

"What's the Big Idea?"

Level One



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List of Books & Materials Needed to Complete

What's the Big Idea? - Level One

- What's the Big Idea? - Level 1 Student Manual
- Growing With Grammar Level 7 Set (2nd edition)
- Jensen's Format Writing
- On the Shores of the Great Sea
- The Discovery of New Worlds
- Fallacy Detective (3rd edition)
- Tales of Ancient Egypt
- The Cat of Bubastes
- Hittite Warrior
- Around the World in 80 days
- Victory on the Walls
- Tales of Greek Heroes
- Island of the Blue Dolphins
- The Children's Homer
- Theras and His Town
- Archimedes and the Door of Science
- Caesar's Gallic Wars
- The Bronze Bow
- Quintus
- Eagle of the Ninth
- Polycarp, The Crown of Fire
- The Adventures of Tom Sawyer

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

For the Student...

"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 Sections**: one for English Composition, one for History, and one for Bible. A sample of both the History Summary 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. ☺

You will also find a **Poetry Section**. In this section are two poems that you will memorize and recite this year as well as some supplementary offerings for your enjoyment. 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**. In this section 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 do this reading during "school time", but schedule it as part of your recreational reading. We also recommend that you try to read as many of the supplementary books as possible this year as well. 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.

PLEASE NOTE THIS: 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 leap 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.

PLEASE take some time to look through this manual before you give it to 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, record 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 Summaries Completed, Bible Notes Completed, All Assigned Literature Read, and A List of Books Read from the Supplementary Reading List.*** You can check the mark sheet at the back of this manual for the percentages used for each section. A final report will not be issued until this information is submitted. Thank you for your cooperation.

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School Day # 1 **Date:** _____

Total Time Today: _____

English Composition: In your Format Writing text read pages 5 and 6. Answer the following questions using the appropriate sheet in the English Composition Notebook Section: What type of writing skills will be studied in this text? What are the four basic components of writing? What is the key to effective writing? How can one best learn from returned papers? Why are the examples in each lesson important?

English Literature: Read Tales of Ancient Egypt "Ra and His Children".

English Grammar: Growing With Grammar, Read Chapter 1.1 in Text, page 1-3. Complete Worksheet 1.1 in Workbook.

History: While written from the perspective of a very broad Christian worldview, the history texts used for this course (On the Shores of the Great Sea & The Discovery of New Worlds) are what is known as secular sources. That means that the author has not written from an explicitly Christian perspective. This does not mean that everything you read in this text is necessarily false, but it does mean that information may be interpreted differently. Of course you should not be intimidated by this fact. You will need to develop skills for the future when you will daily come across material that is written from a "secular" perspective. In fact, that is one of the purposes for the way you will read history this year and write the summaries we will require of you...to learn to question what you are reading. Do you remember the Berean Christians mentioned in the Book of Acts? They tested everything Paul said by holding it up to the Scriptures to see if it was true. How much more do you need these skills when reading material that makes no claim to be overtly Christian. Don't be concerned if you find this difficult at first. It's a skill that takes years and much maturity to really master. Today simply take some time to briefly glance through the two history texts. Read the covers (front and back), look at their Table of Contents, and note any topics that might potentially be of interest. That's it. Put your history away now. You'll begin to read in earnest next day.

Logic: Fallacy Detective, (3rd ed.) Read pages 10-12 in your Text.

Bible: Read "Tips for Studying the Bible" found on page 180 of this manual. Then read Genesis 1—2:3. Complete the appropriate notes using the template found in the Bible Notebook section.

Mathematics:

Science:

Spelling:

Second Language:

Art/Music:

Other:

School Day # 2 **Date:** _____

Total Time Today: _____

English Composition: Read page 12 in your text. Turn to the appropriate page in the English Composition Notebook Section in this manual and write one fact that is most striking to you.

English Literature: Read Tales of Ancient Egypt "Isis and Osiris"

English Grammar: Growing With Grammar, Read Chapter 1.2 in Text, pages 4-6. Complete Worksheet 1.2 in Workbook.

History: Read on The Shores of the Great Sea, Chapter 1, *The Home of Abraham*.

Logic: Fallacy Detective, (3rd ed.) Read pages 14-15 in your Text.

