

## Let's Communicate Biblically!

by Pastor Dennis and Sharon Grimes

There are few leadership skills that need greater attention than biblical communication. Relationships quickly deteriorate when there is inadequate communication, and once communication has been broken, it is difficult to restore.

The Bible has given us many principles for the wise use of words. The reading and studying of biblical principles will help prepare a person's heart to be a communicator who will glorify the Lord.

**1. Speak in a guarded fashion.** "Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth" (Ps. 141:3). Count to ten before you speak; record what you say and review it, particularly those words that brought conflict. Ask the Holy Spirit to stop you from saying something you should not.

**2. Use limited or thoughtful speech.** "When there are many words, transgression is unavoidable, but he who restrains his lips is wise" (Prov. 10:19).

It is much easier to say something we will regret later when we talk too much! Limit your conversations; this will also help you to stay off the phone and get your home schooling accomplished. It is easy for the conversation to shift from talking about home schooling to talking about people or other inappropriate topics.

**3. Communicate unselfishly.** "Do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others" (Phil. 2:4). Do not talk about yourself all the time; speak about subjects that relate to and will interest your listener.

**4. Speak pleasant words.** "Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones" (Prov. 16:24).

Make this a family project by giving five pleasant comments at home each day. Then practice outside your home by encouraging other home-school families and your organizational leadership.

**5. Use edifying words.** "Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification" (Eph. 4:29). Avoid words that tear down and crush the listener. Instead, build up and encourage people today. Your words will bring strength.

**6. Speak humbly.** "Let another praise you, and not your own mouth" (Prov. 27:2). Do not brag on your family's home-school accomplishments. Rejoice with someone else who is rejoicing instead.

**7. Speak appropriately.** "We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly,

encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with all men" (I Thess. 5:14).

This verse gives examples of three groups of people, each requiring a different type of communication.

**8. Use "solution" words.** Instead of being critical of those who are leading or trying to learn a new responsibility within your group, use solution words, which teach how to do it right and help someone who is struggling to learn a new skill.

**9. Use "fruit of the Spirit" words.** Use loving words, joyful words, peaceful words, patient words (Gal. 5:22-23).

**10. Give "soft answers."** "A gentle answer turns away wrath" (Prov. 15:1).

Often you will be able to turn away pride or wrath that could create a conflict. Such words demonstrate a humble heart that fears the Lord.

**11. Hear a matter before you answer it.** "He who gives an answer before he hears, it is folly and shame to him" (Prov. 18:13). Listen to what the speaker means, not just what he says. Listen and wait until you hear all the facts before you answer.

**12. Speak timely words.** "A man has joy in an apt answer, and how delightful is a timely word" (Prov. 15:23).

Ask God to give you discernment about when to speak in private and when it is necessary to speak in public at a home-school meeting. Inappropriate timing has often been the source of a wounded spirit.

**13. Speak the truth.** "Speaking the truth in love" (Eph. 4:15).

Do not exaggerate or give false information. Be truthful about the numbers you have at your conference.

Make sure that your truthful words are also said in love and in the spirit of Gal. 6:1: "Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted."

**14. Speak gratefully.** "In everything give thanks" (I Thess. 5:18). How often do you tell others who are serving in leadership (with you, or for you) how grateful you are for their assistance and sacrificial labor of love?

**15. Study how to answer.** "The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer" (Prov. 15:28). Know what is fitting. Know Scriptures that fit various situations.

If we make these biblical principles a way of life, they will often produce harmony and unity.

### The Listener

The role of the listener is equally important to that of the speaker. A good listener also needs to prepare his heart before the Lord.

How should we listen? Here are some suggestions.

Shut out distractions if possible.

Watch facial expressions and posture for nonverbal clues.

Respond with good eye contact, a nod of the head, or a smile.

Make comments or ask questions.

Affirm that you understand.

Avoid listening in a critical spirit.

Listen for an underlying or outright plea for help.

Listen for helpful ideas and worthy suggestions.

Listen for an action that is required, for the Bible always links together listening and hearing with *doing*.

