

"What's the Big Idea?"

Level Two



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List of Books & Materials Needed to Complete

What's the Big Idea? - Level Two

- What's the Big Idea? - Level 2 Student Manual
- Jensen's Format Writing
- Trial and Triumph
- Editor in Chief Level 2
- The Thinking Toolbox
- The Grammar of Poetry (Student & Teacher)
- Men of Iron
- Handel (The Sower Series)
- Cue for Treason
- Coronation of Glory
- The Refugees
- Pilgrim's Progress (Modern Language Version)
- Johnny Tremain
- The Scarlet Pimpernel
- A Tale of Two Cities (Abridged)
- Carry on Mr. Bowditch
- Watership Down
- The Cay
- The Hiding Place

NOTE: Students should also have an age-appropriate dictionary, thesaurus, & atlas.

Introduction

In 2003 *Tree of Life* launched its Great Ideas program (A Study of the Great Ideas Through the Great Books). Since then all four levels have undergone some revision and, overall, we are pleased with the response we have received from parents and students. Good literature is being read, considered, and applied.

However, it has also been our experience that some students have found the transition to the Great Ideas studies, and high school in general, very challenging. There is a lot of reading, a very healthy amount of written work, and plenty of hours to put in. In short, not all students have the necessary skills to succeed right away. Most, however, have overcome this with perseverance, patience, and good old-fashioned hard work. "But", we wondered, "wouldn't it be better if all students were ready to take our secondary school courses when they arrived?" Indeed!

Our answer has been to introduce "*What's the Big Idea?*", a course offered at two levels for students who would normally be in Grade 7 and 8 (ages 11 to 13). "*What's the Big Idea?*" is aptly named. Although humorous at first glance, the title hints at the program's purpose; that is, to develop essential academic skills in young adolescents. Reading, taking notes, outlining, summarizing, logic, writing formats, grammar, memorization and recitation, Bible study...all these skills are specifically practiced in this comprehensive program. You add your own Math, Science, Second Language, Art, Music, etc.

In this book you will find daily plans for English Composition, Literature, and Grammar, History, Logic, and Bible study. Notebook/Summary/Copybook pages are also provided in order to engage the student in regular daily practice that will develop organizational skills crucial to future academic success. Also included are poems to memorize and recite, a supplementary reading list, and an assignment planning page (a place to record marks and/or other comments) if you are having work evaluated by *Tree of Life*.

For more specific information on how to proceed through this course, turn to the next section...

How to Work Through This Course

"What's the Big Idea?" is designed to help you get organized, gain some independence, and develop academic skills necessary for students in the "logic stage". Take a moment to flip through this book. You'll find where everything is located by turning to the **Table of Contents**.

First, you will find daily **Planning Pages**. These will help you organize what you must do each day in the following areas: English Composition, English Literature, English Grammar, History, Logic, and Bible. There are also places for you to plan your day in other subject areas. It is highly recommended that you work with a parent to plan an appropriate amount of work each day. It is also necessary that you mark down how much time you will schedule for each subject. Obviously, this will help you to stay on track.

NOTE: *"What's the Big Idea?"* was designed with a four day school week in mind. This allows a fifth day to either catch up on assignments still unfinished and/or to participate in other activities like art/music lessons, co-ops, recreation, work, etc. This means that a student *could* complete the entire course in 120 days. That's 30 weeks for a 4 day schedule or only 24 weeks if you decide to work straight ahead following a 5 day week. Basically, flexibility is built in to accommodate different interests, lifestyles, and schedules.

You will also find three **Notebook/Summary/Copybook Sections**: one for English Composition, one for History, and one for Bible. A sample of both the History and Bible notes have been filled in for you to provide an example of how the pages should be completed. Generally speaking, these pages are designed for you and you alone. The format will help you develop organizational skills that can be applied to other subjects, but the content of these pages, however, is up to you. Consider developing your own system of abbreviations or other techniques to help you take notes faster and more concisely. Just make sure that you do indeed do them and that you can read them later. ☺

Next, find a **Poetry Section**. Here are some poems that you can memorize and recite this year as well as some others that you will use to write summaries (when you get to those lessons). You are encouraged to at least read over the supplementary poems even if you and your parents decide that you will not memorize and recite them.

