

# The CMEC Information Packet

## 2024-25

Thank you for your interest in the Charlotte Mason Educational Center (CMEC). In this packet, you'll find descriptions and video tours of our offerings as well as background information about our organization. Welcome!

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## INTRODUCTION

*This is our fourth year with the CMEC and each year I see more clearly the fruits of not only the feast prepared for my student, but also of the ongoing encouragement and practical support for me to grow as mother-educator. With each term of accumulated Form Meetings, retreats and mini-retreats, specialized courses, and the Mother's Education Course, my understanding of the philosophy has grown, as has my confidence in applying the method to our daily lessons ... When I first joined the CMEC four years ago, I briefly wondered if the cost was worth it, since I have only one child, and that child was still in Kinderleben. Looking back on these past four years, I realize that I do not, in fact, have only one student in the CMEC - I am a student too, and my child and I are both learning and growing together! The CMEC is truly for families, and I am very grateful to have the CMEC team as my own "guide, philosopher, and friend," as I endeavor to be the same for my student! - Raquel in AZ*

Charlotte Mason's philosophy rests on the foundational idea that *children are persons*, and as such they are entitled to a broad education that is delightful, challenging, and full of life. Just as our students' bodies need food, their minds need food too—*living ideas* of all sorts in many subjects. And so a Mason education has at its heart what Mason called "living books," books that not only provide students with information, but also capture their imagination and offer the nourishing ideas they need to grow. We work hard to choose the best living books for each grade for each term in all areas of study. Students also receive living ideas from being in nature, looking closely at art, listening to music, making things by hand using media such as clay and paper, and more. Through the student's course of study, he explores a broad and rich range of books and experiences.

We then pair that *living material* (what Mason calls "books and things") with *narration*—a method of assimilating ideas that, for the Mason student, replaces the dull repetitiveness of workbooks and comprehension. Narration's power is its simplicity: as the student tells back what he knows, he must bring his whole mind to bear on the assignment and do the work of his own education. As such, it is a *living method*; it grows with the child, developing in him worthwhile habits and a genuine relationship with the material he studies. The books he reads and experiences he has become part of him, and he develops through this wide engagement with the world a knowledgeable mind and a magnanimous soul.

We believe Mason's principles and practices offer us the best way to educate and offer our children the best way to learn! Most importantly, they provide solid preparation for whatever God has in store for their lives.

## **Our Work at the CMEC.**

*The CMEC has allowed me to give more breadth to the subjects for my children. Having multiple kids in various Forms was stressful but it is easy to combine and have them work together in certain subjects. The great amount of detail in the Form guides makes me feel as prepared as I can be without having to do lots of preparation on my own and second guessing myself. Everything about this program has made me a happier Mom and educator to my children. – Kate in Ontario*

Our primary mission is to provide a program of learning based on Charlotte Mason's principles and methods—comprehensive, broad, balanced, and rich in living ideas. Our course of study is flexible enough to accommodate various families, yet detailed enough to make planning peaceful for mothers and teachers. We choose books that have been tested widely in homeschool and classroom settings and have designed accompanying support materials to make implementation simple and joyful.

An essential way we achieve this mission is through the building and nurturing of community. Our shared curriculum allows us, just as it did for members of the PNEU in Mason's time, to provide specific support for the "books and things" of the program. It is so heartening to know there are families around the world working term by term alongside us! We meet online and in person to troubleshoot challenges and share progress. We as a team can respond to questions with targeted help, encourage our members in schooling faithfully, and offer ideas for healthy routines of preparation, work, rest, and reflection.

We are also dedicated to research into Charlotte Mason's philosophy and practice. Since its founding, the CMEC has been committed to studying the work of the PNEU (Parents' National Educational Union, the international organization of parents, teachers, and others interested in education during her time) and the PUS (Parents' Union School, the association of schools and homeschools for which her team provided a term-by-term curriculum and support materials). We explore the many programs and examinations we have from PUS schools, the six volumes Mason wrote on education, and the tens of thousands of pages published in her magazine, the *Parents' Review*, in order to understand better her methods and their contemporary application. The insights we are constantly unearthing from this study inform our curriculum and community offerings. We see the promise of Mason's philosophy for our time and aim to share her thoughts on both education and parenting with the world.

Finally, we are a group of mothers and teachers who believe that when we become practitioners of Mason's philosophy, we are not just learning how to teach but also how to live. We are committed to growing as parents, as teachers, and as persons together and alongside our children.

We hope that in joining the CMEC you experience a broad and enriching education, firmly grounded in Mason's philosophy, and oriented toward joy in living.

## **The History of the CMEC.**

*The CMEC has such a beautiful way of helping me as a mother teacher – I have found the whole of the program layout to be more helpful than I could have dreamed. It is a delight to use the system they have created, and it works well in my home. – Lydia in MN*

The CMEC began in the Philadelphia area in 2010 when a few families began studying Mason's philosophy together. From this sprung the idea for The Mason Academy, which allows homeschooled children to come together weekly for a variety of subjects in the Mason program. A few years later, we created a second iteration of this blended-model learning community in Princeton, NJ. We now develop our own full curriculum, provide the support necessary for its implementation, and offer ongoing education and training for members and the larger homeschooling community. Under the guidance of the CMEC Leadership Team, the curriculum is constantly updated, enriched, and improved by a committed, experienced group of parents and teachers. Our membership includes families across the country and world.

## About Membership.

Our subscription fee is \$300 per family. Members receive access to...

1. Our full **curriculum** for the 2024-25 School Year, which is uploaded to the website for our Spring Curriculum Launch in April. This includes detailed programs for 1<sup>st</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades. These programs are the heart of our curriculum, outlining a subject-by-subject course of study that includes books and other materials as well as recommended pacing. Accompanying the programs are shopping lists and exams for each term by "Form" (a Mason term that is a rough substitute for grade levels). Our thorough Form Guides walk through each book and subject on the program for the year. We also have a Kinderleben Guide for our preschool and kinder-aged students.
2. Our large collection of online **resources**, including webinars, self-paced online courses, curated *Parents' Review* articles, practical advice, video lessons, galleries of student work, and suggestions for implementing Mason's philosophy in the home across the Forms.
3. Our **community**. We offer an array of in-person and live online community events throughout the year, as well as recordings of those events for later viewing. These include year-long study courses, Form Meetings to discuss the work of each term, annual retreats, orientations, and more. 2024-25 members have access to the community events for the upcoming year, as well as past events that have been added to our resources area. Our new Member Corner includes a discussion space, a bulletin board for finding members in your area, video chats with featured members, and our Form Galleries, where you can submit photos of the CMEC program at work in your home. If parents have specific questions related to their children's course of study, questions may be sent directly to our Form Leaders, who respond via email and help guide members in navigating our resources.

Membership lasts from the date you enroll through June 30, 2025. You can register at [www.thecmec.org](http://www.thecmec.org).

Please contact [info@thecmec.org](mailto:info@thecmec.org) with any further questions. We would love to hear from you.

*These samples are for your personal use only and should not be distributed. Reproduction or sharing of CMEC materials violates our copyright. If you have friends who would like to know more about the CMEC, please [send them to our website](#) to request their own copy.*

## PART 1. OUR CURRICULUM

*The CMEC does such an amazing job organizing their curriculum so that I can feel confident that all the lovely things I want to lay before my children will be included. Not only will it be included, but its place has been thought through and makes sense related to the time period we are studying, etc. They have put so much thought into these details, I see it at every turn and I appreciate it so very much! – Amanda in MN*

Our curriculum is based on years of research into Mason's philosophy as well as the working out of her principles with a diverse group of families in the classroom and in homeschools across the country.

Some key features of our course of study:

### **Broad and balanced.**

The more we have studied and implemented Mason's programs, the more we appreciate the measured way her curriculum carefully builds from Form to Form. Each time we create a program for a fresh term, we look at the books Mason assigned her students and how the many streams of learning she offered her students in areas like history and science interacted and complemented one another.

We have purchased and read the books that Mason assigned during her lifetime to understand her goals for each subject and to become better acquainted with examples of living books for each grade. We then decided whether to continue with the same book, or choose another that, though newer, echoes the original in tone, material, and vividness. This process often leads to unique choices in our curriculum. For example, our Form 2 students read a book by Arnold-Forster (also author of one of Mason's favorite history texts) called *The Laws of Every-day Life*. This book interestingly walks students through natural law and how it shapes governments. For many years, it was out of print, but we found it listed on Mason's programs and brought it back into print for our program. We are grateful to partner with publishers such as Riverbend Press and Yesterday's Classics, who are as committed as we are to keeping high-quality old books in circulation and able to bring beautiful texts back into print for our use (at affordable costs!).

Our curriculum team reads many books aloud to one another, and with test groups of students, to be sure the book can be narrated and understood by the Form to which we are assigning it. We try to choose the best quality reprints for our Shopping Lists, so students have pictures and maps to aid them in their narrations and notebook work. We always choose books that are well written with an engaging voice.

All that said, it is a joyful task to compile a list of living books for students to read; it is much more challenging to curate that list into a program that offers balance among subjects and a suitable workload for each Form.

The Parents' Union School offered a timetable, or a schedule that assigned a given amount of time to each subject with each term's program, and we use their model as our guide. This helps us ensure there is time in the day not just for history, math, and science, but also for picture study, singing, painting, and handicrafts. Beyond that, there is time in the day for leisure and rest as well.

Because we use many of the books that the PUS scheduled, we are able to use the same chapter breakdowns they did. This has given us a clear sense of how lesson time ought to be used, how books should be paced through the term and year, and how to apply this same basic process to new books we select. The result is a program that is not just *broad* but *balanced* too.

### **Organized around a shared study of history.**

Students in our program study the same historical era, allowing for greater camaraderie and collaboration.

For the 2024-25 School Year, the CMEC will study roughly 1400-1650 and the Ancient Near East, including Egypt. Like the PUS, we follow a four-year history rotation. Our model implements Mason's key ideas governing the study of history:

- That children should begin their coursework, whether it be in history or science, with what is close to them and should slowly broaden their view of all the world holds. Our Form 1 students begin with American history.
- That history should become more and more comparative so that multiple perspectives inspire new insights. Our Form 1 students study American history and then add the contemporaneous study of the country that had the greatest impact on our nation's history, Britain, in Form 2. By Form 4, this study expands to cover world history.
- That students should be thoroughly grounded in ancient history. We add a third stream of readings on ancient cultures, beginning in Form 2 and carrying on through high school.
- That students from Form 1 through high school study the same period of history. This simplifies the program for a family with more than one student and builds camaraderie among siblings and peers—and throughout the entire community, as all CMEC members study the same periods each year.

For CMEC members, the history streams and cycles are carefully explained in a workshop with detailed handouts that include graphics. Our website provides links as well to further resources.

#### **Including “streams” of history, science, and geography.**

The approach to history detailed above describes Mason's approach to so many subjects. When students are invited to engage broadly and from multiple perspectives at once, they make rich comparisons and connections across branches of that subject. At the same time, the books and tasks assigned help the student gain a deep and clear understanding of each branch individually, an understanding that grows over time as students revisit subjects in new ways from the earliest Forms through high school.

For example, as you will see in our Form 2 program sample, Form 2 students study multiple streams of science at once. Along with a general science book like *The Sciences* by Holden, which rotates through topics such as astronomy, meteorology and physiography, students also read *Life and Her Children* by Arabella Buckley, a book on animal biology. They are at the same time working through a year-long special study of the weather and sky and keeping a nature journal of seasonal observations. This thoughtful variety keeps the student's work in science fresh and allows for him to form relationships with many branches of science at once—and to see their relationships with one another.

As the student grows, so does the breadth of his work; students in Form 3 add additional streams of science, and by high school, students are studying biology, physical science, earth science, the history of scientific thought, and current events in science each term. This robust coursework also includes lab and field work. Our helpful science guides help make such a program of study doable at home.

We offer on our website various schematics of our science scope and sequence so members can see how the streams work together toward scientific knowledge and literacy for our students.

This integrated approach to education is a unique element of Mason's method that we have seen nourish and engage our students!

