

TEACHER'S GUIDE FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Grammar of Grace was written by a mother (me) who was all but ignorant of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew when she began homeschooling; it is designed to equip you to introduce Classical languages to your children, assuming that you are also coming to the table without any previous knowledge of them. I present every language rule in simple terms, with lots of English examples and encouragement along the way. I want to make sure that every Christian mama, no matter how little she may know about foreign languages, can teach basic Latin, Greek, and Hebrew to her children.

This Teacher's Guide is where you need to start. It begins with general instructions that apply to all of the languages, then has information specific to Latin, Greek, and Dutch. At the end of this Teacher's Guide are full-size printable alphabet charts, followed by a separate Teacher's Guide for Hebrew.

How to Use the Audio CDs

I need to address this right at the start. I have recorded audio CDs of the Foreign Language lessons for each cycle, to help you check your pronunciations and make sure you're on the right track. But please note: The CD is a *help* for you; it is *not* a substitute for you learning and teaching this material.

Begin by reading this and the following chapter, and then work on each Foreign Language lesson, one at a time, as you prepare to teach it to your children. (I will help you with this; that is what these next two chapters are for; I will walk you through this.) Then, after you have worked on it, you listen to the recording to check your work and correct mistakes. Finally, after you have diligently worked to learn these lessons for yourself, you may choose to play the audios for *some* of your lesson practice with the children. But you must do it without the recording, as well, and when you use the recording you need to be trying your best to learn how to say it alongside the children.

Again, the audio CD is a Help, but it is *no* substitute for you learning and teaching these lessons to your children, yourself.

This is important. There are an increasing number of curriculums in the homeschool world that furnish DVDs or CDs; and tell parents all they have to do is let their children listen to the recordings, and the authors will take care of the rest. This may be helpful for some subjects, especially once you move beyond the Grammar Stage to studies that require a higher level of scholarship. But *Grammar of Grace* does *not* work like that. One of the key elements of *Grammar of Grace* is that the children are taught in the context of the loving parent-child relationship.¹ It is for Grammar School-aged children, and there is no material in it that cannot (and should not) be taught by parents, as they lie down, when they rise up, and when they are walking by the way. Yes, after 150 years of public schooling, the foreign language work is challenging for us! But I have purposefully kept these lessons very limited, so that even with our (for most of us in America) sad experience with foreign languages, this is within our reach. It may be that the best we can do is merely lay down these few foundation stones, but we're going to do what we can to hand this down to our children.

If you want to pop a CD into the car player to teach your children Classical languages, I'm sure you can find many CDs of Greek-, Latin-, and Hebrew-speaking out there; you don't need *Grammar of Grace* for that. But there are several things *Grammar of Grace* does give your children, that simply playing an audio recording of these lessons cannot:

¹ Deuteronomy 6:4-9.

"Teacher's Guide for Foreign Languages" excerpt taken from
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1. You are modeling for your children how to learn something that is difficult. You are modeling for your children how to learn a new language. You are modeling for your children that you continue to learn new things when you are out of school, throughout your adult life. That was three things. Three things, every one of which I would stand up head-to-head against a language-learning CD.
2. As you're going over these lessons with the children, they will see you pointing to the Greek β (*beta*), for example, and saying "b ...". You don't need to make a big deal out of this, but they will see you looking at certain letters and making certain sounds, and it will help them develop their understanding of the language. You probably haven't noticed it, but you do that with English, too. This is part of how a child gets an organic understanding of a language.
3. Even though you will only have a limited understanding of these languages by the time we're through, here, you will have created a culture in your home in which Latin, Greek, and Hebrew are languages with which the family is familiar. When children learn something outside of the home, it does not have the same kind of anchor in their minds as when it is something the parents know and teach.
4. As the child gets older, you will teach him the "behind the scenes" knowledge you learned in these study help chapters. For now, he just parrots the lessons you teach him, and that is *wonderful* at this age! But as he enters the Later Knowledge and Understanding years, it is natural for him to learn to recognize the shapes of each of the foreign alphabet letters, and try to sound out the words in the foreign languages for himself. And with your basic understanding of these languages, you won't find it difficult at all to pass that information along, just like you taught him to read in English when he was young. You can teach him how to read the Foreign Language lessons in *Grammar of Grace*; you may sit with him, from time to time, and practice reading from a Latin Vulgate Bible, or an interlinear Greek New Testament or Hebrew Old Testament.
5. It will cost you time and effort to teach these lessons. The children will see—by the time you spend outside of homeschool studying and the visible difficulty you have with these languages during homeschool—that you believe this important, and they will believe it's worth working hard at, too. They really do follow you, you know. They will also see the difference between the education you received, and the education you are laboring to give them; it gives you an opportunity to tell them about that; and it will make them (on good days) grateful to you for the choices you've made on their behalf.