There is also a **Supplementary Reading List**. Here you will find a list of good books for all tastes. The assigned reading found in your planning pages is *mandatory*. However, it is recommended that you not necessarily do this reading during "school time", but schedule it as part of your recreational reading. Having said that, try to read as many of the supplementary books as possible this year. Make sure you write the date beside each book on the list as you finish it in order to keep some record of your private reading.

Finally, you will find a page where **Marks and Comments** can be recorded. If you have signed up to have your composition work evaluated by *Tree of Life School*, this is the place to record results when they are returned.

All assignments are to be submitted in a word processing document (preferably Microsoft Word) and emailed to evaluation@treeoflifeathome.com. Mailed assignments will **NOT** be accepted.

BOTH the attached file **AND** the subject line of the email must be labeled identically using the following format:

Name_Course_Assignment Title

Example: (John Smith_Big Ideas I_Example Paragraph)

Assignments not labeled properly will be returned to you unmarked, and you will be asked to resubmit the assignment with proper labeling. Do not think we are being nasty when we send back assignments that are not labeled properly. This is the only way to insure that your assignment gets to the proper evaluator and that you get the feedback you need to become a better student. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

For the Parent...

"What's the Big Idea?" is designed to lead your child in such a way as to be more independent in his learning. However, if your child is taking this program for the first time, they may not be quite ready for this lead of maturity yet. The daily planning pages contained in this manual have done much of the work for you as far as setting forth a regular schedule of what must be done. But you may need to help your child fill in the rest of the schedule, at least until he demonstrates that he can handle this on his own.

Take some time to look through this manual before you give it your child. Become familiar with its contents, at least where the various sections can be found. Take special note of the chart found in the back. Here you will find all of the assignments that need to be submitted to us for evaluation. *Please submit them as they are completed.* When they are returned, indicate the mark and other comments that you want to remember. This will provide an easy way to check your child's progress throughout the year. **Please send in the necessary confirmation for the following at the end of the year: *Poetry Memorized, English Notes Completed, History Notes Completed, Bible Notes Completed, All Assigned Literature Read, and A List of Books Read from the Supplementary Reading List.*** A final report will not be issued until this information is submitted. You can email this information to evaluation@treeoflifeathome.com. Thank you for your cooperation.

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School Day # 1 Date: _____

Total Time Today: _____

English Composition: Whether you are new to "What's the Big Idea?" or you are taking Level II after surviving Level I last year, it's probably a good idea to review what was covered in the first part your composition book - Jensen's Format Writing. Essentially three basic ideas are taught there: single paragraph formats, elements of the five paragraph essay, and five paragraph essay formats. Take some time today to dip into the text and find where these three concepts are covered. HINT: Check the Table of Contents.

English Literature: If you have not already at least started to read this novel, you will have five days to read Men of Iron. Obviously it would be best to organize your reading in such a way that you are also reading this novel on "our own time". You will be doing a lot of reading this year so all assigned novels must be completed according to the schedule. Make every effort to stay on schedule.

English Grammar: Editor in Chief Level 2 is a different type of grammar text. While it does teach certain concepts, it does it within the context of learning how to edit a piece of written work. Perhaps you have studied grammar extensively in the past...maybe not...but one skill that you must master to be successful in writing your own composition is the ability to edit. Now let's get one thing straight. NO ONE likes to find mistakes in their own composition. We ALL want to do it right the first time and be done with it. But that is not realistic, so we are going to practice editing other people's work all year. After all we don't mind finding fault with others, right? You may find these exercises easy or you may find them extremely frustrating, but either way we encourage you to follow the directions and make a good effort and there is little doubt you will be better at finding the errors by the end of the year. Who knows? Perhaps you won't even mind finding errors in your own writing. For today, simply take a few minutes to look through the text to see what type of work you will be doing and where the different sections are found. That didn't hurt too much, did it?

