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My Homeschool

ENGLISH

3A - Semester One



Knowledge Rich Language Arts For
Australian Home Education

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My Homeschool English 3A—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, spelling, poetry appreciation, picture study, copy work, narration and compositions.

My Homeschool English requires minimal preparation. However, **you will need to be present to start 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. Lessons usually take between 15 to 30 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 Curriculum Alignment

This resource is intended for use with a child aged 8—9. It forms part of the *My Homeschool* curriculum for Year 3/Grade 3. This book is intended for use in the first semester (Term 1 and Term 2) of Year 3/Grade 3. It is best 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 3, the WA Curriculum Year 3 and the NSW Curriculum Stage 2.

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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.

Themes for My Homeschool English 3A

This semester we cover themes from classical literature (Greek Myths) and nature (mostly birds).

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 and has completed *My Homeschool English 2B*. However, if your child hasn't, don't worry! We will continue to work on developing their skills this year. But be aware, your child may need some additional support with the following skills if they haven't learnt them before.

Prior Knowledge Skills

- Understands that a sentence has a predicate, a subject and it expresses a complete thought. (Appendix 1)
- Can write a compound sentence with 'and', 'but' and 'so'. (Appendix 3 & 4)
- Can understand the different types of sentences. (Appendix 2)
- Begins sentences with a capital letter and ends with a punctuation mark that matches the sentence type.
- Has a basic understanding of nouns, pronouns, verbs and adjectives.
- Understands the differences between single and plural nouns.
- Has begun using the skill of sentence expansion by using 'when', 'where' and 'why' questions.
- Can identify, and insert, an appositive into a sentence. (Appendix 5)
- Has been introduced to the idea that commas are used to separate meaning. (Appendix 6)

Revision of Skills

For parents wanting to revise some of the writing, punctuation and grammar concepts used in this resource, we provide some initial teaching suggestions for teachers in the next section, plus we include teaching tips in some lessons, and we have an *Appendix*, at the back of this resource, for key concepts. Please use these when needed.

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Suggestions to Teachers

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

Use a Notebook

In most cases, we have provided spaces for your child to write their answers within the resource. However, your student will also write some of their lessons in a notebook (exercise) book.

Presentation of the work is important. Instruct the student on using a margin, indentation of paragraphs and a title for the work. Encourage the student to use self editing skills and proofread their work. If they see something wrong allow them to correct it (using an erasable pen or liquid paper) prior to handing it over for feedback.

Copywork and Handwriting

A natural precursor to teaching dictation begins with copywork. This is simply writing out by hand or copying from other written texts or models. This practice has been employed for centuries as a technique for teaching writing skills to young, and old scholars.

Encourage neat printing. Additional copywork provided within the My Homeschool curriculum will enhance handwriting skills.

Cursive handwriting is introduced in Year 3/Grade 3.

Grammar and Punctuation

Every lesson should be a language lesson. We aim to teach grammar within the context of writing. No grammar terms are given that won't be used within the student's work.

Take the opportunity to teach or reinforce certain aspects of grammar during your lessons, sprinkle in terms such as adjective, noun, pronoun and verb. Don't get too technical, you don't want to bamboozle the student.

When examining a passage, examine the punctuation also. Ask your student questions about specific punctuation marks. Have them read aloud the passage, paying attention to pause when the punctuation indicates. Remind them that they need to study not only the spelling of words, but also the punctuation used. The way you read a passage will help them work out the natural pauses for commas and full stops.

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Keep an eye on the most common errors committed and focus on correcting those.

Weekly Spelling and Phonics

In this book we have moved beyond phonics and will be teaching word parts. Each week we will be focussing on different prefixes, suffixes and root words.

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.

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.

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 a written narration about the passage.

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. If they cannot read it, trying to do dictation on the passage is not advisable.

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.

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- 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.

During oral discussions, cover the points indicated by the questions or directions. After the discussion, a student should read the question silently, and then give the answer aloud as a complete sentence. As they progress in this skill these answers may be written, but they should always be preceded by the oral discussion.

Fostering a keen memory and retention is a study skill that you want to develop into a life-long habit.

