

# Your Guide to No-Regret Homeschooling

---



Lee Giles

Copyright 2021

All Rights Reserved

# Making a No-Regret Decision

---

This isn't going to be long because this doesn't have to be complicated. You are thinking about homeschooling, so you already have reasons to consider it. Or maybe you've already decided it's what you want to do, but aren't fully convinced it's what you should do. Many reasons that push families to homeschool are fear-based: fear over what they are teaching at schools, fear over how your child has been or might be treated, fear over violence, and now fear over disease spreading through schools.

I want to offer you a different perspective. Personally, I always want to avoid any fear-based decision. I don't want fear ruling my life. I want my life ruled by love instead. I want you to look at the decision to homeschool from the perspective opposite of fear-- one of love.

Who loves your child more, you or the state? Homeschooling is a simple decision when you look at it from the perspective of love. No one loves your child more than you do. No one is going to care about your child more than you do.

Yes, there are awesome teachers out there that care about their students and are experts in their field, but they can't ever care about your child the way you do. No matter how dedicated they are, they can't tailor their day and their curriculum to fit your child. They can't know your child the way you do.

You, however, even if you have multiple children and other demands, are more equipped to adapt and mold your child's education in the way that's best for them.

Curriculum standards are one-size-fits-all, but we know each child is different. Each human is unique, even identical twins. School could never give them the love and care that you can.

If you decide to homeschool out of love, then you will not fail your child. *Love never fails.* That's a timeless truth. If you are homeschooling out of fear, you could fail. If your only motivation is to keep them away from school and not to provide and support your child's education, then your child will be at a loss.

Getting that "why" down will be the most important step towards no-regret homeschooling. Homeschool your children simply because you love them. That love will never change, so your motivation will never change. There won't be waffling in your decision.

It's pretty simple to feel confident that you love your children more than the state does. You can apply the same confidence towards anyone who questions your decision to homeschool. You can shrug it off without offense. While they may care about your family, you will know that they don't love your child as much as you do. No one else has that parent-child bond with your child.

\*Deciding to send your child to school is not a sign of not loving your child. But, if that's your decision, make it out of love and not fear!

# Moving Forward with No Regrets

---

Of course, after we make the decision to homeschool, insecurities start to creep in. Yes, we love our children, but is that enough? I'm not a teacher. I don't get math. I am already busy. Won't it cost a lot to do it well? What if I can't do it? What if what I have to give my child isn't enough?

Here comes our next step towards no-regret homeschooling. We need to make a decision on how to approach homeschooling. We can't let panic force us into a wrong choice here. We need to choose with the confidence we built with our choice to homeschool in the first place.

The fear decision would be to imitate what the schools do, the fear being that your child will get behind and not learn what the kids in school are learning. This leads to desks in rows, thick overpriced textbooks, very expensive online schools, intensive all-day online programs, and other such stress-inducing options.

The fear is that what you offer your child might be somehow less than what they would get in school. But, remember, you've already decided that what they have to offer in school isn't what you want for your child. If school is what you wanted for your child, you'd send them there. If you've already decided not to send your child to school, why would you want to replicate it?

Then there is the self-doubt, looking at others and comparing them to yourself. These other homeschoolers have their stuff together. Their kids

are so accomplished. The fear-based decision would be to just imitate them, hoping to replicate their children's success. While there's nothing wrong with gleaning wisdom from those who have gone before, there's a big problem with just doing what others are doing simply because you don't want to take responsibility for the decision yourself.

We have to deal with the underlying fear of the responsibility of educating your children. Educating your children is not separate from parenting them. We love them. We do our best to guide them. They ALL will make mistakes because we're all raising humans. One mistake, one bad decision has ruined some lives, but a loving family doesn't lose it at that point. A loving parent doesn't have their identity wrapped up in their children. Their children's success is a joy to them, and their failures aren't an embarrassment, but a place to reach out in love to help them back up and on their way. Regardless of whether your child goes to Harvard or community college or skips college altogether, what they do or don't do is not a reflection of your self-worth.