History: Read History Summaries Section found in this manual. Also read the introduction to Trial and Triumph found on pages 11-12 of the text. Take time to dip into the book (Table of Contents, random pages, Further Reading section). Consider the idea put forth by the author that Church History is your Family

History...that you are connected in some way to all the people you will read about in this book.

Logic: The Thinking Toolbox, Read pages 10-11 in your text. Take a moment to a look at the Table of Contents and briefly flip through the book taking time to read anything that looks interesting. Read pages. 14- 16 in the text today.

Bible: Read the Bible Copy Work and Journal Section found in this manual. There you will be given an explanation on how you will pursue your Bible study this year. Then copy Psalm 1 in your copybook. Application question: How can you delight in the law of the Lord?

Mathematics:

Science:

Spelling:

Second Language:

Art/Music:

Other:

School Day # 2 **Date:** _____

Total Time Today: _____

English Composition: Today we will begin to review in a bit more detail. A key part of the Level I course was learning to handle the seven formats for paragraph writing. Take 15 minutes or so to read through the material from pages 11-32 in the text. This will help you to re-familiarize yourself with these important concepts in academic writing.

English Literature: Continue to read Men of Iron.

English Grammar: Editor in Chief Level 2, Complete Lesson 1 found on page 2. Ask someone else to check your answers using the suggestions found on page 119 of this text. If you did not find all the necessary corrections to be made, make sure you reference the brief explanation found right after the suggested answers. This will help you learn from your own errors and lead to better understanding and retention of the concepts reviewed in this course.

History: Read "Polycarp - Witness in the Arena", beginning on page 17.

Logic: The Thinking Toolbox, Complete exercises, pages 17-19. Check your answers using the suggested answers in the back of the text.

Bible: Copy Romans 1: 1-7 in your copybook. Application question: What does Paul's use of the terms "servant" and "apostle" reveal about him?

Mathematics:

Science:

Spelling:

Second Language:

Art/Music:

Other:

School Day # 3 **Date:** _____

Total Time Today: _____

English Composition: Last year, as we built on the seven paragraph formats, we extended these ideas to include seven five paragraph essay formats. You will write a few of these this year, so it's pretty important to become familiar with them. Take 20 minutes or so to read through pages 33-55 in the text.

English Literature: Continue to read Men of Iron.

English Grammar: Editor in Chief Level 2, Complete Lesson 2 found on page 3. Ask someone else to check your answers using the suggestions found on page 119 of this text. If you did not find all the necessary corrections to be made, make sure you reference the brief explanation found right after the suggested answers. This will help you learn from your own errors and lead to better understanding and retention of the concepts reviewed in this course.

History: Normally you would be following the reading of a section from your text by writing a summary. However, you will recall that we included the summary for Polycarp as an example in your History section. Take a look at it again today and determine if your summary would have looked much like the example.

Logic: The Thinking Toolbox, Read pages 20-23 in your text.

Bible: Copy Romans 1: 8-12 in your copybook. Application question: What does this passage teach about your obligation to other Christians?

Mathematics:

Science:

Spelling:

Second Language:

Art/Music:

Other:

School Day # 4 **Date:** _____

Total Time Today: _____

English Composition: Final review day! Read pages 55-75 in the text. Note that the seven formats for the essays are the same as those for the paragraphs. Simple, huh? 😊

English Literature: Continue to read Men of Iron.

English Grammar: Editor in Chief Level 2, Complete Lesson 3 found on page 4. Ask someone else to check your answers using the suggestions found on page 119 of this text. If you did not find all the necessary corrections to be made, make sure you reference the brief explanation found right after the suggested answers. This will help you learn from your own errors and lead to better understanding and retention of the concepts reviewed in this course.

