

Choosing Curriculum THE FAMILY WAY



Questions? Just Ask...

Our friendly consultant team is here to answer your questions, M-F, 8:30-5 CT.



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Click here to watch how the FAMILY factors can make choosing curriculum easier in our video on:  YouTube



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Watch the "FAMILY Way"
Video on choosing curriculum!

How to use the "F.A.M.I.L.Y" factors to choose curriculum

There are six factors that make each family unique: your **faith** (or philosophy distinctives), what **approach** you take to education, the **money** you have to spend, the **individuals** who make up your family, your family **life** circumstances and **you**, the homeschooling parent. Take time to think through your specific family factors as you research curriculum. Consider the questions below and review each summary of the icons in our catalog, this may help you in selecting curriculum that will work best for you.

F – Faith/Philosophy

Why are you homeschooling? What things do you consider the most important for your children to learn?

- F** **Christian:** Faith-based or including instructional religious content.
- N** **Neutral:** Avoids religious or theoretical topics or presents multiple viewpoints without preference.
- S** **Secular:** Contains content contrary to common Christian beliefs (i.e. evolution).

A – Approach to Teaching

What do you believe about how children learn? What is your vision for your homeschool?

- T** **Traditional:** Teacher-centered curriculum commonly used in classrooms that may include a text, teacher manual, tests, etc.
- L** **Charlotte Mason:** A methodology based on the work of a 19th century educator who maintained that children learn best from literature (Living Books), not textbooks.
- C** **Classical:** A methodology based on the Latin Trivium (three stages of learning), including the grammar stage (memorization and facts), logic stage (critical thinking), and rhetoric stage (developing/defending ideas).
- U** **Unit Study:** A thematic or topical approach centered around one topic that integrates multiple subject areas.
- M** **Montessori:** A methodology based on the work of a 20th century educator that emphasizes student and sensory-driven discovery learning and real-life applications.
- S** **Sequential:** Curriculum progresses through well-defined learning objectives. Emphasizes mastery before moving to the next topic.
- S** **Spiral:** Topics and concepts are repeated from level to level, adding more depth at each pass and connecting with review.
- C** **Conceptual/Topical:** Focus is on the "why," often with a unifying concept as well as specific skills; coverage may be broader.

M – Money

What is your curriculum budget? Keep these questions in mind when looking at curriculum costs:

- Which components and resources will you need for the year?
- Are the materials reusable? Does the publisher update or revise the material frequently?
- Which resource do you have more of: time or money? Compare costs of ready-to-use materials with those that must be prepared or gathered.
- Will you need additional resources or supplies that are not included with the curriculum?
- ∞** **All-inclusive:** Everything you need is included.
- R** **Required:** There are additional required resources that are a separate purchase.
- G** **Optional:** There are additional resources mentioned or recommended but are not absolutely necessary.





Digital/Online: Some components require a computer/device and may require Internet access.

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I – Individual

How does your child learn best? What motivates them?




-  **Auditory:** Learns through listening, talking out loud or reading out loud.
-  **Visual:** Learns through seeing, prefers written instructions and visual materials.
-  **Kinesthetic/Tactile:** Learns through moving, doing and touching.
-  **Multi-sensory:** Curriculum that employ a variety of activities/components.

L – Life

What season of life is your family in? Are you educating young students, middle grades, high schoolers, or a mix? What events (a move, a new baby, illness, etc.) will be factors in your homeschool year? Keep these in mind when evaluating the level of **teacher involvement** and time required to implement a particular curriculum, detailed below.

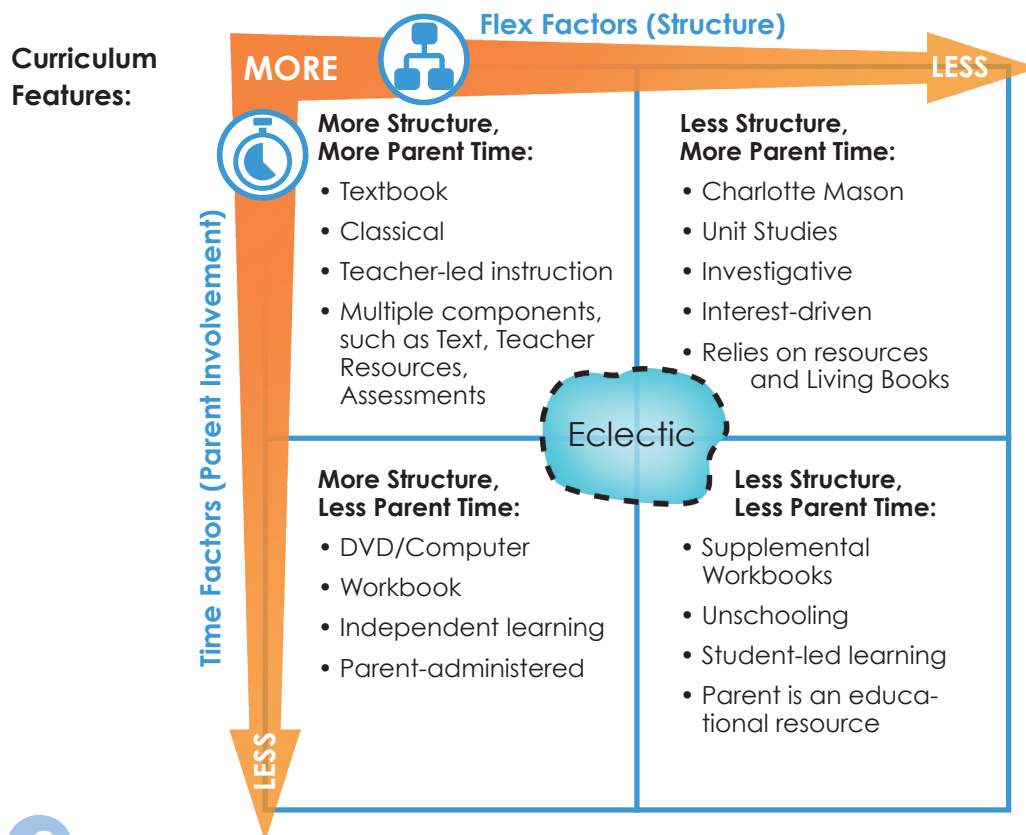
Y – You

What are your time limitations and priorities?

