

Passport to Learning

Morning

Time Plans



Travel
UNIT

Welcome,



Pour yourself a cup of coffee, put your feet up, and take a little coffee break with me. Let's talk about Family Style Learning using simple Morning Time plans. Our family found the simplest way to homeschool was to learn as much as we could together as a family. We found the easiest way to do this was by setting time aside each morning to do our Bible, memory work, and humanities together. In our home, we called it family time; you may call it Morning Time, Circle Time, Table Time, Basket Time, or something similar.

Each morning, our family would gather at the table for breakfast and devotions. Then we would congregate on the couch and floor in our family room for our family-style lessons. I would read aloud to the kids while they drew something, built something, or created something with their hands. After discussing the book or chapter we read, we would work on memory work, read some poetry, learn a folk song or hymn, write in our journals, play a game (usually math-related), learn about an artist or composer, draw in our nature journals, discuss current or historical events, do some map work, maybe do a science experiment, and from time to time, read a little Shakespeare.

Did we cover all of these things each day? No way! After family devotions and read-aloud, we would do 2 or 3 of the things mentioned as a family before taking a break and moving on to independent work. In this resource, I have compiled for you our Morning Time Plans we did over the years. Each monthly plan suggests topics to read, discuss, memorize, learn, teach, observe, and do.

Use what you like and what appeals to your family. Skip the rest. Each month is "grab and go." Scripture, memory work, poetry, map work, and art prints are printer ready. Links are provided for geography, art, science, and music studies. All you need to do is collect picture books and chapter books to read (I share some of my favorites), print what you need, and start. For more ideas on how to use Morning Time Plans, listen to Coffee With Carrie Homeschool Podcast [Episode #130, "Simple Homeschool Solutions: Let's Get Loopy!"](#)

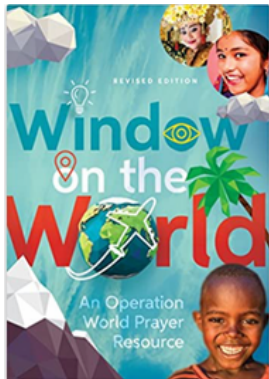
May the Lord bless your homeschooling adventures for His glory,

— Carrie —
DE FRANCISCO



Family Devotions

Start each day in prayer and worship. In this year's Morning Time Plans, you and your family will be "traveling the world." As you "travel," spend each week praying for missionaries around the world. Pray for the people and cultures around the world that do not know the saving grace of Jesus Christ. Learn about different world religions and compare them to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I recommend using the book, Window on the World: An Operation World Prayer Resource (WOW) by Operation World Resources and edited by Molly Wall and Jason Mandryk. From, October through May, I will suggest countries and cultures to read about from this book during your family devotional time.



Map Work

Create a Map Work Binder for each child (or add these pages to their Memory Work Binder). Each month, print the maps to be learned and memorized. Print one blank map and one labeled map for each child. Place the blank map and labeled map back to back inside a sheet protector. Then place each sheet protector into the Map Work Binder. Another alternative is to purchase Transparent Menu Covers. For younger students, print extra copies of the labeled maps to use as coloring sheets. Each day, trace with a dry-erase marker the labeled map. Once or twice a week, try to label the blank map. Once the country or continent is memorized, try drawing and labeling it from memory. Each week, pick a country to read about in Children's Atlas of God's World (CAofGW) by Froman or in The Travel Book Atlas (TB) by Lonely Planet. For example, if the monthly continent focus is South America, then pick 3-4 countries to read about that are located in South America. For more ideas on how to "travel the world" and do simple map work, listen to Coffee With Carrie Homeschool Podcast Episode #69, "Passport to Learning."



Read Aloud

This is the heart and soul of your family-style learning and morning time. It doesn't really matter which classics or picture books you read; the idea is to spend at least 20 minutes a day reading aloud to your children. However, it is a time (and sanity) saver to read to the entire family books that are related to the topics you are studying in history, science, art, and music. Each month, I suggest a few classics to read as well as give links for recommended picture books. Don't let my recommendations add extra stress to your planning. I often found I could go to the library at the beginning of the month with only a list of topics I wanted to cover, and I could find an abundance of picture books to check out. I personally made more work for myself trying to find the exact books recommended in teacher guides and packed curriculum. Start with the suggested books in each month's Morning Time Plans and then check out or purchase any other treasures you find along the way.

