

Turn Quarantine into Quality Time

*14 Days of Questions and Activities to
Maximize Your Time Together and Help Keep You Sane*

Hey.

No one saw this coming. We are in a strange sort of survival-mode as a nation right now, and life doesn't feel anything close to normal.

Most of us aren't used to being confined to our homes. Most of us don't know what to do with our children when they're off from school, nor what to do with ourselves when we are off from work. The state of our nation is unsettling, for sure, but the state of our home could seem unsettling, too.

But the reality is, this time is novel. There are few instances where you will be able to be in close quarters with your family for an extended period of time, for better or for worse. This season could be remembered as a time of complete chaos and despair, but it doesn't have to; it could be a really memorable time of connection and fun.

As a stay-at-home, homeschool mom I'm used to this life. And if I'm honest, it's actually really cool and rewarding. It's not always easy to be home with my kids 24/7, but one of the things that makes our days go by smoothly is having meaningful things to do together.

I've been thinking about you all - those of you who's next few weeks will look totally different than normal. I can't imagine how you are feeling. Maybe anxious. Maybe angry. Maybe afraid. Maybe exhausted. Maybe overwhelmed. Any and all of those feelings are legitimate.

I can't change the reality of your situation, but I thought that I could offer you some ideas of what you could do to make these weeks at home a little more smooth, a little more grounded, a little more enjoyable. No guarantees, of course, but something is better than nothing, right?

I have put together a two-week curriculum with fourteen daily themes to cover two weeks. (Before I was a SAHM I was an English teacher and I get weirdly excited about curriculums!) Each theme includes questions you can discuss as a family, as well as some structured activities and suggestions for family activities. You can do as much or as little of it as makes sense for your family, and I hope it can work for a wide variety of ages and family groups. Most days require little to no special materials besides what you are likely to have access to at home.

I believe this time of quarantine could actually be a memorable time in which you and your family can connect and learn together and about each other in new ways. I hope this little resource can help!

Best wishes. You got this!
Kristin

P.S. Follow me on Instagram [@withquiethands](https://www.instagram.com/withquiethands) for daily tip and suggestions and use the hashtag #quarantinequalitytime to share what you're up to!

THOUGHTS AND SUGGESTIONS

You don't really HAVE to do anything with your kids while they're off; these are just some ideas to provide some meaning and direction to your day if you want it. Don't push anything if your child is not interested in it - rather, make it available if they want to engage. Remember, they are going through a lot of changes, too, and adapting to a new normal will take time for all of you!

This is really set up for you to do alongside your kids. There are some structured activities suggested for each day, and some of these could be completed by a child independently, but this is more about finding a way to learn and enjoy each other together and bond through the process.

I wanted to include questions and activities that all ages could appreciate, including you as an adult! Keep in mind, though, this isn't comprehensive and not all of it will make sense for every age. While I tried to include some ideas for adaptation for the different ages, use your own wisdom to make adjustments. You know what kinds of questions and activities your child will respond to.

Each day includes a theme, a set of discussion questions, and activities. Days 1-5 and 8-12 include structured activities and family activities while the other days are more "weekend" style and focus more on conversation and family time.

I think the discussion questions are the best part of this whole thing. You will have ample time to have conversations with your family during this time; don't limit your questions to the few I suggest! Whether you like to discuss those questions first thing in the morning, throughout the day, or gathered around the dinner table, enjoy taking your time conversing with your family. You may be surprised what conversations can evolve. And be sure to answer the questions yourself! Remember, this is a unique opportunity to bond as a family, and *you* are an integral part of your family.

Another thing I highly suggest is reading aloud with your child(ren). On Day 1, I suggest you find a chapter book you can enjoy reading together as a family. Perhaps it is a beloved book from your own childhood or a book your child enjoys reading. Buy an [audiobook](#) or read aloud from a hardcopy throughout the week as an alternative to screen time. [The Read-Aloud Revival](#) is a wonderful resource if you're unsure of where to start or why to bother.

