sounds; 6 digraph sounds; possessive 's) The Dog on the Log

The dog is on a log. He is a bit of a dog.
He is a pup.
The pup has a kid. His kid is a gal.
His kid is Jan.

Step 2 (double f, l, s, z; -all; suffix -s) Mud on the Path

Bob is a big dog. A big tan dog. He can pick up thick logs. He can sit and set his chin on the bed. He can get in the back of the van when he wants.
Bob is my pal. If I am sad, he will kiss my chin. He will get the ball when I toss it.
He sits on the rug with me. I rub his back and neck.

Step 3 (words with -ng and -nk) The Ship with Wings

"What will the box be?" Tam says.
"I think it should be a hut," Ted says. "We can have a bell that will ring."
"That would be fun. The bell could go, 'ding, dong.'" Tam says.

Step 4 (consonant blends) Musk Ox in the Tub

Lil is in bed. She just had a nap. She thinks, "I want a bath." She goes into the hall. She goes to the tub. She stops. There is a big hulk in the bath tub.
"What are you?" she asks. "You smell."
"I am a musk ox. Yes. I smell. I want a bath," the musk ox says.

And let's jump to all the way to Step 9 which is still unpublished.

Step 9 The Chicken Bus Express

Jan and her sis are in the chicken pen. They each hold a chicken. "I do not think the chickens want baths," Jan says.



“But they have muck on their tails and wings. They are not clean and sleek. I think it could be clay that is stuck to them,” Gret says.

“Where would they have gotten clay? I think it is mud. We left the water tap on while we slept and their pen was a mishmash of mud when we got up. Their hay was yuck. Dad had to toss in some clean hay for them,” Jan says.

There will come a point when a typically learning child will cease to need decodable books. That will happen for children with dyslexia as well, but they will probably need many more decodable books for a much longer time.

Our son went from basic phonics to reading novels seemingly overnight. Our daughter is on a much slower path. I have many more decodable books to write for her as she learns one or two new phonics rules at a time. It is a slow path, but we are making progress. There was a time I wasn't sure if I could ever teach her to read. Now I see that with time, and a lot of evidence-based instruction, she is reading.

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For information, contact the author at read@dogonalogbooks.com



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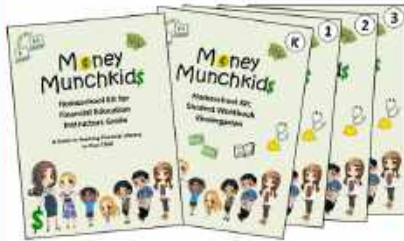
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The Art of Movie Magic

By Jason Grooms

Art can take many forms, and as a young secular homeschool parent it was easy to get caught in the “paint on a canvas” loop of art education; coloring recreations of the painting masters or learning to identify some of the great works. But art is vastly broader than simply studying Picasso or Rembrandt. Art is the expression of creative skill and imagination. It can be so many things, including movies. That's right, I'm talking about films, cinema, motion pictures. The art of storytelling on the big (and little) screen.



According to the Oxford English dictionary, Art is “the expression or application of human creative skill and imagination, typically in a visual form...” A great work of art moves us and makes us think. It stirs our emotions. After having experienced it, we are changed. Our understanding is expanded; our minds broader.

ORSON WELLES, CITIZEN KANE (1941)



It's easy to dismiss movies as a true art form and it seems almost blasphemous to put Spielberg in the same category as DaVinci, but both are masters of their art and both have something to teach about art. Don't get trapped in the thinking that movies are just the throw-away fodder of modern media consumption. There can

be so much skill and care that goes into creating and presenting them. Are there bad movies? Of course. Should all movies be studied to understand the craft? No. It'll be a cold day in Hades before I do a unit study on the Puppy Buddy movies. Just like any art, there are examples of both masterpieces and train wrecks, and also like any art, the judgment of which is which is subjective. That's part of the fun.

