



Fact Sheet & Seminar Topics...

Debra Bell

- Author, the best-selling *Ultimate Guide to Homeschooling*, 4th edition 2009, *Ultimate Guide to Homeschooling Teens* (Apologia, 2010), and *Ultimate Homeschool Planning System* (Apologia, 2011). Forthcoming *Writers-in-Residence*, a writing-focused language arts program (Apologia, 2013)
- Ph.D. educational psychology, Temple University. **Expected** May 2012.
- Keynote speaker, numerous state and regional conventions and High School @ Home seminars since 1988.
- English teacher, Creative Home Educators Support Services (1994-2008) and PA Homeschoolers' Online Advance Placement English (2000-present). www.pahomeschoolers.com.
- Director, Lead Teacher: Aim Academy (aimacademy.co) Launched 2011.
- Board President: Encore! Home School Productions
- Founder, Susquehanna Valley Pregnancy Services; co-founder CHESS family school, Learning Center home school co-op and Encore! Home School Productions.

Personal:

- Married since 1981 to Kermit;
- Four grown, college educated children, all graduates of homeschooling.
- Founding member of Living Hope Church, Harrisburg, PA. (25 years)

Seminar Topics:

Twenty-First Century Homeschooling: Welcome to the digital age. What does the future of education look like, and how can the homeschool community take advantage of this? Here's a look at **free tools** and **free content sites** online that can make your homeschool more efficient, more economical and more powerful. Harness the educational advantage of online learning and give your kids a jumpstart on their future. We will look at how Web 2.0 applications are changing the definition of education - blogs, wikis, Google applications, Skype, VoiceThreads, open courseware, YouTube, Facebook and even Twitter, when used appropriately can really help kids learn. (New 2010)

This is an exciting new seminar that has been very well received, but I can only show audiences all these cool tools and sites if I have Internet access.

Developing Motivation and Interest in Kids of All Ages: This seminar covers the importance

of intrinsic motivation and interest in learning. Research shows motivation to be an inherent characteristic of young children, but in a traditional setting, studies indicate most students show a steady loss in academic motivation the longer they are in school; however, homeschooling is an antidote to this decline. Learn practical ways to help your children and teens develop and retain motivation and enjoyment in academic pursuits. (New 2010)

Why Homeschooling Works: If we started with what the research tells us about how kids learn best and built a school from the ground up – we'd build a home! Learn the critical factors that help explain why homeschooled kids succeed – and what you can do to keep the windows of wonder open in your house. (New 2010)

Cultivating a Love for Learning in Our Homes:

A love for learning is a blessing God has for His children – one that is meant to enrich our lives, give us purpose and draw us into a quest to know the Creator. This workshop will give you a biblical foundation for safeguarding a child's natural curiosity and joy of discovery; and suggest ways to approach homeschooling that keeps this important element alive and growing in your home. (Updated 2010)

How Children Learn:

My enduring interest in how children learn best has led this retired home school mom back into the halls of academia in pursuit of a terminal degree in educational psychology. This seminar sifts through what we now know to be true about how God has hard-wired kids to learn. This seminar will review briefly the steps of cognitive development for kids K-6 and give you practical strategies for supporting their development in your home school program. (New 2010)

How Teens Learn:

During early adolescence, teens not only experience a physical growth spurt but a dramatic cognitive growth spurt as well. Here is how to capitalize upon that momentum; as well as, live with your teens in an understanding way. (New 2010)

Using Graphic Organizers to Promote Learning:

From reading comprehension to the advanced sciences and everything in between, kids who use graphic organizers to aid their understanding outlearn those who rely on traditional outlining or note-taking. Graphic organizers are easy to make and free. Free graphic organizer templates included in this seminar with examples for where to use each type in the curriculum. (New 2011)

Online Learning: Does it work? Is it good for kids? From an educator with more than a decade of experience teaching online; as well as, a homeschool mom who used online learning extensively during the high school years—this session will review types of online classes, the types of students who fare best in each and how to get the best experience for your money. (New 2011)

College Credit for High School Work? Here are all the options for converting the work your teen completes during high school into college credit at a fraction of the cost. From CLEP and AP testing to dual enrollment, we'll cover the gamut of options, the costs and best type of student for each. Attendees receive a graphic organizer that shows how these options can best be turned into credit and a degree. (New 2011)

Study-Smart Student Strategies: The 20 Power Tools of Learning and the brain science behind them. For teens and their parents. Cut your study time in half, remember what you learn, recall it when you need it. (New 2011).

