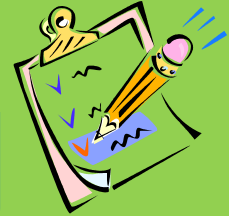


# Research Non-Fiction



# Writing



## Lesson Plans

## 2010



This high school psychology course was created in 2010 for my son and his friend Josh to learn to research and write a research paper.

This is not a product.

I used several different resources: *Understanding Writing*, *Write Stuff Adventure, Writers, Inc.*, and my own book, *Teaching Writing in High School with Classes You Can Use*.

We hope this will be a blessing and inspire you to create your own classes and unit studies.

Warmly,  
Meredith Curtis & Laura Nolette  
[Meredith@powerlinecc.com](mailto:Meredith@powerlinecc.com)  
[Laura@powerlinecc.com](mailto:Laura@powerlinecc.com)

## Course Requirements for



## Research & Nonfiction Writing



### Textbook

*Understanding Writing* by Susan Bradrick  
*Writer's Inc*  
*The Write Stuff Adventure* by Dean Rae



### Supplemental

*Elements of Style* by E.B. White and William Strunk, Jr.  
*God in the Dock* (a collection of essays) by C.S. Lewis  
*Rod and Staff English Handbook*  
*Handbook of Grammar and Composition* (ABeka)  
*Daily Grams*  
*Wordly Wise 3000 8*



## Writing Assignments:

**Unit 11.** (*U.W.* pgs.328) Using the Library. Read *Rod and Staff* pgs. 283-291. Read *Writers Inc.* pgs. 139-162. Visit Library with Baba to learn how to research various sources. Make a list of sources of information.

**Unit12.** (*U.W.* pgs. 328) Paraphrase and Précis. Read *Writers Inc.* 178--184  
*A Beka* pg. 171-175. Write 2 paraphrases and 2 précis of written pieces.

**Unit 13.** (*U.W.* pgs. 329) Read *U.W.* Read *A Beka* pgs. 198-229 and *Writers Inc.* 139-266.

- Select and limit topic.
- Find sources and prepare the working bibliography.
- Prepare a preliminary outline.
- Read and take notes. (Revise outline as necessary).
- Organize the notes.
- Write the first draft (include footnote information).
- Rewrite the paper.
- Edit the paper.
- Type a trial list of your footnotes.
- Type the paper.
- Proofread the typed paper to ensure its accuracy.

**Unit 15** (*U.W.* pgs. 330-331). *The Write Stuff* 12 lessons **Essays**  
Read *A Beka* pgs. 181-183

Write an essay on "My interviews with Godly Men about manhood and leading a home...."after interviewing 7 men. Type up interviews and write an article/essay based on interview. (This is also an assignment for your character course--place a copy in that folder too!)

Write an essay on World History (speech too!) (Ideas: Assyrian Siege Warfare, Tower of Babel, Flood, Creation, Person from Bible,

Mummies from Egypt)

Write an essay on Human Anatomy topic or World History topic

Write an essay on Battle of Marathon, Golden Age of Athens, or Peloponnesian War

Write an essay on Christmas

**Business Writing** Read *Writers Inc.* 371--397

- Write a business letters.
- Write a letter of inquiry.
- Write a letter of complaint.
- Write a letter of application.
- Write a resume. (Photocopy resume for Economics class and place in both folders)
- Write a memo.



### **Grading:**

To get a **C** grade, you must complete all assignments with content, grammar and spelling adequate.

To get a **B** grade, you must complete all assignments with content, grammar, and spelling of high quality.

To get an **A** grade, all work must be completed with excellence and creativity.



## Research & Nonfiction Writing Assignments



### September

### Date time comp

Read Elements of Style

Fill out book report sheet

Read UW unit 11 page 328

Read Rod and Staff pages 283-291

Read Writer's Inc pages 139-162

Visit Library and learn how to research various sources.

