

# The Headgate

By Brian & Keri Tibbets

## Preface

This paper is not intended to be a scholarly work complete with research citations, it was created to assist those striving to raise their children with a classical education. Howbeit, in the appendix you will find the books that were the genesis of these ideas.

Over the years I have observed many families struggling to provide a classical education whether through public school, private school, or home schooling their children. When this education is dug up from the past, dusted off and inserted into our modern day, many challenges arise because our generation contains things that did not exist two-hundred years ago when this type of education was available.

I wrote this paper in answer to these challenges. This work is based on Oliver DeMille's "A Thomas Jefferson Education" that teaches the principles of classical education. This paper teaches the principles of the environment needed to foster a classical education. The nomenclature used herein presupposes that you have studied and are familiar with The Thomas Jefferson Education.

## Introduction

The longer we home school our children we have noticed our home school becoming more like a home than a school. In fact it has come to the point that there is now no school left in it at all. It is just a home. There is no part in our daily schedule that resembles school and there is no place in our home where school supplies are to be found. Yet our children have begun in this environment to educate themselves at such a rapid rate, so as to exceed our grandest expectations.

How can this be? How can children, who do not even know what education is, educate themselves? It is because they have accidentally and almost unbeknown to themselves, fallen in love with reading.

When a child falls in love with reading great books, they behave much like an adult who has fallen in love with reading great books, and they choose to spend nearly all of their free time doing so. They even cheat a little by sneaking it into times that aren't their free time. Such as coming to the dinner table with a book on their knee, or pleading, "Mommy, may I please read while you do my hair—I can just look straight down like this?"

These children have a little fire of desire burning within them. It is in the parent's greatest interest to create an environment where this fire can be lit within the child, because once

this fire is lit, no public school, home school, private school, or even a full-time tutor could ever keep up with the child. These children require no one to push or encourage or even suggest that they read. They only need someone to provide them with more books (fuel for the fire) and to keep the environment right for the fire to keep burning.

The most beautiful part of this is that the mother of the classically educated child is no longer part-time teacher, part-time motivator, or part-time nag. She gets to be mother and do the things that mothers love to do. She gets to be a wife and do the things that wives love to do. And, she gets to be herself, and pursue the things that she wants to pursue. In this environment, everybody wins. The children feel free to pursue whatever they wish. But, whatever they wish just happens to be so enriching and educational, that Mother and Father can relax and go pursue their own interests instead of pushing their interests on the child.

This is not too good to be true, and it is as lovely as it sounds. Neither is it reserved for those rare perfect families with perfect children. However, it is contingent upon the parents creating an environment where these fires can be lit. Children come into this world loving learning and full of energy and they are completely capable of channeling that energy into the pursuit of a rich classical education. But they are not capable of creating an environment in which these capabilities can be fostered. That, the parents must do. We are the creators of this environment.

This enriching home environment is not difficult to create. A home of this nature has nothing unique in it that any other good home does not have. But I think you will find that the difference between this sort of home and many other good homes is found in the things that it does *not* have. I will show you what this environment is made of, but first, I would like to address one pressing issue.

What if this is true, and the children actually do voluntarily spend nearly all of their free time reading? How do we know that it will turn out to be an education sufficient to adequately prepare them for scholar phase? How do we know there aren't going to be big gaping holes in their education that need to be filled in before they can move on? What subjects are they reading? Who are they reporting to in order to keep quality in check? And what about math? Are they going to just happen upon enough math that they are fluent in the language of numbers and ready to dive into Euclid, Nicomachus and Archimedes at the age of fourteen? Shouldn't we require just a few basics so that we know that our children at least have the basic tools to make it in life?

If we were to schedule school time, that would suggest to them that we have in mind some things that they *ought* to do before they can go do what they *want* to do; this would hinder the falling in love process. Can you imagine falling in love with someone whom your parents told you, you "ought" to fall in love with? By that same token, if we were to use "school supplies" or curriculums, this would also hinder the falling in love process, because they are boring. Can you imagine falling in love with something boring?

You see, when a child knows that their boring "school work" is something they are "supposed" to do, they treat it like work, and they get in "get it done" mode. This way they can complete it quickly and get on with their day. The problem with "get it done" mode is that the children would then rush to complete the minimum amount required of them by their mothers to the end that they might pursue what their heart desires. Now they look at learning with a "minimum requirement" paradigm, instead of a "the sky is the limit" paradigm. Let me show you what "the sky is the limit" can look like on a child. My daughter is nine and a half years old. Exactly two and a half years ago I taught her to read her first Dick and Jane book, because she asked me to. Now, just a couple of months ago, I found her reading Ivanhoe. She completed it in

about twelve hours. She went from Dick and Jane to Ivanhoe in two and a half years. Why? The answer being she has fallen in love with reading, on her own, sans requirement or coaxing. To her, this is play.

Did I walk by her side every step of the way from Dick and Jane to Ivanhoe, like a dedicated home-schooling mother? No, I simply provided her with the environment that she needed to grow, while I ran along and rocked the baby, or baked the bread, or did any number of things that mothers naturally do in the day. She, like every other nine-year-old, exercises no self-discipline during her free time, but rather spends the hours on whatever her heart tells her. Because of the environment in which she lives, her heart and mind are free to fall in love with the most valuable and refined things that this world has to offer...great books. To her it is just play.

These are the things children's hearts and minds were made to fall in love with. This is why they have such great memories, and such incredible capacities for cataloging and storing details. The reason the children who live in this type of environment will fall in love with great books as opposed to other less valuable activities, is simply because great books are the most satisfying of any entrée they could possibly partake of. Without them even being aware of it, they are naturally attracted to the most nourishing and satisfying, the most gourmet and refined, the most heavenly and enriching, because these things inherently provide the most growth. However, if the environment is wrong, they will not recognize great books as appetizing, because their senses will be dulled. Their senses were created to guide them to the most nourishing activities, that would build and develop them into the best they can become. However, when their senses become dulled through entertainment and overstimulation, they then need greater and greater stimulation all the time if they are to feel anything. It is in this way that the delicate system of the sensory is misused rather than used.

Requiring school-time, and curriculums in a loving way does work. It has been done for years with many good results. We know that children can learn in that way. If that is the direction your heart leads you, then I hope you follow it. But, I would like, first, to introduce you to something I call magic. Usually, in nature, we reap what we sow. We give a little effort; we get a little result. We give a lot of effort; we get a lot of result. Like with building, if my husband builds a little, a little is built; if he builds a lot, a lot is built. But every once in a while we come across things that seem to give back much more than we put into them. Some things seem, almost as if by magic, to want to produce—to *want* to build themselves...like a seed. I put very little into keeping a seed alive once the environment is right. And if the environment is right, I can neither make it grow nor stop it from growing. I just watch it grow. The power is within the seed itself. I could try to make tomatoes everyday out of the ingredients in my kitchen. But that would waste so much time and never taste as rich or as good as a real tomato. And why would I even consider making tomatoes when tomato seeds already know how to grow into tomatoes? I may as well spend five minutes watering and ten minutes weeding each morning, and go spend the rest of the day pursuing my own interests while leaving the seeds to grow.

A Thomas Jefferson Education teaches us that children, like these seeds, have the power contained within themselves to grow into "Love of Learners" and on into "Scholars"...as long as they get the "water, soil and sunshine" that they need.

If we are going to know if this non-school, enriching home environment is enough to meet and even exceed all of the goals of core phase and love of learning, we must first understand what the goals of core phase and love of learning are. Please refer to the following chart.

Age	0-8	8-12	14+
Phase	CORE	LOVE OF LEARNING	SCHOLAR
GOAL	ACCIDENTALLY MASTER VALUES	ACCIDENTALLY MASTER 3 R'S (READING, WRITING, AND ARITHMETIC)	PURPOSELY MASTER SUBJECTS
AM	WORK ALONGSIDE MOTHER	WORK ALONGSIDE MOTHER	STUDY
PM: LARGE CHUNK OF UNSTRUCTURED FREETIME	PLAY	LEARNING	STUDY

**-Chart Explanation-**

Please be aware that the ages on the top of the chart show what age children naturally transition from one phase to the next if they are born into this natural environment. They represent the ages that children are naturally inclined to care about values, the 3 R's, and different scholarly subjects. If children have not been raised in an environment that encourages them to develop their capabilities their age will progress, but their phase may not. This is not a problem, just a challenge. Children and young adults can easily re-live any phase they may have missed by simply experiencing life in that phase again.

In order to determine what phase a child is in, refer to row 5 entitled PM: Large chunk of unstructured free-time. If a child chooses to spend their free-time playing, then they are in core phase. If a child chooses to spend their free-time reading, they are in love of learning phase. If they choose to spend their free time studying under the direction of a mentor, they are in scholar phase. Neither the parents nor the children choose which phase they are in. They default into their phase depending on how they spend their free time.

Parents should not look at the chart to determine the child's phase by their age and then direct their free time accordingly. Their free time is actually free. The only way to progress through the phases is through development. No forcing on the parents part or compliance by the children will aid in their phase progression. Successfully meeting the goal of their current phase is the only way to move on the next. There is no other way.

The reason the goals (row 3) for core and love of learning phases are labeled as "accidental" is because children do not consciously set goals to work toward. They follow their hearts all day and consequently end up mastering the very things they were meant to master. On the other hand, scholars set goals and work feverishly to meet them. All of this is achieved naturally provided they live in the right environment.

Note that success in column 4 (Scholar Phase) is not achieved by moving items from this column over into columns 2 and 3 (Core and Love of Learning phases). Take math, for example.

