

And The Journey Begins...

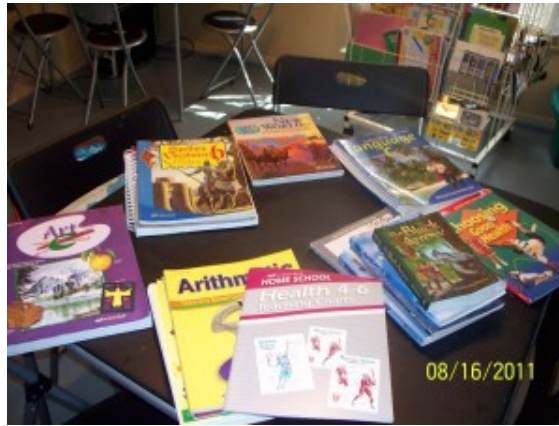
Even before we were married and had kids, my husband and I have always liked the idea of homeschooling our children, but the time just hadn't been right in the past so we put the idea on the back burner. The idea resurfaced last spring, and we began to pray and meditate on it and to do some planning. Over the summer we were able to visit with some of the families we know who homeschool, spending hours learning about resources, comparing curriculum, and getting to know their families better. My worry-prone mind tells me it's completely insane to take something like this on while expecting a new baby, but on the other hand, time keeps passing us by and our oldest is in 6th grade already. Never being exactly sure about God's plan for us ahead of time – how many children we will be blessed with or paths of service my husband might be called to in his career, etc – now seemed like as a good a time as any to try homeschooling our two oldest children. Besides, I've been told that it's easier to teach when there is a baby in the family rather than a troublesome toddler, which is all the more reason to start now instead of next year or the year after. So in addition to "Mom of 5", another new hat I will be trying on this fall is "Homeschool Teacher".

I am 90-95% ecstatic and 5-10% terrified, depending on the day you ask me – but only because I'm worried about taking on all these responsibilities while enduring the lack of sleep that accompanies a new baby. Other than that, I know we can do it – after all, we believe this is God's plan for our family, so we can always appeal to Him through prayer for strength, endurance, and patience. Also, I have tons of ideas; actually one of the main problems I came across when designing my daughters' curricula was finding a way to include all of the subjects and ideas that I was so excited about. I didn't come close, but there are always future years.

Our 6th grade curriculum is complete: it's designed and

outlined, and we have the materials. Our 6th grader is extremely excited about our adventure, and it helps to have an amazing support system through friends who homeschool – a good percentage of my daughter's friends are homeschooled, and they are amazing kids. Actually, ALL of the kids I know that are homeschooled are amazing kids, and the vast differences between the emotional maturity and the moral integrity of the homeschool kids and the public school kids in our church youth group was one of the leading contributors that led us to this decision. As youth group leaders, my husband and I have gotten to know many of the kids in our small town. They are all great kids, but seeing how distracted many of them are by all of the emotional dramas that are manufactured in the public school setting was both eye-opening and heart-breaking – another factor aiding our decision.

Tangent over – back to curriculum. We are using [A Beka curriculum](#) for our 6th grader, and we found a complete set of workbooks and teacher guides on ebay for a great price – barely more than our school fees would have cost. Taylor is extremely excited about her books; especially the art book which looks REALLY cool!! And the great thing about A Beka curriculum is that it is Christian-based curriculum, which is very important to us and another key factor in our homeschool decision. We also found a whole bunch of workbooks and textbooks the other day at Goodwill in mint condition and at a great price! It's incredible how many resources there are out there, and also surprising how fun it is to hunt, shop, and piece them together to make curricula!



Most of Taylor's A Beka Curriculum

I know it's going to be a lot of work. I know I'm prolonging indefinitely the things I might want to do for myself once my kids are old enough to take care of themselves – any hobby, job or career path I might have wanted to pursue when the time came to put all of my kids on the bus for the day is moot. But I'm accepting that my career is Mom + Homeschool Mom, and right now, I can't think of any better use of my time than the investment I'm making in our family and the futures of my children.



This summer we worked so hard on getting this homeschooling room ready!



Taylor's books are on the table