This little curriculum will not take up your whole day. Implement whatever of it makes sense for you at whatever time makes sense. Don't feel bound to it - if your child(ren) gets excited about a certain part of it or deviates from it completely, that's ok! Don't forget to include time for rest, play and, if possible, outdoor time during your days at home. And, of course, take time for yourself!

If you are looking to grow as a parent and want to take advantage of the time home to read and learn, here are a few books I recommend. Pick up a hard copy, or purchase them as an audiobook. (*These are affiliate links, meaning if you would make a purchase, I would receive a small commission at no cost to you.*)

[Simplicity Parenting](#) by Kim John Payne

[Peaceful Parent, Happy Kids](#) by Dr. Laura Markham

[The Power of Showing Up: How Parental Presence Shapes Who Our Kids Become and How Their Brains](#)

[Get Wired](#) by Dr. Daniel J. Siegel and Tina Payne Bryson

[How to Talk so Kids will Listen and Listen so Kids will Talk](#) by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish

THEMES

Day 1 - Stories: *Enjoy stories together.*

Day 2 - Animals: *Learn about and appreciate animals together.*

Day 3 - Music: *Enjoy music together.*

Day 4 - Influential People: *Learn about and share about influential people together.*

Day 5 - Recreation: *Enjoy playing together.*

Day 6 - Memories: *Share special memories together.*

Day 7 - Rest: *Take time to slow down.*

Day 8 - Food: *Learn to make food together.*

Day 9 - Nature: *Appreciate nature together.*

Day 10 - Art: *Appreciate and make art together.*

Day 11 - Places: *Learn about places together.*

Day 12 - Skills: *Learn life skills and work together.*

Day 13 - Love Languages: *Learn about how each other loves.*

Day 14 - The Future: *Make and share plans for the future.*

DAY 1 – Stories

Enjoy stories together.

Discussion Questions:

- What is your favorite book or story? Why?
- If you could be a character in any story, who would you be and why?
- Who is your “literary hero”? Why?
- Would you rather be the hero in the story or the best friend of the hero? Why?
- What is your favorite genre (style) of story? Why?
- If you could write a book, what would it be about?
- Come up with your own questions!

Structured Activities:

- Figure out what your child’s favorite book/story is and encourage them to read it or read it to them.
- Have your child share a story from their life and by present it in some way.
 - For young children: have them tell you a story and write it down for them. You may be surprised how delighted they are to have their story “written” like a book! If they’re interested, allow them to illustrate their book.
 - For older children: Allow your child to share their story in accordance to their interests. If they like to write, let them write. If they like to draw, have them do a “graphic novel” or include illustrations to written words. Allow them to write it as a rap or poem. Allow them to reenact it and record it. Be creative! Sky’s the limit.

Family Activities:

- Have each child share their story with the family.
- Find a book that you all could enjoy (perhaps a favorite book from a parent’s childhood!) Either have a parent read the book aloud or download the book on [Audible](#) or any audiobook source and begin listening to it together. Listen together throughout the next two weeks. *You may be amazed at the connection and conversation that can come from it!*
- Make up a continuing story together. One person begins with, “Once upon a time...” and begins a story (be sure to include at least one character and a setting). When that person is done their piece, they “tag” another next family member who then has to add onto the story. Continue doing so until you feel the story comes to a natural conclusion.

Child: Once upon a time, there was a little girl who had a pet goose. She loved to take her pet goose to the pond. Tag, Mom!

Mom: One day, she took her goose to the pond, but the goose got loose! The little girl didn’t know what to do. Tag, Dad! (etc.)

DAY 2 - Animals

Learn about and appreciate animals together.

Discussion Questions:

- What is your favorite animal? Why?
- If you could have any animal as a pet, what would it be?
- What habitat would you like to live in best: farm, forest, jungle, sea, desert? Why?
- What animal do you relate to? Why?
- If you had to describe each member in your family as an animal, what would it be and why?
- Come up with your own questions!