We do not prepare our children for practical math problems in scholar phase by giving them math problems in Core and Love of Learning Phase. We instead, prepare them for math, and every other subject covered in column 4 by allowing them to more fully enjoy and complete columns 2 and 3. When they have done this, they will move into scholar phase naturally.

I think you can see, that I am assuming here that the children's play really does, eventually, turn into learning. Actually, success in this system *depends* on their play turning into learning. If their play does not turn into learning, then this method of education will be a failure. There must, therefore, be some steps we can follow, some key, necessary components, that will ensure that the children's play does in reality turn into learning on its own. I would now like to share with you five steps to creating this environment.

## **Step 1. Create a House of order**

The reason that a house of order is essential to the child's education is simply that it gives them a great sense of security. When a child feels secure, he is free to move on to bigger and better things—like learning. When a child feels insecure, they tend to worry. They do not know they are worrying, and we do not necessarily know they are worrying, but it manifests itself in the form of slowed progression.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs showed the child's most basic needs as physiological needs, i.e. food and shelter. Further to safety needs, then security needs, etc. Learning is not one of our children's highest priorities, but it is definitely one of their priorities. It is just lower on their list. The child will move on to learning when they are old enough, if their more basic needs are met first. Security, solidified for the children by a house of order, is just one of these basic needs.

Although there are countless ways to add order to a home, and just as many books and experts on the subject, I would like to share with you my three favorite ways to add order to the home.

*Order in the relationships.* A child feels secure as he sees his father single-handedly providing for his family. Regardless of how meager the income, or whatever sacrifices the family makes in order to live within the means the father provides, the children feel a sense of well-being knowing that they are provided for. The young boy with his masculine juices flowing through him knows by his father's example that he too will someday provide for a family. When he sees the pride, the fulfillment, and the joy that a father possesses that fulfills this responsibility without the help (but definitely not without the support and care) of his wife, that little boy flourishes in his desire to be just like father. Why? The answer: Dad is not only masculine and adequately capable, but he is Happy.

A young girl, likewise, with all the feminine potential she possesses, recognizes very early on in life, whether or not her mother is happy and fulfilled in her role. If she does see this happiness, she will want to model mother more fully than if she sees discontentment, unfulfilled needs and desires, and overstress. Little girls come into this world knowing inherently what the feminine role includes. This is evident in their play often from before the time they can even walk or talk. They naturally play house with just about any objects they can get their hands on. And they play it in the traditional sense as if they had been coached in the art of femininity (babies, table settings, cooking, cleaning, taking care of husband, needing husband to fulfill

masculine tasks.) Then, depending on the happiness of their greatest example (their mother) they will either continue to develop their “house play” or diminish it into other sorts of make-believe, adding in seemingly more “fulfilling” roles to their play as needed. When a mother fulfills her feminine role with grace and success, she possesses a distinct kind of charm that lights up her countenance and fills in and even overflows any emptiness she might have experienced.

The challenge in our modern world for women who desire this fulfillment is to understand what that feminine role is. What does it look like in regards to her husband? What does it look like in regards to her children? When women experience the emptiness from not living up to their potential, they will search their entire lives for something with which to fill it in. They will bounce from one thing to another hoping to find what they are missing. The error though, lies in not knowing what it was they were missing. If only they could go inside themselves and return to their childhood make-believe and see what it was that their little girl heart always desired, they could have all of the answers they need at their fingertips.

An in-depth discussion of the feminine and masculine role is not part of my intent for this work. Such a study would be beneficial for any man or woman from our generation, and I have included the titles of some books on the subject in the appendix. However, I will say this much here. The feminine role looks nothing like the masculine role. It includes all of those things that are not masculine. The woman thrives in her feminine role as she independently oversees and directs all of the feminine responsibilities in the home without the help of (but definitely not without the love and guidance from) her husband. She has the ability to excel in this role when she is not busy worrying about the masculine responsibilities in the home. He relieves her of this burden of worry because he manages all of the masculine responsibilities with such efficiency. He can excel in this manner only when he is taken proper care of by his wife. He is also more capable of excelling in his masculine role when he is not busy with *any* of the feminine responsibilities in the home. What appears to be “teamwork” in a happy home, is truly nothing more than two very different experts working two very different kinds of magic in very different ways. Yet each type is so fulfilling to the other that order and harmony abide. And amidst this order and harmony little children thrive.

Little children also thrive when they understand the order of their role as children in relation to their mother and father’s role as parents. Children need to know this order, just as much as they need to know that they are loved. When children have learned how to obey, with no negotiation or arguing, yet another layer of security envelops them and they become prepared to move on through their phases of development... not to mention they become pleasant to be around.

I do not mean to suggest by the phrase “obeying with no negotiation” that we raise our children into robots who only obey and know not how to make choices on their own. On the contrary, choices are extremely important to a child’s development of autonomy. I mean to suggest that they know how to obey during those times when they are not given choices. Each parent will have to decide in which moments they are willing to give choices. Children, who have learned to obey during those moments when the parents are not offering choices, but rather directions or instructions, are the ones who have mastered this order. I believe that this element is crucial to the foundation of order for children in the classical education.

### *Order in the appearance.*

When a home is neat, orderly, and beautiful the children feel an added measure of order in their thoughts. The home need not be perfect or large or expensively decorated. But if it is neat and orderly and beautiful the children will feel another level of security and joy that will strengthen their foundation.

Laura and Mary Ingalls grew up in a home that had order in the appearance. Whether they were living in their little town home, their cabin, or their dugout, they swept and dusted each morning to put the house in order for the day. This daily morning routine of cleaning kept the house prim. The Ingalls home was also orderly, or organized. Everything had its proper place.

This was more easily accomplished living out on the prairie where endless trails of papers and unwanted items did not just find their way into Caroline's kitchen as they do into ours. Although it is a more daunting task for us than it was for her, it is not impossible to get a handle on the clutter. Caroline also added whatever she could to create beauty in the home. Laura, as young as she was, noticed and appreciated every detail of beauty their home contained. Little children light up and lighten up in an atmosphere of beauty.

### *Order in the schedule*

When there is order in the schedule, children feel yet another depth of security because they can relax knowing what is coming in the day, and also knowing that what *is* coming is fulfilling all of their greatest needs. The schedule need not be perfect, nor too strict, nor anything resembling a military regiment. It only needs to be productive and reliable. When a family is in survival mode, their schedule is not productive. They exist day to day, but they do not produce much of anything beyond primal needs. This causes depression in mothers and children alike.

All women want to feel like they are growing week to week, in some fashion or another. For example, if we are good with our schedule, we will find time to grow in such things as knowledge, experience with new skills, new hobbies, new recipes, new friends. All of these things take time, and they make us feel alive because we experience *growth*. When our schedules are not reliable, and we are not experiencing this needed growth that makes us feel alive, we unknowingly may attempt to fill this emptiness by seeking *gain*.

Although materialistic gain does provide the temporary illusion of having experienced growth, it is short lived and un-satiating, and therefore urges us on to acquire more gain in effort to finally fill in the emptiness. This is why shopping becomes such a beloved past-time for women. This expensive and unfulfilling cycle can be broken for a mother simply by getting a handle on her schedule, and making room in her schedule for her purpose, beyond survival. When a woman lives on purpose, shopping (as an activity in and of itself) loses much of its luster. Purpose is much more richly fulfilling.

Sometimes, a women's purpose brings in income, just by the nature of what it entails. Teaching music lessons, for example, would cause the woman to earn money. Taking advantage of this special opportunity to share her talents with others is very different than seeking a career for the *purpose* of earning money. When a women seeks money making opportunities, her family becomes her second priority as they must now bow to the demands of her schedule. This also injures her husband's masculine pride, as it inadvertently suggests to him that she believes he is incapable of adequately providing for his family, his main purpose in life.

However, when the wife seeks to fulfill one of her secondary purposes in life through service, teaching, sharing talents, family history, writing books, mentoring others etc., she knows that it is her second priority, and she fits it into her life in such a way that her family is not neglected because of it, but are enhanced and enriched by it.

For example, if one woman feels drawn to paint beautiful paintings, and fits it into her free time, her children are able to witness her pursuing things that bring her joy and bless humanity. The same thing occurs when a woman decides to spend her free time visiting the sick, knitting blankets for the poor, teaching ballet lessons, taking a college class, or volunteering at the library. All of these things bless her family because they make her sincerely happy and they make others happy as they encourage the developing of talents, never at the expense of her family's care and nurturing.

When a woman seeks a career or job or even a side job or home business for the purpose of earning money, something very different occurs. The woman is not as enriched and uplifted by the work because it wasn't her little "niche" in life. It was a "have-to", something she must do "rain or shine". She also can rarely ever fit it into just her free time. It will take precedence over her free time, her chore time, her family meal times, and possibly all the times her children might have thrived learning and growing by her side. Her children see her sacrificing her own happiness and theirs for money. They know where they stand in their mother's eyes, and they will resent her for it. They also will unconsciously worry about it and try with their childish minds to fix it; that they never can do.

This err may manifest itself in many ways, but one certain way is in their slowed progression through core phase. However, when mother loves to paint, and little Tommy has to be quiet while she concentrates, he is sacrificing for something much more noble than money. He is sacrificing for Mother's progression. And that is a worthy sacrifice because it is really not a sacrifice at all. Tommy will gain much more than he loses by this. He will witness progression first hand from his closest mentor, and not at the expense of anything.

When a father makes great sacrifices in order to provide for his family, the entire family is blessed by his noble actions because providing for his family is his first priority. If he is away from home for long hours and his wife and children have very limited time with him, it is still counted as noble and good in their hearts because they know where they stand in their husband's and father's eyes: *first*. It is *them* he is sacrificing for. His income is the reason they are free to pursue the life they are currently pursuing.

