



Home Learning Year by Year: How to Design a Homeschool Curriculum from Preschool Through High School

Rebecca Rupp

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Finally, homeschoolers have a comprehensive guide to designing a homeschool curriculum, from one of the country's foremost homeschooling experts. , Rebecca Rupp presents a structured plan to ensure that your children will learn what they need to know when they need to know it, from preschool through high school. Based on the traditional pre-K through 12th-grade structure, **Home Learning Year by Year** features:

The integral subjects to be covered within each grade
Standards for knowledge that should be acquired by your child at each level
Recommended books to use as texts for every subject
Guidelines for the importance of each topic: which knowledge is essential and which is best for more expansive study based on your child's personal interests
Suggestions for how to sensitively approach less academic subjects, such as sex education and physical fitness

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Sharon says

3.5 A basic break down trying to boil down normal curriculum expectations by grade level. There are so many curriculums/scope & sequences out there that I like how this one tries to generalize. Some of them seemed off to me and I can see it stressing someone out if they think they need to meet all of them, but could be useful for getting a general idea.

Christina says

I LOVED this book and plan to add it to my home library! It was exactly what I have been looking for- a detailed list of exactly what concepts should be covered at each grade level as well as specific and creative curriculum suggestions for each subject area. It is organized well, by grade level and subject matter- it not only covers the specifics of language arts and math but all social sciences and even physical health. Again, I was impressed with the extremely thorough coverage at each grade level. I've already bought and checked out some of the suggestions for areas I want to supplement and they are exactly what I needed. I highly recommend this book for any parent no matter if your child is homeschooled, attends public or private school so you can keep tabs on the essentials and make sure they are being covered.

KJ says

I guess this book was okay but kind of a waste of a library rental for me. The title says "preschool through high school" but then the preschool section is just her saying she doesn't believe in preschool curriculum. Even more puzzling, she then goes on to kinda allude to adhering to such a curriculum but still insists it is just so self explanatory that it need not be spelled out. I have no problem with her putting her beliefs into her book, however poorly stated, but at least reflect that in the title. Just call it "kindergarten to high school" and be done with it!

Her recommendations for foreign language instruction for k-12 take up not even a full page in the book and are pretty laughable.

The rest of the elementary section was okay (nice mix of topics for the social studies and language arts sections) but the high school section was miserable. A student who follows her suggestions for grades 9-12 will be very poorly prepared for a university-level education. 12th grade and more advanced subjects like calculus are skipped over completely.

The reliance on computer programs is also a bit troubling at every level. Especially in regards to the quality of the programs suggested.

I suppose if your child can't attend public school for various personal reasons, this curriculum is better than nothing. But your child certainly won't learn more at home or be more challenged than they would in any standard (or even sub-standard) American public school.

Heather says

I borrowed this book from our local library when looking for books about homeschooling. To be honest, I didn't read the entire book, as it's not written in a "read cover-to-cover" format. Rather, this book is set up in a way such that a reader can use the sections that are most helpful without needing to read it all the way through.

This is not a book that demands that its readers subscribe to any particular philosophy of homeschooling; rather, the author readily admits her belief that a child's age shouldn't determine what grade level they are in, but rather what skills they have mastered at any given time. For instance, you may have a child who reads at a third grade level but is struggling with kindergarten math skills. This book offers guidelines for what children should be learning and in what order, but when parents have a child whose learning is a bit uneven, they can use this book as a guide to find materials that will help that child move along at his or her own pace.

I appreciated the ease of accessibility this book offered, as well as the decidedly secular approach. Unlike many other homeschooling books I've read, this one does not use religion as a basis for choosing curriculum, though parents can easily inject their own personal religious lessons based on their beliefs and values.

Danielle Wells says

What I appreciated most about this book was that it analyzed all forms/types of education and what exactly each one meant. In one smallish section there was several pages of the types of schooling (classical education for instance) and the philosophy of each of those types and what atmosphere/size of class each is conducive to. It's a broad, bird's eye view of all the different types.

And then each grade has a chapter devoted to it. Within each chapter the goals for that year is discussed in detail with resources given for curriculum, extra curricular activities, books for parents to read to aid in teaching their children, books and magazines for children to read, computer software, websites for educational ideas and online book lists. It is truly a wealth of information!

This is in my "to read again" booklist here on goodreads. This is a book I wouldn't mind owning!

Heather says

Ok, truthfully, I'm not "finished" with this book, but I got through the two grade level chapters that I wanted to for my homeschoolers. This information (grade-specific standards in education) can probably now be viewed online, but I prefer the traditional book form where I can highlight and go to reference throughout my school year and in the years to come. Obviously the standards serve as benchmarks - and if you've gotten out of the public school system because of its "one-size fits-all" model, this will not apply or interest you at all! - but I would encourage any homeschooling parent to not stress about these standards if you have a slower learner. They should be viewed as goals, not as a rigid checklist. Generally a helpful book. Again, it just depends on your homeschooling style and goals.