Bible: Read Genesis 2:4-7. Complete the appropriate notebook page.

Mathematics:

Science:

Spelling:

Second Language:

Art/Music:

Other:

School Day # 3 **Date:** _____

Total Time Today: _____

English Composition: Read page 13 in your text. Turn to the appropriate page in the English Composition Notebook Section in this manual and copy the outline for essentials of good paragraphs exactly as it is presented on page 13.

English Literature: Read Tales of Ancient Egypt "The Great Queen Hatshepsut".

English Grammar: Growing With Grammar, Read Chapter 1.3 in Text, pages 7-8. Complete Worksheet 1.3 in Workbook.

History: Read on The Shores of the Great Sea, Chapter 2, *Into Africa*.

Logic: Fallacy Detective, (3rd ed.) Complete exercises on page 16. Check answers.

Bible: Read Genesis 2:8-25. Complete the appropriate notebook page.

Mathematics:

Science:

Spelling:

Second Language:

Art/Music:

Other:

School Day # 4 **Date:** _____

Total Time Today: _____

English Composition: Read page 14 in your text. Turn to the appropriate page in the English Composition Notebook Section in this manual and list the three possible points of view that could be used in a paragraph and explain when each should be used. Why maintain consistent verb tense in a paragraph? What is "subordination of ideas" and why is it important?

English Literature: Read Tales of Ancient Egypt "The Prince and the Sphinx".

English Grammar: Growing With Grammar, Read Chapter 1.4 in Text, pages 9-14. Complete Worksheet 1.4 in Workbook.

History Read on The Shores of the Great Sea, Chapter 3, *An Old Trade Route*.

Logic: Fallacy Detective, (3rd ed.) Read pages 17-19 in your text.

Bible: Read Genesis 3. Complete the appropriate notebook page.

Mathematics:

Science:

Spelling:

Second Language:

Art/Music:

Other:

School Day # 5 **Date:** _____

Total Time Today: _____

English Composition: Read pages 15 and 16 in your text. Turn to the appropriate page in the English Composition Notebook Section in this manual. What is "continuity in writing" and why is it important? In your notebook list the 8 means of promoting continuity in writing. Write the example as well if that will better help you to remember.

English Literature: Read Tales of Ancient Egypt "The Golden Lotus"

English Grammar: Growing With Grammar, Read Chapter 1.5 in Text, pages 15-16. Complete Worksheet 1.5 in Workbook.

History Read on The Shores of the Great Sea, Chapter 4, *Joseph in Egypt*.

Logic: Fallacy Detective, (3rd ed.) Complete exercises on pages 19-20. Check answers.

Bible: Read Genesis 4: 1-15. Complete the appropriate notebook page.

Mathematics:

Science:

Spelling:

Second Language:

Art/Music:

Other:

School Day # 6 **Date:** _____

Total Time Today: _____

English Composition: In your notebook do the Continuity exercises found on page 17 of your text. **After** you complete them, check your answers on page 147.

English Literature: Read Tales of Ancient Egypt "Teta the Magician"

English Grammar: Growing With Grammar, Read Chapter 1.6 in Text, pages 17-18. Complete Worksheet 1.6 in Workbook.

History: Read on The Shores of the Great Sea, Chapter 5, *The Story of the Nile Flood*.

Logic: Fallacy Detective, (3rd ed.) Read pages 21-23 in your text.

Bible: Read Genesis 4: 16-24. Complete the appropriate notebook page.

Mathematics:

Science:

Spelling:

Second Language:

Art/Music:

Other:

School Day # 7 **Date:** _____

Total Time Today: _____

English Composition: Read Page 18 in your text. NOTE: The Parameter Check Sheet Type 1 found on page 135 will make a good reference for you as you prepare to submit paragraph assignments for evaluation.

English Literature: Read Tales of Ancient Egypt "The Land of the Dead"

English Grammar: Growing With Grammar, Read Chapter 1.7 in Text, page 19. Complete Worksheet 1.7 in Workbook.

History: Read on The Shores of the Great Sea, Chapter 6, *In a Strange Land*.

Logic: Fallacy Detective, (3rd ed.) Complete exercises, pages 23-24. Check answers.

