



A JOURNEY TO BEAUTY

*A Handbook for First-Time Charlotte Mason
Homeschoolers*

YEN CABAG



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“Beauty will save the world.”

~ Fyodor Dostoevsky

Welcome Message

Dear Parents:

Welcome to your journey of beauty with your Charlotte Mason homeschool!

In the midst of all the ugliness and brokenness in the world, I am excited to walk with you and your family to learn to fill our minds with all that is noble, all that is pure, all that is beautiful and excellent (Philippians 4:8).

Please know that while I am personally recommending the Charlotte Mason philosophy as that which works best for our family and which I believe can add significant value to any other family, there is no one-size-fits-all way to homeschool, and the reason we all chose to homeschool can come in different forms.

As such I hope to help you in your journey to get to know your own family a little bit better, and to know your goals for your own family a little bit clearer as well. In the meantime, I hope the Charlotte Mason philosophy will help to enrich your lives as individuals and as a family, as it clearly did for me and my family.

Blessings on this exciting new chapter of your life!

Cheering you on,

Yen Cabag
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Chapter 1: Before You Start

OK, before we jump right in, there are a few things we need to have in place. First, WHY did you decide to homeschool? This is crucial to write down, because it helps to keep you going in the midst of challenges. Homeschooling is a beautiful alternative for our children's education, but it's not always easy, and may be a good choice for certain seasons in our lives.

And specifically for the Charlotte Mason method, results do not come quickly, as a lot of the skills we are developing in our children happen over the course of time. This means that there may come periods of time when we feel doubtful about whether we are doing the right thing, and during times like that, it's best to remember what our goals had been in the first place.

As you process your motivations and goals, you can always come back to this page during times of questioning or challenges.

1. Write down your top 3 reasons why you decided to homeschool:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

2. Write down your top 3 goals for your child(dren) for their entire school career:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

3. Write down your top 3 goals for your children for this particular year:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

4. Write down your top 3 reasons why you chose the Charlotte Mason method:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Glossary of Terms

1. Philosophy - is a set of principles that govern how a certain thing is done
2. Curriculum - a guide made up of book suggestions, schedule suggestions, and activity suggestions according to the philosophy chosen
3. Independent homeschooling - the process of homeschooling a child without enrollment in any provider school; upon return to conventional school, the child needs to take the PEPTest with DepEd in order to qualify for the grade level he expects to be in
4. Homeschool Provider - the school that a student enrolls in to receive a report card at the end of the year
 - Open Curriculum Homeschool Provider - allows you to pick and choose your own philosophy / curriculum
 - DepEd Curriculum Homeschool Provider - requires you to follow DepEd curriculum or set of core competencies that need to be met; may also require you to use their own textbooks
5. Portfolio - a compilation of the students' output that is submitted to the Provider either at the end of the year or at the time periods stipulated by the Provider

Please note down any other terms you come across that you want to remember as you go through in your homeschooling journey:

Chapter 2: Principles of a Charlotte Mason Education

(From Charlotte Mason's Vol. 6 Towards a Philosophy of Education)

In this chapter, I have reproduced the 20 principles that summarize Charlotte Mason's philosophy. However, don't be intimidated if you find the language a bit new to you—since Charlotte Mason lived a couple of centuries ago, the English they used tended to be a bit deeper. I admit that when I was starting off, it was much easier to read blogs and articles, (or if you prefer, watch videos or listen to podcasts) than to read Charlotte Mason's actual words!

Still, I decided to include her actual words here so you at least get a glimpse of them from the get-go. Don't worry about understanding or agreeing with everything. For now, let's just have them here where you can easily access them.

Note that each one of these principles is like an entire book in itself. This handbook is my simple attempt to break down some of these principles to help you get started.

I suggest you read through a few of these principles each day, chew on them, write down your observations and questions about them, and find a community to discuss them with. It is my hope that CharlotteMasonPhilippines.Com can be that community for you!

I will be highlighting and adding my commentary, in the following chapters, on some of the principles that can start you off in the direction of a Charlotte Mason education. I will not be commenting on each and every principle, but I believe that over the years, we will expand our understanding as we continue to learn about education and children.

So without further ado, here are Charlotte Mason's twenty principles:

1. Children are born persons.
2. They are not born either good or bad, but with possibilities for good and for evil.
3. The principles of authority on the one hand, and of obedience on the other, are natural, necessary, and fundamental; but—
4. These principles are limited by the respect due to the personality of children, which must not be encroached upon whether by the direct use of fear or love, suggestion or influence, or by undue play upon any one natural desire.
5. Therefore, we are limited to three educational instruments—the atmosphere of environment, the discipline of habit, and the presentation of living ideas. The PNEU Motto is “Education is an atmosphere, a discipline, a life.”

6. Education is an atmosphere: We do not mean that a child should be isolated in what may be called a 'child-environment' especially adapted.
7. Education is a discipline: We mean the discipline of habits, formed definitely and thoughtfully, whether habits of mind or body. (Physiologists tell us of the adaptation of brain structures to habitual lines of thought, i.e. to our habits.)
8. Education is a life: This refers to the need of intellectual and moral as well as of physical sustenance. The mind feeds on ideas, and therefore children should have a generous curriculum.
9. We hold that the child's mind is no mere sac to hold ideas; but is rather, if the figure may be allowed, a spiritual organism, with an appetite for all knowledge. This is its proper diet, with which it is prepared to deal; and which it can digest and assimilate as the body does food.
10. Such a doctrine that the mind is a receptacle lays the stress of education (the preparation of knowledge in enticing morsels duly ordered) upon the teacher. Children taught on this principle are in danger of receiving much teaching with little knowledge; and the teacher's axiom is, 'what a child learns matters less than how he learns it.'
11. But we, believing that the normal child has powers of mind which fit him to deal with all knowledge proper to him, give him a full and generous curriculum; taking care only that all knowledge offered him is vital, that is, that facts are not presented without their informing ideas. Out of this conception comes our principle that—
12. "Education is the Science of Relations": that a child has natural relations with a vast number of things and thoughts: so we train him upon physical exercises, natural lore, handicrafts, science and art, and upon many living books, for we know that our business is not to teach him all about anything, but to help him to make valid as many as may be of—"Those first-born affinities that fit our new existence to existing things."
13. In devising a syllabus for a normal child, of whatever social class, three points must be considered:
 1. He requires *much* knowledge, for the mind needs sufficient food as much as does the body.
 2. The knowledge should be various, for sameness in mental diet does not create appetite (i.e. curiosity)
 3. Knowledge should be communicated in well-chosen language, because his attention responds naturally to what is conveyed in literary form.

