

Maggie Hogan's Bright Ideas Press E-Zine

Welcome to the February 2007 edition. I hope you find the following information useful, as you spend time teaching and enjoying your children!

Literature Help

I first heard Jim Trelease speak on reading a few years ago at a community meeting in a local high school. Bibliophile that I am, I was impressed by his desire to make books appealing to every child. I thought this idea I found in his website of using rain gutters to promote books was brilliant! Maybe I'll redo my office . . . If you have a shortage of book case space, check out this idea – include lots of photos!

http://www.trelease-on-reading.com/rah_chpt6_p4.html#

<http://www.grtbooks.com/>

This is a Great Books and Classics website for SERIOUS adult and upper teen reading. It is organized, easy to search, but we are talking the Great Books of Western Civilization,-think Homer, Plato, etc.

<http://www.promo.net/pg/> - Project Gutenberg

“Project Gutenberg is the brainchild of Michael Hart, who in 1971 decided that it would be a really good idea for lots of famous and important texts to be freely available to everyone in the world. Since then, he has been joined by hundreds of volunteers who share his vision.” Now, more than thirty years later, Project Gutenberg has a total of 6,000+ free eBooks!

<http://www.hbook.com/booklists/default.asp>

Horn Book site is a grand place with complete lists of winners of various awards, a parent page (check out the archives for some interesting and useful articles) and a link to a perfect little British site where you can read letters from young British bibliophiles, about what they are reading, why they are reading it, and where they go to look for good used books. Not to mention, there are also black and white bookplates you can print off and place in your home library books. (Great for coloring pages as well.)

<http://www.myhomelibrary.org/>

<http://www.ala.org/ala/alsc/awardsscholarships/literaryawds/newberymedal/newberyhonors/newberymedal.htm>

This site includes winners from the inception of the award to current times, a history of the Medal, and from here you can also find the Caldecott Medal home page as well as some less familiar awards.

The Newbery Medal is awarded annually by the American Library Association for the most distinguished American children's book published the previous year. On June 21, 1921, the purpose of the Newbery Medal was stated as follows: "To encourage original creative work in the field of books for children. To emphasize to the public that contributions to the literature for children deserve similar recognition to poetry, plays, or novels. . ."

The Newbery Award thus became the first children's book award in the world. Its terms, as well as its

long history, continue to make it the best known and most discussed children's book award in this country. From the beginning, committees could, cite other books as worthy of attention. Such books were referred to as Newbery or Caldecott "runners-up." In 1971 the term "runners-up" was changed to "honor books." The new terminology was made retroactive so that all former runners-up are now referred to as Newbery or Caldecott Honor Books.

Geography Corner

Outline Maps

You might already know that outline maps are great for labelling all sorts of political and physical features: bodies of water, rivers, mountain ranges, cities, states, capitals, countries, continents, longitude, latitude, etc. Here are 25 other great ideas!

1. Birthplace of US Presidents
2. Inventors and inventions
3. Famous composers
4. Famous or favorite authors
5. Famous artists
6. Use your maps as a book list. Plot the story's location.
7. Where are your missionaries? Pray for them.
8. Imports and exports. Where did your P.J.'s come from? How about your orange juice?
9. How many US military bases can you find?
10. What countries forbid Christianity? Plot the persecuted church. Pray for them.
11. Use different colors to show the three major world religions. (Christianity, Judaism, Islam)
12. Match the flag with the country.
13. Write in as many foreign greetings as you can discover (i.e. Aloha! Ciao! Bon Jour!)
14. Follow the concert tour of your favorite band.
15. Trace your ancestors' trek to the "New World".
16. International cuisine. What's Babka? Where did the hamburger come from? Bruschetta?
17. Where do all your cousins live?
18. Visit the zoo (or your favorite zoo book). Where do all the animals live? Cut out or draw pictures and stick them on the map.
19. Follow the migratory patterns of bees, butterflies, birds or waterfowl.
20. How many songs can you think of that mention cities, states, or countries? Do you know the way to San Jose? I left my heart... My kind of town, Chicago is....
21. Follow the schedule of your favorite sports team.
22. Note the location of natural disasters. Floods, earthquakes, tornadoes, hurricanes, forest fires.
23. Where do the trees grow? Note the native areas of Ponderosa pines, palm trees, eucalyptus, mahogany, ebony, bamboo etc.
24. Plot as many dormant and active volcanoes as you can.
25. Go on a scavenger hunt around your house. How many geographical locations can you place on your maps? Check the record companies on your CDs, the publishers of your books. Read the labels on the back of your toothpaste, shampoo, etc. Where was your lunch made? The peanut butter, the jelly, the chips, the banana, the dairy, and the plate you are using.

Looking for more great geography ideas? Have you looked at Hands-On Geography or The Ultimate Geography & Timeline Guide? These books are stuffed full of ways to incorporate geography into your school and your life.

<http://brightideaspress.com/HOG.htm>
<http://brightideaspress.com/UGTG.htm>

Science Secrets

One of a Kind Mercury-sniffing “Pound Mutt”

From [Science Daily](#) — “America's only dog that's trained to sniff mercury is able to detect as little as a half-gram, and is faster and cheaper than traditional lab analysis. Dogs' olfactory membranes are larger and 44 times more sensitive than humans'. Mercury contamination is frequent in schools: mercury spills are typical in science classrooms and labs where thermometers and barometers are used.”

This link will take you to an interesting story about a dog and his owner/partner. This former “pound mutt” is now the only dog in the USA trained to sniff out mercury. In the last five years, Clancy has helped rid schools of more than 1,500 pounds of mercury. Read about how dogs sense smells and share this interesting video with your family.

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/videos/2006-12-05/>

Speaking of Mercury, have you taught chemistry yet in your homeschool? Chemistry was the first science subject I covered as a new homeschooler back in 1991. We had a great time with a chemistry set and library books on experiments. However, in my ignorance, we did not cover any of the basic building blocks. I learned the hard way that although experiments are fun, they are meant to be a demonstration of something you are learning about, otherwise they have little educational value. If chemistry intimidates you or if you'd like to delve into this subject before your kids are in high school, let me recommend *Christian Kids Explore Chemistry* by Robert & Elizabeth Ridlon (a husband-and-wife team of creation scientists and college professors). Written with the 5th through 8th grader in mind, this book will walk you and your students through this “dynamite” topic! And at \$29.95 it's a great deal.

<http://brightideaspress.com/CKEChemistry.htm>

*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:

Bright Ideas Press (Publishers of *The Mystery of History* series)
877.492.8081
info@BrightIdeasPress.com
www.BrightIdeasPress.com

Come visit my blog:
www.homeschoolblogger.com/maggiehogan

Happy Trails,

Maggie Hogan