Make a list of sources of information

Daily Grams 1 page

Wordly Wise 3000 8 lesson 1

Read UW unit 12 page 328

Read Abeka pages 171-175

Read Writer's Inc pages 178-184

Write a paraphrase

Write a paraphrase

Daily Grams one page

Write a precis

Daily Grams one page

Wordly Wise 3000 8 lesson 2

Write a precis

Daily Grams one page

Read God in the Dock (collection of essays)

Fill out book report sheet



## October

Read UW unit 15 pages 330-331

Read Abeka pages 181-183

(The Write Stuff) Essay Made Easy lesson 1 page 83

Essay Made Easy lesson 2 page 84

Essay Made Easy lesson 3 page 85

Daily Grams 1 page

Wordly Wise 3000 8 lesson 3

Essay Made Easy lesson 4 pages 87-89

Essay Made Easy lesson 5 pages 90-91

Daily Grams one page

Essay Made Easy lesson 6 page 92

Essay Made Easy lesson 7 page 93

Daily Grams one page

Wordly Wise 3000 8 lesson 4

Essay Made Easy lesson 8 pages 94-95

Essay Made Easy lesson 9 page 96

Read God in the Dock

Fill out book report sheet

Daily Grams one page

Essay Made Easy lesson 10 pages 97-98

Read What is an Essay by Mom/Miss Meredith

Daily Grams one page

Wordly Wise 3000 8 lesson 5



## November

(The Write Stuff) Essay Made Easy lesson 11 pages 99-100

This speech is to be about World History and delivered to the World History Coop

Give World History speech

Daily Grams one page

Essay Made Easy project pages 101-102

Daily Grams one page

Wordly Wise 3000 8 lesson 6

Interview 7 godly men

Type up interviews

Write an essay about godly manhood and leading a home

Daily Grams one page

Write an essay on world history or human anatomy topic

Daily Grams one page

Wordly Wise 3000 8 lesson 7



## December

Write an essay on Battle of Marathon or Golden Age of Athens  
Or Peloponnesian War

Daily Grams one page

Write an essay on Christmas

Daily Grams one page

Wordly Wise 3000 8 lesson 8



## January

Read Research Papers (by Miss Meredith/Mom)

Read Writer's Inc pages 168-177

Your research paper should be on a World History or Human  
Anatomy (see Mom!) topic approved by mom

Read Writer's Inc pages 168 (Prewriting)

Select Topic

Gather Information, Visit Library ( get books, etc.) Surf Net

Write Thesis Statement

Daily Grams one page

Wordly Wise 3000 8 lesson 9



Read Writer's Inc pages 169-170 (Info Search)

Make outline

Prelim biography

Take notes on note cards

Read Primary Sources

Fill out book report sheets

Collect info from Primary sources

Daily Grams one page

Read Writer's Inc page 171 (Design Writing Plan)

Write working outline

Research

Daily Grams one page

Wordly Wise 3000 8 lesson 10

Research

Revise outline

Daily Grams one page



**February**

Read Writer's Inc pages 172-175 (Writing First draft)

Write Introduction

Daily Grams one page

Wordly Wise 3000 8 lesson 11

Write body of paper

Daily Grams one page

Write body of paper

Daily Grams one page

Wordly Wise 3000 8 lesson 12

Read Writer's Inc page 176 (Revise)

Revise Document (Rewrite)

Write Conclusion

Daily Grams one page



## March

Read Writer's Inc page 177 (Final Paper)

Edit

Type Final copy

Daily Grams one page

Wordly Wise 3000 8 lesson 13

Arrange and number pages

Add title

Type final outline

Daily Grams one page

Proofread

Final Copy

Daily Grams one page

Wordly Wise 3000 8 lesson 14

Any Work to complete research paper

Daily Grams one page



## April:

ReadWriter's Inc pages 371-397

Write a business letter

Write a letter of inquiry

Daily Grams one page

Wordly Wise 3000 8 lesson 15

Write a letter of complaint

Daily Grams one page

Write a memo

Daily Grams one page

Wordly Wise 3000 8 lesson 16

Write a resume (you can copy your resume from Economics class)