Math Morning Time

Math and games were a consistent part of our morning time routine. While math was usually what my children did during their independent work or one-on-one with me later in the day, I did incorporate math during our morning time through picture books and/or games. Each month, recommended math picture books will be given to read aloud during your morning time. Over the years, I collected quality math picture books to include in our home library. There is an abundance of picture books that teach counting, shapes, and adding skills so I only purchased the ones my kids loved to read over and over again. Then each month, I would get from the library a ton more. New ones come out every year. Surprisingly, there are a ton of math picture books that teach higher-level math skills such as fractions, multiplication, division, probability, decimals, measurement, ratio and proportions, geometry, and even algebraic concepts. This year while "traveling the world" during Morning Time, I highly recommend using the [Count Your Way Through Country Series](#) by James Haskins. Listen to Coffee With Carrie Homeschool Podcast [Episode #19 "Math Morning Time: Tame Those Math Tears and Fears."](#)

Check out my [Math Games PlayList](#) at my Coffee With Carrie Homeschool Help YouTube Channel. I share over a dozen simple math games you can play with a deck of cards or a pair of dice. There are games for all math levels, including algebra.



Memory Work

Create a Memory Work Binder for each child. Each month, print the scripture memory verse, poem, song, maps, and/or passages suggested for memorization. Print one of each for each child. Place the memory work pages inside sheet protectors. Then place each sheet into the Memory Work Binder. Another alternative is to purchase [Transparent Menu Covers](#). When you read, recite, or memorize verses, poems, or passages, they are easy to find and use. You can also use dry-erase markers to highlight or underline keywords. For more ideas on how to incorporate memory work into your days, listen to Coffee With Carrie Homeschool Podcast [Episode #116, Memory Work: A Podcast To Remember](#).

Poetry

My kids did not enjoy poetry so I had to be intentional about including it. I did this by including at least one poem and one poet in our Morning Time Plans each month. Because this was not an area of interest for my children, I made sure I kept poetry time light and enjoyable. Keep it simple. Read the poem with your family and simply enjoy it. It's really that easy! If you want, ask your children to close their eyes while you are reading the poem. Then after, they can narrate what they pictured in their minds, or they can draw an illustration that goes with the poem. Ask what they liked about the poem and what they didn't like. Focus on a new vocabulary word heard in the poem. If you have time, print the poem and place it in your child's Memory Work Binder. Each day or each week, recite the poem and memorize it line by line. For fun, read the poem with different accents. With older kids, you can analyze the rhyming pattern (if there is one). Teens can look for literary devices in the poem such as personification, alliteration, similes, and onomatopoeia. If your child loves to write, then try creating a few original poems about the same topic or using the same rhyming scheme. I honestly think poetry should be read for enjoyment; it doesn't need to be over-analyzed. For more ideas on how to have fun with poetry, listen to Coffee With Carrie Homeschool Podcast [Episode #93, "Poetry Tea Time."](#)



Nature Study

At the beginning of the year, let each child pick out a new drawing journal.

This will be his/her nature journal for the year. Each week, nature study suggestions and activities are given in the Monthly Morning Time Plans. Feel free to do some, all, or none of them. You can use the activities to supplement whatever you are already doing in science, or they can be your sole science "curriculum" for the year. In the Nature Study section of the Morning Time Plans, drawing, painting, and watercolor instructions, videos, and links are given. The primary objective of doing nature studies is to appreciate God's handiwork in creation, to improve observation skills, to inspire curiosity, and to get outside.

After spending time in nature and drawing something that piqued your child's interest, you can stop there. However, if you want to include more, give your child a verse, poem, or inspirational quote to copy next to his/her drawing. If your child is older, he/she can research the item drawn and write facts about it next to his/her drawing or they can spend time labeling the parts of their drawing. The goal is to observe and enjoy nature. For simple ways to incorporate Nature Studies in your week, listen to past Coffee With Carrie Homeschool Podcast episode.

