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My Homeschool

ENGLISH

1A - Semester One



Knowledge Rich Language Arts For
Australian Home Education

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My Homeschool English 1A – Semester One

Knowledge Rich Language Arts for Australian Home Education

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Introduction

My Homeschool English is a simple straightforward curriculum that cuts out the busy work and gets children writing, reading and thinking. Using knowledge rich themes, this language arts resource is your gateway to a holistic and effective English education.

Lessons include explicit writing instruction, reading practice, sentence level grammar, vocabulary, phonics, spelling, poetry appreciation, picture study, copy work, narration and compositions.

My Homeschool English requires minimal preparation. However, **you will need to be present for most lessons** because there is a lot of teacher/student interaction. In most cases one lesson shall represent one day's work. However, as your child's teacher, you can best determine the amount of work that should be done. In most circumstances lessons will only take less than 15 minutes.

This resource is six months of work which is aimed towards the first half of the homeschool year. It has been broken down into 18 weeks with three lessons per week plus one weekly spelling activity. There are two 8-week sections, and the 9th week is used as a catch up assessment or revision.

Grade Level and Syllabus Alignment

This resource is intended for use with a child aged 6 - 7. It forms part of the *My Homeschool* curriculum for Year 1/Grade 1. This book is intended for use in the first semester (Term 1 and Term 2) of Year 1/Grade 1. It is to be used in conjunction with our other resources that work on literacy and writing.

This has been written to follow the Australian Curriculum Version 9 Year 1, NSW Curriculum Year 1 (Stage 1) and the WA Curriculum Year 1.

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Writing Lesson with a Knowledge Rich Curriculum

Writing lessons are inspired by Judith Hochman¹ and Charlotte Mason. The Hochman method is an explicit style of teaching writing that shows children how to write sentences and paragraphs. The Charlotte Mason method teaches writing mostly through narration and copywork. Both these methods are well suited for teaching in a homeschool setting.

Providing children with a knowledge rich curriculum and explicit writing instruction is one of the tenets of this English curriculum. Research shows² that teaching writing skills, without knowledge, impairs a child's ability to write well in the future. Although it may not be as apparent in the primary years, a lack of knowledge leads to comprehension problems when children progress to writing about more complex topics. Our goal is to teach writing skills while using worthwhile content.

Whilst the Hochman method is much more structured than the Charlotte Mason method, there are many shared ideas. Firstly, Charlotte Mason believed it was important to teach writing within a literary context. Secondly, she believed that sentences are the place to start teaching grammar. Thirdly, both utilise picture study to stimulate written content. Fourthly, Charlotte was anti twaddle, this meant a knowledge rich curriculum was a priority. Finally, the last one to highlight (there are more) is they both believed in teaching writing across the curriculum, in all subjects. So, even though this resource doesn't follow the Charlotte Mason Method strictly, many ideas coalesce, and you can still use her method as you teach other subjects.

¹ The Writing Revolution by J Hochman and N Wexler © 2017

² The Knowledge Gap by N Wexler © 2020

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Before You Start Skills

This resource assumes that your child has already been introduced to the following skills. However, if your child hasn't mastered these skills yet, don't worry! We will continue to work on developing them this year. But be aware, your child may need some additional support with these skills if they haven't learnt them before.

Prior Knowledge Skills

This program is designed for early primary students who are beginning to read and write simple words and sentences. Before you begin, use this checklist to see if your child has the foundational skills they need.

Your child should be able to:

- Recognise and name all letters of the alphabet (uppercase and lowercase).
- Say the sounds (phonemes) for most single letters (e.g. /b/ for b, /s/ for s).
- Hear and say beginning, middle, and ending sounds in simple words (e.g. cat = /c/ /a/ /t/).
- Blend 2–3 sounds together to read simple CVC words (e.g. dog, sun, pen).
- Copy short words neatly using correct letter formation.
- Speak in full sentences (e.g. 'The dog is running.').
- Listen to and retell a short story or event in their own words.
- Follow simple instructions and complete short tasks with support.
- Enjoy picture books and sit for short periods to read or write together.

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Suggestions to Teachers

Here are some teaching suggestions and useful information that will help you understand how to get the most out of this resource.

Notebooks

Most lessons can be completed in this book. However, you will also need to write some lessons in a notebook or exercise book.

The Importance of Sentences

Sentences are the building blocks of writing. When they first begin writing, many children write fragments instead of sentences. For example, a child may write, ‘ducks are going’, rather than ‘The ducks are going to the pond’. Children also struggle with writing run on sentences, such as, ‘The ducks were going to the pond and then there was a big swan and the swan saw the ducks and said hello.’. Both need to be corrected and children need to be helped to recognise what a sentence should look like, and how they can combine and link ideas effectively. There are a few lessons in this resource that *introduce this concept*.

