

Global Village School®



Whole Child, Healthy Planet

Curriculum Guide

Grade 3

Authors: Sally Carless and Michele Blumberg

Global Village 3rd Grade Curriculum Guide (9th Edition) - SAMPLE

Global Village School®
Whole Child, Healthy Planet Curriculum Guide

Ninth Edition, June 2017

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*Thank you for your interest in the Global Village Whole Child, Healthy Planet curriculum guides. This sample contains the full Table of Contents for the 90-page guide, followed by extensive excerpts from many sections of the 3rd Grade curriculum guide. **Please note that the guides are printed in black and white.***

Global Village 3rd Grade Curriculum Guide (9th Edition) - SAMPLE



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Chapter 1

Introduction to Global Village School and the Whole Child, Healthy Planet Method

It's an amazing world we live in. We are delighted to be your guides as your family explores the wonders of life on this planet together. We hope that this curriculum facilitates a powerful and engaging experience that opens your children's hearts, eyes, and minds to all the magical people, places, and experiences this world has to offer.

This is such an incredible time to be alive because so much of the world is open to us—people in other centuries did not have access to the amount of knowledge and information that we do. The thought of homeschooling may be intimidating if you are a first-time homeschooler, but we trust that you will soon feel much more confident as your view of learning expands to include the world around you. In fact, you'll likely have trouble remembering what you were so worried about!

This chapter contains:

- 1. General information about Global Village School, our authors and contributors*
- 2. Introductory information about the curriculum guides and how the GVS method works (included below)*



ABOUT THE CURRICULUM GUIDE

We are delighted to be able to offer curriculum guides that are fully aligned with our educational values. With a learning styles-centered approach and focus on diversity and developmental stages, our elementary program is designed to engage the whole child. The curriculum guide combines a student-centered philosophy (creative, flexible, holistic, and experiential) with an emphasis on peace, justice, diversity, and sustainability.

The curriculum guides are centered on the four core principles of the Earth Charter (a comprehensive and inspiring road map for the future of the planet—see Appendix and www.earthcharter.org):

- 1) Respect and Care for the Community of Life
- 2) Ecological Integrity
- 3) Social and Economic Justice
- 4) Democracy, Nonviolence, Peace and Diversity

Our K-8 curriculum guides cover all of the core academic subjects in a way that connects with students through a sense of enchantment, awe, and wonder through the incorporation of art, music, nature, imagination, and story.

HOW THE METHOD WORKS

People who are "products" of traditional schooling methods are taught to follow directions (and not to get started without them, because you might do something wrong!). So it is natural to be concerned that you "do it right," and to want detailed instructions. That is how most parents start out. What we have observed over the years is that people get more and more comfortable with the process and soon find (often during their first homeschool year) that they do not want or need as much instruction as they thought they did. Kids and their parents get "into the flow" and they are off and running. School life is never the same again.

We want to help parents and children make the learning process their own. We provide a multitude of ideas; by following your child's interests and learning style you are free to branch out in numerous ways. There is no reason for every fourth grader to answer the same questions about the same topic at the same time. Some families will probably structure their year exactly as we have suggested, while others may be so excited by one of the books that they spend several weeks following where it takes them, and, accordingly, spend less time on some of the other topics.

HOMESCHOOLING FROM THE HEART

We have been working with new homeschool parents for many years now and have found that the thing we do more than anything else is aid them as they create the learning environment they know is best for their child. There are so many pressures homeschooling parents face, particularly those doing it for the first time; so many myths about education that rear their ugly heads as soon as someone steps outside the norm. Many people are still under the illusion that "regular" schools do things best even when the actual results—student dissatisfaction, dropouts, etc.—are negative. Some families who homeschool are harassed by people who don't know better; those with no sense of the courage and commitment it takes to step outside the norm in search of something better for their kids.

Learning is all too often politicized and regimented in schools today, with tragic results for many children. It has become something that is "done to" children, rather than the natural, unfolding process that it really is. Look at a young child and what you will usually see is a little magnet for learning, looking, exploring, tasting, touching, asking question upon question.

Our goal is to assist you in homeschooling your child in a humane, inspiring, and socially conscious way. We encourage you to listen to your heart and to listen to your child: observe them—what lights them up? What fascinates them? When do they come alive? That is where to start your "curriculum."

Homeschooling affords you the opportunity to keep the learning process alive; we encourage you to make the most of it!



CONSULTATIONS—IF YOU WOULD LIKE ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

If your children are enrolled in Global Village School, then contact your GVS teacher for support. They will be happy to help you. If your kids are not enrolled, then you can arrange for individual consultations. Our consultants can provide creative ideas for when you feel stuck or just want to try something new, suggestions for additional resources, and overall support and encouragement.

Call 805-646-9792 or e-mail info@globalvillageschool.org for more information.



Chapter 2

Curriculum Resources

This chapter contains a curated list of books and other resources aligned with Global Village values for you to use in creating your own personalized curriculum geared exactly to your child's interests, needs, and learning style.

ABOUT THE RESOURCES

Okay, here we go!

We have spent many months researching and combing through our collective resources to come up with a list of materials to inspire and enliven your family. There is a lot here—most likely much more than you will be able to get through in a year. So please remember that we have designed it to be like a big smörgåsbord, which means you probably do not want to put everything on your plate all at once, and some of it might not even make it onto your plate this time round!

