

# A Word from the Author

Dear Parents,

*I have enjoyed writing this book and hope you will use it to great success! Please do not think that these simple exercises and ideas are slight or insignificant. I have found that it's the little things you do each day that often add up to be the most meaningful!*

*Geography and history are more than important, they are essential. In my opinion, the least important thing your child will do with their geography and history knowledge is "pass the test." While that seems important, even urgent, right now, it is only later, when your child will realize what a great gift you have given them by participating in their efforts to learn about their world.*

*As an employer of young people (including those in school as well as recent graduates), a true awareness and knowledge of world geography and history is one of the critical things I look for. After all, how can someone "pull a mailing list" or prepare a shipment...communicate globally...or plan a sales campaign without a great background in basic geography. Likewise, a background of history, who we are and how we came to be (and that includes all countries) is essential just to be a good citizen.*

*As the proud product of the Georgia public school system, I have considered myself fortunate to have received a strong background in geography and history. Textbooks were helpful, but it was often the creative, "out of the box" teacher who tried new ways to get us to learn and make connections that helped me the most.*

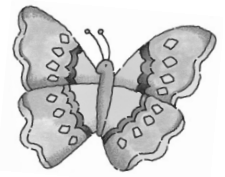
*I hope these activity suggestions and ideas will inspire you to think of more, as well as adapt these as you see fit to serve your family.*

*Please see my other "Parents Take Charge" books on math, science, writing, and other subjects to come in the future. Outside of the good it will do your children, the best reward (other than passing the test!) will be a mutual interest and dialogue that you and your children can share all your lives. After all, kids aren't the only ones who need to learn more about the world! I am learning all the time, and I know you will too—and have so much fun doing so. I also know that your child's teachers will especially appreciate your "take charge" efforts!*

*Carole Marsh*



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Oh, history's a mystery to me!  
Sometimes I wonder  
How things came to be!  
Could what happen to them...  
Happen to me?  
Oh, history's a mystery to me!

—Carole Marsh





## The Globe Theater!

Shakespeare had the right idea, but here's mine: buy an inexpensive world globe (office supply stores, even drug stores carry them; inflatable will do, too!) and put it smack in the middle of the kitchen table. Every time a country, or body of water is mentioned,

get your kids to yell "GLOBE!" and find it on the globe. Make

up all sorts of games and let everyone play. Even the youngest child can spin the globe and close

their eyes and point their finger to stop it on

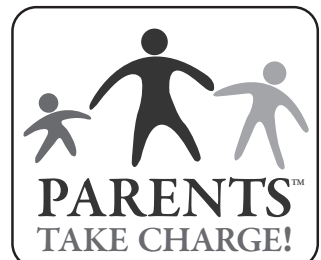
"here's where we're eating dinner tonight!" Your kids will learn a lot over the course of 9 months of globe-spinning!



## Mail Call!

When my kids were young, they loved to beat me to the mail box to get the mail.

I rewarded them with a large map of the USA over the hall table. They would look at the return address and put a pin on the location (map pins are available at office supply stores, or map flags, but a pincushion of straight pins or even small color stickers or a marker will work, too). This works well with a world map near the television; they can put a pin on locations where news or tv shows or reality adventures take place. They quickly learn the "world" is really a lot of place names—big and small—and not so difficult to learn, after all!

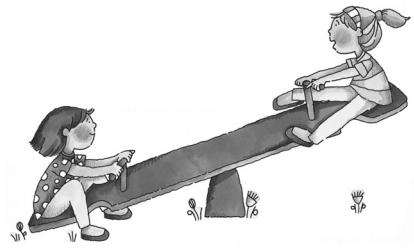


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WORLD HISTORY

## Photo Gallery

If a picture is worth a thousand words, a picture is also a great learning tool. Visit your local library, scour old National Geographics from yard sales or grandpa's house, or otherwise find famous or interesting photographs of what your child is studying in school. While it may be difficult to digest and discuss a hunk of written material, a photo on the kitchen table during dinner can be a great kick-off to a discussion that leads to real learning. A photo of a child immigrant at Ellis Island...a picture of the amazing Machu Picchu...a World War II vet saluting the flag...all promote questions of who, what, when, where, why, how, and more. A picture is a puzzle to figure out. "Figuring out" is a great critical thinking skill. "What do I know?" a child might wonder. "What do I see here? What does it mean?" Part of the fun, and analysis, is drawing the wrong conclusions, but you can guide your young history student to learning success in this intriguing and enjoyable way!



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WORLD HISTORY

## Interviews & Oral History

If there are only, supposedly, "six degrees of separation" between everyone, it should not be too hard to find someone related to your child's current history studies for them to interview. This can be a simple conversation, a prepared questions interview, a phone call to a relative, or many other scenarios. There is nothing like hearing history from the horse's mouth! While your child might have to compare what was said with what they have learned (you can discuss opinion, memory, and other issues that might make the "correct" story vary), they will learn how much more fascinating history sounds from someone who made it or was there to witness events big and small. There are many rewards to this kind of face-to-face historical research: passing the test, but more importantly, meeting history in person, and possibly having a relationship that will be long respected, recalled, and remembered.