Providing for a family is not the mother's first priority or even her responsibility at all. This is why husbands and children feel neglected when they sacrifice in order for her to follow this path. Any illusion the mother has bought into about her income "helping" the family can be shattered by even the slightest amount of research on the subject. Studies show that men whose wives stay home and care for them and the home make far more money than men whose wives work for the purpose of earning money. Whether or not there are even children in the home at all, a woman's touch to a home is irreplaceable to her husband. Two simple questions any wife or mother may ask herself when trying to decide if the interest she is pursuing is blessing her family or taking from them are:

1. Does this interest fit into my free time, or does it cause me to neglect important family times such as meal times, work times, morning and evening routines, story times or family bonding times?



2. Is the purpose of my pursuit of this interest to earn money or is it to find joy? Do I enjoy it enough that I would be happy doing it even if it provided no monetary gain?

Another advantage comes to the children when the schedule is *reliable*. When a schedule is dependable, the children can expect that certain things will happen during certain times of the day. This is simple, but extremely effective in bringing order to the home and security to the children.

As the children develop the habit of hard work in the morning, and more leisurely activities such as free time in the afternoon, they develop an early morning momentum (just as adults do) that helps them accomplish much and look forward to their afternoon. As they spend the mornings working alongside their mothers, their free time is enhanced by the knowledge, skills, and character they have gained.

Children reared in these natural cycles appreciate and enjoy a more productive free time, are generally more unselfish and much more able to feel and express gratitude for every little goodness that their life contains. We as parents work so hard to provide goodness for our children. It is to our and their greatest advantage to rear them in an environment where they can see that goodness for what it is and experience real joy from it, rather than take it for granted.

*A house is not a home unless it contains food and fire for the mind as well as the body*  
-Benjamin Franklin-

## Step 2. Require Work

The main reason for requiring work of our children is that it develops a strong self-discipline muscle that they may call upon whenever they need it to accomplish something difficult. When our children get inspired by great books, and are old enough to begin reading, they will need a well toned self-discipline muscle in order to see them through the hard part before the reward comes. If they have not developed this through hard work, they may think that reading is just too hard for what it is worth to them...even if it is of great worth to them.

There are many experts and books on the subject of teaching your children to work, some of which I have included in the appendix, however, I will say this much on the subject: when the parents have mastered the art of requiring work of their children, the children not only know how to do the chore correctly, but they can be held accountable for the completion of the chore. For example, a child of eight years old who has been properly taught can easily complete a list of tasks, unsupervised, and return and report on their own. When the parents master this art, no nagging or reminding is needed. Although every child is different, a simple breakdown of ages and abilities in chores has greatly benefited me along my path of requiring my children to work. I learned this from a wonderful expert on the subject, Laura Gallagher ([www.lazyorganizer.com](http://www.lazyorganizer.com)).

- 0- 4 ½: Personal chores with mom (dressing, brushing teeth, washing hands)
- 4 ½-6: Family work *with* mom (folding laundry, drying dishes, making beds)
- 6-8: Family work *near* mom (folding laundry, drying dishes, making beds)
- 8+: Family work independently (any family work, even baking, sewing, gardening)

When I learned this model, my seven-year-old had not been properly trained, so I focused on his phase and not his age, and went back to the 4½-6 year old guideline of working *with* him. He quickly caught up to his age and could reliably work near me. Now I follow this model with my older children every time I teach them a new task. When I taught my 8 year old daughter to make the family salad dressings for the week, I had to first work with her (like with a 5 year old). The next week when she did it again, I had to work with her again. The third week, I just stayed near her, lightly supervising. By the fourth week, she was on her own. I have found that through this pattern, I can successfully teach my children nearly any task or project that needs to be done.

*Life grants nothing to us mortals without hard work. -Horace-*

## Step 3: Inspire Daily

The main reason we inspire our children to want to learn is that it gives them a reason to want it for themselves. It is like the carrot hanging in front of the horse's mouth, urging them on to walk forward. They only know they want this carrot if they have tasted it. Each day, we can give our children little tastes of stories that are delicious, but that they cannot yet have for themselves because they do not yet read, or have not chosen to use their skill of reading.

This step of daily inspiring will not yield results the first day, but over the weeks and months and years, the children develop a feverish appetite for great books. The result of this inspiring is usually observed when the children near the age of eight. This may cause some concern in parents who are used to the public school model, and who know that children are very capable of reading at the age of five.

Let me state here that it is not important that the children get the optimum amount of time reading before the age of fourteen when they enter scholar phase. No, it is not *time* at all that is key to this process, but *timing*. Nobody knows or cares that my nine year old, who often reads a three to four hundred page book in two days, did not even learn how to read until she was seven years old. When our children come out of scholar phase, having mentored with Shakespeare, Montesquieu, Newton, and Locke, speaking multiple languages and commanding the arts of rhetoric, logic and reason, no one will know or care that they did not write beyond their own name until they were nine or ten.

My children became interested in writing around seven or eight when they became interested in reading, however they did not use their writing enough to perfect it until after reading hundreds of books. This is simply because once they have read hundreds of books, they know how to spell, properly use grammar, punctuation, etc. with a collected confidence of these skills. When they attempt writing before this time, it is always a slow process because they must inquire how to spell everything. This slow writing is not very fun for them, and consequently, anything they write before about the age of nine is short-lived (like a birthday card). Once they master the writing skills, through reading, writing is fun and they can write paragraphs of priceless journal entries every single night.

An easy way to inspire daily is to pick a certain time of day that you will read to them from the best books you can find. This can be termed "kid-school" or "story time", or anything else you would like to call it. But the difference between this kind of story time and other kinds is that I, as the mother, choose what to read to them. They get to choose if they come to it or not.

By leaving them free to choose if they attend, I am able to see day to day if the things I am choosing to read are interesting them or not.

One time when I did not understand the art of inspiring, I was using our “kid school” time to practice poems with the children. I did not know at that time that practicing is something that scholars do. Practicing takes effort and discipline and commitment, and is therefore boring to children. Children only do things for fun or for duty. If I want my children to learn something, they must think that it is fun, and then go accidentally practice it (which, because it is accidental, is really called “play” to them.) I learned that this poem practicing was boring my children because they would leave in the middle of it and go play instead. If I had not allowed them to leave, I would never have learned which kinds of things kids really enjoy. But if I had allowed them to choose the stories for kid-school, then they would never have learned about the “greats” because they do not know them until I expose them. It is essential in this system that I choose the story, and they choose whether or not to attend. During other story times, like bedtime, I let them choose the stories. This inspires me to know what kinds of things they love. It is also great bonding time.

This inspiring time is better for everyone if it is short. When it is short, the children leave wanting more, wishing you’d read just one more chapter. This is the feeling we want them to have, little delicious tastes but not enough to ever satiate. It is also better for the mom if she can finish it quickly and get on with her day. When the children see that their mother’s day is important to her, because she progresses, which makes her happy, they too can model her example and plan on accomplishing much to bring joy to themselves.

On the contrary, when they experience their mother spoon-feeding them their education hour after hour, they may neither appreciate the time she does give to them, nor even be aware that she is her own person. Further, when a mother sacrifices herself on the altar of home schooling, she may not even be aware that she is her own person. This kind of sacrifice is not necessary, because it does not yield more than it costs. As mother moves forward, children follow, and everyone thrives. As mother stays back and spoon-feeds, nags, prods, or pushes, everyone stays behind.

One thing to remember about inspiring is that we always inspire with what I call the “show and tell model.” We just show and tell and wait to see if they care about it enough some day to ask us to teach them how to do it themselves.

Once when I did not understand the beauty of this model, I would try to inspire by teaching the children how to do something, and then asking them to show me if they could do it—such as telling the time. This was boring because they had not asked me to show them how to tell time. And I was casting my pearls before swine—sharing information and knowledge with people who did not care about nor value it. Children will remember things taught to them after they have had to ask and wait for the lesson.

Another key to inspiring is that we always inspire by showing the beautiful end result or the end product, that someone could obtain, if they knew how. For instance, if I wanted to inspire someone to want to quilt, I would show them the beautiful quilt, so that they could have a reason to desire quilting lessons. If I chose, instead, to show them the “how to” of quilting (the lessons), they would have no vision to look forward to, no reason why they should want to quilt. If the end result is beautiful enough, they will come asking for the necessary skills and tools to obtain it.

Likewise, if I tried to inspire a child to read by bringing out the lesson books, or the ABC’s, they would miss the point entirely and likely get bored. They will do the boring work later, after they have been sufficiently inspired. If I wanted to inspire my children to write, I

would have to think of an end product they might enjoy using the writing for, and show them the end result, and the beauty and value it contains.

We do this in our home by reading from journals. The children may hear us read stories from our own journals, from their little baby journals I have kept for them over the years, or from family history stories and journals.

If I were to try to inspire them to write by bringing out the pencils and papers and teaching them handwriting skills, again, I may bore them. They will do the hard work to get their writing to measure up to my high standards during a formal writing lesson that I will give to them as soon as they are sufficiently inspired and come asking for the lesson.

The reason I put no effort into inspiring my children with any specific subjects is because they will be pursuing those subjects later on in scholar phase. My purpose for inspiring children, or young adults who are stuck in childhood phases, is to get them to do one single thing: to voluntarily spend their free time reading great books. If they will do this for fun, they will master the skills of reading and writing.