#### **Assigning “living books” and “living things.”**

Our careful study of Mason's programs has showed us how much more Mason's curriculum contained than a mere list of good books! To that end, we have included the instructions and other work that the PUS provided on their

original programs beyond the books assigned, like notes on sand tray and mapwork for geography, word drills for reading, or timelines and charts for history. When we first began, we focused primarily on reading good books and felt perplexed by how all the other assignments Mason wrote about fit in. We see now that those elements of the curriculum were actually laid out for the teacher right on the program, and so we have followed suit. It has made for a full and rich experience with plenty of hands-on work in addition to wide reading and narration. Our members say that our support for this work has made them more consistent with these elements of their studies and that their students are gaining so much from this delightful balance.

### **Progressing thoughtfully through the Forms.**

Since we arrange our curriculum according to Forms, we are able to mirror Mason's progression in each subject as students get older. For example, a subject like citizenship carefully unfolds from moral tales, to retellings of Plutarch, to Plutarch in the original, to other great writers like Plato and Aristotle. In writing and recitation, we see the amount the student is assigned increases gradually and the assignments change slightly. In history and science, additional streams are added as students move from Form to Form. We reflect this expansion in our programs and see students gradually blossom in their skills and abilities. At the same time, this model makes it simple for families who are new to see at a glance how to scale down to the work of a prior Form for students who need a more gradual transition to the method.

### **Featuring end-of-term exams.**

Another unique feature of Mason's method is the term exams the PUS assigned students in both schools and homeschools. If you have not taken a Mason-style exam, you will find it is refreshingly different from the traditional tests most students are used to! They have the potential to be inspiring, educative, and joyful. Since our books so closely mirror Mason's own selections in terms of scope and sequence, we are able to pull from the PUS's term exams for the questions in our own exams. You are free to just print and use the exams we provide, or you may adjust questions to accommodate your family's adaptations.

### **Easy to combine within the family.**

Our program makes combining within the family easy, both within the Form and across Forms. For two students in the same Form: many books are on a rotation within the Form, like *Tales of Troy and Greece* and *The Sciences*, which makes it easy to combine students in rotating through these books. And because all students in the school study the same time period, history spines, biographies, historical fiction, and more can easily be shared *across* Forms. The set of geographical readers we use is another simple place to streamline for a family of students.

One of the videos in our Summer Planning Course walks through how to combine students and simplify your program. We think this is key for a parent teaching several students! Not only does combining make implementing daily lessons easier, but it also trims preparation time and energy.

### **Simply and clearly organized.**

Our curriculum materials include four components for each Form: Programs, Timetables, Shopping List, and Form Guide.

- The **Program** lays out the work for each term, subject by subject. Books are clearly marked with chapters to be read that term. Additional notes are simple and straightforward.
- A **Timetable** is attached to the back of each Program as a sample of how the work may be scheduled over the week. These sample timetables are based on the original PUS timetables from the archives. As part of our Summer Planning Course, we walk you through how to take this sample and build a timetable that suits *your* family, along with strategies for implementing it and adjusting it as the year goes on. We have found the timetable to be such a gift to the busy homeschool family!

- We also offer a clickable **Shopping List** for each Form to make your school prep an easy task.
- Our **Form Guides** start with a helpful overview of the Form, and then move subject by subject through the curriculum—including detailed notes on the scheduled books, sample lessons, suggestions for additional reading or work, and descriptions of methods like copywork and science notebook-keeping. We also try to offer substitutions in case they are needed: for example, if your student has already read the scheduled chapters from *This Country of Ours* with another curriculum, we offer an alternate suggestion for their history spine and provide term breakdowns.

In addition to these four components, we have our **Common Subjects Program and Guide**, which collects the family subjects like picture study, composer study, recitations, handicrafts, and singing for easy planning. Our Common Subjects Program gives simple term assignments for everything from folk dancing to art, making it easier to provide the rich breadth of a Mason education.

### Offering Canadian and British Supplements.

For members in Canada and the United Kingdom, we offer a supplemental guide with suggested books and breakdowns for history, citizenship, literature, historical fiction, and geography.

### What members say about our curriculum:

*No longer do I have to scour numerous websites and booklists to find the best of the best. Year after year the CMEC has curated beautiful resources in one concise list, taking time to review materials related to our history time period, finding the perfect fit for each grade level. And if that's not enough, the alternate titles and supplement list gives even more suggestions! – Angie in AZ*

*With living books, the CMEC offers materials whose richness stretches and bends when accommodating neurodivergent students; and with a program modeled around supporting the teacher as “guide, philosopher and friend,” I am finally equipped to meet my kids' needs, which surpass academics and reach into the heart of a thriving child. – Ellen in MD*

*I adore the form guides and program layouts. I have wanted to do a Charlotte Mason education for awhile but until finding the CMEC felt so intimidated about trying to do it myself. CMEC does such a wonderful job of giving you guidance while still allowing you to tailor the program for your family. – Alana in LA*

*Having all the books listed in the Form Guide and then grouped by subject helps me stay organized when managing several different forms. In the subject guides, I enjoy reading the background information about the authors and the reasoning behind the inclusion of the books in the curriculum. I also find the details and suggestions about how to use the books very helpful. – MH*

## [WATCH OUR CURRICULUM TOUR](#)

In this video, we give you an inside tour of the curriculum section of the CMEC website. We show you our user-friendly organization of curriculum materials and a peek at each Form document: Program, Shopping List, and Form Guide. We explain how we make book selections, the kinds of notes we include on our Term Programs, and the layout of our Common Subjects Program for easy planning of family studies.

## [VIEW SAMPLES OF OUR PROGRAMS AND TIMETABLES](#)

## PART 2. OUR RESOURCES

*So many of the resources on the website have become indispensable to me: the guides, the past courses, member challenges, and online meetings! It gives me a lot of confidence and peace to know it's all there for me when I need it ... The website layout is \*so\* organized and it makes everything with planning and organizing the year incredibly smooth—all the links are in one place, the curriculum guides are fantastically organized, and the shopping lists are great too. I love that the website is a one-stop-shop for everything we need to do school! – Nicole in VA*

The CMEC aids our families in implementing Mason's full curriculum. To do this, we offer a variety of resources, including detailed programs of study, self-paced teacher training courses and webinars, printable guides for specific books and subjects, *Parents' Review* articles that shed light on our objectives and methods, and more.

Our resources are living, broad, and balanced, just like our curriculum. We aim to provide the kind of guidance that leads to greater understanding and confidence in parents. By offering our families an overall education in the philosophy and the methods rather than specific lesson plans for each day, we have seen them thrive—their implementation of the Mason program feels joyful and natural. Our Form Guide provides an overview for the year, our Subject and Book Guides offer week-by-week ideas, and our Resource pages collect subject-specific articles and webinars. We pair these print resources with ongoing education in the form of live retreats, online courses, and meetings in community with other parent-teachers. Through this combination, families are equipped with the "high thinking" that makes "plain living" possible in the day to day.

### Getting Started.

We have a thorough Getting Started Guide to assist new members. In an accessible format, we walk you through the essential information you'll need to prepare for your school year with confidence. We recommend which webinars to watch first, share information about our online meetings, and offer key tips to ensure that you feel comfortable with the CMEC offerings.

### General Resources.

This section of the website is full of resources to help you understand the "big picture," as well as what that looks like day to day. We describe, in detail, the key components of a Charlotte Mason education.

- Our **Timetables and Logbooks** page explains how to build a timetable and set up a logbook, as well as the benefits of both. The timetable is essentially the schedule we each design to accommodate the course work, needs, and age ranges of our families. Mason's schools used a six-day school week, but most of our families schedule only five days of school weekly, so on this page, we discuss how to shift the sample into a workable version of your family. We include tools like our Timetable Quick Sheets, which detail the number and length of lessons in each subject for each form, and some blank timetable planning cards for those who prefer a tactile format for their scheduling. The logbook, a teacher tool we learned about from Mason's schools, is a way to plan and track student work efficiently and simply. So many members have written to say how much they appreciate these resources! We have also collected sample member timetables and logbooks for inspiration.
- Under **Occupations and Leisure**, we discuss building good habits of family leisure and moving older students toward independently directing their afternoon work and free time. We offer lists of daily and weekly occupations and sample grids for easy planning.
- **Narration** is integral to the Mason method! Our Narration page offers a two-part webinar on the basics of narration for all Forms as well as helpful *Parents' Review* articles on the subject. These articles also include recommendations for narration in group settings for those who are homeschooling multiple students or teaching in a co-op.



- Our **Exams** page includes a thorough webinar on Mason-style exams and tips for a successful exam week at home. We hope all our families will experience exams to be joyful, fruitful, and educative! We also provide a reflection guide to use in assessing exams and in asking for student feedback.
- We have a **High School** page for those interested in learning about how to homeschool in the Upper Forms. Here we have put together a set of resources for high school parents, from sample transcripts and course descriptions, to a carefully curated list of online resources about SAT testing, college decisions, and more.
- Under **Habits for Mothers**, we provide resources for homemaking while home-educating, from a bullet journaling webinar to printable “challenges” that guide you through how to develop a morning routine or plan for pre-reading. We have a gallery there where members can share photos of their progress—we always love to cheer one another on!

Our General Resources area also includes our “Top Ten” *Parents’ Review* articles for those new to the Mason method, an extensive compilation of public domain links for scheduled books, and more!

### Self-Paced Courses for Parents.

Each of our online courses includes a set of videos with accompanying handouts, narration assignments, and suggestions for implementing the course ideas in the home. The list of courses we offer expands each year.

- We recommend new members begin with our course on **The Method of the Lesson** in a Mason education. It features a thought-provoking talk—great for beginners and advanced educators alike—about the role of the teacher and how living books and living methods can combine for delightful studies. The talk is accompanied by immersions in dictation, geography, recitation, singing, and poetry. The course also includes reflection questions and narration prompts as a guide for integrating the ideas and understanding the philosophy more fully. Some members watch this as a refresher each year!
- Our **Summer Planning** course lays out all you need to know for planning your school year. There are five videos, each detailing a different element of planning: combining students and simplifying the program, planning for preparation and pre-reading, building a timetable that works for your family, implementing the timetable, and setting up your logbook. The course is designed with accompanying “work session” assignments so mothers can pull together their own materials piece by piece while they watch. We also have a follow-up video in which members share how they have approached their planning using these tools. We host a Q&A chat each summer so members working through the course can ask questions and share their insights.
- Our new **Reflection Course** offers a step-by-step approach to building a simple and effective routine of reflection that will benefit your homeschool and home life. With short videos on daily, weekly, term-level reflection followed by hands-on work sessions and plenty of helpful handouts, the course walks through how to set up and faithfully keep a logbook, how to assess exams at end of term, how to brainstorm problem areas—and how to keep a positive mindset through the process!
- Besides these general-interest courses, we offer several subject-specific courses. For example, our **Art Instruction** course includes lesson immersions in brush drawing, clay modeling, and chalk drawing by our art teacher at The Mason Academy, as well as guides for each medium. We also provide suggestions for implementing art lessons in a home with multiple students of multiple ages. Our brand-new **Composition** course covers how to cultivate good writers from Form 1 through high school and includes handouts and immersion lessons.
- The **Mothercraft Course** is our latest addition! Through short videos and accompanying work sessions, we explore ideas like beauty, comfort, and order by focusing on three areas of homemaking—laundry, meals, and

living spaces. The talks and handouts offer plenty of practical support for serving our families well and cultivating a generous, balanced perspective.

Our members use these courses in various ways: you might carve out a weekend to work through a course as a personal retreat; you might spread out a course for a month-long study, taking up a new video and topic each week; you might host other CMEC members in your local community to watch together. The videos can be revisited as often as you wish; they make fruitful study at every level.

### Resource Pages.

Each subject-specific page features helpful *Parents' Review* articles, suggestions for implementing the material, sample CMEC student work, and more. The type of support provided varies by subject.

