

Dear Home School Families,

Welcome to the May newsletter. We are experimenting with an efficient way to communicate the activities that are going on without repeating ourselves in every newsletter. So therefore we are listing activities in this newsletter, that we haven't mentioned before, but we are trying not to repeat previous information or at least the details of those things that will take place in May and June. So, in this newsletter we will put in the new information, and then for a complete listing of activities, you can check the calendar on the website: www.familieslearningtogether.com You will see the activity and then when you click on each activity, you should be able to see all the details that pertain to it. Also the two previous newsletters are also there if you prefer to look in those.

Funding – Just a reminder that we need to have all receipts in by June 15th in order to get cheques sent to you and our record keeping completed and sent to the accountant. Again the funding for this year is \$713 per child. If you need a cover sheet to attach to your original receipts, please email us at k.d.snider@shaw.ca . Cheques will start to be written dated May 10th.

Year end Home School Visits – May and June are busy months for us as facilitators and so we are looking forward to visiting you all!. If you are wanting a specific day or time for a visit, please be sure to contact us so that we can try and make that happen.

At the end of this newsletter you will see articles that are from the weekly Home School Minute emails that you can subscribe to through the Old Schoolhouse Magazine website. I normally don't put in this much but I appreciated what they had to say about two topics. The first one is about learning naturally and this is a good time of year to be reminded of that. The second topic is about talking with your children. They also have good things to say about this very important topic and so I hope you enjoy them both!

Blessings and enjoy the warm spring weather which I'm sure is coming soon! Kathy ☺

Activities:

High School Options Discussion

This very informative discussion/presentation is taking place on **Tuesday, May 5** at 7:30 at the Door Christian Church (5315-Gaetz Ave.) There are a few speakers lined up that have handled the home school high school years in different methods from traditional homeschooling all the way through to programs with doing 100 credits at home to having their children do their high school in local high schools as well as combinations that worked for them and their child. So come ready with some questions for these experienced Moms.

Park Days in Red Deer

Park Days by Rosedale Community Shelter begin **Tuesday, May 5th from 2 – 3:30 p.m.** Again we are happy to have families volunteer to bring a watermelon so we can quench our thirst at the end of our active time! Check the calendar for more details.

Open House Coffee Morning

Are you a new homeschooling parent or maybe have been homeschooling for awhile and are you just looking to connect with other parents & their children who share similar values, interests and their love for homeschooling? I would like to invite you to an Open House Coffee Morning at my home on **Thursday May 7th** at 10am...Parents & children of all ages welcome.... Contact Kendra LaPorte at 403-314-2162 to confirm and for address & directions.

Drama Opportunities:

We are pleased with the many options that we as homeschoolers have, to enjoy drama in many different ways. First of all please call Heather Standish right away at 403.729.3873 if you would like to check for tickets for the Punchinello

play in Lacombe that is still on April 30th and May 1st and 2nd. There are many homeschoolers involved in this production and they are excited about it.

Next we want to tell you about 'Seussical the Musical' that will be held in Olds (again with lots of homeschoolers involved) and then lastly about Christian Youth Theatre Drama Camps and May Auditions for the Red Deer Parade. Please contact Tari if you want more information and there will be more information about fall drama opportunities in the next newsletter. Here you go:

1. Meadowlark Players presents **SEUSSICAL THE MUSICAL**. A brilliantly entertaining, fun-filled Broadway show for the whole family (based on the works of Dr. Seuss). Location is the TransCanada Theatre at the CLC Fine Arts and Multi-Media Centre in **Olds, AB**. Show times are **June 4-7th, 2009**. Evenings @ 7:00 pm (doors open at 6) and Sunday Matinee @ 2:30 pm (doors open at 1:30). Ticket prices are \$10.00 for adults and children 12 and up. \$5.00 for children under 12 (must be accompanied by an adult). General Seating. Tickets can be purchased at Craigs Dry Goods, Olds Municipal Library, and Shoppers Drug Mart Uptowne (all in Olds, AB). For more information on how to purchase tickets, or out of local area call 1-403-556-7838.