*Love keeps no record of wrong doing.* Love doesn't hold anything your child does against them. Love forgives. Love keeps its arms open. Love doesn't say, "After all I did for you..." Love says, "I would do it all again."

So, let's look at the flip side of deciding how we will approach homeschooling: the love-based decision. You love your child. You know your child best. You know your family. Your decision as to how you will approach homeschooling will be as unique as your child and your family.

I like to say that homeschooling is just an extension of parenting. You have been teaching your child their whole life. You taught them their first words. You taught them what a tree was. You taught them how to use utensils. You've been teaching them all along. Why should it stop now? You were made for this.

Each family has its own unique culture. Each family is made up of different people, so each family interacts in different ways. There are some general categories such as those families who run their lives by schedule and enjoy each day being the same, and those who like adventure and flying by the seat of their pants. Some families have movie nights, and some read aloud to each other. Some families are large and have lots of extended family nearby for lots of gatherings, and some are small and spend most of their time by themselves.

We like to categorize everything like that, but the truth is life isn't that neat and orderly. We're all a mix of lots of different things. And that mix in each of us as humans mixes with the mix in the other humans we live with, creating our family secret sauce that no one else has.

Your parenting is unique. No one else's home is just like yours. It can't be. It's made up of different people. You may have things in common with them, but you have different families. You have different traditions, customs, not just big things like holidays, but the day-to-day traditions and customs. Do you rise early without an alarm and open the kids' bedroom doors with a song on your lips to wake and ready them for the day? Do you

drag out of bed on the fourth snooze after your kids are already up and cerealed and watching TV?

We all do things differently. My family sits down together for a homemade breakfast each morning, but lunchtime is a free-for-all-survival-style-every-man-for-himself experience. To each his own.

Our families are different. Our parenting is different. Each relationship is unique, so the parents' relationship with each child is different, even within the same family. People are unique. You are unique. Your kids are unique. Your family is unique. Your parenting is unique to you, and your homeschooling will be unique to you.

That's the point of all that. Be your own homeschoolers. Just like we don't want to look to the school and copy that, we don't want to look to others to copy them. They aren't you. They will never be you. Their kids are not yours. You don't want your kids to be their kids. You want your kids to be themselves. Let your kids be themselves and don't try to push them into someone else's mold.

I hope you can agree that you want your kids to be raised to be all they can be, not all that someone else has decided they should be, including you. Love your kids enough to want them to grow into who they were created to be, not your idea of who they should be.

We need to be clear on our love motivation. We can't let selfishness creep in and start looking at ourselves. We need to make sure we're free of those

self-doubts and insecurities that say my kid's success in the eyes of the world determines my worth.

We need to homeschool out of love. *Love is selfless.*

We can homeschool without regret because our motivation is love and *love never fails.*

# No-Regret Homeschool Days

---

We've got our motivation down. We know we're committed to homeschooling. We know we don't want to just copy the world around us. But what do we do?

We all want someone to step in and say "do this." It would be a relief, right? It would lift the responsibility off of ourselves to make the "right" decision. But we've already established that no one can tell you what's right for your family.

If you are a praying person, now's the time for prayer if you haven't been praying over this decision yet.

While I won't tell you what to do, I will give you some guideposts. I'll talk more about each one, and then I'll give you an easy way to get started accomplishing them.

1. Cover the basics. Your child should read, write, know arithmetic, and learn about the world around them.
2. Set your child up for success. Don't force a curriculum on your child that's too hard. Yes, challenge your child, but a successful child is eager to learn. A defeated child just wants to retreat.
3. Move at your child's pace. If they are excited, let them spend extra time on it. If it's becoming a burden, break it into parts and just do

part each day, or straight up take a break and come back to it another time.

4. Give your child time and space to pursue their interests.

Let's look at each of these features that should be part of everyone's homeschool. First, cover the basics. You want your child to be educated. That's a basic desired outcome of homeschooling. They should get the "three R's" and learn about the world around them, which would include your history and science.

