



MORNING  
TIME  
SNAPSHOTS

## SARA'S MORNING TIME

"MORNING TIME HELPS TO PULL US TOGETHER DURING THE SCHOOL DAY. I'M OFTEN WORKING WITH THE YOUNGER KIDS WHILE THE HIGH SCHOOL TEENS ARE STUDYING THEIR OWN MATERIAL. MORNING TIME GIVES US A COMMON GATHERING POINT, SHARED MEMORIES, AND A TIME TO DISCUSS WHAT WE'RE STUDYING."

### How many kids do you have and what are their ages?

I have six children, but I'm only homeschooling five at this time. My oldest graduated and is at college. The others are 17, 16, 12, 6, and 4. It's a challenge doing morning time as a group. Poetry that the youngest children adore makes the older boys groan.

### How long have you been doing Morning Time?

We've done a group gathering or Morning Time most of the years I've homeschooled (14+). Over the years it's changed, been dropped for a time, and adapted to the needs of the family. We stopped for a time so everyone could concentrate on their own schoolwork, but I missed having the family learning together.



My mother also told me of a family she knew as a child whose mother read aloud to them over lunch. It was such a peaceful picture, I've tried to bring it about in my own household.

### What do you call your Morning Time?

Even though we do Morning Time during lunch, I still call it Morning Time for lack of a better name. We do often refer to it as Lunch Time, Group Time, and Read-Aloud Time.

### Typically how long does your Morning Time take on an average day?

Depending on how much I'm trying to pack into our day, it usually takes 30 minutes to an hour. I keep my Morning Time super simple. The kids make lunch and start an art project while I touch on a concept from *Tapestry of Grace*, such as geography or art history. I then read aloud for a period of time. Once the troops get restless, I break off reading for the day. We review and recite poetry, and I call it good. [Here's an ideal schedule](#) for my family. If life is truly chaotic, I simply worry about getting our read-aloud done while the kids draw. Even then we'll often spend a good 30 minutes between lunch and Morning Time.

### What is your favorite Morning Time subject or activity?

The read-alouds. The books take us into the historical time we're studying and adds information and color to the time period. We've read biographies, historical fiction, and non-fiction as part of our read-alouds. The biographies especially stick into my memory.

### What is your kids' favorite Morning Time subject or activity?

The artwork. I pull out art supplies to keep hands busy. Often one or two children will still be finishing their picture when I'm herding the other children to quiet/study time. Some of the artwork can get quite elaborate.

### What is your biggest struggle with Morning Time?

Keeping it simple so we do it on a regular basis. It's so tempting to keep adding subjects and thinking, "Hey, we could also cover that!" Then the kids get restless

and bicker, I'm overwhelmed with the amount of information to cover, and I end up with a headache. After a couple days, I give up. If I keep Morning Time simple — one subject, a touch of poetry, and a read aloud, I don't get overwhelmed and the kids are happy.

Another major struggle is getting everyone together at the same time. Early in the morning, the kids take off doing their own things. One might start exercising, another math, another sits down with a good book, and the little ones start playing happily upstairs. It's hard to disturb the family. Everyone wanders into the kitchen around 11:30 for lunch. That makes it the easiest time to sit everyone down and do a simple Morning Time routine.



### How have you seen Morning Time bear fruit in your home?

That's a good question. Morning Time helps to pull us together during the school day. I'm often working with the younger kids while the high school teens are studying their own material. Morning Time gives us a common gathering point, shared memories, and a time to discuss what we're studying.

### What are some of your favorite Morning Time resources?

*Tapestry of Grace* guides my entire homeschool. It includes information on art history, geography, history, literature, and recommends read-alouds for the family. In

addition *Story of the World* is a favorite book for history. I love to read it to all the children. It's a wonderful review for my older children and ensures the younger kids are exposed to history. It's also a well-written book that the teens don't moan and groan about listening to again. [Here's a post](#) with a couple other resources I use.

[What are some of the ritual practices you include in Morning Time?](#)

We really don't have any ritual practices. I heard of people using bells to call the children in to Morning Time and thought it was a great idea. I haven't actually tried it though.

## ABOUT SARA



Sara Dennis is a homeschooling mother of six children ages 4 through 18. After much research into homeschooling in 2000, she and her husband fell in love with classical education and used it as the foundation for their homeschool. Sara blogs at [Classically Homeschooling](#).

TERM: \_\_\_\_\_

# MORNING TIME PLAN



DAILY

Four sets of horizontal blue lines for writing, each consisting of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line.