14. As knowledge is not assimilated until it is reproduced, children should 'tell back' after a single reading or hearing; or should write on some part of what they have read.
15. A single reading is insisted on, because children have naturally great power of attention; but this force is dissipated by the re-reading of passages, and also, by questioning, summarising, and the like. Acting upon these and some other points in the behaviour of mind we find that the educability of children is enormously greater than has hitherto been supposed, and is but little dependent on such circumstances as heredity and environment. Nor is the accuracy of this statement limited to clever children or to children of the educated classes: thousands of children in Elementary Schools respond freely to this method, which is based on the behaviour of mind.
16. There are two guides to moral and intellectual self-management to offer to children, which we may call 'the way of the will' and 'the way of reason.'
17. The way of the will: Children should be taught, (a) to distinguish between 'I want' and 'I will.' (b) That the way to will effectively is to turn our thoughts from that which we desire but do not will. (c) That the best way to turn our thoughts is to think of or do some quite different thing, entertaining or interesting. (d) That after a little rest in this way, the will returns to its work with new vigour. (This adjunct of the will is familiar to us as *diversion*, whose office it is to ease us for a time from will effort, that we may 'will' again with added power...)
18. The way of reason: We teach children, too, not to 'lean (too confidently) to their own understanding'; because the function of reason is to give logical demonstration (a) of mathematical truth, (b) of an initial idea, accepted by the will. In the former case, reason is, practically, an infallible guide, but in the latter, it is not always a safe one; for, whether that idea be right or wrong, reason will confirm it by irrefragable proofs.
19. Therefore, children should be taught, as they become mature enough to understand such teaching, that the chief responsibility which rests on them *as persons* is the acceptance or rejection of ideas. To help them in this choice we give them principles of conduct, and a wide range of the knowledge fitted to them. These principles should save children from some of the loose thinking and heedless action which cause most of us to live at a lower level than we need.
20. We allow no separation to grow up between the intellectual and 'spiritual' life of children, but teach them that the Divine Spirit has constant access to their spirits, and is their Continual Helper in all the interests, duties, and joys of life.

Chapter 3: Children as Persons

Children are born persons

This first principle is one of the foundations of a Charlotte Mason education is that “Children are born persons.”

This is one of the things I love about this philosophy. We view children as individuals, with unique gifts, strengths, and weaknesses, and it is our role as parents to discover—and cherish these individual traits.

I once listened to a TedTalk by the late Sir Ken Robison, Changing Education Paradigms. In it, he explained how our current educational system was a result of the Industrial Revolution, where factories needed to be efficient in producing the items they were called to manufacture, and schools, therefore, also needed to be efficient in producing the workers needed to run these factories. He likened the school system of lumping students altogether by age group as putting them through an assembly line, and stamping each one with a quality control stamp upon graduation.

But, if we believe that children are born persons, it means that our children are not outputs in a factory assembly line, nor are they computer programs where we can input a certain series of things and expect a certain result. Instead, we are given the awesome privilege of raising up a God-created being with special gifts that we get to discover, unfold, and release into the world. Isn't that wonderful?

Possibilities for good and for evil

If you love philosophy, you probably read of different views of humans, as being either naturally good, or naturally bad. Because Charlotte Mason was a practicing Christian, she based many of her principles on the Bible. Based on this, she believes that children are born with the propensity of doing either good or evil. This means that our role as parents is really important, because we get to train our children to choose the good, the true, and the beautiful.

Respecting the Personality of Children

Do you remember how you behaved in school when you were young?

In my case, I was an achiever from a very young age. But I do remember that I tended to perform well in school subjects where I liked the teacher, and also slack off when I didn't like the teacher.

Because of the high value she places on children as persons, Charlotte Mason discourages the use of any outside force in encouraging children to learn. This includes the use of rewards and punishment, which are very common tactics for traditional school. For example, who among you here either had experience yourself or your children running for the honor roll or being preoccupied with getting good grades? While there's nothing inherently wrong with being driven by competition and a desire to do good, when our main focus is on external factors like those, we may miss out on the joy of learning.

Instead, the Charlotte Mason philosophy emphasizes the child's natural love for learning and works on cultivating, supporting, and encouraging more and more learning, simply for the joy and reward of knowing something. We believe this is a more powerful and sustainable model for encouraging children to learn.

In the next chapter, we will also discuss about the tools that we use in order to harness this valuable gift.

Chapter 4. Education as an Atmosphere, Discipline, Life

One of the favorite sayings in a Charlotte Mason education is “Education is an atmosphere, a discipline, a life.”

In this chapter, let me break them out into simple terms, but please bear in mind that there’s still so much to discover about each of these ideas!

Education is an atmosphere

As parents, we have the power to create an atmosphere conducive to learning. This does not mean adjusting everything in the home for the child’s comfort, but it does include being intentional about pursuing lifelong learning, even in our personal lives.

One example for this is that we create an atmosphere of safety in thinking, analyzing ideas, and expressing our thoughts and opinions. The more we cultivate this kind of atmosphere, the more that our children grow up knowing that learning is enjoyable and is a reward in itself, the bigger the chances that they will grow up to be lifelong learners.

Education is a discipline

We believe in the power of habit. Charlotte Mason describes habit formation as being like laying down rails for a train to pass through. Just as the locomotive can go as fast as it wants and still be sure of getting where it needs to go, when we do one thing over and over, it forms a “rut” in our minds that the action becomes automatic.

One practical example of this is when we first learn to drive. Do you remember how, when you were first learning to do it, you had to pay attention to what you had to do first? For a stick-shift vehicle, that would’ve included figuring out whether to step on the clutch, the break, or the accelerator, and then glancing at the gear to figure out where to push it. Then you also had to add in your attention in front of you, etc etc! But, after a few days or weeks or practice, it becomes almost second nature.

In terms of school lessons, habit is also crucial. For example, the habit of attention plays a vital role in how a child is able to listen with his whole being, and then assimilate his lessons from only a single reading.

In a Charlotte Mason education, we also emphasize the habit of excellent work, and encourage our children to give their best effort in everything they do.

Education is a life

Our minds thrive on ideas, not just dry facts, and we serve a feast of great ideas from the greatest minds in history using the very best books we can get our hands on. This is one reason why the CM philosophy uses a wide array of books.

And, we also believe that the mind of our children is not merely a container for ideas: instead, we view it as a “spiritual organism” that actually hungers for knowledge! Just as our physical body hungers for food and thrives on nutritious food, our mind also hungers for living ideas, feeds upon them, and grows from a steady diet of these “nutritious” ideas!

This means that, one of our roles as our children’s teacher is not necessarily to “teach” every single thing. After all, who among us can say we know everything about everything? But, because we value the importance of ideas coming from great minds, we know that we can use books. And instead of pressuring ourselves to “teach” our children, we focus on preparing the materials that will give our children’s minds the healthy diet that it needs.