There are many more resources, in addition to the resources listed in this chapter, in Chapter 6. These are all optional.

GLOBAL VILLAGE HOMESCHOOL TOOLBOX (KITS)

There are some books and resources that you will use for more than one year. We call these the homeschool “kit.” Some are optional and some are a core part of the curriculum. You will find notations about this in your resource list.

Again, please remember: this is just a place to start. We do not believe there are any education standards (even ours) that work for everyone.

HOW TO GET THE MATERIALS:

Most of the materials we have chosen are readily available. If we have not told you where to get something, it means it can easily be found at either a local bookstore or library or online. We have provided information on where to get the resources that are not so easy to find.

STEP ONE: ORDERING YOUR BOOKS AND RESOURCES

If you have not already done so, we suggest that you start by reviewing the list of suggested resources below. Check your local library first, and then order anything that you or your library does not already have. We recommend that you get your own copies of all the core resources, since you will be using them throughout the year.

Once you have ordered the materials—or at least a good portion of them—then take your time and read through the rest of this guide.

Note: If you shop at amazon.com, using this link will help support Global Village School and future editions of this guide:
<http://tinyurl.com/26z5f2a>



PARENT RESOURCES

Planning to Change the World: A Plan Book for Social Justice Teachers (Optional)

Published by NYCoRE and the Education for Liberation Network

<http://www.rethinkingschools.org/ProdDetails.asp?ID=9780942961881>

Along with being very helpful for planning and/or record-keeping, this book has a multitude of information including important birthdays and historical events, references to related online lesson plans, tips from social justice teachers across the country, and inspirational quotes. Each year they select different birthdays and anniversaries, so it's different every time. (Note: this planner is written for a traditional August-June school year, so it does not have space for July activities.)

GRADE 3 LIST OF RESOURCES

Note: *While most of the resources below are generally listed as being for third graders, a few are not. We take a broader view than many reviewers do about what grades/ages a particular book is appropriate for. We feel that people tend to dismiss "picture books" way too early. There is so much learning that can be built around them, and, some of them contain quite sophisticated language, art, and ideas. So, don't worry about the "official" grade level. Using the instructions we have provided throughout this guide, you will be able to facilitate wonderful learning with books that are supposedly for many different age levels. Also, remember that there is an extensive supplemental reading list in Chapter 6.*

Social Studies/Diversity/Peace/Literature



We feel it is important that today's children learn about the world and its people every year of their education, and so our books for this level reflect our commitment to the belief that the more we know about each other, the more we promote peace and understanding. A child that has grown up hearing the stories of, enjoying the music of, eating the foods of, many different cultures and peoples will have a hard time seeing others as that different from themselves. These may seem like small things, but they are a powerful force for peace in our world. Children this age have a great curiosity about the lives of children their own age in other parts of the world. The books we recommend in this section reflect this interest. We also encourage the exploration of the world through the study and creation of maps this year.

This section (Social Studies/Diversity/Peace/Literature) contains 17 books. The main emphasis is on the cultures and geography of the world. It includes:

several beautifully illustrated story books with culturally diverse settings

an engaging book series that covers a different culture in each book

an interactive book that introduces children to geography, culture and maps
a non-fiction book for children about early American history and pre-history
a beautiful book about peacemaking in everyday life

Here are some of the books:

Sitti's Secrets (ISBN-10: 0689817061) (Aladdin Picture Books)

By Naomi Shihab Nye and Nancy Carpenter

A young girl travels from her home in America to the West Bank to visit her Palestinian granny. A touching story accompanied by beautiful paintings.

Inuksuk Journey: An Artist at the Top of the World (ISBN-10: 1897349262)

By Mary Wallace

A glimpse into Arctic life and art. Part travel journal and part art book, this is a visually stunning chronicle of the author's summer trip to the Arctic.

Chachaji's Cup (ISBN-10: 0892391782) (Audio Version Available)

By Uma Krishnaswami and Soumya Sitaraman

An American boy, Neel, learns the value of a family keepsake when his great-uncle tells him the story of being a refugee during the Partition of India and Pakistan in 1947. A small flowered teacup brings to life the time when his great-uncle, as a small boy, walked miles with his mother to cross the border into India, and the struggles they went through.

Whole Child/Literature

This section contains 3 books about children's social/emotional lives. Here is one of the books:

Courage (ISBN-10: 0618238557)

By Bernard Waber

The many faces of courage. A good book to read aloud that will spark conversations about what courage is and isn't and the many forms it takes.

Language Arts

This section contains 5 books:

A spelling workbook

A fun grammar resource that can be used in grades K-3

An entertaining handwriting book, a cursive writing workbook, and a set of cursive alphabet cards

Science/Eco-Integrity

Secular or religious? All of our science resources are **secular**; no religious perspective is included.

Summary of resources:

This section contains a number of resources: a series of six books about different ecosystems and the beings that live there, a book about ways for kids to make a difference, 3 “real life” stories about animals (see one below), an astronomy book, and the option for exploring another large series of science books for children.

Looking for Miza (ISBN-10: 0545085403)

By Juliana Hatkoff, Isabella Hatkoff, Craig Hatkoff, and Dr. Paula Kahumbu

The true story of the mountain gorilla who found his daughter after she and her mother had disappeared. Beautiful photographs, includes information on threats to mountain gorillas and the organizations that are working to save them.