When they have mastered the languages of reading, writing, and arithmetic (I will expound on arithmetic later) they will be prepared for scholar phase where they will use those languages to master the different subjects. Therefore, it is to their greatest advantage that I leave science, philosophy, government, history, etc. for a later time, and just inspire them with great stories. Stories are fun. They take no discipline if they are written well. All of the core values can be easily learned simply by *hearing* great stories (this is for Core Phase). And all of the skills of spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc., can be mastered simply by *reading* great stories (this is for Love of Learning Phase).

*Our chief want is someone who will inspire us to be what we know we could be.*  
-Ralph Waldo Emerson-

## **Step 4. Understand Lessons and Daily Application**

Once the child is old enough and has been sufficiently inspired, they will come asking their mother to teach them how to read. The first thing to do at this point, is to make the child wait a few days while you work a good time for these lessons into your schedule. This allows the child to value your time and appreciate the fact that he has a mother that loves him and wants to teach him these beautiful things. Also, as this wanting and waiting is allowed to occur inside of him for a couple of days or weeks, it may grow into a greater wanting.

If we were to drop everything and teach a reading lesson the first time they ask for it, they might likely be given such a valuable privilege too cheaply, and they may not appreciate it for what it really is worth. We do not want to rob them of this feeling of gratitude. Once I have decided upon a good time for the reading lesson, I usually say something like this: “How would you like to stay up tonight for about 20 minutes after the little children are in bed, and the house is perfectly quiet, and I will give you your first reading lesson?”

Once the lesson starts, I follow the same “return and report” model that they are already used to from their chores. I show them the first few words of the story “See Dick Run.” Then I

tell them to try it. I actually *require* them to obey what I tell them in the lesson. Remember, they are not required to attend the lesson in the first place. But, should they choose to attend the lesson, they are required to measure up to my standards eventually, through trying and completing what I give them. So, they try reading “See Dick Run.” I always say “Good” after they give it a try, and then I either have them try again (if they made any mistakes) or I move onto the next sentence (if they got it right).

If they were learning to write they would give their first cursive “a” a try and then I would say, “Very good, now try it again, only this time make it a little rounder, like this.” Then after showing them again, they would try it and we would continue on like that until they got it right. Just like with their chores, they learn so rapidly when they are required to go back and fix it before they move on.

I am careful during these lessons to only teach that part which I know they really want, because I want them to keep wanting the lessons. For example, I know when a seven-year-old asks to learn to read, it is only because they want to read stories, it is not because they are interested in all the technical rules of the English language. In other words, they usually do not care *why* the word says what it says—they just want to know *what* it says so that they can enjoy the story.

If I were to vomit all of the phonics on them in their first lesson, they may not ever ask me for another lesson. I just want them, initially, to learn how to read stories. I do want them eventually to understand the process of reading and which specific sounds each of the letters make. But right now, I am only concerned with them learning to read their favorite stories. The miraculous part about this is that if they fall in love with reading, they will read so many thousands of words each day that they will actually teach themselves the phonics rules and they aren’t even aware of it. I have watched this happen. They are so quick, and so capable, when they desire something that they see as enjoyable. The whole trick is making sure to provide an environment where they can see the books as enjoyable.

During these lessons, I also make sure to only teach them those parts that they actually can use in daily life. This is because I know that it is only through practicing these skills almost daily in natural life that the children will master the skills. When a child asks me for a math lesson, although I know that they are capable of understanding much more, I only teach them basic arithmetic. This, again, is because I know that basic arithmetic is all they can naturally use in daily life.

If I were to teach them anything beyond basic arithmetic, and if I wanted them to retain it, I would have to then require them to practice it in some abstract fashion that does not occur in their natural daily life. But if I just teach them those things that they will use anyway, I can be sure that they will practice the things that I teach them daily...in their minds. I will expound a bit more on math later.

If during any of these lessons, the child decides they do not want lessons any more, we not only allow, but also encourage them to quit. We do not want anyone taking lessons out of duty. We want the real thing. If they feel like quitting, we want them to quit and come back when they have a burning desire. This burning desire is not difficult to create in a child, so the parents need not be afraid if a child shows some interest in these lessons, and then quits. You just have to go back to steps 1-5, and fine-tune each one of them, and give the child time.

If we go chasing them and trying to get them to come to lessons, we’ve missed the point entirely. We want them to come chasing us. When children are hungry, they eat! You do not

have to ask them twice. If we chase a child who is not hungry, with a plate of food, they might snub us—plus it takes undo energy to try to catch them and talk them into it.

The same thing happens when we chase them with reading, writing, and arithmetic. If it were necessary to chase them and encourage them and even require them, then it would be worth all of our best efforts to catch them and “get them going”. But the good news is, just by running a house of order, the children do it all voluntarily.

These lessons are always short in length, and temporary in duration. They are short so that the child always leaves wanting more, never getting their fill. They are temporary in duration because it simply does not take more than a few weeks to catch on to the basics of reading writing and arithmetic when a child really wants to.

The whole trick for the parents, again, is creating an environment where the children can feel that they want to. These lessons, then, do not go on and on building one skill upon another, becoming a daily part of mother’s agenda. They are, instead, sort of like potty training: A few weeks (maybe months) of training from the mother, then once the child gets it, they are off! However, as with potty training, if the parents do not wait until the child is begging for the training, it could be years before they get it! This is not because the “getting it” is difficult. It is because the child did not fully want it.

When a child wants something, they are bright enough to figure out a way to get it. And when they really want something, and get stuck, they never hesitate to request help from their parents. The wanting it is the key. The getting it is a snap!

I mentioned above that it only takes a few weeks to learn the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic. The reason I am only concerned with teaching children the basics is because I know that they will master these skills on their own once they practice them daily. They will practice them daily once they have completed the lessons. But to them it is not practice. To them it is simply play.

It is important that we as parents know how to recognize this practice or daily application when we see it. Then we can relax, knowing that the time we spent teaching them has not been wasted. When a child practices reading, it just looks like they are reading for fun. They do not normally set goals on how much to read (that would be scholarly). They do not formally report on the books through colloquium or written report (these are not natural parts of daily life unless you are a scholar with a formal mentor). They simply read whatever they want whenever they want, and informally tell their families all about it.

When a child practices writing, it is in the form of something fun that they chose to do, such as daily journal writing, or perhaps some children might undertake to write little stories or books. In my experience, things like letters and stories only naturally happen once in a while, but journal writing is a daily treat.

Through this daily application of the lessons I taught them, they perfect the skills beyond anything I ever imagined. With permission, I once got to overlook my nine-year-old daughter’s writing. I was curious if she could spell, punctuate, etc., and also the form of her penmanship. To my surprise, her previously sloppy handwriting had become beautiful since her voluntary institution of daily journal writing, not to mention her vocabulary put my college papers to shame. Her spelling and punctuation was absolutely perfect. It did not look like nine-year old product. I only ever taught her the cursive alphabet. However, I made sure during the lessons to require perfection out of her in the appearance of her letters and also her method of writing them. I did not require her to take the lessons.

I also did not give the journal away so cheaply. She could only receive one once she had finished her formal writing lessons. My son, who is just falling in love with learning right now, (he is on his 3<sup>rd</sup> book: “Where the Red Fern Grows”) desperately wants a journal. He has completed his writing lessons perfectly, however, I decided after watching my daughter, that I would rather give him his journal after he has read hundreds of books and can spell everything. He can write anything he wants to in his notepad in the art drawer, but the journal is more expensive and special, and he will receive that opportunity only when ready.

Am I manipulating him into reading by holding that journal over his head? No. A journal is not an exciting enough object to motivate a child to read hundreds of books. He will read hundreds of books for one reason only: because he enjoys them. I’m just not choosing to give away something as useful and potentially valuable as a journal too cheaply. I would never give a child a journal to try to get them to want writing lessons either. That would be me chasing them—bribing them.

As for arithmetic, once the children have learned to work the numbers in their heads like basic addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, their daily application (practice) comes usually in unseen ways. For example, figuring how much time they must wait before Daddy comes home or figuring how many places to set at the table to include the arriving guests. If they were to learn and perfect written math and working facts and figures on paper, progressively adding concept upon concept, it would then be necessary that someone require them to continue on building each lesson upon the next, daily, so that they might retain that which they had been taught save they lose it!

However, in this method, we teach only those things that the children can readily use in daily life, because children love natural daily life, and it is in the atmosphere of daily life that they progress. In daily life, children often work numbers in their head, even fractions, and they become so familiar with them, that they can command them when they need to. My daughter came up the stairs the other day and stated, “I am exactly 86 months old!” Is this a solid math education? No! Are there holes in it? Yes—big holes. They only use it when they want to and when they think they need it. It is merely a solid foundation on which to build a more complete math education later on in scholar phase.

Practicing math daily on paper is what we call studying. It takes discipline and great desire, and is something that scholars do. Yet, I would caution you here to not underestimate the great value that this math foundation holds. A math foundation, though not a math education, is equally as important as a math education because it is what a math education is built upon. The ability to be familiar with numbers, and to work them quickly and to comprehend their values and uses in daily life is a necessary prerequisite to understanding scholarly math later on.

When someone lacking this ability learns scholarly math, they memorize formulas and functions, rules and theorems, yet they often do not relate to the numbers, because they have no foundational relationship with them, and thus they may work the problems in such an abstract fashion, that they neither gain value from nor see the beauty in the process. They are also at risk of quickly forgetting the formulas and their uses soon after they move on to other ones. These people may often not be able to tell if their answer “seems” right or wrong. Someone who has a relationship with the numbers and is following with some purpose, will know when they see their answer if it is probable or improbable that their answer is correct.

This type of “common sense” is of much greater value to the child than being “further advanced” in mathematics. In fact, artificially advancing our children in mathematics beyond what they would naturally use in daily life can be a source of hindrance to the child. It can

confuse them and cause them to actually be less prepared for math later on. It can also cause them to view numbers as distant and obscure ideas, as they drowned in them before they can fully grasp their meaning.