Composition

Some lessons give the student an opportunity to compose pieces of writing in a variety of text styles from an imaginative story to an informative text. Discuss what will be in their composition **orally first** because this will help get their creative juices flowing and make them realise that they do have something to write. If you skip this stage, you will often find resistance from reluctant writers. However, many children will still find writing down their own compositions a daunting experience. This is because their vocabulary far exceeds their writing ability. Therefore, use wisdom in getting them to write their composition and help them spell words that they can't yet spell.

Assess each child individually and have them dictate to you some compositions if necessary. This skill grows slowly and needs patience and nurturing. Some children are natural writers others take a while and at this age the skill level is quite varied. Charlotte Mason did not expect children to write out their compositions until age 10 so if they aren't ready - don't panic; there is always next year!

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

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Literature Discussions

A genre is the traditional classification of texts, such as fiction and non-fiction. This is the first classification your student should be able to make. You can ask them whether they think this is a true story or a pretend story.

You can begin introducing some discussion about other features of the stories and poems they are reading. Your aim here is to have your child notice and observe: why a text was written, who was it written to and what was the author trying to say. These discussions will help your child think about literature and give them some vocabulary for discussing literature in a literary way. Discussion prompts have been added to lessons.

Writing Instruction

For years writing instruction has been based on the idea that students can learn to write ‘naturally’ in the same way they learn to talk. However, we know now this doesn’t work for all children and with declining writing standards the need for explicit writing instruction is needed more than ever. With homeschooling this is easier as you are teaching alongside your child. We use direct instruction in this resource.

Read Aloud

In the **Read Aloud** sections the teacher will be expected to read the passage to the child. These texts are above grade level and are expected to challenge the student in terms of vocabulary.

Read With Me

These are passages the student can attempt to read themselves with help from the teacher. These are aimed at boosting fluency in reading.

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.

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Assessment & Review Weeks

Week 9 and Week 18 are assessment and review weeks. Exercises have been provided to help review the content that the students have learnt in the previous weeks. You can write the answers in this section.

Answer Guide

Most lessons are self-explanatory. However, some answers are provided at the back of this resource. Parents should mark and correct children's work and give them feedback when possible. For your convenience, we have added some additional teaching helps in the Appendix.

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Week Two—Lesson 5 – Suffix ‘y’ and single consonant

Add the suffix ‘y’ to these words.

All the words in this list are single syllable words which have a short vowel sound and single consonant at the end.

To keep the short sound, we must double the last consonant.

Word	Add ‘y’ suffix	Copy	Copy	Copy
<i>mud</i>	<i>muddy</i>			
<i>fun</i>				
<i>sun</i>				
<i>nut</i>				
<i>bat</i>				
<i>pup</i>				
<i>flop</i>				
<i>slop</i>				
<i>drip</i>				

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LESSON 6—THE GOLDEN TOUCH—ORAL NARRATION



Read With Me

According to Greek mythology, there was once a king named Midas. This king had a little daughter whose name was Marygold.

Now Midas loved gold more than anything else. One day a fairy gave him the golden touch. Then everything that he touched turned to gold.

At first the king was very happy. Roses and lilies became gold when he touched them.

As he was walking in the garden, his little girl came running to meet him. He stooped to kiss her and immediately she became a golden statue.

Then the king begged the fairy to take away the golden touch and give him his Marygold again. The fairy was sorry for him. She told him to bathe in the river and sprinkle some river water on his little girl.

He hurried to do as the fairy had said, and soon he held his little daughter again in his arms.

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ACTIVITY

1. Read the story and reproduce (narrate) orally.
2. Read through this passage and circle any fragments.

begged the fairy to take away the golden touch and give him his Marygold again. The fairy. She told him to bathe in the river and sprinkle some of the water on his little girl.

The king. He hurried to do as the fairy had said, and soon he held his little daughter again in his arms.

3. Turn these fragments into sentences about *The Golden Touch* story:

A. is a story about a king

B. the king

LESSON 7—SENTENCE WORK—BECAUSE

Teacher's note: The conjunction 'because' is used to create a complex sentence which tells us why.