Chapter 5. Education as the Science of Relations

This is another principle that I believe makes a huge difference between traditional mindsets about education and the Charlotte Mason method. In saying that education is the science of relations, we believe that education includes letting our children make connections between different lessons by themselves.

Education is the Science of Relations

When I was still researching on the different methods to use for my oldest son's homeschool, I came across a method that utilizes lessons that focus on a particular theme over a period of time. I liked the idea, and tried my hand at creating "themed" lessons, incorporating the "theme" across all subjects. For example, in reading the story of Noah's ark, my lessons would include counting by twos for Math, learning about different types of animals for science, making an ark for handicraft, and so on.

But when I studied about the Charlotte Mason method, I learned that it's not our role as parents or teachers to make connections for our children. Instead, children are perfectly capable of making these connections themselves, and should in fact be left to do that themselves!

For example, a child in a CM homeschool who reads about one person, say, Queen Elizabeth, in one book, may recognize the name in another book and point it out excitedly. But another child may not have the same reaction, and instead notice something else. This is the science of relations at work, while also giving room for every child's individuality.

But of course, the science of relations won't really work as well if there aren't many ideas to connect in the first place. We believe that our children actually requires much knowledge, and that this knowledge needs to be varied. Just as, in our physical bodies, eating the same food over and over stifles our appetite, the same is true for our minds: always having the same thing for our mental diet stifles appetite, or what we call curiosity.

The Power of Story

Also, we believe that the knowledge that we “feed” our children needs to come in excellently-written language. Charlotte Mason tested and found that children’s minds respond best to literary or story form. This is why we use a lot of “living books,” or books that are written by somebody who is passionate and an expert in a given field, and also written in a literary way.

Compare the following passages:

Passage 1. The following format is common in many textbooks or lessons for children.

Faith is an important trait for everyone to have. You have to believe that something good is coming in the future, even when you don’t see it with your own eyes.

An analogy of faith is the caterpillar. Although it starts off like any ordinary worm, crawling along on the ground, someday it will turn into a beautiful butterfly.

Remember, you are like that caterpillar, too. Someday, you can soar on wings like a butterfly!

Passage 2. This is an excerpt from Margaret Gatty’s *Parables from Nature*. This story opens with a dying butterfly leaving her eggs in the care of a caterpillar sitting on the same cabbage leaf where the eggs are:

"Well, then, first of all, I will tell you what these little creatures are to eat"—and the Lark nodded his beak towards the eggs. "What do you think it is to be? Guess!"

"Dew, and the honey out of flowers, I am afraid," sighed the Caterpillar.

"No such thing, old lady! Something simpler than that. Something that *you* can get at quite easily."

"I can get at nothing quite easily but cabbage-leaves," murmured the Caterpillar, in distress.

"Excellent! my good friend," cried the Lark exultingly; "you have found it out. You are to feed them with cabbage-leaves."

"*Never!*" said the Caterpillar indignantly. "It was their dying mother's last request that I should do no such thing."

"Their dying mother knew nothing about the matter," persisted the Lark; "but why do you ask me, and then disbelieve what I say? You have neither faith nor trust."

"Oh, I believe everything I am told," said the Caterpillar.

"Nay, but you do not," replied the Lark; "you won't believe me even about the food, and yet that is but a beginning of what I have to tell you. Why, Caterpillar, what do you think those little eggs will turn out to be?"

"Butterflies, to be sure," said the Caterpillar.

"*Caterpillars!*" sang the Lark; "and you'll find it out in time;" and the Lark flew away, for he did not want to stay and contest the point with his friend.

Can you see the difference between a passage comprised only of dry-facts (Passage 1), and one in which the idea is told in story form (Passage 2)? Write down your observations about their differences here:

Chapter 6. The Power of Narration

The Charlotte Mason method places a great emphasis on the practice of narration.

Narration is simply telling back what you read or hear after a single reading. This is because we believe that “knowledge is not assimilated until it is reproduced.”

How does this look? For younger children, the parent or teacher may be the one reading the book aloud, but after a scene or two, the parent stops and asks the child to recount what he has heard. For older children, they may read their school lessons themselves, but they also stop after, say, a few pages or so, and tell back what they read.

Along with this expectation for every school lesson, we also emphasize the importance of only doing a single reading. This is because children actually have a natural aptitude for paying attention. But if we always repeat ourselves when they miss anything, they know that they can get away with not paying attention, and instead always wait for the rereading of the passage. Or, if we employ traditional school methods of explaining, summarizing, or asking pointed questions after the reading, they will also lose that habit of attention.

Take a look at how Charlotte Mason describes it:

“Children must narrate after one reading or hearing. Children naturally have good focus of attention, but allowing a second reading makes them lazy and weakens their ability to pay attention the first time. Teachers summarizing and asking comprehension questions are other ways of giving children a second chance and making the need to focus the first time less urgent. By getting it the first time, less time is wasted on repeated readings, and more time is available during school hours for more knowledge. A child educated this way learns more than children using other methods, and this is true for all children regardless of their IQ or background.”

This is one reason why children educated in the Charlotte Mason method are able to go through a great number of books. After all, with only one reading, you can get through so much more. And, because they are trained to pay utmost attention, and then tell back what they heard or read, they are able to remember the stories in more detail and over a longer period of time.

And, stories that make their way into children’s hearts are those that have the greatest power of transforming their lives.

Chapter 7. How Lessons Look in a Charlotte Mason Homeschool

In this section, I hope to give you some quick “how-to” in terms of implementing different aspects of a Charlotte Mason method. For more information on each aspect, I encourage you to head back over to CharlotteMasonPhilippines.Com, where I will continue to flesh them out in more detail, including real-life examples from our own homeschool or perhaps from some of the families I coach in the CM method.

Disclaimer: Please note that this is my humble attempt to describe how a first-time CM homeschooler CAN apply some of the different aspects of a CM education and is no way intended to replace the actual reading and understanding of Charlotte Mason’s volumes on Home Education. I heartily recommend continued learning by reading her actual works and also reading articles, blogs, watching videos or listening to podcasts to help build your understanding of the philosophy and how best to apply it to your family.

How to implement: Literature/History/Science Readings

1. Typically, the books recommended on the Charlotte Mason philosophy are a few notches higher than the child’s reading comprehension. As such, it may help, especially for first time homeschoolers, to have mom/parent read aloud the books.
2. Older children, e.g. strong readers from ages 9 onwards, may co-read: the mom can start by reading aloud three or four paragraphs, ask for a narration, and then let the child read aloud the three or four paragraphs, narrate, and so on.
3. Narration (**review previous paragraph and see next section for more details*) is simply asking the child to tell back what he/she read or heard. We avoid direct fill-in-the-blank type questions. We let the child form his own connections with the stories.
4. Very strong readers, typically from ages 9 onwards, may read their school books independently, but at the start, it is recommended to have them read the book aloud to you, so you can establish the habit of reading things only once and then narrating them. This takes a few months to establish, so be prepared to have him/her read aloud to you and then listen to the narration.
5. As narration skills develop, typically over a few months, you can extend the length of the passage read to about a page before asking for a narration.

