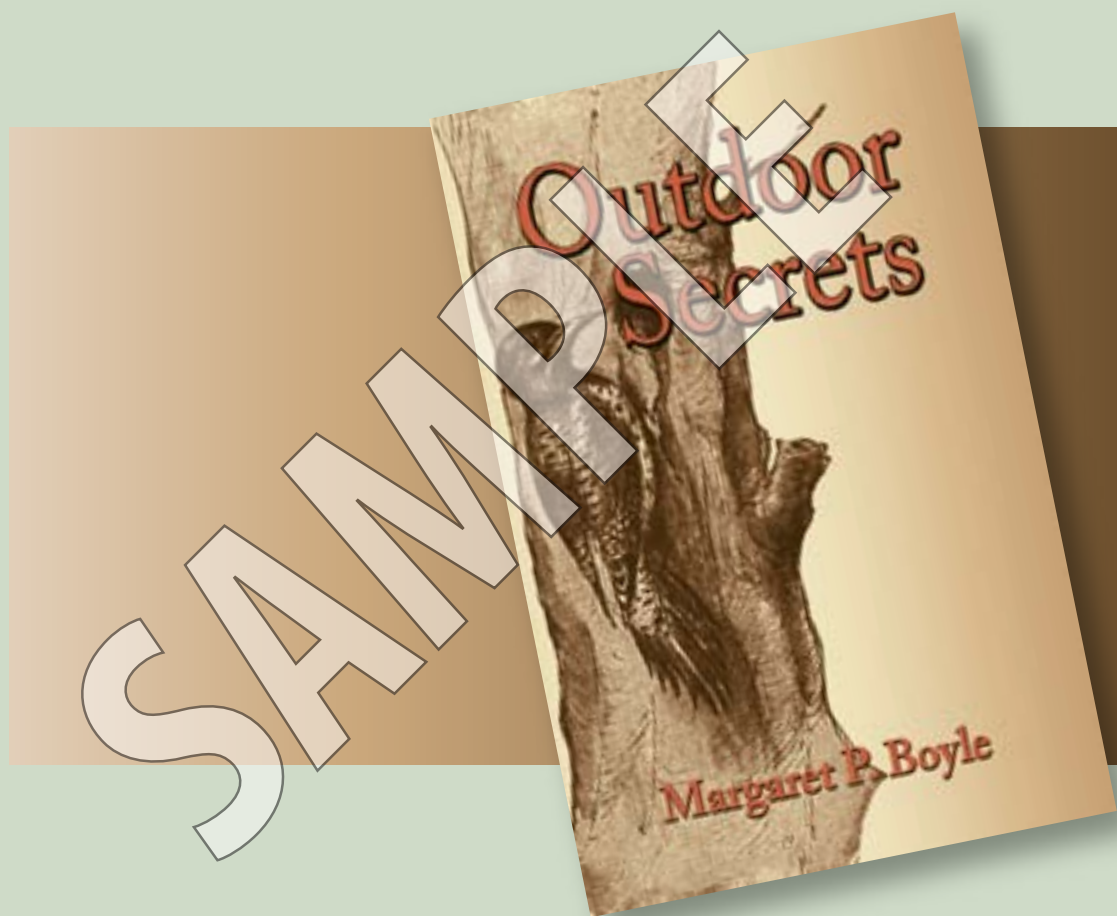


Simply Charlotte Mason presents

The *Outdoor Secrets* Companion



A living science handbook

By Sonya Shafer and Karen Smith

More ideas to expand your Outdoor Secrets book!

If you want to teach science with interesting living stories, nature study, and hands-on experience, this book is for you. Your First and Second Grade students will love the gentle nature stories as you read together *Outdoor Secrets*. And now you can expand on each story with the additional ideas suggested in this companion handbook.

Help your child learn more from Outdoor Secrets with these

- Easy nature study ideas
- Simple projects with handy materials
- Fun nature notebook suggestions
- Beautiful poetry that reflects the plants and animals studied
- Additional non-twaddle book suggestions to find at your library
- Gentle lesson plans to use at your own pace

Enjoy this companion to *Outdoor Secrets* and help your child discover even more about what may be hiding in his own backyard!

*Simply
Charlotte Mason*
.com

The
Outdoor Secrets
Companion
A Living Science Handbook

by
Karen Smith and Sonya Shafer

The Outdoor Secrets Companion
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Introduction

During the elementary years, your science lessons should accomplish three things:

1. Nurture within the child a sense of wonder at God's creation.
2. Cultivate a habit of careful observation.
3. Lay the groundwork of personal experience that will support future science studies.

The lessons in this book strive to accomplish those three goals. They are intended for children in First and Second Grades and are based on the gentle and interesting living science stories found in *Outdoor Secrets*, a book originally published in 1903. We have simply collected some additional ideas to encourage you and your child to explore more about the plants and animals and weather that the stories introduce. We have also included some nature poetry to enrich your discoveries.

Feel free to progress through the lessons at your own pace. If your child devours anything scientific, you might do several lessons each week. If you want to enjoy a more leisurely pace, you might do one lesson per week. Or you might do two or three lessons during one week, then do only one the next week. Whatever you decide, you have freedom. Do what works best for your family.

And along those same lines, remember that you don't have to do every idea that is suggested in the lessons. They are just suggestions; you may pick and choose from them as you are interested and able.

At the time of this publishing, all the book suggestions listed in the lessons were in print (unless otherwise noted). If you perhaps cannot find one of the titles, feel free to substitute a different book on the same topic.

We hope you enjoy these additional ideas that will encourage your child to continue exploring outdoor secrets!