- For example, our History page has a webinar and handouts describing Mason's (and the CMEC's) approach to history, including its streams and the four-year rotation. It also houses our annual collection of Historical Supplements, which are curated suggestions for leisure reading, biographies, additional non-fiction resources, historical fiction, and good references for notebook work for the period we are studying. Alongside that are suggestions for keeping a current events notebook and an explanation of the Book of Centuries and century charts.
- We have robust Art Instruction and Handicraft areas, including guides, supply lists, video art lessons (chalk drawing, clay modeling, brush drawing), and thorough photo tutorials for many handicraft media. These videos and tutorials are thoughtfully prepared by our art and handicraft teachers at The Mason Academy and can be used with a variety of ages and levels. This support allows busy parents to introduce a joyful series of subjects without a lot of tedious prep work! This support allows busy parents to introduce a joyful series of subjects without a lot of tedious prep work! As a result, they are one of our members' favorite resources.
- Our Music section includes separate pages for Hymns and Folksongs, Composer Study, and Solfege and Singing Games. Under Hymns and Folksongs and Composer Study, we have dedicated guides for all assigned pieces (described below). Our Singing Games and Solfege page includes sample lessons, a guide and playlist for the year's suggested singing games, and recommended books for games.
- Our Plutarch page includes sample lessons, a gallery of student narrations for Plutarch, and curated map collections—in addition to our thorough term-by-term Plutarch Guides, as described below.

These are just a few of the resources available on our website—and our subject pages continue to expand. We are always working toward fresh ideas and further understanding of Mason's methods, and these pages are one place we get to share those insights with our members.

### Subject and Book Guides.

We offer both big-picture and chapter-by-chapter support for parents using our recommended books and materials. Like Mason, we believe that “the teacher's part is, in the first place, to see what is to be done, to look over the work of the day in advance and see what mental discipline, as well as what vital knowledge, this and that lesson afford; and then to set such questions and such tasks as shall give full scope to his pupils' mental activity.” (*School Education*, pp. 180-181) We also think, like Mason, that mothers are well-equipped to do this kind of work themselves—and more importantly, that personal lesson planning offers flexibility and enables the mother to take on the proper posture for teaching, that of “guide, philosopher, and friend.”

There are certain books or subjects that can benefit from additional support. For example, if we have chosen an older living book, we like to provide updated information for families. In the sciences, we like to provide a model for the lab work, field work, or notebook work students should do alongside the reading. In art and handicrafts, we

know many mothers appreciate suggestions for where to begin and what materials to use. And so each year, we look over our Form Programs to see which books or subjects would most benefit from guides.

Some examples of the kinds of support we offer in these guides:

- Our artist and composer study guides offer biographical information about the artist/composer studied and a write-up for each selection assigned, with “captain ideas” or “seed thoughts” to introduce the lesson as well as suggestions for narration or notebook work. Our composer study guides also include a playlist. Whenever our artist or composer was studied by the PUS, we also include the accompanying *Parents’ Review* article—these were the guides Mason asked to be created for their member families, and we are excited to be able to use them!
- Our geography guides walk through sample lessons, cover how to use a sand tray and chalkboard in geography work, explain the progression through the Forms, and then offer chapter-by-chapter links to updated images, articles, and videos for the geography readers scheduled.
- For our scheduled hymns and folksongs, we create a Songbook (available through Riverbend Press) with an accompanying playlist. A printable guide offers the history and background for each piece.
- Our science guides are primarily designed to assist our high school families. For our science courses that pair a living text with lab work or field work, we include supply lists, websites, and other extension activities. We also provide suggestions for notebook work, a curated set of demonstrations/experiments, and a Lab Notebook Guide written directly to high school students.

This is just a sampling! We also have guides for foreign language songs and stories, special studies, grammar from elementary through high school, and more.

Our guides are available in PDF for easy printing or download. Some families like to print and bind their guides to use through the year. Other families like to load their guides to their iPad or tablet, or access on their laptop so they can click through the links. Others do a combination of these two options, depending on the subject.

#### **What members say about our resources:**

*Because of the CMEC, I am keeping a log book for the first time (I have a Form 3 student and have followed CM methods from the beginning). It has helped me tremendously to evaluate how our homeschooling is going in both short-term, and long-term trajectories. It has helped me discern how to better prepare for each school day and it has helped me to reduce wasted time between subjects. – AT*

*The CMEC is unique in its dedication to equipping the mother teacher for what I feel is an incredibly reasonable price. Also, because of the way the website is set up I am never overwhelmed by FLASHY or anything lacking substance. It's a slow, inviting space on the Internet and I can take my time to learn and grow alongside my kiddos. I love the detailed videos on art instruction and handicrafts. I lack that knowledge entirely and need the help as I learn alongside my son. I am still going through all the incredible resources from PR articles to webinars to courses – this is a feast for the mother teacher! I also appreciate the detailed subject guides. This was my first year completely committing to educating in the Charlotte Mason way and I couldn't have done it without the CMEC. The gentle guidance is so incredibly helpful. – Samantha in FL*

*The resources have been invaluable to our homeschool this year. I have been able to approach each subject with confidence and excitement because of these guides. We welcomed our 7th baby in the fall; having the [CMEC] support in place made for a much simpler transition into our school year. – Kendra in NC*

*The Form Guides are really superlative. There are other programs out there which can supply booklists, but with the form guides you really get to see the "why" beyond why a particular book was used, how to use the book well and see the "behind the scenes" of how the whole programme hangs together. - Emily in NH*

*The Summer Planning [Course] helped me to start our school year on firm footing. My children remarked soon into the year that it was our best year yet! I know that was mostly due to the CMEC and the thoughtful preparation the administrators poured into the program. - Valerie in TX*

## **[WATCH OUR RESOURCES TOUR](#)**

**This video provides an inside look at our resources, including our general resources area, our curated suggestions for those new to the philosophy or new to the CMEC, our self-paced online courses, and our subject resources with *Parents' Review* articles and webinars. You get to scroll through many of our members-only pages as we show examples of our Subject Guides and galleries of student work.**

## PART 3. OUR COMMUNITY

*The support offered to mother teachers is the main reason I joined the CMEC. I so appreciate all the meetings, retreats, courses, etc. that have helped me to become the best home educator that I can be! – Emily in WA*

Mason writes that education is an “atmosphere, a discipline, and a life.” Our community helps enrich each of these foundational components. Our members tell us that the atmosphere of their homes is more positive because they have the support they need, the discipline required of them is more doable because they have so many helpful resources at their disposal, and life is more engaging and joyful in the company of others on the same path. Our offerings grow and adapt from year to year with the development of CMEC families and the express needs of our members in mind. We aim to encourage, provide accountability, educate, equip, and build relationships.

We offer a wide range of online and in-person events for our members each year. This includes both ongoing groups, like our Mother’s Education Course and Community Learning Support Group, as well as annual events like our Fall Mini-Retreat and Parents’ Night. We livestream all of our events and offer recordings. We also provide other kinds of online support, including discussions of weekly topics at La Pianta, video messages from the CMEC Team, and a monthly newsletter.

Our model of support aims to be twofold: constructive and responsive. We offer regular and rich continuing education that lets us all move forward in exploring ideas together as a community. At the same time, we also have methods in place to respond to questions as they arise.

The CMEC Team is made up of homeschooling parents who are not just creating the curriculum but also using it in their own homes and with their local communities. Because of this, we are able to bring both experience and sympathy to our community offerings—we consider ourselves working out the ideas right along with our members.

At the same time, all of our support is based not just on personal experience but also on a solid understanding of Mason’s philosophy. We ground our community offerings in active and ongoing research into Mason’s programs, volumes, and archives. For example, our summer interns are engaged in a project of putting all of the PUS programs and exams into a searchable database for our use in creating the curriculum. Other team members are doing topical research in our personal collection of the *Parents’ Review*, from charting the artist study rotation of the Parents’ Union School to exploring the books recommended for art lessons. This kind of behind-the-scenes research and development gives us firm footing for our work with families.

### **Curriculum Launch.**

At the Spring Curriculum Launch, our curriculum team gives a live walk-through of each Form’s program: the reason each book was chosen, the role it plays in the curriculum, and additional notes and thoughts that will give you “eyes to see” the year ahead. This is such an exciting day!

We hold this meeting in the spring rather than in the summer for a few reasons. First, we find that it provides a fresh dose of inspiration for finishing your school year strong! As you see how the curriculum will progress into the next year, you can tell how the work you are doing to finish out your school year will prepare your student well for the year to come. Second, parents can get a jump start on purchasing and collecting their schoolbooks. It is encouraging to already have the next year’s books ready to go on the shelf—and it makes pre-reading during the summer months much more leisurely.

We also hold a separate Launch in May for the Common Subjects and for our Kinderleben program.

### **Fall Mini-Retreat.**

During our Fall Mini-Retreat, we take on a particular subject or topic workshop-style, with a unique mix each year of modeling the art of teaching, work sessions, and small group discussion. This event gives us the opportunity to dive deeply into a particular area of the Mason program. In 2020, for example, we took on art instruction in the Mason model, spending a full day on talks and immersions in various media from Mason's programs. In Fall 2021, we discussed composition through the Forms, exploring Mason's approach to raising good writers. In Fall 2022, we walked through the components of a thoughtful and effective reflection routine, and our topic for Fall 2023 was home-making.

### **Parents' Night.**

Our annual Parents' Night gives members a chance to reflect on their family culture and educational goals and is planned with both mothers and fathers in mind. We believe that the Mason philosophy offers *home education* in the broadest sense—it has the potential to affect not just daily lessons but everything about our home life, including how we spend our evenings and weekends, where we vacation, how we parent toddlers, and what career paths our students follow. We welcome fathers into this conversation and enjoy the chance to discuss larger issues surrounding education, parenting, and life. Past topics have included a look at the CMEC's high school program with an eye toward college, the relevance of Plutarch, cultivating a sense of adventure in family life, reframing challenges as opportunities for growth, and the benefits of a narrative approach to history. These are available as part of our member resources as well.

### **Mother's Education Course.**

Our popular Mother's Education Course walks through Mason's twenty principles with a fresh outlook and plenty of practical advice. For this course, members have access to a carefully designed set of coursework, including readings, narration prompts, and "practice" assignments. We welcome both beginners and veterans and try to both cover the "basics" for those new to the method and provide new readings and new thoughts for more experienced mothers. We meet live monthly to share insights and discuss our work together.

### **Support for Community Learning and Engagement.**

This free private support group is for those leading or teaching in co-ops, hybrid schools, and other learning programs. Together we dig into best practices for group learning. We discuss creating a healthy atmosphere for the community, building good classroom habits, communicating with parents, setting up clear expectations, practicing group narration, and more.

In addition to live meetings, we have a special set of resources for leaders and teachers:

- Our Common Subjects in Community Guide details suggestions for implementing subjects like composer study, artist study, art, recitation, dance, and drill in group settings.
- Our Community Learning Handbook discusses how to begin and/or grow a community in your local area from both a philosophical and a logistical perspective. This includes sample invitation emails, timetable examples for half-day and full-day meetings, a reflection guide for co-op teachers, a list of potential roles for parents in co-ops, and much more.
- Our curated set of *Parents' Review* articles on group learning covers topics like narration in multi-age settings, classroom organization, teacher preparation and communication with parents, and more.
- Support group participants also have access to our Collections, which allow members to use select CMEC materials with non-member families in their local groups at a discounted rate.

We believe strongly in supporting those who are reaching out to share Mason's vision with their local communities. The CMEC itself began as a small local co-op that eventually expanded over many years into the international organization we have today, and we are happy to help others share in the many benefits of in-person collaborative learning.

But our goal for community support extends beyond just collaborative schooling. We have many members engaged in their neighborhoods doing various kinds of important work, from running a catechism class at church to bringing together local mothers for friendly fellowship, to hosting Thanksgiving for an assorted group of family and friends. We believe Mason's philosophy is relevant to all of these realms of relationship-building and service!

Part of our mission as an organization is to equip mothers for this service, both within and outside of the Charlotte Mason homeschooling community. For example, for our Summer Gatherings this past year, we encouraged members to invite other mothers in their community for a simple retreat together. We provided a Hostess Toolkit with ideas for organizing such an event, as well as a *Parents' Review* article and discussion guide to use with their groups. We had dozens of members across the world host small events in their local areas.

