

## Goals and Tools

Generally, young children learn readily and joyfully. Their world is a place of games to be played, words to be discovered, stories to be told, and God's creation to be experienced. Our preschoolers do not stop to consider how long the lesson will take, whether they have completed as much of it as their siblings at a similar age, the cost of the story book, or how they will use this information to earn a living at some distant point in their future.

We often feel pressured to teach more content more quickly. This mounting pressure then overshadows the native curiosity and joy that originally characterizes learning. As homeschool parents, we often lose sight of the education progress each year while we look at things that should not take precedence: our students' peers, the skills our students have not yet developed, the plethora of available curricula, and college admission requirements. When we focus on these things, we quickly become overwhelmed with the task we have undertaken.

Educating our children is hard work, and it takes time.

Think of other tasks that we undertake that are difficult. When we build a home, cook for a dinner party, repair a car, run a business, or sew a quilt, we start with a fixed goal and the proper tools. We should approach education the same way. We must have goals not focused solely on achievement

but focused on true learning. In order to meet our goals, we must equip ourselves with the proper tools. So, we begin by asking two important questions: "Is my home school focused on learning?" "What is in my tool kit?"

First, though, we must have ideas to express. Where will students get them? Are we seeking ideas that will enrich our children's souls, or are we trapped by merely checking off someone else's requirements? Are we able to distinguish between knowledge and information? Tools can grow dull over time; are we maintaining them? As parents, are we soaking in knowledge that will feed ourselves and our children?

Classical Conversations is an organization made up of parents who work to equip other parents as they help their students learn. We have created a number of resources to support parents. Writers Circle articles describe the principles of classical education in the day-to-day experiences of our parents. Our catalog lists books about classical education that parents have found valuable enough

to read, and re-read. Each year, 3-day Parent Practicums serve as annual training camps to offer new tools as well as hone and organize the tools you already have.

True education is about formation, not information. In other words, to be classically educated is to be molded into the kind of person with the kind of mind and mental habits that can appreciate truth, goodness, and beauty.

—Tucker Teague, "A Father Takes Up Latin"  
Classical Conversations  
Writers Circle