HOMESCHOOLING & STRUCTURE

KEY CONCEPTS

- Homeschool need not resemble conventional school (Teach STUDENTS, not 'curricula')

- Focus on SKILL-BUILDING, not 'knowledge', and BACKWARDS-PLAN from the goal of INDEPENDENT LEARNERS

- Knowing our "Educational Philosophy" and a set of GENERAL PRINCIPLES & PROCEDURES saves time and emotional energy.

  (Permaculture: Watering Can vs. Rain-barrel & Mulch)

Conventional school classroom vs. homeschool (a teacher's perspective)

CONVENTIONAL SCHOOL:

- Wake to alarm
- Inflexible schedule
- Dictated by clock/bells
- High student/teacher ratio
- Depersonalized
- Undifferentiated instruction
- Long feedback-cycles
- Marks & Grades - focused
- "Failure" = BAD
- Bored & lost learners

HOMESCHOOL:

- Wake when well rested
- Highly flexible schedule
- Dictated by meals/rhythms
- Low student/teacher ratio
- Personalized
- Individualized instruction
- Immediate feedback
- Learning focused
- "Failure" = Valuable data
- Engaged learners

MAXIMIZE TIME OUTSIDE IN NATURE!

START-OF-YEAR PLANNING

CO-CREATE list of HOPES and NEEDS for the upcoming school year (include student AND teacher's needs!)

REQUIREMENT	STUDENT	TEACHER
PHYSICAL	Adequate sleep, Nutrition, Exercise (strength, flexibility, hand-eye coordination, balance), Circadian rhythms (pair alertness with demanding tasks) , Comfortable spaces, Time in Nature	
EMOTIONAL	Motivation, Belonging, Feeling successful, Freedom/Autonomy, Fun/Engagement, Love	Feeling Prepared & Effective, Meeting Domestic Expectations, Maintaining Strong/Positive Relationships, Avoiding 'burn-out'
CURRICULAR	Government dictates, Context-specific subjects, Individual Learning Goals	Pedagogy/Teaching Techniques, Educational Resources (Books, Museums, Mentors, etc.)
SELF-ACTUALIZATION(?)	Becoming an Increasingly Confident, Powerful, & Independent Learner	Building upon successes & Giving back to broader community (Supporting other teachers, etc.)

Surrounded by Creative Opportunities

EMBRACE PURPOSEFUL ROUTINES (aka: "Freeing up RAM")

- Co-Construct "Week-At-A-Glance"
  - Creates running record (and manages paper!)
  - Teacher is not required to 'initiate homeschool day' **
  - Establishes routines and anticipates questions ("*Can I do screen time, now?*")
  - Alternate between physically demanding and sedentary activities
  - Make EASY TO USE (checkboxes, limited text requirement)
  - Revisit EACH YEAR (to make age/ability appropriate)

  [NEXT: Example "Week-at-a-Glance"—sheet]

HOMESCHOOL WEEK-AT-A-GLANCE   NAME:_____

ACTIVITY	MONDAY DATE:	TUESDAY DATE:	WEDNESDAY DATE:	THURSDAY DATE:	FRIDAY DATE:
Water Tally (glasses)	☐☐☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐☐☐	☐☐☐☐☐☐
Animal Chores	Egg Tally: Rab. feed/water	Egg Tally: Rab. feed/water	Egg Tally: Rab. feed/water	Egg Tally: Rab. feed/water	Egg Tally: Rab. feed/water
BREAKFAST					
Brush Teeth/Hair	Teeth☐ Hair☐	Teeth☐ Hair☐	Teeth☐ Hair☐	Teeth☐ Hair☐	Teeth☐ Hair☐
By 10am→ Weather	Day:_____ Night:___	Day:_____ Night:___	Day:_____ Night:___	Day:_____ Night:___	Day:_____ Night:___
Equation of Day					
Yoga, Stretching					
Typing, Scratch, Bits+Bricks, Boost, LDD					
QUESTIONS(?)					
HOUSEHOLD HELP: Meal Prep, Laundry (wash/dry/fold), Dishes					
LUNCH					
Lunch & Learn/ What's in our Lunch?					
Element of the Week	Element Name: _____ Atomic Symbol: _____ Atomic Number:_____ Interesting Fact:_____				
Reading (challenge)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Exercise Outside Play — Cardio / Balance/etc	--OR-- ☐☐☐☐	--OR-- ☐☐☐☐	--OR-- ☐☐☐☐	--OR-- ☐☐☐☐	--OR-- ☐☐☐☐
Music, Art, Craft, Make or Fix something					
LESSON					
Reading Response, Writing Practice	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Plant/Animal of the Week	Plant/Animal Name:_____ Data-sheet: ☐ (completed by Thursday) –OR-- REVIEW: ☐ Interesting Fact:_____				
Strength Training — Activity / Reps.					
Entertainment					
SUPPER					
MYTH & MEAL/History					
Math, Money, Measurement,	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