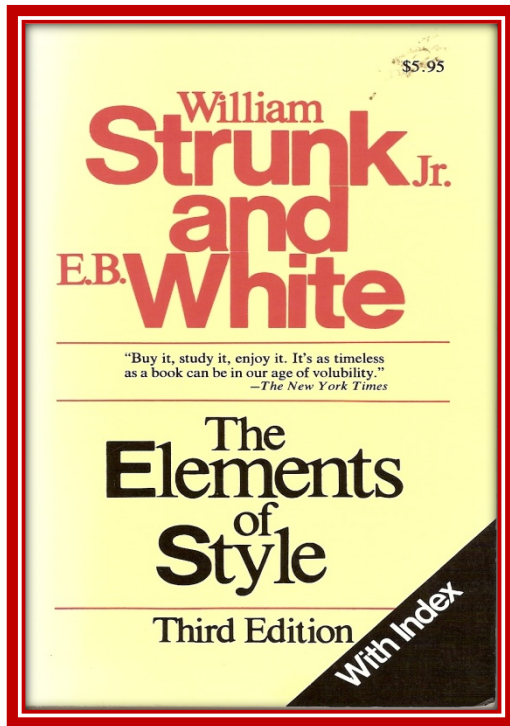
Daily Grams one page



## Research & Nonfiction Hours Check-Off


# ***Elements of Style***

**By William Strunk Jr. and E. B. White**



**Give 5 grammar rules mentioned in this book.**

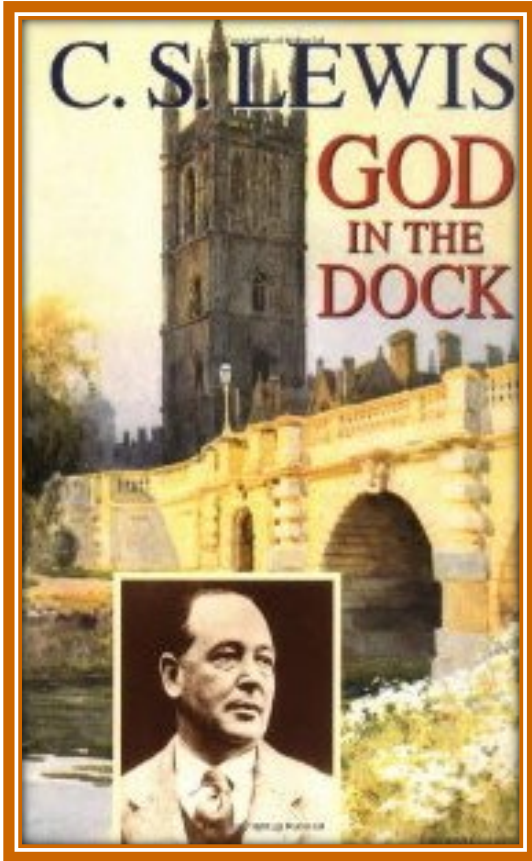
**Why is it good to use active voice when writing?**

**What are some words and expressions that are commonly misused?**

**Give ten tips for writers from this book (Not ones you have already mentioned!)**

# *God in the Dock*

By C. S. Lewis



What is your favorite essay and why?

What essay was the most difficult to understand and why?

In Essay (I: 23) *Must Our God Go?* C. S. Lewis is responding to another man's article. What is

Lewis refuting? What is Lewis declaring?

What are Lewis's main points in his essay (II: 4) *On the Reading of Old Books?*

# What is an Essay?

By Mom (from *Teaching Writing in High School with Classes You Can Use*)

Mention the word essay and many teens' hearts will stop beating. Parents will become nervous. "How do I teach my child to write an essay? His whole future depends on it!" No, his whole future does not depend on whether or not he can write a good essay. His future is actually in God's loving hands. But, the essay is important and it is difficult to teach. Writing a good essay is easier for some teens than others. But, take heart, your teen can learn to write a good essay.

An essay is a short piece of non-fiction on a single topic, presenting the author's point of view. Most writing teachers would agree that an essay's value is based on the presentation of ideas rather than the content itself. As Christians, both would be equally important.

