

# Global Village School<sup>®</sup>



## Whole Child Healthy Planet

Curriculum Guide



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## *Whole Child, Healthy Planet*

### Curriculum Guide Grade 4

Authors: Sally Carless and Michele Blumberg

Global Village School®  
Whole Child, Healthy Planet Curriculum Guide

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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 121-page guide, followed by extensive excerpts from many sections of the 4th Grade curriculum guide. **Please note that the guides are printed in black and white.***

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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](http://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.

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### 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!



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### 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](mailto:info@globalvillageschool.org) for more information.



## Chapter 2

### Curriculum Resources

#### ABOUT THE RESOURCES

Okay, here we go!

We have spent many years researching, gathering, 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 around!

Fourth Grade has a very comprehensive resource list. We expect that few people will use all of the materials. Rather than telling you which of our resources to use, we leave that up to you. We recommend that you use a good number of the resources from each subject area, but ***please use your own judgment about what is best for your child.***

---

#### CORE, RECOMMENDED, AND OPTIONAL RESOURCES

We have categorized the materials in the following way:

**Core Resources**—These resources are referenced in the Unit Planning suggestions. If you choose to follow our suggestions, then you will want to get these materials.

**Other Resources** (anything that is not labeled as “Core”)—we really like these and thought you might, too.

*In addition to everything listed here, there are many other resources 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.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **GVS Amazon Referral Link**

<http://tinyurl.com/26z5f2a>

While we encourage you to shop locally, if you do choose to shop online for some of the resources in this guide, using this link will benefit the school. You will land on the main Amazon.com page, but rest assured that Global Village School will get a percentage of everything you spend during your visit.

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## 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.justiceplanbook.com>

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.)

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## GRADE 4 LIST OF RESOURCES

### **Social Studies**

#### ***(Cultural Geography, Geography of the U. S., Art, plus a taste of the Renaissance)***

*This section contains 10 books. The main emphasis is on Cultural Geography, Geography of the U.S., and Art, plus a taste of the Renaissance.*

*It includes:*

*A beautifully illustrated atlas to be used as the core text*

*A colorful book of photographs introducing children to geography and the diverse cultures of the world*

*Two books about African cultures (see one below)*

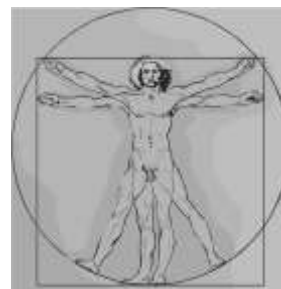
*A book about children from cultures around the world (see below)*

*An online geography resource*

*Three books related to U.S. geography and culture, including one full of regional recipes*

*An activity book inspired by Leonardo da Vinci*

*Here are a couple of the books:*



**Africa is Not a Country (ISBN-10: 0761316477) (Core)**

By Margy Burns Knight, Jim Knight, Anne Sibley O'Brien

An excellent resource for learning about the diversity of the cultures, environments, and lives of children in the 53 countries of the African continent.

**Children Just Like Me: Celebrations! (ISBN-13: 978-0789420275) (Core)**

By Anabel Kindersley

Have you ever heard of a festival or celebration from another culture and wondered what it was all about? This colorful DK book provides enlightenment and reference for the world's festivals through the eyes of children. This beautiful book was published in association with UNICEF, providing a multicultural look at children's celebrations, both secular and religious, from eighteen countries around the world.

## Language Arts

*Literature: Folktales, Stories, Legends, Diversity, and more*

*This section contains 21 beautifully illustrated stories from around the world; several are award-winners. Included are folk tales and diverse heroes young and old. See below for some samples:*

4<sup>th</sup> grade is a good year for stories and heroes of all kinds. Here's a wide selection for you to choose from. *You do not need to get them all*—you may decide to get just a few. Look online, read the reviews, and check to see what your local library has. Of course, if you want to get them all, they will be wonderful additions to your home library and will most likely be family favorites for years to come!

**Note:** for even more options, see also the *Mythology* and *Folk and Fairy Tales* sections of Chapter 6.

**Grandfather's Journey (ISBN-10: 0547076800) (Core)**

By Allen Say (Author, Illustrator) (*Digital and Audio versions available*)

This is a true story of the author's grandfather's immigration to the US, around the turn of the century, when he was 16. It is a bittersweet story—common to many immigrants—of a heart in two places. Lovely illustrations. A Caldecott Medal winner.

