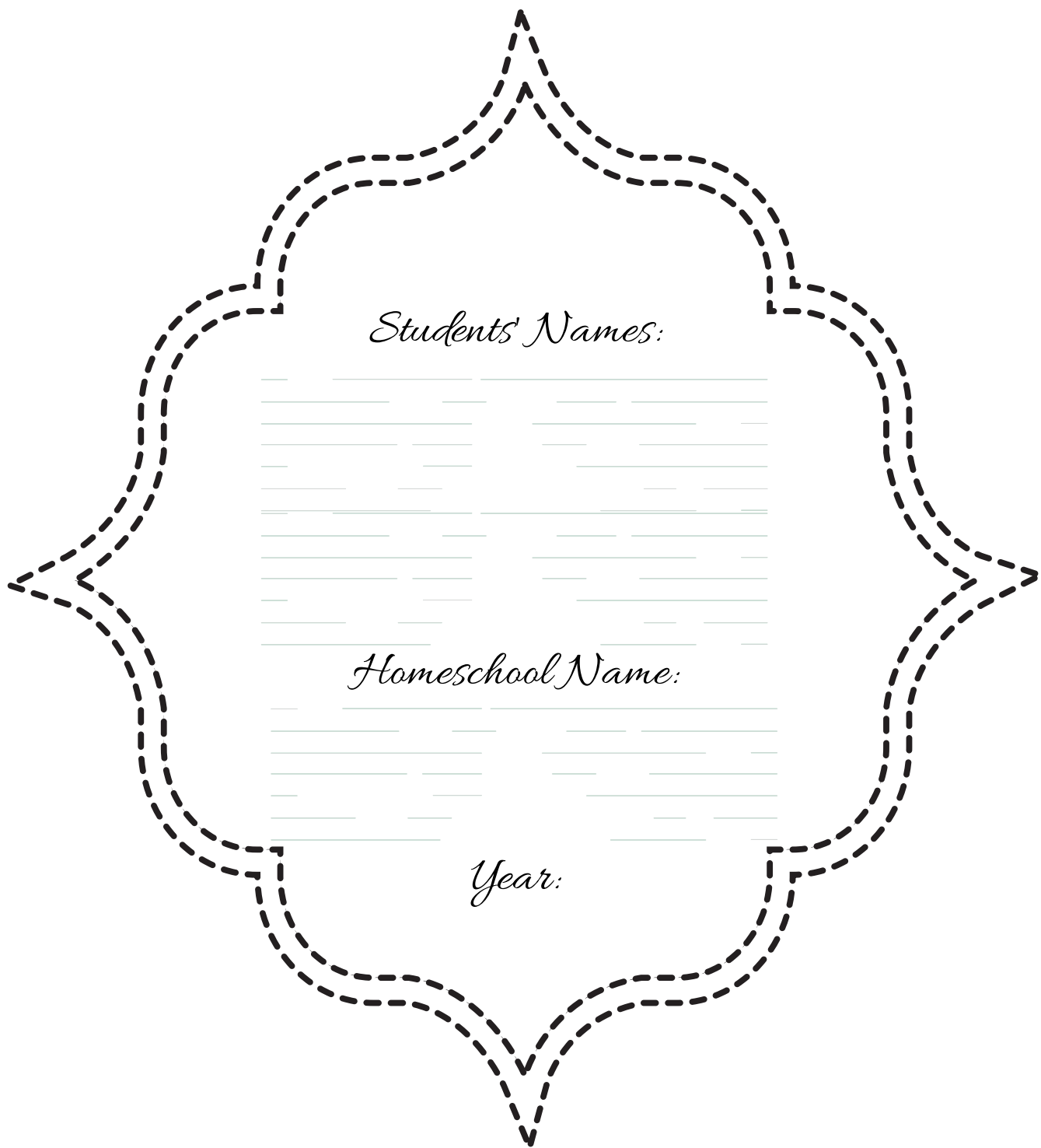




*Dear Homeschooling
Mama:
Refresh Your Home's
Atmosphere
+
Habits*

Planning Resource



Students' Names:

Homeschool Name:

Year:



So Many Little Hammers

Hi there! Are you looking forward to beginning a new homeschool year with your family? Does the idea of creating new habits make you exuberant, or does it make you cringe?
Listen - you are not alone!

I'm Holly - a stay-at-home mom, wife, daughter, sister, friend, who happens to write and teach. I love inspiring others to go out and faithfully do "the next right thing" on my blog, **My Little Brick Schoolhouse**. I also love writing about our family's journey as it relates to the Charlotte Mason philosophy of education.

