

Maggie Hogan's Bright Ideas Press E-Zine

Welcome to the October 2006 edition. I hope you find the following information useful, as you spend time teaching and enjoying your children!

History Helps

Columbus Day

Why did Columbus set sail in 1492?

1. to prove the earth was round
2. to discover a sea route to the Spice Islands (East Indies)
3. to spread the Gospel
4. to acquire riches & power

If you answered “2, 3, and 4” you are correct. If you are like me though, you may remember from grade school being taught that Christopher Columbus also wanted to prove the earth was round. We were told that people back then thought you could “fall off the edge of the earth” if you sailed too far in any direction. However, the truth is that most educated Europeans during that time period already believed it was round. Columbus wanted to sail west to reach the East Indies. The disagreement centered not on the shape but rather on the size of the world. Although Eratosthenes (276-194 BC) had already fairly accurately calculated the Earth's circumference, Columbus (using different measurements) believed it was smaller.

Columbus finally found sponsorship for his expedition from Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand from Spain. He asked for and was granted three requests:

1. one tenth of all the riches he brought back
2. governorship of all the lands that he visited
3. the title “Admiral of the Ocean Sea”

The Spanish monarchs desired the potential riches and new lands from this voyage. But Queen Isabella, like Columbus, was a devout Catholic and she, too, wanted to see the Gospel spread to other lands. So on April 17, 1492, Ferdinand and Isabella signed a contract with Christopher Columbus. They hoped he would return with gold, silver, silk, gems and spices. (Instead, he just brought back a new spice, later named “allspice,” as well as chile peppers, corn, and tomatoes.)

So Columbus and his crew began their daring expedition to the Spice Islands. The Moluccas were the original "Spice Islands." They are but a small chain of islands in the north central part of E Indonesia, between Sulawesi (Celebes) and New Guinea. The Moluccas are mountainous, fertile, and humid and are home to nutmeg and cloves.

Read the rest of this article, including discussion questions and hands-on ideas, at http://crosswalk.com/family/home_school/

For more on Columbus check out:

<http://wilstar.com/holidays/columbus.htm>
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/today/oct12.html>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Columbus_Day
www.shalomjerusalem.com/heritage/heritage2.html
www.bede.org.uk/flaearth.htm
www.christiananswers.net/q-aig/aig-c034.html
www.columbusnavigation.com/ships.shtml
www.shipsofdiscovery.org/columbus.htm

Are you looking for an easy-to-use, thorough, American History curriculum written from a Christian perspective? Join thousands of other families discovering our All American History series. Volume 1 available now.

http://brightideaspress.com/aah_info.htm

Geography Corner

Fall Leaves

One of my readers shared this great geography idea with me that I wanted to pass on to you now that fall is here. She wrote:

“My son was working on a nature badge for scouts, and we asked via several homeschool email loops for people to volunteer to exchange either their state leaf, or their favorite leaf that is typical of their area, with our son. He in turn sent them a buckeye leaf and a buckeye. We would then find the location on the map and pinpoint it exactly. We actually got the state leaf from every single state, as well as many other neat ones.

What fun! Lots of the people sent pictures of where they lived, or of the tree they had gotten the leaf from. So we added those to the portfolio, too. Since my son is in junior high, I had him pinpoint longitude and latitude of the various locations, as well as finding the towns on a map, and mapping out a way to drive there from our home via both the quickest route and the scenic route. Also, I had him calculate mileage and the cost of gasoline required to make the trip. It really helped give him a sense of how far apart things are in this big ol' country of ours . . . and also helped earn that badge for scouts.”

Science Secrets

This just in from BBC News:

“Sir Richard Branson has unveiled a mock-up of the rocket-powered vehicle that will carry clients into space through his Virgin Galactic business. The Virgin spaceships are designed to carry six passengers and two pilots to an altitude of about 140km on a sub-orbital space flight. Tickets on a Virgin Galactic flight are expected to cost £100,000 (\$190,000).”

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/5388482.stm>

Would you like to learn more about Earth and Space before your kids beg to go on the ultimate field trip? Well, Bright Ideas Press announces our newest book in the Christian Kids Explore Series:

Christian Kids Explore Earth and Space breaks our universe into manageable bites, offering units

about Earth and its structure, the lithosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere, and weather, as well as a unit investigating the universe and its components. The 24 lessons and six unit reviews present the material in an easy-to-teach manner. Students are encouraged to keep a science notebook as they learn. Hands-on activities include building a model of Earth and its layers, using eggs to understand plate tectonics, and simulating a volcanic eruption. *Christian Kids Explore Earth and Space* guides your journey as you dive into the wonder of our universe. Grades 3 – 6 (but adaptable for younger students). \$29.95

Visit <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ChristianKidsExploreBiology> (For a community of homeschoolers using any Christian Kids Explore science curriculum)

*Cathy Duffy Top 100 Picks

See the books that Cathy loves: The Mystery of History Series and The Christian Kids Explore Series at www.BrightIdeasPress.com

Check out our Yahoo Groups!

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AllAmericanHistory> (Our awesome American History curriculum!)

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HSGifted> (Homeschooling gifted children)

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MysteryofHistory1>

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MysteryofHistory2>

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MysteryofHistoryHS> (Using The Mystery of History with high schoolers)

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ChristianKidsExploreBiology> (For all of our science curriculum)

We appreciate you, our customers.

Feel free to contact us:

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Come blog with me:

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Happy Trails,

Maggie Hogan