



Dear friends,

For many of you, summer is a time to relax and kick back—as much as one can with children. It is an important time: being school-free (by which I mean 'homeschool-free'), the children need to learn how to keep themselves occupied. Although it is tempting to keep the children busy and heavily scheduled, it is much better for them to learn how to entertain themselves and to look inward, to their own creativity and inner resources than to constantly be fed from outside. For little ones, of course, summer is the same as the rest of the year—here I am speaking mainly of those from about 6 or 7 and up.

Although it is best if the parent-teacher also has something of a break during this time, it is also really important that one prepare for the upcoming year. When I started Christopherus 20+ years ago, our busiest month was May. That generation of homeschoolers knew how much time it takes to adequately prepare oneself for the next school year. I wonder if it is the influence of the internet that suggests to people now that they can just start in the fall and not spend time in advance, preparing.

Whether it's learning a new skill such as crocheting or batiking; thinking through the series of stories for a main lesson; or scheduling your nature lessons to coincide with seasonal changes in your area, homeschooling which is authentic to your particular circumstances and your child's needs, requires thought and planning. You can buy boxed curriculum which walks you through every day and week or you can figure out, with some effort, how you want to create your unique homeschool. You can even, nowadays, sign up your child to have a so-called Waldorf teacher give him a so-called main lesson via the computer! And I am not just being snotty when I say this: if Waldorf is anything, it is meant to be a synergy, a living relationship, between the teacher and child. Karma is created in the living relationships between human beings. This is simply not possible via a screen. Sure, a child can learn something: but one of the things he will learn is that human relationships, flawed and messy as they are, are not our priority.

And homeschooling is messy and often very flawed. Parents get overwhelmed and feel inadequate. But surely it is a far better life lesson for a child to witness how a parent acknowledges her shortcomings and picks herself up and carries on. Perfection is not out goal. But earnest striving is.

By [the middle grades](#), parent preparation is extensive. At Christopherus we do help by providing *Student Workbooks* (sort of a hybrid main lesson book and text book) as well as recordings of me giving main lesson narratives for your child to listen to, but there is still a fair old bit for the parent to do.

Help with Parent Preparation

All of which leads me to a plug for our [Take Hold grades webinars](#). Waldorf teachers do their training each summer and now you can 'train' and have help penetrating the depths of the Christopherus curriculum with other fellow Christopherus families and with me. There is a webinar series for each grade and by completion, the hope is that each parent feels refreshed, rejuvenated and confident she can homeschool her child in the way she feels is best.

Please note that the deadline for signing up for the Take Hold grades webinars is 27 June.

I have to be strict with this because, as the webinars are personalized and based on the extensive questionnaires each participant fills out, I need time to prepare.

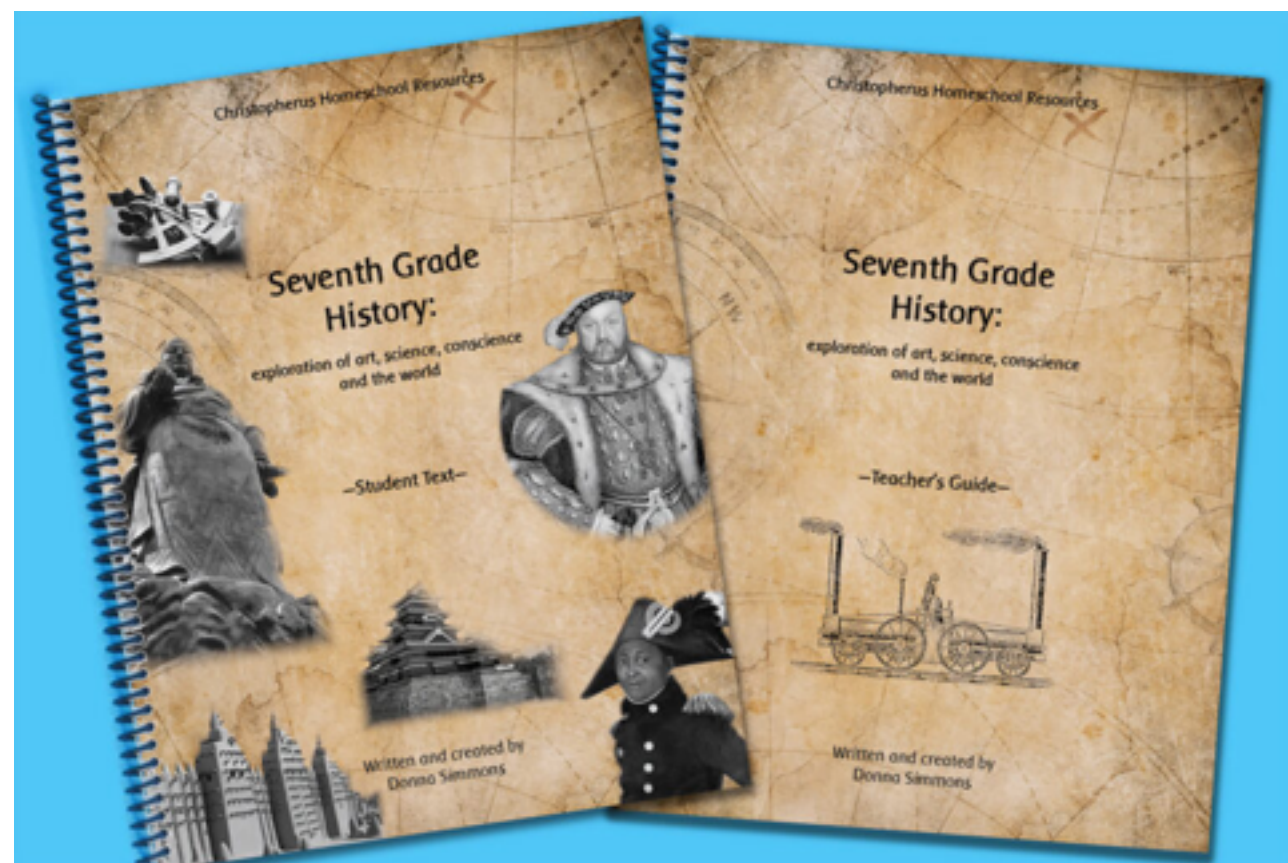
[Sign up here](#)

