

HOMESCHOOLING Today[®]

PO BOX 244 · Abingdon, VA 24212
276-628-7730

Writers' Guidelines For *Homeschooling Today*[®] magazine and *Homeschooling Helper*[™] online

Thank you for your interest in our publication. We appreciate the hard work and dedication put forth by our many contributors. Efforts like yours, and those of our regular staff, have helped make our magazine the wonderful resource and encouragement our readers have grown to expect.

Homeschooling Today[®] magazine, published six times per year, is one of the most comprehensive home education magazines available, with a special focus on literature, fine arts, and Christian living.

Our mission is to encourage, challenge, and support homeschooling families. We believe that as we obediently train and educate our own children and equip them with a Christian worldview, we will see families strengthened and future generations prepared for the task of reforming the church and changing society.

Article submissions can be sent to: management@homeschooltoday.com with the words "Article Submission" in the e-mail subject line.

Please read our Writers' Guidelines carefully. Your submission will have a better chance of acceptance if you follow them.

Magazine Themes

While we understand that it will not always be possible (or preferable) for every article to fit into our issue theme, our readers have shown an interest in this format. Therefore, please browse our theme list for ideas and inspiration. Each theme includes a submission deadline which you will also want to take into consideration. You will find our "Themes and Deadlines" on the *Homeschooling Today* website under "Contact Us"/"Write for HST": <http://www.homeschooltoday.com/write>.

Article Types

We currently have four main types of articles in our magazine:

- **Columns** (written by our regular columnists)
- **Feature Articles** (1,300-2,000 words)
- **Departments** (500-875 words)
- **Reviews** (150-475 words or 150 words per product for multiple products in one review)

We also have a monthly email newsletter, **Homeschooling Helper** (900 to 1100 words), which is intended for inspirational rather than "how-to" topics.

Consider the category for your article when submitting it. Feature articles are more likely to be used when they relate to the magazine theme.

Submissions

We do not accept reprints at this time, and we no longer accept queries. We accept *unsolicited articles submitted as Word document attachments to an e-mail* or, if you are unable to submit an attachment, *on CD* mailed to the attention of the Editor-in-Chief of *Homeschooling Today* magazine. If you use Macintosh, please convert the file for us. Send articles to management@homeschooltoday.com with the words “Article Submission” in the e-mail subject line. It is helpful if you include the *issue date/theme* as well, if you are submitting for a particular issue. Articles cannot be returned. Submission does not guarantee publication.

Unsolicited articles should arrive at least six months prior to the issue date for which the article is intended (for example, March for the Sept/Oct issue). We receive a large number of unsolicited articles, so we appreciate your patience as we review submissions for possible publication. If you have not heard from us within six months, you may assume that we will not use your article. We do not send notification if we decide not to publish a submission.

If your article is chosen for inclusion, we will notify you and will e-mail a contract for you to sign and fax or mail to us.

Feature Articles

Good feature articles include information on a topic, unit studies, encouragement, challenge, or an interview. Feature article word count is 1,400 to 1,650 words. This may take the form of one 1,400-1,650 word article or as a 1,250 word article with a 400 word “sidebar”. Final published word count, which is the basis for payment to the author, includes the *text of the edited and published article and any resource list*. It does not include the author’s personal information on the first page, the title or byline of the article, or the bio of the author; **it will likely differ from the word count of the article as originally submitted.**

Departments

Not all departments are included in every issue. Word count for articles in the various departments is 500 to 875 words. Again, final published word count, which is the basis for payment to the author, includes the *text of the edited and published article and any resource list*. It does not include the author’s personal information on the first page, the title or byline of the article, or the bio of the author; **it will likely differ from the word count of the article as originally submitted.**

We currently have regular writers for the follow departments:

- Understanding the Arts: Emily Cottrill, regularly writes an article to accompany a pull-out art print for each issue.
- Living Literature: Emily Adams regularly writes for this department. We *do* accept additional article submissions in this category. Please contact Kara Murphy (kara@homeschooltoday.com) if you would like to write for this department

In addition to the above bi-monthly departments, we include several articles in each issue from the following departments which do not have regular writers or accept additional submissions. Not all departments are included in each issue:

- In the Word (Bible study) – 875 words
- Living Literature 1 (book studies appropriate for middle students, ages 8-12) – 500 words
- Living Literature 2 (for older students, 13 years old and older) – 500 words
- Living Literature 3 (for children ages 6-10) – 500 words
- Unit Study – 1500 words
- Bringing History to Life – 875 words
- Nature in Life (Nature Study) – 875 words

- Focus on Writing – 875 words
- Language Learning (English *and* Foreign Languages) – 875 words
- The Abacus (Mathematics) – 875 words
- Music Through the Centuries (History) – 875 words
- Making Melody (Musical Instruction/Enjoyment) – 875 words
- The Home Team (Physical Education) – 875 words
- Thinking (Logic, Biblical Thinking) – 875 words
- Homeschooling Around the World – 875 words
- The Art of Homemaking – 875 words
- Teach Them The Good Way (Training Methodology) – 875 words

Homeschooling Helper

Homeschooling Today's online newsletter, Homeschooling Helper, is sent monthly to a free subscription-based email list. An inspirational article (900 to 1100 words) is meant to encourage and refresh homeschooling parents in their day-to-day journey through homeschooling. For subscription information and a sample of a recent article visit: http://homeschooltoday.com/articles/homeschool_helper/.

Reviews

Since thousands of homeschoolers are counting on our reviewers when making book and curriculum decisions, reviewers should remember that different families have different standards. They should warn parents of any objectionable, unpleasant, or secular content. Always focus on the good in a product while warning about the negative.

Reviews of books, curriculum, and media/computer programs will appear in our “Bookshelf and Beyond” department. We accept suggestions for materials to review. Contact reviews@HomeschoolToday.com with ideas.

In addition to these, we receive many unsolicited copies for review and possible inclusion in our “Bookshelf and Beyond” department. If you would like more information on becoming a reviewer, please contact: kara@homeschooltoday.com.

Reviewers should follow the Formatting and Editing Guidelines (given below) in preparing their review, in addition to the following requirements:

- In book reviews, give complete publication information (title, author, publisher, date) **within the text of the review** rather than listed as a resource. [*The Giver* by Lois Lowry (Random House, 1993)]. A phone number or website is helpful too.
- Include a **bio of up to twenty-five words** in the first page footer of your review; 9 pt Arial type.
- To calculate word counts for reviews of several products combined in one article, multiply the number of review items by 150 words. If you are reviewing only one or two items, your word count should equal no more than 475 words.
- Exceptions are made for feature review articles, reviews that include an interview, or certain curricula that simply *cannot* be described in so few words. If you feel that your product review falls under one of these categories, please advise us when you submit your article, and we will evaluate our space restrictions for that issue. You must be prepared to shorten it if we cannot accommodate the longer length.

- Review products should be mailed back (Media Rate) to us upon completion of the review. You will automatically be reimbursed five dollars for postage (included in payment for article). If you already own the item to be reviewed or you can locate it at your local library, please let us know. If postage is more than the allotted five dollars, please submit a receipt, and we will send you complete reimbursement.

Sometimes reviewers prefer to keep the products they have reviewed. Since we pay our reviewers, we typically ask for the return of review products. However, if you have a particular interest in a product you have reviewed, it never hurts to ask.

Payment Schedule

We pay for published articles in one of the following ways:

- Ten cents per *published* word for original, unpublished works in print publications.
- Eight cents per published word for original, unpublished works in online media.
- Ten cents per published word for reviews in “Bookshelf and Beyond” plus five dollars to cover return postage for the book/product. Reviewers should read the specific Reviewers section (above) as well as the general guidelines.
- Fifty dollars flat rate, regardless of length, for reprints (when they are accepted for a rare reason) of previously published works (with proof—e-mail or statement in some form from the original publication—that author owns copyright for reprint), or appropriate word rate, whichever is less.
- Advertising bio in lieu of cash payment. Send a bio of up to 100 words that includes any of the following: personal information, education and accomplishments, family, info regarding your business and products, and contact info that you would like to share, including website, phone number, etc.

