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MEET THE GELLOS FAMILY | 14

SPRING 2018
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VOLUME 2

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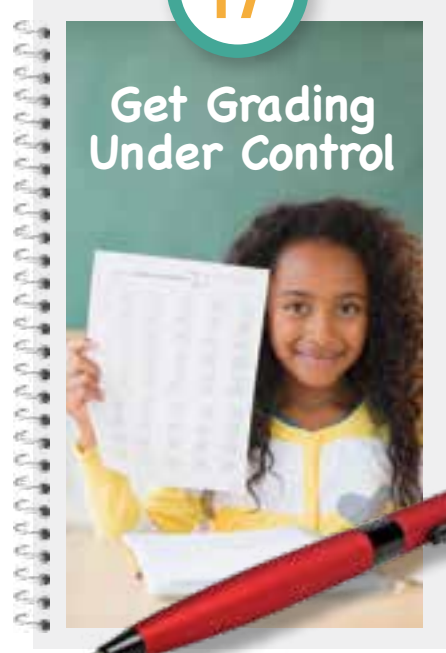
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Meet the Gellos family and
PREPARE TO BE AMAZED

Abekamazing is a service of Abeka, Pensacola, Florida. Our mission is to support and equip students, teachers, and parents by providing amazing Pre-K through Grade 12 academic resources based upon biblical values.

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Send in Your Schoolroom Photos NOW
for our back-to-school issue!



Send clever decorating/organizing photos of your school space to amazinghomeschool@abeka.com

Letter from Abeka

Dear Friends,

I just learned that I would fail the easiest math they had. A thousand miles from home, a freshman in college, and now I'd have to tell my parents their daughter was a failure.

Mama answered the phone.

"I failed my math class," I sobbed. "I'm not smart enough to be a teacher."

Mama replied, "God knows how to make a teacher."

I stopped crying and was trying to follow.

"Why haven't you failed before?" she asked.

"I guess because I do my homework and listen in class?" I answered.

"Exactly!" she said. "But what about the kids who work and *still* fail? How will you help them?" Mama made her point, "God knows how to make a teacher. He knows the classes she has to take, and He's signed you up for one you need."

Tears started rolling back down my face.

Then Mama whispered, "We can trust God with our failures."

I re-took the class and passed. Passed all my classes and graduated. Finally, I taught fourth grade. Among my students was a hard-working, precious girl who kept failing. When I looked at her, I understood, and *that made all the difference.*

Because children aren't allowed to fail (or lose) in our culture, many teachable moments have disappeared. In homeschooling we can help our children view their failures through a mother's loving perspective. *This makes all the difference.*

The same privilege is available to us. We can choose to view our failures through our Father's loving perspective. He knows the thoughts He has toward us (Jeremiah 29:11), and *He knows how to make a homeschool mother.* We can trust Him, even with our failures! 🇺🇸

Tabby

Tabby Hershberger

Senior Editor

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This verse is ready to frame on p. 11!

Tabby homeschooled for two decades. She is also a former elementary school teacher and newspaper editor. She has four kids and has been married to her husband, Dan, for 30 years.

Secrets for NAVIGATING MATERIALS DISPLAYS AND CONVENTIONS

As valuable as they are, materials displays and conventions can be overwhelming venues for the unprepared. Make your experience profitable with tips from the pros!



Plan ahead for an Abeka Materials Display (display of Abeka homeschool products). Be prepared by circling catalog items you want to order or know more about. Before you arrive, know your account and login info as orders will be taken online. Get premier access to Rep expertise by arriving within the first two hours.

Know what you need. Ask Reps for advice about the best products for your particular situation.

Pro Tip: If you are considering Abeka Academy video and have books in that grade already, check Abeka's website to make sure older products still match.

Realize why and how you homeschool. What are your long-term homeschool goals? The answer helps determine the best curriculum. How much time can you devote to teaching or supervising? Will your children respond better to instruction from you or someone else?

Know where the value is. Abeka Academy is the best value. **Pro Tip: Expert video teaching costs much less than Christian school tuition. Abeka Academy's book kit is priced far lower than the same books purchased individually.**

Understand what the reps can offer. Helping customers make wise choices is the Reps' ministry. Their ultimate goal is your long-term success. **Pro Tip: Remember that Reps deal with a lot of customers in many different situations. They may be able to offer insight others cannot.**



Kee a file detailing needed purchases to take with you to the convention. **Pro Tip: Include prices so you can compare. Once at the convention, take pictures of items for future files.**

Set a budget. **Pro Tip: Bring extra cash. Use only designated cash for unexpected finds.**

Bring snacks and a water bottle for each family member. Food is expensive at conventions.

Pro Tip: Save money by bringing a cooler of pre-assembled meals. Slow cook these meal bags in your hotel room. The savings are enormous.

