

Preschool Homeschool Resources

You've just decided to homeschool, or your oldest child has finally hit 3 years of age and you've been excited to homeschool your children! ...Now what?

You are not alone. We get this question fairly often, which is why we have this resource. The good news is, you can relax. Your child is a preschooler. You have 2 or 3 years before it's time for compulsory education. That's 2 years plus for you to figure out how best your child learns, what he or she likes for learning styles, and what fits best for your family. That's plenty of time. You've got this mama- you can do it. The first step is to Breathe.

Now that life sustaining activities are out of the way, what about schooling? There are so many resources out there. It's easy to get overwhelmed. I would recommend taking a look at the Styles of Homeschooling file, but don't get ready to commit to one just yet. Feel them out and see what peaks your interest.

Resources loved by DAH members:

<http://carrotsareorange.com> - Marnie Craycraft - Montessori homeschooling

[1+1+1=1](#) - great toddler/preschool info

<http://mothergoosetime.com/>

[Timberdoodle](#)

[Easy Peasy's Getting Ready 1](#) - Free

[Starfall](#) - A lot of free content

[ABC Mouse](#)

Book suggestions from: <http://materamabilis.org/ma/>

<http://www.movingbeyondthepage.com/curriculum/age4to5.aspx> - literature based with crafts

[Our Preschool Homeschool](#)

[The Mommy Teacher](#)

[Percipion](#)

[Lillian Jones](#)

[Amongst Lovely Things](#)

[Hands on Homeschooling](#)

[Homeschool-Your-Boys.com](#)

[time4learning.com](#)

[simplehomeschool.net](#)

[Sheppard Software](#)

[Lego Education](#)

["Chris Davis Recommends" Resources](#)

Advice From Groups (Condensed from several answers over time):

My youngest is 21 months old and we do mostly sensorial stuff with him. Things like pouring sand or water into buckets and back again, pouring beads into the floor and picking them back up, feeling hot and cold and heavy and light and hearing the associated words. He's also just beginning to match colors and shapes and only because he is interested. You can definitely collect materials early, but my advice to you is to sample lots of styles when he is in the four to

five year range to see what works best for you. We were planning to be a whole lot more structured with my oldest (6) but that did not work for him, so we do Montessori inspired work. My middle child (4) enjoys some Montessori work but also really likes workbooks and flash cards, so his schooling will incorporate more of those things.

There are bazillions of curricula out there and it is easy to get overwhelmed, but eventually you just decide on a path and try it out. It's a learning process for all involved. But if you are anything like me or most people I know then if you collect something now you will prob change your mind on it by the time your child is ready to start. But I take advantage of websites and reviews and forums to narrow down my likes and then I buy as much as I can **used** through Facebook groups or homeschool swap sites. Then if something isn't a good fit I can resell it for the same price as I paid. There are plenty of places to buy new as well like Rainbow Resource or Christian Book Distributors (not all curricula they sell is Christian if that is a concern of yours).

I don't lesson plan, but I do like having set curricula (I use different ones for each subject) and so I just take it day by day, and for my own records I write down what we did that day in a dollar bin calendar. There isn't much to keep organized yet other than tons of books and a couple bins for art stuff and math manipulatives. My oldest is 6 and we don't officially "do school" with my 4 year old yet.

I have been doing this officially for almost a year and a half now and I am still learning a lot! Plus my second child is very different from my first.

When they are so young, playing with them and reading to them and snuggling and kissing them lots is what they need! Talk to them about everything...develop a great relationship. When they get a bit older learn everything with them...it doesn't just have to be opening up a science book..but exploring the backyard, learn about trees, birds, clouds, stars...it is so fun! We also have a ton of fun learning in Classical Conversations...we meet once a week with 48 other students to study; it gives my kids friendships and all of us accountability, which is needed with bumps in the road.

Play trains with him and talk about what might be the cargo and who might need it. Play cars and play auto shop. Play store, and when you go grocery shopping, talk to him about what's going on. Just simple things like, "Can you find the beans? They are somewhere to the right." Or "Let's find the number 3, because we need tomatoes and they are in aisle 3." Take walks and see what you find. Falling leaves? Why's that? Critters? What might they be doing or where might they be going? Go to the museum. Go to the park. Go to Matter. Bake cookies. You will be surprised how much LIFE will teach him!

And read! Read as many books as you can aloud. A few alphabet, color, and number books as well as beautiful, rich children's literature will do SO much. And don't be afraid of messes-sand, paint, dirt, water play, play dough, LOTS of time outside and at the library. Once mine hit about 3-4, I like to do a simple letter or number of the week...there's a million ideas on line and it does NOT have to be complicated. Good luck!!

I don't do anything formal until age 5, and then we ease our way slowly into formalized education. At 3 and 4, I think learning should be mostly play!

Learn little nursery rhymes and short poems and songs together...again nothing formal, just having some fun.

We keep it simple and encourage them to learn about the things that interest them the most. Today the 3 year old threw ice off of the balcony and learned a tiny bit about solids, liquids, and gases!

There are so many ways to homeschool. Some are very easy on the parent, others require a lot of effort and planning. Some are super affordable, others are pricey. I highly encourage you to come to one of our park days and talk to some of us moms- that may give you some ideas to help you whittle down what's right for you.

I didn't/don't officially homeschool for preschool. We just try to have a good routine that involves time for creative play (blocks, play doh, etc), reading aloud, and outside time when the weather permits. For a 5 year old ready to learn to read and write and such (and not all are), I simply started with reading lessons (Teach Your Child to Read in 100 Easy Lessons) and later on added A Reason for Handwriting and a math program. Then the rest was the same as "preschool." Lots of fun time.

My oldest was ready to learn to read shortly before age 5 (that's his biggest strength, though). My second is now 4.5 and we've done a few reading lessons here and there but she isn't really ready for a daily formal lesson. However, she (unlike my first) LOVES workbooks and coloring, so we've already, over the past couple of years, gone through a preschool workbook with her. Now I've got more workbooks but I only pull them out occasionally - we'll probably do more this fall.

So we are pretty laid back but also a little bit structured once we decide we are ready for kindergarten "officially." There are many resources and many methods. It can be expensive, free, or anywhere in between. As you talk to other moms and start feelings things out yourself you'll start to shape together some plans for what you think might work best for you and yours.

We started kindergarten very sporadically/gradually with simply a reading lesson, and then adding a gentle math and handwriting curriculum. We added in fun reading for "science" and "social studies" (books from the Sonlight P4/5 list) when he was moving on to first grade stuff.

Kindergarten is not mandatory in Iowa, so if you were going to choose one of the options with more involvement in the public school system then you start to report in the spring before your child's first grade year. We do the independent private instruction option so we never had to tell anyone that we were homeschooling unless they send a letter asking.

Welcome and good luck!