### **Form Meetings and Form Leaders.**

Each Form has a Form Leader who fields questions about the curriculum and methods of the Form. Our Form Leaders are available via email, and although they do not provide individual consultations, they can helpfully direct members to resources on the website, clarify instructions in the Form Guide, or provide additional insights in reply. All of our Form Leaders are not only experienced mothers, but also are currently teaching children in the Form they lead.

We also meet online as a community each term to share, troubleshoot, and chat specifically about the work of the Form. We collect questions before each term's meeting to help guide the content and format of these meetings, but we also take on topics of study, such as how to begin written narrations, get outside with little ones, or think about the dictation lesson. Responding to questions in this live format allows us to give clear explanations. Our members value the chance to ask questions and bond with other mothers doing the same work around the country.

### **Member Corner.**

A special corner of our website is dedicated to member-to-member interaction. This Member Corner offers various features:

- At our discussion space, called La Pianta, we host a weekly conversation on a specific topic. We cover a large range of subjects: getting started with written narration, menu planning, gratitude, Plutarch, mottoes for daily inspiration, clay modeling, and more. This discussion space is moderated by the CMEC to keep the conversations on topic. Our members are a wonderful group of thoughtful and dedicated mothers, and we all benefit from their friendly contributions and helpful questions.
- In our Form Galleries, members can submit photos of the CMEC program at work in their homes. It is such a joy to browse these galleries and see the variety of ways that our students respond to the same books and activities!
- We host a bulletin board to facilitate local, in-person community among members. Members in search of community can post their contact information, and members already running communities can provide that information for others who may want to join.
- We have a growing collection of Member Chats in which we record live conversations with members about a special element of their approach to homeschooling with the CMEC.

We believe that virtual connection can be helpful and life-giving, but also that time spent online should be kept in a healthy proportion to in-person community. We aim for this balance in the way we have designed the Member Corner.

#### **What members say about our community:**

*The Mother's Education course has been wonderful in helping to form me as a mother and teacher. Coming together each month to chat about life then listen to other mothers' thoughts on the given topic leave me with so much to consider. It also reminds me that God made us for community. – Sarah in VA*

*I thought I was signing up just for the great homeschool resources, but the Mother's Education Course has blessed me personally the most. It is a hidden gem I did not know I was missing! – Amanda in SC*

*The CMEC is by far the most complete CM course available anywhere. I find the form meetings help with many of the books chosen for that term. Hearing and seeing in the Member Corner how other mothers work with the books, the discussions of philosophy and CM's own articles in the Mothers' Education Course all add to a home education that is both peaceful and vibrant; a true family life ... This program and community is a tight knit family that supports each member where they need it most! – Elizabeth in NC*

*The Mother's Education Course is fabulous! As a parent who is brand new to all things Charlotte Mason this course and the discussion meetings have been an invaluable resource for me as I begin this journey of homeschooling. I truly feel like I am learning so much and it is shaping the way I think about learning alongside my child. I'm so grateful! - FT*

*My homeschool scheduling and record keeping has become so much more organized since joining the CMEC. The many years of experience by other moms is freely shared and I am personally benefiting from that wealth of knowledge. – Amanda in SC*

*I feel like I'm getting a Master's degree in Charlotte Mason education. – Rachel Ann in VA*

*I love that everything is recorded, so when life happens, I can go back and listen to what I missed. I also find it's just really encouraging to hear from others who are embracing this adventure of learning in this way, as most of the homeschoolers near me tend towards a more classical curriculum and the co-ops all seem to be very work-book and homework oriented. – Sarah in IN*

*The mother's education course has been life-changing! It gives me the inspiration and ideas I need to continue my work with my children. I come out of the meetings joyful, refreshed, and with renewed purpose ... The CMEC community is unique because it is a remarkably warm and personal group. The group leaders SHOW us through their interactions with us at community meetings what it means to be "guide, philosopher, and friend" to our students. – Leandra*

### **[WATCH OUR COMMUNITY TOUR](#)**

**In this video tour, you will hear about the two kinds of community support we provide: constructive and responsive. We let you take a peek at our annual members-only events and the coursework we assign for our popular Mother's Education Course, which is included in your membership.**

**[FIND US ON INSTAGRAM](#) or browse our active member community at [#thecmec](#).**



## PART 4. MEET THE CMEC TEAM

The CMEC relies on a broad base of support, from our member families, to our nonprofit board, to the team in charge of our curriculum and community offerings.

### The CMEC Leadership Team:

With a graduate degree in literature from the University of California-Irvine, **Amy Snell** taught in a variety of classroom environments. She then discovered Charlotte Mason, whose philosophy quickly convinced her to begin homeschooling. As her family thrived using Mason's methods and grew to include five children, Amy wanted to share and learn more about Mason's philosophy with others, including speaking at national conferences and local retreats, hosting Mason book discussions and workshops for parents, running a Nature Study Club, facilitating Truth, Beauty, Goodness afternoons, and creating the Mason Academy as director, teacher, and parent. Amy now serves as the Board President of the Charlotte Mason Educational Center and heads our curriculum team and community projects. You can find Amy on Instagram [@learninghowtolivecm](#).

**Erin Daly** lives near Philadelphia, PA with her husband and two daughters. In 2012 she was introduced to Charlotte Mason and the work of the PNEU. Since then, she has studied Mason's life-changing ideas with a wonderful community of fellow homeschoolers. Erin and her family run the publishing company [Riverbend Press](#), providing notebooks and artist prints to the Mason community. Erin is the Director of The Mason Academy, which provides weekly educational programs for homeschool students in grades K-12. She has degrees in economics and political science from Grove City College. Prior to staying home with her children, she worked as a Treasury and Finance Consultant, which equips her as the CMEC's overall administrator.

**Celeste Cruz** lives in the San Francisco Bay Area with her husband and their eleven children. With a graduate degree in English and a background in European humanities and art history, she has taught literature and writing in classroom and small group settings. She discovered Charlotte Mason before her children were born and has enthusiastically studied her philosophy ever since, but her most rewarding experience has been putting that philosophy into practice with her own children at home. Besides organizing a local Mason group, she shares the joys of home education at [Joyous Lessons](#) and [@celeste\\_cruz](#), collects Mason-style notebook work [@keepingcompanycm](#), and speaks at retreats and conferences nationwide. Celeste serves the CMEC in a variety of ways, including contributing to community projects and acting as managing editor.

**In building the curriculum, writing support materials, and managing our membership, we rely on the expertise and efforts of a dedicated team of parents and teachers:**

**Judy Clark** has four children and has been learning alongside them since her oldest two were in 5th and 3rd grade. When she and her husband found themselves passing twin girls around the high school homeschool table, she knew she was in for the long haul. Meeting Amy Snell, joining her Nature Study Club, and being introduced to Charlotte Mason began a wonderful new adventure in homeschooling that has completely changed her and her family's life. She and her family are delighted to be part of the CMEC. Judy has an undergraduate degree in biology and a graduate degree in computer science and also helps her husband run their two comic book and game shops. Judy assists the CMEC as a membership administrator.

**Cassie Detwiler** is a mother of four and lives in the Philadelphia area. Cassie was introduced to Mason's philosophy after graduating from Eastern University's Templeton Honors College where she studied philosophy, politics, and economics. She teaches at The Mason Academy in Newtown Square, PA. Cassie manages our Instagram account, [@the.cmec](#), and our discussion board, La Pianta, and assists with member communication and events.

**Dawn Duran** lives in Maryland with her husband, who serves in the U.S. Army, and their two sons. She has undergraduate degrees in physical education and physical therapy as well as a graduate degree in health sciences. Her pre-motherhood career choices were influenced by her experience as a Division I athlete, and she worked as a physical therapist full time prior to taking on her most prized roles of stay-at-home wife and homeschooling mother. Dawn feels blessed to have encountered the philosophy of Charlotte Mason prior to her children reaching school age and has been immersed in Mason's methods for ten years. Dawn has created [Swedish Drill Revisited](#) to assist homeschool families effectively embrace a forgotten form of physical education and she enjoys offering a local class to facilitate the study of Plutarch and Shakespeare in community. She also writes for the magazine *American Essence*, teaches classes online for Purdue University Global, and co-hosts [The New Mason Jar podcast](#). Dawn is our business manager and helps with our subject guides.

**Jocey Jekel** lives in Pennsylvania with her husband, Levi, and her three little ones. Originally from Massachusetts, she attended the Templeton Honors College at Eastern University for her undergraduate degree (B.S. Biochemistry, with minors in Philosophy and Theology) as well as her graduate studies (M.A.T. in Classical Education). After two years of teaching and outdoor adventure in Jackson, WY, she spent the past four years as a teacher and administrator at a classical high school outside Philadelphia. Throughout her studies and her working experience in education, Charlotte Mason has become a treasured conversation partner. Jocey draws on her experience in the classroom and teaching a variety of subjects at The Mason Academy in her work with our Community Learning Support Group.

**Camille Malucci** is a homemaker and home educator in coastal Virginia using the Charlotte Mason method since the middle of her first son's first grade year. She earned a Bachelor's in Business Administration and worked as a Buyer and Planner in the fashion and home goods sectors, but is glad that when family life called, she was able to pursue lifelong learning beside her children. A lover of good books, homemaking, beautiful architecture, travel, and fiber crafts, she found the Mason method a good fit from the get-go. These interests drive Camille's contributions to our team.

An Ohio native, **Renée Ricou** moved to Philadelphia to attend college and received a BS in Biology and Chemistry and a Master of Science in Education from Drexel University. She studied French in high school and college and lived in Nantes, France for two years, first working in a university laboratory, then as a student of French studies at the University of Nantes. Renée met her husband there and they return to France about once a year to visit family and friends. Renée's background in science adds much to our curriculum.

A lifelong bibliophile, **Emily Sullivan** is a graduate of the Great Books Program of Thomas Aquinas College. When she was a young mom, she began reading Mason in Amy Snell's reading group and felt certain she had found a true kindred spirit. The Sullivans currently reside in southwestern New Hampshire where a wild collection of animals, books and daughters are randomly strewn among a blue gambrel barn, the 1860s farmhouse, and various open fields and gardens. In addition to teaching her own girls, Emily also leads TBG afternoons and mentors college women at nearby Thomas Aquinas College. Before becoming a homeschooling Mom, Emily taught theology and philosophy at a classical high school outside of Manhattan and has written and lectured for a variety of catechetical non-profits. When she's not pre-reading for the upcoming term, she's happiest spending time over tea with old friends...like Aristotle and Aquinas. Emily uses her experience as one of our guide writers.

## **PART 5. CURRICULUM SAMPLES**

Here you will find samples of our curriculum for Kinderleben, Elementary/Middle School, and High School.

### **KINDERLEBEN**

We at the CMEC want to support all families with the life-giving ideas of Charlotte Mason.

Day-to-day life with young children can sometimes be overwhelming, but Charlotte Mason had so many wonderful ideas to support and structure our days.

While Mason did not start formal schooling until age six, she offered foundational principles and practices that lay the basis for the years ahead. CMEC member families have grown to love the delightful, varied, and rich occupations for our youngest children. We want for our little ones to experience the full “child-life,” or Kinderleben, doing activities developmentally appropriate for their age, building good habits, and soaking up all that their natural world offers for them. We have seen the dangers of rushing too quickly ahead or pushing too hard too early. Mason’s approach was based on broad experience and is still observed by teachers and psychologists today. We aim to provide children with the “quiet, growing time” that will prepare the fertile soil needed for the rest of their life.

#### **Our Kinderleben Guide.**

The CMEC offers a thorough guide with suggested reading and activities, as well as well-researched resources and direction for the Kinderleben parent to help cultivate a joyful year of learning with littles. Rather than supply a formal curriculum, organized by subject and readings, we provide a comprehensive text that gives parents a helpful combination of ideas and practical tips for the start of a Mason education.

