



Homeschool Goal Setting

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“Do New Year’s Resolutions Work?” That’s what one of the latest news headlines asks. An article I just read said that 80% of New Year’s Resolutions are abandoned by February. Another article proclaims January 17th as quitter’s day! Yikes!

What does that mean for homeschoolers and educators who work in a field that requires regular goal setting?

It boils down to the difference in semantics. What’s the difference between resolutions and goal setting? A resolution is a firm decision to do or not to do something, whereas a goal provides a **direction to follow** to achieve a desired outcome.

We need a clear destination in order to work effectively. And, we need a plan of action!

We have to think through the educational goals we set for our kids or students... and perhaps even more importantly, to make sure we are offering exciting reasons for students to work hard and stay focused.

Educational goal setting is important. It’s our job to make sure things happen, right? We can reach our educational goals through

- **Amazing Experiences** – Everything - from field trips and world travel to engaging experiments and memorable crafts & projects - will draw our students in!
- **Great Literature** – Good books, draw us into a new world, expose us to new ideas, create good discussion points, and help us experience new frontiers
- **Quality Practice** – Whether it’s building math skills, learning and absorbing new science techniques or learning a new language, our students need regular, interesting ways to engage with the material. Practice worksheets have their place, but how can you go even farther? Student led projects, research & presentations, field trips, documentaries, creating a family play? Be sure to visit [this](#) post for even more [homeschool teaching strategies](#)!!
- **Building Skills** – Think through the skills your kids need to work on things such as
 - writing
 - building algebra skills which they can use in other fields (such as chemistry)
 - building strength and endurance – We often think of this as we talk about sports, but students need strength and endurance for sticking with problem solving, writing, reading, studying and absorbing new material as well. There’s an entire book by Cal Newport called *Deep Work: Rules for Focused Success in a Distracted World*, if you want to explore this topic further! It’s an awesome book!

I’m sure you’ve already heard this description of goal setting: make sure your goals are measurable and specific.

It's time for us to be specific! As you think through this semester, what do you have planned?

What read-aloud books have you chosen?

What history unit/s will you be covering?

Do you have specific writing goals for the kids this semester (regular/daily writing practice essay writing? Tackling a research paper? Doing a poetry unit? Tackling certain grammar or spelling rules?)

What vocabulary/conversation units will the kids cover in their foreign language? What grammar points will they cover?

How can you make this semester more fun and engaging? Visit [this](#) post for more [hands-on activity ideas](#)!

Does your science unit have hands-on activities and experiments to do with the kids? Spend some time browsing through Pinterest and/or Google images to brainstorm some ideas.

What makes us successful goal setters is that we are crystal clear about what needs to be done!

We **hunt down a curriculum or unit study** that works for us.

We grab **specific books** from the library.

We **write down our plans**.

We **find time** for each subject (or crafts, games, reading time, math and so forth!)

We are **prepared**. We have the books, printables and materials on hand. Make sure we have games ready and on hand! (For example, we did lots of spelling games to make spelling time fun! Check out the Long A games & activities or the er Sound Games)

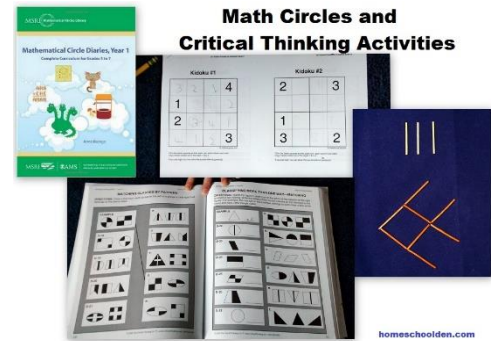
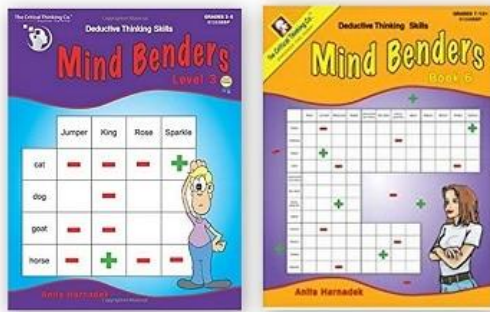
We have a **time frame**. Not only do we have a daily time, but we have a start and stop date. Even if you school year-round, you probably plan things out in 4-, 6-, 8- or 12-week chunks, right?!

