



I like that minimal, or at least intentional, lifestyle. We decluttered over 50% of our possessions before our second child arrived and have lived this way for over 7 years. I've always enjoyed tidying and organization, but I was tidying and organizing a whole lot of stuff! When the babies started coming, I was ready to let it all go! It was a good decision for us. Our home isn't stark or dull, but there is space. We can breathe.

But I have a secret. For the most part, I can keep it a secret because my husband owns a cabinet company. When we got engaged, and he was preparing a place for me, he added lots of storage to the decent amount that already came with the house. I wasn't a minimalist when the nuptials took place, and upon coming into my new home, I filled those cabinets and shelves to the brim.

Would you believe that now most of them are only half full? Some are even empty! Even the closets are sparsely occupied, whereas



Managing YOUR Inventory OF Books

before, they were filled to the max with extra clothes, pillows, and who knows what else! But I digress... back to my secret. I have a category in which I'm not so minimal.

Ready? Books! Probably not surprising as a homeschool mama. I read all the books about all the books. You know the lists of must-haves for each age and stage. I buy the box curriculum every year. I'm

an avid reader. I love books! But how do I keep them manageable and intentional? What are some ideas for storing them? For making them enticing to our children? How can we collect books in a way that makes it easy to let go when we are done or not loving them? Read on, and I'll share some ideas.

What's a Minimal/Intentional Philosophy on Books?

Good books are treasures to be enjoyed, re-read, shared, and appreciated. One of my favorite things about homeschooling is how much time we have to read good books together. I love to snuggle up with my children and read to them—or listen to them read to me. I sincerely enjoy reading, and I hope to instill that enjoyment in my children. I want books to be available, noticed, loosely organized, and very intentional.

I try to keep what Charlotte Mason calls "drivel" off of our bookshelves. For a book to occupy space

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Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates. - DEUTERONOMY 6:5-9

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in our home, it needs to be quality. Even our board books have to be fun to read, enjoyable to listen to, and qualify as good literature. In our opinion, Little Blue Truck is the bees-knees. I also do not keep books that are just annoying to read. If they are mind-numbing to read out loud, or I'm tripping over poor composition, I move it out. Keep only the books you and your family enjoys and don't mind reading again and again.

How Can We Store Books in a Way that Doesn't Overrun the Home?

Remember those cabinets we decluttered? Well, we emptied so many of them in our main bathroom (yes, you read that right) that we can house my husband's entire pastoral/theological/Bible study library there. Now, I am aware that only some have room in their bathroom for a library, but my point is to make space, even if it's unconventional. It took me a hot minute to come to terms with the idea of putting books in the bathroom, but it works for us!

For Mama, there's a living room cabinet where I store our book series, chapter books, and my own personal but pared-down library. Next to that is another cabinet that houses a curriculum that is currently out of use. I'm constantly culling this area to make sure we only have what we need or will use in the future. Daily curriculum and school books are organized on an art cart in the school room. I have a medium-sized bin in my garage with a few science textbooks from my high school years.

I've also, against my initial minimal instinct, lined up a selection of anthologies and large picture books on one shelf of a bookcase in our living room. The sight of that curated selection of books makes me so

happy. It looks cozy and invites the children to come pursue the beautiful illustrations and photography.

The kids have a cabinet shelf in the playroom for their books. They each have small book baskets in their rooms, and they rotate the bookshelf books in and out of there to keep them fresh. We also have baskets in the school room for easy readers. That way, they know where to look for their books when it's reading time. We have a basket on our fireplace with books we use for morning/Bible time, as well as our current read-aloud and a couple of picture books for spontaneous reading sessions.



Good books are treasures to be enjoyed, re-read, shared, and appreciated.

I could totally keep all my books in one spot—I even have that bookcase in my living room. But I like to keep most of our books in cabinets since I prefer a more minimal aesthetic. I love the look of an entire bookshelf in other people's homes, but it feels too cluttered for our space.

I've shared some ways I store our books in hopes that it might give you some ideas if you need more space in an area where you'd traditionally expect to keep books. It's

ok to be creative. Make them accessible and available in a way that makes sense for your family.

I will order books second-hand from thriftbooks.com or visit the library bookstores (such a gem!). Since I only paid a few dollars, I don't need to hang onto a book we didn't love. Donate to a second-hand shop, share them with friends and family, or bring them to co-op.

Books are meant to be read and enjoyed. However, they are still inventory we have to manage, so be intentional and thoughtful about the books that are allowed to live on your bookshelves.

Books to Declutter

- * Annoying-to-read books
- * Trashy books that don't honor God
- * Grotesque illustrations. Can anyone relate to me on this?
 - * Keep the beauty; trash the ugly!
 - * Books your family doesn't love
 - * Drivel (nonsense, without humor, devoid of a moral, etc.)
 - * Books you know you won't read again
- * Curriculum you're done using
- * Teacher manuals you don't need anymore
- * Books that don't align with your family's values
- * Old college textbooks you'll never use again.
- * Books with bad theology (To discern this, be a voracious reader of your Bible!)