Voyage Dans La Lune (A Trip to the Moon) (1902)

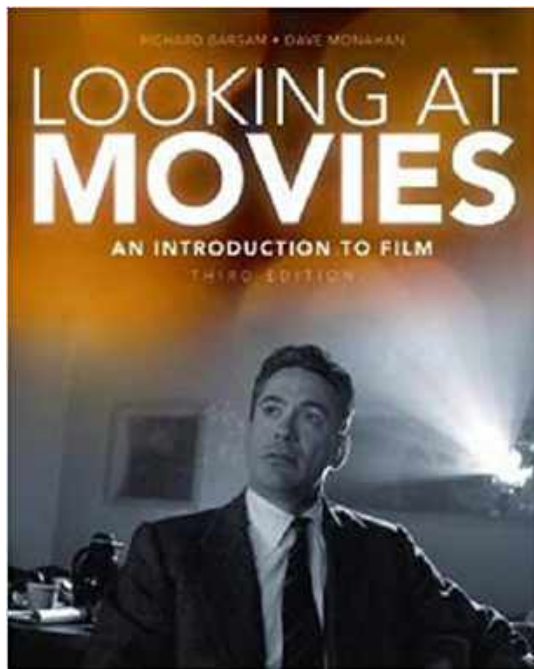


Teaching any art elective, including a unit study on movies can be daunting though. There are a million choices and a million opinions. Where to start? How do you study it? How do you keep "homework" from turning into normal, everyday TV time? It's a tough balance, but with a little bit of direction and a few resources, this art elective can be a blast for you and your kids.

This summer I created a movie magic unit study designed to give an introduction to film and film history using movies that can be found online, articles, a textbook, and writing assignments. Each module in the unit begins with an introduction to a concept, structure, or idea, then letting your child write about their reaction to the movie including a short fact sheet. At the end of this articles is the

PDF of the unit with the introduction, assignments and the first five modules on movie history. You can build the next modules any way you want, focusing on any concept you like using the same format.

The Art of Movie Magic: A Unique Art Elective



The Movies - Most of the earliest movies are free to access and easy to find in an online archive or on a film history site. Others, especially newer movies, have to be rented or accessed via a movie service. The services, like Netflix or Amazon Video, are sometimes limited and they swap out movies often. A larger rental library like iTunes or Vudu is the best. I do NOT endorse any sort of piracy or illegal access to movies. Sure, it's easier and cheaper, but in the end, it's still stealing.

The Book - I choose to use a textbook with this unit, Looking at Movies: An Introduction to Film, 3rd Edition and I highly recommend it. I don't follow the order that the book is written, nor do I use everything contained in it, but it does have some great information. I've added an affiliate link to order it at the bottom of this article.

Art of Movie Magic Unit Study: [This unit study can be found in our members area.](#)

Metropolis (1927)



The Unit Study- I've broken the unit up into one module per week for convenience, but you can break it up any way you want. I use four or five basic segments per module:

Prereading - Add some articles or chapters from the textbook that introduce the concepts or era. Don't include movie reviews here.

Watch the Movie - Generally, I allow them to watch it on any electronic device they want but I always recommend the TV so they can see more and get the full effect.

Write a Reaction Paper - These are short papers meant to capture their thoughts on the film and concepts they are looking at.

Write a Fact Page - This reinforces the terms and concepts.

Read Reviews - Only after they've watched the movie and formed their own opinion of it.

The art of film can be a fun and engaging study. It'll give you and your kids a new appreciation for the craft and I guarantee you and your kids will look at movies through a whole new lens.

Click here to buy [Looking at Movies, 3rd Edition](#)



Jason Grooms is an author, adventurer, mountain climber, husband, dad of six and grandpa of two. Along with his brilliant and beautiful wife, he's been homeschooling for over two decades (two graduated and four close behind). When he's not being a teacher, adventure guide, and life coach for his kids, Jason is a Director of Learning and Development for an exciting startup by day and writes science adventure books for kids by night. He has his degree in Cultural Anthropology, is an ordained Humanist Celebrant, and is certifiably the biggest Disney nerd you will ever encounter. You can find his

science books and activities at The Brainy Tourist and follow along with his mountain climbing adventures on his YouTube channel Geek on the Peak TV.