## Step 5. Close the Headgates

Close the headgates: When I was a child, my father irrigated our alfalfa fields. In order to get the water out to the desired point in the field, he had to open and close certain headgates. This system of irrigating assumes that there is already water flowing down the ditch. As long as the water was there, my father's job was minimal. He neither forced the water to the edge of the field with his own strength, nor could he have stopped it by his own means once the proper headgates were opened. He simply stood back and watched it flow.

Yet, as powerful as the water was, and as naturally as it seemed to flow through, the water was virtually helpless without my father facilitating it. It flowed powerfully, and seemed almost to have a mind of its own, yet it had not the sufficient judgment to create its own path for success. If left to its own wit, with all that power, yet lack of judgment, that water could not have served its purpose as the life-blood of our fields. Without that simple act of opening and closing the headgates, the water's potential would have either been unnecessarily wasted, or become a destructive force. I see a child's progression through these natural phases of life very much like the water in that irrigation ditch."

The water's constant flow through the ditch represents the child's progression. It is ever constant—as long as the child is alive, he is progressing...in something. He may not seem to be progressing, but he is progressing in *something* at all times. This flow, we cannot control; they were programmed with it. If the child is always progressing in something, and we can neither force it nor stop it, then our role as parents is likened unto the farmer's. We open and close headgates in effort to channel the child's progression down a path that we know will bring good results.

The child cannot see the whole field, and knows not what potential he holds. We must harness that power to be used in the right way. He is depending on us to do so. If this power and potential for progression is not directed down correct paths, then it, like the unharnessed water, will either be wasted, or become a source of destruction to the field. The crops at the ends of the fields represent the wonderful fruit that we wish our children to reap by the time that childhood is over and they enter young adulthood. These are the fruits of values like love, joy, hard work, honesty, friendship, loyalty, and skills of reading, writing, arithmetic, drawing, knitting, sewing, etc. These are the skills we want them to master in Core Phase and Love of Learning.

The opening and closing of the headgates simply represents the parents allowing or not allowing certain activities to be pursued. Reading is a headgate. Because it is a right headgate, it ought to be opened so that the children can progress on through. The parents open the reading headgate by providing the children with access to great books. The parents cannot make the child progress in great books, anymore than the farmer can force the water to the end of the field. Neither can the parents stop the child's progression in the great books, any more than the farmer can stop the progression of the water through an open headgate.





would never have had the patience to see those good activities through to the end when the fruits would be seen, if the parents had allowed the wrong activities to be available.

Without knowing what is best for them, children will usually choose the activities that offer the most stimulation for the least amount of effort. The real skills, which we want our children to fall in love with (reading, writing and other life skills) take tremendous effort for very slow-coming stimulation. The stimulation or reward or growth and progression felt by the children when they accomplish these real skills, not only feels richer to the child than the false, but in the end the child himself has become something.

When they get their cheap thrill from the other type of activities, they *feel* as if they have done something, and in the end, they have become nothing greater than when they started. Therefore, if our children are naturally drawn toward this feeling of progression and growth (as we are), and will spend all of their waking hours trying to obtain that feeling, and actually care more for the real than the fake thrill, we should take advantage of this and provide our children with this fertile environment that they so desperately are starving for, and which only we can provide. I would like to now share with you some examples and definitions of right and wrong headgates.

A right headgate is defined as any activity you would want your children to voluntarily engage in, that would help develop their mind and direct their motivation towards wanting to read. A right headgate is determined by asking the following five questions. The first two questions apply to toys, and the last three questions apply to activities.

### **1. Does the fun or the thrill of the play come from the child's own brain, muscles, or voice box?**

If your answer to this is "yes," then these toys will not entertain your children. Your children will have to entertain themselves if they are to get any enjoyment out of playing with them. These are plain and lifeless toys that the children must bring to life. They do not perform tricks for the children to enjoy. They will have to be creative and imaginative if these toys are to ever satisfy them.

On the other hand, if you answered "No" to this question, then the fun or thrill of the play probably comes from the button or battery of the toy. These toys will entertain your children. Your children will not have to entertain themselves in order to get enjoyment. These are battery or electronic toys that seem to have life inside them and do tricks for the children to enjoy. The children need not exercise creativity or imagination in order to feel satisfaction from these toys.

Some examples of plain and lifeless toys that will help develop creativity and imagination in children are dolls, blankets, ropes, trains, planes, and automobiles (batteries not included). The most important benefit gained by these toys is the natural environment in which they rear our children. They give rewards to our children only after our children have exerted substantial amounts of effort. This environment is much like the environment our children experience when they attempt to read: substantial effort yielding subtle rewards. Children reared in this natural environment will not think that reading is too hard for what pleasure it yields them. They will be able to feel the enjoyment or thrill that great books contain.

When a child is reared in an unnatural environment, of which battery toys provide, where very little or even no effort at all yields amazing results unlike anything in nature, the greatest

disadvantage to the child comes as the perspective from which he will view reading. He may see it as simply too much work for what rewards it yields.

The rewards of reading great books, however permanent, enriching, refining, unlimited and ever-perpetuating they may be, are subtle. Subtle rewards are not likely to be detected by children with an unnatural appetite for entertainment. Some examples of these kinds of toys are any and all battery toys, ipods, TV, video cameras, regular cameras, educational videos, computer games or computers in general.

Established in rule #1, activities like watching movies, making movies, and playing wii are excluded. Yet there be another, more subtle kind of toy that acts as a wrong headgate to the child as it pulls their progression away from love of learning, leading us to question number two.

## **2. Who was the creative one, the toymaker or the child?**

In my experience, the more creative the toy, the less creative the child will be for having played with it. The less creative the toy, the more creative the child will be for having played with it—the child will *have* to be creative in order to get any enjoyment out of it. If you look at an “activity toy” (meaning a toy with a prescribed activity attached to it such as a train track set: build track and drive trains on it, or hot wheels tracks: loops and hills to send cars down, legos: build motorcycles and racecars,) and say “Wow, this activity could really develop some creativity in my child,” it will probably do just the opposite.

*(More specifics on legos and Lincoln logs in the appendix)*

These toys entertain your child as he follows the script the toy came with—the one the toymaker designed for the child when he sat in his office with a paper and pencil and came up with the idea for the toy the factory would make out of raw materials. The toymaker was the creative one. His materials were plain. He had to take things which looked like almost nothing and make them into something. He sat and toiled to work his brain into unknown territory and back again in order to create the excitement. He went through the creative process so our kids would not have to. Now our kids can just sit back and enjoy the activity.

This is too easy a route for our children if they are ever to relate to natural law. When they get inspired to read, they may want it, love it, and perhaps even know how to do it, yet they may never choose in their free time to read for fun because it is just simply too much work. They are used to flowing through unnaturally easy headgates. What should be naturally stimulating, valuable and lasting, will feel unnaturally difficult when nourished on a diet of scripted play.

I want the children to go through the creative process themselves. I want them to sit in their playrooms or yards with plain raw materials and let the wheels in their heads turn as they try to decide what on earth they are going to do with these same twelve toys. I want them to stare off into space like the toymaker did, until the light bulb goes on in their heads and they get their stroke of genius. Then they will create something out of raw materials that was not there before. This is creation.

This is the kind of play children naturally do anyway (even with their sets of scripted toys) because it makes them feel alive. These toys provide a more natural environment than the scripted toys, because these toys yield results only after much thought and creativity is invested

in them by the child. When a child lives in, works in, and plays in a natural environment, he is very used to the level of effort required to obtain delight and enjoyment.

When this kind of playing occurs, children are fully satisfied with their play, and yet they never get enough of it. Their toys are plain, and there are very few rules attached to their playtime. The children are then able to really use their imagination in the way that they want to. When the playroom consists of fancy “learning toys” the parents cannot afford to allow the children to fully direct their play according to the dictates of their imaginations. If the parents did allow this, they would find little puzzle pieces in the corner of the yard because they had, earlier that afternoon, been turned into cannon balls. The little wooden beads that belong to the “necklace making” activity could be dropped down heater vents to hide in secret before the bad-guys came.

These kinds of toys, that may be costly and come in sets with multiple parts and pieces, simply do not allow the child to fully pretend away their free time to their heart’s content. Or rather, the parents whose children have these toys cannot allow it. If they did allow it, they would have to resupply the toy closet with new sets regularly. So, because they cannot in good conscience allow these little “parts” to be hauled up the tree or into the garden, and they do not know that it is okay to get rid of these toys, the parents, usually the mothers, end up monitoring the toys and managing the toys and teaching and training rule after rule: “Only one set out at a time. Complete one puzzle, put it back, and then you may have another. Do not put the train tracks in the tree because we need that piece for the set. Be careful of the tea set, the baby might reach it and break it. If I find anyone mixing the colors of play-dough, they are not going to be allowed to play with it for one whole week.”

This is not play! Play is pretend! These are more like real life adult rules, yet they are being applied to fake activities that produce neither useful products nor any useful qualities in the children, and at real-life prices. Children do not see things in organized “sets” when they go to play. They do not want to *just* play the puzzles the way they were meant to. They do not want to *just* get the bin of Lincoln Logs out and build cabins and fences. They may start that way, but give them a chunk of unstructured free time and this is what you will find: The long Lincoln Logs have turned into catapults that hurl the mini Lincoln Logs over the castle, and the puzzle pieces that were specially made with different colors and textures so that the children could learn their colors and textures have been turned into cookies and other snacks that the girls are serving. But unfortunately they are serving the snacks up on a home-made table they created by turning five different toy bins upside down, and nicely leaving the contents of the bins in a pile. This pile now serves the purpose of a pit to run and jump over—or maybe into.

