

Bored of Education, Part 1: Real-Life Learning

Episode 228

Rachel Winchester [00:00:01]:

Are you or have you ever been bored with education? Unfortunately, it's all too common for an education to not include a love of learning. The goal of the homeschool made simple method is to preserve a love of learning while also giving kids a world class education. In this episode, we're talking about breaking the one size fits all box of a boring education. You're listening to the Homeschool Made Simple podcast. This is a podcast to help you homeschool simply, inexpensively, and enjoyably. Carole Joy Seid has been helping families homeschool for several decades. And J. J. Seid is a pastor and homeschool dad to 4 kids. And I'm Rachel Winchester, a fellow homeschool mom of 3.

Rachel Winchester [00:00:44]:

Today, Carole, J. J., and I try something new on the podcast that we hope you enjoy. Listen in.

J. J. Seid [00:00:51]:

Hey. It's so good to be with you guys. An idea that we've been tossing around for a while that's a little bit out of the box, and experimental. So listeners, bear with us, is actually read through the lyrics of a really artfully written song by a world famous musician named Propaganda, Christian hip hop artist. He was part of a group called Tunnel Rats that I used to listen to growing up. He's now, you know, exceeded that group's fame by many levels. I looked in the in the songwriter credits, and it looks like he co wrote it with guys that form a group called Beautiful Eulogy, out of Portland, Oregon. They have they have a ministry and a record label called Humble Beast.

They're closely associated with the church there in Portland. All my boys listen to their music all the time. Very, very thoughtful, theologically rich music. So it's not surprising that this song is is equally thoughtful. And the title of the song is *Bored of Education*, spelled b o r e d. And it's meant to be a play on words with, you know, a board of education, b o a r d. And and their frame throughout the song is, dear board of education, so are we. That's sort of the pun.

And then he proceeds to say some really intelligent, thoughtful things about the plight of inner city kids in public school system, as an African American artist, who's very insightful. So I thought it'd be fun to kinda read through this a chunk at a time and then respond because because I think, in propaganda, we have a lot of shared passions and burdens for for what education should look like regardless of people homeschool, are in public school, private school, Christian school. These are some universal principles that are pretty significant. So okay. Let me jump in. I'll read a little bit. And then and then I'd love to just hear your guys' reactions in real time.

Okay. Here we go. So prop says,

"Dear board of education, so are we.

At no point in the lives that we actually live do we sit in rows and listen to pontifications.

At no point did mama pass written exams out on how to wash the dishes. No.

She pulled the stool up next to her at the sink,

handed us a dish rag like, watch how mommy does it.

Now you try. Learning by doing such a crazy idea, it might work.

Those stools felt like a magical ladder into an alternate universe, into the grown up world.

Informational portals, wormholes into other places where kids were equals,

being made privy to information only those with driver's licenses and facial hair had,

Who knew we were learning?

No clue pops was teaching us time management and budgeting.

Miniature project coordinators, he said, I'm gonna show you how to do these chores.

And if they're done when I get home, then that allowance is yours.

Maybe some ice cream's involved too.

Remember when we were in kindergarten and you had to learn about worms? Yeah.

You went outside and you played with worms. What a novel idea.

Dear board of education, so are we."

Carole Joy Seid [00:03:56]:

Yeah. Doctor Moore would like this song, I think.

J. J. Seid [00:04:01]:

Yeah. He says, at no point in the lives that we actually lived, do we sit in rows and listen to pontifications.

So and this is something educators universally acknowledge. Right? If you rank in order the various methods of learning something Yeah. Listening to a lecture is is considered

the least effective. And teaching others is considered the most effective. And learning by doing is obviously far more effective than than sitting in rows and and listening.

Carole Joy Seid [00:04:35]:

Yes. My favorite part is the part about the kitchen stool.

J. J. Seid [00:04:38]:

Yes.

