

# Home Education Program for Miss Seven

## Submission To HEU Queensland

Miss Seven is seven and a half years old. She attended school for years prep, one and two before one term of year three at home doing distance education. We began our home education using distance education because I wasn't sure I knew enough to teach what she needs to know. After one term I realise I know all I need to show my children the world of learning and help them realise how amazing it can be using their own learning style.

We initially wanted to home educate because we missed the children when they were away from us. We were together with them for around four hours a day and it did not seem enough for us if we were to teach all that we wanted them to know about the world. As Miss Seven's parents, we are responsible for her education so we decided to bring her home with us full time and teach her in a way that she would love to learn. Miss Seven is an active girl and loves to be with her siblings, Miss Six and Master Four. We want them to continue to play and learn together so this year we are going to learn through unit studies and language arts but through a natural learning approach. We are blessed to have Miss Seven's grandparents live with us along with international home stay students from UQ to enrich the children's lives.

### **Educational and Personal Goals:**

#### **Short Term (this year)**

This year Miss Seven will be developing her literacy and numeracy understanding. She will also continue to learn how to choose her own units of study to increase and maintain her level of interest and motivation. In this way we will cover all subject areas over the year and endeavour to keep a thematic approach to Miss Sevens's studies. Miss Seven will also be working on her interpersonal skills while spending time with her siblings, grandparents, international homestay students as well as friends and visiting family members.

#### **Long Term (future years)**

We want to provide Miss Seven (and her siblings) with an environment of love and learning so she can love learning. We also want a very play based environment where Miss Seven can play and learn with her siblings at the same time. We will also provide her with the necessary skills to take advantage of all the learning opportunities that occur in the future.

### **Overview Learning Needs and Styles, and the Teaching Strategies I intend to use:**

Miss Seven is quite a social child and learns well while she is with other people most of the time. However, one on one time with her is very important and she seems to grasp concepts quite fast (especially in maths and literacy) when she is the only student. Our time table will reflect that need for this time together and other subjects she will be learning alongside her siblings.

We are going to mainly use unit studies to cover the necessary subject areas with a

strong play and natural learning based curriculum. Miss Seven has shown that when she learns a new skill or concept, she cements this new knowledge by teaching someone else. She has taught her siblings (and mother!) quite a few things and we will continue to encourage this way of learning for Miss Seven.

### **Our Home Learning Environment:**

Miss Seven has her own computer and a shared table in the study. She has access to private study areas in the house though we do many of our lessons at the kitchen table. The house is a well-lit and ventilated QLDer. Miss Seven and her siblings have a backyard with a large cubbyhouse. The long cement driveway is used for lots of activities.

We have daily routines and Miss Seven has her share of chores including caring for chickens. Miss Seven helps prepare meals with her siblings and they help with the weekly grocery shopping and the second daily fruit shopping. Miss Seven's grandparents live with us and she spends time with them in the garden learning about horticulture. They also have their own antique business and Miss Seven likes to learn about antiques and history relating to each piece.

Miss Seven also enjoys learning on the computer and she has accounts with Reading Eggs, MathsOnline and StudyLadder. We incorporate the online learning with traditional studies and Miss Seven is learning research techniques using Google and YouTube under strict supervision. Miss Seven's father is a computer systems engineer and his hobby is building unique computers and installing and using new technologies such as a live webcam in the chicken coop. Miss Seven can log into that camera and watch her chickens whenever she wants.

### **Social Opportunities:**

This year we have joined a home school group that has weekly sport activities and language classes. Miss Seven has also enjoyed Little Athletics with her sister this season and will continue when the next season starts in a few months. We regularly see our neighbours whose children are close to Miss Seven's age, as well as friends from school last year and other local children.

As a family we try to have one excursion a week that relates to our study topic. We live quite close to the state museum and art galleries at Southbank and visit regularly.

## **ENGLISH**

This year Miss Seven will concentrate on developing her writing, grammar understanding and spelling. She will also be improving her creative writing. The main goal will be to increase Miss Seven's enjoyment of literature and her exposure to quality writing in order to develop her love of reading.

