

HEART MATTERS

NON SCHOLÆ SED VITÆ

Libraries of Hope Newsletter

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“A STORY IS THE BEST INTERPRETATION OF LIFE ”

MONTHLY TOPICS

--As we turn to a study of the Constitution this month, check out FreedomFactor.org where you can purchase pocket constitutions to read and to share. It also contains the Declaration of Independence. And there is a series of ten fun videos that explain the Constitution in a simple, easy to understand way for kids. A big thank you to Freedom Factor for donating several hundred pocket constitutions that we are including in subscription shipments this month and all other shipments until we run out.

--A little more from William Forbush’s *Life of Jesus for Young People*, this time on the power of stories:

“His chief method was that of stories. At first how imperfect, how childish, seems such a method, but remember, it is the oldest means of knowledge. It is a universal means, appealing to all ages, bridging all languages, and understood by all races.

“You can tell the stories of Jesus to people of every race and creed.

“Stories are easily remembered and repeated... If Jesus wished to have His thoughts reproduced correctly He could not do so in any other way so well as by telling stories. People might misunderstand prosaic statements, but they would not forget His stories.

“A story is the best interpretation of life.

“The best way to describe a man or an idea is not to write an essay about it, but to illustrate it by a story.

“Notice the topics of Jesus’ stories. They were about things near at hand. When He was out of doors in the springtime, He told (*cont. on p. 2*)

(*Monthly Topics cont.*) springtime stories about outdoor life. Over four hundred references to nature have been found in the Gospels...

“He talked about common things...

“Jesus used another method which was even more graphic. He not only told stories, but He acted them out...

“Another method was the proverb...cast in the form of poetry...

“Jesus appealed to feeling... Jesus appealed to reason... Finally Jesus appealed to action. [*The Pattern for Learning!*] He was always seeming to say, ‘Try this.’ He used the laboratory method. ‘Follow me.’ ‘Do and you will know.’

“By all these appeals Jesus, the wonderful Teacher, touches the whole man.”



“AS THE SUN
COLORS FLOWERS,
SO ART
COLORS LIFE.”

Art credit: Girl Picking Poppies by Daniel
Ridgway Knight

ANNOUNCEMENTS

--All of My Book House and the *Junior Classics* are available on [Internet Archive](https://www.archive.org) as borrowed reads. With their newer 1-hour option, you can almost always access them when you want. If you click on the peach or the lavender boxes on the bottom of any page in the website, it will take you to a page where I have linked all the books for easy access. I don't have any problem reading these on my phone--it's a great grab-and-go option when you have a few minutes somewhere that you want to fill in your day with a story.

--The new **Month 7** books are in the store! Here is what we have for you:

My America Story Book 7 has stories of brave men and women who settled new land as they pushed westward as well as stories of the Native Americans. You can't help but feel sadness when you hear their stories. I wish we could have come up with a better solution. That could spark an interesting discussion in your homes.

Our Little Cousins visit Pioneer and Eskimo homes. (*cont. on p. 3*)



MY AMERICA
STORY BOOK

BOOK SEVEN: WESTWARD EXPANSION

Compiled by Marlene Peterson



Our Little Pioneer Twins
and Eskimo Cousin

VOLUME NINETEEN

LUCY FITCH PERKINS
JULIA DARROW COWLES



A History of Scotland

THE WORLD FREEDOM SERIES

H.E. MARSHALL



Laddie

SUNSHINE SERIES

GENE STRATTON-PORTER



Gene Stratton-Porter

SUNSHINE SERIES BONUS

EUGENE FRANCIS SAXTON

(Announcements cont.) This month's Sunshine series is the first of 5 Gene Stratton-Porter books we are reprinting. There is so much of WEH in them. If you are a subscriber to the series, you will get a free copy of a brief but wonderful biography we reprinted of her. Or you can buy it in the store for \$5.00. Or read it online for free.

Finally, in our World Freedom series, we are visiting the Story of Scotland--you know, William Wallace's FREEDOM!! When my youngest daughter was serving a mission in Scotland, I sent her a chapter from this book every week and she really enjoyed it.

