



# PROGRAM PLAN GUIDELINES

## for a Roots parent-directed home education student



Your Program Plan (PP) provides a concise overview of your plans for your child's education, as well as a way to meet the requirements of the Home Education Regulations. This document will help you understand the expectations and the terminology. Your facilitator is also available to assist you, so don't hesitate to contact him/her.

**First – don't miss this important first step.** Do you have Adobe Reader on your computer? If not, go to <https://get.adobe.com/reader> to download your free software. Download the PP form [http://www.roots-homeschooling.com/index.php/resources/forms\\_for\\_registration](http://www.roots-homeschooling.com/index.php/resources/forms_for_registration) and immediately **save the blank form** on your computer. Check to make sure you can type into your form and save it.

After your blank PP is saved to your computer, complete the fillable boxes, utilizing the drop-down boxes. Save your document using your child's name and the current school year. Next, complete a PP for another child. Once you have completed and saved your PP(s), save a copy for yourself and email it to your facilitator. She/he will be happy assist you at any point through this process.

All PPs must be approved by your facilitator by **September 30**. This can be a time-consuming task and technology can present challenges, so please strive diligently to e-mail your plan to your facilitator by September 20, giving him/her time to review it and get back to you. Submitting your form in a timely manner respects your facilitators time and allows them to support you well.

**Before completing your PP, stop to seek God's direction for the big picture on your goals for your children. Where do you and your spouse perceive God leading for each child this year?**

*Things to consider:*

- character traits your family plans on prioritizing this school year
- life skills you're working to develop i.e., independently cooking supper once a week, keeping a prayer journal, cleaning their room, doing their own laundry, growing seedlings, job skills, etc. These skills can be included as a "SUBJECT OR GOAL" or as an activity and work well for meeting some of the Learning Outcomes.
- service projects your family is planning
- does your family have a philosophy of home education? The better you and your facilitator understands your goals, the easier it is for her to help you meet those goals.
- If your child is gifted or if he/she has special physical or educational needs, please let your facilitator know.

### Filling out a PP, Step by Step

#### Anything parents would like Roots to know:

Whatever you write in this box goes to your facilitator and eventually goes into your child's student record. The student record follows a student through his high school education. You decide how much information, if any, to include in the first box. Information entered here is optional; some students and families have benefited from information submitted here while other families chose to communicate personal details to their facilitator in other ways.

#### Subject or Goal

Since literacy and numeracy are the foundations for enabling further education, parents must include details for these two areas annually (with the exception of some high school students). Feel free to combine multiple workbooks into one subject. For example, Reading could include readers, phonics, reader workbooks, a reading app, etc. For an older student, Language Arts could include reading, writing and spelling. Science and social studies are also highly encouraged, though you may want to combine them into unit studies. You definitely don't need to use all the boxes!

The beauty of home education is the flexibility and freedom parents have to set their own goals for their unique children who are all made in God's image. Therefore, look at your child's interests, gifting and challenges to think outside the school box! How can you disciple each of your children to be more like Jesus?

### Resource Materials (Submit at least one thing.)

Pay attention to this section since items listed here also guide reimbursement eligibility. To enable flexibility, use general terms as appropriate. Some examples of general terms are fieldtrips, art supplies, Apologia resources, novels, readers, science experiments, etc. Parents may add to or remove items from their PPs throughout the school year.

### Instructional Methods (Choose at least one.)

Below is a brief explanation of the various options in the drop-down boxes. Choose at least one instructional method.

- **Delight directed:** studies guided by a child's interest.
- **Workbook approach:** most commonly used by younger children, a child works through a workbook, completing the pages as the parent directs them.
- **Textbook studies:** common among older students, a child reads and studies materials from a textbook.
- **Unit studies:** a collection of studies and activities on a particular topic organized by a parent or purchased as a program. For example, a family may study Mexico, studying the geography, history, culture, religion, language, a local missionary serving Mexico and food of Mexico. This study may also include spelling words, writing assignments and art appreciation.
- **Research-directed studies:** students research an area as part of or as their entire program. Research may include library resources, the internet, or people knowledgeable on a topic.
- **Learning co-op:** two or more families get together for a subject with various parents participating in the instruction.
- **DVD/CD/computer based:** subscriptions, computer software, listening exercises. This resource may be the complete program or a part of a study.
- **Tutored:** one-on-one instruction by someone other than the parents. Examples include piano lessons, high school math support or private instruction in computer programming.
- **Community classes:** group instruction available in your community. This includes group instruction such as swimming lessons, Roots PE classes, classes for homeschoolers or classes at your local gym.
- **Hands-on activities/fieldtrips:** activity-based instruction, examples include using math manipulatives, planting a garden, fieldtrips, trips to the science centre, science experiments.
- **Oral narration:** a child repeats what they have been taught, using their own words and including as much detail as they are able.