Math

This section includes the resource that we recommend; it is highly rated and has been enjoyed by many of our homeschool families. It is a comprehensive full year’s math curriculum, with an emphasis on mastery and problem solving. It includes manipulatives, even in the upper grades, and teaching videos. Online assessments make it easy for parents to choose the most appropriate level for their child.

We also list another comprehensive alternative resource that you may choose instead.

Important note: *We know that there are many different options for math, and that you may have already found something that works very well for your family. It is fine with us if you want to use another program either in addition to or as a substitute for our recommended resource.*

Additional math: Many children enjoy math games, workbooks, CD-ROMs and online games. Supplement with as many as you want!

Art

This section contains 3 books: one about 13 famous artists and their works (see below) and 2 books full of highly engaging hands-on projects.

13 Artists Children Should Know (ISBN-10: 3791341731)

By Angela Wenzel

A chronological presentation of famous artists: their biographies, their most famous works, and their contribution to the world of art. Games, activities and quizzes help the student learn each artist's special contribution in a fun and colorful format.



Kit

These are books and tools you can use for more than one year:

This section lists 6 books on a variety of subjects that can be used for grades 1-3 and beyond. Topics include poetry, culture, reading, geography, science, and nature.



STEP TWO: READ THE REST OF THIS GUIDEBOOK

While you are waiting for the materials to arrive, read through the rest of your Whole Child, Healthy Planet Curriculum Guide, and get ready to have a great year!



Chapter 3

Now What? (The Instructions!)

Preparation

How to Use the Resources: Instructions and Activities
Enhancing Your Skills

This chapter contains two main sections:

- **Articles** about how to prepare your learning environment, observation and teaching skills, a learning model for using the materials, how to create “immersion projects” and branch off in multiple directions from a given resource, and more.
- **Detailed activity ideas** specifically written for the resources in this guide.

The activity ideas are specific to this grade level. The articles are included in most or all of the other guides (there is slight variation between some of the grade levels).

Articles include:

- *Setting Up Your Learning Environment*
- *Developing Observation Skills (Including Self Observation), Finding Teachable Moments*
- *Using Your Educator’s Ear with Materials and Books*
- *Introduction to 3rd Grade*
- *How to Use the Resources in Our Curriculum Guide—A Learning Model (see below)*

HOW TO USE THE RESOURCES IN OUR CURRICULUM GUIDE—A LEARNING MODEL

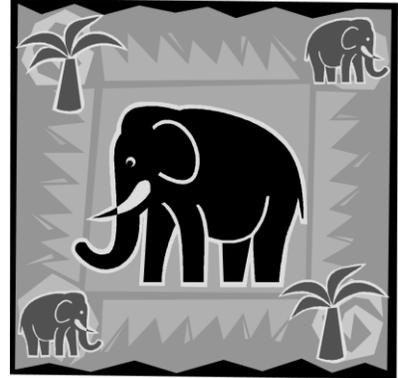
This article comes from Michele Blumberg's many years of experience as a very successful tutor.

In our curriculum guide we present a suggested book list you can use as the framework upon which to build your child's learning year. This is by no means a complete list of all books you need or could use. You can get many more suggestions from your GVS teacher.

Our hope is that you will utilize these books as a springboard into the many ideas and discoveries they present. At best these are a representation of what is out there. In exploring these suggested books you may be led to many others.

Most curricula are built around a textbook and a workbook. Ours is built around the inspiration found in many types of literature. Sometimes we do suggest a text or a workbook, but more often we look for a book that will bring about the same learning in a more creative, beautiful and fulfilling way. In many ways our choice of books resembles the idea of "living books" that early home educator Charlotte Mason proposes. Some of the qualities of living books are:

- Literature created by a person with an obvious special interest in his/her subject.
- A personal, human, emotional quality to what is presented.
- Books that are inspiring and attractive to the spirit as well as intellect.
- Material that promotes a sense of wonder and appreciation.
- Books that fulfill the learning goals of that grade.



DRAWING OUT THE LEARNING

Our suggested books (and those that you can find for yourself) can be used as a way into your own creativity. You can do this in lots of ways, specifically: Book Projects, Re-tell or Re-Create, Make Your Own Workbook, and Immersion Projects.

(... Excerpt) The article continues for 6 more pages, with

information on book projects (1 page),

narrative learning (1-1/2 pages, see excerpt below)

creative ways to make and use workbooks (2-1/2 pages)

and an introduction to immersion projects (1 page, see excerpt below).

Re-Tell and Re-Create: The Value of Narrative Learning

Traditional educational systems put a lot of value on the written word but research shows that narrative learning is very important as well. In the past, narrative learning (telling what you know from memory, by story and narration) was the primary way in which one demonstrated knowledge. For eons, and today in many world cultures, 'telling' is the way in which knowledge and wisdom is imparted. Deep intuition tells us that when one's learning can be narrated in a manner that others understand a lot of learning has taken place. Educational theorists are beginning to recognize this ancient fact—"Constructing stories in the mind, or 'storying' as it has been called, is one of the most fundamental means of making meaning." (Wells, 1986)

Indeed, one might well say that meaning making is the very heart and soul of education. It is certainly an important part of a GVS education.... *(Excerpt)*

sort of template for creating “lesson/unit plans,” I offer you this as a guide. My hope is that YOU will become skilled at this yourself and in doing so will be able to create custom curricula for your own child from year to year.

