

“Our “ answers to some of the questions we hear frequently.

Q-How do I withdraw my child from public school?

A-three ways. (1)You may go up to the school and sign their withdrawal papers. They may or may not ask for you to sign other paperwork. It's up to you what you choose to sign. If they ask for the name of your homeschool, you may just make one up. (2)Send an email with the [sample withdrawal letter](#) stating that you are going to homeschool. Make sure you get a response so they don't count your child absent. It's that easy! (3) Send the [sample withdrawal letter](#) via registered mail to

Q-Which curriculum do I use?

A-That is up to you and your child. Figure out your child's learning style. What may work for someone else may not work for you. Research. There are learning style quizzes online. One is on Cathy Duffy website. These will offer you examples of curriculum that may be right for your child. Research that curriculum. Get your hands on the options you are considering to get a clear idea of how it will be implemented. Cornerstone Bookstore in Port Arthur offers a variety of curricula for viewing/handling. HEP Bookstore in Houston does as well. It also depends on how involved you, the parent, want to be. There are teacher-intensive and student-led curricula. Do you want secular or non secular? Again research. Google will become your best friend. What works for one child may not work for another or the parent. Each family has different learning and teaching needs.

Q-Do I have to buy a boxed curriculum or may I just piece my own things together?

A-Again, that is up to you. When you buy boxed you are choosing the distributor's options for each subject. You may like one subject but hate what they chose for another. Many people begin with a packaged curriculum and then their style becomes eclectic (picking and choosing from various publishers/places) as they learn their children's needs.

Q-Do I have to buy brand new?

A-No! In fact, we advise that you buy used. That way if it's not working you didn't spend much on it and it doesn't "sting" to change. In the beginning you may switch often and as you become familiar with a curriculum and have experience with it, that will slow down. Most of us find that language arts and math are the "tricky" ones that we often have trouble finding the right one. We also switch for each child sometimes until we find one comfortable for both parent and child. Keep in mind that just because your child isn't happy with a curriculum, it may be that that is simply a subject he/she doesn't prefer and you may want to stay with one the "mom" likes best! Cornerstone Bookstore in Port Arthur offers a variety of used curricula. Come get a look at it.

Q-Is there a homeschool support group in my area?

A-There are numerous support and enrichment groups in the southeast Texas area! Visiting the links on this page on Lighthouse Home School Support will help. You may also come and see us at Lighthouse and we can share with you what we've been doing to support homeschooling and how each group operates (to our knowledge) as we've learned as a group of experienced homeschool moms and dads.

Q-What about socialization?

A-Socialization is a term that often is misunderstood as meaning that a person being placed among other children of the same or similar age for most of the work week and for most of his/her early years, under the supervision of an uninvolved or over-tasked adult who is required

to maintain some sort of order is being “socialized.” Your child will be primarily socialized by you, your family and friends and your circle of activity. It’s your choice what that looks like and the “good citizenship” requirement is the state’s answer to that. There are numerous groups of other student/parent homeschoolers, including meet-ups, athletics, academic groups and co-ops should you choose to develop further “socialization” beyond your family, church group or intimate friends.

Q-Do I have to school all day?

A-NO! In part, we homeschool because we don’t want to copy public school. There are various guides online that suggest minimum and maximum hours of academic training, but you as the parent have the final decision on how long your child should read, write, study and develop skills. Obviously, a young student needs adequate play time and an older student may need free time to explore interests and develop skills outside of academics, so it really depends on your curriculum demands and on what you require of your child(ren.) If you thrive on a schedule and your children like the order of all-day “classroom-style” learning, there’s nothing wrong with that. If you find a relaxed, unscheduled learning environment works best, work through your goals throughout the day. It’s your school—you do what works for you and your family. Most of us don’t school longer than 3-5 hours a day, depending on the age of our children, but those hours may not be consecutive and may include a variety of enrichment activities.

Q-Do I need to set up a “school room” at home?

A-NO! That’s the beauty of homeschool! Homeschoolers find the kitchen, bedroom, living room, and outside on beautiful days perfect places to learn. The library, workplace or a friend’s house are great places too! Depending on what makes your family work the best, you may want a more rigid schedule

Q-Do I need to keep records or report to anyone?

