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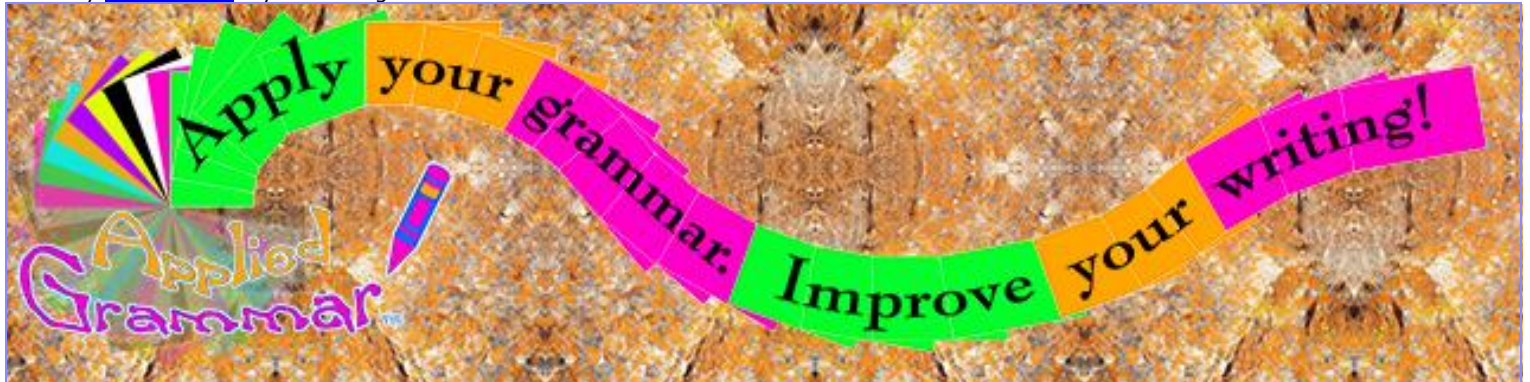
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Dear Friends,

It is just amazing how quickly the months are passing. We are busy with getting our printing up and running. The High School Level has been typed and is now being formatted. It will be complete by mid- March. We have also completed the yearly editing to catch any typos from the last year. Each year improvements are made and we hope you enjoy our product.

It will soon be time to start up the little greenhouse and begin the germination of this year's flowers and vegetables. This hope that we have for the coming season reminds me of the hope that we have as we plant the seeds of faith as we walk along life's path.

My next project will be the biggest one yet. As I find the time to write, I am developing a branch of Applied Grammar specifically for Autistic Children and others with severe language disorders. Please pray for clarity and creativity from God so that this program can meet the needs of these special precious children. More about that will come as the program progresses.

We are looking forward to meeting you. Come stop by our booth sometime and say hello.

Sincerely,
Gail and Bob Brubaker
Applied Grammar

Bob and I continue to work together to bring to you the best services that we can. Because we are a home business, we cannot get to every convention. However, if you have used Applied Grammar and have found it to be a great resource for you and your children, we would be delighted to have you represent us at a convention near you. We would be paying you to make sure that Applied Grammar gets a good representation in your area. Please contact Gail and Bob at info@applied-grammar.com for more information if you are interested in making some money to help off-set your schooling expenses.

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News & Events

Hear ye, Hear ye!

WE have registered for the HOME convention in Maine, the Midwest Home School Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio, the CHAP convention in Pennsylvania, and the Southeast Home School Expo in Atlanta, Georgia. We will also be going to Mobile, Alabama and Enoch in New Jersey.

We will not be able to attend SETHSA, in Houston, Texas this year because my student, Michael, will be graduating on that weekend, and I wouldn't miss that for anything.

The High School level is complete, and our daughter, Erica, is in the process of formatting it and doing the first editing. We will be printing soon. Some have asked what the price will be for the High School Level. This book will be the same as the others, \$30.00. I hope that will help you to plan.

To ensure that you know when the High School Level is available, sign up to continue to receive our E-Newsletter. You

might also want to [sign up for e-tutoring](#) so that your student gets the benefit of having someone new edit and correct their work, as well as give them written assignments.

