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English 111 W1: College Composition I

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Homeschooling: A Parental Right

The practice of parents homeschooling their children is an age-old traditional educational practice. (Brian) The famous inventor, Thomas Edison, was a successful product of a homeschool education. Edison was pulled out of school at age 12 after a teacher implied that he was mentally slow. (Klein) Edison's mother, Nancy, was offended by the teacher's claim and taught him at home from that point. Parents should be able to homeschool their child in order to receive additional one-on-one instruction, educate their child at home on the basis of religious beliefs, and because the U.S. Constitution allows the right under the 14th amendment.

There are some that argue that homeschool students do not obtain a quality education. They claim that students taught at home do not perform well on standardized test, and will suffer when the time comes to take college admission tests. ("Homeschooling.") This logic is flawed, as homeschool students typically score above average on the SAT and ACT test for college admission. (Brian) Plus, homeschool students go to and succeed at an equal or higher rate than the general population. (Brian).

Teaching children at home allows the students to have more one-on-one instruction. While public school classrooms have a number of students to tend to at one time, homeschooling allows an opportunity to show the student more individualized attention.

Proponents contend that one-on-one instruction creates a better environment for learning. ("Homeschooling.") Parents can work with the child more closely and allow them to work at their own pace. The homeschool environment gives the parent the latitude to concentrate on their child's specific needs.

Majority of parents who decide to homeschool, do so on the basis of religious beliefs. Those parents who prefer to homeschool their children, have indicated one of the main reasons to be on the basis of religious instruction and teach their children moral values. The National Center for Educational Statistics reported in 2003, the most important reason for parents homeschooling their children were "Concern about the environment of other schools and to provide religious or moral instruction..." ("Parents Reasons for Homeschooling") The National Household Education Surveys conducted in 1996 and 1999 cited the following common reasons people choose to teach their child at home: educational quality, learning environment, safety, *religion* and *morality*, curriculum, and special needs and other considerations. ("Homeschooling.") Being a country built upon religious freedom provides parents wanting to teach their children at home on the basis of religious beliefs the right to do so.

The right for parents to determine homeschooling as their preferred method of instruction for their child is protected under the 14th amendment of the United States Constitution. In the 1923 Supreme Court case, *Myer v. Nebraska*, the court emphasized, "The Fourteenth Amendment guarantees the right of the individual...to establish a home and bring up children, to worship God according to his own conscience." (Klicka) The cases reaching the Supreme Court level concerning the right to homeschool children have been consistently upheld by the court in the favor parental rights. The Supreme Court of the United States has

traditionally and continuously upheld the principle that parents have the fundamental right to direct the education and upbringing of their children. (Klicka)

In conclusion, while there is certainly nothing wrong with parents choosing to send their child to public school or decide to homeschool, it remains an individual parental decision. Parents should be able to homeschool their child in order to receive additional one-on-one instruction, educate their child at home on the basis of religious beliefs, and because the U.S. Constitution allows the right under the 14th amendment. Therefore, if a parent so chooses to homeschool their child, they need to understand that is their fundamental right, if they so prefer to do so.

Works Cited

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