Your educational goals can stretch your kids, but don't feel discouraged if (or more likely **when**) you fall short. We may plan to read 4 wonderful novels with the kids, but then find the we only finish 2 or 3. If we "fall short" on certain goals, **THAT'S OKAY!** Amazing learning has happened along the way and truly **THAT** is our end goal!!

At the beginning of the semester, we often try to bring in something a bit different before tackling our big units. You might want to start with some fun activities. Here are some things we've started with over the years (the links are for blog posts on the topic!):

- [Math circles or critical thinking challenges](#) (See [this post](#) for ideas) Things like analogies, math challenges, brain teasers and things like that.

- The Critical Thinking has a wonderful selection [Mind Benders](#) (deductive thinking puzzles) for [younger](#) and [older](#) students.



- [World Facts](#) – Do your kids know the biggest countries, the tallest mountains in the world or the cities with the largest populations? What about the deserts of the world or the basic geographical terms? We've sometimes paused from our history studies to go over some of these basic facts!
- Similarly, we've spent some time studying basic [civics and government topics](#) with the kids... How long does a Senator serve in office? What is supreme/highest law of our country? Why are there federal, state and local taxes?
- And on a fun note, we've started with a series of fun engineering challenges like these [STEM projects - 7 fun engineering challenges for kids](#) or a really hands-on science unit like [Electricity and Circuits](#).



One last thing about goals. They keep us motivated. They keep us on track. But we are NOT slaves to our goals! It is actually the journey that counts!! The greatest goal is engaging with the material while discovering **new capabilities and insights along the way!**

You will need to reevaluate and readjust your goals regularly. Why? This helps reactivate your enthusiasm and creativity. This is not a slow slog through a swamp. This is a bright, exciting trip to new places!

Grab the freebies:

- [Free Homeschool Planner](#) - I tend to change up my homeschool planning pages regularly as our needs change, so this packet of materials has steadily grown in size! There might be something you can use there! 😊
- [Free Homeschool Planning Pages](#) - These are some free Homeschool Planning Pages that I use as I try to figure out our **long-range homeschooling goals**. This post shares share the process I go through... and also will share the planning pages that I've been using the past few years. I like having colorful planning pages to work on.
- [Free Printable 2020-2021 School Year Calendar](#)

Good luck on your family's educational journey this semester!

Happy Homeschooling!

Liesl

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What do you have planned?

Reading/Literature	History	Science

Math	Language	Arts/Music/Computers

What books will we read?

What are our writing goals this semester?

How will we make this semester more fun and engaging?

Hands-on activities and experiments to do with the kids:

Engineering Challenges the kids might enjoy:

These are just some of the packets we have available!

World Facts Packet
70+ page unit

World Facts Packet
homeschoolden.com

Do your kids know these basic facts...

- 4 largest countries
- countries with the most people
- the world's largest cities
- the deserts of the world
- terms like archipelago, atoll, mesa, butte ...
- plus world landmarks and more!

homeschoolden.com

Middle Ages
Feudalism Activities
Middle Ages Event Cards
Notebook Pages and more!
50+ pages

Middle Ages Packet
Feudalism Activities & Activities
Middle Ages Chronology Cards
Middle Ages Notebook Pages
and more!

homeschoolden.com

European History Packet
1500-1750
Renaissance
Reformation
English Reformation
Henry VIII and his Wives
Age of Absolutism
Scientific Revolution
Enlightenment

90+ Page Renaissance/Reformation Packet
homeschoolden.com

13 Colonies
The Thirteen American Colonies
Notebook Pages, Chronology Cards, Maps and More!

Roanoke
Jamestown
Plymouth
Massachusetts Bay
and others!