Webinars

The winter/spring series of webinars are now finished: there will be further webinars in the fall and they will probably be announced in the July newsletter. For now, if you missed the live sessions, [you can purchase these lively and enlivening recorded sessions](#). Topics include: Nurturing Gratitude in Children; Nurturing Gratitude in Teens; Death; Being at Home with Little Ones; Parental Sanity; Festivals at Home; and many more.

Two webinars I would like to highlight are [An Introduction to Anthroposophy](#) and [Child Development](#). The former is for anyone wishing to understand something of the foundations to Waldorf (Christopherus)---one certainly does not need to be an anthroposophist to use Christopherus but it can be helpful to understand what informs my approach.

And the webinar on Child Development—well, I want to say it is required! If you really want to make Christopherus homeschooling your own, you really do need to understand the way the curriculum speaks to the developmental progression of children---and that is what is covered, in a lively way, in this recording. Once you 'get it' you can then change things, knowing that the lessons you bring, while not in the curriculum, flow out of the reality of child development and your child's needs and so, in many ways, because of that authenticity, are better than the curriculum. And then all the mysterious questions one might have: Why is it not a good idea to give a 7 year old a magnifying glass? Why don't we do American history until 8th grade? Why is handwork so important and what is the therapeutic basis of Christopherus? Listen to the recording and find out!



New Seventh Grade Curriculum

Seventh grade is ticking along nicely! Seventh Grade history should be available by the middle to end of June. [Click here for a sneak preview](#).

Next 7th grade project is the Seventh Grade Syllabus—I hope to have this finished by the end of the summer.

Seventh grade chemistry follows—and possibly even comes at the same time as it will be a series of videos for the parent—not the seventh grader—to watch to enable you to then lead your child through an exploration of earth, air, water and fire, the basis of chemistry. No, it won't be about alchemy! There will be experiments exploring those elements such as : how do things burn? What is combustion? Looking at pH. The three states of water; the nitrogen cycle; and much, much more.



In our early years webinar last night focused on how to stop talking too much with one's child, I was asked about how Christopherus families can connect. [One way is through our Networking page](#). And although I have very little to do with social media, if any of you have facebook or locals or other kinds of Christopherus homeschool networks you'd like others to know about, please send me the details and I will put them in the next newsletter.

Lastly...you know we have been trying to figure out ways of helping our low income customers and supporters. The only practical way we have come up with is for people to donate directly using this stripe button.

Please help—there are so many folks who wish to use Christopherus but cannot afford to do so—and it is way too big a burden for us to reduce the price for everyone who asks.

[Please consider helping your fellow Christopherus homeschoolers and helping Christopherus remain viable.](#)

Every single penny we collect this way will be used to help low income people who wish to purchase our materials.

Thank you so much for helping!

Til July,
Blessings on your homeschool journey,
Donna