Our 70-page guide details those “first relationships” your young student should develop as a strong foundation for his studies in future years—as well as for “joy in living” now! Our suggestions are accessible to the parents whose oldest child is just entering kindergarten and those with other older students. We discuss building a healthy home atmosphere, developing habits of order in the schoolroom and in the family schedule, and considering and implementing chores for the young child. Then we take on what Elsie Kitching calls the “moveable timetable.” What ought a Kinderleben student’s day look like? How do we help them be productively employed and introduce them to living ideas of all sorts? Our guide answers those questions with a broad feast of nature activities, indoor occupations, and a curated selection of books. We also include seasonal suggestions for crafts, chores, and picture books, additional booklists for bedtime reading, and a “wishlist” of toys, materials, and supplies for learning spaces. We provide a sample daily routine as well as tools for planning your own. There are sections for each season, with suggestions for picture books, handicrafts, seasonal living, and outdoor life to match the time of year.

For Kinderleben parents, we include a thorough study plan with our *Top 12 Parents’ Review* articles on parenting young children, links to modern research about play, outdoor time, and media use for children, and a description of how to take on a special study of your own.

We hope this guide will be all you need to use the atmosphere, discipline, and living ideas of your home and the surrounding world to help your young students thrive.

#### **Kinderleben Form Meetings.**

There are three Form Meetings each year, one per term, for Kinderleben parents to receive guidance, ask questions, and meet with parents of similarly-aged children around the country.

At these meetings, we inspire one another to bring fresh thought each season to the work of our young students. For example, in the fall, we might discuss how to incorporate young children into Thanksgiving celebrations, fall

chores, favorite fall picture books, and how to keep a Mother's Logbook. In the wintertime, we have taken up subjects like good audiobooks for littles, tips for getting outdoors in cold weather, poetry teatime, and Christmas gift ideas. To round out these meetings, we usually dive into a discussion of a *Parents' Review* article especially geared to parents of Kinderleben students.

Beyond the practical help and encouragement these meetings offer, they are such a nice way to get tapped into a vibrant community that shares your vision for family life and the joys and struggles of early childhood.

### **Form Leader Support.**

Members are invited to contact the Kinderleben Form leader throughout the term with questions. These questions may be answered immediately or may be sent along to the CMEC team to be answered live during the Form Meetings.

### **Kinderleben Resources.**

On our website, we provide special reading from the *Parents' Review* geared toward the early years. In the 1930s-40s, the addition of a "Playroom" option was added in Mason's schools, and several useful articles and pamphlets were put out specifically regarding the teaching of children ages 0-5. These articles give so many sound, practical ideas on what learning in early childhood ought to look like! We round those off with additional suggestions from PNEU nursery teachers, experienced mothers, psychologists, and other voices from the *Parents' Review* community of writers. The Kinderleben area of our website also features a set of stories and songs to use with young children, member-submitted samples of moveable timetables, and an ever-growing photo gallery of our Kinderleben program in action.

### **Training for Future Homeschooling.**

We encourage all members of the CMEC to attend our community events and take full advantage of our resources. These provide a great way to direct your energy as you prepare to homeschool. What an amazing head start a young mother will have by tackling the coursework of our Mother's Education Course, for example, or spending a weekend watching our retreat on Art Instruction in the Mason homeschool. So many living ideas and practical advice is available!

### **What members say about our Kinderleben program:**

*I love the Kinderleben guide. The handicraft, living books and art sections are used by my son every single day! The timetable and chores suggestions are also much appreciated as it's made our home much calmer and simpler. – RL*

*I think the program even if you have just Kinderleben students is totally worth it to dive into all the resources, find your way around all the hidden gems of the website, learn more about the Charlotte Mason philosophy through all the courses, past Form Meetings, etc. The Kinderleben Guide is such a gem of great books and ideas to do with littles but at the by the way type pace that Charlotte so highly encouraged. – Amanda in WI*

*The Kinderleben guide and booklists have been a blessing beyond anything I could imagine. I read the guide almost daily, and it never ceases to bring me fresh perspective and ideas for the season and liturgical and practical joyous living in my home. – Lydia in MI*

*I LOVE the Kinderleben guide! I just found it so incredibly inspiring and thought provoking! My copy is full of underlining and comments; it has felt freeing to step back and not be so worried about my youngest jumping into everything, but just also thinking about the habits we work on for her – Danielle in Saskatchewan*

*I love the kinderleben years! I appreciate the thought put into explaining what these growing years can be for our children and how we can be intentional without introducing academics before they are ready. The thorough explanation of the philosophy and methods for this age gives confidence for answering the expectations of those around us (including our own!) on us and our children. – Rebekah in Central Asia*

*I really appreciate how the Kinderleben materials honors the young child's capacity for attention and also the child's need for variety and movement throughout the day. – MH*

*The Kinderleben guide is incredible! Jam packed with helpful resources, foundational pedagogy, and such a wonderful and comprehensive starting point for me as a new-to-homeschooling parent. – FT*

*The Kinderleben guide is so inspirational. It presents a picture of a beautiful, rich, quiet growing time for young children and gives both the philosophical mindsets and practical steps to approach this. I love the fact that Kinderleben students get a chunk of time in the Form Meetings- it's a great reminder to me not to leave my little ones behind as I focus on teaching my older student. – Mary Austin in Ontario*

*A reminder that there is so much to work on with Kinderleben students has eased my worries that I am not working hard enough on my son's "education." I am reminded that education is more than the ABCs and the guide treats him as a whole person. – Sarah in VA*

### **Samples.**

Below you will see the Table of Contents for our 2023-24 Kinderleben Guide as well as the beginning of the section on Occupations.

**Continue on to our Kinderleben samples or [return to Part 2 to read about our Resources.](#)**

## The CMEC Kinderleben Guide Program 7 (2023-24)

### PART 1. The Principles

- [Introduction](#)
- [Our Beginnings](#)

### PART 2. The Program

- [Atmosphere](#)
  - [The Importance of Atmosphere](#)
  - [Masterly Inactivity](#)
  - [Preparing Ourselves](#)
- [Discipline](#)
  - [The Formation of Habits](#)
  - [Ordering the Home](#)
  - [Planning Chores for the Young Child](#)
  - [Implementing Chores for the Young Child](#)
  - [Ordering the Day](#)
- [Living Ideas](#)
  - [Section 1. Through Nature](#)
  - [Section 2. Through Occupations](#)
  - [Section 3. Through Books](#)
  - [Section 4. Through Interpersonal Relationships](#)

### PART 3. A Daily View

- [Thinking Through the Moveable Timetable](#)
- [A Sample Day](#)

### PART 4. A Seasonal View

- [Fall Term](#)
- [Winter Term](#)
- [Spring Term](#)
- [Summer Term](#)

### PART 5. A Kinderleben Mother's Study Plan

### PART 6. A Kinderleben Wishlist

Note: *Parents' Review* articles referenced in this guide are listed under Part 5—A Kinderleben Mother's Study Plan.

## Section 2. Through Occupations

There should be no so-called 'lessons' in the playroom. 'Occupations' is the right word, and for these no time-table should be set and there should be a sense of much freedom both in the manner and matter of 'What shall we do next?' Again, just as the best-loved toys are the simplest in construction because they give full scope to a child's imagination, so all material used should be of the simplest kind. 'Apparatus' should be avoided. A children's 'special hour' should be a time of happy occupation and should be arranged at a time when children cannot be out of doors. Stories, pictures, materials of all kinds are necessary because the provision must be no less liberal of its kind than that for an older child. (Elsie Kitching, "Children Up to School Age and Beyond")

Mason teaches that we glean ideas from books and things, and so these are the "things" of *Kinderleben*. It is important to view these activities as the *child's* work and occupation, rather than lessons presented by the *teacher*. Thought needs to be put into the atmosphere and discipline of the day and home so that time spent on occupations goes smoothly and enjoyably. The child-mind seeks knowledge of the world through exploration, play, and games, but also through "work" with letters, numbers, and patterns. If this time dedicated to occupations is balanced with much free play and outdoor time, chores, and good books, the child will approach it with seriousness and delight.

The temptation here might be to create a set schedule for all of this wonderful learning to take place, but that day will come and from it there is no return. For the young child, freedom is key! As Elsie Kitching warns:

All these occupations should be varied each day. A quarter of an hour is enough for most of them, but the percussion band, singing games, painting or handwork should be allowed a longer period. But the teacher must be on her guard. Some children will show signs of fatigue, and she must know when it would be wise to change the occupation or when a little encouragement is the wiser course. (p. 26)

Again, masterly inactivity is called for—a posture of wise passiveness, knowing when to wait and when to provide variety. For more on this idea, see Part 3—A Daily View.

If you have older children, this might seem like many tasks to try to "fit in" with your *Kinderleben* student, but really these can usually find a home in your current schooling schedule. Many of these occupations are wonderful for young children to be doing right alongside you as you work at the table schooling their siblings. For example, when it is time for copywork for the older students, the kinder-aged child can pull out his letter cards and sand tray and work for 5-10 minutes there with everyone else. When the older children get out their sloyd materials, he can get out his scrapbook and spend time cutting and pasting. This takes a bit of effort up front to introduce the task to the child and make sure his materials are easily accessible, but once he knows how to do his "work," he is often quite happy to be at the table with the rest of the family. Other items on this list fall under what we call the Common Subjects at the CMEC (like Artist/Picture Study, Composer/Music Study, Singing); if you already do these subjects with your older students, you can fold your little one right into the routine. So often we look for ways to "keep the littles busy" when, given the right supplies and direction, they stay very "busy" all on their own, and in ways that support their overall development.

(Note: At the end of this section, we have included some ideas for occupying the littlest ones in the home!)

## ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL

If you haven't yet watched [the video tour of our curriculum](#), we encourage you to do so! You get a chance to look at the way we organize our landing page for each Form and get a peek at our Shopping List and Form Guide. You will see a sample of our program below, but the video explains how the curriculum materials fit together.

We are diligent in choosing the best books for each Form and subject, evaluating them according to Mason's standards and testing them with our own children and the students enrolled at The Mason Academy. After writing the curriculum for many years, we have not only built a set of living books that we return to again and again but also developed the experience to evaluate new books in the ongoing effort to always update and improve our programs.

In each subject, we aim to meet Mason's descriptors for a living book: "fit and beautiful expression," conveying definite knowledge and rich ideas, written with a magnanimous voice. We also look to see how the book will fit in the week's and term's work: Does it provide a fresh perspective? How does it fit with the other books the student is reading? And we always check our selections against the timetable. While there are many wonderful books in the world, the selections we curate must fit into the child's day and the program must hang together. Ultimately, we create more than a good booklist, but a cohesive program.

### **What members with elementary and middle school students say about our curriculum:**

*There is a wide variety of books we read in a given term and the material is rich - there is plenty to think about. The layout of program materials is well thought-out - providing detail when needed and being concise in delivery in other areas for quick reference. Another favorite feature is the shopping lists. All the materials for each Form are listed in one document, complete with vendors and links to purchase. This saves so much time! And it's affordable! - MH*

*The book selections have been wonderful. The quality and breadth of topics has been excellent! My son and I have learned so much and enjoyed reading together. - Carissa in NM*

*The program is academically rigorous and yet gently builds line on line. - Kyndra in MA*

*The structure of the Form Guides (going subject by subject), suggesting the amount of reading to be covered each week, the broad discussion suggestions, the integration between the various books selected so that the feast really is about the science of relations - it's all so great. I love that things are printer-friendly in design, and that you suggest ways to combine up and down the Forms. I also truly, truly, truly appreciate the Shakespeare, Plutarch, artist and composer guides which make my own prep much easier than it has been in years past. - Sarah in IN*

### **Samples.**

We have included one term's work in Form 2 from the 2022-23 School Year as a sample of our program. In this year, students were studying 1800-1900 and Ancient Rome. This will not be the program for the 2024-25 School Year, but it is representative of our approach to elementary and middle school. We understand that some families would like to see all of our book selections for all Forms before purchasing a membership, but we need to maintain our intellectual property for the sake of the longevity of our organization. This preview of Form 2 represents our overall approach.

The sample timetable we include is based on the six-day timetable scheduled by the Parents' Union School, but we provide thorough support for families to adjust this timetable to create a version that will work well for their family. (Read more [under Resources](#).)

**Continue on to our Form 2 samples or [return to Part 2 to read about our Resources](#).**



Charlotte Mason Educational Center

Motto: "I am, I can, I ought, I will."