***Check out our Web site for links to more information on the topics covered in this book:
simplycharlottemason.com/books/outdoor-secrets/links-tips***

A Word about Nature Notebooks

Throughout the lessons in this book you will see a reference to a nature notebook. A nature notebook is simply a blank sketchbook to begin with. It will become the child's personal record of what he observed and made a personal relation with during these studies.

Here are some key points to remember about a nature notebook.

1. A nature notebook is the child's own possession. It is not to be graded or criticized. It is not the parent's project; it belongs to the child.
2. A nature notebook can contain written observations, drawings, poetry, Scripture, specimens—whatever interests the child and encourages him to look closely and carefully at nature.
3. If the child isn't able to or comfortable with writing his observations in his nature notebook, the parent can do the writing as the child dictates what he wants to say.

Resources Needed

For the entire study

- *Outdoor Secrets* by Margaret P. Boyle
- *Favorite Poems Old and New* selected by Helen Ferris—This wonderful collection of poems will be a handy resource for your entire homeschooling career. We have had ours for more than fifteen years and still use it. A great investment!
- Nature notebook, one for each person (See page 7 for details.)
- (optional) *The Handbook of Nature Study* by Anna Botsford Comstock—This resource, that is available free online, is more of a reference book for the teacher to study to learn about the plants or animals ahead of time. Some lesson ideas are also given. Corresponding pages are listed for your convenience if you would like to use this resource as a supplement.

For specific lessons (Check your library)

- *How Do Apples Grow* by Betsy Maestro
- *Johnny Appleseed* by Reeve Lindbergh
- *A Desert Scrapbook: Dawn to Dusk in the Sonoran Desert* by Virginia Wright-Frierson
- *An Earthworm's Life* by John Himmelman
- *A Seed Is Sleepy* by Dianna Hutts Aston
- *My Favorite Tree* by Diane Iverson
- (optional) *Crinkleroot's Guide to Knowing the Trees* by Jim Arnosky (out of print)
- *The Robins in Your Backyard* by Nancy Carol Willis
- *From Seed To Plant* by Gail Gibbons
- *Bumblebee at Apple Tree Lane* by Laura Gates Galvin
- (optional) *The Owl and the Woodpecker: Encounters with North America's Most Iconic Birds* by Paul Bannick
- *Are You a Dragonfly?* By Judy Allen and Tudor Humphries
- *Flower Garden* by Eve Bunting
- (optional) *Wonderful Pussy Willows* by Jerome Wexler (out of print)
- *Flip, Float, Fly!: Seeds on the Move* by JoAnn Early Macken
- *Water Dance* by Thomas Locker
- *Wasps* by Martha Rustad
- *Chippy Chipmunk Parties in the Garden* by Kathy M. Miller
- (optional) *Read-Aloud Poems for Young People* OR *The Oxford Book of Children's Verse in America*

For nature studies

- Variety of apples; knife
- Shovel; large glass jar; smaller jar or container; dirt; dead leaves
- Several potted flowers of the same kind; gauze/netting (optional)
- (optional) Suet
- Variety of flower seeds in packets; containers; soil

Lesson 1

Checklist

- *Outdoor Secrets*

Read together the chapter “How the Apple Blossom Came Back” in *Outdoor Secrets*. Ask for an oral narration.

Lesson 2

Checklist

- *Favorite Poems Old and New*
- Apple; knife
- Nature notebook

Ask your child what he remembers from last time’s reading about the apple blossom. Read together “A Comparison” by John Farrar in *Favorite Poems Old and New*, page 214.

Cut open an apple from side to side, not top to bottom, in order to see the blossom imprint. Have your child draw in his nature notebook the apple half with its blossom imprint.

Lesson 3

Checklist

- *How Do Apples Grow*
- Nature notebook

Read together *How Do Apples Grow* by Betsy Maestro. Add any interesting information to your child’s nature notebook’s apple page.

Lesson 4

Checklist

- A variety of apples
- Chart on page 13

Get three or four different kinds of apples from the grocery store; for

Notes

Tip: You can learn more about apples and apple trees in *The Handbook of Nature Study*, pages 661–670, lessons 182, 183, and 184.

Reminder: Get *How Do Apples Grow* by Betsy Maestro for lesson 3 and *Johnny Appleseed* by Reeve Lindbergh for lesson 5.

Tip: You don’t have to buy a whole bag of each kind of apple. Just buy one of each if you want to.

Notes

Tip: If possible, arrange to visit an orchard to see live apple trees.

Reminder: Get A Desert Scrapbook: Dawn to Dusk in the Sonoran Desert by Virginia Wright-Frierson for lesson 8.

Tip: You will find some links to pictures and information on a Century plant on the Links & Tips page for this book on our Web site: simplycharlottemason.com/books/outdoor-secrets/links-tips

example, Granny Smith, Red Delicious, Braeburn, Gala. First, have your child look at the apples and describe each one's shape. Record his observations on the chart on page 13. Second, have him compare the apples' colors, and record those observations on the chart. Then let him taste each apple and compare their flavors; record those observations too.

Lesson 5

Checklist

- Johnny Appleseed
- Nature notebook

Read together the poem in book form, *Johnny Appleseed* by Reeve Lindbergh. If your child has a favorite line or two from the poem, have him copy those words into his nature notebook.

Lesson 6

Checklist

- *Outdoor Secrets*

Read together the chapter "The Century-Plant's Wish" from *Outdoor Secrets*. Ask for an oral narration.

Lesson 7

Checklist

- Picture of a Century plant
- Nature notebook

Ask your child what he remembers from last time's reading about the Century plant. Explain that a Century plant belongs to the same family as a cactus. Show your child a picture of the plant in a book or on the Internet. If you have an aloe plant in your home, you could compare it to that.

Read together the two quotes on page 14 and discuss what they mean. Add one or both to your child's nature notebook, if desired.

What I Noticed About These Apples

Kind of Apple	Shape	Color	Flavor