Using unit studies, fiction and non-fiction works, Miss Seven will have opportunities to learn grammar, reading, spelling, vocabulary, writing mechanics, reading and listening comprehension, oral reading and narration as well as creative expression. The topic of our unit studies will be guided by Miss Seven and her siblings' interest areas. Miss Seven will also use technology to learn about different ways of communicating. We will use biographies, poetry, fiction and non-

fiction literature. She will learn most skills informally via these resources and have opportunities to use them in her own writing.

We also integrate other subject areas such as history, geography, technology and languages in our units so Miss Seven can learn in a more thematic way.

Miss Seven will learn from:

- reading out loud to her siblings
- listening to her parents and grandparents read out loud to her
- oral narration of heard stories or original stories
- hand writing from dictation and written material
- creative writing inspired by literature

**Resources:**

Quality literature from Australian and international authors.

The local libraries and QLD State Library.

Original and purchased unit studies.

[www.readingeggs.com.au](http://www.readingeggs.com.au)

[www.studyladder.com.au](http://www.studyladder.com.au)

**Possible assessment:**

Daily writing, reading (voice and/or video recording), reading log, comparing and evaluating film and books, video recording of play performances, book reviews (written and recorded). All work samples will be dated.

## **THE ARTS**

Miss Seven is a very creative child and we use her creativity in every subject area.

Some unit studies will have some art components and some will have one or more of the arts as a focus. For example Miss Seven uses dance as a form of expression when we are studying music appreciation. We also use drama when role playing and narrating a story. Visual arts is used often on its own as well as incorporated in unit studies. I am a visual artist myself, so our home has always had a focus on creativity. Assessment of the arts will be incorporated in other subject areas during our unit studies though work samples will be taken throughout the year and all dated.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Miss Seven will improve her confidence in maths through repetition and concrete applications. Miss Seven is still working through the fundamentals of maths and the goal will be for her to enjoy maths in order to increase her knowledge and understanding.

We will be using Easy-learn workbooks and program as our main maths curriculum. Miss Seven will also be learning maths through real life situations such as calculating costs of groceries while shopping for the family and planning excursions using a budget. She will also use online maths

programs and workbooks. Some unit studies will have some maths components and some will have maths as a focus.

Using unit studies Miss Seven's maths understanding will increase and she will have ample opportunities for practice every day. She will use either online resources under supervision as well as workbooks.

**Resources:**

Easy-learn workbooks

[www.mathletics.com.au](http://www.mathletics.com.au)

[www.mathsonline.com.au](http://www.mathsonline.com.au)

[www.mathsisfun.com.au](http://www.mathsisfun.com.au)

[www.studyladder.com.au](http://www.studyladder.com.au)

**Possible assessment:**

Monitoring progress via MathsOnline, graphs for expenditure projects, photos of concrete math learning (eg. Blocks), Mental Maths workbook. All work samples will be dated.

## SCIENCE

Miss Seven's main goal this year in science will be to increase her understanding of the different sciences. Her main interest so far is biology and chemistry and we will use this to guide her unit studies. I would like her to ask more questions and seek to find the answers on her own or together as a family. As Christians we will always use the Bible to make sure any scientific theory is measured against Biblical truth.

Field trips to the Science Centre, Lone Pine Sanctuary, the QLD Museum as well as possibly the Planetarium depending on the topic of studies chosen. Some unit studies will have some science components and some will have science as a focus. Miss Seven will also continue to care for our pet chickens and the meal worm farm to feed the chickens.

Miss Seven will be learning the sciences via real life situations and through unit studies. Our home school group also has classes for science throughout the year that we will be joining.

**Resources:**

The Bible

Care of pets

The local libraries and QLD State Library.

Original and purchased unit studies.

Living books – eg. Astronomy and the Bible, Donald B. DeYoung. Heidi, Joanna Spyri. Shakespeare's Flowers, Jessica Kerr.

Selected *Catalyst*, *The Experimentals* and *Backyard Science*, *Mythbusters* episodes

Insect catchers, old fish tanks for habitats, binoculars, thermometers, a microscope, measuring devices, various anatomy models, magnifying glasses, pulleys, bulbs and wires, field guides and more.

**Possible assessment:**

To be able to form hypotheses and know the difference between a fact (something that can be proven by repeated observation or testing) and a theory (not yet or unable to be proven) and communicate what she has learned.