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Both these links have GREAT information for educators

[NaNoWriMo Young Writers Program](#)

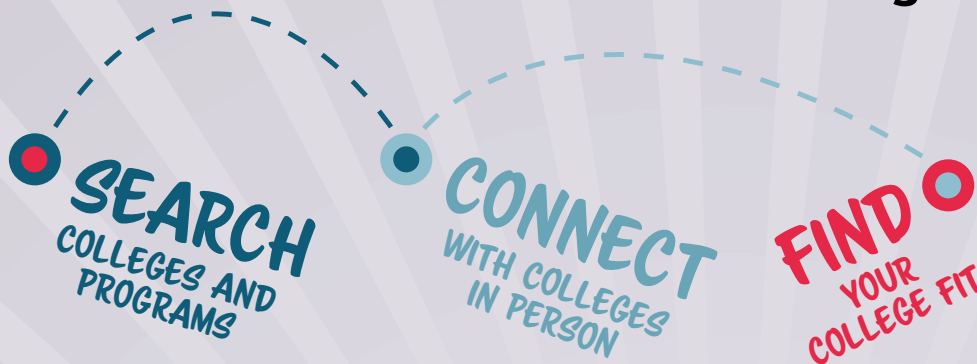
[NaNoWriMo Teaching Resources](#)

Make this fun and cater to your child. If they want colored paper, color pencils, blank books, etc. then let them use whatever they like. You can set goals according to your child's style. You can have a time limit each day, a certain number of words each day, fill a page each day, etc. Don't stress about the details, just make it a fun special writing event. I encourage the parent to write WITH the child each day and take the time to really engage in the activity. You also might want to make it special and have some treats to eat or tea while you write or light a candle on the table, etc. Make this as much or as little as you think your child will respond to.

I want to encourage everyone to take advantage of the upcoming [NaNoWriMo project](#) (National Novel Writing Month) that takes place every November. This is a great FREE resource to encourage writing. It's often a gateway to writing for many people and can really lead to success in the writing world. I've known a few people that have had great success using NaNoWriMo to write their first novel.

In Episode 23, [Moira Ward](#) was interviewed about writing and how she started out with NaNoWriMo too. Don't forget to check out her work on her web site.

NaNoWriMo has lots of great FREE resources that can be used in a variety of ways and I encourage you to check them out to see if some of the activities will work for your student. You can use some of the more structured lessons or leave that all behind and just write! Follow your child's lead. Be sure to leave the editing out of this! This is all about getting their ideas on paper and their voice heard. You can deal with grammar and spelling later.



