PHAROS TERMINAL

QUICK START

For parents

November 11, 2026

PHAROS TERMINAL

VALUES STATEMENT

Pharos Terminal is built so that parents can teach their students to seek truth in primary sources and great books, to test claims and state opposing views at their strongest, and to grow in virtue and citizenship through experience rather than theory.

Pharos Terminal is for families who teach at home with students in grades 7 through 12. You teach. Zac Northup, a writer, historian and researcher who has taught in high schools, career tech centers and universities, provides the material. The curriculum follows the aim of his earlier educational nonprofit: to teach through analysis and experience those who strive to make their communities better places to live.

History is taught from primary sources. Students read great books and classic literature, and use confirmed public-domain images. Wikipedia and Reddit are not used as sources. Unverified sources are cut or hedged. Truth is treated as objective and knowable. Claims are tested against evidence that stands apart from feelings or narratives.

Students define contested words before they use them, name trade-offs, start from scarcity, and trace later effects. They judge policies by outcomes, not intentions, and apply the same scrutiny to government, companies and individuals. They state the opposing view at its strongest, then argue the case, not the person. They practice the old arts of grammar, logic and rhetoric: reading closely, reasoning carefully, and saying what they think and why. On questions of government, economics or society, classical liberal and conservative ideas are taught openly, always with the strongest critique, so students can explain both sides and say where they land.

Lessons treat moral agency and personal responsibility as real and ask students to serve their communities with skill and judgment. Lesson packets are aligned to established academic standards in English language arts, science and social studies. Math is treated as applied, practical work, not as aligned to math standards. The curriculum is written to be accurate, ready to teach and honest about what it knows and what it does not.

In ancient times, Pharos was a towering lighthouse that guided travelers into Alexandria, home of the Great Library. Today's Pharos serves the same purpose. It is a beacon of objective learning for modern scholars.

This statement is also published at zacnorthup.com/values/.

PHAROS TERMINAL QUICK START

For parents. Pharos Terminal is homeschool curriculum for grades 7–12 at zacnorthup.com. This guide gets your family from purchase to your first lesson. The Parent Manual explains everything in more detail.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- **You hold the account.** Students never buy or sign up. You add them once you're inside.
- **Your sign-in page:** zacnorthup.com/terminal/sign-in/. Bookmark it.
- **Your students' sign-in page:** zacnorthup.com/terminal/student/. This one is optional; see step 4.

YOUR FIRST DAY, STEP BY STEP

1. Buy and open your terminal. Go to zacnorthup.com/pharos-terminal/ and press **Subscribe to Pharos Terminal**. When the order is paid, the receipt page says **Check your email.**

- **Your receipt email** has a button, **Open your Pharos Terminal**. It signs you in once and works for 72 hours. On the page it opens, press **Sign in to Pharos Terminal**, choose a password on the **Set your password** page (at least 10 characters) and press **Save and open Pharos Terminal**.
- **Already signed in when you paid?** The receipt page says **You're all set.** instead. Press **Open your Pharos Terminal** there.
- **Later,** sign in at zacnorthup.com/terminal/sign-in/ with your email and password. If the email link has expired, the page it opens sends you to that sign-in instead.

2. Add your first student. The first time you open the terminal, you'll see **Let's add your first student**. Type a **First name or nickname** (one or two words, like Sam or Mary Ann), pick a **Grade** from 7 to 12, and press **Add student**. Only the first name or nickname and the grade are stored. Have more students? Go to **Tracker**, find **Your students** and choose **Add a student**. Your plan covers a set number of students, and the Tracker shows how many slots you've used.

3. Choose who you're teaching. The name pill at the top of the screen (for example "Sam · Grade 9") is the student menu. Whatever you mark done, log or file goes to the student shown there. Switch students from that menu, or from the round account button next to it.

4. Give a student their own sign-in (optional). In **Tracker › Your students**, choose **Set up sign-in** next to a student. Pick a username and a password (or press **Suggest a password**), then **Create sign-in**. Write the password down right away, because it can't be shown again. Your student then signs in at zacnorthup.com/terminal/student/. Younger students can simply work beside you from your own sign-in.

5. Open Today's Nexus Point. New Nexus Points arrive daily. On the **Dashboard**, the **Today's Nexus Point** section shows the featured lesson on a real current event, with its Teaching Value score (0–100: grade fit, subjects, how close to home, how solid the facts are; every family sees the same score). Press **Teach this →** to open it: read **What happened**, check the sourced facts, use the **Talk it over** questions and give the **Writing task**. When you're done, press **Log to tracker**. On the same Dashboard, the **Your week at a glance** card has **Open today's plan**. That page lists what each student has due today, with overdue items first. If nothing is due today, it shows the next due item.

6. Assign a lesson. Open a lesson packet from **Lesson Packets** (or a Nexus Point) and press **Assign this packet** (or **Assign this Nexus Point**). Choose the whole packet or a single session, check the students under **Assign to**, and choose **When is it due?** (required). The choices are Today, Tomorrow, This week, This month, This semester, or On a specific date. Each choice shows its date. A **Note to your student** is optional. Then press

Assign. Your student sees the assignment on their Dashboard, under **Your plan**. The panel checks the student shown in the student menu. If that student already has the item, or is over the plan's student limit, and exactly one other student can take it, that student is checked instead, with a line such as "Ava already has this, so Sam is checked." Full courses are under the **Courses** tab. Open a course, press **Start Lesson 1**, and use **Assign this lesson** on any lesson page to assign it the same way.

7. Teach, then mark it done. Packet sessions and course lessons have a **Mark done** button. One press records the date, hours, subject and standards in the Tracker, and the button then reads ✓ **Done · undo**. A student with their own sign-in can mark work done too, and you'll see "logged by" their name. For learning outside Pharos Terminal (co-op, field trip, outside reading), use **Tracker › Log an outside lesson**.

8. Keep work samples as you go. In the **Tracker**, choose **Add a work sample** and upload a photo or PDF of an essay, map or notebook page (up to 15 MB). Online worksheets can be filed with **File as work sample**.

9. At year's end, export the portfolio. In the **Tracker**, pick the school year and press **Export year-end portfolio**. You'll get a PDF with the year's lessons, hours by subject, the standards tagged, your work samples, and space for your reviewer's narrative. **Download all my records (zip)** under **Your students** gives you everything at once.

GOOD TO KNOW

- **Values:** under the menu, a bar reads "Seek truth. Test claims. Grow in virtue and citizenship," with a **View Values Statement** link to zacnorthup.com/values/. The full statement is also at the front of this guide.
- **Family guide:** this Quick Start and the Parent Manual stay in the account menu under **Family guide**.
- **Records:** your student records are stored in a private, encrypted Pharos Terminal vault, not on this website. The vault is in a US AWS region. Terminal pages carry no ads or analytics, and nothing is sent to AI tools.
- **PDFs:** packet and course pages show parents this line: "For the latest updates, rely on the online course materials. Downloadable PDFs may lag behind."
- **Mature content:** look for the **Content advisory** box on packets and the **For the parent or teacher** notes in courses. Students never see the parent notes. To see a lesson exactly as your student will, use **View as** (your student's name) in **Tracker › Your students**. It's read-only, and nothing is saved while you're in it.
- **Grades:** some courses are written for older students, such as grades 10–12. If your student is younger, the course page shows a short note. You can still open the course.
- **Help:** email officialzacnorthup@zacnorthup.com, or use **Send feedback** on your Dashboard.