



**Action Plan Lesson #2**

# **Why Dynamic Theme Units Work!**

By

**Meredith Nation  
Dynamic Theme Units**

<http://www.DynamicThemeUnits.com>

**NOTICE: You Do NOT Have the Right  
to Reprint or Resell this Report!**

You Also MAY NOT Give Away,  
Sell or Share the Content Herein

If you obtained this report from anywhere other than <http://www.DynamicThemeUnits.com> , you have a pirated copy.

Please help stop Internet crime by reporting this to:  
[support@dynamicthemeunits.com](mailto:support@dynamicthemeunits.com)

© 2009 Copyright Sutherland Creek Publishing

**ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.** No part of this report may be reproduced or transmitted in any form whatsoever, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any informational storage or retrieval system without express written permission from the author.

**DISCLAIMER AND/OR LEGAL NOTICES:**

The information presented herein represents the view of the author as of the date of publication. Because of the rate with which conditions change, the author reserves the right to alter and update his opinion based on new conditions. This report is for informational purposes only. While every attempt has been made to verify the information provided in this report, neither the author nor her affiliates/partners assumes any responsibility for errors, inaccuracies or omissions. If advice concerning legal or related matters is needed, the services of a fully qualified professional should be sought. This report is not intended for use as a source of legal or accounting advice. You should be aware of any laws which govern homeschooling / education practices in your country, state and locality. Any slights of people or organizations are unintentional. You must evaluate this information in light of the unique circumstances of any particular situation and must determine independently the applicability of this information thereto.

The use of this report is governed by the terms of service as specified at the following web address:  
<http://www.dynamicthemeunits.com/terms-and-conditions>

## Foreword

There is a lot to talk about this week, including our usual introductory "notes" so I won't waste any time on small talk. Well, maybe a little time. Just a little. ☺

First, let me mention something about the delivery schedule of the lessons. As you probably know, email isn't an exact science. When I say "Lessons will arrive every 7 days" that's the schedule and that's what I've programmed into the sequence. (Just know that you WILL receive a lesson EVERY WEEK at some time.)

However, there are a variety of scenarios (that I won't list) which might cause a delay in you receiving the lesson. There are things that might cause a delay on MY end with the autoresponder service and there are things that might cause a delay on YOUR end with your email service provider.

***IF*** a lesson doesn't arrive exactly on the day you are expecting it, **please don't panic**. You WILL receive the lesson ... I promise! If you absolutely have to have it that day and it cannot wait or bad things are gonna happen (seriously, if it's your day off and you want to work on it that day...) then email me at: [meredith@dynamicthemeunits.com](mailto:meredith@dynamicthemeunits.com) and I'll manually send you the link.

***Otherwise, please give it 48 hours past your expected time before you become concerned. If it doesn't arrive by then, certainly feel free to email me and I WILL get you the lesson.***

**Read this ->** Additionally, all lessons have download links for all of the previous lessons in the sequence. So, if for whatever reason you completely misplace something, check the current lesson (located on the last page of the PDF) for links to anything you might have missed.

-----

**Note:** Most weekly lessons will be 2-5 pages in length (not including cover page, legal page, and foreword) but some may be longer due to the subject matter being covered.

# Introduction

Dynamic Theme Units have a whole raft of advantages over using curriculums, workbooks, or lesson plans in your Homeschooling.

Here are 11 ways DTUs are a better way to learn:

## 1. Retention

We are all more engaged if what we are learning relates to other things we have learned or are learning about. This is why any exposure to, for instance, a foreign language, makes learning that language later in life MUCH EASIER, even if *the person has forgotten everything he learned before*.

That's why **Dynamic Theme Units** (DTUs) are an ideal way to teach: children are expected to THINK ABOUT what they are learning, to SHARE what they are learning, and to USE what they are learning, in ways that make sense to them. This type of relational learning dramatically improves retention of what they are learning--even dry "facts."

## 2. Interest

DTUs engage the interest of children in two important ways:

- The child has been part of the choosing/planning process.
- Units leave lots of room for individual choice of which projects to engage in.

***Real learning takes place when the child is interested and invested in the process.***

## 3. Skills

DTUs allow a child to build and polish skills through practical, every day use, rather than mindless repetition. Studies have shown that skills practiced in this way are many times more likely to be retained than skills practiced out of any use context.

#### 4. Application

Dynamic Theme Units will encourage your child to use what she learns in real life. For instance, one year our family planned a vacation to the canyon lands of southern Utah. As part of our preparation for this trip, we studied Utah geography, and even made a three-dimensional map out of salt dough. On the first day of our vacation, we were driving through an uninhabited desert area. Suddenly, my daughter exclaimed, "Hey, Mom. This is the Colorado plateau!" For the rest of the vacation, the kids challenged themselves to identify as many landforms as they could.

#### 5. Research

Units encourage fact-finding. When your children are interested in something, they want to learn things about it. In the process, they learn to do research on the internet, in the library, and in the community. They develop **research** skills that will be helpful to them throughout their lives.