While reading more will help, most children need explicit direction in this area, and lots of help. Fortunately, with homeschooling you can provide your child with immediate feedback and correction as they write.

Grammar and Punctuation

Every lesson should be a language lesson. Encourage your student to speak in full sentences and use correct grammar when speaking.

Take the opportunity to teach or reinforce certain aspects of grammar during your lessons. In Year 1 we begin to introduce the terms adjective, noun, pronoun and verb. However, this is only an introduction, we don’t want to bamboozle the student.

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Weekly Spelling and Phonics

Building literacy skills is a very controversial topic and many educators have strong opinions on it. For many years there was a movement that believed that whole word learning was the best way to learn how to read and spell. It was thought to be quicker, and it required fewer rules to be taught. Now the pendulum has firmly swung back to teaching phonics with research showing that no matter what your child's preferred method of learning may be, letter knowledge and phonemic awareness is the best indicator for reading success.

Phonics is a way to teach reading and spelling by helping decode unfamiliar words using their sounds (**phonemes**) and their spelling (**graphemes**). Phonics helps your child build their literacy and it's a process that leads to sight-reading.

Each week there is a spelling list. These spelling lists have been arranged by their sound (**phoneme**) and their spelling (**grapheme**). This helps with visual memory, and it also helps decode words. For example, 'zoo', 'true' and 'new' are not on the same list even though they all represent the phoneme /oo/. Just like 'look' and 'moon' are not on the same list because they have the same grapheme of 'oo' but different phoneme (sounds).

Phonemes in this resource are represented with / / to show it is a sound rather than a spelling.

Homophones (words that sound the same but have different spellings) and **heteronyms** (words that have the same spelling but sound different depending on the context) are also highlighted for your student to see. They do not need to focus on the spellings of these words, they are just there to show the student the variation.

How To Study the Word Lists

Some lessons have a short note to help you teach the lesson, however teaching the lessons is very straightforward.

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Here is a general guideline for your child to study the word lists. Teach them to:

Look closely at the words to be memorised.

Say the words out loud.

Divide words into **syllables** when appropriate.

Find out the **meaning of the word** if they don't already know it.

Copy the word a minimum of three times.

Additional Dolch Words

The Dolch word list is a collection of 220 words commonly used in children's books and writings. These lists have been broken down into sections that most children have learnt by particular stages.

Read through these lists with your child and mark the ones they struggle with.

Even though many of these words are sight words, many can also be sounded out phonetically.

Copywork and Handwriting

Encourage neat printing. You may prefer to use a dotted thirds notebook to help your child write letters in a uniform way. Additional copywork, provided within the My Homeschool curriculum, will enhance handwriting skills.

Reading, Comprehension and Vocabulary

Many of the observation and story lessons are starters for further writing exercises.

For a student to be able to comprehend a passage they need to have many skills cooperating to allow them to understand what they are reading. For some children this skill occurs naturally, and we can 'test' it with simple oral questions or narration.

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If you find that a student does not comprehend the passages, you can look for various areas that will help you break down the process for them.

Can they read the passage? If they need some help, then you might try reading it with them or for them.

Assessment questions to ask yourself:

- Are they paying attention to the punctuation, pausing for commas or recognising a question mark?
- Do they understand the vocabulary used?
- Is there jargon, slang or clichés? These may also inhibit comprehension.
- Do they have prior knowledge of the subject matter to help them comprehend the story? If they do not you may need to give them some background information to help with comprehension.

Oral Observation and Narration Lessons

The art of telling back or narration is employed in many lessons. This is an excellent skill to encourage. **All the narrations are oral for Year One.** Written narrations start in Year 3. Narration is a hallmark of the Charlotte Mason technique, and you will find many lessons that will work on this skill.

Observation lessons encourage children to draw from their knowledge, this will hopefully stimulate their thoughts and inspire them in their writing lessons. During oral discussions, cover the points indicated by the questions or directions.

Poetry Appreciation

Each poetry selection should be read aloud to the student. The content of poetry uses the imagination and speaks directly to the heart. The images in poetry are wonderful. You don't need to turn a poem inside out to appreciate it. With younger children, make it your goal to help

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them enjoy the poems, especially the rhythm, leaving the techniques and jargon for later years.

Picture Study

Some of the art work used in this book is from great artists. A few questions are given with each picture, but the teacher should supplement these with many others. This is also an observation lesson.

End of Term Assessment

Writing assessments are provided at the end of each term (Weeks 9 and 18). You can use these assessments as a revision lesson or as an assessment tool.

Additional Reading and Writing

This resource encourages your student to learn how to spell, write and decode words, however, to develop their skills they will need additional practise across their curriculum.

Reading words in the rich context of whole books is a very effective, natural method for increasing your student's **vocabulary**, so reading from additional sources including poetry should be encouraged.

At the end of this book there is also some **supplementary reading** with two alphabet based reading passages and one counting reading passage.

