

# *The Story of the World, Volumes 1-4*

## Scope and Sequence

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### Curriculum Overview

[\*The Story of the World, Volumes 1-4\*](#) comprise a complete world history - told as a *chronological story*.

Elementary-aged children (grades 1-4) learn the foundations of a subject area through collecting, understanding, memorizing, and categorizing information. They learn the proper place of their community, their state, and their country by seeing the broad sweep of history from its beginning and then fitting their own time and place into that great landscape. Above all, in these early years, history should be enjoyable.

Side benefits in the elementary stage include the development of fine motor skills and increased facility in language and memorization skills.

Middle school students learn about the *connections* in history. With some included enhancements and modifications, middle school students (grades 5-8) can use *The Story of the World, Volumes 1-4* to begin to understand the relationships between cultures and countries and the impact of each on the other. The middle-school student will gain a better understanding of the cause-and-effect, and chronological relationships of cultures and societies through time.

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### Curriculum Description - The Series

*The Story of the World, Volumes 1-4*, covers world history from ~5000 BCE to 1994 CE.

Complete product descriptions and samples can be found on the [Well-Trained Mind Press website](#).

1. The Story of the World, Volume 1: Ancient Times (5000 BCE to 400 CE)
2. The Middle Ages (400 – 1600)
3. Early Modern Times (1600 to 1850)
4. The Modern Age (1850 to 1994)

The volumes are divided as they are to provide a roughly equal division of student-labor (not to divide the “time” of history into four equal parts). While the obvious division is

one-volume-per-year, schools, co-ops and home schools should determine what works best for their situation. That said, adhere as much as possible to these principles:

History should be studied chronologically; and  
History should be studied with a worldwide focus.

### ***Curriculum Components***

Each volume comes with a set of instructor and student materials (complete descriptions on the website).

The Text and the Activity Book are the core of the curriculum. The text is available as a book and as an audiobook. The text and the Activity Book are available in paper and digital formats.

The text tells the story, and the activity book provides the following instructional assistance, as well as student activities and exercises to help students internalize the story.

- **Review Questions:** Students must demonstrate comprehension of the text. For younger students, review is done orally, and for older students, in writing. Well-Trained Mind Press offers PDFs of pre-formatted *Review Questions Worksheets* (formerly known as *Written Comprehension Responses*) to save teachers time in typing up the questions for their students.
- **Narration Exercise:** Demonstrate the ability to retell the story, measure comprehension, internalizing the content, and develop writing skills (younger students can dictate to the teacher; older students do their own writing)
- Lists of additional readings (both fiction and non-fiction) are provided for avid students who want to learn more about a particular region or period.
- Activities and projects appropriate to the text's content. Perhaps the most famous of all is in the study of Ancient Egypt: Mummifying a Chicken. Other activities include 3-D modeling; drawing with the materials available in the relevant time period; field trips; craft projects (like making a scroll); experience projects (like panning for gold); cooking foods of different cultures; costume creation; and many other creative ideas.
- All four volumes include a coloring page for each chapter. (If you are using the *Original Edition Activity Book*, you will need to acquire the *Coloring Pages* separately.) Volume 4 includes more maps and other work suitable for the more mature content and the more mature student.
- **Map Work:** The student sees where in the world "history" happened. Instructions and maps included.

Other components of the curriculum include pre-printed review questions (see above), and a Test Book with Answer Key. *Coloring The Story of the World* is one option for giving kindergarten students a gentle introduction to world history.

### ***Additional Resources***

[\*The Well-Trained Mind, 4th Edition\*](#), ISBN 978-0-393-25362-7,<sup>1</sup> describes how to deliver a comprehensive history curriculum from elementary school (pages 135-186), middle school (pages 364-429) and high school (pages 364-429). Much of this information is also included in the Activity Books for each volume, but *The Well-Trained Mind* provides the overarching vision for the curriculum and each teacher will benefit by reading the appropriate history sections (listed above), as well as the prologue and overview sections for each age-and-stage category.

*The Well-Trained Mind* is focused on home schooling, but the suggestions are useful for schools and co-ops as well. The author discusses options for implementing the curriculum to address variables related to different situations.

The Well-Trained Mind Press' Customer Help Center - FAQ [describes the relationship between the components and gives suggestions for their use.](#)

This Help Center - FAQ article describes [what to purchase for classroom use.](#)

This Help Center - FAQ describes how to [license our materials.](#)

This Help Center - FAQ has further [information related to Well-Trained Mind Press' offerings in history and geography,](#)

This Help Center - FAQ has [further information for schools and co-ops.](#)

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## **Student Learning Objectives and Activities**

Each student should have a 3-ring binder which will store their narrations, map-work, coloring pages and other history-related creations. Further instruction regarding how to use *The Story of the World* is available in *The Well-Trained Mind, 4th Edition*, and more activities, projects, book lists, maps and so on are in the *Activity Book* for each volume.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Well-Trained Mind, 4th Edition*, by Jessie Wise and Susan Wise Bauer (New York: W.W. Norton, 2016)