"...pray for the children to prosper in good life and good literature." (Dean Colet)

This document contains all subjects specific to Form 2A & B. The Common Subjects Program is also needed for full use of the curriculum. Further details can be found in the Form 2 Guide.

## KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

### Bible

- A & B
- i. Joshua 1-3, 5-7, 9, 10, 14, 15, 19-21, suitable stories.
  - ii. *Joshua and the Judges* by Dr. J. Paterson Smyth, used for teacher preparation, part 1, lessons 1-8.
  - iii. The Gospel of Luke 1-7, suitable stories.
  - iv. Commentary on the gospel, used for teacher preparation, parent choice.
  - v. Bible atlas, used for reference.

Use Bible translation of your choice. In all cases the Bible must be read and narrated first; then the teacher may use the lesson from Paterson Smyth to bring the passages home to children. See the introduction to *Joshua and the Judges* for guidance on how to use the lessons in the book. Omit the questions.

In addition to the Bible curriculum above, the PNEU programs advised that Form 2 students have private daily Bible reading from the Old and New Testament, in suitable portions. They assigned a book following the church calendar of readings and a book of prayer.

Sunday Reading: select religious stories, plays, histories, poetry, books on church teaching.

Sunday Occupations: work in Book of Centuries, and choose and inscribe mottoes in a special book in beautiful lettering.

## KNOWLEDGE OF MAN

### History

- A & B
- i. Biography. *America First* by Lawton Evans, selected chapters, or biography of the Lewis and Clark expedition (*Of Courage Undaunted: Across the Continent with Lewis and Clark* by James Daugherty or *Sacajawea* by Joseph Bruchac). Optional additional biography: *The Story of Napoleon* by H.E. Marshall. See Form Guide for details.
  - ii. News source of your choice. Cover the the daily news as a family.

Make history charts for the centuries studied. See Resources—History for more information.

See also Resources—History—Historical Supplements for reading in afternoons and leisure time.

- B
- iii. American History. *Builders of Our Country, Book II* by Gertrude Southworth, chapters 12-18.
  - iv. British History. *Our Island Story* by H.E. Marshall, chapters 1-6.
- A
- iii. American History. *This Country Of Ours* by H.E. Marshall, chapters 65-75.
  - iv. British History. *A History of England* by H.O. Arnold-Forster, chapters 68-71.
  - v. General History. *Peeps at Many Lands: Ancient Rome* by James Baikie, chapters 1-4.

Keep a Book of Centuries with illustrations from all history studied (Bible, American, British, General, etc.). See Resources—History for more information. Recommended reference for student work: *Frontier Living* by Edwin Tunis.

## KNOWLEDGE OF MAN (cont.)

## Citizenship

- B
- i. *The Young Citizen's Reader* by Paul Samuel Reinsch, chapters 1-5.
  - ii. *Stories from the History of Rome* by Mrs. Beesly, chapters 1-6.
- A
- i. *Lives of Tiberius and Caius Gracchi* by Plutarch, spread over term. See Plutarch Guide for support.
  - ii. Classical atlas, used as a reference.
  - iii. *A Smaller Classical Dictionary* by Smith, used as a reference.
  - iv. Lower: *The Young Citizen's Reader* by Paul Samuel Reinsch, chapters 16-21.  
Upper: *Once Upon a Time* by Eric Sloane, spread over term, also useful for Book of Centuries. Students who have not yet read *The Young Citizen's Reader* should begin there.

## Reading

A & B Books set for geography, history, and recitations should afford exercises in careful reading. Poetry read daily.

## Literature

- B
- i. *The Heroes of Asgard* by A. & E. Keary, chapter 1, The Aesir.
- A
- i. Lower: *The Heroes of Asgard* by A. & E. Keary, chapter 4, Idúna's Apples.  
Upper: *Bulfinch's Mythology*, *The Age of Fable*, chapters 1-4, Introduction—Latona and the Rustics.
- A & B
- ii. *The Winter's Tale* by Shakespeare, spread over term. See Shakespeare Guide for support.
  - iii. *Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson, spread over term, to be read in leisure time.
  - iv. *Hans Brinker, or The Silver Skates* by Mary Mapes Dodge or *Heidi* by Joanna Spyri, spread over term.

Choose additional books from Family Classics list under Resources—Literature.

## Poetry

- A & B
- i. *Historic Poems and Ballads* by Rupert S. Holland, chapters 34-41.
  - ii. *The Oxford Book of Children's Verse* by the Opies or *Lyra Heroica* by William Ernest Henley, suitable poems written from 1800-1900.
  - iii. *Favorite Poems Old and New* by Helen Ferris.
  - iv. *TBG Songbook*, seasonal poetry selections.

## Writing

- A & B Transcribe, with a model, favorite passages from poetry or Shakespeare. Two perfectly written lines every day.
- i. *Beautiful Italics for Children* or *Barchowsky Fluent Handwriting*, resource for teaching italics.

## KNOWLEDGE OF MAN (cont.)

## Composition

- B Written narration on stories from reading. Children in B who cannot write easily may narrate part in writing and part orally. One written narration at the end of a lesson each day. Oral narration at the end of all other lessons.
- A Written narration on stories from work set in (a) citizenship and reading or (b) events of the day, etc. Written narration at the end of two lessons each day (10 minutes each). Oral narration at the end of all other lessons. Write letters about family news.

## Grammar

- A & B i. *First Grammar Lessons* by Charlotte Mason. Use breakdown in Form Guide to assign this term's work:

Form 2A students who have completed *First Grammar Lessons* move on to *A Short Grammar of the English Tongue* by Meiklejohn. Use breakdown in Form Guide to assign this term's work:

Parse and point out subjects, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs in books set for the term.

## Dictation

- A & B Two pages at a time to be prepared carefully; then a paragraph from one of these pages to be written from dictation, or occasionally from memory. Use the books set for literature and history that match child's ability level.

## Modern Language

- A & B See Modern Language Guides for Spanish and French for recommended program of study.
- Learn two foreign language songs each term. See the Modern Language Guides and Common Subjects Guide.
- Additional resources and discount instructions can be found at Resources—Modern Language.

## Latin

- B i. *I Speak Latin* by Andrew Campbell. (Optional introduction using TPR method. See Form Guide for details.)
- A i. *First Latin Course* by Scott and Jones or *Lingua Latina per se Illustrata, Pars I: Familia Romana* by Hans H. Orberg. (Or use *I Speak Latin* for an introductory program using the natural method for 2A students new to Latin.)

All language learning should begin at the beginning and make progress each term.

## KNOWLEDGE OF THE UNIVERSE

## Natural History

A & B Keep a nature notebook (see *Home Education*, pp. 54-55) with flower, bird, and insect lists, and make daily notes and drawings on seasonal topics of interest, e.g. seed dispersal, visits of insects to plants, mushrooms. Helpful resources: *Handbook of Nature Study* by Anna Botsford Comstock, *A Nature Study Guide* by W.S. Furneaux, and local field guides.

Make a special study of birds with drawings and notes. See Special Study Guide for support.

See also suitable Scouting Tests in Nature Lore from the *Parents' Review*, under Resources—Scouting.

- i. *The Living Year* by Richard Headstrom, one chapter each month. Teacher will find useful for special study and reference.
- B
  - ii. *The Sciences* by Holden, pp. 1-34.
  - iii. *Easy Experiments in Science* by H. McKay, optional. A book of experiments to be used alongside *The Sciences*.
  - iv. *Life and Her Children* by Arabella Buckley, chapters 1 & 2.
- A
  - ii. *The Sciences* by Holden, pp. 119-160.
- Lower
  - iii. *Easy Experiments in Science* by H. McKay, optional. A book of experiments to be used alongside *The Sciences*.
  - iv. *Life and Her Children* by Arabella Buckley, chapter 6.
- A
  - ii. *The Chemical History of a Candle* by Michael Faraday, lectures 1 & 2. See Form Guide for further support.
- Upper
  - iii. *Life and Her Children* by Arabella Buckley, chapter 10.
  - iv. *The Mystery of the Periodic Table* by Benjamin Wiker, optional leisure and holiday reading.

## Geography

A & B Map questions to be answered from map (or memory) before each lesson, then reading and narration. All geography to be studied with atlas.

Make memory maps. 10 minutes' exercise on map of the world each week.

Know something of foreign places mentioned in the current newspapers.

Local geography out-of-doors: see *Home Education*, Parts II and V. Recommended teacher resource: *Outdoor Geography* by H. Hatch.

See also suitable Scouting Tests in Geography from the *Parents' Review*, under Resources—Scouting.

- B
  - i. *North America* by Nellie Allen, chapters 1-3. See Geography Guide for support.
  - ii. Books set for history to be used for mapping.
  - iii. Personal atlas. See Form Guide for details.
- A
  - i. *North America* by Nellie Allen, chapters 11-14. See Geography Guide for support.
- Lower
  - ii. *Book of Marvels: The Occident* by Richard Halliburton, chapters 1-10.
  - iii. Personal atlas. See Form Guide for details.
- A
  - i. *Africa, Australia, and the Islands of the Pacific* by Nellie Allen, chapters 1, 3, 5, 6, and 7. See Geography Guide for support. Students who have not yet read *North America* should begin there.
- Upper
  - ii. *Book of Marvels: The Occident* by Richard Halliburton, chapters 1-10.
  - iii. Personal atlas. See Form Guide for details.

## KNOWLEDGE OF THE UNIVERSE (cont.)

## Mathematics

- A & B
- i. *Strayer-Upton Practical Arithmetics with Beauty & Truth Math Guides* by Emily Al-Khatib and Heather Schultz, or parent choice. Students should work through each level at their own pace and pick up the next year from where they left off so there are no gaps.
  - ii. Sloyd: *Paper Sloyd for Primary Grades* by Ednah Rich or *Paper Modelling* by Mildred Swannell. See Form Guide for additional guidance.
  - iii. Important: *Number Stories of Long Ago* by D.E. Smith, to be read in leisure time.

In both mathematics and sloyd, children should begin at the beginning and make progress each term.

Spend short time daily in lively oral review of tables.

In Form 2A, Mason began an introduction to geometry using *Lessons in Practical Geometry* by Hall and Stevens. Teachers may find the Practical Geometry Guides from Beauty & Truth Math helpful (optional).

Recommended teacher resource: *Mathematics: An Instrument for Living Teaching* by Simply Charlotte Mason (book and DVD bundle).

## COMMON SUBJECTS

The rest of the assigned work is listed on the Common Subjects Program. Please print that document and attach to this program to complete the Form 2 curriculum plan.

SAMPLE TIMETABLE

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9:00 AM						
9:10 AM	Old Testament	New Testament	Citizenship <i>Reinsch or Sloane</i>	Old Testament	New Testament	Picture Study
9:20 AM						
9:30 AM	Mathematics	Mathematics	Natural History <i>Holden or Faraday</i>	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics
9:40 AM						
9:50 AM						
10:00 AM	Dictation (moveable text)	Literature <i>B Heroes of Asgard A Bulfinch</i>	Dictation (moveable text)	British History <i>B Marshall - OIS A Arnold-Forster</i>	Citizenship <i>B Beesly A Plutarch</i>	2A Latin
10:10 AM	Writing		Writing			
10:20 AM						
10:30 AM	Drill and Play	Solfa Play or Drill	Drill and Play	Modern Language Song and Play	Drill and Play	Solfa and Play
10:40 AM						
10:50 AM	Repetition Poem	Repetition Bible OT	Repetition Poem	Map Exercises	Repetition Bible NT	*Repetition WK's Work
11:00 AM						
11:10 AM	Travelogue <i>B Map Work A Book of Marvels</i>	American History <i>B Builders A Marshall - TCOO</i>	Geography <i>Allen</i>	Grammar	Natural History <i>Buckley</i>	Modern Language
11:20 AM						
11:30 AM						
11:40 AM	Modern Language	B Dictation and Writing A Latin	Grammar	Modern Language	B Dictation and Writing A Mathematics	Literature <i>Shakespeare</i>
11:50 AM						
12:00 PM						
12:10 PM	2A General History <i>Baikie</i>					
12:20 PM						

Narration is oral or written at the end of each lesson.  
2A. Written narrations (10 mins) at the end of two lessons each day. 2B. One.  
\*Repetition Week's Work: Hymn, Shakespeare, Psalm, etc.