Take a clipboard since workshop rooms contain few hard surfaces. **Pro Tip: Bring address stamp or business cards backed with double-sided tape. When asked for your info, just hand it over or tape it down.**

Have a plan for every family member. Designate check-in times.

Orient yourself by looking for vendors with large signs that hang from the ceiling.

Get multiple copies of convention map/workshop schedules. **Pro Tip: Divide sessions among family members (teens can take notes) or purchase audio versions.**

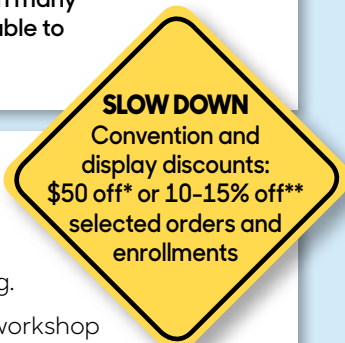
Don't buy anything until you've been through the convention hall at least once. Give someone the job of keeping a running total of what's been spent.

Talk to vendors. **Pro Tip: Don't let free vendor and presenter expertise go to waste. Be in the hall or at the sessions early and ask questions.**

Go through, highlight, and throw away handouts each day.

Ask these curriculum questions: Does it have a K-12 program? Is it proven? Do evaluations coordinate with daily work? Are there connections between subjects? Does it have lesson plans? Could I use this to teach multiple children?

Discuss on the ride home what everyone learned. **Pro Tip: Add action points to the items discussed.** ■



*\$50 off new enrollments with Abeka Academy **10% discount on textbook orders over \$75 Discount of 15% on textbook orders over \$350

SPEAK YOUR CHILD'S LANGUAGE

by Sarah Eshleman



Overcome the challenges of homeschooling a deaf or hard-of-hearing child by speaking his language in the following ways:



Regulate the Noise

Measure noise levels in your home by downloading a noise meter on your smart phone, such as the SPLnFFT app.

- Avoid running the dishwasher or laundry machine until after school hours.
- Evade other routine sounds, such as garbage trucks, by synchronizing your breaks.
- Choose a schoolroom location in a back room or with lower ceilings.
- Outfit any room with sound-minimizing features, such as carpet, sound-blocking curtains, acoustic ceiling material, sound-blocking doors, or sound-blocking tape around the windows.



Emphasize Info Visually

Reinforce lesson concepts by using visual aids such as Abeka charts, flashcards, and maps. Create handouts that list instructions from the day or give a summary of the material. Consider using the free sign language font from Lifeprint.com (Gallaudet TrueType) to print handouts and visuals. *We used it for each paragraph heading.* Post new vocabulary words and their signs on the refrigerator.



Use Amplifier System

If you don't already have an FM system or amplifier, discuss options with your child's doctor. This technology opens a world of learning opportunities. If the hearing device features an amplifier or can connect to the audio output on a television or computer, you can use Abeka DVDs (abeka.com/FindOne) or other educational videos.



Vary Learning Methods

Reinforce concepts through a variety of methods. Use audiobooks to help increase your child's vocabulary and word identification. Learningally.org offers a subscription to 80,000 downloadable audiobooks that feature the text and highlighted words for your child to follow. Involve the family by learning sign language. All your children will benefit from reviewing their own spelling words using signs.



Collaborate with Others

Stay connected with other parents of deaf or hard-of-hearing children. Find information about conferences and events at the websites for the American Speech-Language Hearing Association (asha.org/public) and the American Society for Deaf Children (deafchildren.org). The website [Another Path](http://AnotherPath.org) offers a state-by-state listing of laws, resources, and support groups. ■



your PRESCHOOLER

Changing Challenging Behavior

by Renee Bryant

Changing a preschooler's challenging behavior is difficult, but possible! How should a parent do it? **Decide first to be proactive.**



Renee Bryant taught 4-year-olds for 11 years. She has been a nursery director for the past 10 years and has four children of her own.

Renee

Parents take either a proactive or a passive approach when dealing with their toddler's challenging behavior.

STEP 1 Be Proactive

Proactive Approach

Develop a plan which includes the support necessary to make a change. Work toward your goals with practice, rewards, and an attainable timeline.

Passive Approach

This approach allows a child to continue the same behavior which reinforces poor habits. Challenging behavior often escalates and becomes more difficult to change using this approach.

STEP 2 Clear Expectations

If the goal is to have your child pick up his toys, establish a procedure for picking them up *the way you'd like it to be done*. Begin by making it a game. Walk your child through the process until he becomes independently successful. Focus on completion with a happy heart. If compliance and right attitude are associated now, it becomes a foundational tool for self-control, diligence, and respect later. As your child gains experience and confidence, withdraw your help.

Provide opportunities to practice.

Choose times when you'll both be successful. For example, plan to have your child pick up five toys shortly after nap. Children can generally implement a new routine or task within a week or two, if the task is practiced every day.

STEP 3 Guide the Tantrum

Your child wants your guidance. He doesn't know how to get back to where he needs to be, and tantrums are exhausting.