You are going to have to work hard to learn a language you have not learned before. There's no way around that. If we are going to reclaim the educational legacy of the Reformation, it's going to be hard work to learn things we were never taught in the modern educations we got. But, I have crafted this Teacher's Guide and the Teacher's Guide for Hebrew, to lay out everything that you need, in simple, clear instructions—to provide everything you need so that you *can* do this!

I have imagined that I am leading you by the hand as we learn these languages, or sitting by your side, patiently explaining this material to you, friend to friend. Most Americans believe they cannot learn foreign languages, and I have assumed that you believe that lie, too. But, look, if someone plopped you down in Israel or Greece and left you there, within a few months, you would learn Hebrew or Greek. You can do this. And I have really simplified this thing for you!

I say again—you have to put in some hard work. But when you put in this hard work, your children will grow up knowing basic Latin, Greek, and Hebrew! And they will find it natural and easy to pass basic Latin, Greek, and Hebrew onto their children; and their children to their children, for all of your generations. You and I; we will be the ones to break the cycle, if God wills it; by God's grace, we aim to be the ones to create a generational legacy of biblical literacy, including a basic knowledge of the original biblical languages. Someone's got to do something really hard, and by the grace of God, in our generation, we are the ones receiving that calling. May we create a new legacy for our children!

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OVERVIEW FOR ALL LANGUAGES

Approach

As previously mentioned, the Foreign Language subject of *Grammar of Grace* is intended to let children hear and speak Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Dutch as a natural part of their childhoods. We are giving them an ear for these languages before they begin to study them formally ... just as they are familiar with English before they begin to study English Grammar. To be clear—this curriculum does not formally teach these languages, but merely provides an *introduction* to them.

The Foreign Languages subject of *Grammar of Grace* is modeled on the way children naturally learn their native tongues. When a baby is born, we do not begin by teaching him, “Mama; ‘mama’ means your mother. Milk; ‘milk’ is the food you are drinking. House; ‘house’ is the place where you live.” The idea is ludicrous! We simply speak to the children in English, and based on context clues and repetition, the child learns the language.

In the same way, it is natural for a child to hear and speak a foreign language, even if he does not understand the meanings of the words, yet. Many of us remember Ramona Quimby singing about “the dawnzer lee light” (“the dawn’s early light”), and can think of plenty of examples of that sort of thing, from our own lives! When we are children, we learn the sounds of words, the sounds of our language, *before* we learn the meanings. In God’s design, this is what is natural for children.

Children have an amazing aptitude for learning languages. I think of it as building a train track. When the Transcontinental Railroad was built, it required clearing trees and stumps, blasting through mountains, and bridging across rivers to lay the tracks; it took years to complete the railway. But five days after the Transcontinental Railroad was completed, the first trainload of passengers made the full trip from New York to San Francisco in only 83 hours.

Because children pick up languages so easily, when we let them hear and speak a little bit of these languages during their early years, it is as if we are able very easily to lay train tracks in their minds for that language, which the train of that language can roll along, later. The goal of the Foreign Languages subject of *Grammar of Grace* is to lay down some Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Dutch tracks in the children’s minds, when it is easy, natural, and fun for them.

Because we are taking this organic approach, we will not be memorizing vocabulary lists; in fact, we will not focus on learning what the words mean, at all. As you progress, you may find that the children (and you!) begin to figure out what some of the words mean. If that happens, that’s wonderful! If it interests you, you can even look them up in your interlinear Bible or *Strong’s Concordance*. But memorizing what each word means is *not* what we’re trying to accomplish, in *Grammar of Grace*.

This approach is different from the experience most of us had with learning foreign languages in school. When children hear language spoken, they innately pick up the words, the sound, the rhythm, the syntax—in a sense, the language as a *whole*. They won’t understand it all, as I said, but they *will* understand a lot of things that are intrinsic to the language, and that’s the “train track” we’re hoping to lay in their minds.

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