Read Aloud

Greek mythology was a significant part of ancient Greek culture. By studying it, you can better understand the beliefs, values, and practices of this ancient civilisation. It also helps you understand where many of our Western traditions, art, and

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literature come from. Numerous famous writers, poets, and artists have drawn inspiration from these stories and many of the themes are still relevant today.

ACTIVITY

Using the information you have just read finish this sentence (first orally, then written):

It is important to learn about Greek Mythology because _____

_____.

LESSON 8—CONVERSATION LESSON—NOUNS

Teacher's note: This lesson is scripted and designed to consolidate a student's knowledge of nouns through conversation. Read all the text in italics out loud and ask the questions in bold.

This lesson contains a scripted lesson on the concept of nouns. This grammar content can need a lot of consolidation for students so the lesson that is provided here is designed in a way to quickly, and efficiently explain the concept to the student, without placing the burden on the teacher to provide examples and explanations. Follow the script carefully, however, you may want to allow time for elaboration if needed.

Scripted Lesson

A noun is a naming word. It names a person, place or thing.

What is a noun? (Student responds in a full sentence: 'A noun is _____ .')

'Dog' is an example of a noun. 'Tree' is an example of a noun.

Is 'cat' an example of a noun? (Student responds: 'Yes.')

Well done! Here is another harder example.

Is 'falling' an example of a noun? (Student responds: 'No.')

Excellent work! Now for a tricky one.

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Is ‘eye’ an example of a noun? (Student responds: ‘Yes.’)

Well done!

Now, can you look around the room and find some examples of nouns?

(Student to point out examples; remind them of things they may not have thought of.)

Now let’s talk about some types of nouns! The two types of nouns we are going to talk about are called common and proper nouns.

What are the two types of nouns we are going to talk about? (Student responds in a full sentence; ‘The two types of nouns we are going to talk about are_____.’)

Common nouns are the general names for people, places, objects or animals. For example: girl

Proper nouns are used to name specific people, places, objects, animals or the title of something. For example: Lucy is a specific girl’s name.

What’s your name? (Student responds with name.)

Is it a common or proper noun?

Remember this, proper nouns always begin with a capital letter.

What are common nouns? (Student responds in a full sentence.)

Excellent. Words like house, tree, dog and boy are examples of common nouns.

Can you think of another example of a common noun?

(Do not accept a proper noun as an answer, redirect to the general name.)

What are proper nouns? (Student responds in a full sentence.)

Excellent! Australia, Sydney and Bingo are all examples of proper nouns as they are the specific name. Dog is a common noun, but the name Bingo is a proper noun!

Can you think of an example of a proper noun?

Great! Now remember there is a special rule we use when we write proper nouns.

What type of letter do we begin proper nouns with, a capital or lowercase letter? (Student responds in a full sentence.)

What is the difference between common nouns and proper nouns? (Student responds in a full sentence.)

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ACTIVITY

Circle the proper nouns, underline the common nouns and copy the sentences.

1. Without looking behind him, Peter jumped over the fence and into the forest.

2. Tim loved to eat ice cream and chips at Redhead Beach.

3. King Midas had a little daughter named Marygold.

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LESSON 11—SENTENCE EXPANSION WITH PICTURES



She rode.

That's a complete sentence—but it's not very interesting!

By adding more detail, we can expand our sentences and make them much more engaging.

Including when, who/what, where, why and/or how will make your sentence more informative for the reader.

See how you can use these simple questions to expand this simple sentence: *She rode.*

- **When:** at sunrise
- **Who:** a dark-haired woman
- **Where:** in a dusty field
- **Why:** to herd cows

Expanded sentence: *As the sun rose, the dark-haired woman rode through the dusty field herding cattle.*

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Here is another example. See how we have used this picture prompt to expand this simple sentence:

They played.

- **When:** a warm summer's day
- **Who:** two boys/brothers/friends
- **Where:** in a lake
- **Why:** to cool down



Expanded sentence:

On a warm summer's day, two boys played joyfully in the lake to cool down.