Structured Activities:

- Do an animal investigation! Use the internet or books to research an animal (or more) of your child's choice. (If you have a young child, you will need to do this with them).
- Topics you could investigate:
 - Habitat
 - Food
 - Size (measure this out with a measuring tape if you can and/or make a life-sized replica)
 - Lifespan
 - Habits
 - Special Skills/Abilities
- Create a piece of art celebrating the animal(s) you learned about.

Family Activities:

- Share what you learned from your animal investigation.
- Play animal charades.
- Play "I'm thinking of an animal..." and describe it. The person who guesses it correctly can come up with the next description.
- Watch a documentary that showcases animals ([Planet Earth](#), for example).

Day 3 - Music

Enjoy music together.

Discussion Questions:

- What is your favorite song? Why?
- Who is your favorite musical artist? Why?
- What is your favorite style of music? Why?
- If you could play any instrument, what would it be? Why?
- Would you rather be able to sing really well or play an instrument really well?
- Would you rather never listen to music again or never be able to talk again?
- Come up with your own questions!

Structured Activities:

- Actively listen to and “study” a piece of classical, jazz, or choral music. Suggestions:
 - [Vivaldi's Spring](#)
 - [Yo-Yo Ma's Bach: Cello Suite No. 1 in G Major, Prelude](#)
 - [Louis Armstrong's What a Wonderful World](#)
 - [Duke Ellington's Mood Indigo](#)
 - [Ola Gjeilo's The Lake Isle](#)
 - [Morten Lauridsen's Sure On this Shining Night](#)
- Ask your child, if that song were a color, what would it be?
- Have your child describe what feelings he/she feels when listening to it.
- Have your child imagine the scene the music is playing and illustrate it.
- Watch a live performance of the song and observe the difference between merely hearing it and seeing it.
- If the song has text, read the text aloud and discuss how the music connects to the words.
- Allow children to listen to a song of his/her choice and interact with it - allow them to try and illustrate it or make a sculpture that connects to the piece of music or create a dance routine to go with it.

Family Activities:

- Have child(ren) present whatever musical activity they did (see above).
- Share with your child(ren) some of the music you enjoyed listening to when you were growing up. Explain to them why you enjoyed it.
- Do a talent show. Allow child(ren) to showcase any musical skill.
- Sing karaoke or have a family dance party to some fun, upbeat music.

Day 4 - Influential People

Learn and share about influential people together.

Discussion Questions:

- *For little ones:* Who is your favorite person? Why are they your favorite person?
- *For little ones:* If you could be like any person, who would it be?
- What is your favorite thing about yourself?
- If you could have dinner with any person, living or dead, who would it be?
- What qualities do you care about most in people?
- Which historical figure has left an impression on you? Why?
- Who has impacted you the most? Why?
- Who is your hero?
- Would you rather be intelligent or strong?
- Would you rather be beautiful or wealthy?
- Why do you think celebrities are influential? Should they be?
- Come up with your own questions!

Structured Activities:

- Have your child choose a famous person or people group who he/she would like to learn more about. Research that person and discover some interesting points about their lives. Discuss with your child what makes that person/people group interesting or influential.
- Have your child write a letter (a real one!) to a person who has influenced them. (You will have to transcribe for younger ones.) Encourage your child to explain how that person has impacted them. Mail it, if possible.

Family Activities:

- Write each family member's name on a piece of paper. Have each family member go around and write down an encouraging word on each person's paper. (With young children, ask them what they like about each person and write it down for them.) Let each person keep their sheet at the end.
- Watch a film or documentary about real people who made an impact in their community and/or the world. Here are some suggestions: *A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood*, *Cool Runnings*, *A League of Their Own*, *Remember the Titans*, *Hidden Figures*, *The Great Debaters*, *Amazing Grace*, *Freedom Writers*, *Into the Wild*, *The Theory of Everything*, *The Imitation Game* are some suggestions. Use discretion with your children - many of these are rated PG-13 for difficult content). Discuss with your children.

Day 5 - Recreation

Enjoy playing and being together.

Discussion Questions:

- What is your favorite toy?
- What are your favorite things to do?
- What are your favorite games?
- What would be your perfect day?
- Would you rather make art or play a sport?
- Would you rather play a game or read a book?
- Would you rather be still or be moving?
- Come up with your own questions!

