

Kids Must Learn History to Avoid Being Gaslighted by Media

Growing up, history was one of my favorite school subjects. This might come as a surprise to some. After all, history class is traditionally thought of as the domain of the high school football coach who has very little interest in the subject itself, and therefore, passes little enthusiasm or knowledge of the past along to his students.

Perhaps that is why The Nation's Report Card finds that only 12 percent of high school seniors are [proficient in American history](#). Perhaps that is why we see the [1619 Project](#) push an alternative history curriculum. Perhaps that's why we see young radicals destroying historical statues without rhyme or reason. If one has little knowledge of history, or if that knowledge is limited to a narrative that paints our predecessors as evil aggressors, then why would there be any need to revere heroes of the past, the ideas they advanced, or the progress they made?

My story is different. As a child, I learned history through historical fiction, which portrayed the subject as the story it is meant to be – fascinating, intriguing, and even relatable to our day and age. Even the dry history textbooks I encountered in high school and college couldn't remove the love of history that historical fiction instilled in me as a young child.

I now realize what a special privilege it was to learn history this way, and I wonder if other students would appreciate the past more if they had the same opportunity.

We suddenly have a chance to find out. Gallup reports that [10 percent of parents are choosing to homeschool](#) their children

this year. That means that 10 percent of parents now have the chance to make decisions about what their children will read and study, while many other parents, forced into quasi-homeschool through distance learning options, also have the opportunity to direct more of their child's education.

Might I suggest that parents try the path that I was blessed with in my history lessons?

The beauty of this plan is that learning history doesn't have to be a chore. It can become evening entertainment as families come together to read stories out loud. The reading lists at Beautiful Feet Books are wonderful places to start in finding titles based on [ancient](#), [medieval](#), and [early](#) and [modern American](#) history.

So why does all this matter? I'll let the great author and thinker C.S. Lewis answer that question for me. In an essay from [The Weight of Glory](#), Lewis exhorts:

Most of all, perhaps we need intimate knowledge of the past. Not that the past has any magic about it, but because we cannot study the future, and yet need something to set against the present, to remind us that the basic assumptions have been quite different in different periods and that much which seems certain to the uneducated is merely temporary fashion. A man who has lived in many place is not likely to be deceived by the local errors of his native village; the scholar has lived in many times and is therefore in some degree immune from the great cataract of nonsense that pours from the press and the microphone of his own age. [Emphasis added.]

We're living in a time where we are hit with huge amounts of information. If you've been paying attention lately, you may have noticed that what your own eyes see and what the media reports on are two different things. As such, we need to make sure we, and our children, know how to relate the past to the

present in order that they can have a bright future. If we can teach our children that history is enjoyable, they will be more ready to dig into it on their own, and in so doing, they will be more apt to discern what is true and what is false in “the great cataract of nonsense that pours from the press and the microphone” of our time.

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