

# FAQ

## Is this a secular curriculum?

We use books that are non-faith based. However, sometimes our choices of quality books were so limited that our best choices all mentioned religion in some form or another. We have tried to point these out, but if you come across a reference that we've missed, please let us know.

As far as history is concerned, though, we did not attempt to scrub religion from our readings. Religion has shaped human history; this is simply a fact. To deny or ignore that would be, in our opinion, disingenuous. Our criteria for mentioning religion in regards to history is that talking about people's faith as it relates to their actions is fine, but attempting to convert the reader to a particular faith is not. We have tried to choose inclusive books that do not favor one religious belief over another.

Some science books, due to the time when they are written, may refer to "God's creatures". And, for example, d'Aulaire's Benjamin Franklin says that his father was blessed by the Lord with seventeen children. However, we believe these books' literary merit outweighs their minimal religious references.

For a longer discussion about our secular choices, please see: [On Being a Secular Curriculum](#).

## Does secular mean anti-religion? Do I need to be concerned that some books will bash our religious choices?

Absolutely not. Secular does not mean anti-religion, it means non-faith based. We believe it is easier to add our own beliefs to a curriculum than to take out someone else's. None of the books we have chosen put down any faith. If you find a reference in a book that you believe does, please let us know.

For a longer discussion about our secular choices, please see: [On Being a Secular Curriculum](#).

## **Are there weekly or daily schedules?**

Not yet, though we hope to have them in the future. We are all volunteers, and homeschooling parents ourselves, and as such our time is limited. Right now we are choosing to devote the time we have to creating the rest of the forms.

However, we would love for this to be a user-created community. If you develop a schedule that you think would be useful, please share it with us!

## **Why do you use X book in this level when [a different curriculum] uses it in another level?**

We based our book choices on a thorough review of the PNEU programmes from the 1920s and 1930s. We did our best to match the page counts and difficulty level, as much as possible, with those PNEU programmes. If you are interested in reading the original sources we used, they are from the Charlotte Mason Digital Archive. The CMDA has now placed many of these on both worldcat and archive.org.

## **This is too light — or the flip side, this is too much.**

If you think Wildwood Curriculum is too light, we urge you to look at the PNEU programmes yourself and compare.

If you think it's too much, don't use the optional books and take out anything else that you need to.

CM expected 'school' to take place 6 days per week, and many modern homeschool families do only a 4 day school week. Read some at night, on weekends, and holidays. Most importantly, however, spend as much time as possible outside.

## **Why do you use such old books?**

Many of our books are modern, but sometimes the best book we could find was decades old. We use the best books we can find that are widely available, no matter when they were written.

## **I don't have an e-reader. What do I do?**

Ebooks can be read on your computer. If you don't wish to do that, choose an alternate book that is available as a physical copy.

## **I have a 6, 7, and 8 yo. Do I use a different level for each? How can I make my life easier?**

In homes where there are children in A as well as B, both forms may work together, doing the work of A or B as they are able. Composer, Artist, Song, and Shakespeare study are meant to be done as a family.

## **My child hates this book. What should I do? Is it necessary to use it to get a good education?**

Sometimes children simply do not like an author's style. If this is the case, choose a book from the options page, or one that you already own or from your library. No single book is necessary for a good education, and there are too many books out there to waste time on one you hate.

## **Why do you have alternates? Aren't the books you've chosen the best?**

There is no "best" book. Though we've chosen high-quality living books, we strive to give choices so that you can use books from your library, books from used bookstores, or books that your Great Aunt Lucy gifted to you. Maybe this is your 3rd time teaching a 10 year old and you can't face going through the same book one more time. Choose an alternate!

Sometimes people want many choices to customize for their family. Other times life and circumstances make it so that choosing a book from a long list is just one more thing that the homeschooling parent can't face.

## **We are a conservative/ moderate/ liberal/ Muslim/ Christian/ Pagan/ Atheist/ Buddhist family. Will**

## **this curriculum work for us?**

We hope so! Our goal is to make a curriculum that everyone can use, and tweak for their own family. Some who helped create this curriculum are non-religious, Pagan, Jewish, and Buddhist, and our political beliefs range from conservative to liberal.

## **We are a bi-racial/minority/white family. Will this curriculum fit us?**

Again, we hope so! We have given choices when possible, particularly in biographies. We encourage you to use biographies of people who reflect your children's cultural heritage.

## **Do you teach evolution?**

As Charlotte Mason did, we use books that demonstrate current scientific thought. Some science books might mention "God's creatures" or "God's creation", but they assume an evolutionary basis.

## **How do I add in more of a global focus?**

1B might appear to have a western focus. The Blue Fairy Book has a European focus, and the child is learning about his place in the world. We do use Jenny Goes to Sea in 1B geography, and Jenny the cat travels around the world. Our first choice over Jenny Goes to Sea is Children of Many Lands; however, it is out of print and of limited availability. 1A opens up into world fables and folktales, and in geography we begin exploring Asia and Africa.

If you would like, you could take out the Blue Fairy Book and instead use fairy tales from a non-Western country. However, we urge you not to as many of Grimm's and Andersen's fairy tales are part of our collective culture. In Form 1A, the student continues hearing fairy tales but we shift to world fairy tales, as the PNEU programmes did.

In the PNEU programmes that we based this on, CM did simple geography in 1B (the child learns about his place). In 1A, the horizon is expanded and the child uses Ambleside Geography Book 2 to first learn about the geography of Great

Britain, then Europe, then the rest of the world.

If you would like more of an exposure to world geography than the explorers and Paddle to the Sea give you, you could replace them all with Guyot's Geographical Reader and Primer (available only on archive.org ) Use only Part 1, which will last 2 years; there may be some objectionable phrasing that parents will want to edit on the fly; however, it is overall a wonderful book. You could do the same with Ambleside Geography Book 2. Or, you could exchange Paddle to the Sea with Seabird by the same author. A third option is to replace Paddle to the Sea with several cultural geography books. We have suggestions listed for you on the Options page.

**Why don't you use [X] book? It is perfect for this level, and we prefer it over the one you recommend.**

One thing that we found while researching books for this curriculum is that the search for the perfect book never ends. If we waited until we found the perfect book, we would never get this written and out to the public. We made the best choices we could with the books that were available. Some that we found were wonderful but very limited availability; these we put under alternates so if you find them at second hand stores you know that they are great.

However, new books are published all the time, or we might have missed a lovely but not well known book in our searches. We always welcome book suggestions!

**Is this a secular version of [Ambleside Online, Simply Charlotte Mason, Mater Amabilis, another online curriculum]?**

No. The only curriculum that we based Wildwood Curriculum on is that of Charlotte Mason herself, as shown in the PNEU programmes of the 1920s and early 1930s.