Structured Activities:

- Today, spend intentional time (at least 15 minutes) with your child doing an activity of his/her choosing. If you have multiple children, do it for each child and allow the others to do something independently. Here are some ideas of recreational activities:
 - Tossing/kicking a ball
 - Playing with play-dough
 - Playing make-believe
 - Assembling a puzzle
 - Building Legos
 - Playing a game
 - Digging in the dirt
 - Snuggling
 - Cooking/baking
 - Reading
- Be sure to spend at least 15 minutes doing something life-giving for yourself!

Family Activity:

- Have a family game night. Here are some ideas:
 - Board games
 - Card games
 - Shoot a basketball or play P.I.G.
 - Throw a frisbee
 - Assemble a jigsaw puzzle
 - Play an interactive video-game
 - Charades
 - Pictionary

Day 6 - Memories

Share special memories together.

Discussion Questions:

- If you could relive one day, what would it be? Why?
- What was the scariest day of your life?
- What was the happiest day of your life?
- What's the funniest thing that's ever happened to you?
- What is the best thing we've ever done as a family?
- What has been your favorite trip?
- What is your favorite family tradition?
- Come up with your own questions!

Family Activities:

- Look through baby books, old photos or videos of time spent together.
- Share favorite memories of your child(ren) from their growing up years.
- Share your own childhood memories.
- Create a "time capsule" that you will revisit in five, ten, or twenty years from now. Gather items from around the house that can be put into the time capsule. Include little notes about what each person in your family is up to and things they enjoy. Put items into a small box or container, seal it, label it with "Open On..." date, and store it away somewhere for safe keeping.

Day 7 - Rest

Take time to slow down.

Discussion Questions:

- What is your favorite way to rest?
- If you could vacation in the mountains or at the beach, which would you choose? Why?
- What is your favorite sound?
- What is your favorite scent?
- What makes you feel at peace?
- Come up with your own questions!

Family Activities:

- Do any of the aforementioned activities that promote restfulness and peace.
- Spend time outdoors, if possible (please adhere to all government suggestions on this one).
- Play peaceful music.
- Have a family tea-time (or whatever warm beverage you prefer) and snacks.
- Continue to enjoy your family book of choice together.

Day 8 – Food

Enjoy making and eating food together.

Discussion Questions:

- What is your favorite meal of the day?
- What is your favorite fruit?
- What is your favorite vegetable?
- What is your favorite food of all time?
- What is your favorite restaurant?
- If you could choose between _____ or _____, what would you choose?
- What is a food you would like to learn how to make?
- Come up with your own questions!

Structured Activities:

- Encourage your child to make something in the kitchen (it can be as simple as pancakes or as complex as an entire meal).
- Ask your child if there is something in particular they want to make. Find a recipe. If you do not have the means to make a particular recipe at home, make a note to try it when you can access the ingredients.
 - Make a list of necessary ingredients
 - Discuss the pricing of particular items
 - Calculate the cost to create this particular item/meal
 - If you can, make the recipe. Allow child to have some ownership over appropriate skills - measuring, dumping, mixing, turning on the oven, simple cutting, etc. (*Of course, practice appropriate kitchen safety!*)
- If you do not have the ability to make the recipe your child is interested in, problem solve and try to work together to come up with a nutritious meal with what you have available! Consider it like a “[Chopped](#)” event - see if you can creatively incorporate different items into the meal.

Family Activities:

- Have a celebratory family meal together. Make it feel special by setting out a special tablecloth or have it candle-lit. Play some music in the background. Set the mood. Allow your child to help present what they helped make. The meal itself can be so simple - grilled cheese and tomato soup, rice and beans - but make it feel fancy!
- Have everyone work together to clean up from the meal.
- Be sure to compliment and thank the chef(s)!

Day 9 - Nature

Appreciate nature together.