### ***Elementary Objectives (Grades 1-4), Volumes 1-4***

1. Identify the location of each particular place on a printed map the location of each ancient people or culture. (History doesn't happen in a vacuum; it happens in real places, so we put lots and lots of maps in our text and Activity Books.)
2. Re-tell in 2-5 sentences the story or part of the story presented. First-grade students might need to do this orally, with the teacher writing the story on their behalf. Second grade and older students should be able to write this on their own. Narrations measure the student's comprehension, and develop pre-writing skills.
3. Color or draw an image that relates to the story. (Coloring pages are provided in the Activity Book.) The coloring page (or original drawing) provides another point-of-contact in image form, and develops fine-motor skills.
4. Memorize a list of 20 items (or 2 lists of 10 items) which gives the student "pegs" on which to hang the chronology of history. For elementary students, the items are more likely to be major events or important people rather than dates. This activity also increases their memorization skills.
5. Organize the work into a history notebook. In the elementary grades, they will need explicit instruction and help.

### ***Middle School Objectives (Grades 5-8), Volumes 1-4***

1. Record events and names of important people, inventions, literature, art, on a timeline. A timeline visually exposes chronological connections within and among peoples. A timeline can take many formats. For advice in setting up a timeline, see *The Well-Trained Mind, 4th Edition*, pages 366-368.)
2. Locate and label on a map the place(s) where events happened, or where important people lived; additionally, note the geographical changes and movement indicated in the historical reading.
3. Outline some portion of historical reading in order to pick out the central thought and the supporting ideas. Outlining helps the student remember and understand history, and serves as a vital composition exercise.
4. Read and evaluate primary sources. To begin, ask a series of questions to evaluate the source: What does the source say? (Content) Who is the author? (Consider social position, profession, political affiliation, age, any other relevant personal detail) What is the writer's purpose? What does he/she have to lose or gain by convincing others of his/her position? What events led to this piece of writing? What happened as a result of this writing?
5. Organizing the information using a history notebook divided into 9 sections
  1. Facts
  2. Great Men and Women

3. Wars, Conflicts, and Political Events
4. Inventions, Science, and Discoveries
5. Daily Life, Beliefs, and Customs
6. Literature and the Arts
7. Cities and Settlements
8. Primary Sources
9. Outlines

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## General Topics in Each Volume

All of the preceding description applies to each volume in the series. The following section describes subjects specific to each volume.

### [The Story of the World: Volume 1 - Ancient Times](#)

Volume 1 covers the time from 5000 BCE to 400 CE, especially focusing on Egypt, Hammurabi, the Babylonians, Ancient China, Ancient Africa, the Exodus, Ancient Greece, Ancient Rome, and more.

### [The Story of the World: Volume 2 - The Middle Ages](#)

Volume 2 covers the time from 400 – 1600, from the Fall of Rome through the Renaissance, covering the cultures and peoples of all the continents and subcontinents. It includes discussions of the dynasties, arts, discoveries, founding and spread of religions, wars, and explorations among the peoples of the world.

### [The Story of the World: Volume 3 - Early Modern Times](#)

Volume 3 covers the time from 1600 to 1850, again, covering the peoples and cultures from all parts of the globe. The story tells of explorations and expansion within and among continents, and the increased interconnections and impact of each upon the other.

### [The Story of the World: Volume 4 - The Modern Age](#)

Volume 4 covers the time from 1850 to 1994. It is intended for students in grades 4 - 8. Many events covered in this time period - especially in the 20th Century - are pretty intense; it has not been a gentle era. For this reason, **we recommend that this text not be read before 4th grade**. Even then, teachers/parents should exercise judgment regarding what stories might better be “glossed” for their students.

Volume 4 continues the story of expansion, the increasing interconnectedness, and conflict, among the peoples of the world. The book starts with the Victorian Era, and tells of rebellions, the Civil War in the U.S., economic developments and catastrophes, communist political developments in China and Russia (the USSR for most of the 20th century), World Wars I and II, the Holocaust, the atomic bomb, cold and hot wars, the struggles of indigenous peoples to be free, and ends with the war in the Persian Gulf, the end of the USSR, and the demise of apartheid in South Africa.

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## Scope and Sequence - Volumes 1-4

This Google Sheets workbook contains [detailed chapter lists for each volume](#). Each volume has a separate tab (look at the bottom of the spreadsheet). The boxes to the right of each chapter indicate the regions of the world discussed in that chapter. The far-right column is left blank for use by your district and/or teachers.

Final Note: Well-Trained Mind Press has made no attempt to match the curriculum requirements of any government or standards body. It would be impossible to match them all. The philosophy and goals of Well-Trained Mind Press' curriculum are explained in detail in *The Well-Trained Mind, 4th Edition*. For further information about this, [read this article from our Help Center - FAQ](#).