They are all in the [store!](#)

MARLENE'S MUSINGS

--My husband was noticing the different topics for American history in the rotation and he said, "Hey--that looks like the template for learning that you are teaching."

And he is right...it is!

The first month is explore and discover. That should be the first step in all learning, but is especially true for babies and toddlers.

Then they start to feel comfortable as they settle into and become familiar in their new 'home,' under the protection of the mother 'country.' (Month 2: Colonization)

As they grow, they start pushing for the Independence. (Month 3-5) That is a good thing! We want our children to become independent, self-driven learners. They need good examples, like George Washington (Month 4). And then they will settle into a new environment of learning, not so much under the rule of the 'mother' country. (Month 6)

And as they become independent, responsible self-educators, there will be great expansion in their learning--yes, even with risks. (Month 7: Westward expansion)

Now we run into the issue of slavery and freedom. (Month 8) Will we allow a system of compulsion to take the place of freedom in learning? That struggle between freedom vs. compulsion has been going on since always.

Month 9 is the Civil War--as our children learn, they are going to run into conflicting ideas. There (cont. p. 4)

(Marlene's Musings cont.) will be opposition. But many say our nation grew stronger from the conflict. And so will our children.

Month 10--Look at the 20th century explosion of creativity! We put men on the moon and shrunk the world with all the technology. And that's what we want for our kids--to use their knowledge for use-fulness, in right-use-ness.

Months 11 and 12 are for review--we are now at a time in our history when we are questioning things. Are there better ways? Are there things we need to be doing differently? And, I have a feeling we'll cycle back around to Explore and Discover, etc. But we can now layer deeper--we can perhaps see with clearer eyes--we have more understanding than we did the first time around.

Line upon line, precept upon precept, layer upon layer, forever.

What else do you see?

--I loved this statement at the end of *The Life of Jesus* by William Forbush:

"He succeeded in finding pleasure in more things than did anyone else. He saw the inner beauty in neglected objects...and set the world an example of a life that honored God in the fine art of beautiful living."

Exactly what we are engaged in: The fine art of beautiful living.

--"The whole process of teaching [as an art] may be compared to the *Automobile Blue Book*, which points out the directness of one route, the delights of another, and the difficulties of the third, while leaving the motorist to choose for himself--knowingly...

So this is my role: I help you "analyze the several ways that lie before the adventurer into all the delightful fields, offer advice on matters of equipment, point out difficult curves, warn of deceptive byways, and seek, without the interjection of a single impertinent MUST, to help the traveler choose his own way with confident ease."

There is no right way or wrong way to do WEH. Only your way.

Enjoy the journey!

--I'm a little embarrassed asking you to read so much of what I write and listen to so much of what I say. I promise it isn't a vanity thing... Here's the best way I can think of describing the process.

When I discovered the writings of heart educators, it's like a light went on and the more I read, the bigger the vision grew of what this learning lifestyle could look like. It was as though every thing I read was a brush stroke on a canvas inside of my heart. And when all the brush strokes came together--what a vision I saw!! And it continues to grow and expand.

But I can't invite you into my heart and have you sit on my couch and take in this work of art. I can't even describe it with a couple of brush-strokes. The only thing I can do is share the brush strokes with you so that you can start applying them to your own canvas. And then you will see for yourself!

That is why there is no short cut. It is why I can't just tell you what to do. You have to see for yourself. But when you do, it's a masterpiece!



Art credit: At the Studio by Jose Ferraz de Almeida Jr.



Black history month should certainly feature Francis Ellen Watkins Harper:

“Every mother should be a true artist, who knows how to weave into her child’s life images of grace and beauty, the true poet capable of writing on the soul of childhood the harmony of love and truth, and teaching it how to produce the grandest of all poems--the poetry of a true and noble life.”