**The Talking Eggs (ISBN-10: 0803706197) (Core)**

By Robert D. San Souci (Author), Jerry Pinkney (Illustrator)

This Caldecott Honor Book is a Creole folk tale from the American South. Fun to read, full of life lessons, and beautifully illustrated. (Note: it may be cheaper to get the hardcover version.)

**Henry's Freedom Box (ISBN-10: 043977733X) (Core)**

By Ellen Levine (Author), Kadir Nelson (Illustrator)

*(Digital and Audio versions available)*

Inspired by an 1830s lithograph, this is inspired by the true story of a slave who mailed himself to freedom. After first being forcibly separated from his mother, then later from his wife and children, at age thirty-three Henry Brown was determined to escape to the North. The skillful and engaging writing and illustrations bring the emotions and realities of the time to life. A Caldecott Honor Book.

**Silent Music: A Story of Baghdad (ISBN-10: 1596432764) (Core)**

By James Rumford

Inspired by his “hero,” a 13<sup>th</sup>-century calligrapher, a young boy uses his calligraphy to help calm himself while the bombs fall on his city. With elegant calligraphy interwoven, this story shows the power of art as a force for peace. Winner of the Jane Addams Children's Book Award.



*Writing:*

*This section contains two resources: one recommended, one optional (see below). Both resources approach writing in creative and progressive ways.*

**Writer's Express: A Handbook for Young Writers, Thinkers & Learners**

**(ISBN-10: 0669471631)** *(Optional, part of KIT—also used in 5<sup>th</sup> grade)*

By Dave Kemper, Patrick Sebranek, Ruth Nathan, and Chris Krenzke

If it's related to writing, you'll find it in this book! Everything for the student from grammar and punctuation to test taking skills; how to journal; how to write a poem or fantasy story; how to write a speech or manage time in writing assignments. Well illustrated to keep the student engaged in the lessons. This is a reference book as well as a writer's guide that needs to be on your shelf!

## Grammar:

*Some people feel the need to go “in-depth” with grammar study; others need a lighter approach. We offer 2 options for grammar. One provides opportunities for checking for errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation and content, and the other is lighter and has an engaging fun-filled format.*

### **Grammar Punk (Optional)**

**[www.grammarpunk.com](http://www.grammarpunk.com)**

This program is like no other in that it links grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and vocabulary study directly to writing, which is the purpose of those lessons. Additionally, it uses an engaging and fun-filled game format via dice and cards to learn concepts that will then be applied to your child's writing. Lastly, the Grades 4-9 Grammar Punk program can be utilized for the duration of your child's 4<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> grade schooling.

## Cursive Writing:

*This section has one optional resource for learning cursive writing.*

## Typing:

*This section has two optional resource for learning typing.*



## Math

There are many different math curriculums to choose from. We recommend researching several options to find one that is best aligned with your child's learning style. Math curriculums range from being more classic, with lessons and practice worksheets, to less traditional using online computer games. There are also some comprehensive reviews on YouTube for most of these curriculums where you will get a chance to actually see the materials. This can be especially helpful before purchasing. Some students follow one curriculum while others may piece together several or make modifications to one in order to best meet their needs. It is important that children are empowered to learn math in a way that feels right for them. Here are just some of the math options available to homeschoolers. Take a look to see which curriculum seems like the best fit for your child's learning needs and family context. If, for any reason, you are unsure about which curriculum to choose, your Global Village teacher will be happy to speak with you and help with suggestions.