As they learn more, they may decide they are not really interested in pursuing that subject. They may stumble across something that entices them to branch off in another direction of inquiry. Or, they may become fascinated with the subject and pursue the interest until they become an expert. In any case, they are finding information that they *really want to know*.

#### 6. Reading Comprehension

The ability to read well and to understand what is read is a vital skill in today's world. In the process of learning about a Theme, your child will be extracting information from reading material, and adding that information to a body of knowledge that is being compiled about a certain subject. In sharing what he has learned, he will invite feedback from you that will let him know how well he has understood what he read.

#### 7. Enjoyment of Reading

Reading about a variety of interesting subjects will strengthen reading skills, making reading easier and more pleasurable. Many of us who LOVE TO READ initially found our appetite for reading whetted by some reading material that caught our interest. One "doesn't like to read," (yet)

but devours gardening books! His mom is now planning several Units that incorporate gardening, of course.

## 8. Computer Skills

There is such a wealth of information and helpful products and ideas available on the internet these days, that anyone who is not proficient in finding these things is likely to miss out on many wonderful opportunities. Children usually need only a few basic instructions to launch out on fairly sophisticated computer searches; often they are better at it than we are!

With the option of typing a report in an interesting font, most children will soon become quite skilled at word processing, and power point is just icing on the cake. Email, blogging, and setting up a web page are among options for computer sharing that kids often take to like ducks to water.

The great thing is, with all they are learning about the Dynamic Theme Unit, they have interesting things to say!

## 9. Confidence

The DTU approach to education gives your child a strong message: "What you are interested in is important." This is very affirming, and leads to **confidence** in your child's own ability to choose worthwhile things to pursue.

A confident child is much less likely to be swayed by peer pressure, popular opinion, or doubt. This builds the basis for healthy, positive choices in all areas of life. When individual interests can be developed, your child is much more likely to find a satisfying and successful path in life as he matures.

## 10. Critical Thinking

Thematic studies help your child to understand how math, history, geography, and science are everywhere in real life and to gain a sense of how they interrelate. Instead of a choppy set of facts boxed into "subject" categories, each new bit of information can be examined to see how it fits into the rest of the things your child knows.

Learning to apply new knowledge to their world picture keeps children flexible in their attitudes and open to revising their opinion if new facts

warrant such a revision. Surely the world needs such thinkers now more than ever.

## 11. Individual Expression

Children are generally eager to share their thoughts and new knowledge with whoever will listen. In an environment of open inquiry and mutual support, they learn to share in ways that are increasingly more sophisticated and varied.

As part of each Unit, the entire family is encouraged to share what they are learning with each other. As you listen respectfully to your children, they will learn to listen to and to respect what others wish to share with them. Soon, they will enjoy sharing their knowledge, insights and opinions with a wider circle of family, friends, and acquaintances. They will be well on their way to a lifetime of worthwhile contribution to society.

### This Week:

**This week**, get to know your children a little better. The more you know about their preferences, strengths, interests, and natural patterns of rest, hunger, activity, alone time and sociability, the easier it will be to tailor DTUs to their needs and desires.

So, each day, watch how each child behaves when first getting up in the morning, when hungry, when doing individual activities, when interacting with others, when excited, when disappointed, when tired, when working, when playing.

Talk about what you observe. "You really get grumpy if you get too hungry. Would a snack help?" "I noticed that you spend a lot of time alone. Do you enjoy alone time, or do you wish you could have more time with other people?" "You seem really interested in the weather. Would you like to learn more about it?"

If your child expresses a desire to learn about something, facilitate that learning right away. Help her search online, take her to the library, set up a rain gauge, etc. You WANT your child to pursue individual interests in addition to formal DTUs, so here's a place to start!

Pay attention to your own natural rhythms, as well. Are you a morning person, or someone who doesn't function well till 10 am? Are you a structured person, who likes schedules and plans, or do you like things to flow according to your mood? Are you creative, or do you need lots of suggestions? These insights will help you build a family routine that will work for you as well as for your children.

Experiment a little with the routine you began last week. Make adjustments as needed to better fill the needs of each family member.

Begin to utilize together times to share things with your children. Mealtimes are prime sharing time, but time spent together in the car, on a walk, doing chores together, or sitting on the couch cuddling can also be good sharing times. Tell about things you have learned recently, thoughts and questions you have, your hopes and dreams. Leave openings for your child to reciprocate. Begin a real sharing dialogue in your family that will become a family hallmark.

Warm Regards,



Meredith Nation  
Publisher, ***Dynamic Theme Units***

**Coming Up Next ...**

**Lesson #3: *How to use Dynamic Theme Units to help strengthen your family***

In next week's lesson we'll be taking a look at using DTUs to provide a focal point for family interaction.

**Previous Lessons –**

Lesson #1 ... [Click Here](#) to access.