A good essay has a main point to make and impacts the reader emotionally, intellectually, or both. Thomas Paine's essay, *Common Sense*, impacted the colonists and motivated them to fight for freedom. Essays by the Founding Fathers (John Adams, John Jay, Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and Richard Henry Lee) were published in colonial newspapers inciting a serious debate about the role of federal government. You can read these essays in *The Federalist Papers* and *The Anti-Federalist Papers*. GK Chesterton and CS Lewis wrote amazing essays. Read these and other essays to get an idea of what an essay is.

## How Can My Teenager Learn to Write an Excellent Essay?

By Mom (from *Teaching Writing in High School with Classes You Can Use*)

There are actually two ways to write an essay. I'll talk about both.

A good essay starts by making a strong point, goes on to back up that point with solid facts, and concludes by summarizing that point one more time at the end. There are three main parts to an essay: the introduction, the body, and the conclusion. Often an essay answers a question ("Why is abortion wrong?" "What is the ideal family size?" "Should Christian teens go to college?"). The answer to the question is the thesis statement ("Abortion is wrong because it takes the life of a person, devalues human life, and cause physical harm to the mother").

Most essays have a thesis statement and your teens should become experts at writing thesis statements. The thesis statement should sum up the entire argument of the essay in one strong, clear sentence.

The body of an essay is given boundaries by the thesis statement because the body "proves" that your thesis statement is true. Each paragraph should have a clear topic sentence. The rest of the paragraph supports the topic sentence. Try to give examples or illustrations in each paragraph. When choosing these examples, think of your audience and choose examples that they can relate to. Look for unity in style and a logical flow of thought. Good writers spend most of their time rewriting. I like to call rewriting "crafting." Teach your teenager to take joy in crafting their essays to make the enjoyable for the reader. Remember a writer is a servant.

Keep your conclusion simple. Summarize the body of the paper briefly (one or two sentences!). Then, reaffirm the thesis statement that you used in the introduction. Now that you have proven your thesis statement, do something grand with it—show how its truth fits in with the grand scheme of things. Tie up any loose ends. End with a flourish. This might be a quote, a personal statement, or something that catches the reader off guard (like showing where this thesis might lead to something new!). Whatever you do, keep it brief and awesome!

Here are some tips to help your teen write an excellent essay

- Write about something you are passionate about
- Start the essay with a quote, statement, or question that will "grab" your reader's attention
- Explain your point of view clearly in the beginning with a few well-written sentences. Keep it clear, but concise.
- Use facts or data to back up your opinion or point of view

- Don't feel that you have to keep to the traditional 3 main points or five paragraphs. Share what needs to be shared to make your point, no more, no less.
- Craft each section (introduction, body, and conclusion) of your essay so that it is readable, interesting, and moves quickly from point to point without being confusing. Don't be too wordy. Be clear, but concise.
- Have a subject you have to write about but can't think of a thesis statement? Write a list of questions and answers about your subject. One set of questions and answers should give you a starting place for your essay.
- Keep your subject as narrow as possible. For example narrow down the topic of homeschooling to homeschooling your kindergarten child. Narrow it down even further to teaching phonics in your home school to your kindergartener. Make your topic as specific as possible.
- You can write an essay in first person or third person; just be consistent!

Now that I have spend most of my time talking about the more popular type of essay, I will briefly mention the other type of essay. Not all essays need to begin with a thesis statement and go on to prove that thesis statement. You can start with a question and meander through that question philosophically, arriving at your conclusion by writing your thoughts as you think them. This open-ended style would probably not be the best for your teen's SAT essay section, but it is a valid form of essay writing to teach your teen. Writing to think things through is actually very helpful when you are trying to discover what it is your really think or feel about something. The discipline of writing causes the brain to think in a certain way, compatible with exploring all options and reaching a conclusion. Instead of "talking things through" to reach a conclusion, you "write things through." In this scenario, the essay is a train of thought for the reader to follow from beginning to end.



# Research Paper

By Mom (from *Teaching Writing in High School with Classes You Can Use*)

There are eighteen steps in writing a good research paper. Do not skip or skimp on any step. Give your teenager plenty of time to write this paper, having them turn in each step for your perusal. Do not allow them to write this paper in a weekend. They will miss the whole point!

