

## Interview with Add-A-Century Timeline!!

Author : Fulltime Mama

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Interview

with Add-A-Century Developer Liz Blauer

Enter to WIN a FREE timeline!!

I have always loved the idea of using a timeline- even for my own personal reference (aside from teaching my children). What better way to "see" history unfolding, to get a clear picture of how long it was from Creation to the Flood, or when Johann Sebastian Bach lived in relation to George Washington, etc...

So, I had a simple homemade timeline for our children, that served its purpose for the time being. However... for the past two years at our local homeschool convention, I have had the privilege of talking with Liz Blauer, who developed the Add-A-Century timeline system, and I \*loved\* it. I am so excited now that she has agreed to an interview with MamaKnowsBest, and is generously giving away a timeline starter pack to a MamaKnowsBest reader!

Here is the interview, and below that you can see pictures of the timeline with more explanation.

Meet Liz Blauer:

Q: Please tell us a little bit about your family.

A: "Team Blauer" consists of myself, my husband Brad, and our 11-year-old daughter Lauren. Lauren was born just 8 days before our 20th wedding anniversary! After trying for a child for almost 5 years, seeing an

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infertility specialist, and finally giving up hope, we're glad she finally showed up!

Q: How long have you been homeschooling, and how did you make the decision to homeschool?

A: Lauren has always been homeschooled. We had two homeschooling-family friends whose kids seemed...different to us. They were nicer, more mature than "regular" school kids. My husband wanted Lauren to be homeschooled more than I did at the time (easy for him to say!) When she was 3 years old I decided to do it, and now it is difficult to imagine sending her off somewhere else for the day. For us, the idea of our child spending most of every day being taught by others, directed by others, influenced by others seems, well, just wrong. We figured that was our job.

Q: Have you always been a "history buff"?

A: Actually, I am nothing of the sort! But my husband and daughter love history.

Q: How did you come up with the idea for your timeline?

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A: In 2004 I attended my first large homeschool conference here in Minnesota. While there, I went to a seminar on timelines. I thought it was a swell idea, and my mind began churning: how could I create the kind of timeline that would work with our teaching style? I looked at the many vendors at the conference. I wanted something flexible, to be able to add pages when I wanted to without being limited by someone else's pre-printed layout; I didn't need all of history's pages assembled before I was ready for them. I wanted the freedom to be able to plunk something onto the timeline when we happened to "hit on" it in our studies or reading. One day Lauren might pick up a book on Abraham Lincoln, the next day we might continue our reading on ancient Greece. Whatever we found interesting needed to find a place on the timeline. I found no product that would meet our needs.

Well, it probably took over a year of mulling to come up with a way I thought would work; then several more months to get around to gathering the materials. And I was off! I made the pages by hand, and the system worked! That winter I was putting together pages for yet another century (the 1500's I believe), and truthfully, it was a bit of a pain. I covered the sides of the pages, painstakingly measured and drew the lines, wrote the categories and dates. With all of the effort involved, I didn't want Lauren to go near it! That part of the system didn't work!

That evening, Add-A-Century Timeline was born. Producing this product for me, and for everyone else who wanted the flexibility and fun of studying history this way, was an idea whose time had come. It gives me a thrill to know that someone is receiving a product that I truly believe will help them to see and learn history in such a clear and enjoyable way.

Q: Would your timeline be able to work with any history curriculum?

A: Absolutely. Yes! Most certainly. For sure! Without question.

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Q: Could you tell us why you think it is beneficial to use a timeline to supplement a history curriculum?  
Would all families benefit from this type of visual aid?

A: A history timeline is a fabulous tool. I tell customers that even if they don't buy an Add-A-Century Timeline, do some kind of timeline so your kids can take history from separate names and dates, or events and dates, to a whole picture, a story of history. We have a slogan on our banner that we use at homeschool conferences that says "It's more than just names and dates. Put the 'story' back in history." And it's true! When you can place the people and events you've studied together on a timeline, you begin to weave a picture of that era, and see how the parts and pieces fit with each other. Yes, all families can benefit from using a timeline. I think I'm learning more than Lauren!

Q: What age range do you recommend the timeline for?

A: Kindergarten to graduation! You can begin documenting what is relevant to your child right from the start, and continue building on it throughout all your studies. The history picture you create will be very meaningful to your child.

Q: Is there anything else you would like to share with other mothers? (Either about the timeline, or otherwise?)

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A: As far as a timeline, remember that many things that you come across in life can be put on your timeline: A book pulled off the shelf from another time, the composer who wrote the music you're practicing, a TV show about a scientific discovery, history about your favorite hobby...the list goes on and on. It makes for an interesting, and very relevant timeline for the student!

For moms: We've been blessed to meet many wonderful homeschooling parents at conventions. The most frequent thing (apart from Add-A-Century) I get to share with new homeschoolers is to RELAX. Don't make homeschooling harder than it needs to be. Your kids truly are wired to learn, and they will learn. Much of it will come when they are ready, and not before. Read the book *Better Late Than Early* by Raymond and Dorothy Moore. It's a great first read for homeschoolers.

Thank you so much, Liz! It has been a pleasure getting to know you!

And now, for my part of this equation! Liz generously sent me a timeline to review for MKB readers as well, and I was more than happy to do so. The kids and I have had so much fun putting our timeline together.

We have been studying American history, so for now, we just put together pages for 1600-2000. The great thing about this timeline, however, is its flexibility, so whenever we want to add earlier pages in, we can do so with no big fuss.

Until now, we have had our timeline on the wall. This is great in order to keep the visual up all the time, but it was getting more and more difficult to find an adequate wall, and then to keep the one year old from pulling off the figures was another challenge! I am therefore happy now to have our timeline in this handy binder! Portable, flexible, and even with extra pockets for storage:

At the same time, I like this binder better than others I have seen, because you can still S-T-R-E-T-C-H the timeline out, therefore not losing the effect!

Here is a closer-up of one page. The starter pack includes date stickers for the top, so you can put a sticker on at five year intervals, or hundred year intervals, depending on your needs.

Another great idea is the category stickers that also come in the starter pack. You can see some here: Art & Music, Government and Politics, Church and Religion, etc. I really love this feature, and Joshua thought it was

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great fun to figure out who went into each different category.

In the Starter Pack, you also receive these handy little stickers that you can use to mark dates or events that you may not have a picture of!

Busy applying figures to the timeline:

Being able to see the timeline this way really helps children "get" history! Even my not-quite-five year old is grasping events and finding it interesting! It is hands-on, it is visual, it is engaging their senses and cementing important stories in their impressionable minds every time they look at it! I cannot recommend it highly enough!

If you would like to watch an instructional video on how the timeline is assembled, [click here](#).

So are you ready to win your Starter Pack??? (A \$49.50 VALUE!!)

You can enter to win in two simple steps:

- 1) Sign up for our newsletter with only your name and email, on the left sidebar. (If you are already signed up, go on to step 2.)
- 2) Leave a comment below! (The comment box will appear below everybody else's comments, so **SCROLL ALL THE WAY DOWN!**)

That's it!

The drawing will be held on Wednesday, September 30th, and the winner will be notified by email.