

## Geometry: A Fresh Approach

One thing I always look for in a homeschool curriculum is a text that talks directly to the student. While most textbook authors shudder at the thought of such a relaxed, informal style, I think it puts the student at ease and makes any author's explanations easier to understand. I liked that in Christy Walters's *Algebra I: A Fresh Approach* and *Algebra II: A Fresh Approach*, and I like it in her newest book, *Geometry: A Fresh Approach*. As a read her text, I find that her explanations are not only easy to understand, they are also easy to read.

There are a lot of other things I like about *Geometry: A Fresh Approach*. I like that it isn't too "busy." So many texts try to look attractive, and that's generally done by having lots of unnecessary illustrations, call-out boxes, and drawings behind the text. While these things may, indeed, make the text colorful and interesting to *look at*, they also make the text much harder to follow. That's not the case here. This is a no-nonsense text that includes illustrations only when they enhance the explanation and has a simple, easy-to-follow format.

Another thing I like about the text is that it starts off right away with logic and proofs. The author gives the student an excellent description of the difference between deductive and inductive reasoning, helps the student understand how arguments are evaluated, gives some details about logic, and then launches into a discussion of proofs. Some geometry courses try to skip or at least gloss over the topic of proofs. Sure, proofs are hard. That's not a reason to skip them, however. As this book shows, the way to address proofs is to cover them thoroughly and explain them well.

As a science textbook author, I am always concerned about how well a math book covers the mathematics that are used heavily in the sciences. For geometry, that means I am concerned about how a text treats right triangles and trigonometry, which form the basis of vector mathematics. If a student doesn't have a good grounding in these subjects from his or her geometry course, the student will usually not fare well in physics. This text does an excellent job on these topics, and it covers them relatively early in the course. Thus, a student who uses this geometry course will be solidly prepared for the mathematics related to introductory physics by the end of Chapter 8.

Since I am discussing what I like about this book, it is important to point out the two things I don't like. I prefer that the student or parent have worked-out solutions to all the problems. While the student or parent has access to worked-out solutions for the even-numbered problems in this book, the only thing provided for the odd-numbered problems is the answer. While that is better than nothing, it is not ideal.

Also, I am not a big fan of consumable books. Thus, I don't like books that have space enough for the students to write directly in the book. I realize that many students really like that, but I prefer to encourage students to solve problems in a separate notebook. While the student most certainly can do that for this book (or photocopy the pages and write on the photocopies), there is a lot of temptation to write directly in the book, as it has been designed that way. Please understand that these two "quibbles" I have with this book are minor compared to everything I like about it.

Like the algebra books by the same author, this book is thorough in terms of the topics it needs to cover. The progression of those topics flows nicely, allowing the student to build on what was learned in previous chapters. As a result, I think this is an excellent option for the no-nonsense student who wants a good, college-preparatory mathematics education.