



## Nancy Larson's *Science 1* is reviewed in The Old Schoolhouse® Magazine

*Science 1* is like Christmas in the mail for a first grade child! All of the student and teacher materials come in one box. There is a butterfly kit, x-rays, plastic bugs, a tree identification book, a read-aloud book on apples, parts of a tree, a few science picture books, a bug identification book and a lady bug kit, as well as many photo cards. There is a teacher's manual that is scripted and student booklets for the student to write in. The curriculum covers describing the life stages of human beings, observing trees, exploring sunlight, water and soil, investigating animals and their habitats, discovering what is inside our bodies and examining the characteristics and life cycles of insects. Therefore, it includes sections of developmental biology, botany, earth and space, zoology, anatomy and entomology.

*Science 1* has 71 lessons. The lessons in the teacher's manual are written as a "dialogue so that you can use the appropriate vocabulary without missing important content." The student materials include student booklets, lesson reviews, lesson activities and assessments. There is a Teacher Resource CD that includes all sorts of items. On the CD is a list of materials that you will need to collect to complete the lessons. There aren't any unusual items: glue, paper, ruler, globe and nutcracker are a few of the items. The CD also has many photographs that go along with the lessons. It is filled with people of many races and ages.

Nancy Larson was the author of Saxon *Math 1-4* for fifteen years. Her science kits for grades 1 to 4 are her new venture. They have been field tested for a number of years. Some of Ms. Larson's suggestions for teaching are better suited for a classroom. Most lessons can be completed using the teacher's manual, the student manual and the items from the box. Nancy Larson Publishers also produces classroom kits, so, be sure to head to [www.nancylarson.com](http://www.nancylarson.com) to purchase the homeschool kit and not [www.nancylarsonpublishing.com](http://www.nancylarsonpublishing.com).

I received my box with the teacher's materials and the materials for one student. The teacher's manual has everything laid out. At the beginning of a lesson it tells you what supplies you will need. Then it writes out what the teacher would say and what the expected response is. The teacher's portion was printed in bold. This was great when I was short on my preparation time or when an older sibling needed to teach. I found that my children, grades preschool to fourth grade, were able to follow and enjoy *Science 1*, so we were able to enjoy science as a family. The content was not too extensive that it was overwhelming and the children couldn't remember at dinner time what they had studied.

I found *Science 1* to be a solid science curriculum that was adaptable for our family, with children ages 4 to 8. The life stages portion described stages in general terms: children, adolescents, adults and seniors. There was not any information about reproduction. The children loved the regalia: the plastic bugs and the x-rays were big hits. I enjoyed having a scripted teacher's manual. I didn't have too worry that my vocabulary was too advanced or inadequate. I didn't have to do a lot of preparation. For families that enjoy having all of their science materials for the year in one place, *Science 1* or *Science 3* would be great options.

While I liked the grouping of science for grade 1, the curriculum might not follow the guidelines that each state has for the grades. So for those families that need to follow a state prescribed curriculum, these kits may not work.

Sometimes when I purchase an all-in-one resource for a subject or an entire school year, I wonder if it was worth the investment. I worry that I might have spent too much or that my children might not enjoy the material or that I might start with great gusto but then lose the box in the closet. While I may be able to gather the books and a few of the materials for less money, I don't think that I could acquire some of the other needed items in one afternoon on the internet, not to mention daily designing lesson plans. Overall I think that the cost of the science boxes is money well spent. The children always found it, even if it was buried in the closet, because they enjoyed the lessons.

*Science 1* was a great hit in our house. We hope to order *Science 2* soon!

*Product Review by Maggi Beardsley, The Old Schoolhouse® Magazine, LLC, November, 2008*