Learn to discern truth from error; know what God's Word says so you can examine the teaching of any speaker, even those at your support group meetings or state conventions. Be like the Bereans, and search the Scripture daily.

### Commitment

Let us each pledge to "let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer" (Ps. 19:14).

Our relationships within our own families, with other home-school families and leaders, as well as with those within our local church would be greatly blessed if we were committed to following biblical principles for speaking and listening. Let's communicate biblically!

### Resources

Many of the thoughts for this article were taken from the following:

**"Biblical Communication"** by Reuben Ewert. Living the Truth Ministries, 3010 Sky Crest Dr., Pensacola FL 32514, (850) 505-7932. Set of four cassettes, \$16.50 ppd.

**From Playpen to Podium** by Jeff Myers. Becoming an Effective Communicator (see Resources p. 59).

**The Heart of Anger** by Lou Priolo. Chapter on biblical communication. Christian bookstores.

**Peacemaker Ministries**, 1537 Ave. D, Suite 352, Billings MT 59102, (406) 256-1583; www.HisPeace.org.

*Pastor Dennis and Sharon Grimes home school in New York. Sharon is the State Organizations Representative for The Teaching Home.*

# Computer Literacy 101

Computer literacy is an essential subject for home schoolers. Teach yourself and your children about computers and how to use them through Jan's Illustrated Computer Literacy 101 at [www.jegsworks.com/Lessons/index.html](http://www.jegsworks.com/Lessons/index.html) The free lessons on this excellent website are based on the author's lecture notes for a college course she taught on computer literacy.

## Computer Basics

The lessons in the Computer Basics section of Jan's Illustrated Computer Literacy 101 do not require you to touch a computer except to read the lessons.

There are lots of pictures and some animations and graphics that enhance the text and make it clearer. Computer Basics explains technical terms in each lesson and has a section that defines the terms.

The Computer Basics lessons include:

**Computer Types.** Look at the kinds of computers there are based on general performance levels.

**Applications.** Another word for programs running on the computer.

**Input.** Everything we tell the computer. The most basic input device is the keyboard.

**Processing.** The thinking that the computer does—the calculations, comparisons, and decisions.

**Output.** Data that has been processed into useful information. The most used means of output are the printer and the computer screen.

**Storage.** The media and methods used to keep information available for later use.

**Computer to Computer.** The transmission of data and information over a communications channel between two computers.

**System Software.** The programs that handle the running of your computer's hardware. The two main categories are operating systems and utility programs.

**Programming.** Learn a little about what programming is all about.

**What You See.** How the computer's parts all hook together.

**Hands On!** Working with files and networks.

**On Your Own.** Buying and managing your own computer.

After each lesson, there is a review quiz with a pop-up message after each choice you make.

If you would like to use the material from this website with your children, be sure to read the Permissions page and com-

plete the Permissions Form. By doing so, you will receive a set of end-of-the-chapter questions/exercises and notice of any updates to the website.

## Hands-On Lessons

Other sections guide you in actually using a computer. Each lesson has topics to read, step-by-step directions, a quiz, and exercises for practice and to add new skills.

The other topics include:

**Working with Windows.** The Windows lessons cover the basic skills such as using shortcuts, the Start menu, the Taskbar; the parts of a window; and creating, moving, and deleting files and folders.

**Working with Words.** These lessons start with the basic skills in word processing—entering text, editing text, moving and deleting text, inserting and formatting pictures, creating headers and footers, formatting text, using styles, templates, wizards, printing.

**Working with the Web.** The Web lessons start with Browser Basics, where you learn how to navigate different kinds of web pages and how to manage Internet Explorer 4/5. Learn how to search the web using keywords and web directories. These activities use web pages especially created for this tutorial, so there is no problem with a site vanishing in the night or with inappropriate content.

Future projects will cover how to write web pages with HTML, e-mail, newsgroups, and chat.

**Working with Numbers,** dealing with spreadsheets, will soon be available.

*Excerpted with permission from Jan Smith's web page.*

## Software Recommendation

### Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing.