## **HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY**

Miss Seven will continue her studies in family, local, Australian and world history using quality literature as well as the Bible throughout our unit studies. She will also add to her knowledge of where she is in the family and the world.

- Literature based unit studies
- History will be incorporated in other subjects such as languages - eg. Study of Spanish history and evolution of Auslan.

**Assessment:**

- Expressing knowledge of historical and geographical contexts, written and oral reports
- All work will be dated

## **HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION (HPE)**

Miss Seven is a very physical girl and enjoys Little Athletics and running. She takes an active part in our family on health and nutrition discussions and choices of food. With regular Bible study, lots of family discussions and lots of reading, we are also working on her character development as she moves toward adolescence.

- safety skills are taught informally through discussion and modelling eg. we discuss what went wrong if we see an accident or what could go wrong, we discuss things like why do we have to stand back from the edge of escalators, what could happen etc; the news is a great source of discussions
- sun safety is taught by requiring that the children always wear a hat, sunscreen and sensible clothing.
- online safety is frequently discussed; we have rules about usage; we watch relevant videos;
- fire safety – we practise home evacuation procedures; involve the children in checking smoke alarms, discuss the types of fires and how each needs to be dealt with and role play.
- nutrition - we involve the children in grocery shopping, discussion wise choices, demonstrating how to use food labels, watching related programming, discussing people with life threatening allergies and our responsibility to them, we involve the children in cooking nutritious meals, encouraging them to try new fruits and vegetables and teaching them how to prepare them, we are also growing a veggie and herb garden with Nana and Papa in the back yard
- first aid - we watch first aid videos, practise bandaging, simple relevant first aid, role play ringing 000

- health – I take the children with me to the doctors and involve them in my appointments (blood tests, x-rays etc), read books about why you have a cold, germs, disabilities etc, learn about the human body and each part's role
- dental health – Miss Seven has regular appointments and we utilise online resources to learn about decay, look at photos of poorly cared for teeth
- character development - physical changes, growing into womanhood/ going through puberty, lots of discussions
- volunteering – Miss Seven helps out with her grandparents regularly and we are looking at ways to help out in the community.

Unit studies on the Human Body and other topics related to character development and physical education. Regular Bible study and regular formal and informal physical activity.

### **TECHNOLOGY AND DESIGN**

- communicate ideas thru 2D and 3D representations
- select appropriate resources, techniques and tools to create designs
- follow others' design instructions to create products
- evaluate products and processes in an effort to improve upon them
- work technologically, individually and collaboratively to develop creative response to design situations
- use a range of technologies with increasing skill and confidence
- used varied and increasingly mature formats and techniques for presenting data
- use Windows and Linx based software packages with increasing skill
- continue to learn to type

Technology and design will be integrated in all unit studies

### **LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH**

This year we are continuing Miss Seven's studies in Spanish and looking into introducing Auslan sign language as well.

- Regular short classes in each language
- Incorporating other subject areas – eg. history, geography, technology and design, HPE and English
- Rosetta Stone online application for Spanish
- Homeschool group Spanish classes
- <http://www.auslan.org.au/> for Auslan

This document has shown evidence of a high-quality education that –

- A) is responsive to the changing needs of Miss Seven through constant monitoring of her progress and adaptation of the curriculum to meet the goals set out above.
- B) has taken into account her previous learning at school and level of ability as well as her interests when choosing resources.

- C) is conducted in our home (well-lit and ventilated spaces) and other environments with constant supervision.
- D) Is responsive to her sensitive and social nature by allowing many opportunities for play with her siblings, neighbours and friends while making new friends in sporting and homeschooling groups.
- E) reflects my understanding of Miss Seven's educational development by allowing her maximum freedom to choose learning topics while ensuring she is meeting necessary skill development for her ability and aptitude.
- F) shows how we as a family promote an environment of constant learning by living in our community and showing Miss Seven the processes to learn all she wants to know.
- G) provides sufficient and suitable resources in the form of physical learning environments (including field trips), resources including consumables and online applications.
- H) shows the use of strategies needed to monitor Miss Seven's educational process through dating of all written work and regular recording of oral narration and other notable developmental milestones.

**Permission for Homeschooling Downunder to use this submission was kindly given by Alexis (Miss Seven's mother).**