

# Provoking Thought is at Heart of Sonlight Curriculum®

**W**hat started more than 15 years ago as a small, home school company primarily serving American expatriates has grown into a world-wide company serving customers in more than 150 countries. The secret behind the phenomenal success of Littleton-based Sonlight Curriculum can be summed up in just four words: No more boring textbooks!

"We believe that most children respond more positively to great literature than they do to textbooks," says John Holzmann, Sonlight co-founder.

"Literature provides the story, emotion and culture beyond the facts and makes much more interesting reading. Once a good book grabs a child's attention, the educational process becomes relatively painless because the child actually wants to read."

The Sonlight story began in 1990 in Pasadena, Calif., with Sarita Holzmann, John's wife, and Becky Lewis, a friend and neighbor. Sarita and Becky home-schooled their children and held a similar, low-stress philosophy of home schooling that centered on good books.

Becky suggested they start a supply company that would gather the best of the best home-schooling materials, put them together into a complete package, including a thorough instructor's guide, and make them available internationally.

They easily sold John on the idea and set out to develop the curriculum. The business plan designated a distinct role for each of them. Sarita would pick the books with Becky's help; Becky would write the instructor's guides; and John would fill in the gaps — editing, typesetting and providing whatever additional help was needed.

By primarily using literature as the basis for its curriculum, Sonlight is able to deliver a broad perspective with its educational programs.

"Every country has its own system and emphasis in education programs," John says. "We're extremely proud of the fact that our curriculum has found international acceptance and is popular across cultural and country boundaries."

In addition to creating a curriculum that keeps children inspired to learn, the Sonlight program has another important benefit — establishing stronger relationships between parents and their children.

"One of the things that's exciting about using the Sonlight curriculum is that it allows parents to interact with kids on

deep, meaningful issues," John says. "As a result, we've found that parents become the prime contact for their children to discuss and learn about world issues."

Home-schooling your children is not for everyone, nor is the Sonlight Curriculum. However, it is an option worth exploring.

"I strongly believe parents should look at all of the options for schooling and seek what is best for their children and their family," John says. "What I've realized is that most Americans

have not established a habit of looking at school options. They may choose where to live based on schools, but that's about as far as it goes. Rarely do they take the next step and ask to see a course syllabus, something I highly recommend."



John Holzmann

Sonlight provides complete home-schooling curriculum packages and individual materials so parents can build the preschool or K-12 program that best meets their family's needs. The instructor's guides

are comprehensive and easy to follow, which allows parents to minimize the time spent preparing lessons and maximize the time spent interacting with their children.

Prices range from \$300 for the pre-kindergarten program to \$1,000 for the fifth-year program. Once parents purchase the Sonlight Curriculum, they own the books and instructor's guides and can use them repeatedly without additional cost.

Sonlight Curriculum chose Wells Fargo as its financial provider to help the company maintain the necessary inventory level to grow and meet customer demand. "We've really appreciated our Business Banking Manager Ralph Atkinson's creative approach to financing," John says. "Whether we've needed financing for inventory or building projects, we've found Wells Fargo pricing to be aggressive and competitive. And since more than 90 percent of our orders come in online, Wells Fargo's credit card processing services are essential to our business."

For more information about Sonlight Curriculum, visit [www.sonlight.com](http://www.sonlight.com).