The pictures of the cute “kid shelves” in the Pottery Barn Kids magazines are an illusion. They are children’s toys and activities placed in an adult’s method of organization. Our children need toys more like the velveteen rabbit. He loved the rabbit. He loved it so much that he took it outside and pushed it in a wheelbarrow with some dirt. Then he left it outside in the rain...it aged a bit that night, but it was okay...it recovered. The point is, he did not need a whole set of toys because most of the play took place in his imagination. If his mother had glanced out the window during his playtime, she likely would not have been able to tell just what he was playing. This is because most of the play took place in his imagination.

This imaginative play is how children naturally play if left to themselves. They may start an activity or a pre-scripted set of toys if an adult puts them up to it or even provides such a set for them. But just give them time, they will tire of the prescribed activity you thought they were

going to enjoy, and they will turn everything inside out and upside down, as they blissfully pretend away their day the way that children have always done.

Some children who have been managed or steered how to play their whole lives, may seem to not know how to play imaginatively, but if provided with the proper environment, it will come bubbling up out of them just as naturally as anything else. There are great benefits here for the mother as well.

Can you imagine the turn your life would take for the better if you only owned 12-15 toys? I do not mean 15 sets of toys, or 12-15 per child; I mean 15 total toys. If a child is going to just pretend that everything is something else, then what need have we for so many different things? If a child is just as happy with a playroom of 12 toys as they are with a playroom of 12-hundred toys, then why the extra headache for the mother?

Mother's is not the only head that aches when too many toys are accumulated. The children actually feel more cheerful, considerate, and productive in a clean play room. The main fun little 1-2 year olds have is in removing the toys from their proper places and redistributing them throughout the house. This is a welcomed activity when only 12 toys exist.

Aside from the convenience and orderliness that results when the toys are very few and not in sets with many parts and pieces, the main reason for diluting the toy collection is because of its effects on the children's progression into Love of Learning. I find this detail (number of toys and kinds of toys) as essential to this progression as requiring chores. I also find this detail as essential as inspiring.

When a child is reared in the natural environment, where his toys are not much neater than the sticks and trees in the backyard and he later becomes inspired to read and learns how, he discovers it is no more work than any of his past enjoyment was. In fact, he quickly realizes that reading is actually *easier* than playing; reading brings a quicker thrill, a quicker reward, than all that creative play he grew up on.

This is why they choose it again and again over play—once they are old enough (about 8). It is sort of like watching a movie. They just sit down, relax and stare at the page and ...voilà, they are sucked into the story. If the material they are allowed to read is of the highest quality (classics), they will never "over-read." They will always balance their lives between learning and play without any help from you as long as you create the right environment.

When a plant is placed in the right environment for it to thrive, it does thrive. As long as the soil, sunshine, water and air are right for the plant, the plant will control and perfectly balance its own consumption of water, sunlight, and nutrients. Likewise, when mice are given free choice over a variety of healthy foods, they perfectly control their consumption of the right amounts of nutrients. They actually eat (in terms of nutrients) what the scientists would have fed them if they could have controlled the diet themselves.

As soon as refined (unnatural) foods are introduced to the mice, they no longer have the ability to consume the right amounts of nutrients. Try as they might, their gauge is off. They choose things that will weaken them. They choose an imbalanced diet. Now that their "chooser" does not work, the scientist must choose for them. He must control their diet.

If a farmer refuses to close the needed headgates, he will never get water out the right headgates and on to his crops. He will not be able to sit back and watch the water flow on through by itself. He will forever be forced to control the water. Perhaps he will carry large buckets to the irrigation ditch, fill them up, and haul them back out to the crops. This will surely take from his work day; this will surely spread him thin—too thin, perhaps, to make progress. He

might try hiring a private plant gardener to come and water each plant by hand using the bucket method.

This would be quite costly. He may have to close up shop and send his crops to public crop growing institutes, to ensure that they at least get the basic water needed to grow. Here a state certified public crop grower would deliver to each plant its daily dose of water. Thankfully, this will cut costs as these crop growers have been generously subsidized. This is all fine if it is necessary. If this is what it takes to get good crops, he will do it. Only how devastatingly sad it is that this farmer does not comprehend the great power of the water (the child's constant progression.)

He knows not that the water will flow right to his crops, to the nethermost border of the field and beyond—beyond his wildest dreams...if he would only close the other headgates. This, you will find, should you choose to close the headgates, is how it works with children. The great stories that the world contains become so captivating and easy at this level, that they, along with voluntary daily journal writing and normal life are enough to see the children all the way through a rich Love of Learning phase and drop them right at the door of scholar phase.

In conclusion, as a child grows older, and the creative juices are flowing through them at a more rapid rate than in early childhood, they desire

### **3. Is the activity *using* resources, or *wasting* resources?**

When a child uses resources, they get a thrill from the activity they were using the resources for. When a child wastes resources, they get an added thrill from the wasting itself. By using, I mean that the resources are used, but not used up. For example, playing the piano uses the piano, but it does not use the piano up. Eventually the piano could get some wear and tear, but that would be over a very long period of time. However, an activity like cutting paper out and gluing it together to make darling little crafts that are cute but very soon end up in the garbage can uses up resources.

When a child has a few crayons and some paper bound together in a notepad, and they choose to draw, they usually draw as much as they wanted to, and quit when they are done. As a result, very little crayon is used, and thus very little resource is wasted. Also, very little paper gets used when their paper is bound in a notepad or sketch pad. This is because there is no extra artificial boost for having created something that can then be a present, a fridge-hanging, or a thing to pile up in their pile of creations for the day and make an accounting of later.

When the child has a large stack of paper to “go through” they seem to really go through it. It is in this way that the paper is wasted. When it is in a bound notebook that sits in the drawer the same way whether they draw in it or not, they seem to only draw in it when they want to actually draw. It is in this way that the paper is used...for developing dexterity of the fingers, art skill, etc. Plus, their beautiful artwork is already saved and bound and needs no further saving or scrapbooking.

When the child has a collection of crayons, paints, markers, smelly markers, sparkle paint, glow in the dark glue, fluorescent pens, etc., the fun of “going through” the resources is too great for them and they oft times never appreciate the actual drawing. They may draw the same thing over and over with a different writing utensil each time, because the fun was in the using up. However, if the child has a small collection of crayons, their enjoyment comes as they draw many different things. This is because the fun was in the actual drawing. If they have already drawn a

flower, there is only more gain if they draw something else. In this method, crayons get used instead of used up, thus they fall under the category of used and not wasted.

In conclusion, the purpose of this rule is not to conserve resources, (sorry Gore), it is to focus the child's time and energy on an activity that will lead them to love of learning rather than love of consuming and wasting: collecting and accounting. When a child is allowed to consume resources there is a false sense of progression beyond the natural thrill the activity should provide.

#### **4. If the child is creating something, what is the end result or product, should this activity continue? Is it something useful?**

When a child is allowed to create something useful, they get the thrill of creation slowly, after they have earned it through hard work. When a child is allowed to create something un-useful, they can get that same thrill of creation quickly and for too cheap a price.

If a child draws pictures, day after day without the wasting of resources, save only the using of resources, the end result after many years could be beautiful artwork. This definitely serves a great purpose.

If the child hand stitches little patches for a quilt, according to certain rules and guidelines outlined by her mother, the end result is a useful blanket. However, if a child hand stitches what I call "little junks" that are just the cutest little creations that "only a mother could love" the end result after many years is not a useful or beautiful product.

By this same token, if a child is allowed to "make" little creations using household goods like rubber bands, cloths, ponytails, ribbons, etc. they feel very near the same thrill they would have felt had they crocheted a scarf, but with no skill gained in the process. When our children are allowed to create using real things beyond the toys in the playroom, it is to their greatest advantage if their parents hold them to certain rules, requiring them to only make those things that are useful to the family.

When real and useful objects are made, the hands and the mind are disciplined in such a way that the child has grown and gained in a most valuable and lasting manner. The reason this relates to their education is because when a child is allowed to create junk they get the thrill of creation too quickly. That thrill should come only after they have disciplined their mind and hands to properly gain a skill. This again is rearing our children in the natural environment, *substantial effort for subtle thrill, versus subtle effort for substantial thrill*. This again is training their appetite for reading, writing and arithmetic.

Consider piano playing; if a child is allowed to just play whatever they want on the piano, they get the privilege and thrill of making "music" with an instrument without having to make their fingers behave enough to make it beautiful. On the other hand, if they are only allowed piano privileges as long as they play real songs that are beautiful and which they have been properly taught, then, the end result after many years is a beautiful sound for all to hear.

This principle is easily seen in the kitchen. Successfully creating something delicious in the kitchen carries with it a huge thrill, plus the added bonus of eating as the end result. The desire to do such is already in our children. If they are allowed to get that thrill cheaply, ingredients are wasted, the end result is disgusting, and most importantly of all, their time has been wasted. They engaged in an activity, invested themselves into it and then became nothing after. Their time will be used and not wasted, if they have some rules and guidelines to follow, such as, "You're welcome to cook something, as long as it is something that our family needs."

When these sorts of strings are attached to creating privileges, their creating privileges become a great tool with which to foster a love for learning and with which to develop their talents. But the children do not know any of this. They just think they are playing, except with very grown up toys—and in the end, they have taken the family resources, and improved upon them.

