

Form I Overview

Religion-add books as best fits your family.

Math-this is scheduled for 5 days per week, but adjust this as needed-choose your own program.

Handwriting-choose your own handwriting program, although Getty & Dubay is recommended. This is scheduled 3x per week. The emphasis on handwriting should be quality over quantity, so select only a very small amount for your student to complete on each of the scheduled days. A Year One student might only complete one line and a Year Three student might complete two lines.

If your students are still working hard to complete only a word or two in their handwriting program, then be sure that they are also working on fine motor skills with other activities such as, working with modeling clay, tracing activities with various forms of medium, lacing, painting, etc. These activities are important for children throughout Form I.

Phonics/Reading

Choose a program for phonics/reading for Years 1-3, as needed.

Year One -this is scheduled for 5 days per week, but adjust this as needed. You can find a Young Readers Book List at the website which includes suggestions for books that might be accessible to early readers as a supplement to your program.

Year Two -this is scheduled for 5 days per week with the option to exchange 2 days for beginning dictation in Term 3 only. Again, please adjust these schedules to best fit your students. You might also wait until Year Three to begin dictation if your students are not ready at the end of Year Two. If your student only needs phonics/reading scheduled for 3 days, but is not ready for dictation, then feel free to use any openings in the schedule for reading practice. You can find a Developing Readers Book List at the website with suggestions for books which may be accessible to readers gaining fluency as a supplement to your program.

Year Three -this is scheduled for 3 times per week with option to exchange 2 of the 3 days for Grammar in Term 3 only. You might also wait until Year Four to begin grammar if your students are not ready yet; please base this on their needs. The

scheduled phonics/reading days alternate with dictation, which is 2 days per week. If your student no longer needs a phonics/reading program, then please omit these three days from the schedule until Grammar is added-if it is added this year. You might use any open days in the schedule for reading aloud together or for student independent reading.

Transcription or Copywork

Include copywork or transcription, but only when readiness has been established and later transition to a copybook in Year Three, if you wish. Form I has transcription or copywork scheduled for 2 times per week, alternating with handwriting. Read the article “A Survey of Charlotte Mason’s Transcription” at the blog for more information about this. Transcription, like handwriting, focuses on quality over quantity.

Narration

Narrations will cover all subjects and are meant to be varied and adapted for age/skill level. In Form I, the primary method for allowing students to share their connections to books and to lessons will be through oral narration. Other narration methods will offer variety and build skills, many of which will be needed later for writing and composition. Year Two can make use of some written work and Year Three even more.

Be very careful with oral narration, especially in Form I; readings should be prepared and the selections should not be too lengthy, so as not to overwhelm students.

Narration Expectations for Year One-mostly oral, dramatic and artistic with only some written and this in the form of simple lists created as a group or with the teacher, simple and minimal labels to drawings, captions to pictures or titles to works, etc. Perhaps a short personal letter or two could be written or partially written at the end of Year One for some students. Students can also dictate to the teacher short narrations or parts of a narration, as needed. Written work will already come from handwriting and some copywork.

Narration Expectations for Year Two-primarily oral, dramatic and creative, but with some written work: simple lists, labels, captions, titles, personal letters, etc. Written

work will already come from handwriting and copywork (and possibly late in the year with dictation). Some narration suggestions included will present a simple research option. These allow the students to look further at a topic and write a couple of basic sentences about what they've learned. These could be adapted by having the student dictate or type these sentences. Or have your student write one or two sentences and dictate the remainder.

Narration Expectations for Year Three-again, primarily oral, dramatic and creative, but with some written work: simple lists, labels, letters, etc. Written work will already come from handwriting, copywork, dictation and possibly grammar.

Be sure to read [Narration: An Art and A Skill \(PDF\)](#) at the website. There is an article there and at the blog which covers how to help students at this level transition to written narrations. Only when your student is ready for written narration work should you then begin to expect any. These written narrations should be infrequent and towards the end of the year, again, with a focus on quality and not quantity. If your Year Three student is not be ready for written narration work, then stay focused on building the skills needed for written work (lists, charts, labels, diagrams, letters, etc.) and wait until Year Four for written narrations.