Motivating the Reluctant Learner: 10 proven strategies that kindle a love for learning in a child and help him master areas of difficulty; at the same time, reduce conflict and frustration for mom and kid.

Raising an Independent Learner: Do you want a lifelong learner who initiates studies on his own? Then let go of the wheel and start giving your kids responsibility for their education. Here are practical, inexpensive steps that will encourage children to pursue their own learning, and prevent parent burnout as well.

Developing Creative and Critical Thinking Skills: What are thinking skills and why all the fuss? This seminar challenges traditional teaching methods head on by outlining the best way to teach so your child can remember and **use** what he has learned-- even when he is an adult. Analysis, synthesis and evaluation explained. Samples of creative and critical thinking. And lots of suggested resources and activities that are uncomplicated, time-saving, inexpensive and effective.

Homeschooling Teens: From the perspective of a mom who raised four teens, long time high school level teacher and evaluator of numerous high school homeschool programs. The high school years are your child's resume for the future. Here's how to maximize his time, prepare him for a changing job market, get doors to open, and facilitate non-traditional learning experiences.

Determining Your Child's Learning Style: Save time, money and frustration. Before you buy anything, determine your child's learning style and then choose curriculum to match it. Does your son need to **do** to learn? Is your daughter motivated better in a group? Does your child need structure and routine or flexibility and independence? Four types of learners explained with sample programs for each. (This material is similar to learning style info in Cathy Duffy's book, but with my own experience and adaptation to a home school setting. If folks have not been exposed to learning style information, they find this workshop very helpful. This is our top selling tape.)

Raising A Writer: The job market of the future will demand exceptional communication skills. Learn how to motivate your reluctant writer, challenge your talented one and critique their work. Starting an effective writers' group will also be covered. Will also include how to help your children get published -- and sometimes even paid!

Designing a College Prep High School Program: This session covers the timeline, coursework, tests and extra-curricular activities that position your teen for acceptance and scholarship-consideration at the colleges of his/her choice.

Spiritually-Focused Topics

Homeschooling from a Foundation of Grace:

In this seminar we revisit what it means to live with the Cross central to our homeschooling life. What does it mean to start in grace, continue in grace and finish in grace so that God alone receives the glory for the fruit of our lives? Here is a practical framework for homeschooling with eternity always in view. Be liberated once again from self-sufficiency, self-righteousness and condemnation through the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Hope for Weary Moms: There is a Redeemer: God is working redemptively through homeschooling. Here is the hope we have for our failures, weaknesses and frustrations. God is at work to make Himself known to you more deeply and fully. (New 2011)

Standing Strong through High School: Why staying the course through the teen years can be the most fruitful and important years of homeschooling; as well as, the most rewarding for Mom and Dad. (New 2010)

Celebrate the Journey in Awe and Wonder: God intends us to be wonderstruck by the glory and majesty of His creation for it is the irrefutable evidence that God exists and He is worthy of our worship. A honest thirst for knowledge is a longing to know the Creator. And a true love for learning at its heart is a love for God. This is the philosophy of education we should model for our children and infuse into our homeschooling. With Scripture to light our path, here's how. (New 2011)

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Terms

I try to be flexible with organizations, especially churches and ministries, so please don't hesitate to ask me to modify my terms if these make my participation in your event prohibitive. My husband and I will prayerfully consider all requests.

- Expenses to include round trip air fare from Harrisburg International Airport [MDT]
- Because of my writing schedule and coursework, I need Internet access in my non-smoking hotel room.
- I like to fly home on Saturday evening whenever possible in order to be in my home church on Sundays as frequently as I can.
- Honorarium of \$500 -\$750/day. Factored in to this is the total time away from home required. Even though my children are grown, they all live close by and being wife and mom are my priorities.