We require that any original *Homeschooling Today* magazine article reprinted in another publication or website include a copy of this statement: “Originally published in *Homeschooling Today*® magazine—(give issue date). Used by permission. All rights reserved.” or “Originally published in Homeschooling Helper online newsletter—(give date). Used by permission. All rights reserved.” Please send us an e-mail notice of republication for our records.

We acquire first North American serial rights and nonexclusive electronic and reprint rights for previously unpublished work. The author retains the copyright to his/her own work in order to use it for his/her personal purposes (author’s websites, future publications, etc.).

Tone of Articles

We encourage our writers to be bold in presenting the truth of the Bible in a godly way. Remember that most of our readers are brothers and sisters in Christ, so please align your writing style with the mindset of the teaching in Matthew 5:3-16 and John 17:11-26.

Articles can be submitted to: management@homeschooltoday.com.

Formatting and Style Guidelines

Format

In an effort to publish the highest quality publications, we ask that you use the following format when submitting articles. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in rejection of your submission or the return of your article for reformatting if we choose to use it.

If you are unfamiliar with the mechanics of formatting in Word and you do not understand the format instructions below, please contact us for detailed instructions. Please e-mail management@homeschooltoday.com.

Please download the article templates from our website www.homeschooltoday.com/write, and use the following formatting guidelines:

- Use *12 pt Times New Roman* type for the entire article, including title, and subheadings.
- In the top left corner of the first page header only, please type (single spaced) *your name, address, phone number, fax number, e-mail address, and word count of the body of the article* (not including author info, title, or bio). This preliminary word count may not reflect the final published word count.
- Following author info, center the title in the first page header in **bold** type. Put your name *two single spaces* below the title following the word *By* (By Your Name) and not in bold.
- Format your article using single spacing with 12 pt Before and 0 pt After (*Ctrl-Shift-P* or Format/Paragraph/Spacing – Before: 12 pt and After: 0 pt). There should be no double hard returns (hitting Enter twice) in the article.
- Use one hard return (hit Enter once) between paragraphs, which should space two single spaces if you have used the above format correctly.
- **Do not** number pages or include headers.
- **Do not** indent.
- Align your article left. Please do not justify it.
- Use only one space (after end punctuation) between sentences in the article.
- Use bold type (12 pt Times New Roman) for title and subheadings in your article. **Do not** use all caps or italics.
- Do not use special formatting in your article. You may use bold and italics when appropriate, such as italics for word emphasis and for titles of books, magazines, etc. and bold for article title and subheadings within the article.
- Do not use automatic footnoting or endnotes in your article. See **Quotations** and **References** sections for including reference notes.
- In the first page footer in Arial 9 pt type, please include a maximum fifty-word bio or a maximum twenty-five-word bio for a review (subject to editing). See Payment Schedule for longer bio/payment option. When using our template, please indicate the bio word-count above the bio itself.
- Please spell check and proof your article before submitting it.

Style Guidelines

Following is an abbreviated style list. Please see the Style Sheet on the website for an adjunct guide of preferred style. We generally follow *The Chicago Manual of Style, 15th Edition*. These items are our preference, and we will follow them in the editing process. Please contact us with any questions you might have.

Punctuation

- Use a comma before the final item in a list or series that contains more than two items (text books, pencils, and notebooks).
- Use an em-dash (double hyphen – *Alt-0151* on the number keypad) with no space between dash and words before and after it for a break in thought or for emphasis in a sentence. (He won the race—and by four seconds!)
- Use italics to emphasize words. **Do not** use all caps for emphasis.
- Use italics for foreign words/phrases and for vocabulary words

Spelling

- “Homeschool” and its derivatives (homeschooled, homeschooling, homeschoolers) are to be written as one word.

Capitalization

- Use lower case when theological terms are used in a broad sense [church, the gospel (but the Gospels when referring to the books of the Bible), the kingdom, the second coming, biblical, scriptural, etc.].
- Capitalize words used to refer to God [He, Him, His (but not who), the Trinity, the Almighty, the Word, Christ, Holy Spirit, Holy Ghost, etc.].

Abbreviations / Contractions

- As a general rule, do not use contractions unless omitting them will cause the sentence to sound stilted or unless the style of the article requires them.
- Do not abbreviate months of the year or names of states.
- Do not abbreviate names of books of the Bible.