AT NACAC 2019



NATIONAL COLLEGE FAIRS

CINCINNATI
Saturday, Sept. 14

BIRMINGHAM
Sunday, Sept. 15

LONG ISLAND
Sunday, Sept. 15

NASHVILLE
Tuesday, Sept. 17

INDIANAPOLIS
Tuesday, Sept. 24

LOUISVILLE
Sunday, Sept. 29

DENVER
Sunday, Sept. 29

NEW ORLEANS
Tuesday, Oct. 1

BATON ROUGE
Wednesday, Oct. 2

MINNESOTA
Wednesday, Oct. 2 &
Thursday, Oct. 3

CHICAGO
Saturday, Oct. 5

ORLANDO
Saturday, Oct. 5

MILWAUKEE
Sunday, Oct. 6

SOUTH FLORIDA
Sunday, Oct. 6

JACKSONVILLE
Saturday, Oct. 12

OMAHA
Sunday, Oct. 13

PHILADELPHIA
Sunday, Oct. 20

GREATER PHOENIX
Sunday, Oct. 20 &
Monday, Oct. 21

ST. LOUIS
Sunday, Oct. 20

BALTIMORE
Monday, Oct. 21 &
Tuesday, Oct. 22

KANSAS CITY
Tuesday, Oct. 22

HONOLULU
Tuesday, Oct. 22

PORTLAND
Sunday, Oct. 27 &
Monday, Oct. 28

GREATER
WASHINGTON, DC
Sunday, Oct. 27

ATLANTIC CITY
Monday, Oct. 28 &
Tuesday, Oct. 29

BOISE
Wednesday, Oct. 30

SEATTLE
Friday, Nov. 1 &
Saturday, Nov. 2

SPOKANE
Tuesday, Nov. 5

PERFORMING & VISUAL ARTS COLLEGE FAIRS

PORTLAND
Monday, Sept. 16

SEATTLE
Tuesday, Sept. 17

SAN FRANCISCO
Thursday, Sept. 19

SAN DIEGO
Saturday, Sept. 21

LOS ANGELES
Sunday, Sept. 22

CINCINNATI
Monday, Sept. 30

MINNESOTA
Tuesday, Oct. 1

KANSAS CITY
Thursday, Oct. 3

INTERLOCHEN
Sunday, Oct. 6

ST. LOUIS
Monday, Oct. 7

CLEVELAND
Saturday, Oct. 12

LAS VEGAS
Monday, Oct. 14

DENVER
Tuesday, Oct. 15

HOUSTON
Wednesday, Oct. 16

DALLAS
Thursday, Oct. 17

AUSTIN
Sunday, Oct. 20

PHOENIX
Monday, Oct. 21

INDIANAPOLIS
Tuesday, Oct. 22

CHICAGO
Thursday, Oct. 24

FT. LAUDERDALE
Sunday, Oct. 27

ATLANTA
Monday, Oct. 28

CHARLOTTE
Tuesday, Oct. 29

WASHINGTON, DC
Sunday, Nov. 3

PHILADELPHIA
Monday, Nov. 4

BOSTON
Tuesday, Nov. 5

NEW YORK CITY
Tuesday, Nov. 12

STEM COLLEGE & CAREER FAIRS

ATLANTA
Sunday, Sept. 29

SILICON VALLEY
Sunday, Oct. 6

NEW! NEW JERSEY
Saturday, Oct. 12

NEW YORK CITY
Sunday, Oct. 13

HOUSTON
Sunday, Oct. 20

NEW! BOSTON
Sunday, Oct. 27

Free and open to the public, NACAC fairs link you to hundreds of colleges and universities in one location.

Learn more at nacacfairs.org.

NACAC

National Association for
College Admission Counseling

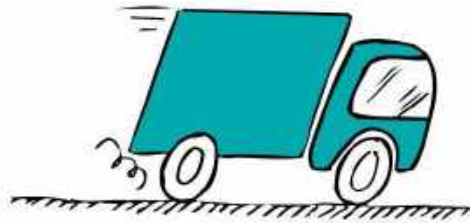
Rotating Peanut Butter

Tools Needed: *Two identical peanut butter jars (one filled with peanut butter and the other cleaned out and filled with water), incline*

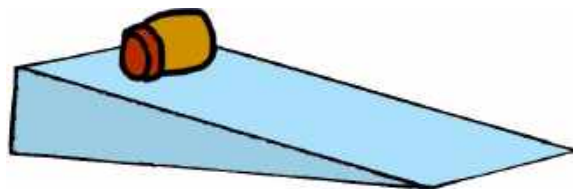
You need a push or a pull to get something moving. That push or pull is needed to overcome the object's inertia. We define inertia as the "resistance to change". The greater the mass of an object, the greater its inertia.



A massive truck has much inertia. To get that massive truck moving, you need a powerful engine to overcome that great inertia.



Motion can be linear, that is, following a straight line. But motion can also be rotational, which means the object is turning or following a curved path. Consider a jar of peanut butter rolling down a ramp. Can you see that there are two types of motion? First, the jar is traveling from one side of the ramp to the other (linear). But the jar is also rolling, which is a rotational motion.



Imagine a jar of peanut butter floating in outer space. Imagine a second identical jar filled with gold. You're an astronaut and your goal is to get each of these jars spinning. Which might be harder to get spinning? Answer: The one with more inertia, which is the one with more mass. You'll find the jar filled with gold is more difficult to get spinning. You'll find it has a greater resistance to the change in motion you're trying to effect, which is to speed it up.



Likewise, if you find the two jars already spinning at the same rate, which might be harder to stop? Answer: The one with more inertia. You'll find the jar filled with gold is more difficult to stop. You'll find it has a greater resistance to the change in motion you're trying to effect, which is to slow it down.

This is the principle behind a “flywheel”, which is an ultra massive ring or cylinder. At a hydroelectric plant, for example, flowing water is used to get a massive flywheel moving. The energy of the flowing water is thus stored by the rotating flywheel, which helps in the production of electricity.

Activity: Consider two identical jars. One filled with peanut butter and the other filled with water. Which will roll down an incline faster? And why? Watch this video for some important clues.



Rotating Peanut Butter

Till next time, good science to you!