This writing assignment teaches teens to research properly. In college, they might rush to get this job done. But allow them to write their first one properly. Checking over each step will ensure that they learn to research thoroughly. Parents need to stay focused on their students and keep prodding him/her to do the WHOLE thing correctly. I have never met anyone who enjoys their first research paper in the beginning steps because it is an overwhelming assignment. For almost all students, it is the biggest task they have ever faced in school. My children do their first formal research paper from January to May during their sophomore year in high school. They do a literary analysis research paper their junior or senior year.

My suggestion is to give them a check-off list with due dates for each step. If possible, make the list together with your teenager. Go over each step and figure out how much time will be needed for each. Research requires the most time.

## 1. Select Topic

The topic of your teen's research paper is of major importance. They have to be interested, and hopefully excited, about the topic chosen. It should be something they really do want to learn about, or at the very least, something that will be pleasant to learn about.

Topics need to be narrowed down to be able to write a research paper that will be a manageable size. "Dog training" is too big a topic, but "The Best Way to House break your Labrador Puppy" is manageable. Start with a general subject and then narrow that down to a research paper topic. To research something, you must start with a question?

General Subject	Narrowed Down Subject
Stem Cell Research	Is Stem Cell Research Ethical?
Animal Testing	Is it morally right to use animals for testing beauty products?
Video Games	Do video games build stronger hand-eye coordination?

Video Games	Do video games decrease attention span?
Abortion	Was the "Roe vs Wade" decision constitutional?
Abortion	Does having an abortion affect a woman's fertility?
Marriage	Can religious belief keep people from getting a divorce?

## **2. Gather Information/Research**

Visit the library to get books! Surf the net, but let your primary research be done in the library with books. Encyclopedias and web sites provide the menu, but books provide the meat and potatoes. Give plenty of time for this step. If your children have never had to gather information before, it will be a challenge. Let them ask the reference librarian for help, rather than doing this step for her. Librarians help children all the time with research.

## **3. Write Thesis Statement**

A thesis statement is a strong statement that can be proven or disproven. Your child's thesis statement will direct his research, outline and paper itself. It may change over the course of writing the paper. Hopefully, there will be the joyful discovery of research that backs up her thesis statement!

Your child should write up a thesis statement and keep it in his research paper folder. Yes, a folder. At this point, give your child a folder to keep paper work and a box to store index cards.

Here are some examples of thesis statements.

*A diet high in fiber reduces cholesterol, decreases the risk of colon cancer, and helps people maintain a healthy weight.*

*Children whose parents stay married make better grades, are less likely to use drugs, and make higher incomes as adults.*

These statements can be proven or disproved by research, so they make great thesis statements!

## **4. Make Outline**

Have your teen write an outline. This will probably be adjusted drastically so don't be really picky here. Just have them make an outline and put it in their research folder.

## **5. Preliminary Bibliography**

This is simply a list of the books that your child is using to research the topic of his research paper. Be sure to include title, author, publishing company with address, and year published.

## **6. Take Notes on Note Cards/Keep in File**

Using index cards is so easy! On one side write the name of the book the notes are taken from (make sure the book is on your bibliography!). Students will take three kinds of notes on the index cards: summaries, paraphrases, and direct quotes.

A summary card will contain one or two sentences that summarize what a chapter or the entire book is saying.

A paraphrase card will restate what the book has said in your child's own words. Be sure to write the pages numbers down that are being paraphrased.

A direct quote card will have quotation marks around the quote taken directly from the book itself. The page number will be written down as well. Be sure your child copies word for word, so that the author is not misquoted.

## **7. Read Primary Sources/Continue Taking Notes on Note Cards**

Continue to research and take notes on index cards. Keep cards together in a box or file. Add new books to the bibliography. Pick out two or three books that seem to be the most helpful. These will be considered primary sources. Make sure that those books are not just skimmed for information, but read completely cover to cover.

## **8. Write Working Outline**

Write a formal outline. This outline will direct research and the writing of the paper. It is helpful to put note cards in a logical order before beginning this step. The note cards are a lot of help in writing the formal outline of the paper.