Art Study

Print in color the masterpiece for the month. In our morning time plans, we scheduled two weeks for our art and artist study. If you would like to learn about the artist and his/her work once a week during the entire month, then search the internet for 2-3 other masterpieces by the artist to use. The first week, start with the masterpiece given in the Morning Time Plans. Then each of the following weeks, focus on a different masterpiece by the same artist. Use the same procedure described in the Morning Time Plans on the Art Study pages. Since we purposefully chose famous artists, it will be easy to research the artist on the internet and to find quality picture books at your local library about each artist to dig deeper into his/her life and works. I highly recommend building your own home library of artist picture books. Check out some of our favorite artist picture book series: [The Katie Books](#) by James Mayhew, [Anholt's Artists Books For Children](#) by Laurence Anholt, [Getting to Know the World's Greatest Artists](#) by Mike Venezia, and [Smart About Art books](#). We also invested in many art and artist card games and board games to play during our Morning Time. It was a great way to review artists we have learned about and to introduce new artists not yet covered. For more information on how to do simple art studies, listen to Coffee With Carrie Homeschool Podcast [Episode #15: "Let's Talk Art Studies: What Are They and How To Start."](#)

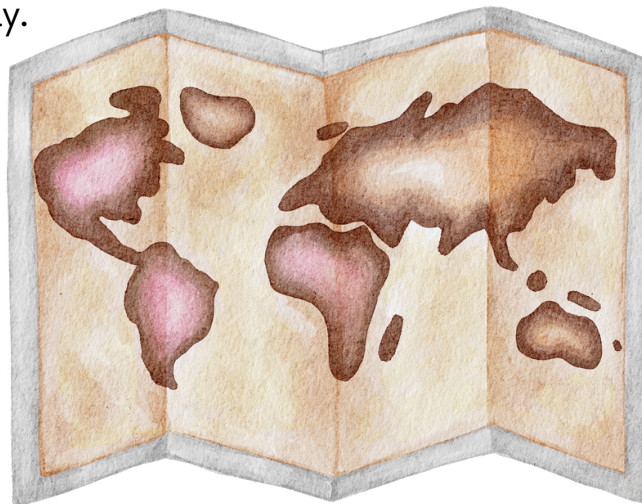
Music Study

In this year's Morning Time Plans, I combined Composer Studies with Folk and Hymn Studies. You can learn a lot about a culture or time period by singing, listening to, and learning American folk songs and folk songs from around the world. In addition, traditional church hymns are full of biblical truths, doctrine, and bible verses. While listening to, singing, and discussing lyrics of traditional hymns, your family will be learning about God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

In September and December, I include a composer study. During the remaining months, your family will learn a new folk song or hymn related to the places and cultures discussed that month.

For a composer study, create a playlist of the composer of the month. Start with the musical piece or symphony listed in the Monthly Morning Time Plan. Spend one week learning about the composer, his or her life, the musical era of his/her work, and one or two musical pieces suggested in the plans. Use your playlist throughout the month. Use it as background music when playing, drawing, cooking, eating, driving, cleaning, and resting. The idea is to infuse your family's day with beautiful music. Just listen and enjoy. Eventually, your children will begin to recognize the composer's style or the style of a particular musical era.

For a folk song or hymn study, print the folk song or hymn for each child and place it in his/her Memory Work Binder. Each morning, start with family devotions and worship by singing the hymn together. For fun, listen to and sing the suggested folk song from another country during Morning Time or throughout the day.



December Morning Time Plans



Travel
Europe

Scripture

Throughout the month, read and discuss Luke 2.
Focus on the memory verse: Isaiah 9:6.
Pray for Bulgaria, Greece, and Ukraine from the WOW book.

Map Work

Learn and memorize European Countries and Capitals. Older students should draw and label the Europe from memory.
Read about Europe (pg 29-48) from CAofGW or visit [USA Facts for Kids](#) website.

Poetry

Read, discuss, and memorize "[Love Came Down at Christmas](#)" by Christina Rossetti.

Art Study

Study the painting, "[Mystic Nativity](#)" and learn about the Renaissance artist, Sandro Botticelli.

Music Study

Learn about [George Frideric Handel](#) and listen to his famous oratorio, "[Messiah](#)."

Nature Study

Learn about forests and the animals that live in deciduous, coniferous, and boreal forests.

Math Work

Fun math picture books to read by Jim Haskins: [Count Your Way Through France](#), [Count Your Way Through Greece](#), [Count Your Way Through Germany](#), [Count Your Way Through Ireland](#) and [Count Your Way Through Italy](#).

Read Aloud

Read [24 Christmas Stories: Faith and Traditions from Around the World](#) by Judith Bouilloc, [A World of Cookies for Santa](#) by Furman, [Christmas Around the World: A Christmas Holiday Book for Kids](#) by Lankford, Christmas themed picture books and/or one of the following chapter books: [The Best Christmas Pageant Ever](#) by Robinson or [A Christmas Carol](#) by Dickens.

