

Inspiring a Love of Learning Through Unit Studies

By: Diane Geerlinks, PCET
dianegeerlinks@primus.ca

"Education extends to all of life...The truly educated person has only had many doors of interest opened. He knows that life will not be long enough to follow everything through fully."

Susan Schaeffer Macaulay

The sole end of education is simply this: to teach men how to learn for themselves and whatever instruction fails to do this is effort spent in vain."

Dorothy Sayers

1. WHAT is a UNIT STUDY?

A Unit Study is the extensive study of one topic, with the integration of many subjects, using a variety of resources.

- Compared to other methods/approaches
- Connects information, combines subjects vs. fragmentation
- Parent directed &/or student directed units

2. WHY? DOES IT WORK?

"Some educators question whether textbooks, even at their best could ever do the job. The very nature of textbooks is to present information that is predigested, pre-thought, pre-analyzed...a steady diet of such books deprives children the joy of original thought. It turns them off to learning."

Ruth Beechick

- Experiential Learning
- Multi-Level Learning
- Teaching Research Skills
- How Children Learn Best

3. HOW DO I MAKE IT HAPPEN IN OUR HOME?

"I think we owe it to our children to let them dig their knowledge, of whatever subject, for themselves out of the fit book; and this for two reasons: what a child digs for is how own possession; What is poured into his ear...floats our as lightly as it came in, and is rarely assimilated."
Charlotte Mason

"A good deal of your school time should be spent reading and learning together. In order to accomplish this, you must eliminate the unnecessary busy work. It is hard to do this because we equate learning with filling in workbook pages and answering questions at the end of the textbook chapters."
Valerie Bendt

- Pick a TOPIC and START!
- Choose books (read alouds and non-fiction)
- Choose 'hands-on' activities
- Choose writing activities
- Find a Field Trip Opportunity
- Consider Co-oping
- Keep a Balance
- The 3R's – Kid Juggling

4. RESULTS? IS IT WORTH IT? WHAT WILL IT COST?

"Am I filling their minds with tedious, nebulous facts, or am I feeding their minds with the good, the wonderful, the excellent?"

- Love of Learning
- Family Learning Together
- High Retention
- The Cost: time, energy, commitment
- YOU will learn SO much WITH your children
- YOU CAN DO IT!