Discussion Questions:

- What is your favorite thing about nature?
- Which is your favorite season? Why?
- What is your favorite weather day? Why?
- Which do you like better: birds or fish?
- Which do you like better: sunrise or sunset?
- Which do you like better: the beach or the forest?
- What is your favorite thing to do in nature?
- Come up with your own questions!

Structured Activities:

- Read the poem “Mindful” by Mary Oliver (see next page). Remind your child(ren) that beauty is all around us!
- Investigate the nature in your immediate community. If you can’t go outside, peer outside a window. Make a collective list of all the nature you can see from your home. Make the list as comprehensive as possible: names of trees, birds, plants, bugs, animals, etc.
- Most of us will have local birds that we can observe from our home. Consider downloading the [Merlin Bird App](#) (it’s free!) and search out which birds you see from your window.
- Pick a particular piece of nature near your home (a leaf, a bug, a seed, a rock) and study it carefully.
 - Note its size, shape, color, etc.
 - Illustrate it carefully (little children may need help with drawing, but could color it in, etc.).
 - If you can, discover its name label it according to its parts (use the internet as a resource!)

Family Activities:

- Do a family outing (*if possible - please follow your local government’s suggestions on this*) to the back yard, a local park, bird sanctuary, beach, etc. Spend a good deal of time enjoying the outdoors, but also do an open-ended “scavenger hunt” and have family members collect items or take pictures of anything that appeals to them in nature. After the outing is over, share with each other why those items appealed to them.
- Watch a documentary like [The Biggest Little Farm](#) or [Planet Earth](#). Marvel at the beauty and complexity of nature!

Mindful

by Mary Oliver

from [New and Selected Poems, Vol. 2](#)

Every day
I see or I hear
Something
that more or less

kills me
with delight,
that leaves me
like a needle

in the haystack
of light.
It is what I was born for –
to look, to listen,

to lose myself
inside this soft world –
to instruct myself
over and over

in joy,
and acclamation.
Nor am I talking
about the exceptional,

the fearful, the dreadful,
the very extravagant –
but of the ordinary,
the common, the very drab,

the daily presentations.
Oh, good scholar,
I say to myself,
how can you help

but grow wise
with such teachings
as these –
the untrimmable light

of the world,
the ocean's shine,
the prayers that are made
out of grass?

Day 10 - Art

Appreciate and make art together.

Discussion Questions:

- Do you enjoy art? Why or why not?
- If you had to pick: which mode of art would you be interested in learning? (Drawing, painting, sculpting, crafting, needlework, woodwork, culinary art, music, etc).
- Do you have a favorite artist or piece of art? What is it?
- Does art enhance your life? Why or why not?
- Do you like art that looks more realistic or art that is more sensational?
- What makes something beautiful?
- Come up with your own questions!

Structured Activities:

- Study a famous artist (or two). Learn about what made him/her unique. Figure out where and when they were creating art. Then, look at their art. Compare and contrast how two different pieces look. You can search famous art and see which appeals to you, then find out who created the piece. Or, you could simply look up an artist. Here are some suggestions:
 - Michelangelo
 - Vincent Van Gogh
 - Pablo Picasso
 - Claude Monet
 - Frida Kahlo
 - Paul Cezanne
 - Georgia O'Keefe
 - Kehinde Wiley

Note: use discretion with your children and preview art before observing it. I wanted to include a range of artists from varying eras and cultures, but be sure the art you are studying is consistent with your family values. Art is evocative and powerful!

- Create a piece of art! You could have your child imitate the art of the famous artist to the best of their ability or come up with their own piece of art. Be creative: art takes many forms!

Family Activities:

- Have an "art show" and post the created art around a room. Encourage each person to give positive feedback to the artist.
- Consider creating a piece of collaborative art! Be creative - the possibilities are endless.
- Play pictionary.
- Plan a trip to a museum to enjoy art in real life when we can finally get back into the real world!

Day 11 - Places

Learn about places together.