<p>Lunch</p> <p><i>Easy Experiments in Science</i> (Optional)</p> <p>Out-of-Doors</p> <p>Seasonal Nature Book</p> <p>Scouting</p> <p>Nature Study</p> <p>Composer Study</p> <p>Book of Centuries and Book of Mottoes (Sundays)</p> <p>Daily News</p> <p>Handicrafts and Art</p> <p>Musical Instrument Practice</p> <p>Reading: Poetry, Historical Fiction, Term Biography, Classic Fiction</p>
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## **HIGH SCHOOL**

Mason's vision for high school reflects a step up in maturity and challenge without sacrificing living quality. The key descriptor for this Form's course of study is Mason's aim for all levels: breadth and balance.

The CMEC curriculum for high school is based on the PUS programs, so it covers core subjects like history, science, and literature, but also art history, philosophy, economics, and other unique subjects Mason added in the high school years.

Our high school curriculum team is composed of women with expertise in various areas: science, philosophy, economics, literature. They are either homeschooling high schoolers themselves or have graduated children from the homeschool (or both!). They have all steeped themselves for years in Mason's work.

Each member of the team focuses on finding the best books for each part of the program. The team then looks carefully together at the program overall to balance breadth, depth, and a need for leisure time.

### **Resources for High School Students and Parents.**

We have guides written for each Form as well as for particular subjects, like Plutarch, Shakespeare, and geography. These guides provide background resources and helpful tips for narrations. Also, by suggesting discussion topics, they are designed to aid student thinking and writing as well.

Additionally, we have a range of science guides to accompany our complete program for high school science. These guides offer suggestions for the lab work and field work students do alongside their reading. By balancing hands-on work with reading, they help create full courses for assigning credits.

Our extensive collection of resources for homeschooling high school with the CMEC includes a sample transcript and course descriptions, tips on effective meetings with high school students, a checklist for parents as their student's guidance counselor, a curated collection of helpful links, and more. We also offer a video that covers how to view the post-graduation discernment process with the proper lens and how the CMEC prepares students well for college and beyond.

### **Form Meetings.**

There are three Form meetings each year, one per term, for high school parents to receive guidance, ask questions, and meet with parents who are in the midst of the high school years for the first time or have gained insights from children who have already graduated and flown the nest! It can often be challenging to find other parents who are homeschooling older students with whom to share the journey, but at the CMEC, we have a supportive group of member families working through these years together.

### **Form Leader Support.**

Members are invited to contact their Form Leader throughout the term with questions. These questions may be answered immediately or may be sent along to the CMEC Team to be answered live during the Form Meetings. We cover a range of topics including planning afternoon occupations and leisure, working toward independence, understanding the parent's role in student compositions, and navigating the challenging books in the CMEC high school program (particularly in science, history, and philosophy.)

### **Ongoing Education and Training.**

All members of the CMEC are welcome to attend our retreats, workshops, and Mother's Education Course, and at these events we always give special consideration to our upper-level students and their families. Perhaps because so many of us on the curriculum team have high schoolers ourselves, we at the CMEC are especially dedicated to making our high school program reflect the life-giving education Mason envisioned.

So often homeschool resources cater to younger students because it is more common to home educate in the early years. We have found that without a good sense of Mason's approach to the later years, it is hard to know what those early years are aiming toward in the first place. Toward that greater goal of understanding her sense of the student and his development over time, we have put careful work into teasing out her thoughts on older children. We pass those findings along to the community through our training events.

#### **What members with high school students say about our program:**

*The high school program has been so thoughtfully laid out. Not only are the books and courses of study so thorough, but I have the freedom to customize options to fit our schedule and my student's needs. And during the term meetings, it's so nice to connect with other moms of high schoolers to discuss how things are going, ask questions and troubleshoot various areas, and gain inspiration from other families. The high school form guide is such a wealth of information. It's not just a booklist or checklist, but a robust program for me to then tailor to our family's needs. – Angie in AZ*

*The continuing education provided by this curriculum is priceless ... I had to pull my daughter from a classical high school. She was used to a rigorous education. After looking over Form 5 I knew that CMEC would prove just as rigorous if not more than her previous school. It was nice to know I could get support from the form leader as well. – Danielle in CO*

*In the beginning as a new CMEC parent I asked one question about transcripts and the response was incredible. The CMEC went deep into an entire webpage of resources beyond anything I had conceived. They are an incredible curriculum provider ... I have been able to see growth in learning and positive attitudes of my own children. – Elizabeth in NC*

*Science guides for the upper forms have been so helpful! It's not just a list to buy (and when to use those items) but extra links and further thoughts have helped us flesh out science. We are actually being consistent with experiments! – Heather in GA*

*The CMEC has provided materials so that I can further educate myself in the Charlotte Mason method. I'm very grateful for the support provided and the cheerfulness of the team wanting to support me. I'm able to dig deeper into the CM method but I'm also able to spend more time with my family and less time preparing for school. - Cassie in MO*

*This program is unique in its approach to treating children as persons. It allows them to make the connections and form the ideas from each lesson on their own with little guidance instead of telling them what is important and what they should think. And in this way, it makes them masters of their own education ... The natural progression of the curriculum's breadth and difficulty allows students to feel challenged each year without feeling out of their depth. As I see them forming relationships with ideas and their ability to articulate them verbally and in writing, I am confident that they will be more than well prepared for higher learning. - Judy in PA*

*We begin our first set of high school years in the fall and seeing how this piece is a continuation and fruition of what was done before has been helpful. – Kyndra in MA*

#### **Samples.**

We have included one term's work from the 2022-23 School Year as a sample of our program. In this year, students were studying 1800-1900 and Ancient Rome. This will not be the program for the 2024-25 School Year, but we hope it gives you a sense of how we select and organize our program of work.

**Continue on to our High School samples or [return to Part 2 to read about our Resources.](#)**



Charlotte Mason Educational Center

Motto: "I am, I can, I ought, I will."

"...pray for the children to prosper in good life and good literature." (Dean Colet)

This document contains subjects specific to Form 4 & 5. The Common Subjects Program is also needed for full use of the curriculum. Further details can be found in the Form 4 & 5 Guide.

## KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

### Bible

- 4 & 5
- i. Psalms 1-50 and Proverbs 1-10.
  - ii. *The Saviour of the World, Volume 2* by Charlotte Mason, Book 1, with the accompanying Scripture passages from the index.
  - iii. The Epistle to the Romans, chapters 1-8.
  - iv. Bible commentary for student use. Mason scheduled *The One Volume Bible Commentary* by John R. Dummelow.
  - v. Bible atlas, used for reference.

Use Bible translation of your choice. In all cases, read and narrate the Bible text before reading commentary or *The Saviour of the World*.

In addition to the Bible curriculum above, the PNEU programs advised that Form 4 & 5 students have private daily Bible reading from the Old and New Testament, in suitable portions. They assigned a book following the church calendar of readings and a book of prayer.

Sunday Reading: select religious stories, plays, histories, poetry, books on other cultures and on church teaching. Recommended: *The Aeneid* by Virgil, spread over the year, and additional novels listed under Literature.

Sunday Occupations: work in Book of Centuries, choose and inscribe mottoes in a special book in beautiful lettering.

## KNOWLEDGE OF MAN

### History

- 4 & 5 American History.
- i. *The Oxford History of the American People* by Samuel Morison. Option A: chapters 22-31. Option B: chapters 22-29. See Form Guide for details.

General History.

- ii. *Ancient Times: A History of the Early World* by James Henry Breasted, chapters 20-23.
- iii. *Medieval and Modern Times* by James Harvey Robinson, chapters 24-25.

Historical Supplements.

- iv. *The Book of Naturalists* edited by William Beebe, chapters on Waterton through Wallace.
- v. *Great Astronomers* by Robert S. Ball, chapters on Herschel and the Earl of Rosse.
- vi. *Up from Slavery* by Booker T. Washington and *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* by Frederick Douglass, spread over term.
- vii. *Sesame and Lilies* by John Ruskin, spread over term.
- viii. News source of your choice. Read the daily news and keep a Calendar of Events.

Make summaries of dates and events. Use maps. Continue Book of Centuries, putting in illustrations from all history studied. See the Form Guide for recommended reference books for this year's time period. Visit museums. Make history charts for centuries studied. See Resources—History for support.

## KNOWLEDGE OF MAN (cont.)

## Everyday Morals &amp; Economics

- 4 & 5
- i. *Ourselves, Our Souls and Bodies* by Charlotte Mason. Students should begin with Volume 1, *Self-Knowledge*, then move to Volume 2, *Self-Direction*. Use breakdown in Form Guide to assign this term's work for your student:
  - ii. Classical atlas, used as a reference.
  - iii. *A Smaller Classical Dictionary* by Smith, used as a reference.
- 4
- iv. *Lives of Tiberius and Caius Gracchi* by Plutarch, spread over term. See Plutarch Guide for support.
  - v. Essays listed under Historical Supplements. See Form Guide for explanation and support.
- 5
- iv. *Phaedo* by Plato, spread over term. Or read Plutarch with Form 4.
  - v. *Basic Economics*, Fifth Edition by Thomas Sowell. Year 1: preface and chapters 1-3. Year 2: chapters 10, 11, and first half of 12, stopping at "Collective Bargaining."

## Reading

Books set for literature, history, geography, and recitations should afford exercises in careful reading and in composition. Poetry should be read daily.

## Literature

- 4 & 5
- Lighter selections can be used for holiday and evening reading. See Form Guide for more details.
- i. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by William Shakespeare, spread over term.
  - ii. *A Short History of England's and America's Literature* by Eva March Tappan, *England's Literature*, chapter 8, sections 124 through end of chapter.
  - iii. Choose at least one: *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe, *The Death of Ivan Ilych* by Leo Tolstoy, spread over term. Other novels are optional for additional leisure and holiday reading.
  - iv. *Lays of Ancient Rome* by Thomas Babington Macaulay, spread over term.
  - v. *Historic Poems and Ballads* by Rupert S. Holland, chapters 34-41.
  - vi. *The Oxford Book of English Verse*, suitable poems written from 1800-1900, especially Byron, Shelley, and Keats.
- 5
- vii. *Oedipus the King* by Sophocles, can be read in one sitting or with a group.

## Writing &amp; Dictation

- 4
- Select and transcribe passages from Shakespeare, poetry, and other literature set. Keep a commonplace book for lines and passages from books that strike you particularly.
- Two or three pages to be prepared first, from a newspaper or from the prose and poetry set for reading; a paragraph to be then dictated. Words not known should be visualized. Use the books set for literature and history that match student's ability level. Form 4 should occasionally write their dictation from memory. See *Home Education* for general dictation instruction, pp. 240-243.
- Italics to be used for writing and dictation. Use *Beautiful Italics for Children* or *Barchowsky Fluent Handwriting* as a resource for teaching italics.
- 5
- Form 5 may add Writing and Dictation to their work if needed.

## KNOWLEDGE OF MAN (cont.)

## Composition

- 4 & 5 i. *New Grammar of the English Tongue* by John Meiklejohn, section on Composition and Prosody, pp. 159-189. PDF provided at Resources—English Language—Composition.

Written narrations at the end of at least two lessons each day. Oral narration at the end of all other lessons.

Write essays or resume on subjects suggested by the term's work in literature, history, and science or on topics of the day.

Occasionally write narrations in poetic form, using a set meter. See *New Grammar*, pp. 178-189 for guidance on poetry meter and rhyme.

- 5 Write a good *precis*. See Resources—English Language—Composition.

## English Language &amp; Grammar

- 4 & 5 Parse and analyze from books read each week, making progress each term.

