



Formation Of Character: Volume V of Charlotte Mason's Original Homeschooling Series

Charlotte M. Mason

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Formation of Character is the fifth volume of Charlotte Mason's Homeschooling series. The chapters stand alone and are valuable to parents of children of all ages. Part I includes case studies of children (and adults) who cured themselves of bad habits. Part II is a series of reflections on subjects including both schooling and vacations (or "stay-cations" as we now call them). Part III covers various aspects of home schooling, with a special section detailing the things that Charlotte Mason thought were important to teach to girls in particular. Part IV consists of examples of how education affected outcome of character in famous writers of her day. Charlotte Mason was a late nineteenth-century British educator whose ideas were far ahead of her time. She believed that children are born persons worthy of respect, rather than blank slates, and that it was better to feed their growing minds with living literature and vital ideas and knowledge, rather than dry facts and knowledge filtered and pre-digested by the teacher. Her method of education, still used by some private schools and many homeschooling families, is gentle and flexible, especially with younger children, and includes first-hand exposure to great and noble ideas through books in each school subject, conveying wonder and arousing curiosity, and through reflection upon great art, music, and poetry; nature observation as the primary means of early science teaching; use of manipulatives and real-life application to understand mathematical concepts and learning to reason, rather than rote memorization and working endless sums; and an emphasis on character and on cultivating and maintaining good personal habits. Schooling is teacher-directed, not child-led, but school time should be short enough to allow students free time to play and to pursue their own worthy interests such as handicrafts. Traditional Charlotte Mason schooling is firmly based on Christianity, although the method is also used successfully by secular families and families of other religions.

Formation Of Character: Volume V of Charlotte Mason's Original Homeschooling Series Details

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Lara says

I read the Charlotte Mason Home Companion a couple years ago and it was nice but a friend of mine forced me to buy the original series of six books written by Charlotte and now she is forcing me to read them and I couldn't be more grateful because they are excellent! I started with book five, Formation of Character, and it's helping me so much with my children.

This book would be good for any parent to read, not just homeschoolers. I hope I like the rest of the series as much.

Amanda says

Just a note: I didn't have time to finish this book before returning it to the library, but I want to finish it sometime soon.

Betsy says

These are books I dabble in--rarely reading one volume straight through from beginning to end. I tend to check chapters off in the table of contents as I have time to read them.

This one is a thought-provoking read whether you are homeschooling your children, a classroom educator, or not! (as is true for most of her books)

What sets this book apart from her others is that much of the information is told through stories. This might be hard to dive into if you're not familiar with Victorian authors, but it's quite effective. I find this one a little more challenging to read straight through and jump around more in it than I do the others.

Deanna says

This book deals with the importance of developing character.

She says, "A woman's success in life depends on what force of character is in her; and character is to be got, like any other power, by dint of precept and practice." pg. 239

The early part of this book deals with stories that are devoted to pointing out character traits in ill-behaved children and how they can learn appropriate habits.

The thought is also presented that all of us have habits. However we need to ask are they habits that are helping us or keeping us a slave to our passions and desires?

Rebecca says

This is a difficult book to read, as it doesn't give clear advice like a modern self help book would. The first part of the book contains short stories that illustrate how to fix character problems. The second part is a conversation between parents about how to salvage our unproductive summer vacation; how to teach the Bible in the face of scientific discovery; and how her philosophy can change the world. The third part is more straightforward; it described the parent's responsibility once the child enters school. And the fourth part consists of multiple literary analysis essays showing how different characters in the books had their character formed. Overall, I would not recommend this book because it uses many outdated references that the modern reader is not familiar with, and even the more straightforward sections of the book are heavy and hard to get at the point.

Becky says

I was given five of the volumes in this series and for some reason I started with Volume 5. . . This volume had several case studies and examples of famous people as well as forming the character of a young woman. Some of it was very helpful; I appreciated the case studies about habit-forming in which it was encouraged that in order to change a bad habit in a child you need to seek to replace it with a good habit. However, some of the book seemed to just bog me down and sometimes some of Mason's antiquated language was hard for me to follow.

I hope that the other volumes are of more use!

Ali says

Book 5 of Charlotte Mason's six-volume education series. This book gives several "short stories" in the first half of the book which serve as anecdotes for Ms. Mason's philosophies on education and discipline. A great book for those wishing to bring up their children in a respectful manner, and who want their children to have a life-long love of learning.

Summer says

I'm so happy that Charlotte Mason has come into my life! This is the second book from her series that I have read (I've also read Vol. 1 Home Education)

This book is divided into four parts. Part 1 and Part 3 are must reads! Part 2 has some excellent ideas and quotes. Part 4 was referencing a lot of Victorian books and people that I was not familiar with so it did not keep my attention. Overall, 5 stars, an absolute treasure!

Part 1 is a series of case studies. Instead of the author telling you "If your child has tantrums, do this.", as many modern books would, each story is presented in conversation form. This can be a little difficult at first especially since they are speaking in old english. It's worth the effort. Once you get used to the style it will really give you great insights into why children act a certain way and how to eliminate those "tiresome traits"

and establish positive habit and help them to form good character. I actually teared up a few times because I could see myself and other loved ones in the stories. Excellent advice for all ages.