How to implement: *Narrations

1. CM recommends telling back EVERY school reading (except Poetry), and telling back after ONLY ONE reading. No repeating of passages read. See reference below:

“As knowledge is not assimilated until it is reproduced, children should 'tell back' after a single reading or hearing: or should write on some part of what they have read.”

2. Narration skill takes time to develop. Be patient with your child, and start by asking for narrations after a few paragraphs at first, and then extending the length over time.
3. Narrations can come in various forms. Note that oral narration and eventually written narration is all that’s mentioned in Charlotte Mason’s writings. But because homeschool providers are fairly common in the Philippines, I have taken the liberty of adding options for narration, also especially to aid you in record-keeping purposes, such as in the case of reporting to your homeschool provider:

Format:	Description:	Recording option:
Oral	Simplest and the only “real” requirement for children below 10-11years old or who are only starting with CM	You can record oral narrations on a mobile phone (label them by date and story chapter for easy checking), or transcribe them afterwards.
Drawn	Can be one scene, or comic book format (3-4 boxes to show sequence)	For younger children, paste drawings onto a Drawing Book; only let older children draw directly onto a Drawing Book to avoid tearing of pages.
Written	Started at about age 10 or 11 years old, but for first-time CM homeschoolers, I recommend waiting at least a few months until oral narration is stabilized.	I recommend using one notebook for older children’s narration for easy record-keeping. Have them write the Date, Title of the Book, and Chapter Number or Chapter Title at the top of each narration.
	<i>*Note for written narrations: This is not the place to correct grammar or spelling. That is done in separate ways.</i>	
	<i>*This also applies for all types of narration :D</i>	
Video	This can be fun for those who love doing vlogs. They can either orally tell the story back, or use visual aids such as toys or puppets to tell the story.	The video file is enough for record purposes.

Role Play	The child acts out a scene, including setting up props and making up his own dialogue. OR the child can use toys like Legos or stuffed toys as characters in a mini-play.	This is a fun way to narrate, and if you want a record, you can take a video of their work. Unless you have enough extra time, we recommend this to be done only once a week or less.
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How to implement: Nature study

Nature study is the foundation of all science lessons in a Charlotte Mason education. We believe that getting the children acquainted with the wonderful works of God in nature helps them develop the scientific thinking they need later on. And besides, it's easier for children to imagine the parts of the flower if they've actually observed them up close!

When I was young, our family lived in a building, and I had never seen a gumamela (hibiscus) flower before I was required to memorize the parts of the flower in our textbook. What a difference it would have made if I'd already known the said flower from real experience!

1. First, **schedule a day** when you can spend at least one hour outdoors. Charlotte Mason recommends at least *four to six hours a day out of doors*, and it would be a good goal to aim towards, but specifically for nature study, target at least one hour or more. Start with once a week, and slowly build up outdoor time.
2. **Things to bring** for actual *nature journalling*: sketch pad, pencils, colored pencils, and/or water color and brushes. Crayons may be used by younger kids but colored pencils allow for more "texture."
3. **Theme**: Pick a theme for a month, and try as much as possible to focus on the theme that month: e.g. trees, flowers, birds, insects, then rotate back to trees, flowers etc. This way you get to explore more of one type of nature find.
4. **Drawing**: From the theme, e.g. Trees, ask the child to find some part of a tree. Then he draws it into his nature journal, being careful to observe and follow whatever he sees.
5. **Important note**: There is a time for free drawing, and nature journalling is is not a time for free drawing. Nature journalling is staying true to whatever is observed.
6. **Labelling**: If you know the name of the item drawn, go ahead and label it. If you don't, feel free to consult a field guide or do a Google search just to identify it. Label the drawing and for older children, they may add brief descriptions.

E.g. Narra Tree seed, found outside Auditorium in UPV.

7. Continue to do this at least once a week.

How to implement: Poetry

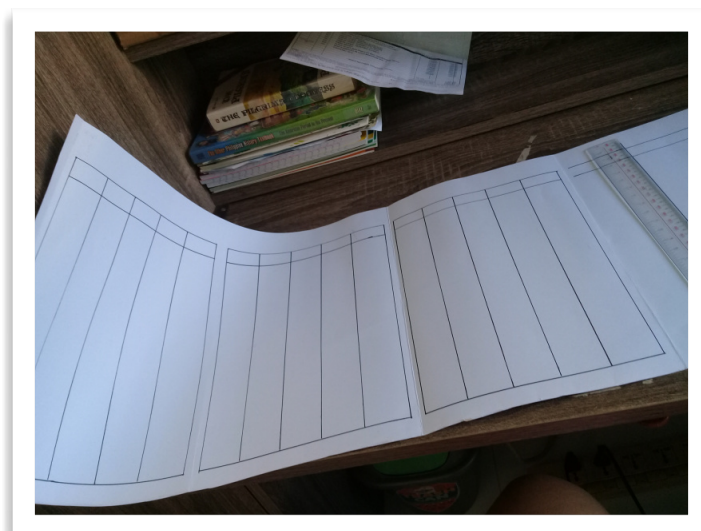
1. Simply read aloud one poem a day from the scheduled selection.
2. After you have read e.g. about 5 or 10 poems, ask the student for his/her favorite; start to read **that poem aloud once a day** as well along with the **one new poem each day**. (This means, if his favorite is the poem entitled “The Arrow and the Song,” you can read that poem aloud once, and then proceed to read the new poem scheduled for that day.)
3. Just keep reading ONCE everyday and soon memorization will take place naturally.