Reading is foundational. There are different ways to do it. I start with sight reading with most kids because it gets them reading faster and more fluently. You read by sight, so sight reading is the end goal. Phonics is actually just for decoding words you don't yet know by sight. It's a tool, not a reading technique.

Writing follows reading, though the two can be taught simultaneously. Reading starts with the alphabet. They can trace the letter and not only say its name but its phonetic sound, "D, dee, duh."

They can write the sight words they are learning to add a physical dynamic to the process. Children, however, will progress at different rates. They might learn to read earlier than they can master writing. Let your child progress independently in their different skills.

For older kids it's most important to just be reading daily. That is much more important than the level they are reading at. The research supports

this. Reading for twenty to thirty minutes a day will set your child up for success.

Writing has rules of grammar that need to be learned, but they should be separated out from writing. You'll need to decide how to provide those basic grammar lessons. They can even come from just copying good literature and then looking at how it's written. Why is there a comma there? What do the quotation marks show? What does this word describe? There are terms like *adjective* that they will need to learn for the sake of "getting an education."

But apart from that, your child should write stories. These can be creative, but they should also be non-fiction, just telling about their life. They need to learn to state a topic, and add details about it, and come up with an ending. These should be more about content and structure than worrying about spelling and grammar.

Math starts with counting. You don't need a book for that. You can count around the house, outside on walks, whenever, wherever. Math benefits from structure and building on itself. The early years can focus on learning math facts and basic concepts of geometry, time, money, graphs, and fractions. These can all be taught without a book. But eventually, you'll want to move to a systematic approach to make sure they are getting the stepping stones to keep building towards higher math.

History and science can be learned through books, videos, field trips, etc. It doesn't have to come through a textbook. You can choose a topic like

explorers, pioneers, World War I, the Space Race, ancient Egypt, and so on, and just learn all you can about it, including history and science and literature and music and art and anything else you find along the way. Use your library and request all they have on the topic, from books and magazines to videos. Give your child a shelf or bin for the current topic and let them explore what's there freely.

As they get older, maybe third grade, you can move into a more organized curriculum to expose your children to all sorts of things and not just the things they already knew about to want to learn more. I encourage you to let your child explore their interests, but I also encourage you to let them do that on their own time. If they really want to learn, they will. They don't need to be "forced" to do it. School time can be to explore new things and find new interests. And if it doesn't interest, then it's over and done when school's finished for the day and they can go learn more about those things that interest them.

Second, set your child up for success. When choosing a curriculum and deciding on levels and placement, keep this in mind. You want your child to be successful. Find the place where they can feel successful and move forward from there.

Success breeds excitement and intrinsic motivation to continue on. Defeat breeds discouragement. It doesn't mean it has to be easy. It doesn't mean they should never get something wrong. But the getting something wrong shouldn't leave them feeling it's impossible. The getting something wrong

should be an obstacle they can overcome and then feel all the more encouraged that they can do it.

If your child is struggling to read independently, let them use audio books to read along, so they are getting exposure to different levels of books. You can and should adapt to your child.

I have some kids who were independent readers at age four, reading novels for fun at five. I have some kids who weren't really independent readers until they were ten. These are all siblings, my children. It just didn't fully click for some until they were older. They will never be the voracious readers those first kids are, but they don't have to be. That's not who they are. But it's clicked for them and they can pick up and read whatever they want now. And they do read just for fun.

Third, move at your child's pace. This would be related to what I've said before about kids learning at different speeds and even the same child learns different skills at different times. If the math is easy, it's okay to let them go ahead and do more to some extent. It's not a bad idea to leave them wanting more, and you don't want burn out, but let them do more if they want to. If they are excited to learn, that's a good thing.

When you come to the subjects that are harder and a struggle, it's great to teach them to push through and get it done, but it's also good to say "we'll do half today and finish tomorrow."