2. Kingdom Christian Youth Theater **Music Drama Day Camps!**

Three weeks of CYT camps to choose from:

Teen Camp ages 13-18	Tribute to Broadway	August 3-7	185.00
Junior Camp ages 7-13	Mickey's Magical Musical Revue	August 10-14	185.00
Bitty 1/2 Day Camp ages 5 & 6	Mickey's Revue	August 10-14	125.00
Junior Camp ages 7-13	Mickey's Revue	August 17-21	185.00
Bitty 1/2 Day Camp ages 5 & 6	Mickey's Revue	August 17-21	125.00

Early bird registration discounts by June 15/09

\$20 sibling discounts, for financial help please ask for a scholarship application phone Tari at 403 341 6021 or email dramadaycamp@gmail.com for registration forms and more information.

3. **Auditions** Friday, May 22, 4-7 pm., First Baptist Church, Red Deer Callbacks May 23

Mickey's Friends Visit the Red Deer Parade

Auditions for children ages 8-18. Help your child prepare and give a one minute audition so they could be a part of CYT's display for the Red Deer Parade on July 15 this summer. Kingdom Christian Youth Theater believes in providing an encouraging, positive atmosphere for your children to bravely do what most of us would not.. sing for one minute in front of an audience! No experience necessary. Help your child choose the best part of a cheery song accompanied by either a pianist or a DVD (music only) Remind them to smile brightly. This is an chance for them to step outside their comfort zone and do the very best they can. It's very normal to be nervous or even fearful.

More than anything we want to provide a safe place to grow and shine. Our desire is to show God's love and your children's worth. You may book a time (but not necessary) by phoning Tari at 403 341 6021 or emailing

ParadeAudition@gmail.com.

We will give you more details and suggestions.

Camp Little Red -Home Schoolers 'Horse Camp'

This year's horse camp days at Camp Little Red (which is located near Bowden) take place on **Tuesday, June 9th, Wednesday, June 10th and Thursday, June 11th**. To register in advance, contact Camp Little Red. Arrival time is 9 a.m. and pick up time is 5:30 p.m. The cost of \$40 includes the day's activities as well as lunch, supper and snacks! This is intended for ages 9 – 16 yrs. For more information call the camp at 224-3700 or check their website: www.camplittlered.com. Your child gets to learn the horse-basics, go for a trail ride, play all kinds of games, learn something from the Bible. These are popular days and book up quickly.

Art Opportunities

Tuesday, May 26th at 1 p.m. you have a chance to make Art Trading Cards at the Rosedale Community Shelter (again details are on the calendar). These are becoming quite popular with all ages. Below you will also see that you can make them again and get more ideas at the Artsparks event as well. So that is great for you 'Art Card' fans.

Also please remember the Art Display Day on **Tuesday, May 19th** again at the Rosedale Shelter. We are excited to have all home school students submit their artwork and from this art will be chosen – both by a draw and some by invitation to participate in the display representing our group's artist at the display at the Red Deer Hospital. Don't miss this 'artortunity'!

Artsparks/Artist Trading Cards

Artsparks is moving during the museum renovations, beginning May 4, 2009

New Location: Parkland Mall next to CD Plus – use the Safeway/Staples entrance

First Week is FREE and they are doing Artist Trading cards. Weekly Artsparks meets Monday, Wednesday & Friday from 1-4 pm Regular drop in fee is \$3.50 per person. **May 4-8** Housewarming Party (artist trading cards on the theme of Belonging). **May 11-15** Create Your Story (make a handmade book). **May 20 & 22** Drawing Deep: Line & Mass. **May 25-29** Paint it, Press it, Pull it (printmaking). Check out www.artsparks.org for the upcoming June-August camps

Wildlife Field Trip Ideas

Here are a couple of places that families have suggested to us that they have enjoyed learning about wildlife. The first one is a trip to the new huge outdoor store just outside of Calgary called: Bass Pro Shops. Families have spent up to two hours and I'm sure the children could have spent even more time there. There are all kinds of wildlife displays as well as a 30 ft. Waterfall and a 24,000 Gallon Aquarium. If you are able to go during daytime hours during the week it isn't crowded and therefore more fun. They also have a Laser Arcade with 56 animated targets – just to let you know ahead of time!

They will be doing group activities there likely in the fall and so we may be able to book something later as a group but for now it might be a nice family activity one spring day!

The second place we've been told about recently is the Sundre Museum, which has one of the largest museum collections of animal trophies from around the globe. Safari Club International has rated this 140 – specimen collection as one of the top 10 attractions in the world. Now we're not sure who the Safari Club is but still it has been reported by homeschoolers to be very worthwhile. Some who have children that enjoy drawing have even gone with sketch pads etc. and enjoyed time enjoying it in this way.