How to implement: Copywork

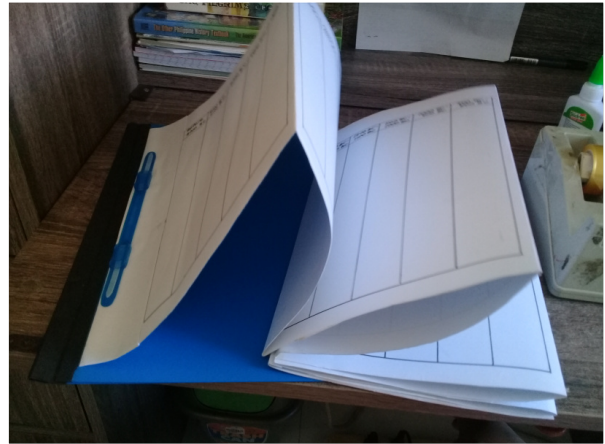
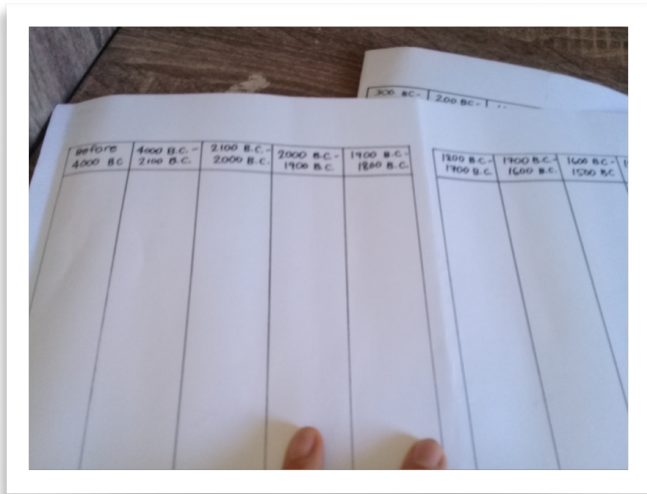
1. The aim of copywork is “Excellent execution,” not repetitive busywork.
2. Set a timer for 10 minutes, and let the child copy the selected passage in as neat a handwriting as possible, being careful to copy capitalizations, punctuations, and spelling.
3. For first-time homeschoolers, sitting right next to them while they copy is advisable, as you can make sure they don’t dawdle over their work.
4. In my personal opinion, once in a while, you can do copywork in a creative way, such as making a bookmark or poster.

How to implement: Timeline (Beginners)

1. Using several folders glued/taped together, make an “accordion” which expands out to a long strip.



2. For every block, write a “century”: 2000BC to 1900BC, 1900BC to 1800BC, all the way to 1AD to 100AD, 100AD to 200AD etc, up to 2000AD to 2100AD. (I like to keep the timeline folded up accordion style and fastened into our schedule folder for easy access.



3. For every reading that mentions a date, let the child jot in the name in the corresponding “block.” He or she may also draw a small icon for that person.
4. Keep doing this throughout the years and see the historical people line up chronologically.
5. After the first year of doing a CM Homeschool, we can add a Book of Centuries (to be discussed in the future).

How to implement: Mapwork

1. For every book you read that is set in a specific location, either before or after the reading, just bring the World Map or Globe over and point the country out to the child. It may help to point to the Philippines and then to the other country so that he has a point of reference.
2. If you can find an Atlas, it will help in showing the exact locality mentioned, especially in stories set within one country.
3. Although you can find these places on Google, having a hard copy map, globe, or atlas makes mapwork more easily accessible for your children, while also training them to find place names themselves.
4. Keep doing this throughout the years.

Miscellaneous (but very helpful) Scheduling tips:

1. For first time homeschoolers, setting a daily start time may help to establish a routine.
2. Reading stories aloud does not have to happen always at a school desk or official 'homeschool' setting. You can schedule to read some books over breakfast, lunch, snack-time, or bedtime. Just be sure to ask for a narration afterwards.
3. The Charlotte Mason method recommends scheduling different type of tasks one after another, so as to give the brain a "change" in focus and not to overwork one part of the brain. For example, if you have a Literature Reading now, the next can be something music or art related, then go back to a History reading, then do Math. Reading stories should not go longer than 30 minutes at a time.
4. Free-Reads, such as those recommended in the Ambleside Curriculum, are very helpful ways of bonding with a child over stories that he does not have to narrate. We highly recommend reading these books before bedtime, if possible.

Chapter 7. How to start incorporating CM elements

OK, so you're convinced you want to apply the Charlotte Mason method in your child's education. But because it is so different from the experiences most of us had in school, it takes a lot of adjustment.

Whether you are currently homeschooling or not, let me outline possible changes you can make into your weeks, before taking the full plunge.

My next steps:

1. Let's review. What are my goals for my child(ren)'s education?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

2. Which parts of a Charlotte Mason education appeal to me, and why?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

3. How can I continue learning about how to apply the Charlotte Mason Method to educate my child?

___ By reading more online:

Recommended websites:

<http://amblesideonline.org>

<http://simplycharlottesmason.org>

<http://charlottesmasonphilippines.com>

___ By watching videos online:

Recommended channels:

Simply Charlotte Mason

Ambleside Schools International

___ By meeting regularly with other moms studying the same things

If you know other moms who might be interested in this e-book and/or this method, please send them over to CharlotteMasonPhilippines.com so they can sign up too!

Also, feel free to contact me yen@charlottesmasonphilippines.com :)

Developing a read-aloud habit

1. When is a good time for me to read regularly to my child(ren)?

___ Over breakfast

___ Over lunch

___ Over snacktime

___ Over dinner

___ Before bedtime

___ Others: _____

2. Which days do I believe I can insert a 10-minute slot to read to my children?

___ Monday

___ Tuesday

___ Wednesday

___ Thursday

___ Friday

___ Saturday

___ Sunday

3. In the following page, I've listed some books that you can start with to develop the habit of regularly reading aloud to your children. For those free on Kindle, you can download them immediately onto a Kindle app. The rest, if you are in the Philippines, you may find in Booksale or National Bookstore.

(Note: I personally recommend Booksale, as I've found so many gems there! But it does require much time scouring and waiting until you score big! hehe.)

Title	Author	Free on Kindle?	Found in Booksale?
Mike Mulligan and the Steam Shovel	Virginia Lee Burton	No	Yes. Books by Virginia Lee Burton are highly recommended!
Alfie books	Shirley Hughes	No	Yes. Books by Shirley Hughes are fun to read aloud to young children, and the illustrations are amazing, too!
The Velveteen Rabbit	Margery Williams	Yes	Yes
The Tale of Peter Rabbit (and other tales)	Beatrix Potter	(Yes but no pictures)	Yes (picture book, choose unabridged versions)
Winnie-the-Pooh	A.A. Milne	No	Yes, but make sure you find the original version, not the Disney adaptation; the original is considered a living book while adaptations are not
The Box Car Children	Gertrude Chandler Warner	No	Yes, choose Volumes 1-12 only, as these were the ones originally written by the author
Pinocchio	Carlo Collodi	Yes	Hard copy chapter books available, choose unabridged versions
Peter Pan	J.M. Barrie	Yes	
The Wonderful Wizard of Oz	L. Frank Baum	Yes	
Little House in the Big Woods	Laura Ingalls Wilder	No	Yes; chapters are a bit long, but kids as young as 6 or 7yo can listen attentively to it
Charlotte's Web	E.B. White	No	Yes

Stuart Little	E.B. White	No	Yes
The Blue (/Red etc) Fairy Book	Andrew Lang	Yes	Yes, but rare

**Kindle is an e-reader that uses e-ink technology, sold by Amazon, at about \$79.00 for the most basic model. If you want to download free ebooks and you don't have a Kindle, you may download the free Kindle app on your iPhone or Android device, and the Kindle books may be read there. I personally would recommend the Kindle app on phones or tablets for books you read aloud to your kids, but not really for kids to read themselves because of glare issues.*

The table below can help you jump-start your reading-aloud habit. Choose the first book you want to start with and plot it under Title in the week you want to start. Then encircle the # of days you believe you can read-aloud that week in order to see how long it will take you to finish the book. Then plot another book and so on.