The first step in assuring successful computing is keyboarding skills. *Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing* is a good keyboarding program. It has three levels with lessons customized to typing strengths and weaknesses.

Eight games build typing speed, accuracy, and rhythm. You can also download 50 free lessons from the classic literature or poetry file to use with *Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing*.

*Software available from Edusoft Family Fun Learning, Box 1498, Veneta OR 97487, (541) 935-5958, [www.edusoftonline.com](http://www.edusoftonline.com).*

## Training Minds Through Formal Debate

*“Home schooling makes a life of leadership possible. Debate and forensics makes leadership likely.*

*“Students who debate learn research, speaking, analysis, and logic, developing an extraordinary sense of self-confidence that comes from achievement.”*

*Mike Farris, chairman, HSLDA*

### The Why and How of Debate

by Chris Jeub

Christian home-school parents desire their children to love truth, search for righteousness, be learned in the Word of God, and be able to disciple others. All these skills are enhanced by learning to debate.

Home schoolers now have their own debate league—the National Christian Forensics and Communications Association.

The NCFCA releases a resolution to be debated each year. This year’s issue is immigration reform (see Resources). Debate teams nationwide develop cases both for and against the league’s resolution in preparation for tournaments.

All students develop an affirmative case, then stretch their debate skills by taking the negative side of the resolution as well, rhetorically challenging the affirmative cases.

A tournament typically has six rounds, each 70 to 80 minutes long, divided into strictly timed alternating turns in which the two sides present their cases and respond to each other. During each round a judge carefully weighs all the arguments, then casts a ballot declaring the winner.

Here is how you can get started.

**1. Learn about Debate.** Excellent resources are available, including some that have been developed specifically for home schoolers (see Resources).

**2. Study the Issue.** Debaters need to study the topic inside and out. Get the study guide (see Resources), search the Internet, and check library resources. Become an expert on the topic.

**3. Develop a Plan.** Basically, debaters will say a problem exists in the status quo (this is called *harms*), the problem will not magically go away (*inherency*), a plan is needed to fix the problem (*plan*), and the proposed plan will fix the problem (*solvency*). Once the case is written and backed up with evidence, the speech should be eight minutes long.

**4. Practice Debating.** The affirmative case may appear airtight, but the debaters must anticipate typical attacks and prepare against them. They will actually take the

negative position for three of their six rounds, giving all equal opportunity to argue the affirmative and anticipate criticisms. Debaters are constantly practicing forensic skills before competing.

**5. Compete in a Tournament.** To compete, contact the NCFCA to find other debaters in your area, or get on the e-mail loop to receive announcements on tournaments nationwide (see Resources).

If there is not a debate club near you, start your own. All you need is a handful of motivated students and parents who recognize the great value and fun in debate.

*Chris Jeub operates Jeub Debate Publications in Colorado.*

### National Christian Forensics and Communications Assoc.

The purpose of the NCFCA is to facilitate tournaments and host a national debate tournament for home-school students. The 2001 National Speech and Debate Tournament will be held June 27-30 at the Santa Clara University in Santa Clara, Calif.

Competition includes two styles of debate: Debate Teams (two debaters on a team) and Lincoln-Douglas Debate (two individuals debating one-on-one).

Other speech (or forensics) events include Dramatic or Humorous Interpretation; Duo Interpretation; Original Oratory; Extemporaneous; Impromptu; Expository; Original Advocacy; and Prose, Poetry, and Thematic Interpretation.

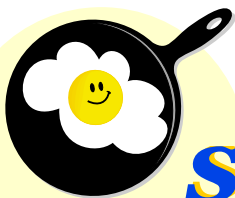
### Resources

The following organizations offer resources on debate, forensics, and logic, including: *Beyond Baby Steps: Advanced Theory and Strategy for the Christian Debater* by Ryan Lee Stollar; *An Introduction to Argumentation and Debate* by Christy Shippe; and *It Takes a Parent* by Deanna Stollar, a 12-week debate course.

