

George Washinton's Rules of Civility Copywork



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Designed by: Cyndi Kinney

George Washington's Rules of Civility
& Decent Behavior in Company & Conversation
Copywork

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*****What is “copywork,” and how do I use it in my child’s education?***

Copywork is a fun way for your children to learn spelling, grammar, punctuation, vocabulary, and penmanship. It’s also a wonderful tool for memorization skills!

On each page, you will find a portion of this poem by Robert Louis Stevenson. **Here is a suggestion for using this copywork:**

Day 1: Have your student copy the given passage, using his or her best handwriting (print or cursive). Allow the student to view the passage as he copies.

Along with your child, look over the copied passage, and allow your student to circle any imperfections.

Day 2: Have your student copy the same passage again. The student should be allowed to view the passage as he copies.

Along with your child, look over the copied passage, and allow your student to circle any imperfections.

Day 3: Have your student write the passage from memory while covering the given passage AND previous days’ copying with a scrap piece of paper.

Along with your child, look over the copied passage, and allow your student to circle any imperfections.

Day 4: Have your student write the passage from memory, again covering the passage and previous days’ copying with a scrap piece of paper.

At the end of this 4 day process, your student should be able to recite the passage from memory. Also, the handwriting, punctuation, and spelling should be perfected.

Repeat this process with EACH passage given. At the end of each passage’s 4 day process, have your student recite (and write, if you like) out all of the passages that he has learned so far. At the END of this poetry copywork ebook, have your student write out the ENTIRE poem from memory, if possible.

(Taken from the Public Domain document: Washington, George. Rules of Civility & Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation: a Book of Etiquette. Williamsburg, VA: Beaver Press, 1971) (Original errors in numbering have been corrected; original spelling and punctuation are unchanged and may appear strange. Please accept it as a historical document, worthy of study.)

About this document:

By age sixteen, Washington had copied out by hand, 110 *Rules of Civility & Decent Behavior in Company and Conversation*. They were based on a set of rules composed by French Jesuits in 1595. Presumably they were copied out as part of an exercise in penmanship assigned by young Washington's schoolmaster. The first English translation of the French rules appeared in 1640, and are ascribed to Francis Hawkins the twelve-year-old son of a doctor.

Today many, if not all of these rules, sound a little fussy if not downright silly. It would be easy to dismiss them as outdated and appropriate to a time of powdered wigs and quills, but they reflect a focus that increasingly difficult to find. They all have in common a focus on other people rather than the narrow focus of our own self-interests that we find so prevalent today. Fussy or not, they represent more than just manners. They are the small sacrifices that we should all be willing to make for the good of all and the sake of living together.

These rules proclaim our respect for others and in turn give us the gift of self-respect and heightened self-esteem.

*****What is "copywork," and how do I use it in my child's education?***

Copywork is a great way to teach your children. By copying passages from Great Works of literature or history, children learn many areas of Language Arts. Children have the opportunity to be exposed to great writers or historical events, while learning Spelling, Punctuation, Grammar, Vocabulary, and Creative Writing from the "Masters." Most Classical Education programs recommend copywork as an intricate part of educating your children, quite often in place of many of the traditional Language Arts programs listed above.

By copying passages 2-3 days per week (or more), your children will come to learn and possibly even memorize some of the greatest literature from our history. While penmanship is important, the knowledge that they are gaining through the copywork is what is most important.

However, do encourage your children to take pride in their penmanship. Also, instruct them in the importance of the "art" of Spelling, Punctuation, Vocabulary, Grammar, and Creative Writing. With some practice, they will begin to "imitate" these in their own personal writing.

*****How do I use THIS notebook?***

Inside this book, you will find the 110 "rules" as written by George Washington in "Rules of Civility and Decent Behavior in Company and Conversation" when he was 16 years old. Have your child/children read each rule, and think about/discuss what it means. Have your child/children copy the rule, using his or her best penmanship. For older students, have them also write what they think this rule means. At twice per week, this notebook will last for 55 weeks. At three times per week, it will last a little more than 36 weeks. Many parents choose to have their children do copywork daily, in which case, this notebook will last for 110 school days. You will also need to determine how many times each quote should be copied, as there is ample space for multiple copies to be written.

******This notebook also includes 53 "Vocabulary Extension Exercises."*** Unusual words or those which are not often used in today's language have been defined for your child, and there is a space for your child to use each of these words in his or her own sentence. Please note that these words are OLD words, and so are the definitions that we have chosen to include. Many of the words have other definitions, but we have included the one that might not be so familiar to your student.

George Washington's
"Rules of Civility & Decent Behavior
in Company and Conversation"

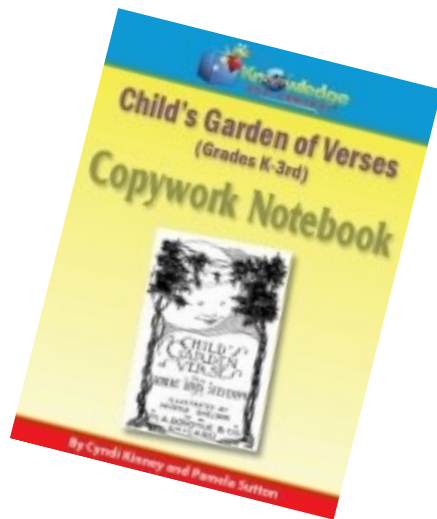
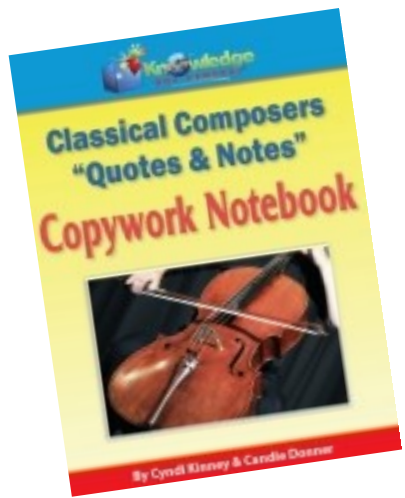
Copywork Notebook
(With Vocabulary Extension Exercises)

Name:

Date Started: _____

Date Completed: _____

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