A Hands-on Science Series From Conceptual Academy

Conceptual Academy is a video-centric learning platform used by colleges and high schools for introductory science, now available for homeschools, grades 7 – 12. Thank you for visiting our dedicated homeschool support site at www.LearnScience.Academy.

Autumn Leaves

A Printable Coloring Page by Judith Claudi-Magnussen



CLIMATE STRIKE!

Homeschooling Activism



The Climate Action Challenge

Blair Lee, MS



Let's Do Something to Make a Difference. I have a challenge for each of you. Over the next 12 months, let's each of us come up with one action a month to do that will shrink our carbon footprint. These actions will not all be the same. They will all be unique to each of us and our situation. For example, I am vegan, live in a house powered by solar, and drive a Prius. My actions will not include changing one of those, but yours might. There is no action that is better than any other. We will all be working together with a common goal, and for each of us who chooses to join me in this we will promote, encourage, and empower each other.

Hopefully at the end of each month, each of us has gotten so comfortable with the change we made that we keep doing it along with the change we choose for the month going forward. That way by the end of the year, each of us will have made 12 changes in our impact on the Earth.

Here is what I am doing for each month going forward.

October:

I will shrink my carbon footprint by making different food choices. I will eat homemade food using local ingredients. I have been so busy this year that my reliance on pre-packaged goods has increased. This month I will be changing that for myself and family. I will buy our produce at the local farmers market.



November:

I will educate others. I will put out a video short every one to two days to educate people about the science of global warming and climate change. These will be shareable from the [SEA Homeschoolers YouTube channel](#).



December:

I will ask my family not to give me any materials gifts during the holidays. I will ask them to donate to some specific causes that I support.



January:

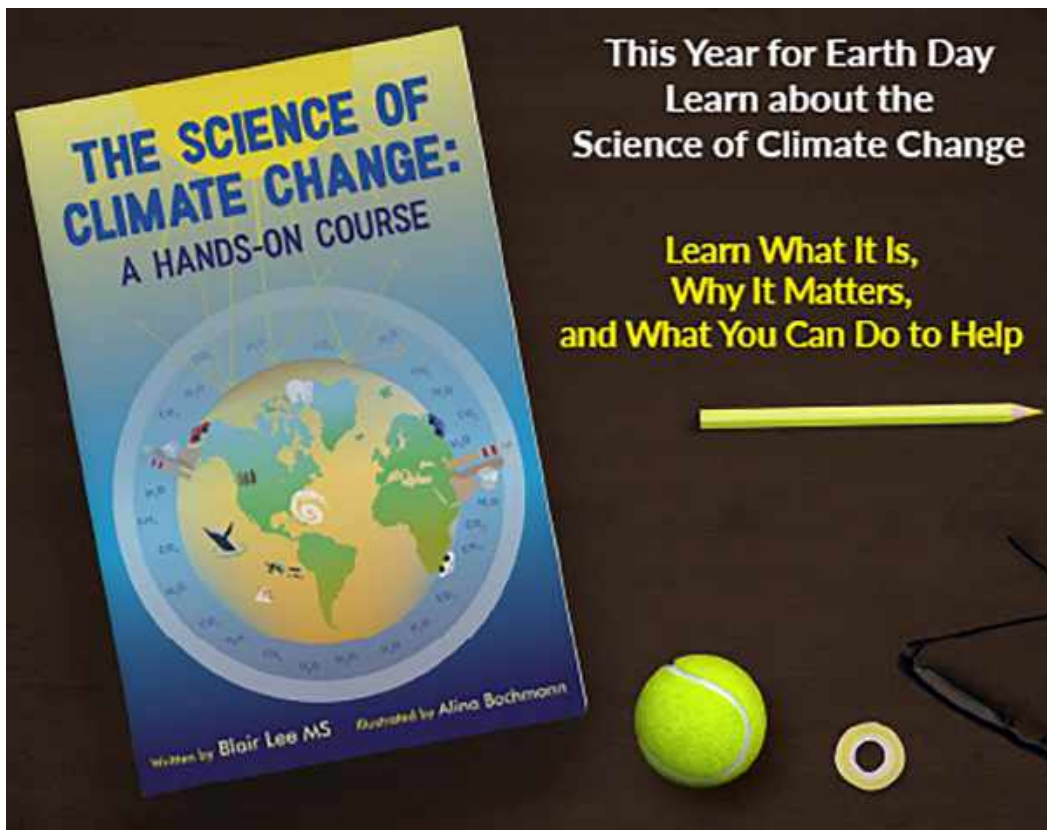
Do a better job of reusing what I have instead of buying new. And repurposing things I have into things I need.