## **Conventional Math Curriculums using text and worksheets:**

\_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ has been very popular and effective with many GVS families. It provides a comprehensive full year's math curriculum (K-12), with an emphasis on mastery and problem solving. It includes manipulatives, even in the upper grades, and teaching videos. (Some families choose not to get the manipulatives as they can be a little pricey.) Online assessments make it easy for parents to choose the most appropriate level for their child rather than relying on grade level. Lessons can be followed by watching the DVD or reading the text. Children then have worksheets to practice what they learned in each lesson. Unit tests are also included. Packets come with answer keys as well for parents to oversee work. You can learn more about this curriculum at \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ is a comprehensive K-12 program focused on long term mastery and application of concepts. Children are taught incremental concepts in progression while consistently reviewing old concepts. Includes teacher guide, practice worksheets and tests for monitoring progress. The early years of math use manipulatives to teach concepts while the older grades use textbooks. For more information go to \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ provides a K-8 curriculum using textbooks and worksheets. It uses progressive math education methods to teach foundational math by building on concepts and skills from different angles to prepare students for more advanced levels. The website provides assessment tests in order to find the appropriate level for your child. For more information go to \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ is a program which is mastery-based and emphasizes conceptual understanding for grades 1-7. It is also strong on mental math & real life applications and offers games to practice concepts as well as supplemental YouTube instructional videos. The program uses workbooks to teach concepts and practice skills. The website offers free downloads of workbook samples to see if it's a fit for your family. To learn more about this program go to \_\_\_\_\_.

*This section goes on to discuss two online options, a non-traditional storytelling math option, 8 other books/programs, and 1 fictional/biographical book about math.*

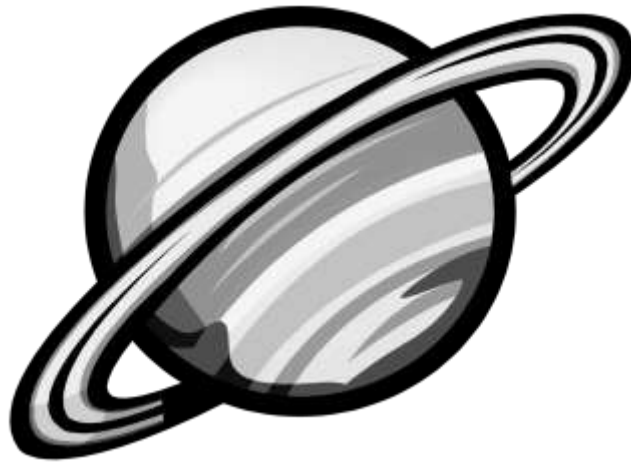
*Note: We encourage you to also include other age-appropriate math games and activities as desired.*

## Science

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

Experiments: We realize that not everyone is a science buff, and that most people don't want to have to buy a bunch of extra supplies. Our aim is to support you through home-based science experiments that are simple and engaging, with readily available materials.

Summary of resources: This section contains three resources. One is a wonderfully engaging book about the solar system to be used as a core resource this year. The other two are books full of fun hands-on science experiments (you can choose one or both).



## **Art/Nature/Science**

*This section includes one core resource chock-full of environmental art and science projects.*

## **Citizenship/Service Learning**

*This section contains one core resource full of a wide range of service projects for children.*



## **Values/Character**

*This section contains one book with a large number of engaging character-related stories. As part of the “Kit” for grades 4-8, it can be used for several years and by siblings of different ages at the same time.*

## **Kit**

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

*This section contains two core resources, a nature activity book for grades K-4, and an encyclopedia for grades 4-6.*

## **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).*

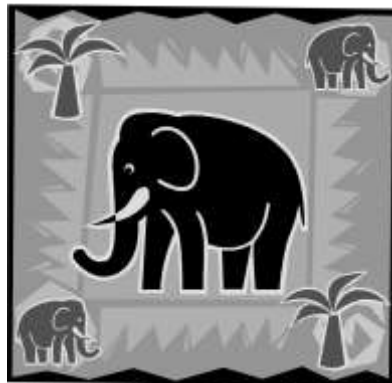
*Articles include:*

- *Setting Up Your Learning Environment*
- *Developing Observation Skills (Including Self Observation), Finding Teachable Moments*
- *Using Your Educator’s Ear with Materials and Books*
- *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.

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### DRAWING OUT THE LEARNING

We encourage you to use our suggested books, and others that you find yourself, as a way to tap into your own creativity. Discuss the material, or its subject matter, with your student, ask questions, let it be a springboard to further exploration. It is this kind of integrated and free-ranging interest that generates a rich, self-directed educational experience. Your GVS teacher is a good source of ideas, and we would love to hear about projects that your family creates so that we can create a library of suggestions to share with others.

