



Writing with Ease: Strong Fundamentals - Instructor Text

Susan Wise Bauer

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Young students who learn to write well need one-on-one instruction—something which your child's classroom may not offer. In *The Complete Writer* series, Susan Wise Bauer turns every parent into a writing teacher. No experience is needed. Drawing on her fifteen years of experience in teaching writing, Susan lays out a carefully-designed sequence of steps that will teach every student to put words on paper with ease and grace. This alternative plan for teaching writing combines the best elements of old-fashioned writing instruction with innovative new educational methods—and explains why so many writing programs fail.

Designed for elementary-aged writers and for older students who still struggle, *Writing With Ease* builds a sturdy foundation of basic skills for grades 1–4 (or levels 1–4 for the older student who needs more work) all in the same book. Diagnostic tests within the book will help the parent to determine where the child needs to start and which workbook the child will need. You can use the text by itself as a guide, then choose your own copywork and dictation; or you can buy the workbooks (available separately), which do all the work for you. Each workbooks will cover one grade. **This Instructor Text covers grades 1-4 in 144 lessons, 4 explanatory chapters, and 4 appendices.**

Writing with Ease: Strong Fundamentals - Instructor Text Details

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Author : Susan Wise Bauer

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Gemma Esprey says

I can see the basis for this and respect the ideals of the plan. In practice, after a full school day, I'm not sure how it would go down. However, I shall be thinking about the principles of copy work and dictation with more fun projects such as writing letters and stories or sentences from her favourite books, which is more likely to engage my daughter. Also, I shall think more carefully about the questions I ask her when we are reading together. A good read but very structured.

Deann says

I read the 2015 printing. I have and use in our homeschool the 4 levels of workbooks. They are wonderful themselves, but I had the desire to understand the mechanics a bit more. Writing With Ease Strong Fundamentals provides just that. This book will be helpful in pinpointing exactly where my child needs more practice, and allow me to obtain that from our other studies. There is some information on the next two stages of writing in middle and high school so the reader understands what we're moving towards. For the price, I wish there was more to this book, but if you use this instead of the workbooks it will hold much more value. I'm still glad to have the book, especially as I move more towards individualized lessons.

Ellen says

Jenni has this

Jennifer says

We won't be using this curriculum this year, but it looks like an easy way to help with the mechanics of writing.

Christine says

I really enjoyed the opening essay in this book. We've had some visual perception issues here and Bauer's plan reinforces the training "prescription" recommended to me for my child. I borrowed the book from the library, but now plan to purchase it. The author has done all the copywork selections for me and that - in and of itself - it worth it.

Allyson says

I'm hoping to use this for TyTy. He was late to read so we are just beginning the process of learning to write now. He hates writing at the moment and still struggles with simple things like capitalizing the first word in a sentence or proper nouns, and punctuation. I love Bauer's Story of the World series and this series comes highly recommended by one of my homeschooling friends who has five boys.

Juliana Lyon says

This IS a good program. It just gets a little monotonous...

Angela Wade says

Put together well and meticulously thought-out, but not the right fit for us. Too repetitious and dull to hold my child's attention, which turned spelling/handwriting into a seriously un-fun chore.

Probably better when paired with the classical approach.

TheRose says

I'm currently researching English/Writing curricula, and this is the one I've decided on. Its scope is exactly what I've been looking for!

Jean says

I borrow this book on a whim with the hope that it would give me tips to help my children's writing. While I can edit for style, I cannot teach young children the basic building blocks of writing in a manner that my kids would understand. However, this book gives me ideas based on the appropriate age level as well as exercise to help them improve the basic skills such as copywork and narration, later dictation. While I don't think this is the end all be all, it definitely gives me additional methods to keep in my proverbial bag of tricks that I can use if it should be appropriate for each of my children.

Catherine Gillespie says

Bauer is a professor at William & Mary, which is a rigorous school (my little brother went there!), but she notes that increasing numbers of her students are abysmal writers. In looking into why, Bauer unpacks the component skills required for good writing, and considers the best way to build those pieces in a way that will not frustrate the child. She notes that prematurely asking kids to combine handwriting, sentence structure, analysis, and composition organization is not a good idea, because except in the case of the (few)

naturally gifted writers out there, this approach will only create kids who hate writing, or kids who think they know how to write but who are actually terrible at it or have no sense of style.

Rather, Bauer's study led her to conclude that the classical and Charlotte Mason approaches of emphasizing narration, dictation, and copywork in the early elementary years, then moving into deep understanding of sentence composition and connecting style and thought in compositions in upper elementary and middle school, and finally working on building style in high school work best.

{Read my full review here}

Liz says

Good writing curriculum. I've never thought about the two steps involved in writing--forming thoughts that can be written, and writing them in correct form--as two things you could teach separately. Turns out there was a reason old-school schools taught dictation. We should bring it back, I think.

Sally Linford says

I left this review on Amazon:

Susan Bauer's opening essay on the writing process and how to teach it is the most cogent, informed explanation I've ever read:

"Writing is a process that involves two distinct mental steps. First, the writer puts an idea into words; then, she puts the words down on paper.

INARTICULATE IDEA ---> IDEA IN WORDS

IDEA IN WORDS ---> WORDS ON PAPER

. . . The pianist practices first the right hand, and then the left hand, before putting the two together; the young writer practices putting ideas into words, and then putting words down on paper, before trying to do both simultaneously. . . What follows will equip you to train the young student in the language of writing."

And Bauer delivers on this promise perfectly; she shows even the most unprepared parent or teacher how to teach good writing in just a few minutes a day. Her program will be a great relief to students who feel overwhelmed by writing assignments. It's all so manageable: she even tells you exactly what to do if you're starting with a "reluctant older student(grade 6-12)."

To make her case, her own writing is so easy and delightful that it's relaxing to read. I'm ordering the workbooks.

Thank you, Ms Bauer.

My off-the-record comment:

Susan Bauer ROCKS! I want to BE her.

(I guess I should say, "I want to be SHE," but that sounds goofy. So, if Shakespeare can get away with "Woe is me," I'm sticking with I WANT TO BE HER!

Meredith Henning says

This one is actually really nicely laid out. I really like pretty much all that Bauer has to offer, so I'm not surprised that I like this one as well. I will use bits and pieces of it to round out Matthias' and Seamus' grammar lessons. I really like how she breaks down the copywork, dictation and narration into small pieces. For a beginning home eucator, this would make an excellent foray into these methods! Very CM with a classical tilt :)

Saraelizabeth says

I read this in researching what writing curriculum to use for oldest daughter next year. I like her ideas of narration, copywork, and dictation for the early years. This author always does a good job of laying it all out for the parent to see exactly how it would be done. I like that for starting out until I get comfortable enough to do my own thing.