Afternoon Taekwondo classes offered in Stettler

Instructor Dave Hargreaves is opening his studio in Stettler to homeschool students who are interested in learning the art of Taekwondo. If you need a phys. ed class for your kids this could be it, avoid another evening out and enjoy a class in the afternoon. Eight week classes beginning May 5 to June 25, 2009.

5-6 yr old -- 2pm -- Tues and Thurs-- \$80 All other ages -- 3pm-- Tues and Thurs.

You will want to check his web site out at www.foxtaekwon-dostettler.net. Mr. Hargreaves and his partner Cindy, will be happy to answer any questions you have.

Archery Field Day

Thursday, June 11 or Friday, June 12 you are invited to attend a day of outdoor archery at Dragon Flight Archery which is located south of Sundre. They have outdoor courses, both field target courses and a course with 3D animals. The start time would be 10:30 a.m. and you would need to bring your lunch and then you would be done in the afternoon between 3 – 5 p.m., (depending how long you would like to stay). If you have your own bow and equipment you would certainly want to use that but they also have equipment to use if you don't. You can check out their website at: www.dragonflightarchery.com/index.htm. Thursday would be intended for people who are more in the beginner stages of archery and Friday for those with more experience. There would be a time of instruction as

well as guided outing on the courses. The cost is \$60 for the day and we need to know who would like to attend by May 14th. Please contact the Sniders (k.d.snider@shaw.ca or 348.0723) if you would like to attend. You would also need to make payment arrangements ahead of time. There needs to be a min. of 10 participants each day with a max of 15.

Tour of Peaks Chiropractic Clinic

For those of you who would like to learn more about what chiropractors do and learn more about this aspect of a wellness type approach to health, you have the opportunity to have a tour of the Peak's Chiropractic Clinic near downtown Red Deer. You can also check out their website at: www.peakchiropracticcentre.com.

The tour would be about 45 mins. and there is no cost. The date has not yet been confirmed but will be added to the calendar when it is. It will take place on either a Monday or Tuesday later in May. This would be suitable for parents and children approx. 6 years old and up. Contact Kathy if you would like to attend (k.d.snider@shaw.ca or 348.0723).

Lacombe Home School Mom's Supper

Come and join other Home School Moms living close to you. The plan is to meet at Leto's Restaurant located at 4944 – Highway 2A in Lacombe at **6 p.m.** on **Monday, June 1st**. We plan to eat, visit and enjoy one another's company. If you are able to come, please call Kathy at 348-0723. We have a couple of Moms who are 'graduating' and so I'm sure they will have some advice to share with others!

Also, if you are interested in meeting for evening coffee with other Lacombe Home School Moms from different groups please contact Gail Vander Roest at 782.9947 for details.

Top O' The Hill Golf Course

This Par 3 Gold course at Sylvan Lake, is offering a golf package to homeschoolers once again this year. The package is as follows: The program will take place once a week for 4 weeks. Each week will include: 1/2 hour golf lesson, 1 1/2 hours of play time on the golf course, Rental clubs provided, if needed

The last week will include a BBQ hot dog lunch.

The cost of the program is: 1 student - \$80.00, Family of 3 - 180.00 Family of 4 -\$240.00 Family of 5 or more 300.00 Costs include GST.

The dates of the program are: Tuesdays from 1:00 - 3:00 pm May 12, 19, 26, June 2 or Thursdays from 1:00 - 3:00 pm May 14, 21, 28, June 4 or Tuesdays from 12:00 - 2:00 pm May 12, 19, 26, June 2

Or Thursdays from 12:00 - 2:00 pm May 14, 21, 28, June 4.

Minimum age of participants is 7 years of age. Children under the age of 12 years must be accompanied by a parent for the "course play" portion of the program.

Those interested can call the clubhouse at 403-887-2766 for more information.

Sharing Bulletin

Central Alberta Festival of Science - this takes place every year at Central Middle School (5121 48 Ave). This year it takes place on: **Saturday, May 23** from 9:00a.m.-4:00 p.m. Cost: Free You will see such things as: Flying Bob, Petting zoo and many other science adventures, RCMP Crime lab etc.

