

Sue Patrick's

Workbox System

User's Guide

Sue Patrick

Wend Publishing
Wake Forest, North Carolina

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My appreciation...

To God, who has always known I would not willingly take the paths I have been on, but has sent a Counselor and Teacher for me so that I would not be alone.

To my husband, Dale. I wish I were wise enough to always put you first. I am thankful you are patient with me and allow me to be the obsession-chaser I am. You are the perfect leader and example.

To my children, Jake and Katie. God gave you both to me and I will be forever thankful. It was only through you that I could truly understand His love.

To Joyce, your support, prayers, friendship and help are precious to me.

How to Use this Book

You are either a manual reader or you aren't. I realize that by being a manual reader, I am nearly alone. I read manuals, cover to cover, for everything—even the battery recharger I recently bought.

I recognize that you are probably not a manual reader. That's why this is called a "User's Guide." Perhaps the title will encourage your reading it from cover to cover. However, if that is not the case, please be sure to read **Chapter 4** in order to have a good foundation on the Workbox System. I have many small details in place because they work. I like to think that I am an efficiency seeker and I do not like to do things that are not necessary. I have put the information in **Chapter 4** that is necessary. The other chapters in this book may stand alone and will allow you to pick and choose as you are in need.

If you have questions beyond what this book will provide, please register your purchase with me at: www.workboxsystem.com. When you register, you will receive a password which will allow you access to all the sample forms noted in

this book with the  symbol.

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Chapter 1

The Benefits of Homeschooling

Homeschooling benefits run into infinity. I could make a very long list and argue forever on which items should be at the top. The bottom line is that we only have our children (usually) at home for 18 years. They are only under foot for about 9 years. There will never be enough time to spend with our children before they are adults and raising children of their own. Time spent loving, growing, nurturing, guiding, teaching, preparing and disciplining our children should only be treasured. While our children should not be the center of our universe, they are one of our greatest blessings.

Beyond the emotional and philosophical reasons above, for those of you who are a bit more concrete, I will try to develop a very real and practical list of homeschooling benefits.

Family. I believe family is becoming a lost entity in America. Do we not all marvel at other countries and cultures who are unselfish enough to make family the priority? Unselfish because it takes time, money and effort above and beyond

the American daily grind to make family and extended family a priority. Who wants to make the effort for their mother-in-law to live with them, or for the “between jobs” brother? That has possibly translated into some other selfish attitudes such as “What about my career?” “What about time for **me**?” I have yet to be able to find answers to or support for these questions in the Bible.

“Homeschooling can be the ultimate family opportunity. It is what your family makes of it.”

Homeschooling creates a family relationship that is very hard to achieve within the framework of public or private schools, tutoring, lessons, sports, appointments, and carpooling to no less than 100 different “opportunities.” Homeschooling can be the ultimate family opportunity. It is what your family makes of it. Homeschool families may still be going in way too many directions, but at least they can benefit from 6 to 8 hours per day that other families must commit to be apart and in separate schools. That makes for 180 days x 8 hours per day, or 1,440 hours per year, that homeschoolers are growing together in a family relationship.

Character. You are your child’s ultimate peer.

Their siblings are also their peers. It is not that they are not subject to the opinions, behaviors and influences of others, but you are able to be in direct conversations with them as they begin to interpret the world around them. When they are fully secure and rooted in your family's values, they will be more capable of handling the unstructured world of public education—in college. There is no need to tackle it all before then. Their development will not be stunted. They will still be able to think for themselves. Who doesn't want their children to hang with the "right" crowd? That right crowd is your family.

Education. There is no doubt in my mind that education is more meaningful, richer, fuller, deeper, broader and far more nurturing when done by a loving, discerning parent. No teacher could ever care about your child as much as you do. No teacher, year to year, could ever understand the educational needs of your child as you do. You do not need to start at square one on day one of each new school year. We always know our children and our school year never ends. A homeschooler finds a way to educate with more depth, no matter what they are doing. When you homeschool, a trip through the car wash, a wait behind the garbage truck and a visit to the dentist are continuous teaching moments. We teach by

asking questions—not always by opening a text book and expecting a 2nd grader to learn from it.

Faith. I have listed faith last, but for many of us it is first. I simply cannot understand teaching without God in the classroom. There is no other basis for history, science, geography, math or any subject on earth, than to start with God. It is popular for public schools to have a behavior and discipline “control plan” based on character. It is nothing but hollow without the Bible for its foundation. Man simply cannot be “good” and “reasonable” on his own, so why waste time trying to teach small children in public school to do just that?

If I am already committed to homeschooling, why should I put in the extra work of a Specialized Education Plan?

Simply by virtue of homeschooling we are already providing a Specialized Education Plan for our children. There are thousands of families out there who are homeschooling with “boxed” curriculum and reading, “Teacher says ...” straight from the teacher manual. That is certainly a huge step up from public school, but we can do better than that. We can make school fun and interesting both for us as teachers and for our children as students. School should be and can be fun!



Chapter 2

How We Teach and Train

Families choose, and are sometimes forced to choose, homeschooling for many different reasons. Some homeschools exist for years without formally knowing why. They have some notion, but no written plan, statement or philosophy for the accomplishments of their homeschool. They also have no formal written plan, statement or philosophy for what their children will learn, what they want their children to learn, or how they want to mold their children's minds, character or life paths. While the thought of figuring this out for your family and writing it down may seem too overwhelming (which is why you have never tackled it before), I would challenge you to simply take out a legal pad for each child and start jotting down what you feel would be important for your child to learn over the next three months. Even if you never put together a formal plan, the next three months will have more direction.

While there are as many styles of homeschools as there are actual homeschools, I believe every school can "lighten up and have fun" while at the

same time deepening their children's understanding of all subject matter. It does not take supreme creativity, as so many moms believe. I have no natural creativity whatsoever, had never considered myself teacher material, nor was I particularly organized. But somehow, when I put the right system together, I created an environment in which I could more clearly understand the needs of my children's education. I could more clearly understand their most effective ways of learning. Once I looked at those input channels in a logical and sequential way, I was able to see how to teach and provide curriculum in a way that made sense to my children. I'm not creative, I am logical. Logic can look like creativity at times. So believe it or not, logical, creative homeschooling is fun, effective, efficient—and possible for everyone.

When your homeschool is logical and creative—meaning your children are learning in a way (individually) that makes sense to them, school is effective and fun. When your homeschool is fun, the whole day is self perpetuating. You love to homeschool, the kids love, or at least like, to learn. The school hours go by quickly and no one feels that school is what we do until we can do something better. School is what we do! And fun is what we have while we are doing school.

There are two comments that I continually receive from people who use my Workbox Systemsm. The first is generally, "This has changed our lives forever!" The second is, "I cannot believe how much work we get done and in so much less time." Each time I hear these comments from exuberant new Workbox System users, I smile gratefully and nod and tell them how happy I am that this is working so well for them. The truth is, everyone says the same thing and I am no longer amazed by it. But my smile and returned exuberance is real, because I am so very grateful that they were willing to try and were able to look past their traditional ideas of what school should look like and what children should be able to do on their own.

"Learning how to learn is one of the most important things we can teach our children."

I believe it is **our** job to train up our children. Our children should become smart, sequential, forward thinking, self-driven, independent people. But I don't think they typically have to achieve it by themselves. Some of our children will never blossom into the individual who "loves to learn." But at least they will have learned **how** to learn. Learning how to learn is one of the most important things we can teach our children. It is a first