Bible: Read Genesis 4:25-26. Complete the appropriate notebook page.

Mathematics:

Science:

Spelling:

Second Language:

Art/Music:

Other:

School Day # 8 **Date:** _____

Total Time Today: _____

English Composition: Read through pages 12 to 18 in your text once again. This is simply an end review of all you have done over the past two weeks and will serve to get you ready to begin writing next week.

English Literature: Read Tales of Ancient Egypt, "The Tale of Two Brothers"

English Grammar: Growing With Grammar, Read Chapter 1.8, pages 20 to 23 in textbook. Complete Worksheet 1.8 in workbook.

History: Other than reading and learning about history this year, you are also going to practice the very important skill of summarizing. In fact every couple of weeks you will be asked to write a summary based on one of your previous history readings. While you may or may not have had opportunity in the past to develop the ability to summarize effectively, it might be a good idea to consider how to go about writing one before you begin. Turn to page 168 in the back of this manual for instructions and an example to help you get started. This will be your lesson today...no summary...just learn how we want you to do it. Relieved?

Logic: Fallacy Detective, (3rd ed.) Read pages 26-29 in your text.

Bible: Read Genesis 5. Complete the appropriate notebook page.

Mathematics:

Science:

Spelling:

Second Language:

Art/Music:

Other:

School Day # 9 **Date:** _____

Total Time Today: _____

English Composition: Read page 19 in your text. Turn to the appropriate page in the English Composition Notebook Section in this manual. Take notes on points that you want to remember. Now read the two examples on page 20 carefully. This will help you see a practical application of the Example Paragraph format.

English Literature: Read Tales of Ancient Egypt, "The Story of the Shipwrecked Sailor."

English Grammar: Growing With Grammar, Read Chapter 1.9 in Text, pages 24-25. Complete Worksheet 1.9 in Workbook.

History: Read on The Shores of the Great Sea, Chapter 7, *The Children of Israel*.

Logic: Fallacy Detective, (3rd ed.) Complete exercises, pages 29-30. Check answers.

Bible: Read Genesis 6: 1-8. Complete the appropriate notebook page.

Mathematics:

Science:

Spelling:

Second Language:

Art/Music:

Other:

School Day # 10 Date: _____

Total Time Today: _____

English Composition: Do Assignment #1 on page 20. Your topic must be selected from the Sample Topics section on this page. It's a lot to ask perhaps, but you need to finish your paragraph before the day is over. It does not need to be perfect but the structure should be clearly that of an Example Paragraph.

English Literature: Read Tales of Ancient Egypt "The Peasant and the Workman".

English Grammar: Growing With Grammar, Read Chapter 1.10 in Text, pages 26-28. Complete Worksheet 1.10 in Workbook.

History: Read on The Shores of the Great Sea, Chapter 8, *Back to the Fatherland*.

Logic: Fallacy Detective, (3rd ed.) Read pages 31-32 in your text.

Bible: Read Genesis 6: 9-12. Complete the appropriate notebook page.

Mathematics:

Science:

Spelling:

Second Language:

Art/Music:

Other:

<i>"What's the Big Idea?" Level One Marks</i>	
Assignment	Marks
Example Paragraph on "Tales of Ancient Egypt" (5%)	
Classification Paragraph on Tombs in Ancient Civilizations (5%)	
Definition Paragraph on "Victory on the Walls" (5%)	
Process Paragraph on the Sport of Bull Leaping (5%)	
Analogy Paragraph on "Tales of Greek Heroes" (5%)	
Cause and Effect Paragraph on Cyrus and Darius (5%)	
Comparison Paragraph on "The Children's Homer" (5%)	
Thesis Statements (5%)	
Introductory Paragraphs (5%)	
Concluding Paragraphs (5%)	
Example Essay on "The Bronze Bow" (12.5%)	
Cause and Effect Essay and "Quintus" (12.5%)	
English Notes Completed (5%)	
History Summaries Completed (5%)	
Bible Notes Completed (5%)	
Poetry Memorization Completed (5%)	
All Assigned Literature Read (5%)	
Supplementary Reading (1 bonus mark for each book up to 5 marks)	
<i>Final Mark</i>	