Discussion Questions:

- What do you like better: the city or the country?
- What do you like better: warm climates or cold climates?
- What do you like better: busy places with lots of people or more remote places?
- If you could visit any country in the world, what would it be and why?
- If you could visit any city in the world, what would it be and why?
- If you could visit any wilderness in the world, what would it be and why?
- If you could live anywhere for the rest of your life, where would you live and why?
- What is your favorite thing about where you live? Why?
- Come up with your own questions!

Structured Activities:

- Have your child investigate a place of their choice! It can be as broad (a country) or specific (a particular site) as they please. Have your child discover a few key parts about that place. Ideas could include:
 - What makes that place significant?
 - What language do they speak there?
 - What is the climate?
 - What kind of animals can you find there?
 - What do people enjoy doing there?
- Have your child look into their own home state or city. Have them determine what makes their state/city significant and unique in the United States.

Family Activities:

- Have your child(ren) share about the place they investigated. Allow them to show pictures, if possible!
- Share with your children the places you have visited or places you always dreamed to visit. Locate those places on a map so your child can see. Share stories from your experiences, or share what you would have liked to do there.
- Plan an outing to a location in your area (it doesn't have to be fancy - just a visit to a local park or museum or city or landmark) for when you can get out and about again!

Day 12 – Skills

Learn life skills and work together.

Discussion Questions:

- What is something you'd like to learn how to do?
- What kind of activities do you enjoy doing at home?
- Would you rather: cook or clean?
- Would you rather: fix something or decorate a space?
- Would you rather: fold laundry or clean dishes?
- Is there anything you would like to learn from me?
- Come up with your own questions!

Structured Activities:

- Today is all about helping your child develop a life skill. This will completely be dependent on where your child is at developmentally! Just think: what is something you can help teach your child as they grow in autonomy? What practical wisdom do you have to share? Here are some ideas:
 - Little children: tying shoes, set the table, clearing the table, sweeping a floor, sorting socks, feeding a pet
 - Middle aged children: cooking skills, decorating skills, folding and putting away laundry, washing windows, scrubbing floors, organizing room
 - Older children: cooking skills, balancing a checkbook, cleaning/maintenancing a car, planning a grocery trip

Family Activities:

- Work together to tidy and clean the home and do chores. This may sound like a lame activity, but it actually can be really fun when done together. Play some upbeat music and/or make a game out of it.
- Consider sorting through old books, toys, and clothes and choose some to donate to an organization that could benefit.

Day 13 - Love Languages

Learn about how each other gives and receives love.

Discussion Questions:

- What makes you feel loved?
- Would you rather receive a gift or a hug?
- Would you rather be told something kind or given a hand?
- What is the kindest thing anyone has ever said to you?
- What do you love about each person of the family?
- What can I do to help you this week?
- What is one thing you wish I understood better about you?
- Come up with your own questions!

Family Activities:

- Have each member of the family take the [Love Languages quiz](#) (there are ones for children, teens, couples, and singles).
- Write down each family member's names on a chart and write down their top love languages.
- Strive to find a way to love each member of your family according to their love language.

Day 14 - The Future

Make and share plans for the future.

Discussion Questions:

- What has been the best part about these weeks at home?
- What has been the hardest part about these weeks at home?
- What are you looking forward to in the coming week?
- Is there anything you're nervous about in the coming week?
- What is something you hope to accomplish this year?
- Are there any skills you would like to work on in the future?
- Is there a certain career path you are interested in?
- What kind of person do you want to be known as?
- How would you like our family to operate from here on out?
- Come up with your own questions!

Family Activities:

- Discuss and debrief the time you've spent together. Reflect on the experience, highs and lows.
- Make a family bucket list for the rest of the year - things you would like to do together or accomplish in the months to come.
- Enjoy doing more of whatever you've enjoyed most!

*I hope this resource was able to serve you!
It is truly a passion of mine to equip families to
learn, grow, and love each other well.*

*Please feel free to send me any feedback
at with.quiet.hands.blog@gmail.com.*

*If you appreciated this resource,
would you consider making a small donation
to help support my blog?
Simply visit my blog www.withquiethands.com
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Thanks for your consideration!*

Soli Deo Gloria.

Kristin