Week starting:	Title:	# of days I can read this week: (encircle)	# of chapters in book:	Target date to finish
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7		
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7		
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7		
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7		
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7		
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7		
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7		

(This is just to get you started on the habit. We want to be intentional! If you are already used to picking up a next book after you finish one, you may not need to list them down.)

4. My target books to give my child reading practice with excellent quality literature: (may be found in Booksale)

Frog and Toad readers by Arnold Lobel	Found? _____
Little Bear readers by Else Holmelund Minarek	Found? _____
George and Martha series by James Marshall	Found? _____
Frances books by Russell Hoban	Found? _____
Henry and Mudge series by Cynthia Rylant	Found? _____
Chalk Box Kid (and other books) by Clyde Robert Bulla	Found? _____

Developing a habit of outdoor time and nature study

1. Which day of the week can I take my child(ren) outdoors for 30 mins to 1 hour to appreciate nature?

____ Monday	____ Tuesday	____ Wednesday	____ Thursday
____ Friday	____ Saturday	____ Sunday	

2. What are the options for nature study that can work for us?

____ Beach	____ Esplanade
____ Town Plaza / Playground	____ School / University
____ Our backyard / garden	____ Others: _____

3. Which things in nature seems most interesting to me and/or my child to study first?

____ Trees	____ Flowers	____ Insects
____ Birds	____ Pets	____ Others: _____

(For us, birds helped us take off our nature study.)

Developing a habit of adding beauty to our days

Note: Classical music, hymns, and folk songs are all available on YouTube. You may make your own playlist, or you can use the suggested links on AmblesideOnline.Org. For us, we typically download them so we can play them while offline.

1. Which times of the day can I add a little classical music playing in the background?

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ While doing chores | ☐ Over breakfast |
| ☐ In the car | ☐ Over lunch |
| ☐ During snacks | ☐ Over dinner |
| ☐ Before bed | ☐ During bedtime |

2. Which day of the week can I add a little time to sing hymns or folksongs together with my child(ren)?

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ☐ Monday | ☐ Tuesday | ☐ Wednesday | ☐ Thursday |
| ☐ Friday | ☐ Saturday | ☐ Sunday | |

3. Which day of the week can I spend 3 minutes looking at a painting by a master artist?

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ☐ Monday | ☐ Tuesday | ☐ Wednesday | ☐ Thursday |
| ☐ Friday | ☐ Saturday | ☐ Sunday | |

4. Which way of finding songs/paintings do I believe will work best for me?

- ☐ Opening AmblesideOnline.Org, clicking on the sidebar and finding the links
- ☐ Making my own playlist
- ☐ Downloading the files to my laptop
- ☐ Downloading the files to my phone

Developing a habit of working with our hands

1. Which day of the week can I spend between 30 minutes to 1 hour doing handicrafts with my children?

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ☐ Monday | ☐ Tuesday | ☐ Wednesday | ☐ Thursday |
| ☐ Friday | ☐ Saturday | ☐ Sunday | |

Note: Thanks to the Internet, we can now easily access tutorials on how to do different handicrafts either on YouTube or on sites like Instructables. The key thing is to understand its value and to be intentional at finding time for it.

2. Which handicraft (useful work, no cut-and-paste-and-toss busywork) can I explore with my child(ren)?

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Pottery or clay sculpting | ☐ Crochet |
| ☐ Knitting / Fingerknitting | ☐ Sewing: Embroidery, toy making |
| ☐ Soap carving | ☐ Macrame |
| ☐ Wood carving / Whittling | ☐ Weaving |
| ☐ Beadwork | ☐ Knot-tying (intro to Macrame) |
| ☐ Origami (paper-folding) | ☐ Others: _____ |

3. Which resources do I prefer to consult?

- ☐ YouTube ☐ Instructables ☐ Wikipedia
- ☐ Hard copy book (you can find them in bookstores or online sellers)
- ☐ Actual person to show me (Stay connected to CharlotteMasonPhilippines.Com, as we may host future Handicraft seminars)

Proposed Schedule to help me Develop these Routines

Based on your answers above, plot the following in the boxes below:

Read-aloud - several times a week; the rest once a week:

Classical Music / Hymn / Picture Study / Nature Study / Handicraft

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
Breakfast							
AM							
Lunch							
PM							
Dinner							
Before Bed							
Bedtime							

Chapter 8. How to Plot a CM Homeschool Calendar

Now that you have started adding Charlotte Mason elements to your weeks, you can move towards plotting your own CM homeschool calendar. Here are some steps to help you move forward:

Step 1. Decide the amount of time you can allocate for school, e.g. if Wednesday is Daddy's day off and you usually spend extra time just hanging out on that day, you can opt to schedule less work on that day, and more work on other days.

Step 2. Prepare booklists for every subject, or use an existing booklist recommended by your homeschool provider or homeschool curriculum.

Step 3. If you prefer to have a Daily Schedule, (which can be the easiest to follow if you're just starting off), plot each book into a day of the week. For me, I use a spreadsheet with the days on the left-most column, and each column corresponding to Week Numbers.

Usually, CM homeschoolers recommend dividing a book by the number of weeks in your term. For example, if you plan to use a book over 12 weeks and it has 24 chapters, you will read 2 chapters per week. If this is the case, you can plot the book, say, on Monday and Wednesday. Then, check the length of the chapters. If needed, you can split a long chapter into two readings on two separate days.

Once you have the book in its set day(s), you can put the Chapter numbers onto the corresponding weeks.