## **9. Research/Research/Research!**

Continue to research and take notes on index cards. Keep cards together in a box or file. Add new books to the bibliography. Each time your child researches, they should be reevaluating their thesis and adjusting it as necessary.

## **10. Revise Working Outline**

Make any necessary revisions to the outline. Do this with your child if she needs your help.

## **11. Write Introduction**

Start with a bang! Grab the reader's attention. A quotation or interesting story

will often work to pull the reader in! They should give some background information and state their reasons for writing the paper. This will allow the reader to know where they are heading in the next pages. This is also the place to provide any definitions that are unique to their subject. If they are writing a research paper on the theory of Intelligent Design, then they better define Intelligent Design for their reader.

Surprising facts or little known information on the subject can capture the reader's interest. The introduction should pull the reader in and whet their appetite for more.

## **12. Write Body of Paper**

This paper can be written two ways. Your child can write from the outline or they can write from the heart. Give both options to your child and let them choose. The creative student is more like to want to just write freely, fixing everything later. The more structured students will love the form the outline gives to the paper. Either way, the next step is revision.

The first option is to have your student review the outline and note cards one more time; then set them aside. Let them write freely and with abandon. Express what they think, feel and understand about the subject. Have them make the points they want to make. Have them only look at their note cards for specific quotes, facts, or figures.

The other option begins with a review of the note cards and outline too. However, the outline is followed methodically and the note cards are placed in order according to the outline. The student refers to them continually throughout this step.

Remember that a research paper is formal writing. Avoid the use of slang words or expressions. Use formal language. Be careful not to plagiarize from a book, web site, article, or any other form of research. Give credit with footnotes for any direct quote.

When this step is finished, I recommend at least a day or more to let the paper and the writer rest. Sometimes a week is a good waiting period. Come back to the paper with fresh eyes.

## **13. Revise & Write Conclusion**

Revise first for content—is that what they really wanted to say? Help your child on this step, but don't do it for them! Are the arguments in the paper weak or strong? Are they backed up by facts? Is research presented logically and clearly? Can the reader understand the points your child is trying to make? Does the research back up the thesis statement? Does the paper address the

thesis statement?

Revise a second time for grammar, spelling, and other mechanics. Make all necessary corrections. Were the correct words chosen to express what the writer was trying to express? Use the thesaurus liberally!

When the paper has been revised, have your child write the conclusion. This final section of the paper should reinforce the main points made previously and give a final conclusion! Think of it as the final one, two punch! This section should pack a punch verbally!

#### **14. Rewrite**

Using all the corrections and adjustments, rewrite the paper. I recommend printing another copy for the next step!

#### **15. Edit**

Look over the paper again. Edit again for content and grammar. Let others read the paper and give their constructive input. You cannot edit a paper too many times, though your children will probably disagree!

#### **16. Create Final Bibliography & Footnotes**

You must document your sources. The rules for footnotes and bibliographies have changed since I was in school. I encourage you to use MLA, which seems to be used more often in colleges and universities. They have a very helpful web site: [owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/)

#### **17. Type Final Copy/ Number Pages/Choose Final Title/Write Final Outline**

Double space the entire paper! Don't forget to number the pages, making grading so much easier! You will actually feel that you deserve a grade too! Helping someone write a research paper is hard work! After typing the paper, both you and your child should reread it once more. Have them make any needed changes. Then have the thoroughly exhausted student choose a title. Make any adjustments to the final outline that are necessary and type up the final outline too!

## **18. Title Paper/Type & Print/Publish!**

Give the paper a title. Your child should give the paper a title and make a nice title page for his paper and then package the paper, title page, outline, bibliography and footnote section in a folder or report cover. Let people read this paper! Too much work has gone into it for it to just sit and gather dust. At least everyone in your family, including grandparents, should read it.

We hope you enjoyed these "Good Old Days" lesson plans that we used to homeschool our children years ago. They are compliments of Powerline Productions.