Art credit: Idyllic Scene by Eugenio Zampighi

WEH IN ACTION

--**I wanted to** share this with you all. My oldest daughter had her favorite chicken pass away almost two weeks ago and she has been struggling with the loss. She raised her chicken since it was a day old and nursed it back to health when it was stepped on by a neighbor. In an effort to help my daughter heal in her heart, I have given her the My Book of Delights series to read. There are occasional pictures of chickens, which she loves. Then, I read to my children from Clara Pierson’s *Among the Farm People* about the shiny egg. This inspired my 10-year-old son to write a small book about chickens and we all laughed about how well Clara described their personalities. We also did a nature drawing of our chickens last week, led by my 10-year-old son. Finally, I felt impressed upon to help my daughter create a scrapbook of her chicks as they grew. Yesterday, she and her 10-year-old brother worked for hours on a beautiful scrapbook. My daughter said it helps her to have a way to remember. I’m so grateful for the ideas from WEH and how they are helping our family.

--**We love beautiful** art in this home and my 13-year-old shared something neat the other day. I had printed our new paintings to discuss for the week and he stood admiring them. He then shared how he loves real paintings. He told us when he went to New York with his Aunt two years ago, he noticed something. He said while at some of the famous museums the halls that had old beautiful art were full of people admiring their work. He said (*cont. p. 6*)

“[T]he forerunners of the Renaissance were the troubadours, minnesingers, bards and minstrels, who aroused in the soul of a slumbering Europe the sense of nobler living in a time when Church and State were both asleep.

“Are not our storytellers...the true pioneers of a new revival of learning?”

-- Edna Lyman

Art credit: The Decameron by John William Waterhouse



(WEH in Action cont.) he saw many people sitting on the benches and trying to take it all in. They were drawn to those amazing masterpieces. He then shared how the halls full of modern art were almost empty. He said he remembered seeing one with a dot and a line, or something like that, and he didn't even care to spend time looking at any of those, so like many, they skipped those halls. Our souls are drawn to the beautiful. But to really love art, it takes time with great art and I agree with Marlene, it really grows throughout your life. I am SO thankful Marlene has made it SO easy for me to print beautiful art work and have it in my home. He was 11 when he went and I do not think he would have loved or appreciated even the beautiful work like he did had he not been exposed to it since he was little. Little seeds over time really do give beautiful results.

--I have to share our little victory today. This year when we began listening to My America Story Book, I tried to get my kids (ages 7 and 11) to notebook. They resisted so much, I finally gave up the notebooking and we just enjoyed the stories together. This morning we read a beautiful picture book for older children called *We the People: The Story of Our Constitution* by Lynne Cheney. Every 2-page spread has a small quote by one of the founding fathers at the bottom. After we finished reading the book, my 11-year-old daughter suddenly got very excited and said, "Mom! I have an idea! We should get a notebook and write down all the quotes we find and love!" So I handed her our My America Story Book Journal and told her that was an excellent idea. This was the quote she chose:

"How has it happened...that we have not hitherto once thought of humbly applying to the Father of lights to illuminate our understanding?" --Benjamin Franklin

MOI MINUTE



Art credit: Sunday Evening in a Farmhouse in Dalarna by Amalia Lindegren

“There is no greater good in all the world than motherhood. The influence of a mother in the lives of her children is beyond calculation.”

--James Faust

“NO INSTRUCTION
WILL THROW DEEP
ROOTS INTO A COUNTRY,
UNLESS IT REACH
CHILDREN THROUGH
THEIR MOTHER...SHE
OPENS HEARTS TO
LOVE...”

--Letters to Mothers,
Lydia Sigourney

Art credit: De Drentse Madonna by Jozef Israels.



KRYSTAL-SPLAINING



Art credit: Protecting the Groceries by Edward Henry

--February is Black History Month. Our family has (as I'm sure many of your families have) discussed at length the issues of racism quite a bit over the last year or so. One of my sisters asked my mom (Marlene) the same question we always come back to: What do we do about it? I kind of chuckled and rolled my eyes because the answer mom has is always the same: Educate the hearts.

But that really is ultimately going to be the answer, isn't it? No amount of cancel culture or shaming or condemning will really change anyone. Change has to come from within, from the heart. And what better way to the heart than through stories? So I encourage you this month to find some new stories. Listen to the experiences of people of color, both modern day and historic, from the people who experienced it. And please share the stories you find so others can deepen their reservoirs as well!