- **Stay calm.** Communicate clearly without emotion.
- **Maintain boundaries.** They are the security your child needs. Address disobedience by following a predetermined plan without negotiating or wavering.
- **Help your child regain emotional control** by using calming techniques such as offering a drink of water, a tissue for his nose, or to wash his hands. Say, "Let me help you." It's a good way to approach a distressed child. They often want your help, but don't know how to ask.
- **Look for an avenue of cooperation.** Often cooperation can be achieved much quicker with a different route that will lead to the same goal. For example, ask him to do something

easy like hold your hand, or get the truck and bring it to you.

- **Acknowledge the first sign of cooperation** or heart change and capitalize on it. Give a genuine look of joy, awe, or wonder. Your child will work hard to see it again. Children also love sincere, encouraging words such as, "I'm so proud of you" or "You did it!"

The child who knows he can consistently trust his parents to help him change his challenging behavior will become a secure and confident preschooler. ■

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Training Your Children to Turn Out Right

by David Sorenson



Nationally respected author, speaker, and Pastor Emeritus, David Sorenson provides foundational whys behind the do's and don'ts of biblical parenting.

Making the Terrible Two's Terrific!

by John Rosemond



In a revised edition of his classic parenting guide, nationally recognized expert John Rosemond offers practical methods for raising toddlers.

All content is not necessarily reflective of the views held by Abeka.

your KINDERGARTNER

Sweet Little Graduate

by Beth Reese

For homeschool families, kindergarten graduation means a range of memories and emotions.



Beth Reese taught K5 and 2nd grade before homeschooling her sons for eighteen years. When she returned to the classroom, she became the K5 Abeka video teacher. Recently, she joined PCC education faculty.

How can a group of homeschool mothers plan a memorable graduation which highlights the children, involves the parents, and remains within budget? It can start with you.

PLANNING MEETING

Several months ahead, brainstorm with those involved. Discuss a venue. Research regalia options. Decide on a budget. Will families donate items or split costs? Discuss ways to highlight each child via slide show, grandparent's prayer for the future, or tables showcasing individual awards.

DESIGN MEETING

Delegate the workload. Volunteers are needed to decorate, handle program refreshments, help with staging, obtain costumes/props, make snacks for practices, send reminders, play the piano, make invitations/programs, and babysit siblings during practices. Decide on the children's memorized

selections often coming from poems or songs already learned and whether you'll include a special speaker or children's play.

PRACTICES

On the first practice, place masking tape markers on the ground while the kids say their parts. Make two sets of props; one for practice, the other for performance. Make name tags for each child to be taped onto "waiting chairs." While not performing, children will wait in these seats. This is also a good place to put props when resetting.

GRADUATION

Make sure props are in the correct places or on individual's chairs. Have two graduates arrive early to pass out programs. Have someone bring graduates to gathering room as they arrive. Make sure everyone is taken to the restroom. Remind children to "speak to the last person in the back" and "look just above the heads of the people." Pray together before the program begins. ■

Food Little Grads Love

Assemble these ideas quickly without ever turning on the oven!

Individual Mortar Board Cups

Check the dollar store for shallow, white or black, bowls. Cut cardstock squares to match the bowls. Glue tassels made of thin rope on top. Fill with small candies or shiny pennies.



Chocolate Grad Cap

Place a chocolate covered square cookie over a chocolate donut. Add gummy worm tassel.



Tasty Diplomas

Wrap ribbon (or shoestring licorice) around prepackaged cookies or cakes in the shape of diplomas.



Even little graduates can help make these clever party treats.



GRADUATION SUPPLIES

Kindergarten Diplomas (two options)

Graduation Programs (two options)

Musical Plays (two options)

For more information, see abeka.com/GraduationSupplies

Song Time for K5 (book and CD)

For more information, see abeka.com/K5SongTime

amazing
mom
the
Entrepreneur

by Katie Wiggett

She can
make
it all
fit
together.

even when
it comes to
making
money.

Homeschooling comes with perks—a flexible schedule, extra family time, and curriculum choice—but it also comes with the sacrifice of a second income. These moms make earning money and homeschooling fit together!

Do something you're passionate about.

Carmen Beernick's passion for healthy living and self-defense makes it easy for her to invest hours teaching classes and selling her favorite healthcare products. Carmen homeschools her four children in the morning, teaches self-defense three afternoons a week, and does direct sales throughout the week. She loves that her children see her servant's heart and entrepreneurial spirit in how she runs her side jobs. Like Carmen, *do something you feel passionate about.*



Carmen

Do something that makes sense for you.

