

We would also like to encourage you to create your own customized worksheets for your child. After all, you're the one who knows exactly where her strengths and weaknesses are and what she needs to practice.

Please don't overdo the use of worksheets. Ten to fifteen simple problems, four to six difficult problems and, occasionally, one timed sheet is enough for a day's math session. Ensure your lessons do not become stale or that you rely on worksheets when you can't think of an alternative! Do, however, use them on your fifth school day while you are otherwise occupied.

And make up your own worksheets! You're the one who knows what your child needs to practice and what would otherwise be busy work, a real homeschool no-no!

## Workbooks

This year, in recognition of the level of maturity of fourth graders, we have included a number of workbooks in our curriculum. We have chosen books from the *Key To* series because they are clearly laid out, user-friendly, have tasteful illustrations and are never patronizing to children.

*Key To* also takes one math topic at a time and works with that from its beginnings to an advanced level over a series of self-contained workbooks. Most math curriculums jump around from topic to topic or, like Saxon, use an "incremental approach", a way of breaking down material into tiny steps. Books like these are not adaptable to the progression of mathematics in Waldorf education, where topics are introduced according to developmental changes in the child, not to curriculum-writers' whims. (*Please refer to our website for a grades 1-8 layout of our math curriculum.*)

*Key To* is easily adaptable to a Waldorf approach. The workbooks are also very inexpensive – which is nice!

To succeed at homeschooling, one's children need, eventually, to have a degree of independence. We discuss this in our *Fourth Grade Syllabus*, and introduced this idea in the *Third Grade Syllabus*. In fourth grade, a child can take a further step by using workbooks to work (somewhat) independently. The parent, then, can be with another child or doing something else.

Please note that a child who has never used workbooks needs some introducing to them. And that those who've been traumatized by overuse of worksheets (perhaps at public school) might not take to them. In this latter case, you might need to work together in the workbooks for this year.