Independent Reading

This curriculum includes history supplement books and specifically arranged literature lists; this provides accessible books for students to read independently each year, beginning with Year Two. The purpose of this design is to better prepare students for the transition of moving from having books read aloud to them to reading them independently. Year Four holds the expectation that most students will be able to read at least some of their own books. Other Charlotte Mason curricula arrange the literature in such a way that the books included are too advanced for most students to read independently, particularly in the early years. This curriculum was designed to address both needs: accessible books for independent reading and challenging, classic and modern literature for stirring the imagination.

You will best know your own students. If your students are proficient readers, then you may wish to allow them to read the below listed books on their own, narrating orally after each chapter (or narrating after every few pages, as best fits). Levels vary, so some books are accessible to some students but not to other students. Please make adjustments as needed.

Year Two

- *Sword in the Tree* by Clyde Robert Bulla
- *Minstrel in the Tower* by Gloria Skurzynski
- *The Apple and the Arrow* by Conrad Buff
- *A Grain of Rice* by Helen Claire Pittman
- *The Boxcar Children (1)* by Gertrude Chandler Warner

Year Three

- *A Lion to Guard Us* by Clyde Robert Bulla
- *Freedom Train: The Story of Harriet Tubman* by Dorothy Sterling*
- *The Wright Brothers at Kitty Hawk* by Donald J. Sobol
- *Pearl Harbor* by Stephen Krensky
- *The Moffats* by Eleanor Estes
- *Farmer Boy* by Laura Ingalls Wilder
- *The Trumpet of the Swan* by E. B. White*
- *Girls Who Looked Under Rocks* by Jeannine Atkins

**The Trumpet of the Swan* may be more accessible than *Freedom Train*, so adjust expectations as needed—you may wish to use *Freedom Train* as a shared read-aloud book for the year. Year Three includes a list of History Supplement Readers and any one of these might be a good substitute if any of the included books are not a good fit.

Reading Aloud

Reading aloud should be included often in your weekly routine, particularly in Form I. This should extend naturally from your routine, so that your students are reading aloud a couple of pages from at least one of their school books on most days.

If your students are not ready for independent reading or are not ready for the specific book titles listed above for independent reading, then you might use some or all of these as shared read-alouds between you and your students. These should be a good fit, since books to be read aloud should present a little challenge, but not too much. This will better ensure that your students will not feel frustrated or stressed while reading. This is so important, since one of the goals in reading aloud is for the student to gain fluency in reading.

Reading aloud also works on skills which overlap with dictation. Read the article “Dictation and Reading Aloud are Interrelated” at the website blog for further information about this topic.

If the books are too challenging, then find more accessible ones (perhaps try the Developing Readers list) and use 2-3 days per week working through many of these titles as read-alouds. You might have open slots that are not needed from a phonics/reading program and can instead exchange the time set aside for these lessons for read-aloud time.

If your students are definitely reading all of the suggested books independently, then consider having them read aloud portions of these books to you: *Viking Tales* (Y2), *Famous Legends* (Y2), *Knight’s Castle* (Y2), *Homer Price* (Y2), *A Child’s History of the World* (Y3), *American Tall Tales* (Y3) or *Understood Betsy* (Y3).

It is assumed that the books used in Year One will be read aloud by the teacher only, although you might find some books for your students to read either aloud or independently from the Young Readers List.

Grammar-start in Term 3, Year 3 or Term 1, Year Four, as best fits. More information about grammar will be coming soon.

Dictation-start in Term 3 of Year 2 or Term 1 of Year 3, as best fits. See the website for an article on dictation. Read the article “Prepared Dictation” at the blog for more information about this.

Foreign Language

Begin a study of a modern language with your students as early as Year One, if possible. This is scheduled as a family or group activity 3 times per week. The language you choose now will, ideally, be the one which your students will know the best. This language will run the longest, since it is started early and will continue through high school. There are some suggested resources at the website, but use what is most accessible and what is the best fit for your family.

