

White Paper 100

How to Assess Your Child and Create a Personalized Curriculum that Exceeds State Standards

A White Paper on Homeschooling for
African-American Families

by

African-American Unschooling

The Internet's #1 Site for Africentric Homeschooling Resources
www.AfAmUnschool.com

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Do you sometimes wonder if homeschooling would work for your family?

Would you like to know more about how to homeschool?

Have you decided to homeschool, but need more information to convince your family?

Do you want to homeschool but just don't know where to start?

Here's the problem...

It's always been in the back of your mind... "one day it would be nice to homeschool." Well, "one day" never happened, but life just did. The timing wasn't perfect, but you had to take your child out of school. Now what? Your spouse wants to know the game plan, the in-laws keep hoping you will change your mind and your child keeps asking, "so when do we start to homeschool." All you can think is, "I need a curriculum and I need it now!"

There are so many curriculums, how do you choose?

Textbook and curriculum publishing is a billion dollar industry and many of the popular publishers also produce materials specific to homeschoolers. Add to that the number of publishers who produce grade level pre-packaged curricula exclusively for the homeschooling market, and the choices can seem overwhelming and expensive.

With African-American Unschooling, it just got easier.

Don't worry, you don't need a Masters in Education and three months to sift through the choices, nor do you need a \$2,000 pre-packaged curriculum to give your child a high quality education.

[How to Assess Your Child and Create a Personalized Curriculum That Exceeds State Standards](#) gives you what you need to know to get your family's homeschool on the fast track!

Read On...

How to Assess Your Child and Create a personalized Curriculum That Exceeds State Standards

Curriculum — All of the courses of study offered by an educational institution.

The American Heritage Dictionary,
2nd College Edition.

Before you create your curriculum or course of study, you will want to assess your child's non-academic interests, favorite academic subjects, hobbies and learning styles. There are many tools available to assess your child, but the best way is through listening and observation. As a parent you are uniquely qualified to assess your child's strengths and weaknesses, after all, you have watched him child grow and learn all of his life. Who better to assess his abilities or to have a vested interest in his success?

Online at African-American Unschooling, the Internet's #1 site for Africentric Homeschooling, there are several helpful resources for new homeschoolers on the [General Homeschooling](#) page. You may purchase the resources from the web site or look for them at your local library.

Many parents find it helpful to begin with the following books:



In Their Own Way: Discovering and Encouraging Your Child's Multiple Intelligences

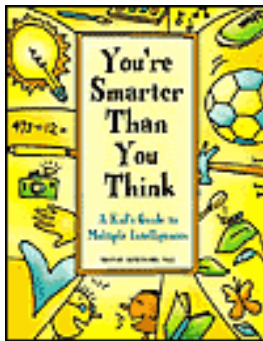
By Thomas Armstrong

ISBN: 1585420514

Does your child have a favorite subject, activity, or hobby? Children learn in multiple ways, and educator Thomas Armstrong has shown hundreds of thousands of parents and teaches how to locate those unique areas in each of our children where learning and creativity seem to flow with special vigor.

Our society generally focuses on only two of eight types of intelligence when deciding who's smart in the culture.

—Thomas Armstrong,
In Their Own Way



In this fully updated classic on multiple intelligences, Armstrong sheds new light on the “eight ways to bloom,” or the eight kinds of “multiple intelligences.” While everyone possesses all eight intelligences, Armstrong delineates how to discover your child’s particular areas of strength among them.

The book shatters the conventional wisdom that brands our students as “underachievers,” “unmotivated,” or as suffering from “learning disabilities,” “attention deficit hyperactivity disorder,” or other “learning diseases.” Armstrong explains how these flawed labels often overlook students who are in possession of a distinctive combination of multiple intelligences, and demonstrates how to help them acquire knowledge and skills according to their sometimes extraordinary aptitudes.

Filled with resources for the home and classroom, this new edition of *In Their Own Way* offers inspiration for every learning situation.

You’re Smarter Than You Think: A Kid’s Guide to Multiple Intelligences

By Thomas Armstrong & Jennifer Brannen
ISBN: 1575421135

Howard Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences has revolutionized the way we think about being smart. Written by an award-winning author and leading expert on multiple intelligences, this book helps kids make the most of their own learning strengths. In clear, kid-friendly language, Thomas Armstrong introduces Gardner’s theory, explains the eight intelligences, and describes 22 ways to develop each one. Kids learn how to use the intelligences in school, strengthen them at home, and draw on them to plan for the future.

While assessing your child’s strengths and learning styles, make sure you assess your own. How you learn affects how you teach and it will be helpful to know what areas you and your child are alike and where you differ. Don’t be discouraged if there are many differences. The Armstrong books will show you how to teach, and your child how to learn, using all of the intelligences.

No doubt your child has a wide variety of interests, and with a bit of creativity and suggestions from the Thomas Armstrong books, you will be able to create a personalized course of study which will exceed your state's academic standards and have the added bonus of nurturing your child's God-given talents.

Through trial and error, many homeschoolers have found that their children prefer learning from "real books" as opposed to grade-level textbooks and are able to create a personalized course of study with resources from their local library and interlibrary loan.

Homeschool Curricula & Resources

Textbook and curriculum publishing is a billion dollar industry and many of the popular publishers also produce materials specific to homeschoolers. Add to that the number of publishers who produce grade level pre-packaged curricula exclusively for homeschoolers and the choices can seem overwhelming and expensive. But don't worry, you don't need a \$2,000 pre-packaged curriculum to give your child a high quality education.