Cultural Connections

In the kitchen, make Gingerbread cookies (Germany), Plum Pudding (UK), Italian cookies, and Saffron Buns (Sweden). Then make a paper dreidel and play The Dreidel Game. For fun, try to solve the 12 Days of Christmas Riddle.



Cuisine Spotlight: Germany

Gingerbread Cookies (Vegan)

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 tablespoon powdered ginger
- 1 tablespoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup vegan butter, brought up to room temperature
- 3/4 cup organic brown sugar
- 3/4 cup molasses
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract



For the Frosting

- 2 cups powdered sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 tablespoons water, plus up to an additional tablespoon, as needed

DIRECTIONS

1. Stir the flour, baking powder, ginger, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, and salt together in a large mixing bowl. Set it aside.
2. In a separate large mixing bowl, use an electric mixer to beat the butter and brown sugar together until smooth and creamy, for about 1 minute.
3. Add the molasses and vanilla and beat until uniform and creamy.
4. Slowly add the flour mixture to the butter mixture fully mixing in each addition before adding the next. By the time all the flour has been added the mixture should form a dough.
5. Divide the dough into two halves and roll each into a ball. Wrap each ball tightly in plastic wrap. Place the dough halves into the fridge to chill for at least 3 hours and up to 2 days.
6. Cut the dough using cookie cutters, then transfer the cookies to the baking sheets. Freeze for 20 minutes.
7. Bake the cookies for 8 to 10 minutes at 350. Cookies will harden as they cool.
8. While the cookies cool, mix the frosting ingredients together. Keep the mixture thick so it pipes easily.



For fun, decorate cookies with candies
and gumdrops.

Cuisine Spotlight: England

Plum Pudding

INGREDIENTS:

- 1/2 cup unsalted butter softened
- 3/4 cup light brown sugar packed
- 1 tablespoon molasses
- 1 tablespoon finely grated orange zest
- 2 large eggs at room temperature
- 2/3 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 cup blanched almonds chopped
- 1/4 cup freshly squeezed orange juice

DIRECTIONS

1. Mix together chopped fruit and orange juice. Cover and let stand for at least 1 hour, stirring occasionally. The fruit will soak up the liquid and become moist and juicy.
2. While the fruit is soaking, generously grease a 6 1/3 cup (or basin) with butter, and line the base with a circle of parchment paper. Plum pudding is traditionally round.
3. Beat the butter in a large mixing bowl with a handheld electric mixer about 2 minutes. Add the brown sugar and beat until fluffy.
4. Mix in the molasses and orange zest, then add the eggs one at a time, putting a tablespoon of flour with each egg. Beat until well blended.
5. Fold in the flour, baking powder, and mixed spice until smooth.
6. Stir in the almonds and the bowl of soaked fruit, along with any liquid that might be in the bowl. Mix thoroughly until the fruit is evenly distributed, then pack the batter into the prepared basin.
7. Place the basin into a larger pot and pour the boiling water around the basin. The water level should come halfway up the sides of the basin. Steam the pudding for 4 hours adding more boiling water as needed.
8. Make sure it ages for at least 4 weeks before serving. It needs time for the flavors to mature. (As long as it's stored in a cool, dark place, it shouldn't go moldy or spoil.)



FRUIT

- 1 cup raisins
- 3/4 cup currants
- 2/3 cup golden raisins
- 1/2 cup prunes chopped
- 1/3 cup dried apricots chopped
- 1 1/4 cup Golden Delicious apple peeled and diced (about 1 large apple)

Cuisine Spotlight: Sweden

St. Lucia Saffron Buns



INGREDIENTS:

- 3/4 cup milk
- 1/2 teaspoon saffron threads
- 1 teaspoon plus 1/4 cup white granulated sugar
- 1 (1/4-ounce) packet active dry yeast
- 3 1/2 to 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- cardamom, optional
- 1/4 cup (4 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened)
- 1/4 cup sour cream
- 2 large eggs (+ 1 egg for glaze)
- Raisins

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat milk, saffron, and sugar until the milk is steamy. Remove from heat and stir to dissolve the sugar. Let cool.
2. Sprinkle the yeast over the warm saffron-infused milk, and let sit for 5 to 10 minutes until foamy.
3. In a separate bowl, mix together the flour, sugar, salt, and cardamom.
4. Make a well in the center of the flour and add the yeast milk saffron mixture, the eggs, the butter, and the sour cream. Mix the ingredients until well incorporated.
5. Knead the dough until the dough is still a little sticky to the touch.
6. Shape the dough into a ball and place in a large bowl. Cover with plastic wrap and let it rise. When the dough has doubled in size, gently press it down and knead it a couple of times.
7. Break off a piece and form it into a ball about 2 inches wide. Roll the ball out into a snake, about 14 inches long and then form an "S" with spirals at each end. Place on a lined baking sheet and repeat with the rest of the dough.
8. Cover with plastic wrap and place in a warm spot until the dough shapes double in size, 30 minutes to an hour.
9. Brush with egg wash, place raisins on bun and bake at 400 for 10 minutes.