History: Read "Blandina-Martyr of Lyons" beginning on page 21.

Logic: The Thinking Toolbox, Complete exercises, pages 24-25. Check your answers using the suggested answers in the back of the text.

Bible: Copy Romans 1: 13-15 in your copybook. Application question: Beyond the obvious answer of divine inspiration, why do you suppose Paul felt he had to write verse 14?

Mathematics:

Science:

Spelling:

Second Language:

Art/Music:

Other:

School Day # 5 **Date:** _____

Total Time Today: _____

English Composition: Before we explore the various applications of the five paragraph essay formats found on pages 76-84 in the text, it's a good idea to do a straight-forward assignment to get your feet wet. Read and take notes on the Comparison Essay found on pages 73-75. Use the note-taking template found in the English Note-taking section of the manual.

English Literature: Complete Men of Iron before proceeding to day 6 of English Composition.

English Grammar: Editor in Chief Level 2, Complete Lesson 4 found on page 5. Ask someone else to check your answers using the suggestions found on page 120 of this text. If you did not find all the necessary corrections to be made, make sure you reference the brief explanation found right after the suggested answers.

History: Complete "Blandina" summary in your History notebook using the template provided in the History section.

Logic: The Thinking Toolbox, Read pages 26-27 in your text.

Bible: Copy Psalm 2:1-6 in your copybook. Application question: What is one way that this passage applies to Jesus?

Mathematics:

Science:

Spelling:

Second Language:

Art/Music:

Other:

School Day # 6 **Date:** _____

Total Time Today: _____

English Composition: OK...you've done the notes on the Comparison Essay and finished reading Men of Iron. Now the assignment....**TOPIC:** *Write a five paragraph Comparison Essay exploring the following: Myles Falworth can be seen as a picture of your typical hero in every way.* Begin to list all the categories that might be compared between Myles Falworth and a typical hero.

English Literature: Part of your literature component this year will be to learn some basics in poetry. Before you dive into your first lesson today, we want to advise you to begin reading the *Sower Series* biography, George Frederic Handel. You will need to have it read by Day 17. Now, let's take a look at some poetry. ☺ Do Lesson 1 in the Grammar of Poetry. Check answers in the teacher's book.

English Grammar: Editor in Chief Level 2, Read the information on Capitalization found on pages 6 and 7. Most of this will be review for you but there may be a few things you didn't know, so don't hurry through your reading. This is the information that will be used for the next group of lessons, so feel free to reference these if you are having trouble completing the exercises.

History: Read "Constantine-Defender of the Church" beginning on page 25.

Logic: The Thinking Toolbox, Complete exercises, pages 27-29. Check your answers using suggested answers found in the back of the text.

Bible: Copy Romans 1: 16-17 in your copybook. Application question: What really grabs you about verse 17 that you would like to study further?

Mathematics:

Science:

Spelling:

Second Language:

Art/Music/Other:

School Day # 7 **Date:** _____

Total Time Today: _____

English Composition: If you did not complete it yesterday, finish your list of categories comparing Myles Falworth and a typical hero. Look at your categories. Sub-divide them into three main divisions. Which list looks most favorable for you to develop into an essay? Arrange the divisions from least to greatest importance.

English Literature: Do Lesson 2 in the Grammar of Poetry. Check answers in the teacher's book.

English Grammar: Editor in Chief Level 2, Complete Lesson 5 found on page 8. Ask someone else to check your answers using the suggestions found on page 120 of this text. If you did not find all the necessary corrections to be made, make sure you reference the brief explanation found right after the suggested answers.

History: Complete "Constantine" summary in your History notebook using the template provided in the History section.

Logic: The Thinking Toolbox, Read pages 30-34 in your text.

Bible: Copy Romans 1:18-23 in your copybook. Application question: If verse 17 is the solution, how are verses 18 to 21 the problem?