After a friend suggested she try reselling, Rebekah Hodge gathered up unwanted things around her house; listed them on eBay; and started making money "out of nothing." One Goodwill-bound plate sold for \$30. As Rebekah said, "It just didn't make sense not to do it!" Three



Rebekah and family

Mindy and family

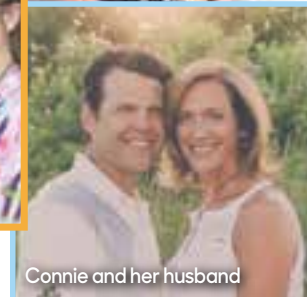


Do something that you can balance with homeschool.

Mindy Faieta balances her media analyst work with homeschooling by using creative scheduling and delegation. She starts her work early in the morning, holding off homeschool until 9:30 a.m. She gets her work done while her kids sleep in! Mindy also delegates extra household chores and responsibilities

to her husband and children. While Mindy's family makes sacrifices for her work, they also reap the benefit of extra income. *Do something you can balance with homeschooling.*

Do something you can do while teaching your kids!



Connie and her husband

Connie Butcher followed God's direction to open a high school in her farmhouse, providing a hands-on, academically robust

homeschool experience for her five children and the local community. In the first year, eight families joined hers! God clearly used Connie to meet a real need in her community. Now she and a small paid staff teach 35 students two days a week. If you have a heart for teaching and your community, *do something you can do while teaching your own kids!*

These moms work different jobs because there isn't a one size fits all job for the homeschool mom. Don't work just any job that comes along. **Find the perfect fit for you!** ■

m\$mpreneur suggestions

If you ...	Consider ...
love cooking	selling home-made frozen meals or baked goods; decorating cakes; teaching cooking classes; catering.
have teenage help	gardening or mowing lawns; delivering groceries; doing odd jobs; cleaning houses; providing care for the elderly.
are creative	selling handmade knitting, quilting, crafts; making jewelry; writing for blogs, newspapers, magazines, or local businesses.
want to teach others	tutoring English as a second language; teaching sewing, cooking, or another practical skill; teaching music, calligraphy or any artistic skill; teaching fitness classes or becoming a health trainer.
have a large space	starting a co-op or in-home daycare; renting your unused space for storage or parking; starting a laundry service.
want to work a professional job from home	freelancing as a writer, editor, designer, social media marketer, proofer, translator, data entry specialist, or transcriptionist; becoming a virtual assistant, bookkeeper, notary, or a personal accountant.
appreciate photography, film, or design	photographing family, senior, or infant portraits; creating pictures for local businesses; creating online educational videos; designing homeschool study aids.
love hair and makeup	setting up a home salon; doing special event hair/makeup, face painting; selling the beauty products you love.
have young children	starting an in-home day care; becoming a direct seller for a product you love.
love animals	grooming pets; walking dogs; pet sitting; running a pet hotel; dog breeding.
enjoy sales	opening an online shop on Ebay or Etsy; doing direct sales for a product you love; selling homemade crafts; reselling items you find discounted.
love to garden or have a small farm	selling eggs, milk, fresh produce, flowers or plants; creating flower arrangements; teaching horseback riding.
enjoy planning	working as a party or event planner; becoming a home stager.

A Mother and a Doctor? JUST TAKE THE RIGHT R.O.A.D.



Can a homeschooled girl grow up to be a doctor and a mother?

"Along with many other young women," Juliana Fenske, a homeschooled junior from Indiana states, "I dream of becoming a doctor *and* a mother." Juliana

decided to find out if that's possible by researching and writing a homeschool paper on the topic. Her findings are very interesting.

All my research sources (listed in her expanded article: abeka.com/Juliana) consider the R.O.A.D. specialties (radiology, ophthalmology, anesthesiology, and dermatology) as some of the best medical specialties when considering motherhood. To further investigate ideas about mother-friendly medical specialties, I interviewed doctors from the four R.O.A.D. specialties. I also interviewed doctors from two specialties that are not considered lifestyle-friendly: urology and pediatrics. The results from the interviews endorse the R.O.A.D. assumption that radiology, ophthalmology, anesthesiology, and dermatology are great specialties for moms. However, dermatology proved to be the best option. The hours are flexible, controllable, and predictable. The second-best option is ophthalmology. General ophthalmologists, those without a certain specialty added, have set office hours and can easily work part-time. These specialties are wonderful for mothers with families.

Going into this research project, I was unaware of the medical specialty job possibilities. I learned how important it is to consider on-call hours and part-time options within a specialty when planning to be an involved mother. These results proved very helpful to me. I'm now considering the R.O.A.D. specialties, namely dermatology, as I choose my medical specialty for the future.



Juliana Fenske is an 11th grader. She homeschools with her sisters in Fishers, Indiana.

HOMESCHOOL

WHERE CHILDREN ARE

MOTIVATED

ADVISED

HELPED

TUTORED

Educated

FED

GUIDED

AND

PRAISED

Safeguarded

MENTORED

ENCOURAGED

INFLUENCED

prepared

Cherished

Supported

TRAINED

NURTURED

TREASURED

AND

LOVED

FOR I
Know

THE
thoughts that I think
TOWARD YOU, SAITH THE LORD,
THOUGHTS
of Peace, AND
NOT OF EVIL,
TO GIVE YOU AN
EXPECTED END.