Carole Joy Seid [00:04:39]:

Because that's the part I said that Dr. Moore would have loved because it's learning through real life life experiences instead of abstract thoughts that have no application to their daily life and and inviting them into the adult world. I love that. The adults work. Kids don't. So if you wanna be an adult, let me invite you into the world of work and service. So so good.

J. J. Seid [00:05:05]:

Yeah. He says, "an alternate universe where kids were equals being made privy to information only those with driver's licenses and facial hair hats." So things that we take for granted. But if we understand how a child thinks, the things that are commonplace to us are often magical to them, like handling real tools instead of toys that are made out of plastic that just are pretend tools. Right. It's like, oh, a real hammer, a real saw. You've always talked about that that, you know, if you're gonna buy your kids tools, not toys.

Carole Joy Seid [00:05:36]:

That's right. Rachel, are you picturing Benji as we're talking about this?

Rachel Winchester [00:05:41]:

Oh, absolutely. Actually, I have a picture of him standing on a step stool in front of our sink when he was, like, 2 years old, washing the dishes and all of those things. But, yeah, I think it just gives them that sense of I belong here. I mean, Dr. Moore said, if you want to raise people who have a strong self esteem, a sense of that they belong in the world and that they have something to offer, give them work to do, and let them feel like a part of the family corporation.

Carole Joy Seid [00:06:10]:

Yeah. The family corporation. Yes. Yeah. That they feel like they're contributing, he used to say, that they have, like, investment ownership in the family corporation. And they'd rather have that than a day at Disneyland because it just makes them feel like

my family needs me. They rely on me. But right now, J. J. and Rachel, I don't know if you know, but I'm reading the series of books called *Little Britches* to, J. J. to your twins, who are 10, and they just hang on every word and want me to bring it into restaurants with us.

Wherever we are, they want me to reach them while they're eating like it is their favorite thing. And it's all about and, of course, it's true story. It's autobiographical. Story of Ralph Moody's childhood and how he had to work as a very little boy because his father died. So he was working already as a cowboy when he was just a little boy in Colorado. And then when his father died, he had to just, woah, take it to a whole another level. And, and just how children love that that story. Why? Because it's not some little kid sitting on a cream puff, you know, but they're getting it's dangerous.

It's hard. It's challenging, and the boys are living vicariously through it and picturing themselves riding that bucking bronco in in the rodeo and everything that the little boy did. So kids like real life.

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J. J. Seid [00:08:17]:

Yeah. You know, we're all experiencing the pinch with inflation right now and and the increased cost of things. So I've never gotten into car repair until this year, and then just sort of out of necessity. I've been learning how to fix things on the car, replaced, you know, my wife's alternator and got a good sunburn in the process in our driveway. And the boys were supposed to help me with that, and they were bummed because they they had to go away and spend time with with their grandma while I was doing the alternator. So they come back from that trip and I was able to say, good news, guys. Now we're gonna replace, mom's passenger side side mirror. And you guys get to help with that.

And so it's like the things that I'm saying are not rocket science, but I could have replaced that side mirror so much faster on my own. You know, everybody's heard some version of the story. But I think we need to continue to say these things to each other because it's all the people who said that to me that have sort of mentored me into, okay, don't miss this opportunity. You know, you're not gonna be repairing that many things on the car this year, and your boys are 10, 10, and 7. And they think that's the coolest thing in the world.

And so I even got my 15 year old daughter out there, and we got the tools to pop the door off. And we've got all our screwdrivers and our ratchet set. And, you know, I'm teaching them about metric ratchet set versus non-metric. And we had to take them, like, stood in line and took turns. Like, I get to do the next bolt. I get to do the next screw. You know, they're fighting, "No. It's my turn."