Remember: no one knows your child as well as you do. The skills of lesson planning, time management and curriculum selection are certainly skills in which homeschool parents can become quite good. In fact, many home teachers that I have known were much better at these things than classroom teachers who have most of their curriculum and time management dictated to them. Do not be afraid to make these decisions for and with your home students; it can be a highly creative and fun experience.

Here is a template to get you started. Give this one a try and then see if you can use it to guide you into creating curricula yourself. This immersion project/unit plan template has six parts:

- Talk Time *(see excerpt below),*
- Math Time *(see excerpt below),*
- Language Time,
- Science and Environment Time,
- Culture and Geography Time,
- and Art and Music Time...

This sample immersion projects contains four pages of instructions and suggestions for taking this one book and creating an extensive interdisciplinary learning experience that you could dive into for days and days if you so choose. See two short excerpts below:

Talk Time *(Excerpt)*

Talk time is an opportunity to get into the deeper themes in the story. Here are some guiding questions for this book:

- Why do you think the monsoon is so important?
- In this book, what are things that the family is doing that are similar to things your family does? What things are different?



Math Time *(Excerpt)*

- Find out how many people live in India: it's a lot! Use this population number to begin to explore large numbers. Is your child familiar with place value higher than thousands?
- How far is it from your house to India? How long would it take to get there if you went on a ship? If you flew in a plane?

3RD GRADE SAMPLE MINI UNITS

By Patricia Kane

This section contains two sample “mini” units. The mini units are another way to extend the learning from any number of books in this curriculum guide. The first sample focuses on history, with an emphasis on Native Americans, and the second is focused on science (astronomy).

HISTORY

This mini unit is based primarily on the book, _____ which is a book that you can use throughout the year. Following are study suggestions from two of the chapters (_____ and _____). You can follow the same model to create activities of your own for the other chapters.

Books:

- _____
- _____
- _____

More book ideas (optional): *This lists 6 books, including:*

- Chief Jake Swamp: *Giving Thanks*

Possible areas of research:

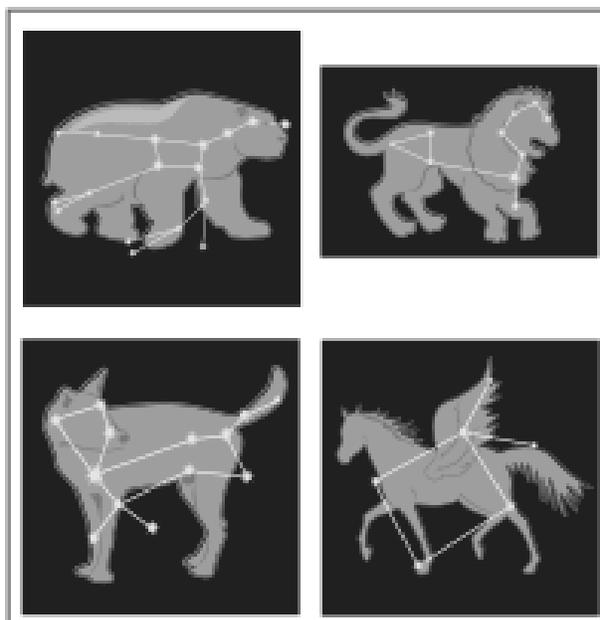
- What kinds of food did the Eastern Woodland Indians eat? (suggestions: the Three Sisters, fishing techniques & materials, hunting tools & practices, how food was prepared & stored, then make pemmican, cranberry fritters, succotash, maple sugar candy, or other foods)
- What kinds of homes & buildings did the Eastern Woodland Indians make? (suggestions: different materials & techniques used, then make models of long house and/or wigwams)

This section contains another half page of activity ideas

Activities:

- Maps: Where did each nation originally live? Compare those areas with a current map of the same region. What changes do you see? What reasons can you give for the changes?
- What geographical features are present in the Eastern Woodlands? How do you think these affected the people's way of life?
- Learn a legend of one of the Eastern Woodland Indian nations.

This section contains another half page of ideas.



SCIENCE

Here's a fun science Mini-Unit. *(This one is focused on astronomy.)*

Books:

More Book Ideas (Optional)

- _____ *Find the Constellations* by H.A. Rey

Activities:

- Go outside at night with your family and find some of the constellations that you've read about in _____!

- Listen to the song “Follow the Drinking Gourd” and learn what the lyrics mean. How does this song relate to one of the constellations?
- *This sample mini unit contains 1-1/2 more pages of ideas for incorporating art, literature, and geography into your study of astronomy.*



Chapter 4

Planning, Scheduling and Record-Keeping

SUGGESTIONS FOR SCHEDULING

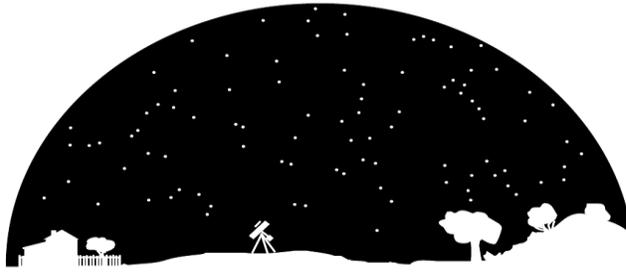
While some people do fine “just winging it,” we highly recommend that you look at the full year in the beginning, and plan around when your vacations and other family activities and trips might be. See the end of this chapter for some formats you may find helpful.