JEREMIAH 29:11

 **abeka**



your ELEMENTARY CHILD

Teaching History and Geography

by Amy Amsbaugh

Teaching history and geography can be the highlight of your day. Here are four ideas I use in my class.

PLAN YOUR START

Your homeschooler may transition to history on his own, but teach him how to do it well. Physical activity using recitation or a song makes a great transition.

Document recitation

Document selections are in the back of Abeka history books and easily marked with a sticky note. Look for a couple words that could include hand gestures. Teach your child to recite with gestures to start class. It will give you time to prepare for history.

Geography songs/stories

Pair geographical locations with tunes of well-known family songs. Give map locations a storyline: Minnesota and the states directly south, look like a man wearing a hat (Minnesota) and large boots (Louisiana).

REVIEW THE TERMS

Teach your kids that the answers to review questions are in bold or italicized terms, generally in order between section numbers. They can find the answers if they stay within the section, but history is much more than just terms! A child must read to learn the fascinating stories behind the terms.

READ HISTORY AS A STORY

I assign pages for homework, but we still read portions in class.

When my students read in advance of the lesson, they seem to engage better. Consider having your child read the lesson in advance or once silently and certain portions again aloud. This will help your child engage better and retain more.

Memory clues

Invent memory clues for your child. I help my students remember that peace with Israel goes with Anwar Sadat. I say,

"The man who loved peace with Israel was sad about war. He was 'war-sad.' So war-sad, in fact, that it was in the middle of his name: **Anwar Sadat**."



END WITH A GAME

Flip-the-term

Homeschoolers need easy ideas for ways they can quiz themselves over an increasing number of terms. Buy connected sticky notes in two colors. Have your child write the terms on one color and the definitions on the other. Number both pads. In this way, your child can read the question, answer, and check his response without your help.

Candy Draw

Fill a container with mini-size candy. Determine a magic color. Every time your child gets three answers correct let him draw a mini-size candy. If he pulls out the magic color, he gets double points or a second piece of candy. 🍬



History of Our United States

Recommended for 4th Grade

For more information, see abeka.com/HistoryofOurUS



Amy Amsbaugh has taught upper elementary grades for the last five years. She is also an Abeka Academy video teacher. She enjoys reading and being outside.

The debate about HOMESCHOOL DEBATE

ECONOMIC
GROWTH

Competitiveness

National Security

**INTELLECTUAL
PROPERTY RIGHTS**

Access to Medicine

**BIOSAFETY AND
ENVIRONMENT**

FOREIGN
INVESTMENT

**International
Standards**



your
HIGH SCHOOLER

Because homeschool parents already guide their teen's learning, debate among homeschoolers may be one of the best places for teens to develop this skill. There are also debate organizations that understand the importance of guarding teenagers while helping them grow. Check out these Christian-based, debate-society organizations and introduce your teenager to the life-changing skill of debate!

1. The NCFCA (National Christian Forensics and Communications Association) provides debate competitions for those who purchase their curriculum. Their mission: "To promote excellence in communications through competitive opportunities where homeschool students develop the skills necessary to think critically and communicate effectively in order to address life issues from a biblical worldview in a manner that glorifies God."¹

2. Christian Homeschool Speech and Debate (Stoa—see footnote below) does not require a purchase to enjoy the excellent resources on this site. The material is designed to help homeschool parents and children prepare for the competitive debate events they host. Stoa's mission is "Training homeschool students to speak boldly and change the world for Christ."²

PROS

Debating shapes a teen in many vital areas such as presentation skills, critical thinking, research, and analytical skills.³ These skills provide a practical way to enable students to handle serious thought, become team players, and develop self-confidence. Statistics prove that students involved in debate become high academic achievers.

CONS

Since debate participants must be ready to argue on either side of a topic, there is the potential for a moral dilemma. Teens might begin to question God's Word and the beliefs parents have diligently instilled. The key to healthy debate is a carefully chosen, appropriate topic and godly, parental leadership. ■

¹www.ncfca.org ²stoausa.org/debate-events ³www.rowlandhall.org/uploaded/PDFs/Debate/Benefits_of_Debate_-_Skills.pdf



Your high schooler can hone his speaking skills this summer at **Drama or History Camp** on the campus of Pensacola Christian College.

During Drama Camp, he'll focus on the fundamentals of performance and showcase in PCC's Experimental Theater. He'll enjoy legislative workshops, monodramas, and skits during History Camp.

Go to YouthOutreachCamps.com to learn more about other visual and performing arts, sports, and academic camps.

Prepare to be

AMAZED

As full-time evangelists, the Gellos family travel over 25,000 miles each year. They do this while homeschooling their four children in a 350-square-foot 5th wheel.