*The article continues for two more pages, with information on book projects, creative ways to make and use workbooks, narrative learning and an introduction to immersion projects.*

## BOOK-SPECIFIC PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

The books we have chosen for the 4th grade curriculum guide are well-suited for student-centered activities. We encourage you to follow your child’s interests and learning style as you move through the materials. Don’t worry about doing everything, or doing it in the way it might be done in a more traditional setting. This experience is for you and your children; it’s about personalizing the learning so that it is most meaningful and enjoyable for them. The more engaged they are, the more they will remember.

So, with that in mind, here are some suggestions for working with several of the texts. We’ve listed activities that connect with other subjects, such as language arts, and that fit a variety of different learning styles.

*This section contains over 6 pages of ideas for working with the resources. We have included some excerpts:*

### PROJECT IDEAS

#### Geography

Geography can really be a fascinating topic, especially if it is approached through the lens of learning about all kinds of beautiful places and fascinating people rather than as lists to memorize. The reason we chose this atlas is because it is so engaging—and—it has lots of great information. Our hope is that it will provide an entry to a lifetime of fascination with the amazing variety of people and places on our planet!



Decide whether you want to go through the book in order or whether you prefer to skip around. If you have travels planned, or if you have family or friends in various places around the world, you may want to start with those sections first. Or—pick a place you know nothing about and start there!

Here are some suggestions for how you might want to interact with the atlas and the other geography resources. We’ve listed activities that connect with other subjects, such as language arts, and that fit a variety of different learning styles. And, feel free to come up with your own!

*This section contains ½ page of activity ideas including:*

*A website for kid-friendly news*

*A website for kid-friendly information about culture and geography*

*A wide variety of project ideas*

## **Language Arts, Folk Tales, etc.**

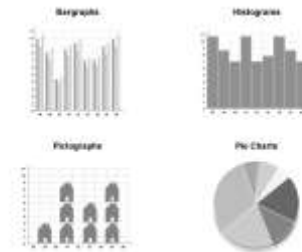
*1/2 page of suggestions*

## **Integrated Math Activities**

### **Renaissance, Immigration, and Graphing**

Research Rene Descartes and the invention of the Cartesian coordinate system. This would be a good opportunity to discuss negative numbers. How did the creation of this coordinate system that combines geometry and algebra change the world? This can also lead to a discussion of the mathematical and scientific achievements of Muslim scholars during the time period of approximately 750 to 1050 A.D., Baghdad (the capital of the empire during that time), etc.

Immigration issues: do a graph of facts: What countries are US immigrants from? What counties are undocumented immigrants from? How many “dreamers” (undocumented immigrants brought here as children) are there? Which countries are they from? Why have immigrants come to the US?



*This section contains four more ideas for integrated math and social studies activities.*

## **Sample Immersion Project (aka Unit Plan), Grade 4**

This sample immersion project (unit plan) gives you examples of ways in which you can begin to look for inherent curricula in the books on our lists, or in any other books. The best way to get started at this would be to read the book and unit plan sample yourself first and see if you can begin to see how the activities and curricula jump off the pages.

Give it a try, and remember: your GVS teachers and advisors are always here to help!

Note: \_\_\_\_\_ (book title) is now out of print. A few used copies are available on the Internet and hopefully many libraries still have copies. Despite its limited availability, we still wanted to offer this unit plan in our guide because it is a very good example of the kinds of things you can do with many of the books in our curriculum. (And, if you're lucky, you will be able to get a copy of this wonderful book!)



Book: \_\_\_\_\_

... (Excerpt) This book is a fine example of the books that typically get lost to older children. It is classified as a "picture book" and so would be considered to be for younger children. However, it is sophisticated in every way: in language, in ideas, in art and in learning. It is really not a young child's story, even though you might find it in the picture book section of the library. Please do not exclude these wonderful books from your growing child's choices; there are many ways you can use them and learn from them.



