



Nancy Larson's Science 3 is reviewed in The Old Schoolhouse® Magazine

Let me begin by stating that science is not my thing, but my children love science. The older they get, the more sophisticated the science language and concept get, the more help I need. Nancy Larson has put together a great science kit for moms like me.

Science 3 is science in a box. Your children will love opening up the box and exploring. The topics covered include exploring our solar system, investigating elements and compounds, observing physical changes, investigating changes in our atmosphere, exploring the earth's structure, examining the structure and function of parts of seed plants and investigating amphibian and reptiles. The box contains a rock set, lima beans, plastic evolving tadpoles, centimeter cubes, thermometer, balloon, equal mass set, marbles, spheres, pumice, clay soil, silt, grass seed, polypropylene beaker, magnifier and Familiar Reptiles and Amphibians; and Peterson's First Guides: Reptiles and Amphibians. There are lessons that cover astronomy, chemistry, physics, meteorology, geology, botany and zoology. It too has a teacher's manual that has scripted dialogue and includes 80 lessons. There is a Teacher Resource CD that has teacher links that is organized by lesson and has photos with a little text that correlates to the lesson. It also has word lists, glossary and a list of needed materials. The student material includes student booklets, lesson reviews, lesson activities and assessments.

Nancy Larson was the author of Saxon *Math 1-4* for fifteen years. Her science kits for grades 1 to 3 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, although *Science 3* did require a few resources, like a balance, that I did not readily have on hand. Nancy Larson Publishers also produces classroom kits so be sure to head to www.nancylarson.com to purchase the homeschool kit and not 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. There is often a review of the previous lesson, instruction and then experimentation. Some times you are showing the students one of the included photo cards or showing them a poster. Afterwards there is a lesson review page for the children to complete. There are student booklets to be used with the lesson that the parent reads to the child. The booklets have built in pause and reflect moments. There are also places for the child to draw. These seven booklets are small enough that the student can feel accomplishment in completion. Ms. Larson has also put together science word lists. They come in different forms. You can print out the list of word according to the lesson, you can have the student copy the words, print them out as labels or have the student make them into flashcards. You can also use the Teacher Resource CD on your computer to show your students the additional photos that go with the lesson.

The scripted teacher's manual was great when I was short on my preparation time or when an older sibling or grandparent needed to teach. I found that my children, in grades second and fourth, were able to follow and enjoy *Science 3*, so we were able to enjoy science as a family. The experiments were fun for the preschooler but the lessons were too much for her to follow. The lessons were just the right amount of time. The content was not too extensive that it was overwhelming and the children couldn't remember at dinner time what they had studied. I liked that the Teacher Resource CD had many great photos, that it was already linked to a lesson and that I didn't have to jump on the internet to use the CD. The cost of the science kit itself is an investment. However, I could use it to teach two of my children for a whole year. Plus, I could share it with another friend and the cost of the additional student materials is very reasonable. I liked the font and the space on the student materials. It helped make the information clear and not overwhelming. I also liked that there was an intentional pause and reflect space in the booklets and plenty of space to draw. My children could not keep their hands off all of the experimentation materials. If I hid the box, they found it and asked for a science lesson. My daughters liked the student booklets where they could draw what they remembered.

Science 3 is for the family that wants a deep science curriculum but doesn't want to use a textbook. It does not have enough living books for the Charlotte Mason fan or Bible connection for the Bible-centered family. Families may not choose to use *Science 3* because the curriculum does not describe the Creator and His role in creation. We were able to use *Science 3* and then go to our Bibles and talk about God creating the heavens. For families that enjoy having all of their science materials for the year in one place, *Science 3* would be a great option.

I appreciate that Nancy Larson has ventured into the science world with these kits. They are more interactive than a dry textbook, with a hint of Charlotte Mason style and the vigor of classic science study. With a few additions at home of Bible instruction on the creation of the world and a few story books from the library *Science 3* would be complete for us.

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