We suggest dividing the school year into nine four-week units. Most schools are in session for approximately 180 days per year, which comes out to thirty-six weeks. Allowing for four weeks of vacation time, this will take you through a typical 10-month school year.

Social Studies/Diversity/Literature

Storybooks—choose one or more of these each month. Obviously, many of them will not take long to read; the reason we chose them is that they are wonderful starting places for rich explorations. Your Whole Child, Healthy Planet Curriculum Guide contains many ideas on how to use these books as entryways to days—possibly weeks—of engaging study.

Additional reading—encourage your child to read as much as possible. Take them to the library (or bookstore, if you prefer) often. Let them choose books of interest. Don’t worry if they are not at the “right” grade level. If a book is too difficult, but they’re interested, then help them read it. If you think it’s “too easy,” don’t worry about it. If it supports them in developing a love of books, then how can it not be a good thing? Also, remember that the book list in Chapter 6 contains many additional suggestions.



Whole Child/Literature

Include these as part of your Literature studies, or fit them in wherever you want.

This section contains another 1-1/2 pages of general scheduling suggestions for:

Language Arts (spelling, grammar, cursive writing)

Science (story books, and the “making a difference” book)

Math

Art

PE

UNIT 1 PLANNING (WEEKS 1-4)

In order to keep yourself on track, look at the calendar and plan the dates for this unit (we recommend approximately 4 weeks).



UNIT 1 dates: _____

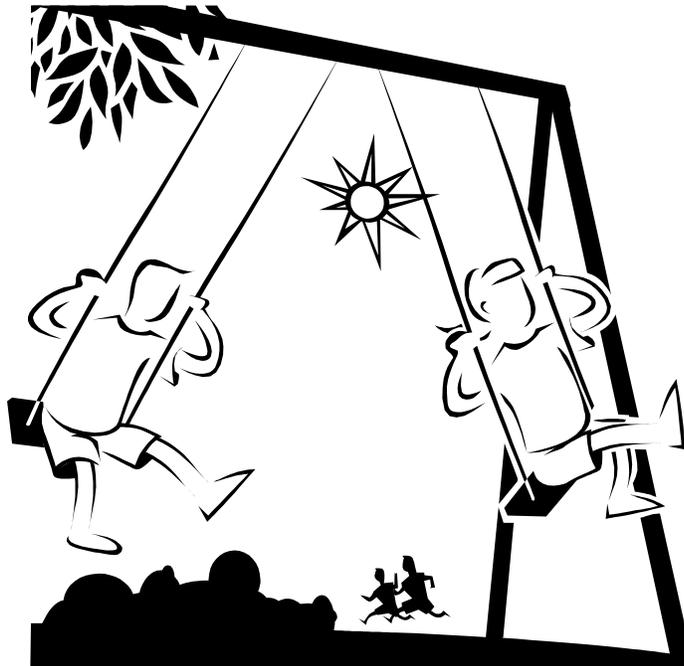
The guide contains a page with basic instructions and a planning chart for each unit/month (9 total)

Reminder: Chapter 3 of this curriculum guide lists a large number of activities that you can use to integrate and demonstrate learning as you work with the various books and resources listed below.

KEEPING A WORK LOG OR JOURNAL

Whether you are working with a Global Village teacher, a charter school supervisor, or in some other way, you will need to keep track of what you and your child have done together. There are many ways to do this.

Some home school parents like to keep a log or a journal of the day's or week's work. This can be useful in helping you realize just how much learning takes place in an average day; it can also serve as a guide showing you where you have been and where you are headed. It helps the GVS advisor immensely when you keep a log of your work;



it will be valuable for you both to be able to refer to it during your conversations. This log can be very simple (see sample formats below) and need not take up too much time, or it can be a more elaborate project that you do with your student, producing a kind of scrapbook diary of your learning.

If you are the type of person who usually sticks to the plans they make, then your planning calendars could also serve as your documentation. If you tend to change plans as you go, then you will also want to keep track of what you actually did, since it may look very different from the plan you created.

Take some time to consider how you will document your child’s learning experiences; ideally, you can make it creative and fun as well as informative. Also, remember that you can experiment with all kinds of different methods—see what works best for you!

SAMPLE RECORD-KEEPING TEMPLATES

SAMPLE RECORD-KEEPING FORMAT #1

We suggest making a weekly summary of your child’s activities. Feel free to adapt as needed.

*This section contains five different templates that you can choose from for **record-keeping and scheduling**.*





Chapter 5

The Global Village Philosophy, Untangling the Myths about Education and Learning

This chapter is devoted to supporting the homeschooling educator in deepening their own learning about the GVS Method. We include most of the articles in each grade level as a touchstone—a way to help you remember that your instincts are good—that there is a healthier way for your children to learn and grow. Just as your children’s learning spirals into increasing depth, so will yours as you revisit these articles each year.