Charlotte Mason said, "The habits of the child are, as it were, so many little hammers, beating out by slow degrees the character of man."

Another one of my favorite Charlotte Mason quotes: "Education is an atmosphere, a discipline, a life."

If we examine the substance of these two quotes, what comes to mind? Do our repeated actions eventually form our character? If we set out on the homeschool path to educate our children, does atmosphere really matter?

If you feel "stuck" in deciding which little hammers to place into the hands of your children, you are in the right place! If the atmosphere of your home needs a refresh, but you have no clue where to begin, you also are in the right place! This is a journey, and it definitely takes a marathon pace. So, start the process by deciding what matters. This will propel you forward in realizing which specific habits you claim this year.

A decorative graphic in the top right corner featuring a cluster of stylized flowers in shades of purple, pink, and yellow, with green leaves. A thin gold circle is positioned behind the flowers, partially overlapping the page content.

[illegible]

A decorative graphic in the top right corner featuring a cluster of stylized flowers in shades of purple, pink, and yellow, with green leaves. A thin gold circle is positioned behind the flowers, partially overlapping the page content.

The image displays a 10x2 grid of horizontal lines. Each row consists of two parallel horizontal lines. A solid black dot is positioned at the left end of each line, centered vertically between the two lines of the row. This pattern is repeated for all 10 rows, creating a structured, repetitive visual element.

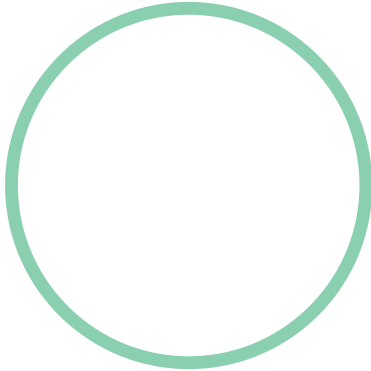
Categorize Things That Matter

After you list your things that matter, you will categorize these things into larger, bigger-picture groups. For example, I can group these items from my things that matter into one category:

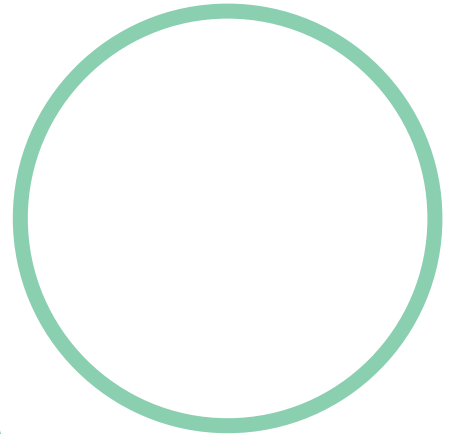
- nature study
- watercolor/brush draw our nature friends
- time spent together without demands, time to just wonder (tea time)
- free play
- time to grow in our habit of attention

MY CATEGORY FOR THE ABOVE LIST: WONDER IN GOD'S CREATION

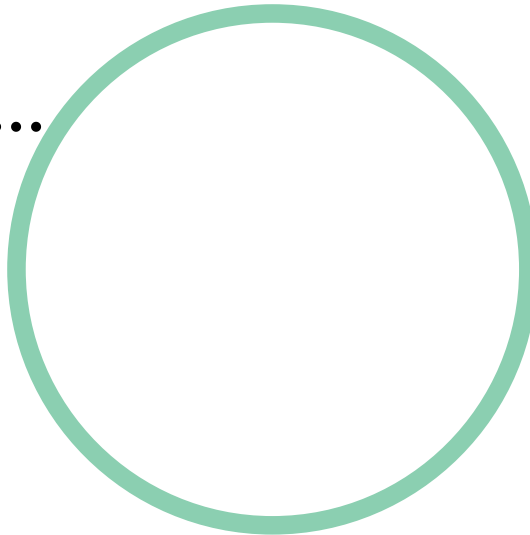
The above example is just a list for one category. Group your items into about 3 to 5 categories. Some lists might be longer than others (hence, the different sizes of circles). Name each category.