### Activities Planned (List at least one.)

This box is completely open to your unique, creative plan for your child. Consider thinking outside the "school" norm. Parents have included activities such as recitation, trips to the TELUS Science Centre, workbooks, research, drama activities, creative play, creative writing, experimentation, dictation, serving seniors, reading to siblings, playing math games and keeping a budget.

### Evaluation Method and Frequency (Choose at least one)

Below is a brief explanation of the drop-down box options:

- **On-going informal assessments:** if a child understands the concept, he moves on, and if he doesn't understand the concept, he will continue to work at mastering it.
- **Curriculum supplied tests:** assessment where a student's curriculum comes with a regular testing system, usually weekly or unit tests.
- **On-going oral discussions:** assessment based on oral contribution to discussions.
- **Projects and/or reports:** culmination project(s) or report(s) completed to show competence. For projects difficult to keep, such as a baking or service project, please take pictures to show the facilitator.
- **Quality/quantity of assignments:** similar to the on-going informal assessment, but more emphasis is placed on independent assignment completions.
- **Regular participation:** assessment based on participation instead of achievement, especially helpful for new or difficult areas where a child is uncomfortable with the process or expectations.
- **Rubrics/lists:** assessment by a predetermined set of expectations.
- **Student self-assessment:** a student periodically reviews his progress to assess his strengths and weaknesses, using that information to review his process and goals.

- **Instructor/coach feedback:** useful for community classes, tutoring, etc.
- **Annual CAT-3/PAT test:** standardized tests. The CAT-3 is available for students in grades 3 – 12 through Roots and the PAT is the Alberta Education assessment for students in grades six and nine.
- **Oral narration:** a child repeats what they have been taught, using their own words and including as much detail as they're able.

### Activities that Demonstrate Progress Towards Achievement of Learning Outcomes

The Alberta Education Home Education Regulations provide Learning Outcomes as goals for home education students. Recognizing that these outcomes are not subject-specific, this section is now placed at the end of the PP. Parents are asked to identify which outcomes their child will demonstrate progress towards in some way this year. A variety of ways are listed in the drop-down boxes. Please note that the default setting signifies that your child will *not* demonstrate progress in that goal; only keep it listed if your child is not progressing in that outcome. The emphasis here is on progress, not mastery. Progress towards a goal is expected according to your child's ability. Note the wide variety of options listed for each outcome, giving you many options.

#### Sample

<b>SUBJECT OR GOAL:</b> Science			
<b>Resource Materials</b>	Resources for hands-on activities, Apologia Science Zoology 1, Calgary Zoo, variety of websites and apps		
<b>Instructional Method</b>	hands on activities/field trips	textbook studies	delight directed
<b>Activities Planned</b>	Reading and talking about the textbook lessons, hands-on experiences, learning new vocabulary, fieldtrips, sharing what is learned with a younger sibling		
<b>Evaluation Method &amp; Frequency</b>	ongoing informal assessments	ongoing oral discussions	

#### What is a common mistake new homeschoolers make when they write their plans?

- New parents frequently plan to do more than their child can manage. Remember, you have twelve years to complete your formal homeschooling program, please allow your child to be a child.
- It's not unusual for parents to plan an excessive amount of workbook activity for their young son. Most young boys require considerable activity built into their studies.
- Plans frequently change during the school year and that is all right. Major changes should be reported to your facilitator. Plans are made to give guidance, not to command obedience.
- Skills like reading, writing and math take considerable practice to develop fluency. Developing academic skills is similar to learning how to hit a baseball; the more you practice the better you become. Give yourself time and ample practice.
- If your child is overly frustrated, determine if they have the preliminary skills for the task required of them. It may be necessary to allow your child additional time to mature before he/she is ready. Your facilitator can help you in this area.
- These plans serve you best if you have them easily available to you and use them as a tool.

#### What do I do with my plans once they're complete?

Keep a copy for yourself and e-mail your plan(s) to your facilitator; she needs to accept them before your acceptance into Roots is complete. Changes can be made at any time.

#### How do I e-mail my plans?

The necessary form is available on the Roots website as a fillable PDF format. Fill in the form in Adobe Reader. Save the document on your computer, then e-mail it to your facilitator.