OTHER (Field-trips, Play-dates, Projects, Games, Astronomical Observations, etc.)

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Describe activities here					

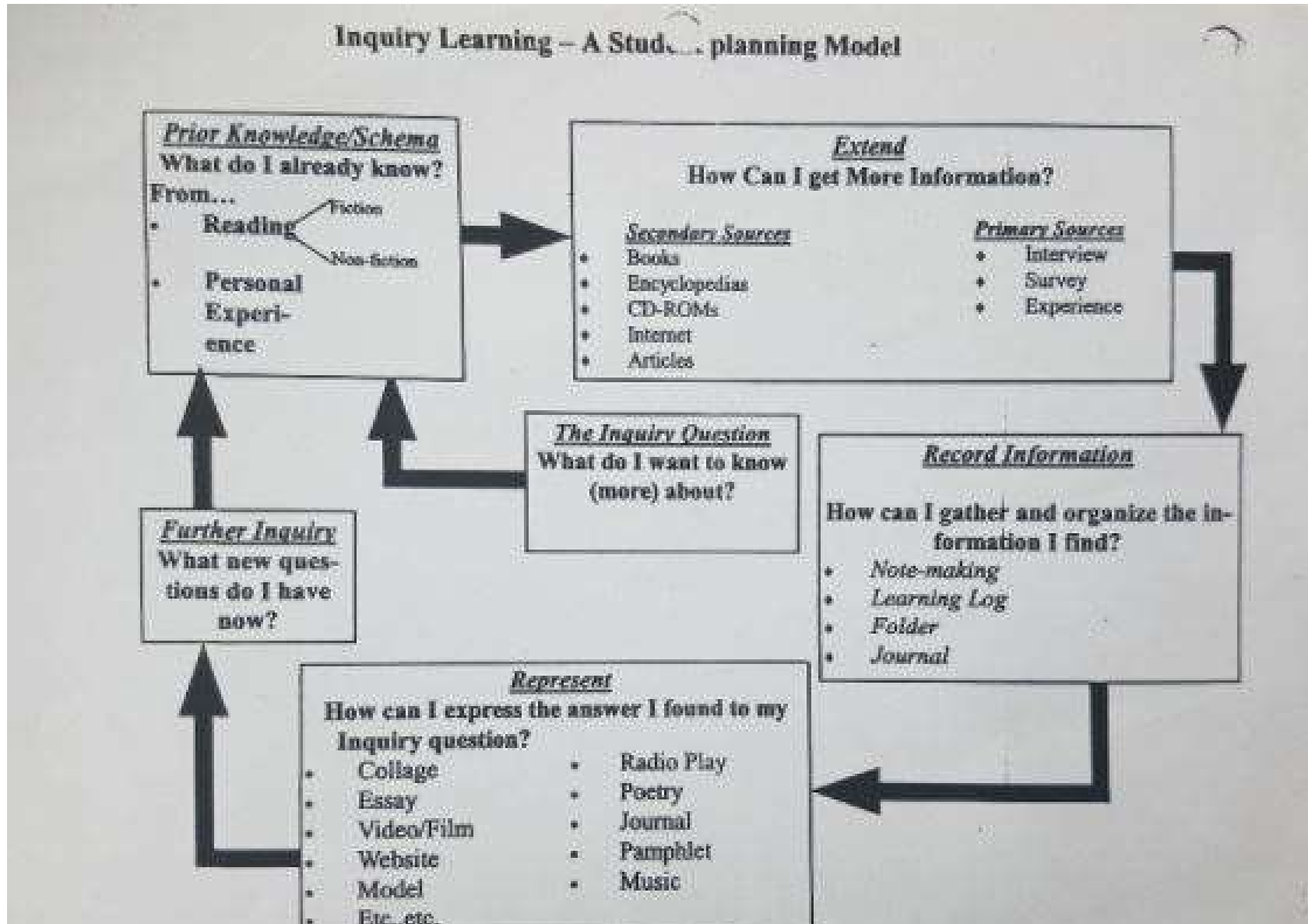# Every lull, nook & cranny gets filled with reading

PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES

- General principles, procedures, and skills create INDEPENDENCE and ultimately FREE the TEACHER!
- PRINCIPLE:
  - Aim for 90% 'error-rate' across subjects(more is too easy, less is too hard)
- Examples:
  - READING: Independent Readers = Independent Learners
    - Reading-strategy approach teaches powerful, portable skills*
  - Re-employ same procedure, but in novel areas (recursion)
    - Plant/Animal/Element-of-the-Week; Connections/Questions ; "What's in our Lunch?"
  - Scientific Method: Observe, Hypothesize, Experiment, Conclusion
  - INQUIRY LEARNING MODEL
    - SKILL:
      - Asking good questions
      - Assessing credibility of Research Sources
      - Synthesizing and representing research
  - (detail next page)

INQUIRY LEARNING MODEL
(Thanks to Syd Korsunsky!)

Inquiry Learning – A Stud... planning Model

Prior Knowledge/Schema
What do I already know?
From...
- Reading — Fiction / Non-fiction
- Personal Experience

Extend
How Can I get More Information?

Secondary Sources
- Books
- Encyclopedias
- CD-ROMs
- Internet
- Articles

Primary Sources
- Interview
- Survey
- Experience

The Inquiry Question
What do I want to know (more) about?

Record Information
How can I gather and organize the information I find?
- Note-making
- Learning Log
- Folder
- Journal

Further Inquiry
What new questions do I have now?

Represent
How can I express the answer I found to my Inquiry question?
- Collage
- Essay
- Video/Film
- Website
- Model
- Etc.,etc.
- Radio Play
- Poetry
- Journal
- Pamphlet
- Music

AUTHENTIC AUDIENCES

(No 'busy work'. Ever.*)

- Chores (mowing lawn, setting table, etc.)
- Tending to animals (chickens, rabbits, dog, etc)
- Reading Response/Literary Dialogue exchange
- Letters, emails, and cards
- Thoughtful home-made gifts
- Eulogies, performances, formal occasions
- Business ventures
- Etc...

SIGNS OF SUCCESS

- Independent, self-directed, confident learners
- FOCUS on HOW TO LEARN, not WHAT TO LEARN
- Learning becomes COLLABORATIVE (shared learning objectives: eg—build a treehouse together as ALLIES)
- STUDENT becomes TEACHER:
  – Of siblings
  – Of parents
  – Outside of the home
- Teacher has something worth sharing!

MISC.

- Importance of high quality resources (books, games, tools, craft-supplies, computers, etc.)

- Parent 'curates' screen-time in our home (distinction between *"Educational", "Skill-building", and "Entertainment"*—time)

- For extensive homeschooling resources—especially focusing on READING INSTRUCTION, go to:

https://parklandphilosophy.boards.net/thread/23/education-school-reading-instruction-resources

THANK-YOU, and I look forward to your QUESTIONS!

-Tim Engbrecht