My daughter graduated high school with probably a seventh-grade math education. She worked on math all through graduation. That's just as far as she got. She has autism and math was a particular struggle for her. She still got a full college scholarship. She excelled at what she was excellent at and that's what the college cared about. (Side note: Now she's a senior in college, and has decided she wants to learn algebra. She's ready for it now, and she'll learn it much better than if we pushed through in high school just for the sake of doing it.)

That leads us to the last point: give your child time and space to pursue their interests. I believe in keeping school short and sweet, and then letting your child spend their time on their interests.

I want my kids to be educated. I want them to learn the basics really well, but I want them to do the things they care about and become experts at them.

We become an expert at something by devoting lots of time to it. The only way we'll devote a lot of time to something is if we love it, enjoy it. My daughter excelled at art because she loved it and spent a whole lot of time on it.

My son excels at 3D modeling because he really enjoys it. He sets his alarm for six in the morning to get up and get working. He's gotten multiple full-time job offers from companies who sought him out for the skills they see in his work. That's all while he was still a teenager.

# No-Regret Easy Peasy Homeschooling

---

I want to leave you with my best tool for helping you homeschool. It will enable you to meet all four of those points I just laid out. I have created a **free** online curriculum called Easy Peasy All-in-One Homeschool. Its mission is to make homeschooling possible even if you think you lack the time, money, or know-how.

It covers every subject; not just the core subjects, but also things like art, music, PE, computer, foreign language. It's all available for free online. We do offer low-cost books if your family works better that way. Kids love the online activities and books provide flexibility for when you are on the go, so some use it both ways.

Easy Peasy is a great way to get started on your first year of homeschooling. It's an eclectic curriculum, so you'll get exposure to learning by videos and by reading, to learning from textbooks (free online) and by completing hands-on projects. You'll get to try out different ways of doing school as you find what works best for your family.

Easy Peasy has over 100 Facebook groups to offer you support. Every state has different homeschool laws; we have a group for each state so you can find help navigating those laws. We have groups for different countries as well.

We have groups for different life circumstances such as large families, special needs kids, those in the military, those schooling from an RV, and those homeschooling grandchildren.

I would encourage you to check it out. You can find us at [allinonehomeschool.com](http://allinonehomeschool.com).

[AllInOneHomeschool.com](http://AllInOneHomeschool.com)

I'm going to close here and leave you with three blog posts that I have written that continue these thoughts. I hope they will encourage you that you can homeschool and can do it well.

You've got this. No regrets!

# Is It Enough?

---

I recently received an email with the subject line, “Is it really this simple?”

The real question, though, is probably one you’ve asked yourself. I know I have. It’s this one: am I doing enough?

What does that question mean? Do you know what you are asking? Enough for what? To appease your doubtful parents? To keep up with the Joneses? For your child to get a job? Or to get into college on a full scholarship?

What is your goal in educating your children? What are your goals for your family? Do you want children who love God and family and serve others? Is following the public school format of school all day and then more work in the evening really conducive to meeting that goal?

My husband and I want our children to be educated. We give them a core body of knowledge to remove their ignorance. The curriculum I’ve designed for my own family is one that I believe covers all of the basics and provides an excellent foundation in reading and writing, which I believe are indispensable for any future learning or career. We don’t know what the future will hold for our children, so we want them to be prepared for anything. We want our children to be able to get into the college of their choice, if they make that choice. We certainly would love for them to get full scholarships, but we’re not going to put that pressure on them or ourselves and make that THE goal.

I know I am doing enough. For our family, doing enough is covering the basics thoroughly and giving our children free time to devote to their passions. My children are already pursuing their future work. Because I keep their “school” day short and don’t have them in outside activities, they have hours of free time every day to do what they love. My oldest child is already getting paid to do what she loves, which is art. My next oldest is building an online following for his computer work. These things, their passions, are what will be important in their lives, more important than their ability to place chemicals on a periodic table or to list the presidents.

