

kids present are the ones that bother them the most. In this way, they are self-sifting and giving us, as parents, an understanding of places we need to give feedback. This is a place where we can build trust with our children's hearts. I don't take these sharing times lightly. Many of the topics are weighty matters, but our kids' lives are being shaped in conversations like these.

Current Events Helps Gain Understanding & Responding to Deficits of Knowledge.

Sometimes, a simple discussion time is enough. Other times, as with social justice issues, personal liberties or racism, as we have seen presented this year with China and Black Lives Matter, we need to build a better response. Our children need to see us take action and advocate for others so that they can begin to act out what we model. In response to the news this year, we are exploring China and the Eastern Hemisphere in depth in the upcoming homeschool year. Last year, we spent a large portion of the year on the history and origins of slavery and the effect it has had on people groups around the world and in the United States. We were able to draw on what we learned and listen to the news to help deepen our understanding of the current cultural climate.

These are hard topics. As a parent, there are times when we will not have the answers. In these moments, student and teacher are equals. We can allow ourselves to be citizens in a bigger world where we are learning together. No matter what the topic, we are equipping the future with our children's education. We cannot stick our heads in the sand when it comes to these difficult but worldview shaping topics.

Current Events Gives us a Starting Place

As an adult, I have learned to recognize the false ideas and beliefs I adopted in ignorance. With our guidance and input, children create

their own conclusions about the world using the information they observe. These inner ideas shape us. By making current events a topic in your homeschool, you give a platform where your child can voice what they perceive about the news stories they are presented. We can help clear away false narratives and perceptions before they take root. When we spend time talking about the news, we reduce fear and help create a culture of empathy in our home. When we act on these lessons in our communities, we intentionally take school outside of the walls of our home. I encourage you to purposefully meet people and visit places to counter negative stereotypes and help shape a worldview that reflects God's standard, not man's.

Current Events Help Build Better Arguments

As our children reach older teens, studying current events can help our children avoid speaking in platitudes and give substance to their arguments. By graduation, every student should be a critical thinker and not a parrot of ideas. As a parent, my goal in our discussion time is not to resolve all my students' questions but to become a great listener and ask engaging questions. When this is done well, our children are willing to spend greater amounts of time on a topic. In turn, their understanding grows from headlines to full paragraphs.

Making current events a subject in our homeschool has helped our college-age children to articulate their thoughts and opinions and listen to others on campus and in the classroom. They are often part of a small number of students willing to offer input in the classroom. They now see how the daily discussions of reading assignments and current events prepared them for a future of healthy debate and social discourse; skills much needed in the world today.

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RESOURCES

- **C-SPAN Classroom** is a good source for current government and historical news, offering a wide array of resources that you can use to supplement your current curriculum, create short lessons within the My C-SPAN Classroom area of the website, and more. Check it out here: <https://www.c-span.org/classroom/>
- **WORLD Magazine** is an investment for the whole family: The WORLDKids Dashboard is full of interactive resources, encouraging young readers. The WORLDTeen annual membership includes print magazines, online content, and bonus materials to reinforce learning. They offer both a print and digital version of the magazine. WORLD Magazine is a Christian publication, the print issue arrives bi-weekly so it is still current when it arrives on your doorstep. You can also listen to WORLD Radio, a podcast from WORLD Magazine. Check it out here: <https://world.wng.org/> and here: <https://kids.wng.org/>
- **Newsela** is a site created for teachers that will allow you to find articles at a wide variety of reading levels so that you can present the same current event article to your entire family at the same time. You can also read articles on the Newsela app as well. The articles are kid friendly, relevant, and geared for students. The GOOD NEWS and FOR KIDS sections of Newsela can help you balance the negative and positive things happening in the world. I also appreciate that each article is immediately identified by author, source, and who did the adaptation. Check it out here: <https://newsela.com/about/content/browse-content/>
- **Your local newspaper** is also an important source, especially for staying in touch with what is happening in your local communities.

Other options to check out:

- **Time for Kids:** check it out here: <https://www.timeforkids.com/>
- **Scholastic News:** Check it out here: <https://scholasticnews.scholastic.com/>
- **The Smithsonian for Kids:** Check it out here: <https://www.si.edu/kids>
- **Dogo News:** Check it out here: <https://www.dogonews.com/>
- **Youngzine:** Check it out here: <https://youngzine.org/>
- **Newsomatic:** Check it out here: <https://www.newsomatic.org/>
- **Kids Post:** Check it out here: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/kidspost/>
- **News for Kids:** check it out here: <https://newsforkids.net/>
- **God's World News:** check it out here: <https://www.gwnews.com/>