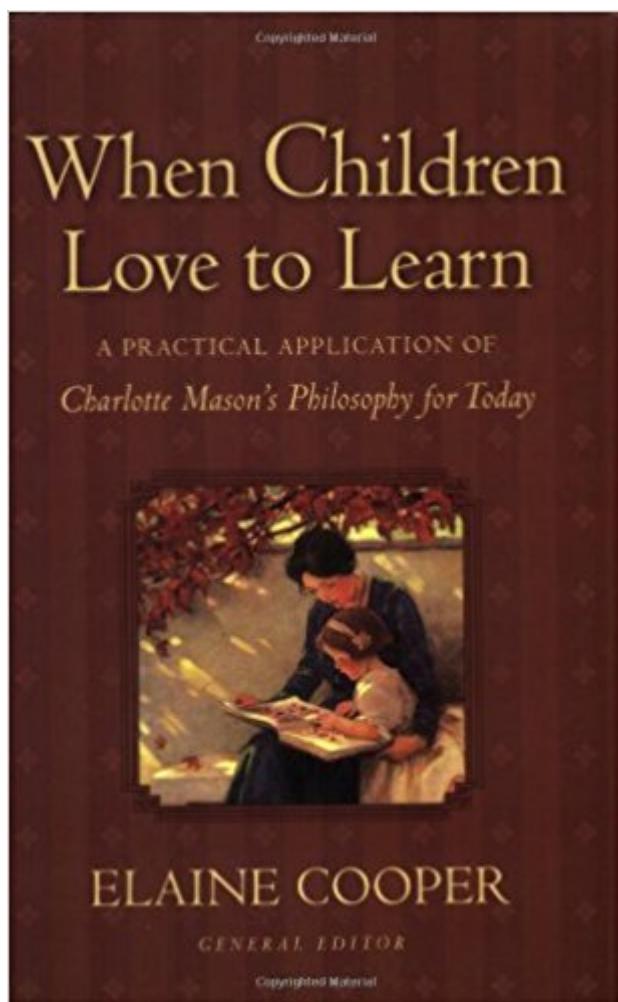


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# When Children Love To Learn: A Practical Application Of Charlotte Mason's Philosophy For Today



## Synopsis

They're hallmarks of childhood. The endless "why" questions. The desire to touch and taste everything. The curiosity and the observations. It can't be denied-children have an inherent desire to know. Teachers and parents can either encourage this natural inquisitiveness or squelch it. There is joy in the classroom when children learn-not to take a test, not to get a grade, not to compete with each other, and not to please their parents or their teachers-but because they want to know about the world around them! Both Christian educators and parents will find proven help in creating a positive learning atmosphere through methods pioneered by Charlotte Mason that show how to develop a child's natural love of learning. The professional educators, administrators, and Mason supporters contributing to this volume give useful applications that work in a variety of educational settings, from Christian schools to homeschools. A practical follow-up to Crossway's *For the Children's Sake*, this book follows a tradition of giving serious thought to what education is, so that children will be learning for life and for everlasting life. ^

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"When Children Love to Learn is one of the better books I've seen on the Charlotte Mason approach. Elaine Cooper has done a phenomenal job of laying down the basic tenets parents of homeschooled hold dear: a child must love to learn. Narration, living books, nature study-it's all here. Elaine covers a lot of ground to show how easy it can be to make learning enjoyable. Charlotte Mason fans will love this! Highly recommended for every homeschool reference library."^ Gena Suarez, Publisher, The Old Schoolhouse Magazine

Susan Schaeffer Macaulay grew up in Switzerland at L'Abri Fellowship, which was founded by her parents Francis and Edith Schaeffer. She and her husband Ranald Macaulay established and led the L'Abri branch in England for several years. She is also the author of *For the Family's Sake* and contributed to *Books Children Love* and *When Children Love to Learn*.

This book captures the essence of Charlotte Mason's rather rigorous advice in a condensed practical overview. I would love to see Elaine Cooper et al expand the work so it can become as easy to grab a guide as *The Well Trained Mind*. It has that potential. Just doesn't seem fully realized.

Although this book is designed for the classroom, it very nicely summarizes what the Charlotte Mason method of education is and what it's not, making it a necessary resource for the home educator. It goes to the heart of the subjects and how to implement them. It provides an outline and a structure for you to base your school upon if you so wish. The book is written by various experts on the Charlotte Mason method, providing fresh perspectives throughout. There are short chapters on History, Spelling, Poetry, Math, Foreign Languages, Science and Nature Studies and all the major subjects. The extensive explanation of narration is essential. Susan Shaeffer McCaulay also contributed to this book. I highly recommend this book to anybody interested to know more about the Charlotte Mason method and those wanting to implement her method at home or in the classroom. Together with Charlotte Mason's books and Karen Andreola's *A Charlotte Mason Companion*, *When Children Love to Learn* completes an unbeatable combination for the Charlotte Mason homeschooler.

I am a homeschooling mom in Brooklyn, New York. I love Charlotte Mason's writings! If you are a homeschooling parent (or just a parent) or a teacher, I recommend this book! I enjoy reading Miss Mason's lofty English in her own words, but Elaine Cooper did a wonderful job of structuring and simplifying her methods! Great read!

I found out about Charlotte Mason's teaching style only recently. I purchased this book, *The Charlotte Mason Companion*, and *For the Children's Sake*. They are all fantastic but I felt this book had a lot of inspiration and practical wisdom. It is a book that I will keep referring to and learning from for years to come!

