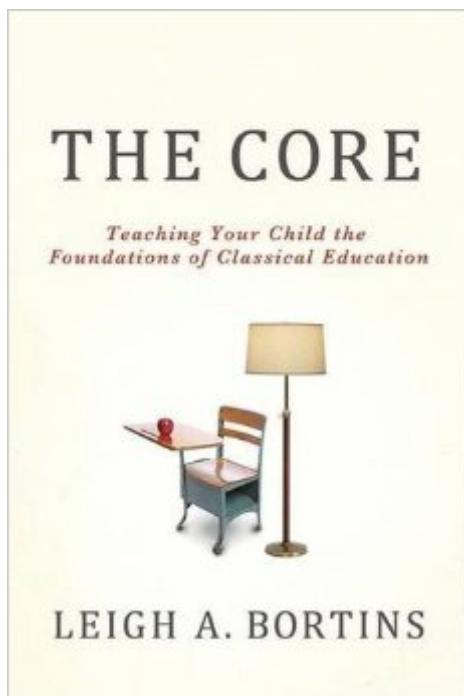


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The Core: Teaching Your Child The Foundations Of Classical Education



Synopsis

In the past, correct spelling, the multiplication tables, the names of the state capitals and the American presidents were basics that all children were taught in school. Today, many children graduate without this essential knowledge. Most curricula today follow a haphazard sampling of topics with a focus on political correctness instead of teaching students how to study. Leigh Bortins, a leading figure in the homeschooling community, is having none of it. She believes that there are core areas of knowledge that are essential to master. Without knowing the multiplication tables, children can't advance to algebra. Without mastery of grammar, students will have difficulty expressing themselves. Without these essential building blocks of knowledge, students may remember information but they will never possess a broad and deep understanding of how the world works. In *The Core*, Bortins gives parents the tools and methodology to implement a rigorous, thorough, and broad curriculum based on the classical model, including:

- Rote memorization to cement knowledge
- Systematic learning of geography, historical facts, and timelines
- Reading the great books and seminal historical documents instead of adaptations and abridged editions
- Rigorous training in math and the natural sciences

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Customer Reviews

I'd like to give a little background that I hope will aid in my book review. I am embarking on my 7th year of homeschooling. I have tried to classically educate my children since the beginning. After reading Susan Wise Bauer's "The Well-Trained Mind" I was excited, but thoroughly overwhelmed at how to implement all of her wonderful ideas. I struggled for 4 years on my own, and always felt as

though I never accomplished all that "TWTM" laid out. At the end of each year I felt I had failed because we did not complete all that we "should have". Then I was introduced to Classical Conversations. What a breath of fresh air! My children thrived. Our homeschool accomplished more, my children learned more, they enjoyed it more, and it required less effort on my part. THIS was what I had been struggling for four years to achieve. This summer I read The Core. I believe this book can help many families who want to see their children truly educated, whether in the home, or in a brick and mortar school. For new homeschoolers, or those new to the idea of classical education, she explains classical education well and utilizes a common sense approach. The book is laid out by subject matter and shows how to encourage your children to truly learn. She also provides ideas that families who aren't homeschooling can use in their children's education. As a veteran homeschooler, I was encouraged. This book reminded me to focus on the best things and not get distracted with good things. As a mom of multiple children, she encouraged me how to truly do a "one room schoolhouse", thereby simplifying my life. She has also graciously given us a glimpse into her own homeschool by laying out what has worked within her family. I appreciate that and am confident that I can implement something similar in our family.

I'm a home schooling mother of two and am following the classical model with my very young kids. We are actively involved in a Classical Conversations community and I absolutely love the program and hope to continue with it throughout our home schooling journey. Leigh Bortins presents a very clear and persuasive argument for classical education, citing many examples and studies. She then goes step by step through different subject matter, explaining how the model can be implemented. She has an obvious passion for classical education that comes through in this book. She speaks frequently of her own family, which I found helpful, for the most part. However, I came away from this book feeling rather overwhelmed. When I finished this book, my gut reaction was "Wow, I don't know if I can really do this." Whereas when I read Susan Wise Bauer's The Well-Trained Mind my reaction was "Wow, I think I can do this!" I do recommend this book to anyone who would like to further their research on Classical Education. If you're just starting to look into it, however, I think Bauer's book is the best "jumping off" point.

I am new to homeschooling, I did kindergarten with my son last year and have been so stressed about the coming year. My daughter will start kindergarten (not too stressed about that) and my son will move to 1st grade. I wanted to be able to give him a strong base but had no idea how. Like so many, I knew my education (though I did very well) was lacking and didn't trust today's school

districts to do better. The Core is amazing. I read The Well Trained Mind last year and it gave me a good starting point, but The Core breaks it down and makes a classical education feel manageable! I'm much less stressed about the coming school year and feel really confident that my kids are going to get the best education possible - and I'm going to learn a lot in the process!!

I'm delighted with this book. It presents classical education as something I, who am lacking somewhat in that department, can actually achieve with and for my children. I like how positive this author is and how she is not strictly a home school educator but encourages parents who have made other choices to explore the classical model as their way of being more involved with their children's educations. After all, most of us have children because we want to spend time raising them and being involved with them. I particularly enjoyed the information on educational expectations when the classical approach was the norm, and educational expectations today. Very much gives a perspective on why a return to the classical model is a good idea! I home schooled my older, now college age, children and this book inspires me to reach for a little more for the next child I'll have the privilege to educate myself. I purchased several books that were recommended to me on the classical model, but this one seems the most accessible for a broad range of parents, not only home school parents.

Leigh Bortins provides an organized guide to laying the foundations of classical education. The first part of the book contrasts the pitfalls of modern education and the benefits of a classical education. The second part of the book consists of a chapter dedicated to each of the core subjects: reading, writing, math, geography, history, science, and fine arts. The author writes to equip and encourage parents in their quest of a quality classical education. This book is easy to read and is full of invaluable information. I will most likely read the entire book again at some point, but I can see myself looking back at particular chapters as a sort of a refresher down the road. Any parent could benefit from this book. After reading it, I am even more excited about the upcoming school year!

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