Bonus: A Couple of Our Favorite Read-Aloud Books are Picture Books

- * The Seven Silly Eaters
- * Little House on the Prairie Series
- * Roxaboxen
- * Dr Seuss (The big ones for mom)



- to practice her elocution and the easy-readers for the kiddos)
- * The Berenstain Bears (The ones from the 80's and 90's read a little smoother, in my opinion)
 - * Uncle Arthur's Bedtime Stories
 - * Children's Bible in 365 Stories
 - * God's Big Book of Animals

Books are an essential and valuable part of any home school. I believe quality books offer our children the living education that

lifts their minds to high things...like the beauty of the Lord, His love for gracious words, His hand over history, and His incredible design in nature and science.

If we are intentional with our collections, we can curate an excellent library that will breathe life and beauty into our homes and families. Happy reading!

- Caprice Bachor

A TIME OF GIVING THANKS

This time of year, we get together with family and friends, eat lots of good food, enjoy a time of fellowship, and reflect on all the things we are thankful for in our lives. It is so easy to think of all that God has given us and done for us.

When we give thanks, we are acknowledging that every good thing comes from God. *"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning."* James 1:17

Throughout scripture, God calls His people to give thanks. *"So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord,*

continue to live your lives in Him, rooted and built up in Him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness." Colossians 2:6-7

Being thankful is also a sign of praise. In Psalms 100:4, it says, *"enter into His gates with Thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise."* Thankfulness under challenging times will show how much you trust Him. 1 Thessalonians 5:18 Paul writes, *"Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."*

We have so much to be thankful for, so this Thanksgiving month, I encourage you to enjoy this thank-



ful cross craft (see next page) with your kids to help remember all that Jesus has not only given us but all that He has done for us. When you stop and take the time to go over all your blessings, you can be reminded of just how good our God is this Thanksgiving season.

- Trisha Kerwin

REVIVAL HOMESCHOOL FIELD TRIP

NOVEMBER 15TH

10:30AM

ACADEMIC CHECK-INS ARE SCHEDULED

At Revival Homeschool, we have regular "Check-Ins" to help parents stay on track with teaching requirements set by the State of California and our Handbook. During these reviews, we go over each child's

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Course of Study that parents share with us. Families have the freedom to choose a Christian curriculum, set up their own teaching methods, daily schedule, and study hours.

Our goal is to ensure everyone meets the yearly work minimums while keeping things balanced. Check-Ins happen as needed, and for new families, we make sure to meet at least once per semester. We're here to make these reviews a positive and encouraging experience for all of our families.

Wednesday 11/6

Berumen – 9:00 am
Brockmeier – 9:30 am
Easton – 10:00 am
Fitzgerald – 10:30 am
Garwood – 11:00 am
Haines – 11:30 am

Monday 11/11

Matthews, D. – 2:00 pm
Nabors – 2:30 pm
Wheeler – 3:00 pm
Williams – 3:30 pm
Martinez, A. – 4:00 pm

THANKFUL CROSS CRAFT PROJECT

Use a wooden or cardboard cross, decorate it with words or images representing things you are thankful for. Each family member can create their own cross, or the whole family can use one cross and add their own personal touches to the cross as a group project.

Remember, it's not about perfection; it's about the joy of creating together. So, relax, have fun, and let your creativity flow.



Try A Cozy Teatime This Autumn

The lessons are done for the day, you've mostly finished everything, the kids are playing, and you're starting the tea kettle. The whistle signals everyone to meet at the kitchen table for poetry teatime.

Poetry teatime, a term that has been circulating in the homeschooling community for years, always seemed to me like a scene from a period drama. I could never imagine my little adventurers, always covered in mud and chasing bugs, sitting quietly for tea and poetry. But when I finally decided to give it a try, my children surprised me in the most delightful way.

It turns out that taking snacks and drinks in fun cups makes for great listeners! This natural break in the day, after school but before dinner, is the perfect time to inject more literature into growing minds in a way that feels more like fun than school.

There are so many benefits to reading aloud to children, even when they can read themselves. Poetry specifically teaches young readers about letter sounds, builds vocabulary, and encourages creativity. That being said, reading a few poems together is the perfect gateway to starting longer read-aloud times. After you do this a few times, your children will start to associate the calm and serenity of teatime with poetry and books. "How easily bread and water can become tea and toast."

The best part of this is you can make it as straightforward or as fancy as you would like.

At the minimum, some tea or "tea," aka juice, lemonade or milk, a snack, and a few great poems are all you need for some cozy connection. Even if you don't have any poetry books, a few poems printed from Google will work just fine. On the other hand, if you want to go all out, you could do themed teatimes.

Autumnal tea, for example, could have cinnamon, a harvest tea blend, pumpkin muffins, and a leaf rub transfer craft during teatime. Let's take it a step further and dress up like pilgrims! Kidding...-kind of. But I think you catch my drift. There is so much room for fun and creativity here. And I KNOW so many of you reading this are gifted with imagination.

I hope this post inspires you to try poetry teatime as a simple yet profound way to connect with your children this season. After all, isn't that what it's all about? Connecting with these little souls that God has entrusted to us. What a blessing it is to be able to fill our children's hearts and minds with truth, beauty, and goodness through such a simple, enjoyable activity.

Cheering
you on!

- Rachel