## Our Websites



[powerlineprod.com/](http://powerlineprod.com/)  
[meredithcurtis.com/](http://meredithcurtis.com/)  
[joyfulandsuccessfulhomeschooling.com/](http://joyfulandsuccessfulhomeschooling.com/)  
[jshomeschooling.com/](http://jshomeschooling.com/)  
[finishwellcon.com/](http://finishwellcon.com/)

**Print Books Available @ [amazon.com/](http://amazon.com/) (look up Books by Title)**

**E-books Available at [powerlineprod.com/currclick.com/browse/pub/247/Powerline-Productions](http://powerlineprod.com/currclick.com/browse/pub/247/Powerline-Productions)**

**Contact Us:** [Laura@powerlinecc.com](mailto:Laura@powerlinecc.com) & [Meredith@powerlinecc.com](mailto:Meredith@powerlinecc.com) & [PastorMike@powerlinecc.com](mailto:PastorMike@powerlinecc.com)

## Please Like Us on Facebook:

[facebook.com/PowerlineProductionsInc/](https://facebook.com/PowerlineProductionsInc/)

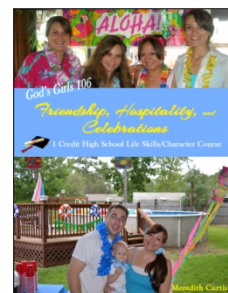
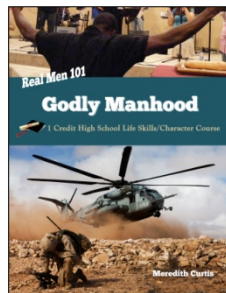
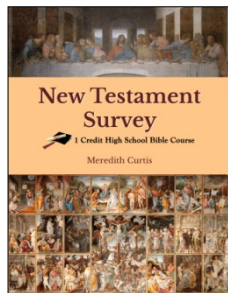
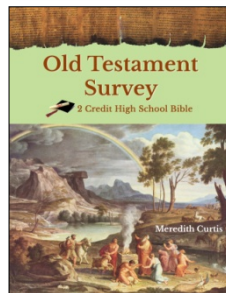
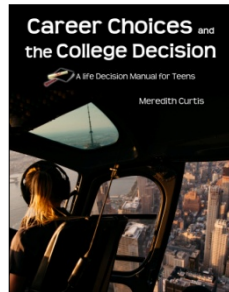
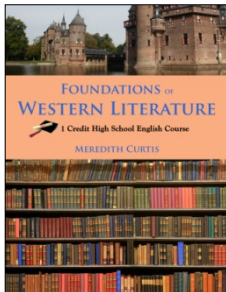
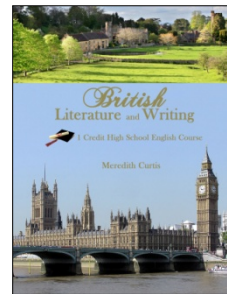
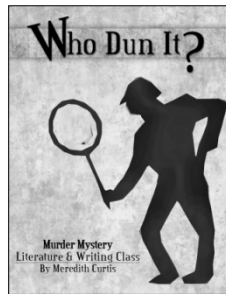
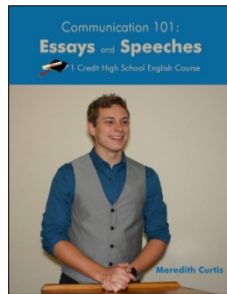
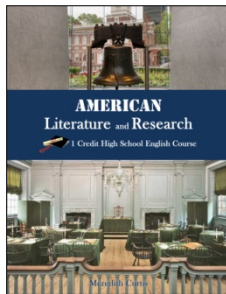
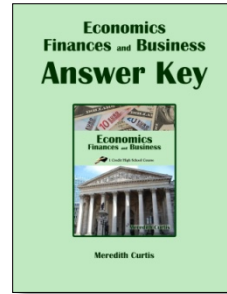
We offer Unit Studies, Cookbooks, History Celebrations, One-Credit High School Courses, How-to-Homeschool Books, and Other Resources to Help You Be a World Changer & Raise World Changers.

## Resources available at PowerlineProd.com:





## High School Courses





## Teach History the Fun Way

