

Teaching Methods and Theories

	Short Description	Main Components or Trademarks of Method	Resources for Homeschoolers and After-Schoolers
Traditional (applicable only to homeschoolers)	Homeschoolers call this approach "school at home" or "boxed approach." Highly structured, parents purchase boxed curriculum that covers all subjects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can incorporate any educational philosophy, but the key component is that the entire curriculum comes set for the parent, literally comes "in a box" • Less flexible than other approaches, but often aligned to public school content standards. 	
Classical	A structured style based on the trivium, a three-part process of training the child to think rationally and eventually to articulate her thoughts and opinions with force and originality. Grounded in the study of Latin and history. Very rigorous.	<p>Child's education is divided roughly into three phases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammar: early elementary students learn the basic building blocks of knowledge; involves memorization • Logic: student has developed the ability for abstract thought; studies algebra and logic; applies logic cross-curriculum • Rhetoric: student applies the rules of logic learned in middle school to the foundational information learned in the early grades and expresses his conclusions in clear, forceful, elegant language. Begins to specialize in a branch of knowledge. <p>Language-focused</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning is accomplished through words rather than images. • Language-learning is thought to require the mind to work harder than image- 	<p>Designing Your Own Classical Curriculum: A Guide to a Catholic Home Education by Laura Berquist</p> <p>The Well-Trained Mind by Susan Wise Bauer</p> <p>The Latin-Centered Curriculum by Drew Campbell</p> <p>Climbing Parnassus by Tracy Lee Simmons</p>

		learning	
Charlotte Mason	Charlotte Mason was a British educator who believed that "education is an atmosphere, a discipline, and a life" and that "education is the science of relations." She believed that children were born persons and should be respected as such. Focus on high quality literature and nature walks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short lessons done well are preferred to longer lessons resulting in "sloppy work" • Nature walks and nature notebooks: spending time outdoors and developing the child's skill at observation are central to the approach • Living books (often classical literature) are used rather than textbooks. Literature and history are studied together using living books. • Daily narration: Child listens to or reads a piece of literature, then tells story back to teacher. Encourages strong reading and listening skills. Notably, children do not begin writing down their own narrations (basically written summaries) until age 10. • Copywork: careful and accurate copying of good writing. Serves as handwriting practice and instills an instinct for good writing. 	<p>For the Children's Sake by Susan Schaeffer Macauley</p> <p>When Children Love to Learn, edited by Elaine Cooper</p> <p>Real Learning by Elizabeth Foss (Catholic)</p>
Waldorf	Based upon the educational philosophy of Rudolf Steiner, which divides childhood into three stages each having its own learning requirements. Learning is interdisciplinary; art is not a separate subject in Waldorf, but is integrated into the entire curriculum. Great emphasis on compassion on for others	<p>Three stages of learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early childhood (birth to age 7): learning largely experiential, imitative and sensory-based. Learning achieved through practical and productive activities in which the child takes part. Emphasis on outdoor exploration, natural materials. Discourages exposure to television and computer media at this stage. 	<p>Waldorf Education: A Family Guide by Pamela J. Fenner</p> <p>Oak Meadow's curriculum seems pretty tame on the Steiner front: www.oakmeadow.com</p> <p>Christopherus is a Christian Waldorf-based curriculum:</p>

	<p>Note: Steiners educational theory is based on anthroposophy which isn't consistent with Church teachings. Anthroposophy proposes reincarnation and a view of the nature of man that is strange at best. However, the degree to which Waldorf schools rely on anthroposophy varies greatly, so if you're checking out a Waldorf school ask about this issue. For some children, a Waldorf curriculum is a perfect fit because it delays intense academic studies until the child is 7 or so, and the integration of the arts into all areas of study attractive.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elementary (ages 7-14): learning is guided and stimulated by a teacher utilizing a multi-disciplinary arts-based curriculum that includes visual arts, drama, artistic movement, music, and crafts. Students usually learn two foreign languages. • Secondary education (ages 14-18): focus shifts to traditional academic subjects, though students may continue to take courses in art, music, and crafts. Emphasis on developing independence and creative thinking, and a sense of competence and purpose. 	<p>www.christopherushomeschool.org</p>
<p>Interest-Initiated; Unschooling</p>	<p>A lifestyle championed by educational theorist John Holt. Child-led learning without external expectations. Children learn through their natural life experiences and not traditional school curriculum.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children will naturally learn everything they need to know to thrive in adulthood if allowed to follow their interests without manipulation. • No concept of teachers; parent facilitates what the child wants to learn or do. • Radically child-led; no external expectations; learning is completely child-driven. • The only structure is the structure the child chooses himself; the parent does not impose any structure. 	<p>Teach Your Own by John Holt</p> <p>The Unschooling Handbook: How to Use the Whole World As Your Child's Classroom by Mary Griffith</p> <p>Homeschooling With Gentleness: A Catholic Discovers Unschooling by Suzie Andrez</p>
<p>Montessori</p>	<p>Based on the educational philosophy of the Catholic Italian physician Maria Montessori. Child-led learning with structure and limitations. Children choose what they want to learn, but from a range of choices given to them by a qualified teacher.</p>	<p>Children learn in multi-age groups. Play is seen as the child's work.</p> <p>Allows freedom for self-directed learning under the guidance of a teacher or parent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children have an inherent inner guidance that allows their natural development. • Right conditions around children encourage 	<p>Teaching Montessori in the Home: The Preschool Years by Elizabeth G. Hainstock</p> <p>Teaching Montessori in the Home: The School Years by Elizabeth G. Hainstock</p> <p>Teach Me to Do It Myself by Maja</p>

		<p>their true natural development. For young children, the environment must be prepared by providing a range of physical objects that are organized and made available for free, independent use, to stimulate their natural instincts and interests.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher's role is to observe children engaged in activities that follow their own natural interests. The teacher's role is to control the environment, not the child. <p>Three Phases (Planes) of Development:</p> <p>The first plane (ages 0-6): basic personality formation and learning through physical senses. A sensitive development period for acquiring language skills.</p> <p>The second plane (ages 6-12): child begins to learn through abstract reasoning, which develops through a sensitivity for imagination and social interaction with others.</p> <p>The third plane (ages 12-18): child begins to value experiences in his community.</p>	<p>Pitamic</p>
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