**National Christian Forensics and Communications Assoc.**, Box 500208, San Diego CA 92150, (858) 774-2291, fax: (858) 538-6256, [www.NCFCA.org](http://www.NCFCA.org).

**Jeub Debate Publications**, 16315 Rick-enbacker Ave., Monument CO 80132, (719) 487-7621, [jeub@earthlink.net](mailto:jeub@earthlink.net). *Immigration Reform: Debating the 2000-2001 Home School Resolution*, study guide for this year’s debate; e-mail loop by e-mailing [jeub@earthlink.net](mailto:jeub@earthlink.net); free sample of *The Christian Debater* magazine; and *From Playpen to Podium* by Jeffrey L. Myers to develop communication skills for all ages.

**HSLDA**, (540) 338-5600. Video instruction course in debate.



# Sunny Side Up

## Did Adam Name All the Animals?

After our science lesson, our son Christopher, 6, said, “Mom, I know an animal that Adam could not name in the Garden of Eden.”

Waiting a moment to see if I could figure out his little joke, he exclaimed with a smile, “The barn owl!”

*Marilyn P., Oklahoma*

## Capitalizing on the Crop

I picked some cherry tomatoes and large tomatoes from our garden and put them in a basket in the kitchen. Rachel, 5, pointing out the different sizes said, “Uppercase and lowercase tomatoes.”

*Brenda H., Arizona*

## Reputable Mechanic

My husband bought an old, inexpensive lawn mower at a garage sale and put it in the garage. When he came home for lunch, he said to Luke, 13, “Did you see the mower I got at a garage sale?”

“Oh yeah,” Luke replied, “I’ve already been working on it.” At the look on his dad’s face, Luke quickly added, “But don’t worry, it still runs.”

*Rosanne E., Iowa*

## Water Works

We recently studied how the water system works in our town. I described how the water goes from a reservoir to a water company to a house to a faucet through a piping system.

A few days later while driving to the store, I used the windshield washer to clean the mud off the window. Dawn watched thoughtfully before asking, “Mom, how can the pipe be connected from the water company to the car while the car is driving?”

*Linda G., Connecticut*

## Q: How does a home schooler change a light bulb?

A: First, Mom checks out three books on electricity from the library; then the children make models of light bulbs, read a biography of Thomas Edison, and do a skit based on his life.

Next, everyone studies the history of lighting methods, wrapping up with dipping their own candles.

Then, everyone takes a trip to the store where they compare types of light bulbs as well as prices and figure out how much change they will get if they buy two bulbs for \$1.99 and pay with a five dollar bill.

On the way home, a discussion develops over the history of money and also Abraham Lincoln, since his picture is on the five dollar bill.

Finally, after building a homemade ladder out of branches dragged from the woods, the light bulb is installed, and there is light.

*Submitted by Bruce and Mary Ann E., Penn.*

## Read Between the Words

At a birthday dinner for my husband’s grandmother, our 5-year-old sat next to a relative from Illinois. I tuned in to his conversation in time to hear him say, “Yes, I know how to read. I just don’t know what all the words say yet.”

*Erica E., Washington*

## Compound Words

Our 6-year-old daughter was matching words in one column to words in another to create a compound word. I noticed she matched “Pea” with “Pole.”

“What’s a “Pea-pole?” I asked.

Talia responded, “You know; like the “people” walking down the street!”

*Luana B., California*

## Here Today, Gone Tomorrow

Matthew, 7, quizzed Joshua, 4, “Hey, Josh, can you name all the vowels?”

Joshua appeared bored with Matthew’s question and continued to play. When Matthew realized he wasn’t going to get a reply, he continued, “Well, Josh, the five vowels are A, E, I, O, and U, and sometimes Y is a vowel.”

Finally Joshua responded, “Well, Matthew, is it one today?”

*Cynthia E., Arizona*

## An Important Detail

Our 5-year-old daughter and I were reading about a person who was Welsh. I explained to Meagan that Welsh meant that he lived in Wales.

Meagan turned to me and asked, “Does that mean Jonah was Welsh?”

*Kym C., Colorado*