70-page unit
homeschoolden.com

American Revolution
Worksheets, Booklet
Chronology Cards and More!
60+ page unit

Causes and Events Leading to the AMERICAN REVOLUTION
60+ Page Packet

Learn about the Causes of the American Revolution and more!
homeschoolden.com

Slavery & the Civil War Unit
75+ page Packet

Slavery in America
Territorial Growth
Civil War

75-page unit
homeschoolden.com

Civics and Government Packet
45 page packet at homeschoolden.com

Civics and Government Unit
homeschoolden.com

Modern Art Unit
homeschoolden.com

Renoir, Monet, Degas, Van Gogh, Seurat, Munch, Picasso, Chagall, Dali, Warhol and others.

25+ Page Packet

World War I Unit
100+ Pages

Causes of WWI
Weapons & Strategies of WWI
Russian Revolution
US Entry into WWI
14 Points, Treaty of Versailles

World War I Unit
100+ Page Unit

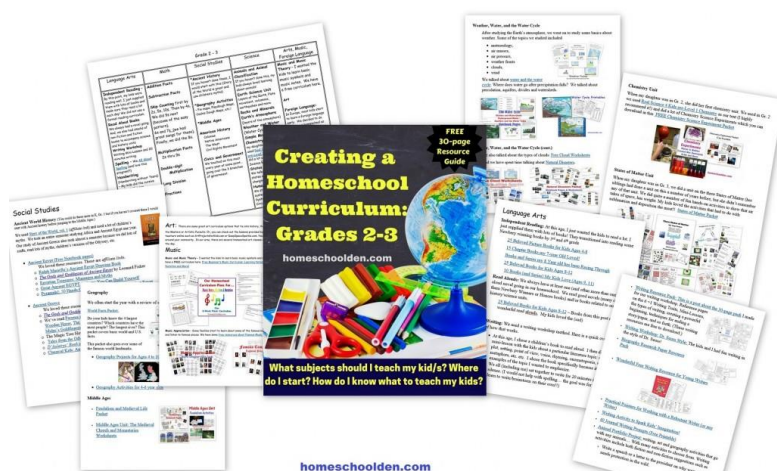
homeschoolden.com

Creating Your Own Homeschool Curriculum: These are some resources I made that might be helpful as you create your own homeschool plans. These are somewhere between 30 and 50 pages and are **FREE** to download :

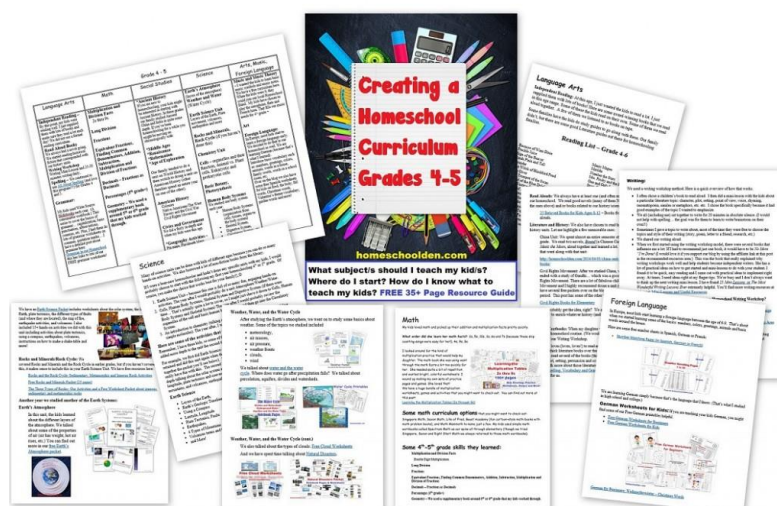
- [Creating a Homeschool Curriculum: Kindergarten – Grade 1 \(Free!\)](#)



- [Creating Your Homeschool Curriculum: Grades 2-3, Resource Guide \(Free\)](#)



- [Creating Your Homeschool Curriculum Grade 4-5 — Free Resource Guide](#)



- [Creating a Homeschool Curriculum for Grades 6-8 – Free Resource Guide](#)

[illegible]

- [Free Resource Guide for Homeschooling High School – Grades 9-12](#)

**FREE 25-page
Resource Guide**

**Creating Your High School
Homeschool Curriculum**

Free 25-page
Resources Guide

**Homeschooling
thru High School**

Grades 9-12

What subjects should I teach?
Where do I start?

homeschoolden.com

High School Course Work
and
Topics of Study

homeschoolden.com