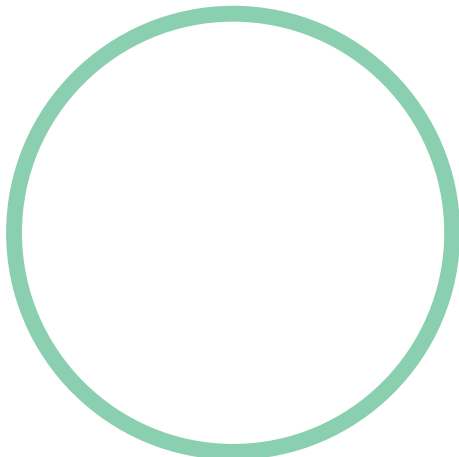
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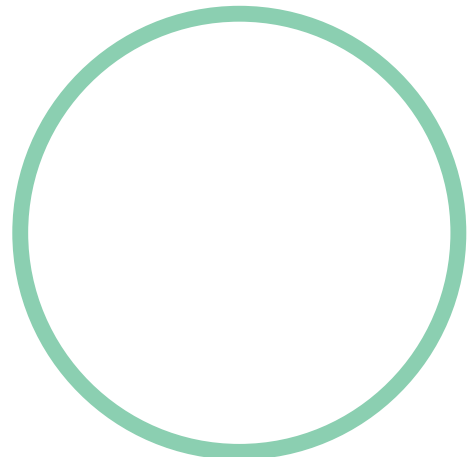
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Focal Points For Our Year Together

The categories you just created based off your list of things that matter to you and your family as you begin a new homeschool year are now to be focal points for your year together! Isn't that neat? You can practice habits that will point back to these focal points throughout the year, or you can choose one focal point to engage for a period of two to three months, then move to the next focal point, once the habits have been engrained in the fabric of your family.



1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Two Types of Habits



Have you ever heard that saying, "Habits can be caught and habits can be taught"?

It's probably common sense, but you know that some of these habits are more for the ATMOSPHERE of your home, while others fall under the category of DELIBERATE TEACHING. Decide which habits fall under the atmosphere category. For example, an atmosphere is the physical, spiritual and relational mood of a place. You might call it the family culture. Atmosphere consists of the ideas communicated in the home, a child's natural environment. If you live in a gentle, warm home, then you will probably "catch" the habit of gentle speech and warm interactions with your family. Write down habits in the form, "We will" or "I will", or "My children will". Action steps also use the "Subject + will" format, but are more specific, to support the habit.

Example of a habit that is "caught":

We will practice a culture of wonder.

Action steps that SUPPORT the atmosphere, or "caught" habit:

1. I will set aside a daily time for either picture study, nature walk, hymn study, or composer study by creating a loop schedule.
2. We will read aloud part of a good, living book each day together.
3. We will take walks in nature, just for the fun of it, once a week.
4. I will leave items out and accessible for wondering at God's creation: microscope, net for catching nature friends, field guides, good picture books.

Example of a habit that is "taught":

My son will make his bed each day, after he wakes.

In a few pages, you'll find my Habit Tracker. This helps parents deliberately teach and instill habits in their children. I included more than one month's worth, as two to three months' time usually indicate whether or not a habit is firmly rooted.

Habits that Support Focal Points of Our Home

Decide what habits you will try to practice for each focal point of your home.

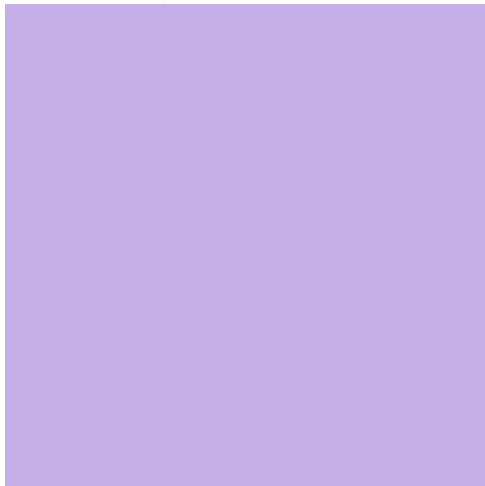
Habits for Focal Point #1

A large yellow square intended for writing habits for Focal Point #1.

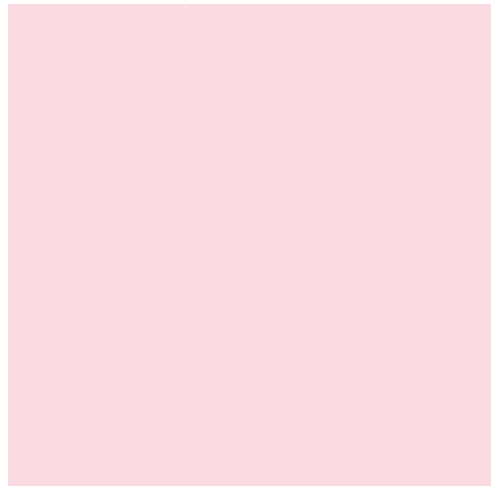
Habits for Focal Point #2

A large light green square intended for writing habits for Focal Point #2.