Cuisine Spotlight: Italy

Grandma's Anise Cookies

INGREDIENTS:

- 2½ cups all purpose (plain) flour
- 2½ teaspoons baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 large eggs
- ⅔ cup granulated sugar
- ½ cup unsalted butter
- ¼ cup whole milk
- 1 ½ teaspoons anise extract (or more if you like anise flavoring)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract



GLAZE:

- 1 cup (120 grams) powdered sugar
- ⅛ teaspoon anise extract (or to taste)
- 5 to 6 teaspoons whole milk (or water)

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F and line two baking sheets with parchment paper
2. In a bowl whisk (or sieve) all purpose flour, baking powder and salt.
3. In a stand mixer bowl, beat with the whisk attachment the eggs until frothy, about 1 minute.
4. Gradually add the sugar and butter and beat until the mixture is thick about 2 or 3 minutes.
5. Then on low speed add the milk, anise extract, and vanilla extract.
6. Remove the bowl from the stand mixer and add the flour in two additions mixing with a wooden spoon.
7. Roll teaspoonfuls of the dough into balls and place on the prepared baking tray.
8. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes until the tops have cracked and are lightly browned. Don't overbake.
9. Mix the glaze ingredients together. Dip the tops of the cookies into the glaze and place them upright on a wire rack. Sprinkle immediately with rainbow sprinkles. Allow to set.



Dreidel Hanukkah Game

The dreidel game is a Hanukkah tradition. It was created as a way for Jews to study the Torah, the first five books of the Hebrew Bible.

MATERIALS:

- 1 dreidel per team
- 15 tokens (pennies, counters, or other small objects) per player

MAKE A DREIDEL

- Print the template.
- Draw the four Jewish symbols on each side. (See below)
- Fold and tape together