- i. *A New Grammar of the English Tongue* by John Meiklejohn. Work through consecutively in time allotted. Use breakdown in Form Guide to assign this term's work for your student: \_\_\_\_\_.
- ii. *A Rulebook for Arguments* by Anthony Weston, pp. xiii -14, points 1-10. Students who have read *A Rulebook for Arguments* should read *The Lively Art of Writing* by Lucile Vaughan Payne, spread over two years. Omit exercises but apply concepts to weekly composition work.
- iii. *A Pocket Style Manual* by Diana Hacker or similar, used as a reference.

## Modern Language

- 4 & 5 See Modern Language Guides for Spanish and French for recommended program of study.

Learn two foreign language songs each term. See the Modern Language Guides and Common Subjects Guide.

Additional resources and discount instructions can be found at Resources—Modern Language.

## Latin

- 4 & 5 i. *First Latin Course* by Scott and Jones or *Lingua Latina per se Illustrata, Pars I: Familia Romana* by Hans H. Orberg. Students who have completed the first year of Latin study should move forward in their chosen program, making progress each term.

## KNOWLEDGE OF THE UNIVERSE

## Natural History

- 4 & 5 Keep a nature notebook (see *Home Education*, pp. 54-55) with flower, bird, and insect lists, and make daily notes and drawings on seasonal topics of interest, e.g. seed dispersal, visits of insects to plants, mushrooms. Helpful resources: *Handbook of Nature Study* by Anna Botsford Comstock, *A Nature Study Guide* by W.S. Furneaux, and local field guides.
- i. *The Living Year* by Richard Headstrom, one chapter each month. Useful for seasonal reading and special study.
  - ii. *Six Easy Pieces: Essentials of Physics Explained by Its Most Brilliant Teacher* by Feynman, chapters 1 & 2. See guide at Resources—Sciences for support. Students who have read Feynman should read *The Atom: A Visual Tour* by Jack Challoner, chapters 1 & 2.
  - iii. *OpenStax Physics: High School Lab Manual*, labs 1-4. See guide at Resources—Sciences for support.
- 4 Make a special study of birds with drawings and notes. See Special Study Guide for support.
- iv. *The Health Reader* by W. Hoskyns-Abrahall, chapters 1-3. See guide at Resources—Sciences for support.
  - v. *The Practical Geologist: The Introductory Guide to the Basics of Geology and to Collecting and Identifying Rocks* by Dougal Dixon and Raymond L. Bernor. See guide at Resources—Sciences for assigned chapters and work.
- 5 Choose a chapter from *Cavers' Botany for Matriculation* for special study. See Form 5 Special Study Guide for recommended sequence. Specimens must be found, if possible, for all botanical work, and experiments must be made.
- iv. *Life Itself: Exploring the Realm of the Living Cell* by Boyce Rensberger. Year 1: chapters 1 & 2. Year 2: chapters 7 & 8. See guide at Resources—Sciences for support.
  - v. *Lessons in Astronomy* by Charles A. Young. Year 1: chapters 1, 2 (sections 21-36 and 73-79 only), and 3. Year 2: chapters 8 & 9. See guide at Resources—Sciences for support.
  - vi. *Science Matters* by Robert M. Hazen and James Trefil, chapters 14 & 15. New students should read the introduction and then join the rotation.

## Geography

- 4 & 5
- i. *Africa, Australia, and the Islands of the Pacific* by Nellie Allen, chapters 1, 3, 5, 6, and 7. See Geography Guide for support.
  - ii. *Travels with a Donkey* by Robert Louis Stevenson, spread over term.
  - iii. Personal atlas. See Form Guide for details.

Map questions to be answered from map (or memory) before each lesson, then reading and narration. All geography to be studied with atlas.

Students to be able to make maps, map new boundaries, and put names into blank maps, all from memory. 10 minutes' exercise on map of the world each week.

Know something of foreign places mentioned in the current newspapers.

Local geography out-of-doors: see *Home Education*, Parts II and V. Recommended teacher resource: *Outdoor Geography* by H. Hatch. See also suitable Scouting Tests in Geography from the *Parents' Review*, under Resources—Scouting.

KNOWLEDGE OF THE UNIVERSE (cont.)

Mathematics

- 4 & 5 i. Programs of choice. Mason divided math into three different streams with texts for each: arithmetic, algebra, and geometry. These were covered continually through high school.
- ii. Important: *Number Stories of Long Ago* by D.E. Smith, to be read in leisure time.
- iii. *Elementary Bookkeeping Exercises*.

COMMON SUBJECTS

The rest of the assigned work is listed on the Common Subjects Program. Please print that document and attach to this program to complete the Form 4 & 5 curriculum plan.

SAMPLE TIMETABLE

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9:00 AM						
9:10 AM	Old Testament	New Testament Saviour of the World	Old Testament	New Testament Epistles	Geography Mapwork and Travelogue	Form 5 only - Science Hazen
9:20 AM						
9:30 AM						
9:40 AM	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics
9:50 AM						
10:00 AM						
10:10 AM	Geography Allen	Literature Tappan and other literature	Grammar Meiklejohn	Composition	Everyday Morals & Economics 4 - Plutarch 5 - Plato	Latin
10:20 AM						
10:30 AM						
10:40 AM	Drill, Singing, Recitation	Drill, Singing, Recitation	Drill, Singing, Recitation	Drill Modern Language Songs	Drill, Singing, Recitation	Drill, Singing, Recitation
10:50 AM						
11:00 AM						
11:10 AM	Literature Shakespeare	American History Morison	General History Robinson	General History Breasted	Grammar & English Language Meiklejohn, and Rulebook or Lively Art	Art and Design Fesole Club or Blake
11:20 AM						
11:30 AM						
11:40 AM						Picture Study & Art History Innes and/or Waterhouse
11:50 AM						
12:00 PM	Modern Language	Latin	Modern Language	Latin	Earth Sciences 4 - Dixon 5 - Young	
12:10 PM						
12:20 PM						Modern Language
12:30 PM	Biology 4 - Health Reader 5 - Life Itself	Physical Sciences Feynman or Challoner	Physical Sciences Labwork OpenStax	Everyday Morals & Economics 4 & 5 - Ourselves, snd 4 - Essays 5 - Sowell	Modern Language	
12:40 PM						
12:50 PM						

1:00 PM Narration is oral or written at the end of each lesson.  
Two or more written narrations each day.  
This timetable does not represent the study of a second modern language.

<p>Lunch</p> <p>Out-of-Doors, Special Study, Seasonal Nature Book, Nature Study Musical Instrument Practice Composer Study Handicrafts and Art Historical Supplements: Essays, Biographies, Historical Fiction Literature: Novels, Plays, Long Poems, Ballads Daily Poetry Book of Centuries, Current Events, Daily News Commonplace Book, Book of Mottoes</p>
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## PART 6. MEMBER TESTIMONIALS

We are grateful for the thoughtful and committed participation of our growing and varied families from around the globe. Their kind words below describe the heart and mission of our organization.

*Partnering with the CMEC has provided me with concrete examples of what a CM education can look like. The photo galleries allow for a glimpse into how other families are implementing Mason's philosophy. The educational opportunities are bountiful and inspiring. The resources help guide my pre-reading and streamline my prep work. In viewing the photos, participating in the webinars/retreats/courses, and reading the recommended articles one can thoughtfully set-up a Mason education for their children. – Ashley in VA*

*I have never been a good student, but through the CMEC, I am beginning to learn structure, order and routine, planning, diligence, grit, and stick-to-it spirit. Without the numerous examples and kindly persistence of the CMEC leadership, I would be continually daunted by trying to live out Charlotte Mason's educational approach. It is through the simple but revolutionary concepts - keeping tabbed binders with guides and schedules, keeping log books with accounts of what we have accomplished, and being encouraged to try things that seem difficult - looking at maps before and after a geography lesson - that turn out to be not that difficult and highly rewarding. – Helen in GA*

*I have been so blessed by everything the CMEC offers on their website. The guides they provide have been invaluable as I plan for our homeschool year and have worked to piece together a timetable that will work for all the members of our family. The Mother's Education Course has been so encouraging and inspires me to continue to put into practice the principles of a Charlotte Mason education and to understand why I want to live this way of life with my family. – Amanda in MN*

*I have enjoyed the Mother's Education Course so far. I readings are so insightful and helpful in my day to day work of homemaking and homeschooling. – Carissa in NM*

*I have needed some guidance and camaraderie on my journey into formal lessons with my son! The Community accessed through these form meetings and Mothers Education Course have warmed my heart and given me such a welcome and fresh perspective. – Lydia in MN*

*The CMEC has help me to reprioritize what is important in our homelife and school and has helped me to slow down and be more intentional with my time with my children. It has helped me to be thoughtful about what I choose and how I share the chosen information. Overall, it has been true gem to me. – Sabrina in VA*

*I have found the neatly organised layout of the CMEC's resources and guides most easy to follow and helpful. I really enjoy the free downloadable pdfs of Parents' Review articles, TBG Songbook, even colour plates of different Burgess Books etc. – Stephanie in Queensland*

*What sets the CMEC apart is the vision to make it a modern-day PNEU - I feel like we are truly following in the footsteps of Miss Mason's contemporary educators, striving to create a community as she did. I know I will never feel like I am alone on our homeschool journey as long as I am a part of the CMEC. – Raquel in AZ*

*I never thought I would homeschool—ever! And here I am and I'm loving it and learning so much. I'm very grateful to the CMEC for the inspiration and ongoing support. – FT*

*It feels like such a welcoming community focused on learning and growth for all. It's a place that for me offers refreshment and encouragement. I love how closely the programs are laid out to the original PNEU programs and the thoughtfulness with which everything is prepared and presented. The CMEC has been revolutionary for our family this year. It has provided much-needed support, structure, and community. At the same time, it has allowed much freedom and flexibility in the actual implementation. – Callie in PA*

*I believe the resources can benefit new and experienced homeschoolers alike! The CMEC is like no other Charlotte Mason program or community I have been a part of or am aware of. The love these women have poured into the program and the support they provide is second to none. My children and I have feasted grandly this year all because mothers who are also educating their own children have shared this outstanding resource with the rest of us. Not only have they shared with us, but they are also supportive and continue throughout the school year to encourage and challenge me. I knew this would be a tough school year with our family moving, yet it's been one of the best school years because of the many benefits of CMEC. The CMEC has re-energized me as a homeschooling mom! I do not feel overwhelmed but challenged to go deeper and create a more meaningful experience for our children. Everything the CMEC does is top notch, and I couldn't be more grateful for them. - Valerie in TX*

*The CMEC not only provides all of the resources that you could possibly need to give your children a complete Charlotte Mason education; they also hold your hand throughout the journey. There is nothing else like it out there! - Jessica in MD*

*The curriculum is just the right recipe. I've done my own thing and I've used other CM curriculum providers. CMEC is a perfect fit for me in providing plenty of support but not restricting the way I implement it in my home school. The resources offered have helped in teaching me more about the Charlotte Mason method. The subject guides have made it possible to teach subjects that I would struggle with ... I'm very grateful for the support provided and the cheerfulness of the team wanting to support me. - Cassie in MO*

*The Mother's Education Course has been really impactful. I'm now using a logbook to keep track of our days and the regular meetings encourage me and remind me of our principles and what is important, which is easy to forget in the midst of the day-to-day ... I'm a better parent and teacher when I engage with the CMEC community and really use the resources that are provided because I need the consistent reminders of the CM principles and the experience of mothers who are working from the same paradigm and towards the same goals. The term and program guides and the guides for geography, Plutarch, composers, and artists have made my planning so much easier! - Sarah in CA*

*I'm growing in my understanding of Charlotte Mason's principles. In my growth, I have been able to sharpen my vision for what our unique home school looks like. The community support has been loving, encouraging, and always available when I have a question or concern. The curriculum is so very thorough, and the guides are an unbelievable resource. Like the structure of the sonnet, the program materials give me a guide but freedom within the form. - Kendra in NC*

*The CMEC provides a seat for everyone at the table. Whether it is your first year as a home educator or you have a high school student, there is always someone who can learn from your experiences and that you can learn from. The humble posture of the CMEC and how they choose to walk beside instead of in front of the community is so refreshing. - Allison in NC*

Further questions about the CMEC?  
Please contact [info@thecmec.org](mailto:info@thecmec.org). We would love to hear from you!