ON THE ROAD

Most weeks, Brent and Kaitlin Gellos and their four children Emily (3rd grade), Abbie (1st grade), David (K4), and Lindsay (2 years) wake up in a different state. Kaitlin says, "Our homeschool journey has been entirely on the road. It's our normal." Growing up with 12 siblings in a three-bedroom, one-bath home gave Kaitlin opportunity to learn how to creatively make use of every spare inch. "It's been easier for me," she admits, "since I didn't come from having a lot of space." With three children in school, she says, "There's a lot of books and flashcards, so we are very blessed to have enclosed cupboards above our couch and table. Brent built a lot of extra cubbies and shelves and has really taken advantage of every space."

The family stores extra items—like toys, books, games, and off-season clothes in a secure storage location. Periodically, the kids rotate their toys. "For every toy they take out of storage" Kaitlin says, "they must put one back in. The key," she relates, "is being creative when figuring out what works for our lifestyle."

HOMESCHOOLING IN A 5TH WHEEL

In the trailer, the dining room table serves as the central hub for school. "It's easier for me to keep an eye on everyone if we are in a small space," she said. "The downside is the noise level."

Sometimes Kaitlin switches things up and the younger ones play quietly with puzzles or books in their bedroom while Kaitlin teaches Emily a difficult math concept. Other times, weather permitting, Emily will sit outside at the picnic table with her schoolbooks while Kaitlin teaches the younger ones inside.

Are we there yet?



Traveling has given the Gellos family the ability to take geography and history outside their textbooks. "Think of all the hands-on learning opportunities there are when you travel as a family from coast to coast!" she says. Brent and Kaitlin are always on the lookout for inexpensive or free educational museums as well as parks and historic sites to take their family.* (See National Park pass info.) Kaitlin said, "My husband has a wealth of knowledge. A lot of times, he will be the one in teaching mode in those situations."

GROWING AS A FAMILY

Through their shared experiences on the road, the Gellos siblings have become best friends. As they visit churches across the country, they also enjoy connecting with kids their own age. "I want them to be able to see beyond our own trailer," Kaitlin said. "Just like any other parent, I have to encourage my children to meet new kids. Emily has really blossomed the last couple of years from being very shy to really enjoying the social aspect of traveling."

In spite of their busy schedule, Brent and Kaitlin find couple time. "My husband is very proactive and plans things," Kaitlin says. "We don't have a weekly date night, but we make time just for ourselves. At least once a year we get away together for a few days. We'll leave the kids with our parents and focus on each other."

LOOKING AHEAD

Though the Gellos family's scenery changes often, a love for their calling remains the same. Recently the family began remodeling a 100-year old home in Indiana not far from their home church. While they plan to keep traveling full time, they now have a place to land between meetings. "It won't really affect anything as far as our travel schedule goes," Kaitlin says, "we will continue traveling as often as God opens the doors."

"Everyone's homeschool situation is different," she continues, "Every homeschool has its challenges. We really try—especially in front of our children—to bring to light the exciting and positive things about traveling together. I think it's just realizing every day that our homeschool situation is a gift from God." ■



*National Park passes provide admittance to over 2,000 national parks and federal recreation sites throughout America for an annual fee of \$80. Generally, this pass is good per car. If you have a fourth grader, check out the free pass option at <https://www.nps.gov/findapark/passes.htm>.



Brent and Kaitlin Gellos
and their four children

Soft Molasses Cookies

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| 1/2 cup butter | 1/2 tsp. salt |
| 1/2 cup shortening | 2 1/4 tsp. baking soda |
| 1 1/2 cups sugar | 1 tsp ground cloves |
| 1/2 cup molasses | 1 1/2 tsp cinnamon |
| 2 eggs | 2 tsp ginger |
| 4 cups flour | |

Mix first 5 ingredients; stir in remaining ingredients. Blend well. Batter will be thick. Roll dough into medium size balls. Roll balls in sugar before baking at 350 degrees for 8-10 minutes.

Kaitlin even bakes cookies from her tiny RV kitchen.

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Send a high resolution photo (>1.5Mb) along with your idea, to amazinghomeschool@abeka.com. Editor's Favorite wins \$100 gift card.

Karen Lenington Harrisburg, PENNSYLVANIA

I love how technology can aid in my homeschool classroom! Judah (3rd grade) and Josiah (1st grade) and I make short videos reciting arithmetic facts, drilling phonics special sounds, and reading poetry. When an interruption threatens to derail lesson time, maybe with Felicity (3) or Faith (1), I disable the internet and play these videos from my laptop. My sons love being the stars of their own videos, and I love being in two places at one time! ■



Lindsay Fischer Pensacola, FLORIDA

I don't like to redo my lesson plans when life happens. For this reason, I no longer use a planner. Lesson plans for my four boys are on 4 x 6 cards. Each subject has its own set of cards and each child has his own tab. I reuse the cards I made for my big kids again for the little ones. We just mark the completion of the item in different ways. If a lesson doesn't get completed, it gets put back in the front for the next day. ■



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COMPETITION & HOMESCHOOLING

Competition can be a powerful motivation for improvement. Create an environment of beneficial competition in your homeschool by incorporating these three things:

1. Make opportunities

- Pair siblings with similar ages for games and competition.
- Use a timer for an only child or for one who is struggling. Keep track of times and accuracy as a motivation to improve.
- Make use of video class competition. This allows less intrusive, age-appropriate competition without the pressures of an actual classroom.
- Consider outside sources such as co-ops or simply combine forces with other like-minded homeschool mothers.