The next project is Applied Grammar especially for children in the Autistic Spectrum. The name we chose was already taken, so we are currently trying to come up with another name for it.

Featured Article

Why do Kids Struggle with Writing?
The Physical Aspect of Writing (Continued from January)



Remembering and forming letters correctly is a skill that is developed over time. Control over the fine motor muscles that control the miniscule movements of thumb, pointer, and middle fingers comes at different times to different children. This is a developmental skill which means that until they are ready to do it, they will not feel particularly successful.

Generally speaking, boys tend to develop fine motor skills a tad later than girls. Boys generally spend more time and energy developing their large or gross motor skills.

Once the development is there, practice will refine it. Somewhere between the beginning of second grade and the end of third grade (years 7-9), children will become more fluent with their ability to write. Until that happens, practice and patience must be applied by both teacher and student.

If by the age of 9 or 10 years, a child still cannot recall letters or letter sounds of the basic phonemes, one must begin to look into the possibility of a learning delay or perhaps a disability. But don't panic, just try to find different ways to teach what they are struggling to learn. Above all, stay positive so that you do not dampen their ability to persevere.

It is good to keep in mind that reading and writing developments tend to spur each other on, or hold each other back. If a child's writing is stagnant, it might hinder progress in reading and the opposite is also true.

Here are some practical ways to practice handwriting and fine motor skills.

- 1. Tracing on dotted lines and writing Spelling words multiple times. Example: Write each word 3 times each day.**
- 2. When teaching forms of letters, begin with tracing in the air with the whole arm, saying out loud what the movements**

are. (see Peterson handwriting for examples of what to say.)

3. Then write the letters large on a white board or chalk board.
(Chalk boards tend to be better because the friction slows down the movements with its resistance.)
4. Form the letters using your body, Wikki Sticks, Play Dough or strings of macaroni. Actually, stringing the macaroni is good for developing fine motor skills, also.
5. Write the letters in sand or pudding on a cookie tray.
6. Using tweezers, move a small pile of rice from the table to a cup and back.
7. Using a wet sponge, erase already written letters off of a chalk board by tracing over them.
8. Use a paintbrush wet with water, and paint large letters on the side of the house or driveway.
9. Practice writing letters with sidewalk chalk.
10. Make large tape letters on the floor and have the children walk through the pathway for correctly writing the letters.
11. Have students write answers to questions on think pads.
12. Have students write spelling words in flattened clay or Play Dough.
13. Fluency Training: Fluency means that the letters are written smoothly and quickly; not drawn slowly and carefully. This is how to do fluency training:
 - A. While timing them, have students write a short sentence using their very best handwriting as perfectly as they can. Allow them to correct mistakes.
 - B. Set the timer a second or two lower than their base time.
 - C. Ask students to write the same sentence again, trying to stay neat and perfect, but still beat the timer. Do this only two times.
 - D. Keep a record of the times and graph results so that students
can see the results of their progress.
Progress will be slow, but it will be there. The graph helps with motivation.

Do this fluency training once a day five times a week. Keep the same sentence until you think they are ready to do a new one.

14. If your child has a lot of writing to do, and spelling is hindering his ability to compose, ask him to dictate to a tape recorder. Play it back in small segments allowing time to find the spelling he needs.

15. Make a distinction between composing and writing.

Composing is the thought process, writing is the physical process. Don't allow the difficulty of the physical writing to slow down the composing.

It is just so exciting to see a child be able to put their wonderfully creative thoughts on paper. Blessings to you and your children as you help to unfold the wonders of your child's mind.

Success with tutoring with Mrs. Brubaker

As a home school mother, I have found Applied Grammar an answer to prayer. In fact that's exactly what it is. I had prayed for God's guidance in a grammar curriculum, and while attending a home school conference, I found Applied Grammar. The simplicity of the concept of teaching grammar in this way has helped my children so much. The concept of giving them the colored posters has been an idea that has helped my children and myself. From my personal view, we teach children to walk and talk by repeating what we do, but when it came to teaching my children the parts of speech, I expected them to "just know." Thank you so much for creating this curriculum. We look forward to continue using it.

Amanda Harbison