Norwegian Laft Hus Society - 4402-47 Ave. Red Deer (403)347-2055 email lafthus@telus.net is hosting the following events:

Children's Festival Friday June 5 10-7 p.m., Saturday June 6 10-4 p.m. Heritage square \$5 per person

Artwalk: June 20, 2009 Heritage Square. Craft Wednesday's: All year round, each Wednesday 9-3 p.m. Free

Laughter at the Laft Hus: Each Thursday in July and August – learn Norwegian history doing crafts, playing games, and listening to stories. www.virtualmuseum.ca

Creative Kids Museum: Call for Art! - Celebrating Creativity 2009 An annual exhibit of children's art curated by Creative Kids Museum at TELUS World of Science – Calgary. **May 21st – June 25th, 2009**

The Creative Kids Museum is inviting all children and youth to submit two- and three-dimensional artwork to our third annual Celebrating Creativity exhibit. The theme this year is "Revived Objects". We encourage young artists to *discover and appreciate the beauty and potential of everyday objects which might normally be discarded and to use these objects in their artworks to express their visual ideas*. For more information about Revived Objects at the Creative Kids Museum visit: www.creativekidsmuseum.com/programs/revivedobject.php or call Wendy @ 403.268.8319. Deadline for submission is May 15th. There is also a: Celebratory Open House: Thursday, June 11th 2009, 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. This is free for all participants and their families to see the exhibit and enjoy performances by other children. There is no need to RSVP, just register with cashiers upon entering.

2009 Write/Right To Read Contest - World Literacy of Canada is pleased to announce the launch of the 2009 Write/Right to Read contest. It is a national bilingual writing and drawing contest that aims to improve literacy skills and create global citizens. Using an opening paragraph written by Kenneth Oppel, students in grades 4 through 6 are invited to complete a 300 word story and accompanying drawing incorporating this year's theme of tolerance and acceptance. This program is made possible through the generous support of TD Canada Trust and Canada Post. The grand prize winner will receive a contribution of \$1000 to a Registered Education Savings Plan, a complete collection of signed Kenneth Oppel books and a \$100 gift certificate to Amazon.ca For more information on our other great prizes, submission guidelines and judging criteria, please visit our website at: www.worldlit.ca/writerighttoread

Fireside Learning Resources Close-Out Sale!!

After 9 years of serving homeschoolers across Canada, Fireside will be closing their doors. We still have lots of homeschool curriculum and resources left and we are offering another 30% off the already marked down prices. Give us a call at 403-347-6334 to set up a time, daytime or evening, to stop by and have a look at what we have. Many mom's have also made an outing of this, a sort of mom's time out, especially handy when coming from out of town. If you would prefer to contact us by email, our address is flr@telus.net.

Music for Young Children, the high note in music learning. Your child will have a chance to learn about music, develop piano skills and gain a sound theory base. Classes include singing, rhythm instruments, individual and group keyboard, games, composers, composing, listening and lots of group fun! Parents included! Openings on Wednesday afternoons this fall from 2:45 - 3:45 for 5 and 6 year olds. September to May - 34 weeks. Please call Heather Standish at 403-729-3873 or myc4fun@hughes.net

To Give Away: 3 free kittens available to go to homes as of May 10. Males and females available. Litter trained. 2 Grey and 1 white. TOO CUTE. Call Corinne

For Sale: Sonlight 5 Eastern Hemisphere 4-day study, Sonlight Science 5, Lyrical Science (three volumes with CD's and workbooks) Contact Sandy at: sanyko2000@yahoo.com or 403-597-5095.

Violins For Sale: 4/4 Size; 3/4 Size (2 of these) 1/4 Size Prices vary from size to make....call Dawn for more information at 403-782-5417 or 403-872-5417.

Violin for Sale: Beautiful sounding 1/4 size violin for sale. Originally \$575. Have \$40 bon musica shoulder rest to sell along with violin. Asking \$475 for everything. Call 403-782-1092 or email jknapp@telus.net

Items for sale: All items are in excellent condition. Sunbeam water cooler - hot, cold, room temp, holds 20L bottles - \$65. Wahl Deluxe Pet Clipper Kit Model #58121 - \$20. 14 inch Sears Color TV with remote - \$35. Dr. Quinn Season 1 & 2 on DVD - \$55 for both. James Bond on DVD - 17 of 21 movies - \$90. Computer - Windows XP

Media Centre Edition Desktop PC, keyboard & mouse, approx. 3 years old - \$195. For more information please call Contenti's at 403-341-5434 or email goin2hvn@telus.net.