Mathematics:

Science:

Spelling:

Second Language:

Art/Music:

Other:

School Day # 8 **Date:** _____

Total Time Today: _____

English Composition: Today write the thesis statement for your essay. Work hard at crafting it as it will tell the reader what your essay is about.

English Literature: Do Lesson 3 (Part A-C) in the Grammar of Poetry.

English Grammar: Editor in Chief Level 2, Complete Lesson 6 found on page 9. Ask someone else to check your answers using the suggestions found on pages 120-121 of this text. If you did not find all the necessary corrections to be made, make sure you reference the brief explanation found right after the suggested answers.

History: Read "Athanasius - Against the World" beginning on page 31.

Logic: The Thinking Toolbox, Complete exercises, pages 34-36. Check your answers.

Bible: Copy Romans 1:24-25 in your copybook. Application question: How is "giving people over" part of their punishment?

Mathematics:

Science:

Spelling:

Second Language:

Art/Music:

Other:

School Day # 9 **Date:** _____

Total Time Today: _____

English Composition: Today arrange the details for each paragraph of your essay from least to greatest.

English Literature: Complete Lesson 3 in the Grammar of Poetry. Check answers in the teacher's book.

English Grammar: Editor in Chief Level 2, Complete Lesson 7 found on page 10. Ask someone else to check your answers using the suggestions found on page 121 of this text. If you did not find all the necessary corrections to be made, make sure you reference the brief explanation found right after the suggested answers.

History: Complete "Athanasius - Against the World" summary in your history notebook.

Logic: The Thinking Toolbox, Read pages 37-39 in your text.

Bible: Copy Romans 1:26-27 in your copybook. Application question: How is this passage an explanation of the fact that sometimes God punishes us by giving us what we want?

Mathematics:

Science:

Spelling:

Second Language:

Art/Music:

Other:

School Day # 10 Date: _____

Total Time Today: _____

English Composition: Set up your seven sentence skeleton.

English Literature: Do Lesson 4 (Part A) in the Grammar of Poetry.

English Grammar: Editor in Chief Level 2, Complete Lesson 8 found on page 11. Ask someone else to check your answers using the suggestions found on page 121-122 of this text. If you did not find all the necessary corrections to be made, make sure you reference the brief explanation found right after the suggested answers.

History: Read "Ambrose - Bishop of Milan" beginning on page 35.

Logic: The Thinking Toolbox, Complete exercises, pages 39-41. Check your answers.

Bible: Copy Psalm 2:7-12 in your copybook. Application question: What is God asking the "nations" to do in this psalm?

Mathematics:

Science:

Spelling:

Second Language:

Art/Music:

Other:

| "What's the Big Idea?" Level Two Marks | |
|--|-------|
| Assignment | Marks |
| Comparison Essay on Men of Iron (5%) | |
| Example Paragraph on Unit I in History (2%) | |
| Biography Book Report on Handel (5%) | |
| Historical Fiction Book Report on Cue for Treason (5%) | |
| Classification Paragraph on Unit II in History (2%) | |
| Fiction Book Report on Johnny Tremain (5%) | |
| Process Paragraph on Unit III in History (2%) | |
| Analogy Paragraph on Unit IV in History (2%) | |
| Process Essay on The Scarlet Pimpernel (5%) | |
| Cause and Effect Paragraph on Unit V in History (2%) | |
| Cause and Effect Essay on The Cay (5%) | |
| Spacial Poem (5%) | |
| Major Paper on Watership Down (10%) | |
| Paragraph on Modern Christian Hero (5%) | |
| Grammar of Poetry Lessons Completed (10%) | |
| English Notes Completed (5%) | |
| History Notes Completed (10%) | |
| Bible Notes Completed (10%) | |
| All Assigned Literature Read (5%) | |
| Supplementary Reading (1 bonus mark for each book up to 5 marks) | |
| <i>Final Mark</i> | |