

## What to do when things are not working

You have looked critically at your path and have concluded that something has not worked this year in one or more subject areas. Now what?

Let's ask some questions:

1. Did the curriculum fit my child?
  - a. Did it move too quickly?
  - b. Too slowly?
  - c. Too boring?
  - d. Too much review?
  - e. Not enough review?
  - f. Too many "extras"?
  - g. Too little educational value?
  - h. Too incomprehensible?
  - i. Babyish?
  - j. Something else
2. Did the curriculum fit the primary educator?
  - a. Did it require Herculean feats of organization?
  - b. Too much prep time?
  - c. Not your style
  - d. Something else
3. Assess your gaps!
  - a. Schedule a meeting with Theresa!
4. Assess available curricula – there is SO MUCH out there
  - a. Cathy Duffy Reviews
  - b. Well Trained Mind forum (this can be a rabbit hole of valuable info and an immense time-suck)
  - c. The Well-Trained Mind by Susan Wise Bauer (Classical education guide with recommendations)
  - d. Go to a homeschool convention for the curriculum fair (this can be valuable if only to see and touch what is out there)
5. Math
  - a. Spiral vs mastery
  - b. Procedural vs conceptual
6. Phonics
  - a. Explode the Code (not the online version), Phonics Pathways, Progressive Phonics, Lexia
7. Writing
  - a. SEE THERESA! Plenty of support at DV Connect. Resources page [davincik8.org](http://davincik8.org)
  - b. Yes, you need some type of guide for teaching writing. Learning to write well requires explicit instruction with skills that build upon each other.
  - c. There are an absurd number of printables for writing practice. Without some unifying direction, this can quickly just become busywork.
  - d. Start at the formulating sentence level
  - e. Teach the rules of the English language (grammar, spelling, phonics)

- f. Being a strong creative writer does not necessarily translate into being a good informative writer (ask me how I know)!
  - g. I hesitate to recommend curriculum, but Institute for the Excellence in Writing (Andrew Pudewa) and Writing with Ease (1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup>) and Writing With Skill (5<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> ish) (Susan Wise Bauer) are great at breaking down the necessary skills of writing into manageable daily exercises. I didn't know what I didn't know until I started my kids on WWE/WWS. I regret the time I wasted doing random free printables. Free ended up being costly.
8. Reading
- a. Is my child reading for pleasure?
    - i. How can I assist my child in reading for pleasure?
  - b. What quality, ability-appropriate literature is available for my child?
  - c. How do I encourage (actively and passively) a reading environment?
  - d. Am I reading aloud to my children? Please don't ignore this!
  - e. MODEL READING!!
  - f. Check out lots of books from the library!!!