There tend to be two groups of parents who ask this “enough” question the most: those with kindergartners, who wonder why I don’t do addition and subtraction and history and science with the five-year-olds, and those with high schoolers, who are wondering if what they are doing “counts.”

To the moms of kindergartners I say, your children will be able to complete calculus in high school even if they wait until they are in first grade to begin “real” math. Enjoy this time with your kids. Read books together. Google the answers to their questions. Watch videos. Try to relax.

To the moms of high schoolers I say, in some states your child could play video games for four years and you could call him a high school graduate. My state, Pennsylvania, is not one such state. Here are their guidelines for what “counts.” To count as a completed high school course a student can do ANY of the following: complete two-thirds of a textbook, have 120 daily logged entries, have 120 hours of logged study, complete a 10-page research paper, complete a college course, or pass an AP exam. If you follow Easy

Peasy, you'll have 180 "daily logged entries." You'll be way ahead of the game.

I wrote the assignments on Easy Peasy for my children. It's "enough" for our family, but your children are yours, not mine. If this curriculum will help you meet your family's goals, then use it and be happy with your decision.

There will always, always be someone else doing something different, something more. There have been times in the past when I've read on blogs about what other people were doing for school and their kids' amazing accomplishments and certainly felt lacking. Well, guess what? My kids are turning out pretty amazing themselves. I bet your kids are pretty amazing too.

I'm someone who believes that everyone has genius in them. Everyone has something special to offer the world. I love giving my kids not only a great education, but the time to discover and develop their genius, and I'm teaching them that their gift is something to use to bless others.

So, I leave the question to you now. Is what you are doing enough? What are you really asking? Think it over. Pray it over. And I pray you come out on the other side joyful and at peace.

## Is It Enough? Part 2

---

I've been cringing reading one mom's posts on my Facebook news feed. Last week the mom and her son spent two hours together completing a grammar worksheet that he then got a 79 on. Her son is in *second grade*. This week she didn't even know the meaning of several of the words she was supposed to read to him to practice for his spelling test. Why would one need to know how to spell "argosy" if one is never, ever going to write that word?

I'm sure her son is getting a rigorous education. I hear about rigorous education all the time. I think it must be a buzzword of the moment because everyone is claiming their school, their curriculum, their standards are rigorous. I'd rather have peace and joy in my home than rigor.

I get a lot of questions from people coming out of the school system about where the spelling test are. EP has none. The kids learn the phonics behind spelling, practice some spelling, but mostly they write. That is, of course, the context where spelling is used. But spelling brings me to another point. If your child is really interested in spelling, then by all means give your child a dictionary and quiz her on the spelling of argosy. But if not, why drill and practice things that will be forgotten tomorrow and were never needed in the first place?

That's all part of the philosophy behind EP. Give them a strong foundation where it matters. Expose them to a variety of subjects. Let them do more where their interests lie.

My one son reads history books for fun. I don't have to push it on him. I don't make him memorize. He learns the names and places and dates because it's interesting to him. That kind of learning sticks. In the subjects he doesn't care about, I let it be "enough."

Now a word of caution here. When your kid is excited about chemistry (and who doesn't like explosions and slime), don't go crazy and run out and buy a science kit. If your child really cares, they will make it happen on their own, including bugging you until you do get that kit. You don't have to chase after a child's whims trying to ignite a passion. When they find what they really like to do, they will just do it. Give your child the gift of time, space, and boredom.

# The Key

---

(This was written in 2017.) The Oscar winner for Best Original Song went to a guy who thanked his mother for letting him quit soccer to be in a musical. He dedicated his win to all the kids who sing in the rain and to all the moms who let them.

I've written before about passion and how EP frees my kids up to spend time on their passions. That's what has been important to me, giving my kids a good foundation and then letting them build on it, their own way.

I know it's hard to let your kids play and explore and create and have fun when you hear about how "rigorous" this and that curriculum or program is. "Rigorous" seems to be a big buzzword in homeschool circles these days. I'd rather have joy and peace than rigor in my homeschool day.