*This section includes three activity ideas based on this book.*

Here are some ideas for extracting the inherent curricula out of this story and using it across the curriculum:

### **Language**

*This section contains ½ page of language arts activity ideas related to this book.*

### **Math**

*This section contains ½ page of math activity ideas.*



### **Science/Geography**

*This section contains ½ page of science and geography activity ideas.*

### **Arts and Culture**

*This section contains ½ page of activity ideas related to this book. See 3 samples below:*



1. What is the “pantoguanacasteco” dance? Can you learn it? (You can see it on Google.)
2. Draw some illustrations of some of your favorite memories. What colors would you choose? The illustrations in this book are done in pastels—have you ever worked with pastels?
3. Listen to some Costa Rican music. Draw or paint while you do this.

*This section contains 5 other activities.*

Hopefully these ideas paint a picture for you of how you can take a simple book and draw out many days—perhaps weeks—of learning. Each one of these suggestions could be expanded upon. For instance, just researching the plants and animals of this part of the world could produce weeks of work and then lead you to other places to explore. Learning is all around us when we see the world as whole and not as fragmented pieces. Imparting this to your student is what will make them a lifelong learner.

*Please note that since we have provided such a comprehensive list of suggestions for working with this book, we have not placed it into a particular month or subject area of our planning recommendations. Use it whenever it feels best to you!*



## 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.

We have chosen to spread the core books out throughout the year. Our suggestions will give you an idea of how to structure your child’s studies in a balanced way that covers a good deal of material for the year. You might want to follow the monthly schedule we have outlined—it works well for many families. If you want to do it in an entirely different way, such as focusing on certain subjects first and doing the others in later months, feel free!

Chapter 3 contains numerous ideas for student-centered “Active Learning” Projects. There are suggestions for many different ways to interact with the books and other resources to personalize the learning process and help you make the subject matter come alive.

#### **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; the article continues.)*

*There is also a section called: What If My Kids Finish Early or We Run Out of Things to Do? (You're in Luck—We Live On a Fascinating Planet!)*



## 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: \_\_\_\_\_

Look through all the resources and think about how you might want to schedule your time. For example, one option is to do a bit of each subject each day or week; another is to focus on one subject at a time (such as all the social studies one day or week, all the science the next, etc.).

Write a general plan here. You can always change it, but it helps to think about it ahead of time.

Week 1	Week 2
Week 3	Week 4

## Instructions

**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.

## Social Studies

(Cultural Geography, Geography of the U.S., Art, plus a taste of the Renaissance)

\_\_\_\_\_ (book)

**Use this book as a reference** as you learn about various areas during your studies. You can read all the way through it if you wish, and use it as a springboard for all kinds of different activities. **We suggest breaking it up over nine months.** We will break it up for you in the order it was written, but feel free to study the countries in any order you like!

We suggest you start here: **Read** the Introductory “Front of the Book” sections.

\_\_\_\_\_ (book)

*Children Just Like Me: Celebrations!:*

**Choose** a different child’s story to read each week. Ideally you will be able to coordinate this with the cultures and regions you are learning about in \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ (book)

(Optional)

For this month, start with the “Front of the Book” section.

(If you do not live in the USA, then study your local area. You may want to do research at the library, or maybe even take a road trip!)

\_\_\_\_\_ (book)

(Optional) and/or

\_\_\_\_\_ (book)

(Optional)

If your family likes cooking together we suggest choosing one recipe a week. Mmmmm! If you like crafts, then do a different craft each week.



\_\_\_\_\_ (book)

This is a fun book that combines history, science and art. You may find that the activities lead you into many more hours of discovery. We suggest choosing **a new activity every two weeks**.

\*Please note that while we have chosen to divide all the social studies books up over several months, it is fine if you want to do them one at a time, or to study a different region each month, or to use them in whatever other way works best for you!

## Language Arts

*Literature:* Depending on which book(s) you have chosen, pick one or two stories each month. Read the story, and do some kind of creative writing, art, or other activity of your choice.

We also recommend reading

\_\_\_\_\_ (book)

If you are using the Leonardo da Vinci activity book, then this month would be a good time to read it.



If you would like to do additional reading, look through our list at the end of this curriculum guide and choose something that interests you.

**Grammar:** If you are working on grammar get started with the book you have chosen. **Keep track** of how much you do this month.