**Purchase a dreidel. [CLICK HERE.](#)



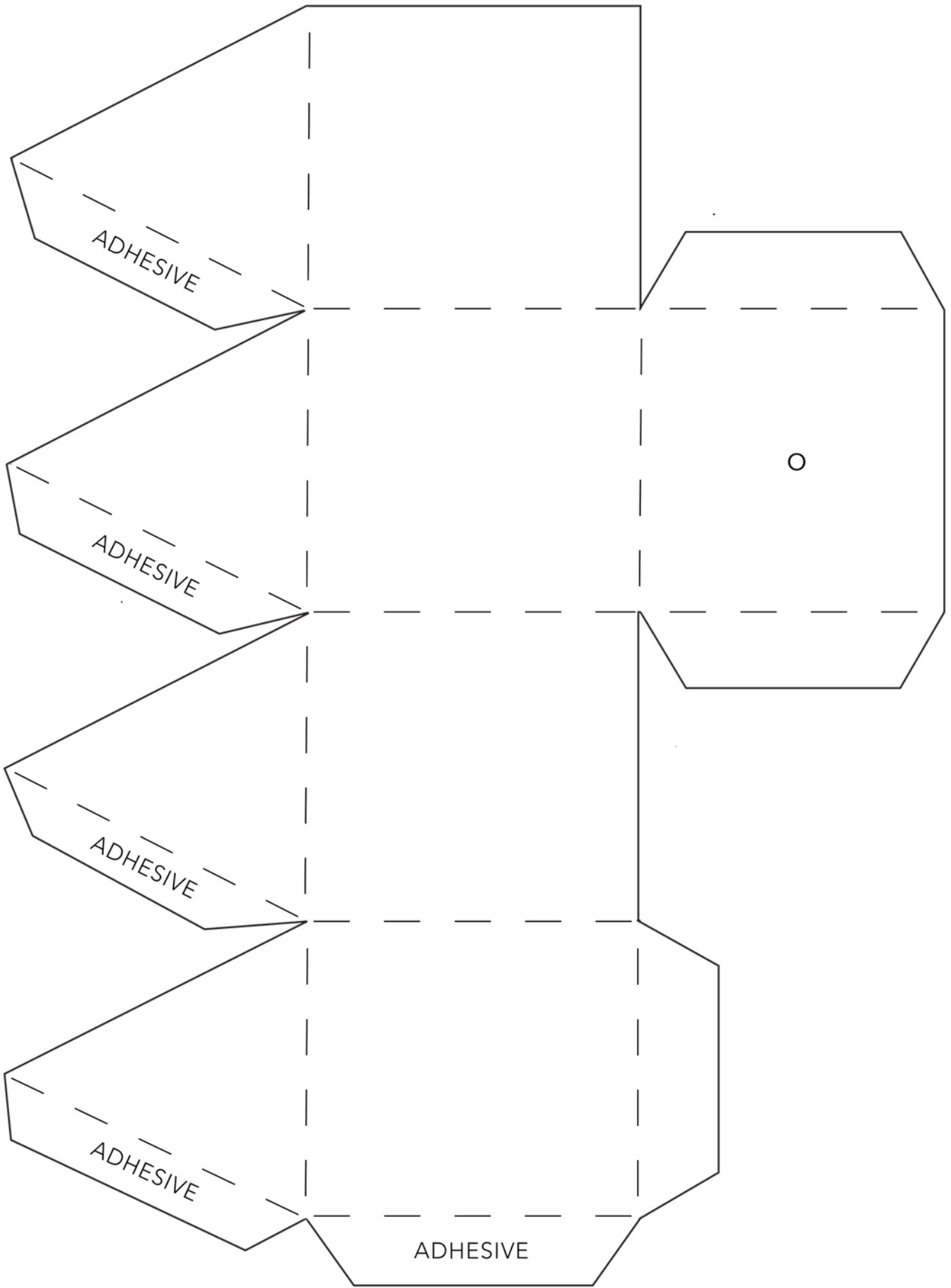
INSTRUCTIONS

1. At the beginning, each player puts two tokens into the center of the circle, the "pot."
2. Starting with the youngest player and then proceeding clockwise, each player takes a turn spinning the dreidel like a top. The letter that is facing up when the dreidel stops spinning tells the player what to do. See the key below.
3. When a player loses all of his tokens, he is "out" of the game. The last player remaining in the game is the winner.

Dreidel Symbol Key

	<p>Gimmel – "Get" - Take everything from the pot in the center. Each player places two more tokens in the pot to replace the pot loot.</p>		<p>Hay – "Half" – Take half of the tokens from the pot. What will you do if there are an odd number of tokens? Decide on a solution, and use this rule throughout the game.</p>
	<p>Shin – "Share" – Put two of your tokens into the pot in the middle.</p>		<p>Nune – "Nothing" – You do not give or receive any tokens. You simply lose this turn, and the dreidel moves to the next player.</p>





Twelve Days of Christmas

This activity requires no special materials, just paper and pencil and the lyrics of The 12 Days of Christmas. This song is “super mathy” with patterns problem-solving and even algebra galore.

ASK:

Have you ever wondered how many gifts in total “My True Love” gave?

If you add up 12 drummers drumming, 11 pipers piping, 10 lords a-leaping, 9 ladies dancing, 8 maids a-milking, 7 swans a-swimming, 6 geese a-laying, 5 golden rings, 4 calling birds, 3 French hens, 2 turtle doves and 1 partridge in a pear tree, does it equal $1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5 + 6 + 7 + 8 + 9 + 10 + 11 + 12$ total gifts in all?

NO, it does not!

Is this really what the song says - that one gift is given each day?

After a closer look at the lyrics, you will see that on the second day, it appears that the “true love” gives three gifts- two turtle doves and another partridge in a pear tree! On the 3rd day, “true love” gave 6 gifts: 3 french hens, two more turtle doves and another partridge!

Estimate!

How many total gifts do you think “true love” gave?

WRITE YOUR ESTIMATE HERE:





Twelve Days of Christmas

Now the math fun really begins!
List the days and the number of presents given



1st Day

2nd Day

3rd Day

4th Day

5th Day

6th Day

7th Day

8th Day

9th Day

10th Day

11th Day

12th Day

Grand Total

Do you recognize any patterns?

SOLUTION





Don't forget to
check out other
Coffee With Carrie
RESOURCES



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BOOK



[Just Breathe \(and Take a Sip of Coffee\):
Homeschool in Step with God](#)



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NOVEMBER: South America

DECEMBER: Europe

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MAY: Central America & Mexico

SUMMER: Africa & Antarctica



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