The example in the screenshot in the next page is from our personal schedule, using the free curriculum from AmblesideOnline:

DAY	SUBJECT	Book	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10	Week 11	Week 12	Week 13
MONDAY	BIBLE	OT: Selected Stories	Adam and Eve: Gen 1:26-31	Flood: Gen 6:5-8;	Abraham and Isaac: Gen 22:1-19	Gen 25:27-34 Sale of Birthright	Gen 28:10-22 Jacob's Ladder	Gen 37:1-4, 11, 28b Coat of Colors	Gen 41:15-49, 53-57 Pharaoh's Dreams	Ex 2:1-10 Baby Moses	Ex 3:1-4:17 Burning Bush	Num 13:1-14:9 Spies into Canaan	Judges 6:11-24; 6:35-7:25 Gideon	Judges 13:1-25; 16:4-31 Samson	Ruth, spread
	History and Tales	50 Famous Stories (K)	Sword of Damocles	Damon and Pythias; Lacronic Answer	Brave 300	Alexander/ Buccephalus and Diogenes	Regulus	Cornelia's Jewels	Horatius at the Bridge	Cincinnatus	Androcles and the Lion	Alfred and the Beggar	William Tell	Arnold Winkelreid	Bruce and Sp
		Drawing narration													
	History and Tales	Island Story (K)	1 Albion and Brutus		2 Coming of Romans		3 Romans Again		4 Caligula		5 Boadicea		6 Last of Romans	7 Story of St. Alban	8 Vortigern and Constantine
		Oral narration													
	Phonics / Reading	Letter games													
	Math	Counting practice													
TUESDAY	Poetry (Sam & Alexa together)	A Child's Garden of Verses* AA Milne ** Kindle collection ***													
	Writing														
	BIBLE	OT: Selected Stories	Gen 2:7, 20-25	Gen 6:13-22;											
		Oral narration													
	Natural History	Burgess Bird (K)		Jenny Wren		Old Orchard Bully		Choose a chapter		Choose a chapter		Choose a chapter			
	Phonics / Reading	Sight words													
	Math	Counting practice													
WEDNESDAY	Poetry (Sam & Alexa together)	A Child's Garden of Verses* AA Milne ** Kindle collection ***													
	Natural History	James Herriot's Treasury (with Euan & Alexa)				Moses Kitten	Only One Woolf								Romy's Big G
	Writing														
	BIBLE		Gen 3:1-12	Gen 7:13-18;											
	Literature/ Tales	Aesop	Wolf and Kid	Belling Cat	Boy and Filberts	Kid and Wolf	Fox and Grapes	Ass and Driver	Lion and Mouse	Gnat and Bull	Farmer and Stork	Traveler's and Purse	Frogs Who Washed for King	Boys and Frogs	Ants and Grass
	Natural History	Paddle to Sea (FOR EUAN)	Ch 1	Ch 2	Ch 3		Ch 4	Ch 5	Ch 6		Ch 7	Ch 8	Ch 9		Ch 10
	Mapwork?														
THURSDAY	Phonics / Reading														
	Math														
	Poetry (Sam & Alexa together)	A Child's Garden of Verses* AA Milne **													

Step 4. Add Daily work into each day: Math, Copywork, Poetry

Suggested rotation to keep Copywork from different book selections per week:

(Note: usually 1 sentence only for younger kids, 1 paragraph for older children)

Monday: Copy 1 sentence from Hymn or Poem (for G1-2) or 1 verse for older children

Tuesday: Copy 1 Bible verse from Bible passage of the day

Wednesday: Copy 1 sentence/paragraph from Filipino reading

Thursday: Copy 1 sentence/paragraph from Literature reading

Friday: Copy 1 sentence/paragraph from Science or History reading

Step 5. Add Weekly work, one per day:

- Nature study
- Hymn study*
- Folk song*
- Picture study*
- Composer study*

Step 6. Start downloading free Kindle books onto your Kindle or Kindle app; it will be easier to save them into a folder entitled “Homeschool Books.” (For those with children in different years, I label my folders by grade level so it’s easier to locate the books for a particular child.) Look at the books available for purchase and decide if you would like to buy them on Kindle or substitute.

OR:

Step 6. Start buying or printing the books you will be using. Because I personally collect books that we will be using the future, I label them with stickers to arrange them by the year when we will be using them.

***For Riches: (Hymn, folk song, picture study, composer study)**

Decide whether you want to create your own playlists and paintings list or use existing recommendations.

For example, if you want to use the Ambleside Online curriculum, see the steps below:

Using AmblesideOnline:

Step 1. Whichever year your child is in, the Riches remain the same. Go to AmblesideOnline.org, and click on the sidebar for the links to Hymns, Folk Songs, Picture Study, Composer Study, and for those using Year 4 and up, Shakespeare and Plutarch.

Step 2. Click on each link and you will find the schedule for the year. Since AO is a US-based curriculum, their school year starts in August/September, whereas ours starts in June. As such, we use them roughly as:

AO 18-19 Term 3 = Our June to August
AO 19-20 Term 1 = Our September to November
AO 19-20 Term 2 = Our December to March

Step 3. Either Bookmark this webpage so you can refer to it each time you need a file, or you can download the files and save to a folder.

Creating your own lists

Step 1. Choose one person each per 12-week term for Picture Study and Composer Study. You will be studying each artwork or piece of music for two weeks, then move on to the next. This means you will need 6 artwork from the same artist and 6 compositions from the same composer for every 12-week term.

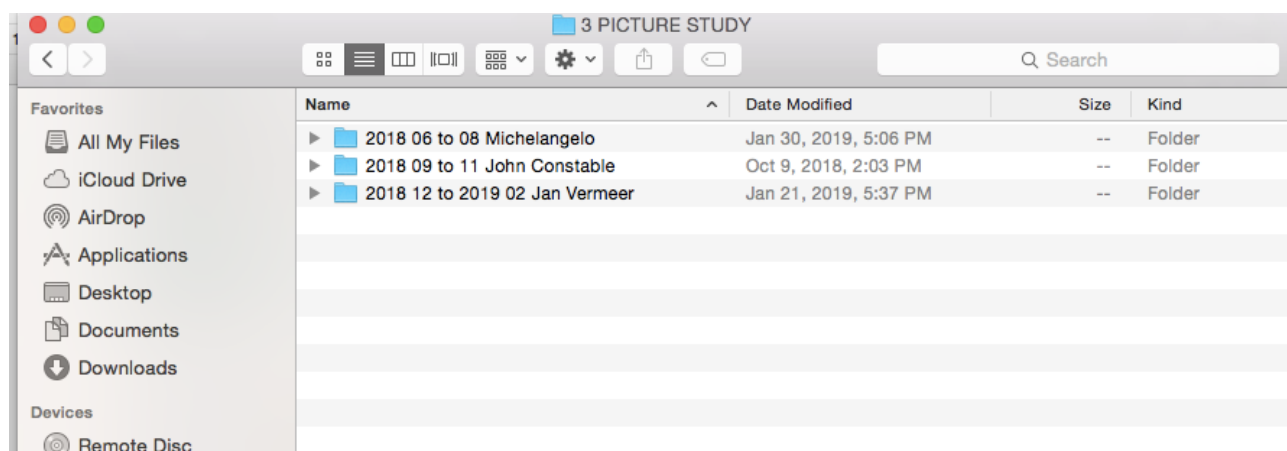
Also, list 10 hymns and 10 folk songs, one for each month of the school year.