-  **Low Teacher Involvement:** Student-led materials; parent acts as a facilitator.
-  **Medium Teacher Involvement:** A mix of teacher-led time and independent student work.
-  **High Teacher Involvement:** Teacher-led lessons; may utilize discussions, hands-on activities and working together.


How much structure do YOU need? How confident are you about how to teach?


- If you are looking for heavy teaching support, look for curricula that offer more *scripted lessons, step-by-step teacher instruction, solutions with explanations, etc.*
- If you want more individual flexibility, look for curricula that offer less structure.




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VISUAL LEARNERS...

- Learn through seeing.
- Like written instructions and prefer to take detailed notes as they listen to lectures.
- Learn best with visual materials such as pictures, charts, videos, illustrated textbooks, and handouts.
- Like to have a quiet place to study and use colorful highlighters to mark notes and texts.



Remember visual details with ease.



AUDITORY LEARNERS...

- Learn through listening.
- Like to read aloud and often like to talk to themselves or create musical jingles to help them learn new materials.
- Like to talk through a problem.
- Remember by talking out loud and they like to have things explained orally rather than through written instructions.



Like to have music on while they study.



KINESTHETIC LEARNERS...

- Learn through moving.
- Likes to stand, and learns best through active, whole body movement.
- Actively participates in learning.



Move around when talking or listening.



TACTILE LEARNERS...

- Learn by touching-prefer hands on activities.
- Hands on is key to learning through writing, typing, building.
- Love to share what they learn through projects.



Carry small objects around in hands.

Learning Style Test



Read/Write:

- ☐ Enjoys reading on own
- ☐ Likes to research, use dictionary, encyclopedia, and other books
- ☐ Enjoys workbooks
- ☐ Enjoys writing stories, poems, letters
- ☐ Takes tests easily
- ☐ Memorizes easily
- ☐ When giving directions, (s)he writes directions on where to go
- ☐ Reads directions before putting things together

Kinesthetic:

- ☐ Finds writing difficult
- ☐ Enjoys building, fixing things
- ☐ Uses body when communicating
- ☐ Has a short attention span
- ☐ Likes hands-on projects like cooking, lab experiments, crafts
- ☐ Remembers things (s)he does better than things seen or heard
- ☐ Enjoys sports, outdoor activities, and being in group activities
- ☐ When giving directions, (s)he takes you where you need to go
- ☐ Puts things together by trial and error

Visual:

- ☐ Enjoys maps, graphs, posters, charts, videos, and TV
- ☐ Enjoys drawing, painting, sculpting
- ☐ Enjoys putting puzzles together
- ☐ Highlights books when reading
- ☐ Enjoys books with pictures and diagrams
- ☐ Remembers pictures better than words
- ☐ Easily distracted by changing scenes
- ☐ When giving directions, (s)he draws a map showing you where to go
- ☐ Looks at diagrams to put things together

Auditory:

- ☐ Enjoys playing/listening to music
- ☐ Sings and hums even without music
- ☐ Very verbal
- ☐ Talks to him/herself
- ☐ Enjoys listening to tapes, CDs, radio
- ☐ Remembers spoken words better than written words
- ☐ Enjoys quiet places and time alone
- ☐ When giving directions, (s)he tells you where you need to go
- ☐ Asks directions before putting things together

For more accurate test, use VARK: www.vark-learn.com/the-vark-questionnaire/

F-A-M-I-L-Y Resources



Getting Started/General Information

Rainbow Item #	Title:
045760*	Becoming Homeschoolers
027807	The Brave Learner
025329*	Shaping Hearts and Minds
037340*	Reclaiming Education
065480*	Teaching from Rest A Homeschooler's Guide to Unshakable Peace
083887	Think About Homeschooling

Homeschool Approaches

Rainbow Item #	Title:
000846	The Three R's — Ruth Beechick
003344*	For the Children's Sake (Charlotte Mason)
000278	Charlotte Mason Companion
005065*	Educating the Whole Hearted Child (Charlotte Mason)
010029	The Well-Trained Mind 4th Ed. (Classical)
022747	The Core (Classical)
056863*	Simply Classical
048814*	The Liberal Arts Tradition
034059*	8 Great Smarts for Home Schoolers (Learning Styles)
023811	Call of the Wild + Free

*Contains religious content.

Websites:

www.amblesideonline.org (Charlotte Mason)
www.welltrainedmind.com (Classical)
www.hslda.org (Homeschool Legal Defense Association)
www.home-school.com (Homeschool World)
www.ourhomeschoolforum.com (Our Homeschool Forum)
 Your State Homeschool Organizations

Curriculum Reviews/Descriptions:

Rainbow Resource Center: www.rainbowresource.com

Cathy Duffy Reviews: www.cathyduffyreviews.com