Recitations- include recitations each year. Allotted times for study and recitation are scheduled 2 times per week as a family. If your student needs less time to prepare each piece, then add more, as needed. You are always welcome to choose more

poems from the poets already being studied that year, or other additional works that you wish to include.

Family Lesson Time

Create a family lesson time for each day whenever it best fits your schedule. It would be reasonable to include foreign language, art, music, handcrafts, recitations and nature study.

Shared Reading

Any books of interest or from the additional reading lists can be shared as a family and read in the evenings before bed or during Family Lesson Time.

Families who wish to follow a 4-Day schedule may convert the scheduled readings for Day 5 to this collection.

History and Geography

There are 3 possible variations to the study of history: 1 Stream which focuses on one time period at a time; 2 Streams –upon which the main curriculum is based-which includes one time period plus an additional study of the ancients in Year Five and 3 Streams which includes an American History stream starting in Year Three, a World History stream and a study of the ancients starting in Year Five.

Science and Nature Study

Natural Worlds I and II will be fairly interchangeable level-wise. You would easily be able to choose whichever guide you wish and be able to combine Form I students in either one. Natural Worlds III (which will contain Astronomy and Marine Biology) could certainly be used for all ages in Form I as long as adaptations for the younger students were made, but you may not feel as if you get quite as much from it for the younger students. Since they are so young, and the greater emphasis should be on natural history anyway, this may not be a problem. The nature study side of these guides will definitely be flexible enough to use with all Form I students.

Combining Form I Students

Each successive year in Form I (Years 1-3) will show an increase in expectations; therefore the complete guide for each successive year will be increasingly more

difficult to share with all Form I students. For example, the complete guide for Year Three will not be marked as accessible for a typical Year One student (ages 6-7), although it may be possible to still use it with this age range if adjustments are made. Generally, lower years will be more accessible to students of the upper end of Form I ages. In other words, it will be easier to use a lower year with extensions for slightly older students to combine successfully in Form I than to combine students in a higher year and lighten the guide enough for younger students. It will be easier to combine up than down-although it could be done if needed.

If you wish to combine your Form I students for as much as possible, but still keep each student in their individual year, then consider these adjustments:

- Share and combine all Family Lesson time, including Shared Reading.
- Possibly share poetry by choosing (1) book from each year and covering each one in a term. This would allow you to combine them and add this study to the shared lesson time. For example: read *When We Were Very Young*, *Fairies and Chimneys* and *A Garden of Verse*. Choose three different books from those years the following year.
- Combine literature by choosing from multiple years in Form I. This can be done by reading aloud many of them, but still perhaps saving a few for the older student to read independently.

Example -Combine a Year 1 and 2 student's literature with these selections:

- Selections from the Red and Blue Fairy Books **or** *Andersen's Fairy Tales*
- *Norse Myths* **or** *Aesop's Fables*
- *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*
- *Charlotte's Web*
- *Little House in the Big Woods*
- *Ordinary Princess* **or** *Mr. Popper's Penguins*

These books could be used while one student is reading about the ancient time period and one student is reading about the medieval time period. Your Year Two student could also include the independent history readers for their own reading. You might also want to find a way to include *Famous Myths and Legends* for your student of the medieval time period. This is just one example.

- Combine your students in science and nature study by using the same level guide for all of them.

- Combine your students in everything by following the plans for Form I in 1-Stream of history.

Short Lessons

The main idea behind a short lesson is to match the length of the lesson to the student's attention. If your student's attention begins to drift, then it's time to bring the lesson to a close. Knowing that younger children's attention spans are typically shorter than older children's spans, the lessons in Form I are generally not as long if compared to Form II or above. There are time tables which were created by the PNEU which can be generally followed, but these times do not have to be absolute. 20-30 min. is a good general time allotment for most lessons, with 10 min. being enough for recitations and some readings. As with most educational ideas, principles and methods -make them work for the students in front of you.