ACTIVITY

Use this picture prompt to expand this simple sentence:

He scootered.

When: _____

Who: _____

Where: _____

Why: _____

Write a new sentence.



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LESSON 12—PERSONAL PRONOUNS

Sometimes we want to refer to a person without using their proper name. So, we substitute the name with words called personal pronouns like he, him, she, and her.

We could say:

‘I saw Christopher Robin walking this morning. Christopher Robin was holding an umbrella. Winnie the Pooh was walking with Christopher Robin.’

However, it’s simpler to say:

‘I saw Christopher Robin walking this morning. He was holding an umbrella. Winnie the Pooh was walking with him.’

ACTIVITY

Add personal pronouns to the sentences 1 to 7:

1. John liked _____ book.
2. _____ lost Stephen’s bike.
3. _____ lunch fell on the floor.
4. _____ towel was round and tasselled.
5. Amanda left _____ bedroom to go to breakfast.
6. Miriam sang with _____ tambourine.
7. The solo was _____ if Sally wanted to sing it.
8. Write 2 sentences using personal pronouns of your choice.

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LESSON 30—THE OLD POND—POETRY APPRECIATION

The Old Pond

An old silent pond
A frog jumps into the pond—
Splash! Silence again.

By Matsuo Bashō



The above poem is a Haiku. Haikus are a Japanese form of poetry that have three lines. The first line has 5 syllables; the second line has 7 and the final line has 5 again.

ACTIVITY

1. Copy the Haiku and count the syllables as you do.

2. Memorise the haiku. Tell it to someone from memory.

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LESSON 42—KOOKABURRA—VOCABULARY AND ORAL NARRATION

Have you ever heard a kookaburra laugh? You can often hear the sound high up in the trees in the bush. But what if I told you that the Kookaburra isn't laughing at all? Instead, this majestic bird is **marking its territory**. The Kookaburra is calling out 'This is where I live! Stay away!'. Next time you hear a kookaburra 'laugh' perhaps you will think very differently.

Always swooping for our lunch, kookaburras can be very greedy birds. I once remember my little brother, jumping up off the picnic rug, holding his finger bun high up in this hand to escape the ants climbing up his legs. But alas, in that moment a naughty kooka swooped down from high up in a gum tree and grabbed the treat for himself. My little brother was understandably upset to watch the kookaburra eating his bun up in the tree, then promptly dropping it in the dirt below when it didn't like the taste.

Even at some schools kookaburras have been known to eye off little kids' lunches and swoop down to get them. Sheepishly, the kids have to sit under a shade cloth, making sure they're able to eat their lunch in peace!

Now, kookaburras don't normally eat finger buns or sandwiches for lunch; their diet should be much more natural indeed. Instead, kookaburras are almost exclusively carnivores, mainly eating insects, worms or crustaceans. However, kookaburras can sometimes be known to eat small mammals, frogs and even small snakes.

Kookaburras are good hunters and are able to swoop down quickly from the trees to catch their prey. They use their strong beak to either eat their meal whole, or bash it against a rock to soften it up to eat!

Have you ever had a kookaburra steal your lunch?

ACTIVITY

1. Orally narrate what you remember about kookaburras.
2. Find the meanings of these words: carnivore, crustacean, and finger bun.
3. What does 'marking its territory' mean (found in the first paragraph)?

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LESSON 43—BECAUSE, BUT, SO

We can use 'because' in a sentence when we want to tell why we think something or to explain further. Usually, you don't need a comma before 'because.'

- I like dogs **because** they are playful.

We can use 'but' to change the direction of a sentence. For example, from a negative to a positive, or the other way around.

- I like dogs, **but** I don't like cats.
- I don't like peanut butter, **but** I like satay chicken.

We can use 'so' in a sentence to show cause and effect.

- I like dogs, **so** I will buy one when I grow up.

ACTIVITY

1. Finish these sentences.

A. The kookaburra's call sounds like a laugh because _____

B. The kookaburra's call sounds like a laugh, but _____

C. The kookaburra's call sounds like a laugh, so _____

2. Write three more sentences using 'because', 'but' and 'so'.