I should preface this review by stating that I own every Charlotte Mason book on the market today, including her original six volumes. Aside from her own words in those writings, I consider this the most helpful book I own when it comes to actually implementing her methods. Honestly, I hesitated to buy this book for quite a while because the editorial review wasn't especially glowing and there weren't many reader reviews describing its incredible attributes. At any rate, I figured I should keep my collection complete, so I bought it to see what it had to offer. I am extremely pleasantly surprised by its content. The beauty of this book is that it was collectively written by educators who are involved with modern Charlotte Mason schools. Unbeknownst to many of the homeschooling folks who are drawn to her philosophy and methods (myself included), there are actually real brick and mortar CM schools currently in the United States. Because of the nature of the authors' experience, this book is full of practical information! The funny thing is that I wouldn't necessarily describe it as the most inspirational Charlotte Mason book I own. For the Children's Sake and A Charlotte Mason Companion are actually vying for that role. Those two books sure do give you a warm fuzzy for CM. The problem for me, personally, has been moving from the warm fuzzy to my practical homeschooling in 2008. I have spent more hours than I would like to admit reading homeschool philosophy and perusing Charlotte Mason web sites. The problem that gnawed at me until I read this book, however, was the feeling that CM lovers of today were hearkening back to Victorian times a bit too much for my liking. A great deal of discussion goes into what CM would have liked and what she would not have liked--audio books, computers, the internet, digital cameras for nature study, Story of the World, Hakim's History of US series. Well, the bottom line is that we can't decisively answer those questions. So, you find that many current CM homeschoolers bend over backwards to find books used in the old CM schools because they know those titles met her standards. They search for out of print titles, read many public domain books online, and generally have a belief that older means better. This particular issue is where I found the greatest value of this book. From page 30: "People like Charlotte Mason are rare and vital. They contribute both stability and continuity as they maintain the clear infrastructure of truth in their work; yet life bubbles up in them with freshness. Their response to actual life and persons creates a relevance and newness to their work without sacrificing the roots. This approach contrasts with a more usual trend toward a deadening legalism that squeezes out new ideas. She pointed out the limitations of a set curriculum plan as well as its value. Every year new books are published, and they need to be considered." From page 37: "The schools and classes that used the old PNEU programs used to await the yearly program with interest and enthusiasm. Old favorites and classic books from our

heritage are included from year to year. But then a Baden-Powell writes a scouting book, and that opens new avenues. A new book on planets, engines, or medieval castles arrives and is chosen."WOW! Finally, freedom from the guilt of thinking that mixing up the classics with some new books is not only acceptable but what CM did. Finally, I can stop looking for the "perfect" CM curriculum and give myself more credit and permission to create a CM style curriculum that is perfect for my children. The fact is, from those using the actual books that she used in her time to those using a combination of those classics and some newer material, I doubt anyone is using the exact combination of materials that she would be using if she were alive today. Her curriculum was living, just like the books she chose, and no one can presume to know what specific choices she would make if alive today. The greatest point I take from this book is that a Charlotte Mason education is not about exact book titles. It is about a specific way of viewing children and education mixed in with some phenomenal and proven methods of learning. Surely, it is about saying no to twaddle and yes to classics and well-written living books. However, after subscribing to many CM Yahoo groups and perusing every CM web site available, this book was a breath of fresh air, inspiring me to realize that I can have a CM homeschool while making my own choices about particular books. I won't accept anything dumbed-down but I will keep current without feeling like I'm getting it wrong. The funny thing is that in looking through all my other CM books again after reading this one, I see that the same point was made in all--that a CM education isn't just about specific books. However, in this book it is a major point, where in the others it was minor enough for me to have glanced right over it without really stopping to ponder that reality. The foundation that CM provides is spot on and her techniques will never age. History and science, however, do age. History titles, in particular, offer a challenge when we consider the extremely negative stereotypes of certain ethnic groups that are the norm in older literature. Science and technology have made leaps and bounds since CM's day and education needs to keep in step with those changes. I heartily recommend this book. Aside from what I've already mentioned, the descriptions of her philosophy and techniques are some of the best I've seen. Additionally, specifics about curriculum scope and schedules are given. I'm also particularly fond of Jack Beckman's discussion of history, which puts the subject at the forefront of "the science of relations." (A scope is laid out for grades 1-8 which is very useful.) On page 164, I found some of his most useful words about the study of history."...history became for us the unifying 'discipline of choice' due to our belief that all aspects of life fit under its broad sweep....as the student ponders the Renaissance, she will be challenged by the works of Donatello and Titian (art), the thoughts of da Vinci (science, medicine, technology), and the words of Petrarch (poetry). Thus, we employed a learning methodology that was history-driven

and thematic in nature."Again, these are modern day educators who work in CM schools in the United States, doing their best to interpret her philosophy and maintain her high standards. This book has been an amazing gift to me as I try to do the same in my homeschool. The book has given me more confidence and helps me feel a freedom that I didn't get from every other CM book I have read. I feel guilt-free searching for modern treasures. I feel fine about doing some inquiry science with my young elementary kids. We'll be spending an entire day, every week, deep in the woods of our nearby state park, listening to classic literature on my iPod on the way there and back. We'll be narrating classic stories as well as more recent living books. We'll be enjoying classical music and jazz, fine art (including modern), and poetry with tea every afternoon. We will use computer software to help us learn Spanish. We will have short lessons. We will have a Charlotte Mason inspired school in these modern times.

Information is given about Charlotte Mason's views on learning. The ultimate goal is for the children to enjoy learning and there are tips given to allow them to explore and be creative.

Very good information and more direct examples of how to apply the principles in real life than other Charlotte Mason books I've read but you really have to dig for what you get. No bulleted points, or lists of example activities for different age groups. Overall, worth the money and time to find what you're looking for.

I enjoyed this book very much! A great introduction to Miss Mason's life's work!

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