February & March:

I am not sure yet



April: To celebrate Earth Day, I will be teaching a series of classes from my book *The Science of Climate Change: A Hands-On Course*. These will be conducted using Zoom and Google Docs. There will be a cost to this, with a couple of scholarship slots if needed. Some of the proceeds will be donated to an NGO focused on mitigating the climate crisis. The class participants will vote to decide who will receive this. I will be using the detailed plan I wrote for the soon to be released PBL book. (Yes it is overdue – if you have been waiting for it. I am so sorry. But it is close, so very close!)



I am not sure about the rest of the year. Hopefully, I get ideas from you. What you choose can be big. Because of all my commitments, to add the November and April actions are big for me, but needed. I have been receiving PMs, emails, and texts from people asking for my help in educating the deniers and doubters in their life. I feel compelled to help those people. Or, it can be simple. Something as simple as stopping to use paper napkins and using cloth ones, makes a difference. My point is, if it shrinks your carbon footprint or leads to the shrinking of someone else's carbon footprint, there is no action that is too small. I hope you will join me in this. I look forward to working with you on this. If two to three of you would like to help me with the day-to-day running of this initiative, I could use the help. If you are not an adult, I will take you on as an intern for this initiative, and you can include it as a type of coursework. You will get a nice letter from me to include in documentation.

Together we can make a difference!
There is no time like now to do it!

To join in the challenge on Facebook you will need to join the group, [SEA Homeschoolers Climate Activists](#). If you are not on Facebook, email me at blair@seahomeschoolers and you can participate that way.



Baked Butter Beans in Tomato Sauce

On my recent visit to the UK I learned that the vegan food there is often superb, inventive, and easy to get. I ate these beans for dinner and liked them so much I asked to have them for breakfast too. (Beans, roasted tomatoes, and mushrooms were a breakfast staple for me in the UK. Especially while hiking Hadrian's Wall. I needed something substantial if i was going to hike 9 to 12 miles on uneven terrain!)

The chef of the Sampson Inn in Brampton kindly gave me this recipe, with permission to share it with all of you.

Ingredients

- 1 6oz Dried Butterbeans, soaked overnight
- 1 Large White Onion, finely chopped
- 2 Cloves Garlic, finely chopped
- 6 Tbsp Olive Oil
- 1/2 tsp Paprika
- 1 Tbsp Tomato Puree
- 28oz Can Chopped Tomatoes
- 1 tsp Salt
- Pinch White Pepper
- 1 Small Handful Chopped Parsley
- 1 Small Handful Chopped Mint
- 7oz Black Olives, sliced



Instructions

1. Drain the beans, cover with fresh water and bring to the boil.
2. Turn down to a simmer. Cook for several hours until the beans are just tender.
3. Gently soften the onion and garlic in 2 tablespoons of olive oil for 5 minutes.
4. When soft, stir in paprika, tomato purée, chopped tomatoes, 1/2 cup water, black olives, salt and pepper.
5. Bring to boil, then reduce to a simmer and cook for 30 minutes.
6. When the beans are cooked, drain them, then mix with tomato sauce.
7. Add 2 tablespoons of olive oil and chopped herbs.
8. Divide between 8 small, shallow terracotta dishes, drizzle with the remaining olive oil and bake for 35–40 minutes until the beans are tender and the sauce thickened and bubbling.

SUBSCRIBE

We are a community-focused group. It is the goal of SEA Homeschoolers to build a strong, healthy, and vibrant network for secular homeschooling families, educators, and business people.

I want to personally thank you for being an important part of the SEA Homeschoolers community.

Blair Lee, founder of Secular, Eclectic, Academic Homeschoolers

If you have any submissions, ideas, questions, or comments, please email us at editor@seahomeschoolers.com or visit us on Facebook at Editor at SEA.