If little daughter wants to learn to sew, it is not at the expense of any resources. She takes raw materials and turns them into something the family needs. It is in this way that everyone wins. The child grows, the family resources are conserved and used wisely and the parents do not feel like they are running a nursery, supervising kid-centered activities. Instead they are just living harmoniously side-by-side their children. This is what investing in the child's education is. Investments yield returns. When I invest five minutes in a child's sewing instruction, I should yield some useful product, plus the satisfaction of seeing my child learn a lifelong skill.

By setting up "as long as" rules, the children are sure to produce these useful end products instead of "cute little junks." You're welcome to sew as long as it is something our family needs, and that you have already been taught how to sew. Or, you're welcome to sew as long as you come and show me after every five stitches.

The most important reason, though, for following this rule is that creating real things is hard; it takes great discipline to knit as opposed to twisting string round and round. It provides no over-stimulation—just natural gratification. They reap what they sew, pun intended. This is natural law; this is real life.

If our children get used to living day to day in real life, with the right amount of rewards for their labors, they will not think that reading is too hard a thrill to obtain. They will actually see it as great fun. Everything they ever do, *including* playing with a few simple lifeless toys in the nursery, takes hard work and discipline before many results can be obtained.

Reading is no different, in fact, once they get into it, they discover that it is easier than most grown up "real" activities, and because of it's easiness, they often choose it over all of the other activities. This is why in our culture adults often value learning and think of it as play or a great relaxing vacation if they could just have some uninterrupted reading time. Our children do not have to grow up to have this perspective. They have it as soon as their environment grows up. It takes very little time for their perspective to shift once the environment is right. It is almost instantaneous as the water flowing through the headgate.

As soon as the gate closes and the other opens up, they flow right through the open one. And remember, they enjoy, choose, and appreciate the right headgates more than the wrong ones. But rarely do they ever choose the right ones over the wrong ones at first.

## **5. What has become of the child after the activity is finished?**

Have they become more for having participated? When a child watches an educational movie or listens to an audio book about the Great Wall of China, they may feel the same amount of growth as if they'd gone to china. I'm not saying that they gain nothing from watching the film, but they feel as if they had gained much more than they really do gain. The feeling is so strong, that it is enough to keep them from falling in love with reading, through with they might have learned about the great wall of china in such a way and on such a thorough level so as to



never forget it and to be able to use it for real purposes later on—this is very different than merely being exposed to it.

The movie or audio book may be very informational, and may even contain the information about the Great Wall that a book might contain. However, after reading the book, the child has actually become more in that his reading skills are becoming perfected, along with his vocabulary and his spelling, grammar, and creative writing skills. The wonderful information or the story found in the book, that we all are so hungry for, leads them on, tempting them, and calling them to wade through the hard part (reading, spelling, vocabulary, grammar).

When this information or story is just spoon-fed to them, what need have they for the books? The movie was equally as stimulating, but required much less effort. The child will choose it every time over the book. At the end of his love of learning phase, he will not have met the main goal of Love of Learning that would have perfectly prepared him for Scholar Phase without his even realizing it. The main goal of Love of Learning was that the child would master the skills of reading, writing and arithmetic and *become* a reader, writer, and logician vs. a watcher, a listener, and a couch potato.

On the other hand, if a child chooses an activity such as knitting, they feel a wonderful boost from creating something useful, and in the end, they are left with a real skill that will bless them for the rest of their life. When they choose to draw or paint in the non-wasteful way, they are left, after many years, with a skill and a talent that could prove to be their avenue for changing the world someday. We may have a Monet or a Picasso right in our homes. But how will we know that if they just “get their creativity out” by making neat greeting cards using stamps?

Activities such as movies or audio books can be very different when an adult engages in them at a certain time and place and for a certain purpose. But when they are available to a child in their free time, they will develop the quick-fix mentality, and when their brain is hungry for knowledge or creativity (as it always is) they will habitually give their brain a quick fix instead of satiating the real craving they had.

It is like unto feeding the body an empty calorie. ”Yum, a cake...I believe I ate because I feel full...and because I feel full I must have fed my body...and if my body is fed, it’s full of energy and ready to go!” Energy yes, the illusion of satiation, yes...nourishment? No. Are we better after the cake than if we had just gone without? No. And, worst of all, the illusion we had of having fed ourselves, will also keep us from the wholesome meal we might have eaten. Even this is less detrimental for an adult who understands proper nutrition and just every once in a blue moon eats cake instead of a meal. They can recover from this if they eat well and do not make a habit out of it.

A child, on the other hand, wants to make a habit of everything. If they know that cake has a time and a place, sparingly, in their life when their Mother serves it to them, they are fine. No permanent damage is done from eating a piece of cake. But, if they are allowed to choose cake freely during their mealtimes, they will not only make a habit of it, but they will also lose their taste for the more subtle flavors that come from useful foods, such as fruits and vegetables.

A little child visited our home once during a mealtime. He looked at the salad, the spaghetti, and the bread and stated politely. “I tried salad once. I nearly vomited, so I never tried it again.” Is this because something was wrong with the child? Did he need salad force-fed down his throat until he decides to eat it on his own? No. If we just close the empty calorie headgate and inspire by good example of course, he will flow on through to the vegetables. All we need is a hungry child (that’s easy) and the vegetable headgate open, with all the others closed, and he’ll

flow on through the open one. He'll thank us later, but he cannot possibly create this environment on his own. This his parents must do.

In conclusion, as we look at our homes, and the activities available to our children, we should ask ourselves, "What is the end result of that activity, or what becomes of the child?" Do they become a stamper, cardboard crafter, skater, neighborhood hoody, uninformed moviemaker, perpetual core phaser or do they become a knitter, baker, reader, writer and scholar?

### Headgate Conclusion

I am not attempting to brainwash the children. I am not setting out to make their lives so boring, that they are fooled into thinking reading is fun. I am trying to make their lives so real that they can actually recognize and appreciate things of real value when they find them. I want to refine their tastes so that they can tell just how lovely reading great books can be, instead of providing them with activities that dull the senses so that they need perpetually more sensation all the time in order to feel any thrill in their minds and hearts. I want them to know and enjoy great art when they see it.

I hope that they will bask in the thrill of the best music this world has to offer. One of the saddest things that I can imagine is to waste these enlightening opportunities—to grow up with them all around us and not really taste them because of numbness.

The most beautiful reward that I have reaped along this journey is discovering that my own children have ears that hear and eyes that see and hearts that feel. I have witnessed my little seven-year-old boy weep at the sound of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. I have watched as my nine-year-old girl taught her little brothers and sisters of the woes of slavery as she had learned them from Uncle Tom's Cabin.

The initial purpose of determining right and wrong headgates is that the right ones lead to love of learning, and the wrong ones lead to love of play. Love of play is a wonderful and necessary part of childhood, but children already have a love of play. We do not need to purposely provide activities for them that help keep them in perpetual childhood any longer than necessary. We're not trying to make adults out of our little children. We are trying to let them be little children while they are little children, in such a way, that they can stop being little children when they become big children. The right kind of play lands them into Love of Learning when they become old enough.

The second purpose for determining right and wrong headgates is that life becomes vastly more efficient. Now mothers can be mothers, and not bear the weight of their children's education upon their shoulders all day. Now the children's time, energy, creativity, and other resources are not wasted, but instead they are used. I say used because they are harnessed into activities that create useful things for the family. They are also usually quiet activities that bring order rather than chaos into the home.

The power in opening and closing headgates is that the home becomes the ideal environment for the classical education of children. The child's play in this environment naturally evolves into love of learning and gives them the skills and dedication for a successful scholar phase.

Lastly, the silver lining of the system is that the parents no longer have to home school. They now have the time to progress in their own scholarly pursuits and enjoy watching their children follow in their footsteps.

*I never teach my pupils; I only attempt to provide the conditions in which they can learn.  
-Albert Einstein*

## How to determine whether or not each day was a success.

You may feel warm and fuzzy and your hearts might skip a beat when you read the DeMille’s description of “Inspire not Require”...as well it should. However, if we choose to put our faith in it, we need not place our children in this system, and never know until they are eighteen if it was really working or not. There are gauges we can set now, to see if it is working. We as parents can know, at the end of each day, whether or not it was a success, and if they are progressing on toward falling in love with learning, or just being held back in perpetual childhood.

Age	0-8	8-12	14+
Phase	CORE	LOVE OF LEARNING	SCHOLAR
GOAL	ACCIDENTALLY MASTER VALUES	ACCIDENTALLY MASTER 3 R’S (READING, WRITING, AND ARITHMETIC)	PURPOSELY MASTER SUBJECTS
AM	WORK ALONGSIDE MOTHER	WORK ALONGSIDE MOTHER	STUDY
PM: LARGE CHUNK OF UNSTRUCTURED FREETIME	PLAY	LEARNING	STUDY

1. **Determine which phase your child is in.** Look at the last row entitled PM Large Chunk of Unstructured Free Time. Decide what phase your child is in by determining which box describes their free time.
2. **Did they improve in the goal for their phase?** Glance at the third row entitled Goal. Evaluate if your child improved in that goal. If they did, they are moving along, progressing on toward their next phase.

For example, if I have a six-year-old who loves to play in her free time, then I know she is in core phase. Once I know she is in core phase, I also know that my goals for her, by the time

she is done with Core Phase are to have mastered those values I want most to instill within her. If I want to know if it was a successful day, preparing her for and moving her on towards love of learning, I need only look at the third row on the chart under the Core Phase column. Then I ask myself, “Did she make improvement on the values I am focusing on teaching her this week?”

Perhaps I want to instill obedience. Is she becoming more obedient or about the same as usual, or worse? Or was it responsibility? Is she becoming more responsible with her chores? If not, what changes do I need to make in order to help her learn these values?” Notice how success in core phase (mastering values) does not look the same as success LoL (mastering 3 R’s) and it looks nothing like success in scholar phase (mastering subjects).