Answer Guide

Most lessons are self-explanatory. However, some answers have been provided for lessons in case you are unsure. The answer guide is found in the back of the book.

Appendix

For your convenience we have added some additional teaching tips and advice in the Appendix.

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Week 1—Lesson 1 – ‘a-e’ as in ‘/ay/ - say’

Teacher’s Note: Homophones—‘break’, ‘great’ and ‘plain’. When the last three letters of a word are a single vowel followed by a consonant and an ‘e’, the vowel has the long sound.

Word	Copy	Copy	Copy
<i>make</i>			
<i>cake</i>			
<i>bake</i>			
<i>lake</i>			
<i>take</i>			
<i>brake</i>			
<i>grape</i>			
<i>grate</i>			
<i>plane</i>			
<i>plate</i>			

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LESSON 2—LADY JANE BAKES A CAKE

Review this week's word list. Read this story together. Have your child read the highlighted words. After the reading have them retell the story to you in their own words.

Lady Jane Bakes a Cake

Once upon a time, Lady **Jane** wanted to make a special treat. 'I shall bake a big, beautiful **cake**!' she said.

She gathered all her ingredients. She didn't measure, but she added flour, sugar, eggs, and a barrel of yeast. She mixed everything together in a big bowl and poured it onto a shiny **plate**.

She put the **cake** in the oven and waited. The **cake** began to grow. It grew so high that it floated up like a flying **plane**! Lady **Jane** didn't know what to do, so she jumped on the cake to try to stop it growing.

The **cake** grew bigger and bigger until it lifted her right off the ground! Lady **Jane** floated far away over a sparkling **lake**. 'Oh no!' she cried. 'I must **take** care not to fall!'

The knights and villagers tried to help. They threw ropes, but the **cake** was too soft. They tried to use a wooden **stake** to pop the **cake**, but it didn't work.

Finally, the villagers said, 'We will eat the **cake**!' Everyone took a piece. They sat in the cool **shade** of a tree, eating bite after bite. Slowly, the **cake** began to shrink.

At last, Lady Jane floated back down to the ground. She laughed and said, 'Next time, I will **take** time to bake a smaller **cake**!'

Everyone cheered and shared the last slice of the delicious **cake**.



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LESSON 3—COPYWORK

Review the previous lesson's story and complete the following questions.

ACTIVITY

1. Answer these sentences orally.

A. **Who** is on the cake?

B. **Why** is she on the cake?

C. **When** did she get on the cake?

2. Finish these sentences orally.

Lady Jane is on the cake because_____

The knights and villagers ate the cake so _____

3. Copy the following sentence.

Jane made a cake to take to the lake.

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LESSON 4—THE CAKE

Teacher's Note: This lesson will teach your child to tell the difference between a statement, a question and a command. (See Appendix 2)

A. *I like cake.*

B. *Do you like cake?*

1. Which of these above sentences tells us something? We call this kind of sentence a **statement**. Copy the sentence.

2. Which of these above sentences asks us something? We call this kind of sentence a **question**. These sentences end with a question mark. Circle the question mark in the sentence. Draw three question marks on the line below.

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LESSON 28—PICTURE STUDY



The Mischievous Puppy by Charles Burton Barber

Look at the picture with your child and ask them to explain what they see.

ACTIVITY

We can expand sentences in many ways. One easy way to do this is by adding the word 'because'.

Answer these questions orally.

1. The puppy was pulling the girl's dress because _____
2. The girl was falling because _____
3. Copy this sentence:

The girl was eating grapes because she was hungry.

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Week 8—Lesson 29 – ‘ee’ as in ‘/ee/ - me’

Word	Copy	Copy	Copy	Copy
<i>bee</i>				
<i>keep</i>				
<i>week</i>				
<i>seed</i>				
<i>sheet</i>				
<i>tree</i>				
<i>sleep</i>				
<i>free</i>				
<i>queen</i>				
<i>three</i>				
<i>between</i>				
<i>eighteen</i>				
<i>agree</i>				

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LESSON 32—SIMPLE SENTENCE EXPANSION

Teacher's Note: In this lesson we are going to learn how to make a short sentence longer. For more on sentence expansion see Appendix 3.

Let's start with a short sentence:

I eat.

We can make it longer by asking these questions:

- What do you eat? eggs
- Who are you with? with Dad
- When do you eat? in the morning

Now read the long sentence:

I eat eggs with Dad in the morning.



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Now try again with:

I will jump.

Ask:

- What will you jump over? a log
- Who will jump with you? my brother
- When or where do you jump? today

Now read the sentence:

I will jump over a log with my brother today.

ACTIVITY

Teacher: Help your child to make their own expanded sentence. Use the prompts:

I eat and *I will jump* to help them.

Write their sentences down on a whiteboard or separate piece of paper as you create them.

After you have created two new expanded sentences together, have your child copy one of the new sentences below.