My oldest is going off to college this fall. She's my first "proof of concept." She has always done school the "easy" way. School before Easy Peasy was even easier for us. Easy Peasy was actually a longer, more involved school day than what we did before. My daughter is an EP kid; she was using it before anyone outside of our family knew it existed.

My kids did all the EP lessons when they were younger, but as I've gotten kids into high school, I've let them take more of a lead on their direction. I let my daughter spend as much time on her art as she liked. As she got really focused on art, I didn't stress over her math and science that she didn't like. We just moved along in math at her own pace. I wanted her to

learn, not just get through. For two years of high school science I let her choose her subject. She did anatomy one year and spent the year drawing muscles and bones and labeling them. The next year she studied light. She researched it and wrote a big paper on it. Light was something she was focused on in her artwork that year. She likes history and English, so she wanted to continue with the regular EP courses in those subjects through high school.

So what was the outcome? She won a full scholarship to her only-choice school. She believed she knew where she should go to school; I trusted her and let her only apply there.

It can be hard when your child wants to go into the arts or some other field where you know jobs might be hard to come by. It can be tempting to worry and to want them to have all that rigorous education when they really just want to create. If your child is passionate and puts in the time and hard work, then they can get good enough to be one of those ones who get to make a living doing what they love. That Oscar winner used to be just a boy singing in the rain.

My next oldest is starting a video game design company. He's hoping to launch the alpha version of his first big game this year, as a freshman. He got his first unsolicited job offer at thirteen. I can already see that he can be successful at his passion, what he pours his spare time into.

Is Easy Peasy the key to every child's future? Of course not. There is a key, though. It's called the grace of God. He gave my kids their talents and

personalities that drove them to the things they love to do. He provided free art lessons for my daughter after I was fussing to Him in prayer about how I couldn't help her move forward with her art. He inspired the Easy Peasy way of school that gave my kids a great foundation and the hours to invest in their work. He matched my daughter up with a school that not only accepts her but appreciates her.

So when I look at my eleven year old reading or making music and his younger brothers dancing and creating imaginative games, I try to relax. God's got a plan for their future and it's a good one.

And a note: EP has high quality courses. There are many high school courses that are based on AP courses. There are courses that use lectures and materials from universities. I'm not saying that EP lacks in "rigor." I'm saying I'm against rigor for rigor's sake. There was no need for my daughter to tackle an AP physics course just so I could feel I was giving her a rigorous education. I hope you can see the difference. And, of course, I'm not saying that your kids or all my kids are going to get full scholarships. I'm just saying that I can trust it's going to all work out okay. I'm putting my faith in God, not in my curriculum, not in rigorous academic standards, not in anything else.

# About the Author

---

Lee Giles is the creator of Easy Peasy All-in-One Homeschool and mother to six homeschooled children. She and her family served the Lord overseas for fourteen years. It was overseas that she felt the need to figure out a way to homeschool online because it was so hard to get books overseas. She created an online curriculum for her own children and shared it for free with the world. You can learn more about her through the All-in-One Homeschool site, [allinonehomeschool.com](http://allinonehomeschool.com), and her miracle stories held at [153love.net](http://153love.net).

Easy Peasy All-in-One Homeschool has all the assignments, lessons, and learning materials available for free for preschool through twelfth grade. It covers math, reading, language arts, science, history, computer skills including coding, “thinking,” art, music, PE, health, foreign language, and Bible.

It’s one stop to get your homeschool organized and on track, moving forward each day, the easy peasy way, where we don’t stress about the perfect and let our family and our children be enough.

Author of:

[All-in-One Homeschool](#)

[All-in-One Highschool](#)

[Genesis Curriculum](#)

[The King Will Make a Way](#) (novel)

If you are interested in Bible teaching, check out [Good Morning, Lord](#), a daily two-minute teaching.



Lee circa 2014 😊