And so we had to you know, all 5 of us took turns taking the door off, you know, removing the old side mirror, putting on the new one. We had to do some problem solving. We had to hammer at some things, you know, uncomfortably forceful amount with a sledgehammer. But we finally get the side mirror on, and it took way longer because 5 hands you had to, you know, put on every bolt and screw. But it's it's a huge win because I've been mentored by you into that way of thinking about these things. And hopefully, we can mentor each other as a community of parents to say, hey. It takes longer, but it's worth it because I just taught my kids that you can fix your own car. I just taught my kids that they get to do stuff with dad.

I just taught my kids all sorts of stuff about tools. Now they're gonna be that much less overwhelmed when they're an adult and it's time for them to fix something. And we actually bonded more doing that than we would have watching a movie, which would have been a lot more relaxing for me. But this is priceless. There's something relational happening at a deep level. And I know my daughter enjoyed it, but then, of course, even some of the aspects of gender difference, you know, father with his sons working on the car, there's even something uniquely gendered happening there, which is, you know, women teaching their daughters about womanhood, men teaching their sons about manhood. But we have to do that by inviting them into some of the things we do. Yeah.

Rachel Winchester [00:11:13]:

I think we can really miss out on the community builder that working beside each other is. Like, when you read Wendell Berry's novels and these characters, they're a membership, they're a community. And in large part, that's because they work alongside each other. They are breaking a sweat out in the fields, bringing in the crops,

herding the cows, preparing food in the kitchen, all these things that by and large our culture pushes aside, like, wow, that's so antiquated. I don't have time for that. Good thing someone else can do that for me. And, actually, that's the way that people bonded

And then they sat on the porch and were able to sigh a sigh of relief and drink some tea and be refreshed, but they bonded through the work that they did together. And then that poured over. And think about if you do a service project with someone or if you know, anytime that you do something hard beside somebody, it just bonds you all the more. And the the kids end up becoming super helpful. Like, I do not host people in my home without my children contributing and helping. Like, someone asked me the other week, how do you do this? And I'm like, my kids do just as much as I do.

Carole Joy Seid [00:12:25]:
Right.

Rachel Winchester [00:12:25]:
They're vacuuming. They're mopping. They're cleaning up, they're, you know, setting up the lemonade or whatever. They're doing all kinds of stuff and making flower arrangements. You know? I mean, you just give them, like, one little skill and then they run with it. So be prepared.

Carole Joy Seid [00:12:45]:
It's so good. That is so good.

Rachel Winchester [00:12:45]:
It's an inspiration, but it's also a warning. Yeah. Be prepared of what you give them because then they will want to mow the whole yard, sell the bouquets, all the things. You know?

Carole Joy Seid [00:12:57]:
They take ownership.

J. J. Seid [00:12:59]:
Yeah. Unless any of our listeners get it twisted. I mean, you know, we're sinners parenting sinners. And so there's, you know, moments of discipline and there's tears and there's I don't wanna. And all that is you can't legislate that out of parenting. But you're absolutely right. You know, when my kids take ownership of something, it's, hey, we wanna set the table tonight and we wanna do a fancy. Can we do that? And there's nights where we're like, no, it's late. We need to eat and get to bed. You're not allowed

to do a table cloth and table settings, you know, and they're like, so you end up in these bizarre situations where your kids get so excited about doing some of these things because they've tapped into the joy of it and the collegiality. And, Yeah. I love what you're saying. It's so true. It's like we have to shift from an entertainment mindset to a co laboring mindset. I would have been the guy going, I gotta put on the side mirror and I gotta keep these kids entertained at the same time. And it feels like those are multiple balls you're trying to keep in the air.

And working together in the field is this beautiful convergence of all of the plates you're trying to spin. You know, like, no, I'm gonna put the side mirror on and that's also gonna be tonight's entertainment. And it's also gonna be tonight's bonding. It's gonna be all the things at once. Because we've been mentored into trying to include our kids in in our work, whenever we can.

Carole Joy Seid [00:14:20]:

That's so good. Yeah. I love it. Yeah. Don't do anything for your children they can do for themselves.

Rachel Winchester [00:14:27]:

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