*This section also contains general instructions for vocabulary, spelling, and writing.*

\_\_\_\_\_ (book)

You can also choose something from *Writers Express* if you like, but it is not necessary. *Writers Express* is a great reference; you will be using it again in 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

## Science

### *Experiments*

Choose a new experiment each week. Have some fun!

\_\_\_\_\_ (*book*)

Use this book in the way that makes the most sense to you. It's a small book, but each little section can open the door to much wider exploration. We suggest breaking the book up over the year, doing one section at a time. You can expand on the information in the book in many ways, such as making models of each planet, looking on the Internet each week to see where the planets are, following the progress of the moon throughout the month, tracking the constellations throughout the year, etc. Note: We go into more depth in 6<sup>th</sup> grade astronomy so there is no pressure to do any more than what is in the book—just do what feels right do you. If everybody is enjoying it, then go further!)

For this month, read: Introduction, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

## Art/Nature (and more science!)

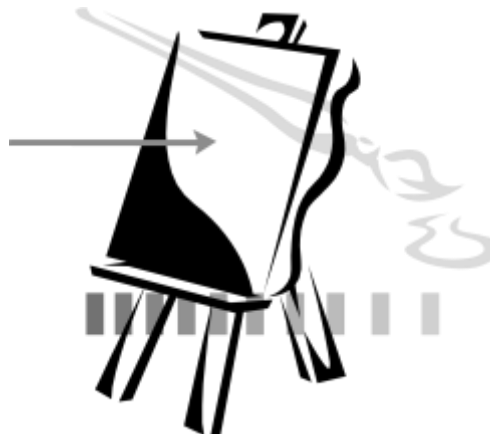
\_\_\_\_\_ (*book*)

Choose a different activity each week. Have some jumbo fun!

### *Additional Activities:*

If you enjoy art, include artwork in your other assignments as you are inspired.

Do as much art as you can—try new things: painting, drawing, collage, etc. Do not worry about being a “good artist”—just enjoy the process!



*This section also includes instructions for Math, Citizenship/Service Learning, Values/Character, Art/Nature/Science, Music, Health, and P.E.*

*The guide contains similar planning charts and instructions for **Units 2-9**.*

## 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... *(Excerpt)*

## SAMPLE RECORD-KEEPING TEMPLATES

*This section includes 5 different planning and record-keeping templates for you to choose from.*







## 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)*

*The guide continues with the following articles:*

*Allowing Time for the Healing Process*

*Learning Styles*

*Music, Art, Nature, and Imagination*

*Some Thoughts on Vocabulary, Grammar, and Spelling*

## 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.

Sound familiar? Understandably, being faced with these statements brings up a lot of fear. This is particularly true when there are school authorities or family members that question the decision, continually second-guess, or quiz the kids on things they think they "should" know.

We have written this guide to inform you so you can sort out the myths from the facts. We hope it will help you trust your heart as you accompany your children on their educational journey.

## 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?

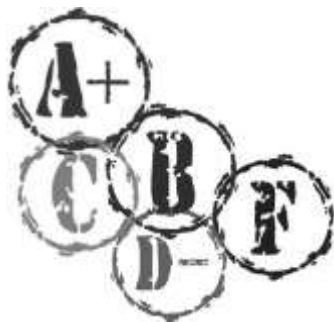
This section is not written in order to "bash" anyone. However, in order to move past the intense fear that surrounds ideas about grade level and standards we must first confront them. It is a myth that forcing children and schools to "meet" arbitrary state and national standards is either necessary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



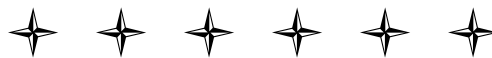
## Chapter 6

### *Going Further: Additional Resources*

#### RECOMMENDED BOOKS AND MUSIC— SOME OF OUR STAFF FAVORITES

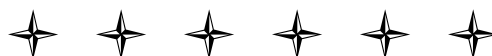
*This chapter contains supplemental articles and resources (over 100 books and several CDs) plus detailed resource descriptions. You do not need to use any of them if you don't want to. This is a "bonus" section of sorts – a collection of extras that we thought you and your kids would enjoy as you move through the 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 121 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!*

*[info@globalvillageschool.org](mailto:info@globalvillageschool.org) (805) 646-9792*



## *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.