A-In Texas, Homeschool is considered a private school. You do not need to report to anyone. If you want to make sure that if your child chooses to go to college, he/she is prepared, then yes, you do need to keep records/transcript starting in 8th grade. Google sample transcripts or look at some provided by our local transcript advisor [here](#).

Q-If I decide to put my child back in public school what grade will he/she be in?

A-That depends on the school district. They have every right to test your child and put them in whatever grade they test in. In Highschool they have the right to refuse whatever credits they may have earned. Most public schools use a test- either a TEA accepted achievement test or a test administered by the district, to evaluate grade-level competency. Many refuse homeschool and even private school high school credits. We have found that when planning to re-enroll your child in high school, it is best to do so in 9th grade.

Q-If I remove my child from school today, should I continue schooling them or just start summer?

A-Again, that is up to you, the parent. Is it almost the end of the school year, and is he/she passing? If so, then just start summer, de-school and plan for the upcoming school year if you are planning to homeschool within the traditional school year. Some people school year-round, taking longer breaks for holidays, spring break, etc. Some use their work-schedule as a guide. Many use the traditional school year so their public/private school friends have opportunity to stay engaged. Some use a 4-day school week and use Fridays for field trips, experiments, co-op or catching up on household chores and duties or even on incomplete schoolwork..

Q-Should I use workbooks or “unschool”?

A-That’s up to you! In Texas we are FREE to homeschool as we see fit as long as we educate in a bona-fide manner, using a visual form of curricula and include the five basic subjects. Use the computer, workbooks, YouTube, a variety of all. It’s up to you! Many find that a variety is best and provides a well-rounded learning environment, allowing students mobility as well as opportunity to learn basic technological concepts as well as traditional ones. “Unschooling” is a concept that should be considered with caution, as it doesn’t mean “not-schooling,” but simply using different resources than those commonly used in traditional public schools.

Q-Once I choose a curriculum do I have to follow it exactly?

A-No. Use what works for you and your child. If your child is already confident with parts of it, the beauty of homeschooling is that you can skip it, test out of it, or skim it and move on or just choose the most important parts or those you find most relevant.

Q-Do I have to choose an accredited school/curriculum?

A-No. Accreditation does not apply to homeschooling. In Texas homeschool is considered a private school. Accreditation is a concept that varies by organization. Curriculum is not accredited, schools are. Private schools typically seek accreditation through associations or organizations that provide a set of standards for them to meet, but the only accreditation that pertains to public schools is that which is performed by TEA and it is ONLY for public schools. Any school accredited by any other organization is not recognized as TEA accredited.

Q-How do I issue a diploma?

A-When it comes time to issue a diploma, you issue it from your homeschool--you are a private school in Texas, just like any other private school. You may make and sign a diploma online or with a program or just buy one from Hobby Lobby. HSLDA and other homeschool organizations offer some options. Add your child’s name to it and your homeschool name. That’s it!

Q-What about college? Will my child’s transcript/diploma be accepted?

A-There are few colleges that are not actively seeking homeschool students now, as they have found that homeschool applicants typically perform and graduate at better rates than their public school counterparts. It is important that you plan and research as you develop your child’s transcript. Some colleges require different credits than others. In Texas, the [TEA plan](#) is a good start for ensuring that your child’s transcript reflects a strong academic background.

Q-How does dual credit work?

A-Dual Credit is a method provided by local or online colleges to allow students in high school to earn credits toward a degree plan while simultaneously earning high school credit. Each semester-long course typically counts for a year of high school credit. If you are interested in enrolling your student in dual credit classes at any of the Golden Triangle colleges, contact us and we will be happy to share with you the process of applying, which entrance exams are applicable and how to get started.

Q-How do CLEP tests work?

A-College Level Examination Program (CLEP) tests are another way to earn credits toward college as well as high school. Typically, a student studies the material (there are many resources for studying for these tests, including DIVE, Shormann and more) and then tests to demonstrate proficiency. You may credit the student for the subject on your transcript and the college acknowledges the credit on theirs, provided it is a course for which they allow credit. It is important that you evaluate which CLEP tests are allowed for each program and school you are

considering. It is a good idea to look up the CLEPs allowed at any colleges you are considering before taking the exam, since each school determines which ones represent allowable credits for their programs.

If you have more questions that we may be able to answer, shoot us a text and we'll add it here with the answer!!!