I just received the following email from a mom on one of the homeschooling sites I belong to. I joined and it has a lot of great content if you are ok with watching video on your computer. For eg. It has at least 5 Bill Nye videos to watch, many audios to listen to, etc. etc.....

Free Videos – Thanks to one of our HS Moms for passing this on after she found it and enjoyed Bill Nye videos and other audios.

The New York PBS station, WXXI offers free access to homeschoolers, as well as other educators to a service called Power Media Plus. It has all sorts of educational videos, including all of the Magic School Bus and Liberty's Kids, and all sort of other things: American History has 397 videos alone.

So, here's the info: <http://wxxi.org/education/k12/ondemand.html> Access requires a "general passcode," which is LJPry8hwwF You will then need to create a teacher account. Here's a site with more information on how to sign up, if you can't figure it out (although it was pretty easy.) <http://aqlibrary.tripod.com/video.html>

From the Old Schoolhouse – Home School Minute: Learning Naturally

Dear Homeschoolers,

At this time of year, many kids (and moms) are itching to get away from the books and get outside. The problem is that the bookwork needs to get done, so what's a mom to do?

First of all, look at what you're really trying to accomplish. Are you just trying to "get the pages done" or are you trying to teach certain lessons? Then, look at your objectives and think about them creatively. Are there any ways to bring those studies to life so that your child is doing more than soaking in the words from a textbook? Can you give your child opportunities to learn about those topics more naturally?

If you're studying the Civil War, are there any battlefields nearby? If you're working on simple addition, can you use Cheerios to make the lessons more fun? If you're working on punctuation, can you have your child blog or write letters or emails to friends and family so that he can practice those skills without doing workbook pages?

People applaud the school systems when they do practical, hands-on lessons or take the kids on field trips. Schools have to create those opportunities. As homeschoolers those opportunities are a natural part of everyday life, yet we sometimes disregard their value because we think that they aren't schoolish enough. It's kind of funny, isn't it?

You can read about how I started looking at how [learning occurs naturally](#) in our everyday life on my blog or about how you can make [gardening the ultimate unit study](#) from my winter 2008 article in *The Old Schoolhouse*®.

Remember the famous quote from Mentor Graham:

"Education is not just sitting in a schoolhouse. Education is learning, and that can be done anytime and anywhere--as long as the mind is willing."

Enjoy every minute! Nancy Carter

The Familyman [Todd Wilson, Familyman Ministries](#)

Well, we're up to our knees in the homeschool convention creek. We've got four under our belt and a bunch more to go. We were in Peoria, IL, this past weekend and have a couple weeks to get our RV ready before we hit the road for over a month.

I've already walked up and down the aisles of curriculum vendors, eaten their free candy, and listened to their spiels. There's some good stuff out there, and it can benefit you greatly . . . but sometimes it feels a little "artificial."

Not that that's always bad, but if you think about it for just a moment, walking around your yard, your house, and your world is like walking down an all-natural homeschool vendor hall.

Not only is everything free, but also it is often more effective at teaching and training our children in what's most important.

For example, my wife has been pondering the usefulness of a writing program for my oldest daughter Katherine (12). The thing is, though, that Kat already writes all the time. She emails cousins and friends, writes letters to grandparents, keeps a journal when we travel, and writes stories about horses and girls named Kristen . . . all because she likes to.

One is natural and one is artificial. One is already working and one makes parents feel like it works, satisfying the need to 'check it off the list.'

So . . . one day while I was talking to my wife, I said, "Why are we having Kat use this writing program when she writes ALL the time?"

My wife started to give me all the 'right' reasons for using a writing program and then stopped.

We decided to forget artificial writing programs with her and go all-natural. For our other kids, we might not do that. But there are natural ways of learning everywhere. They might include playing board games or cards, gathering bugs, or going to places that most people just read about.

One is easy to check off . . . but the other works. Be real, Todd

Weekly Language Tip

[Ruth Beechick, Curriculum Specialist](#)

Is the "natural" method just for gardening, chores, and such necessary household activities? I say No. The natural aspect of caring for pets and the other home activities is that children do them "whole," in their natural life setting, sometimes together with other family members. Some call it "immersion learning," meaning immersed in the real situation and not set artificially and academically in "school."



With that view, you can try to make reading and loving books just as natural as baking cookies. You'll often enjoy books together, often talk about them, often plan what to get and read next.

Even arithmetic can sometimes go natural. Cut pizza into fractions. Figure how many miles to get somewhere and the cost of gas for the trip.