This is why it is easy to be deceived about whether or not the child is progressing. Sometimes, as parents, in order to be assured that our children are progressing toward scholarly behavior, like studying, we want to see some mini version of scholarship—some little kid learning—perhaps some small amount of studying. This way we could at least sleep at night knowing that if some little bit of studying is happening with our six year old, we could very likely envision some more studying from them when they are eight, and progressively more when they are eleven, and so on to scholar phase.

Success in Scholar phase, however, is simply not, in any way, shape, or form, determined by a core phase filled with scholarly behavior. Our children do not achieve scholarship by getting an early start on it, through moving goals from the scholar column over into goals in the Love of Learner’s columns. These childhood phases are foundational. They only set the stage for, or lay the foundation for scholar phase. The foundation of a house looks nothing like a house.

We do not build a firm foundation of a house by building it like a house, out of house materials. We instead build the foundation out of cement and steel, upon which the house sits. If we build the foundation out of wood and sheet rock, it may look house-like in the beginning, but it would never hold up once the house was complete. It would crumble under the weight of the house. Likewise, a foundational core phase built of scholarly material, will never hold up a Love of Learning phase, and would definitely crumble under the weight of an attempted real Scholar phase, simply because it was never built of sound principles, solid enough to hold a Scholar phase.

Many home schooling parents are looking for ways to inspire their “love-of-learners” and “scholar” but many of these youth are actually still in Core Phase. These childhood phases are foundational. Childhood itself is foundational. Children are not small adults, or small young adults—they are unique creatures altogether, but how their development is fostered is of the utmost importance, as it actually determines how they turn out as young adults and adults.

## **How to fix a broken system.**

If you ever ask yourself, “How can I get my scholar or love of learner inspired to read more”, you need to rephrase the question in this manner. “ How can I get my *Core-phaser* to master their values so they can move on to love of learning?”

In order to fix a broken system, the parents need only follow 3 simple steps.

- 1. Identify what phase the child is in** by looking at the last column on the chart entitled PM: LARGE CHUNK OF UNSTRUCTURED FREE TIME. Whatever your child does

with their unstructured free time, regardless of their age, will determine what phase they are in.

- a. Example, if your young adult chooses to play video games or make movies etc., with their free time, they are in core phase

**2. Master the home environment steps 1-5**

- a. Note: if you are having “school time” in your home and you switch to these principles, you are not backtracking; you are creating a new environment called home. Do not fear if at first your children choose only to play in their free time, be consistent, they will progress.

**3. Give the child time in their phase.**

An older child that chooses to play in their free time, is in core phase---regardless of his/her age. If we want them to progress out of core phase and catch up to their age developmentally, we need only submerge them deep into core phase so that they can progress in it, through it, and soon out of it. This child then, of course, would have only work time and play time, like a core phaser. The only difference between a five-year-old core phaser and an eleven-year-old core phaser is the amount of work they can contribute.

An eleven-year-old would actually work all morning alongside Mom or Dad, leaving only the afternoon hours for free time. The five-year-old would likely play most of the morning and all afternoon, except for some assigned morning jobs. They may participate minimally in family work depending upon what it is.

An eleven-year-old in core phase does not have more work than the eleven-year-old in Love of Learning. They do not get “punished” for not being in a certain phase. They do not need to be punished to get them to progress from phase to phase because the progression is natural—that is to say, it happens on its own, all by itself...as long as the environment is right.

If you were to give the eleven-year-old extra work or withhold from them certain privileges until they decide they are ready to start learning the child would then try to make themselves in Love of Learning in order to get those undesirable consequences removed from their life. “How long each day do I have to read to be able to have free time in the afternoon? If I decide to do math, then can I have less chores?”

Children in this environment do not merely have a disadvantage to children in an “inspire not require” home, they actually cannot fall in love with learning. They cannot because it is being forced upon them. Either their parents are forcing it upon them or they are forcing it upon themselves in order to meet the requirements placed upon them that they might earn certain privileges or avoid certain punishments.

Scholars do get a major break from certain family responsibilities. The entire family sacrifices in order to support them in their scholar phase. This, of course, only happens when they are able to meet the demands of the mentor. It is easy to measure because the mentor actually does require work and assignments from the scholar.

Children do not get less work as they fall in love with learning. This would promote artificial results, and it is critical for success in this system that the progression be very real, and natural—almost unbeknown to the child. If a fifteen-year-old chooses to play in their free time (whether by making movies or riding bikes) and is thus in Core phase, they must also, like the five-year-old, be allowed to progress through the phases. This is done, again, by giving them the lifestyle of a core phaser: Work time and free time; work to fill up the morning hours (and

remember, a fifteen year old can do a lot of work) and free time in the afternoon. This work, of course, is unpaid family contributions, and this free time is, of course, free of wrong headgates.

In this environment, the youth can progress freely and quickly through the phases. As he does, you treat him like his age, but you schedule his day according to his phase.

## Appendix I

### List of Books

1. Create a house of order
  - a. Fascinating Womanhood, Helen B. Andelin
  - b. Man of Steel and Velvet, Aubrey Andelin
  - c. Love and Logic, Jim Fay & Foster W. Cline
  - d. The Baby Whisperer, Tracy Hogg
  - e. A Thomas Jefferson Education in our Home: Oliver & Rachel DeMille
  - f. Little House on the Prairie Series, Laura Ingalls Wilder
2. Require Work
  - a. Love and Logic, Jim Fay & Foster W. Cline
    - i. Pay more attention to the principles in this book rather than the application.
  - b. Little Britches, Ralph Moody
3. Inspire Learning
  - a. A Thomas Jefferson Education: Oliver DeMille
  - b. Educating through the phases of learning: Oliver & Rachel DeMille

## Appendix II

Further explanations on specific headgates

A clarification on question #2: Who was the creative one, the toymaker or the child?

Trains, planes, automobiles vs. Legos, Lincoln Logs, kits (science kits, bead-making kits, playdough). These toys are recognizable by the fact that they nearly always come in sets with many parts and pieces. The parts and pieces are not their counterproductive quality. Their counterproductive qualities are listed below.

Legos, Lincoln Logs, or any toy that connects: These give the thrill of creation away too easily. I want my children's make-believe creations to hook together sloppily, in a haphazard fashion like a blanket tied to the back of the rocking horse's tail, while the kids ride atop it pretending it is their carriage. This will never give that advanced thrill of creating something with perfect form and feature until they are older and have earned that advanced thrill through hard work and discipline.

For example, when they knit, the string holds together in an orderly fashion creating something with near perfect form and feature. This type of creation is thrilling, as is a pieced quilt, a carved wooden spoon or a loaf of bread. I do not want my children, especially my boys who are born builders to get that advanced thrill from anything but real creations. If they are allowed to receive it from legos, Lincoln logs or tinkertoys, etc. they may never learn a real skill, and more importantly, they will be reared in the easy, quick thrill environment. The same applies to girls with bead-making kits, rug making kits, baking kits. Let them rather learn to bake for real when they are old enough.

Science kits and experiment booklets: These give the children a big “Wow” that they cannot understand nor grow from. They are like battery toys. Real science is comprehended following the study of mathematics, and is reserved for scholar phase. Watered down science is useless.

### Leaving the property

The right to come and go from the family property is a wrong headgate because it is too much power for the children to steward. The children may travel around on the family property within the bounds the parents have set.

The reason the parents must have stewardship over their children’s travel is because “going somewhere” feels like progression. It is one possible avenue down which to channel their progression. I want to keep their potential physically limited to the boundaries of our property. This is because children have to progress in every avenue that is open to them, always choosing the path of least resistance. If traveling is an option, all their energy will channel into perfecting the neighborhood. They will not feel the more subtle drive to explore the pages of great books when their body can have it first hand.

Because we live on a small lot in a busy neighborhood we have chosen to let our children spend their free time in the home or outside in the fenced back yard. The front yard is reserved sparingly for when we invite them out with us. They receive ample social life because we have a developed social life with friends who also have children. The unsupervised neighborhood roaming is not an option for our children to choose.

Friends who come to visit.

Relationships are higher on hierarchy of needs than learning. Also, it is much easier to develop social relationships with new friends than to maintain family ones. Having friends visit is not bad, in fact it is a welcome event used sparingly. It becomes a wrong headgate when it is unplanned, child directed and too often for them to have times of quiet to listen to the subtleties that coax them to refine their lives.

### Money, Spending and Earning.

Spending is a wrong headgate for children because it uses up rather than *uses* resources. The power to bring things into the home is a very powerful privilege reserved for the parents.

Earning: When children have access to money, they will choose riches of the world over the riches of knowledge. It is possibly the most powerful headgate for children. But, just as we do not insert scholar phase activities into core and love of learning, we also do not insert “Father Phase” into childhood. There are no resource management skills that children learn from earning and managing money that they cannot learn from managing time in the realm of home and family service.

Children allowed this channel could likely skip an entire love of learning and scholar phase altogether—especially boys who have those masculine juices calling them to provide wealth. We see this from the olden days, when children not able to partake of the classical education would go directly from childhood to apprenticeship in their early teen years. Many had not the means to acquire the leadership education and so had, through necessity, to go this route.

But why would we ever curse our children with this if we do not have to? Their money making years will be an expression of the wonderful resource management skills they learned in core-phase and love of learning, and enhanced by the knowledge they will gain in scholar phase. They need to gain those skills before they go expressing them.

Girls have dolls rather than adopting babies. Boys have their toys rather than real commodities. Both learn real skills of resource management through managing their hard work and free time.