Stephanie says

I purchased this book in my second year of homeschooling to be used with the Well-Trained Mind as my guide. I'm now in my fifth year and wish more than ever that I'd never ordered this book. Quite frankly, I feel irritated when I'm reminded that I actually spent money on it.

Early in my second year of homeschooling, I was not confident enough in my own teaching ability to prevent one author's opinion on what my child should be learning from sending me into a tailspin of panic that I was not doing enough. We were. Seven different formal and structured subjects a day including science and Latin. They were excelling, and happily! I began focusing on these checklists in addition to all that we were doing. What was once a fun and energetic school day was now miserable for us all. Now, I realize that self-confidence is clearly my own issue, but three years later, I can look back and see what junk this book was for us. This was far too public schoolesque (where focus *tends* to be more on quantity--not always, I understand, but in our experience) and not enough higher *quality* education for us. We also have a focus on subject mastery and not spiral learning in our house. That seems to be in conflict with the author's ideas of what is appropriate, as indicated by the content of these lists. When we pulled the kids out of the private school they were in (after switching from a public school the previous year), we made the choice to homeschool for the long-haul, with no plans to reintegrate into the school system at a later date. Should that decision have been different (as it is for many families), our schooling style may have been different and suitable for following these lists. But only maybe...

After five years of homeschooling, I've gained a lot of flexibility, adaptability, and sense of priorities. Not to mention the self-confidence that was missing years ago. Typically, I wouldn't rate a book down for my own personal lacking, but since this is such a common feeling among new homeschooling educators and would-be educators (and these kinds of books attract new educators like flies to honey), I worry that these lists upon lists upon lists are derailing others unnecessarily, as they did with me. Jumping into homeschooling can be overwhelming enough on its own, but add these lists that may be taken as gospel and you've got burnout before you've even begun...

Lora says

This has been useful for lesson planning this year, but I do prefer the well-trained mind!

Shelly Kittell says

Well, I bought this to get more information to homeschool our grandson. It is full of good information but more of an outsourcing resource manual. I am only reading preschool and kindergarden right now. It does give me an idea of the basics they need to know. :)

Brittany says

This is a good resource for parents new to homeschooling as it gives a brief overview of what children will learn in each subject area from preschool through high school. The author includes plenty of resources to use to help guide your lessons and your homeschool year as well as books that help teach content. However, this

book was published in 2000. A lot has changed in our education system since then (I.e. Common core) and for that reason a lot of the resources I found were a little out-of-date.

Emily says

This book, as others have said, is not a book that you read cover to cover. It is a reference book with TONS of ideas and information about what kinds of things each grade level should be doing. I will update as my children go through the grades :-)

Preschool: Generally, this age group learns best when allowed to just play! They can learn letters and numbers through everyday activities. Other things that they can do are, string beads, sing songs, dance, and play in the sand, etc. My daughter (age 3) knows the alphabet and numbers up to 29 - she starts saying twenty-ten and thirty-ten after that. We are working on letter sounds and reading some words. We are currently going through "Teach Your Child to Read in 100 Easy Lessons" slowly but surely. I don't think this is too much or too stressful for her. She "reads"/looks at her books almost every day. She loves to paint with watercolors and play in the sandbox. She JUST started going to gymnastics. I ordered some of the books for parents listed in this section of the book and I will hopefully be able to add some new and fun activities for her into our day.

Heather says

This is yet another helpful tool to use as a guideline as to what children should be learning year by year. This, combined with The Well-Trained Mind, and The Core Knowledge Series, has been a great outline as I've planned our homeschooling curricula for Tori. Only three stars because I checked out some of the books she recommended and didn't really care for them, but there were some other really helpful recommendations as well. Just have to wade through it all and tailor a program that works for your child.

Sarah says

I come back to this book year after year to review scope and sequence of what's expected of my kids each year and use that as the springboard for my planning the new school year.

Samantha says

Good resource for homeschooling. Gives a good overview of each grade-what should be taught. This book is one that would be good to look at each grade before you teach it. Gives you some ideas for curricula and a nice book list.

Pumpkinbear says

Especially since my kids don't go to a traditional school, and especially since we'll probably transition to

homeschooling in the next academic year, and ALSO because I'm a big nerd, I loooooove those lists of required skills, broken down by grade. I don't often act on them yet, but I find it useful to know what, for instance, our community school corporation thinks that kindergartners should know by the end of the year, to see what's meant to be average, and my kids actually adore all the books I've checked out for them from their grade-level reading lists.

This book really isn't so much how to design a curriculum, although it does offer web sites and reading lists, etc., so you could make a curriculum, but it's much more that kind of series of lists of what the average kid at any particular grade should know in a variety of subjects. I'm happy that it includes many more categories and is much more detailed than a public school curriculum list, with lists of goals for art, foreign language, geometry, etc., even for young children.

If we do homeschool, and I do want to break down my kids' own unschooling business into their educational categories, lists like this would be madly useful, as well, for its modeling and suggestions. Would I have figured out on my own to categorize a kid's interest in weather or the seasons as earth science in a curriculum list? Ummmm...
