

My Homeschool – A Literature Feast: All About Me – 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition

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## Introduction to Parents

The essence of good early childhood education is to begin with the child. Start from the child's experiences to date, their knowledge and their place in the world as their point of understanding.

Beginning from this point allows a gentle spiraling out into the larger world and slowly, gradually increasing their knowledge and understanding of it. So, in Term 1 of Foundation Year the prime focus is on the child. Not in a selfish way, but on a very simple understanding of who and where they are in the world.

*All About Me* is a unit to dip into some good books to prompt your child to take delight in understanding who they are and who their family is. Essentially, it is the very beginnings of history and geography.

It begins with your child's own personal history and geography. This is founded on your family story and history and is about where your family and loved ones live. Through reading the stories of others, it is an invitation to discuss the stories of your own family: understanding how family members are related to each other and knowing where people were born and grew up.

Learning across the curriculum through an integrated course is a key aspect of the My Homeschool courses. This resource is a fabulous example of how you can address the content in Humanities and Social Science alongside Health and Physical Education – there are many opportunities to have conversations about aspects of personal development while exploring themes of history too. Embrace these! Use these lessons as an opportunity to talk about what makes up your family and what makes your child special and unique.

Delight in the discoveries, the gentle learning, and the time you spend with your child in these first steps of homeschooling. It is a time to help them understand who they are and the stories of their family and life.

Enjoy!

Jo Lloyd

## How the Lessons Are Structured

My Homeschool harnesses the attention of little ones by keeping the lessons short, so at this age expect each lesson to take around 20 minutes. This is an approach Charlotte Mason took in her method of teaching and is supported by modern brain science research.

The *All About Me Literature Feast* lessons are designed to include a range of different learning methods:

- Reading Living Books together;
- Discussions to encourage oral-based learning;
- Narrations in response to Living Books;
- Using art and drawing pictures to represent the content learned; and
- Preparing Notebook entries to record the learning journey.

Given this is the first year of homeschooling, most parents want to know what they should expect for a child of this age, making sure they aren't asking too much or too little from their Kindergarten-aged child. Here are some tips to help guide you with this:

- Children of this age are not expected to write very much. Instead, parents write down what their child tells them back about what they've learned. This is narration. There are prompts provided in each lesson and you can simply record what your child tells you in response to these.
- Encourage your child to draw a picture to capture what you've covered in the lesson and listen to what they share while doing so. Oftentimes, when focused on drawing, children of this age will sift through what they covered in the lesson, talking to you about it, which is great.
- Don't be alarmed if, by the end of the lesson, your child only offers one or two simple sentences. Please respect their answer. Don't try to prompt them to provide more lengthy answers. Further details will come in time.
- You may be surprised to hear your child give a more fulsome explanation of your lesson over the dinner table that night. This is wonderful! Encourage it, and don't worry that it might not all be captured in their Notebook entry. You still know that they've learned this rich content.

The aim is to build the habit of re-telling and recording what was learned in each lesson. This will be the practice for all lessons in the years of homeschooling to come, so you are laying the foundational groundwork for that.

## Week 1 – Me, Myself and I

### To Begin the Lesson

You will need a mirror to start this lesson. (Or use the selfie/camera reversal option on your SmartPhone.)

To begin, encourage your child to look at themselves in the mirror, focusing on their face. Help them to notice aspects of how they look like:

- the colour and style of their hair;
- their eye colour;
- the shape of their nose;
- any dimples appearing when they smile;
- how many teeth they have at present; and
- any unique, distinguishing features of their face.

You may like to use a full-size mirror and look beyond the face. That's fine too. The idea here is to support your child to build a good awareness of what they look like, speaking about their physical attributes. You might even encourage them to notice similarities in their appearance with other family members.

Then, move beyond physical appearance to consider the character of your child. Speak to them about the aspects you notice and admire in them. This may be their:

- willingness to help others and at home;
- friendliness and kindness towards others;
- skills in a particular area, like swimming, dancing or bike riding;
- or
- current interests and pursuits, such as progressing with their reading, music practice or their deep interest in subject matter like dinosaurs or birds.

### Read a Living Book

Next, enjoy reading a book together. For this lesson, read Alison Lester's book, *Tessa Snaps Snakes*. This book features differences in aspects of life such as, what makes children laugh, their fears, how they receive messages, and even pocket money.

Once you've read the book together take some time to chat about the story you enjoyed together. Perhaps there are some aspects of the characters that resonate with your child and look also for those parts of their lives that are quite different to that of your own child's experiences.

### Notebook Entry

After you have finished enjoying the book, turn your attention to your Notebook entry. Following the some of the headings of *Tessa Snaps Snakes*, ask your child to share the following and record these in their Notebook:

- I laugh when...
- I earn pocket money by...
- I dislike...
- Something I am afraid of is...
- My favourite snack is...

Then, ask your child to now draw a self-portrait in their Notebook. While they are drawing you might like to talk to them about all the things they can now do, reminding them of just how much they have grown over the years so far. Remind them too, just how important they are to you and to your family.

### Extension Activities

For those families looking for further activities to enjoy to extend this lesson, perhaps later in the week, consider:

- Looking at some family photographs together, including looking at how much your child has grown over the years.
- Making a record about your child at this age, such as:
  - where they live;
  - who they live with;
  - things they like, including books, games, and cherished toys;
  - songs they like to sing;
  - family pets;
  - any allergies or health considerations your child has; and
  - their current favourite foods.