2. Give feedback

Offer positive feedback by giving verbal praise, recognition, and rewards. Growing up, my mom gave us "points" according to how well we performed. Zero questions missed equaled five points, one question missed equaled four points, and so on. We earned prizes with accumulated points. For example:

100 pts = a candy bar
300 pts = ice cream with Dad
500 pts = no homework/2 subjects
800 pts = invite friend for dinner
1,000 pts = a new book



3. Teach winning and losing

Make the most of competition by teaching your children to respect their competitors. Help them learn the skill of winning or losing graciously.

- Suggest words they might say. For winning: *Thank you; I tried my best.* For losing: *Congratulations, or I enjoyed playing.*
- Teach things they might do. Take a cue from youth sports: shake hands and say *Good Game.*
- Talk about what's really important: giving your best, being a good sport, ways to improve.

When handled correctly, there is so much a homeschooler can learn from good competition. ■

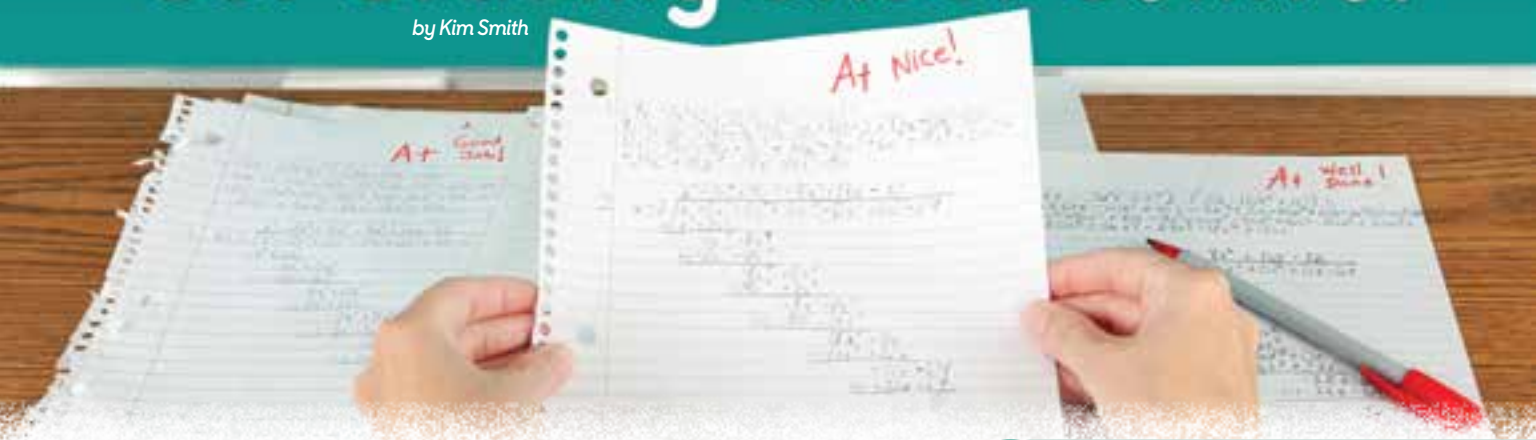
Elizabeth



Elizabeth Shertzer is a homeschool graduate, former Abeka consultant, and teacher. She has two littles of her own.

Get Grading Under Control

by Kim Smith



Enjoy. Grading. Papers.

Three words that don't often get used in the same sentence. Get grading under control with these teacher-tested tips.



Kim Smith is a former teacher and Abeka consultant. She has one son and a daughter on the way.

Get grading under control by keeping all your grading materials together, checking but not grading daily work, providing a grading folder for each child, and filing quizzes/tests by lesson numbers.

Grading Quizzes:

Don't grade quizzes yourself; call out quiz answers as your child marks his own paper. Have him use a colored pencil. Tell your child to mark only the ones that are incorrect. He should put a question mark beside answers he's unsure about, and use a colored pencil to fill in answers he left blank. Don't negotiate the accuracy of answers. Answer question marks later.

Grading Tests:

When grading tests, mark only the incorrect answers. Fill in the blank spaces or incorrect answers with the correct ones. This will make your child's test a wonderful study guide later.

When writing the grade on a test, look at the previous test score in your grade book. If the score has improved, include the number of improved points below the new grade. For example, "Up 9 points!" This is an easy way to praise your child's progress!

