

TruthQuest

HISTORY

"My children are widely spaced in Grades 2, 4, and 8. Should I keep them together, and if so, what guides should I use? If I put them into two groups, is it difficult?"

Let us first say again that it is the direction of the Lord which should decide this question! Families have done every possible combination. We will simply add a few thoughts to consider. The overall history plan for most families is to get the eldest student through world history before graduation, and the younger ones tag along just fine. On the other hand, if there is a very large age gap, if the eldest student must move quickly through history in order to complete his studies, or if the topics being studied by the eldest student are consistently too difficult/mature for younger siblings, it may be easier and wiser to let the older student study world history more independently and put the younger children in the "American History for Young Students" guides. This often works well for three reasons: 1) older students often need the opportunity to practice self-directed study before college and/or adulthood, especially if Mom realizes she has been afraid to let them go; 2) older students are often held back in depth and pace unnecessarily while Mom juggles the needs of both older and younger siblings; and, 3) it can often be 'time' for the younger students to get the same focused attention their elder siblings received when young, and to have their chance to enjoy the fun topics, books, and activities of American history best suited to their precious young age. Surely, some families do not want two topics being studied by two groups of children, but it may help to realize that even this is easier than the traditional textbook method, which has each child in his own era. If the older student is quite independent, the parent's time investment is almost exclusively in the younger set.

Keep in mind, though, that our "American History for Young Students" guides are designed to run parallel with the "Age of Revolution" guides that

cover American (and European history) at the upper level. If your elder student is in the Age of Revolution guides, then, you can either have the young ones tag along directly in those "Age of Rev" guides (you would need to re-phrase some of the commentary and omit certain topics), or you can have your young'uns working in parallel fashion (with commentary suited to their young age) in the companion "American History for Young Student" guides.