Numbers and Symbols

- Numbers through one hundred should be spelled out; all numbers beginning with 101 and up should be used numerically. Whole numbers followed by *hundred*, *thousand*, *hundred thousand*, *million*, and so on should be spelled out (three hundred, five hundred thousand, two hundred million).
- Numbers referring to age should be written out (seven years old and my five-year-old son).
- Years:
 - Periods of time (years) should be written 1998-99, not 1998-1999 (except 1999-2001).
 - Centuries should be written 500 B.C. and A.D. 1525.
 - 1900s, not 1900’s.
 - Do not use apostrophes in decades (1950s, not 50’s).
 - Numbers of centuries should be written out (in the fifteenth century, not 15th century).
 - Use a hyphen for adjectival forms (fifteenth-century art).
- To indicate percent, use numerals and the word *percent* (25 percent).

Quotations

- **Always** indicate quotations (as follows) for any written or spoken words from others. Be careful to record quotes **exactly** as you find them in your source. Light paraphrasing is not a substitute for attributing quotations.
- Use double quotation marks for short quotes within the main text of the article.

- All quotations (including Scripture) of four or more lines should be separated from the text in a block quote, indented one half-inch on the left AND right and separated from the text above and below it by two single spaces. Use italics (no quotation marks) for the quoted material. (Quoted matter *within* a block quotation should be set off by double quotation marks).
- If it is a block quote set apart in italics and indented, use a colon instead of a comma following the last word before the quote begins.

Martin Luther lamented:

Who am I, that I should lift up mine eyes or raise my hands . . .

- Biblical quotes should be from the King James Version (KJV), New King James Version (NKJV), or New American Standard Bible (NASB). Unless it is the KJV, indicate the version used in the article by following the quote with the reference and the initials of the version in parentheses. [“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life.” (John 6:47, NASB)]
- References to sources of quotes should be in parentheses following the quote. [Martin Luther lamented, “Who am I, that I should lift up mine eyes or raise my hands to the divine Majesty?” (*Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther* by Roland Bainton, Abingdon Press, 1950)]. For reprints (*Farmer Boy* by Laura Ingalls Wilder, 1933; reprinted, Harper & Row, 1971)
- If the **book or source of the quote is listed in a reference list** at the end of the article, it is not necessary to provide full publication information in the text. Only the book title and the author’s last name should be included following the first quote for that source. (*Here I Stand*, Bainton).
- If **more than one source** is listed in the article or reference list **for the same author**, the book title and author’s name should be given after the first quote from that source, and only the book title given in the following quotes from the same source.
- If **the same source** is quoted additional times in the article (and there is no other reference quoted for that author), use the book title and the author’s name on the first quote and include only the author’s last name in citations following the first one. You may omit the author’s name if it is mentioned in the text.

References

- References to books, magazines, etc. within the text of the article should state title and author together and list publisher and date in parentheses following the reference.—*The Giver* by Lois Lowry (Random House, 1993), or for reprints of older works—*Farmer Boy* by Laura Ingalls Wilder (1933; reprinted, Harper & Row, 1971). **If the book is included in a list of references at the end of the article, you may leave out the publication information in the text of the article.**
- Please use a list of resources at the bottom of the entire article rather than on each page of the article. Include, in this order: book, author, publisher, and date—*The Giver* by Lois Lowry (Random House, 1993).
- **No page number is required for any reference or source of quote except as follows:** Include page numbers (inclusive) for periodical and journal articles in a resource list, though not for individual quotes in the article. (*NAASP Bulletin*, November 1996, pp. 55-64).
- Please verify all websites to make sure they are still active, that they are appropriate, and that they do not link to objectionable material on other sites. List websites as www. instead of http://www. except when necessary to pull up the site. If you are quoting material from a website, specify the date on which you retrieved information.
- Use italics for titles of books, magazines (including *Homeschooling Today*[®] magazine), and other publications. However, use quotation marks for titles of articles or essays.

If you have any questions concerning these guidelines, please contact us. We also welcome your thoughts and invite your suggestions for additions/changes to this guide. Thank you for considering our publications for your writing and ministry.