Score each section and record missed points in the margin. This makes it much easier to calculate the score. If there are multiple test pages, place the total points missed at the bottom of each page. It saves time in the long run. Use scrap paper to note areas that need attention.

Before returning the test, orally ask your child the questions he missed. Look up the correct answer or work through missed problems together.

Grading Book Reports and Research Papers:

1. Try to grade and return in two days.
2. Read composition twice; once for content and once to make comments.
3. Mark spelling/grammatical errors.
4. Use a rubric. A rubric is a sheet listing scoring criteria.
5. Create your own or use one included in the Abeka lesson plans.
6. Rubrics save time because they take the guesswork out of grading.
7. Some parents allow their child to see the rubric as the assignment is explained. ■





KATIE HAUGHTON
OWENSBORO, KENTUCKY

Homeschooled from first through eleventh grade, Katie Haughton went from living in the country to spending her senior year as a dual-enrollment student at Pensacola Christian College. Now, she's a college sophomore with a major in Business Management.

As a homeschooler growing up in the country, what unique opportunities did you have?

I come from a tight, unified family. We were taught the value of hard work. I have one younger brother at home and two older brothers at college with me. Our parents encouraged schedule flexibility and a good education that helped springboard us into college!



BONNIE GILLIS
Milton, Florida

Bonnie Gillis was homeschooled and graduated from Abeka Academy in 2010. In May she will graduate with her M.D. degree from the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Medicine.

What did you do after graduating from high school?

I went to Pensacola Christian College and received my Bachelor's in Natural Sciences/Pre-Medicine. I then started

medical school. I've also stayed busy with student leadership responsibilities and started a non-profit. Earlier this year, I spent a month working in a missionary hospital in Kenya!

What's one way that homeschooling prepared you for medical school?

A buzz word in medical education right now is "self-directed learning" –the idea that doctors should develop skills to become life-long learners. For many, this type of learning is a foreign experience, but for me, it felt a lot like homeschooling.



HAVEN HWANG
Pensacola, Florida

Haven was homeschooled starting in fifth grade using Abeka. She studied education and graduated from Pensacola Christian college in 2017. Now, she's a first grade teacher at Pensacola Christian Academy.

Tell us a unique opportunity you had as a homeschooler.

My 8th grade year, we moved to Vietnam. My parents wanted to support a missionary family to see how missionaries live in foreign countries. If we were in a traditional school, we wouldn't have been able to do that. We took all of our books with us, and we homeschooled in a foreign country for 9 months!





Share some life lessons you learned from your parents.

My parents taught me to stick with it when times gets rough. My mother taught me the value of diplomacy. My father taught me how to have a backbone. He showed me how one man can stand, if God is at his side.

What was it like going from high school junior to college freshman?

Dual-Enrollment gave me real-life experience. It was the first time for being out on my own and experiencing what true independence is like. Dual-Enrollment also sped up my college graduation date.*

Any advice for current homeschooled students?

If you want to step up your game and develop yourself, go for Dual-Enrollment. The Dual-Enrollment program stretches you and is such an exciting experience!

* Prior to the start of 11th grade, high school juniors wishing to dual enroll should contact the Admissions Office at PCC about requirements. Visit pcc.edu/Admissions.

What's next after medical school?

I'm a recipient of the Air Force Health Professions Scholarship Program (think ROTC, but for physicians). After further training in Family Medicine, I will be working as an active-duty Air Force physician.

Share some advice you'd give to Abeka homeschoolers.

Don't feel intimidated by the idea of higher education. Abeka's curriculum is certainly on par with any college prep

you can find out there, and you'll find yourself surprised by how well you're able to keep up with (and even get ahead of) your college classmates.



What did you learn from your time in Vietnam?

My parents knew that the Lord was saying, "Give a year to me." We sold the house. We sold everything we had. We literally lived out of a tiny storage unit and 8 duffel bags. I saw a living example of what it meant to drop everything you have and "come follow me." That's the biggest life lesson that I learned from my parents.

How did homeschooling prepare you for teaching?

Having a younger sibling really helped prepare me for being in the classroom. Watching my mom patiently homeschool my brother was my first window into teaching. When I was in 8th grade, my brother was in second; I was able to thoroughly explain things to him.

What made your homeschool experience successful?

My parents knew that homeschooling was where God wanted us to be—out of the public school system, trained under their loving parental care, getting the best education we possibly could, and learning under the Bible. My mom's dedication to helping us—whether it was the research or giving us the tools—made my homeschool experience a successful one.

Any advice for current homeschool students?

Something basic: just persevere. If you work at it, you get better. If you have that attitude in high school, it's easier to transition into college. And cherish your family; the time that you have with them should not be taken for granted. 🇺🇸

WOULD YOUR STORY ENCOURAGE OTHERS?

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what makes you a great teacher.

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