

# Contents

1. Let's Talk about Narration . . . . .	5
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## Five Steps to Successful Narration

2. Five Steps to Successful Narration . . . . .	9
3. The Power of a Good Story . . . . .	11
4. Find Your Bearings . . . . .	13
5. Time to Read . . . . .	15
6. To Narrate and Discuss . . . . .	17

## Narration Q & A

7. The Why Behind the How . . . . .	21
8. In My Own Words . . . . .	23
» Narration Ideas . . . . .	25
9. The Simplest Way . . . . .	29
10. Setting Them Up for Success . . . . .	33
11. The Long and Short of It . . . . .	37
12. Correct Me If I'm Wrong . . . . .	41
13. The Next Step . . . . .	45
14. In Which We Talk More about When and How . . . . .	49
15. Magic Numbers . . . . .	51
16. Narration with Multiple Children . . . . .	55
17. Beginning with Younger Children . . . . .	59
18. Beginning with Older Children . . . . .	63
19. Written Narration: The Next Step in Composition . . . . .	67
» Sample Rubrics . . . . .	70
20. Raising the Bar . . . . .	75
» Narration Questions Charlotte Used . . . . .	78
21. On the Side . . . . .	81
22. Narration in High School . . . . .	83
» Sample Narrations . . . . .	87
23. An Added Bonus . . . . .	97
» Index of Questions Answered . . . . .	101

## More Narration Tips

24. Do Not Bury Yourself in the Book . . . . .	111
25. Relating and Rambling . . . . .	113
26. Narration with Auditory and Speech Issues . . . . .	117
27. A Whole World of Thought . . . . .	119

## Chapter 1

# Let's Talk about Narration

In my pantry are some foods I think of as staples. They can be included in a variety of dishes and used in a variety of ways. Take potatoes, for instance. I can add them to a stew or pop them in with a roast. I can bake them, boil them, mash them, slice them, shred them, fry them. I can serve them as a side dish or as the main dish with toppings for garnish.

Potatoes are a wonderfully versatile staple in my meals.

In a similar way, narration is a wonderfully versatile staple in my home school.

If you use the Charlotte Mason Method, narration is a staple. We use it in a variety of school subjects to help our students cement in their minds what they have learned. It's one of those can't-do-without methods.

Narration can also be used in a variety of ways. It is a powerful learning tool that can be flexed and fitted to meet different needs in different situations at different levels.

In fact, I think that's one reason people have so many questions about narration. It might be easier to wrap our minds around it if it weren't quite so powerful and flexible.

Yes, narration can be simple—like making baked potatoes. I mean, how hard is it to put the potato in a hot oven and let it sit there for an hour?

But narration can also be much more multi-faceted and complex—like making *loaded twice-baked* potatoes. Same staple, but used in a different way to achieve a different outcome.

So let's talk about narration.

This book is a handy compilation of blog posts about narration that we have written over the years along with some added material. It's divided into three sections filled with helpful tips and practical how-to's.

The first section, Five Steps to Successful Narration, gives the big picture and shows you what a narration lesson looks like.

The second section, Narration Q & A, dives deeper into the specifics and answers questions submitted by homeschooling parents. You will also find some added Bonus Questions, narration samples, narration question samples, and more that we didn't have time or space to discuss in the blog posts. You will also see an index at the end of that section, listing all of the questions covered, so you can find the answers you need quickly and easily.

The third section gives More Narration Tips and advice from our archives about working with everyday situations and with special needs.

It is our hope that you will gain confidence and skill as we spend a little time talking about narration—that incredibly flexible staple in a Charlotte Mason home school!