A SPECIAL NOTE TO THE NEW HOMESCHOOLING PARENT

Congratulations! You have taken a very courageous step on behalf of your child and their future. You may find that the first few months are not easy as you adjust to new routines. The good news is that you will also find your children coming back to life during the process of making education more engaging and relevant to them.

Homeschooling is a wonderful and complex journey. You will have days that feel great, and days when you wonder why you ever had such a crazy idea. Over time you will find the days that you question become fewer and farther between. You will also quite likely find that you experience less conflict with your children than parents with children in traditional educational settings. Many homeschool parents tell us of the joy of being able to spend so much more time with their children. It may not seem like it now, but childhood actually goes amazingly fast. In families where the parents work all day and the children are at school (not to mention homework time!) there is often little energy left for family time. ...

(Excerpt)

ALLOWING TIME FOR THE HEALING PROCESS

If you have pulled your child out of a situation that was causing a lot of unhappiness it is quite likely they will be resistant to doing anything resembling "school." In this situation it's also common that their self-confidence will be low. Your Global Village teacher can help you with these issues.

The thing to remember is that any kind of healing takes time. You may be aware of quite a bit of fear or frustration arising when faced with a child who refuses to read, or write, or do math, or whatever the case may be. We can assure you that all children have a natural desire to learn and it will come back once they are immersed in a supportive environment. In general, the longer they have been in an environment that was traumatic for them, the longer it will take to heal. Either way, they will recover, though it is important to note that we are talking about education, not psychological or physical well-being. Many children who are wounded do need some form of psychological and/or physical help. If you observe ongoing depression, anxiety, etc., then please be sure to seek qualified help. Your Global Village teacher can support you in this process, but we are educators, not health professionals.



LEARNING STYLES

Respecting learning styles is another way of valuing diversity. Just as the world contains a wide variety of cultures, it also contains a broad spectrum of learning styles.

The traditional educational model works well for those students who like their days to be predictable and orderly, sit at desks, eat only at scheduled times; who learn best by listening, reading, and doing worksheets. These students are actually in the minority. The majority of students—those with differing learning styles—learn best within alternative structures.... *(Excerpt)*

...As you move through this year in your child's life, we encourage you to pay a great deal of attention to their interests, needs, and learning style. You do not have to "do school" in the "usual" way, and we hope you don't!

MUSIC, ART, NATURE, AND IMAGINATION

For many children, the arts are what make the soul come alive and sing its song. We hope that you will put as much art, music, nature study, and time for imagining into your child's life as you can.

Do you have musicians in your family? Are you a musician? Childhood is a wonderful time to learn a



musical instrument. Most kids love to sing and enjoy exposure to all kinds of music. Does your child like to daydream? If so, that's great. Encourage more of it!

We hope you will provide your children with a wide array of artistic materials. Let them be as creative as possible. If they want to color all over their school papers, that is wonderful; we highly encourage it. Allow them to surround themselves with their creations!

We have provided a substantial number of resources for you. Some are listed in the main Resource List (Chapter 2); others are in the Additional Resources section (Chapter 6) at the end of this guide.

SOME THOUGHTS ON VOCABULARY, GRAMMAR, AND SPELLING

So many children have been traumatized by traditional ways of teaching these subjects that we hesitate to tell you what or how much to do in these areas. How much you do with vocabulary, grammar, and spelling this year is up to you.

We believe that it is often not necessary to emphasize these topics as much as traditional schools do (and certainly not in the same ways), especially if your child reads a lot. It is possible to learn a great deal of vocabulary, grammar, and spelling just by reading. Please do not force-feed your children; it will only cause them to hate it.

It is not necessary to buy a special vocabulary book, particularly in the younger grades. There are many ways to integrate vocabulary in a natural way. For example, you could create a special binder or scrapbook where your son writes down words that are new to him. He can illustrate this book if he wishes. Having him create his own flashcards is another fun way to go. You can also come up with ways to play with spelling words; you do not have to give a spelling test each week. If your son thinks it's fun, then go ahead, but do not push it if it just gives him a sense of failure.

Please remember that it is always important to follow your own instincts and your child's natural timing. Your children will learn much more if you present the topics in a gentle, natural, and enjoyable way.

As always, don't hesitate to check with your Global Village teacher if you have questions or concerns.

HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOU ARE "DOING ENOUGH?"

Many new homeschool parents worry that their kids are not doing enough, partly because learning becomes less of a struggle. If they enjoy their studies and stay focused, they may well finish their "official" schoolwork in a short period of time, well before their school-going friends are home. Now what? How can we explain to the neighbors that our kids are already done with school for the day? People who are

unfamiliar with the process of homeschooling or those with a narrower view of learning may think that “real learning” occurs with pencil in hand and books open, so when a homeschool student finishes much faster than they would have if they were at school, it is only natural that someone will be concerned that they are not “doing enough.”

Let us help you expand your view of what learning is. What many people forget is that **learning does not stop when you put the books down**. It is so much more than sitting in a classroom listening to lectures, reading a textbook, and answering questions. Learning goes on throughout the day, whether you are consciously “doing school” or not... *(Excerpt)*

... Pay attention to your son and observe his level of engagement. If he has lost interest, and/or if you are starting to force him to do it, then that is a clue that it is time to move on. Is he still reading about Egypt when you want him to move on to the next topic? That is a good clue that he is not done yet.