Don't make expensive mistakes by overbuying or purchasing materials too soon. Experienced homeschoolers will tell you it is better to wait until you have assessed your child's needs, learning styles and interests. Through trial and error, many homeschoolers have found that their children prefer learning from "real books" as opposed to grade-level textbooks and are able to create a personalized course of study with resources from their local library and interlibrary loan. No matter what your family income, you can give your child a high-quality education within a modest budget.

Here's a brief list of resource catalogs that many homeschoolers find useful:

Unschooling starts with the learner, who has definite interests, learning styles, skills and multiple intelligences, which becomes “the system.” Therefore, it fits every time. No child is a square peg, and everything they value is a round hole and an opportunity for real learning.

[What is Unschooling?](#)
By S. Courtney Walton

FUN Books—To produce life-long learners, we need to show our children that learning is not just something that they get graded on or that only happens during certain hours of the day or certain times of the year. We need to help them hang on to the natural joy of learning that every child is born with, to help them see that learning new things is fun, and to help them realize that learning can take place anywhere and at any time. Our family has put together this catalog of books, games and other materials to help you in your efforts to produce life-long learners. Good luck and remember to have FUN! (888) FUN-7020 or www.fun-books.com

Homescience Tools — Bring the world of science to life for your family or homeschool with our science supplies, articles, and experiment ideas! Find curriculum, home science kits, microscopes, and everything else you need to make science exciting. 1-800-860-6272 or www.homesciencetools.com

Free Spirit — Award-winning publisher of books and other learning materials for children and teens, parents, educators, counselors, and everyone else who cares about kids. 1-866-703-7322 or www.freespirit.com

Chinaberry — Recognizing that conscious parenting is the most important and challenging responsibility that many of us will have, Chinaberry offers items to support families in raising their children with love, honesty and joy to be reverent, loving caretakers of each other and of the earth. 1-800-776-2242 or www.chinaberry.com

No matter what your family income, you can give your child a high-quality education within a modest budget.

Lakeshore Learning Materials — From language and literacy to science and mathematics, we're proud to bring you the very best in school supplies, teaching material and classroom tools for early childhood, elementary, high school and adult education. 1-800-428-4414 or www.lakeshorelearning.com

Magic Cabin — Handmade, all natural dolls, toys and crafts. Our mission is to provide quality natural-fiber dolls that represent all the colors of humanity; toys with simple designs to encourage creative, imaginative play; craft kits for all ages and abilities; and friendly, reliable service. 1-888-623-6557 or www.magiccabin.com

NASCO — Twenty-three different catalogs offer over 60,000 unique products to meet the needs of teachers in 15 different educational subject areas. 1-800-558-9595 or www.enasco.com

Timberdoodle — Meeting the needs of Home Educators for more than 18 years. We strive to provide only the best products at an affordable price. Please feel free to contact us with any home education questions. 1-360-426-0672 or www.timberdoodle.com

Critical Thinking Books & Software — Quality critical thinking products for K-Adult Education in Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and General Thinking Skills. 1-800-641-6555 or www.criticalthinking.com

Formal education has become such a complicated, self-conscious, and overregulated activity that learning is widely regarded as something difficult that the brain would rather not do.

Teachers are often inclined to think that learning is an occasional event, requiring special incentives and rewards, not choice...

Reluctance to learn cannot be attributed to the brain. Learning is the brain's primary function, its constant concern, and we become restless and frustrated if there is no learning to be done.

We are all capable of huge an unsuspected learning accomplishments without effort.

—Frank Smith,
Insult to Intelligence:
The Bureaucratic
Invasion of Our
Classrooms

As you review homeschool curricula and equipment, remember to:

- Start small. Don't rush to purchase a year's worth of materials all at once or from only one source. Nine times out of ten, you will regret it.
- Know what your child needs. Ask yourself, "Will my child enjoy learning math with product 'X'? Does product 'X' address my child's learning styles and special concerns about math? Is product 'X' the best way for my child to learn and apply new math skills?" Don't make the mistake of purchasing according to your interests without considering the uniqueness of your child and how she will really use it.
- Ask other homeschoolers what they use and why. How does the product match their child's learning style? What does their child like best about the product and does it encourage independent study?
- Research materials before you buy. What is the return policy? Can you purchase the product from a number of sources?
- Consider trading or purchasing used materials. Search EBay and the online Amazon and Barnes & Noble sites for lower cost, gently used books and equipment. Contact your local homeschool co-op about used book and curriculum fairs, and check your local Freecycle or Craigslist for gently used items.

Look for the following White Papers Coming Soon!

Africentric Education -- We all hear this word, but what does it really mean? What if you want your child to be equipped to compete in the real world? Will an Africentric Education limit his opportunities? This White Paper answers these questions and more!

Single Parent Homeschooling -- Read this White Paper to find out how single parents are homeschooling with success! What if you work a tight schedule and keep an even tighter budget? Learn how you can manage it all and get everything done.

How to Introduce Homeschooling to Your Child, Spouse, Parents and Friends and Gain Their Full Cooperation (even you in-laws will want to help!) -- Your in-laws are public school teachers and very active in the community. You want to homeschool, but how do you tell them their grandson won't be going to kindergarten with the rest of his cousins? This White Paper shares key points for friends and family with both cultural and educational concerns about homeschooling.

Free & Discount Homeschool Curricula & Resources -- Want or need to homeschool on a budget? This White Paper is perfect for frugal families!

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