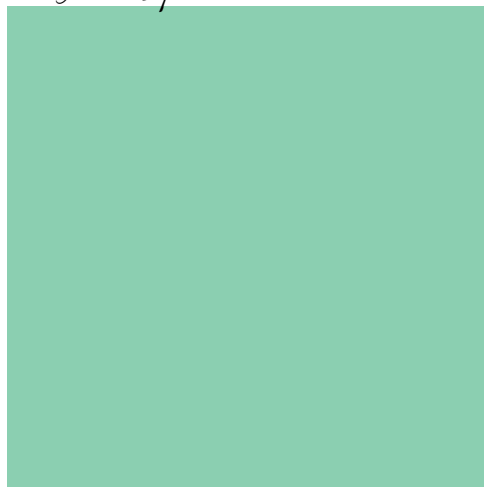
Habits for Focal Point #3

A large purple square intended for writing habits for Focal Point #3.

Habits for Focal Point #4

A large pink square intended for writing habits for Focal Point #4.

Habits for Focal Point #5

A large teal square intended for writing habits for Focal Point #5.

Categorize Your Habits: Caught vs. Taught

You made a list of habits you'd like to cultivate for each focal point of your homeschool year. Go back to your focal points and habits page (p. 7). Some habits are caught (think: atmosphere) while others are taught.

Next to each habit you listed, decide if it is a "C" for caught or a "T" for taught habit.

If you're having a hard time deciding what kind of habit it is, ask yourself if the habit is something you personally need to change about the family culture/atmosphere, or something you must deliberately teach to someone else.

If it is something you personally can work on more, then it would qualify as a "C", or "caught" habit. Below, write down your "Caught" habits for each focal point. JUST list the "C" habits! Make action steps to support each habit.

See my example on page 8.

Caught Habits
Focal Point #1:

Action Steps



Caught Habits
Focal Point #2:

Action Steps



Caught Habits
Focal Point # 3:

Action Steps



Caught Habits
Focal Point # 4:

Action Steps



Caught Habits
Focal Point #5:

Action Steps



Questions to Ponder:
How can I craft a better
calendar?

How can I craft a better life?
What would I be doing if things
were going well?



My Notes

Focal Point: _____

[illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible]

Focal Point: _____

[illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible]

Focal Point: _____

[illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible]

*Focal Point:*_____

[illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible]

Focal Point: _____

HABIT

M T W T F S S

ACTION STEPS

ACTION STEPS

HABIT

$$M \quad T \quad W \quad T \quad F \quad S \quad S$$

ACTION STEPS

ACTION STEPS

HABIT

M T W T F S S

ACTION STEPS

ACTION STEPS

HABIT

$$M \quad T \quad W \quad T \quad F \quad S \quad S$$

ACTION STEPS

ACTION STEPS

Habits Are Taught, Too

For your homeschool year, you might want to focus on teaching a habit for a period of one month, letting it slow cook for about a month, and then evaluate. What's working? What needs to be changed? Do we need to go back and revamp our list of things that matter? Here is a habit tracker to get you started. It can be applied to teaching a child a deliberate habit, such as making one's bed in the morning before breakfast.

Habit Tracker

Decide which habit you want to teach for this month. Then, follow the 5-step process, focusing on one step per day. Repeat each week, until the habit has been formed.

Month : _____

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
1. I do and you watch.	2. I do and you help.	3. You do and I help.	4. You do and I watch.	5. You do and I inspect.

(c) mylittlebrickschoolhouse

Habit I am teaching this month: _____

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(c) mylittlebrickschoolhouse

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(c) mylittlebrickschoolhouse

Habit I am teaching this month: _____

Notes

Date / /

Work and Prayerful Trust



Dear Homeschooling Mama,
I know this isn't a quick fix. You must put in the work. Thankfully, we have research and a BIG GOD on our side. Habits are essentially engrained in the neural pathways of our brains. That's how God made us! It takes deliberate practice. Do we fail? At times. But we reevaluate when we do fail, and think back to what matters. We accept God's grace that He gives as a gift. Sometimes we need to weed out what has been squelching the life out of our daily rhythms. Begin the whole process with prayer. Show your planning to a significant other. You are not alone! We have a God who watches over us, and He does not sleep (Psalm 121:3).

With His help, we can focus on what matters, develop habits to support the focal points, and intentionally work toward establishing these habits.

With encouragement,



Let's connect!

Instagram @mylittlebrickschoolhouse
Facebook page: My Little Brick Schoolhouse
Website: www.mylittlebrickschoolhouse.com
Pinterest: My Little Brick Schoolhouse