WHAT IF MY KIDS FINISH EARLY OR WE RUN OUT OF THINGS TO DO? (YOU'RE IN LUCK—WE LIVE ON A FASCINATING PLANET!)

If your kids finish early, first of all don't forget to celebrate! Then, if you want to, this is a prime opportunity to go deeper and wider. ... *(Excerpt)*

Note: Remember that Chapter 6 has a very long list of additional resources for you to choose from.

AM I GOING TO RUIN MY CHILD'S LIFE IF...?

Here is one of the main myths that new homeschool parents (or anyone who questions the traditional model of education) run up against:

You will ruin your child's life if you take them away from the only people who “know”



how to teach, and from the “standards” that specify what every child needs to know when. If you don't follow these rules then your child will be “behind,” won't get into a good college, won't get a good job, and won't have a good life... *(Excerpt)*

OBSERVING THE ROLE FEAR PLAYS IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

Most of the traditional views on education are oriented around fear, particularly in the so-called “No Child Left Behind,” era. Now it is not just kids failing, it is entire schools under threat of being taken over if their kids do not do well enough on standardized tests created by people who think they know how to quantify learning and define what is essential. The government pressures the administrators, who pressure the teachers, who pressure the kids... *(Excerpt)*

ABOUT “STANDARDS” AND GRADE LEVEL

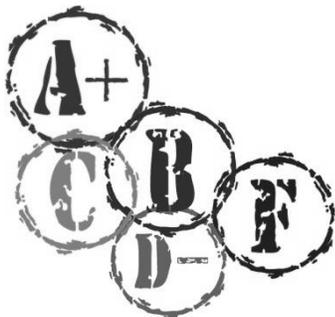
There is much talk these days about state standards, accountability, and testing, testing, testing. Accountability to whom? To the planet? To future generations? While these “standards” may be a good starting place, do they really address what people need to learn and do in order to become effective global citizens and stewards of our planet?

This section is not written in order to “bash” anyone. However, in order to move past the intense fear that surrounds ideas about grade level and standards we must first confront them. It is a myth that forcing children and schools to “meet” arbitrary state and national standards is either necessary or effective... *(Excerpt)*

ASSESSMENT, TESTING, AND GRADES

Friends and family members of homeschool students often want to know what grades they are getting. New homeschool parents feel the pressure. They want to be able to reassure everyone that their children are doing fine, that they have not made a big mistake by pulling them out of school.

Why all this emphasis on grades? What do they think grades mean? What are they really asking: Are your children learning as much as mine? Are they learning as much as they would in a “regular” school? Most of us have been taught that grades are a valid way of assessing children and comparing them to each other, but are they?



Many colleges have begun to question the validity of standardized tests because it turns out that one of the main things these tests predict is a student’s ability to do well on future standardized tests. Fortunately, these colleges are looking for a broader picture of their potential students. Can a test measure the light in a young person’s eyes? Can it measure their ability to hold true to their vision—to follow their dreams?

What does an “A” really mean? People like to pretend that letter grades have a consistent meaning, but they do not. In some classrooms, students are marked down

for being late, for missing class, not submitting their assignments on time, for not “participating,” etc. While it is true that a student generally has to have a fairly good grasp of the material to get an “A,” there are many “C” or “D” students who may have an equally good, if not better, understanding of the concepts. They may have a stressful personal life, no study space, an illness, or perhaps they have to go to work right after school in order to help support the family.

What does it mean to “be” a “C student” or an “F student?” The assumption is that these children are not as intelligent as the “A kids.” Think back—do you remember who the “smart” kids in your class were, and who the “dumb” kids were? And the rest, who were “average”? Where did you fall in that spectrum? How did it feel? How has it affected you in your later life? How did you feel about the kids that were “above” or “below” you? Did you really see them, or were you blinded by the labels given to them? If you were one of the “smart” ones, did you feel extra pressure to do well on tests? If you were not a “top student,” did you feel like not trying so hard because you didn’t think you could do well enough anyway?

Grades often interfere with real learning. Real learning is not about consuming facts or covering a wide swath of material. Real learning occurs when there is engagement. Students in traditional schools learn what their teachers expect from them in order to get a good grade early on. Getting a good grade soon becomes more important than the learning itself. In addition, the pressure to get a good grade can create a level of stress that ends up impeding the learning process. Students come to associate learning with fear, pressure, and potential reward and punishment. At Global Village, we recommend that our K-8 students do not receive letter grades.

So how do you know if your child is learning? Well, the truth is that the vast majority of parents we have worked with develop a good sense of this, and children themselves know and will be quite honest about it if you ask them. Parents, particularly those new to homeschooling, often worry that their children are not doing “enough,” or that they are not doing what they “should” be doing. But when asked what their instincts tell them, what their hearts tell them, then we hear the stories about the transformation of their children, how they are actually doing very well—flourishing, in fact.

There are many ways to assess learning that don't involve testing. Throughout this curriculum guide, we provide a wide variety of suggestions for learning activities. The projects your children create and the conversations they have with you and others will tell you a lot about what they are learning. If you are working with a Global Village teacher, she will help you with the assessment process. If you are not, then give yourself permission to follow your own instincts. Do your best to free yourself from what you were taught about how to “do school.”