Homeschooling naturally is natural. Don't work too hard on making it artificially schoolish. Ruth

Next Subject – Talking With Your Kids

Dear Home Schoolers,

Remember that commercial from the '70s, "Have you hugged your kid today?"

Well, today we're asking, "Have you talked to your children today?"

You're at home with them all day, but are you **really** talking to them? And even further, are you taking the time to listen to them?

Sometimes it's easy to get so caught up in the hustle and bustle of schoolwork, housework, and your other responsibilities that you never get much further than, "Did you do your math? Don't forget to take out the trash. Hurry up! We're going to be late!"

God has blessed and entrusted you with a pretty amazing mission field right in your own home. Invest the time really talking and listening to your children. Talk about the little things and talk about the BIG things too. As my oldest approaches graduation next year, I am increasingly realizing that there is still SO much more that I want to share with him and teach him. Even though I've always appreciated the time I've had with my children because of homeschooling, maybe I've taken it for granted sometimes.

Whether we like it or not, through the good, bad, and ugly, our children tend to base their impression of God on their relationship with us. Do you think they'll really believe that God wants to hear their prayers and cares about every aspect of their life if we get too busy to listen or talk about the things that matter to them?

I've got to do a better job with this. Each day is precious. I've got three boys and God wants me to make the most of my time with them. What about you? Enjoy every minute! Nancy Carter

Mercy Every Minute [Deborah Wuehler, TOS Senior Editor](#)

My first thought was, "Don't we all talk to our children?" Then after thinking about it for a while and putting off some of my younger ones with quick answers, I felt a bit convicted. I am remembering those times I tell them that we can talk about that later, and then we don't. But there are definitely those times when everything is stopped and I sit down and have a good talk with one or more of the children. Or we have a family gathering to read the Bible and talk. Or we talk in the van, or talk in the store, or best of all, everyone piles on my bed in the morning or evening and we just talk. This is where real relationship happens. The more I consider it, the more I am aware that this "talking with our children" should not be minimized, for it is where life is.

And come to think of it, I am overwhelmed with the thought that just as I desire close communication with my children, God wants to talk to His children. He wants to talk to us. He wants to speak with us while we are in the van and in the bed. He wants to speak to us when we are full of joy or in despair. In fact, He wants to have real communication with us every day. He talks and we listen. We talk and He listens. That's what our kids want. That's what God wants. That should be what we want.

Is there anything hindering communication with your God or your kids? Try this: drop everything and go and sit down and just talk with your God. Then, when you are done with that, go find the kids and do the same with them. You'll be surprised at all the wonders of just "talking with your children!"

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." John 10:27-30 ~Deborah

The Familyman [Todd Wilson, Familyman Ministries](#)

I'm convinced that 'talking' is the vehicle that God created for us to train our children in Godliness, life, and all that matters. Just look at His command to that rag-tag bunch of Hebrews in the wilderness in Deuteronomy 6:7

"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart;

And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."



But I'm afraid the homeschooling movement botched the whole thing up. We don't think 'talking' when we get up, go to bed, and go about daily life is enough. We think we need to curriculumize it and restrict it to 180 days of official school.

Nowadays, we don't have time to talk to our kids because we're too busy teaching them. We miss those teachable moments at bedtime because we're so tired and want them in bed...NOW. We don't have time to talk around the breakfast table or while sitting on the couch because we have to begin our school schedule.

We're so busy schooling . . . that we have forgotten about the power of just talking.

So here's what you . . . and I . . . need to do: we need to postpone our curriculum and set our agenda aside, and sit on the couch or around the table and talk about spring, Easter, and summer fun. Don't force the conversation by asking probing questions . . . just let it happen.

And happen it will. Be real, Todd

Weekly Language Tip - [Ruth Beechick, Curriculum Specialist](#)

A mom was seeking help. She said, "My son and I have always talked about the books we read, but now I don't know how to make it academic enough."

That mom was trying on a "school" mindset, and she didn't know that she had already gone beyond that and her son was into real life. He had developed the skill and the interest to talk about books. This ability could carry through the years and enrich his life. The artificial school questions or conversations would be a step backward. Whatever skills he learned that way would have to be translated into real life if they were to carry over into his future.

I suppose this mom also knew how to talk with her son about sports teams, chores, and other aspects of life. And I hope she wasn't looking for a schoolish way to talk about them. ~Ruth