Step 2. Compile links to each song or artist print in a document of your choice.

Step 3. OR, I recommend downloading for first-time homeschoolers so you have easy access to what you need. This is how I organize by folder:

(In our case, I put the number 2 = Tuesday, 3 = Wednesday for easier remembering when they're scheduled)

Inside the Sample Picture Study Folder:



If you notice, I put the months that the artist is assigned: 06 to 08 means June to August for Michelangelo, 09 to 11 means September to November for John Constable, etc.

You can do the same for Composers, Hymns, and Folk Songs. These come with YouTube links on the Ambleside pages.

For Filipino and Social Studies:

For Filipino, we want to apply the same philosophy of using Living Books. These are my current suggestions, but please note we are in the process of adding to and updating this list:

Elementary level:

1. Tutubi Patrol series (by OMF Lit)
2. Oh Mateo series (by Hiyas, may be purchased from Passages or National Bookstore)
3. Gintong Habihan (Palanca Award Stories)
4. Mga Kuwento ni Lola Basyang by Tahanan Books
5. Mga Alamat (Tahanan Books / National Bookstore)
6. Other well-written Filipino story books

High School level:

1. Gintong Habihan
2. Mga Kuwento ni Lola Basyang
3. Ibong Adarna - Grade 7
4. Florante at Laura - Grade 8
5. Noli Me Tangere - Grade 9
6. El Filibusterismo - Grade 10

For Social Studies, books from existing CM curriculum may cover aspects of World History and World Geography. For the Philippines, we have the following suggested books (and we are still continuing to research on Living books for our country):

1. Great Lives Series (biographies of Filipino heroes) by Tahanan Books
2. Manila, my Manila, by Nick Joaquin
3. Bisayan by Sofronio B. Ursal
4. The Other Philippine History by Cristine Diaz
5. Kasaysayan Series (hard bound encyclopedia-type books available in Fully Booked)

High School level:

1. Supremo (biography of Andres Bonifacio)
2. Indio Bravo (biography of Jose Rizal)
3. A Visit to the Philippine Islands, by Sir John Bowring, 1859 (free on Project Gutenberg)
4. Voyages and Adventures of Magellan by George Makepeace Towle (free on [heritage-history.com](http://www.heritage-history.com))
5. Rizal's Own Story of His Life (<http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/48438>)
6. Mabuhay: A Historical Travel Narrative by Ramon Vilaro
7. Wild Philippines by Nigel Hicks (great for geography and natural history)

Chapter 9. Materials to prepare

You can use this as your own checklist. If you managed to print out this PDF, simply put a checkmark into the box of completed items.

Grades 1 to 3		Grades 4 to 6		High school	
ADMIN:					
Booklist		Booklist		Booklist	
Weekly + Daily Schedule		Weekly + Daily Schedule		Weekly + Daily Schedule	
Kindle e-books		Kindle e-books		Kindle e-books	
Hard copy books		Hard copy books		Hard copy books	
COMPUTER FILES OR LINKS:					
Links to Picture Study		Links to Picture Study		Links to Picture Study	
Links to Composer Study		Links to Composer Study		Links to Composer Study	
Links to Hymns		Links to Hymns		Links to Hymns	
Links to Folk Songs		Links to Folk Songs		Links to Folk Songs	
NOTEBOOKS:					
1 writing notebook for Copywork		1 composition notebook for Copywork		1 composition notebook for Copywork	
				1 composition notebook for Commonplace Book	
1 drawing book for drawn narrations		1 drawing book for drawn narrations			
<i>(Note: For kids who may still easily make mistakes in drawing, it's best to let them draw on paper and then paste onto the drawing book)</i>		1 composition notebook for written narrations (for first-timers, may do this second half of the year or starting Year 5)		1 composition notebook for written narrations (for first-timers, may do this second half of the year)	
1 drawing book or sketch pad (with secure binding) for Nature Study		1 drawing book or sketch pad (with secure binding) for Nature Study		1 drawing book or sketch pad (with secure binding) for Nature Study	
1 drawing book for drawing Picture Study narrations		1 drawing book for drawing Picture Study narrations		1 drawing book for drawing Picture Study narrations	
1 accordion-style Timeline (you may glue together file folders)		1 accordion-style Timeline (you may glue together file folders)		1 accordion-style Timeline (you may glue together file folders)	

Grades 1 to 3		Grades 4 to 6		High school	
		1 Book of Centuries: it may be a binder with pieces of bond paper inside. Check out CharlotteMasonPhilippines.com for sample downloads or suggestions.		1 Book of Centuries: it may be a binder with pieces of bond paper inside. Check out CharlotteMasonPhilippines.com for sample downloads or suggestions.	

Chapter 10. What's Next?

Congratulations! You've made it this far, that's already a good start!

So you may be wondering, what's next? From my experience, you have the following options:

1. Do it on your own.

If you are willing to learn, you can continue to learn more about the Charlotte Mason philosophy and apply it to your homeschool and family, thanks to the rich collection of materials available online.

If you choose to take this path, you can actually opt to become independent (indie) homeschoolers, or enroll in any open-curriculum provider.

This was the path I took for the first few years, especially since, during that time, the CM community in the Philippines was just starting. But because my provider was not CM-focused, I had to include explanations of the methods in my portfolio reports.

During that time, what really helped me was reading the online forums on websites like AmblesideOnline.org and SimplyCharlotteMason.com. (Hmm, and I did join in the forums once in awhile! So essentially, I had some kind of community there!)

It's not impossible to do-it-yourself, but, personally, I notice that it's so much easier to be motivated, in the midst of discouragement, with a group of people around who are pursuing similar goals for our children.

2. Connect with a community of other CM homeschoolers.

Your other choice is to connect with a community of other parents who also want to implement the Charlotte Mason method in their homeschool.

You can do this by connecting with us at CharlotteMasonPhilippines.com, whether you are an independent homeschooler or enrolled with a provider.

3. Decide if you want to go indie or enroll with a provider.

If you are in the Philippines, you will likely face two choices for your child's homeschool: go indie, or enroll with a provider.

If you decide to enroll with a provider, we recommend finding one that focuses on the Charlotte Mason method as well, because this will give you a greater opportunity to grow in the method and also get to know other families in their journey.

So... let me say, I hope this is not goodbye!

No matter how much you would choose to connect with other people or not, we encourage you to stay subscribed to our mailing list. If you accidentally unsubscribed, you can sign up again at CharlotteMasonPhilippines.com, so you can stay updated with our latest news and developments. We also look forward to sending you helpful snippets along the way to help you more in your journey!

To your success,

Yen Cabag
CharlotteMasonPhilippines.Com

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