Mastery Learning: Our goal is for students to learn the material rather than pushing them through whether they understand it or not. Therefore, we give them more than one opportunity to submit their work. If there are tests in the materials you are using, use the tests as a tool. If you take the pressure off, then tests can even be fun. Do them in color—put glitter on them! If the test shows you that your daughter still has trouble

understanding some of the concepts, then let that be an opportunity for you to go back and spend more time on the material. Do not let the tests become a judgment about how smart or "good" she is.

The type of feedback GVS teachers give (and the type we recommend you give) depends on the individual student, as well as the style of the teacher. We believe that one size does not fit all. Different strategies work better at different times and with different students. For example, in the case of a student who absolutely hates to write and gets paralyzed whenever she is asked to write anything longer than a paragraph, we recommend that the home teacher ignore spelling and grammatical errors in the beginning, in order to get the ideas flowing again and allow the student to experience some success. In contrast, another student who is feeling very confident will quite likely be ready to receive more detailed feedback on spelling, grammar, and writing in general.



Chapter 6

Going Further: Additional Resources

RECOMMENDED BOOKS AND MUSIC— SOME OF OUR STAFF FAVORITES

This chapter contains supplemental articles and resources (over 100 books and several CDs) plus detailed resource descriptions. You do not need to use any of them if you don't want to. This is a "bonus" section of sorts – a collection of extras that we thought you and your kids would enjoy as you move through their homeschooling journey together.

If you purchase more than one grade level, you are likely to find quite a bit of similarity between the resources we provide in this section, particularly if you order successive grades. We gradually adjust the lists as the grades progress, but we leave some books on for several years because we know most people will not have the time to read even a small percentage of them in one year. As an example, the lists of "Books for Instilling a Love of Reading" are quite similar in grades 1 and 2, but entirely different for a first grader and an eighth grader. It is the same with the "Classic Books" and "Health and Development, Heart/Soul" section. The music list is the same for each grade level.



The full guide, which is 90 pages, concludes with a copy of The Earth Charter. Global Village School's Whole Child, Healthy Planet curriculum guides are centered on the four core principles of the Earth Charter:

- *Respect and Care for the Community of Life*
- *Ecological Integrity*
- *Social and Economic Justice*
- *Democracy, Nonviolence, Peace and Diversity*
-



Thank you for your interest in our Whole Child Healthy Planet curriculum guides. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions!

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Appendix

The Earth Charter

THE EARTH CHARTER

The Earth Charter is a declaration of fundamental principles for building a just, sustainable, and peaceful global society for the 21st century. The mission of the Earth Charter Initiative is to help establish a sound ethical foundation for the emerging global society and to promote the transition to a sustainable way of life founded on: respect and care for the community of life; ecological integrity; universal human rights; respect for diversity; economic justice; democracy; and a culture of peace.

The Earth Charter Principles:

1. Respect Earth and life in all its diversity.
2. Care for the community of life with understanding, compassion, and love.
3. Build democratic societies that are just, participatory, sustainable, and peaceful.
4. Secure Earth's bounty and beauty for present and future generations.
5. Protect and restore the integrity of Earth's ecological systems, with special concern for biological diversity and the natural processes that sustain life.
6. Prevent harm as the best method of environmental protection and, when knowledge is limited, apply a precautionary approach.
7. Adopt patterns of production, consumption, and reproduction that safeguard Earth's regenerative capacities, human rights, and community well-being.
8. Advance the study of ecological sustainability and promote the open exchange and wide application of the knowledge acquired.
9. Eradicate poverty as an ethical, social, and environmental imperative.
10. Ensure that economic activities and institutions at all levels promote human development in an equitable and sustainable manner.
11. Affirm gender equality and equity as prerequisites to sustainable development and ensure universal access to education, health care, and economic opportunity.
12. Uphold the right of all, without discrimination, to a natural and social environment supportive of human dignity, bodily health, and spiritual well-being, with special attention to the rights of indigenous peoples and minorities.

13. Strengthen democratic institutions at all levels, and provide transparency and accountability in governance, inclusive participation in decision making, and access to justice.
14. Integrate into formal education and life-long learning the knowledge, values, and skills needed for a sustainable way of life.
15. Treat all living beings with respect and consideration.
16. Promote a culture of tolerance, nonviolence, and peace.

The Earth Charter was formally launched in 2000 in ceremonies at The Peace Palace in The Hague, Netherlands. Over the next five years, a formal endorsement campaign attracted over 2,500 organizational endorsements, representing millions of people, including numerous national and international associations, as well as the global assemblies of institutions such as UNESCO and IUCN. Over 400 cities and towns enacted resolutions endorsing the Earth Charter. And many thousands of individuals endorsed the Earth Charter through the on-line endorsement system.

The Initiative is supported by Earth Charter International (ECI), a small coordinating secretariat governed by the Earth Charter International Council and comprised of a small network of regional centers and field-posted representatives. Currently there are two formal Centers: one Center in Stockholm, Sweden (Center for Strategy and Communication) and one in Costa Rica at the University for Peace (Center for Education for Sustainable Development). These Centers in turn work with a very global and diverse association of governmental, civil society, religious, business, and international institutions who are formally or informally linked to the Initiative, as Affiliates, Partners, Endorsers and Supporters.

