

A Child's Geography

Explore His Earth

Ann Voskamp

“Go into all the world...”

~ Mark16:15

*A Child's Geography is an endeavor of which a portion of profits support
World Vision, an internationally recognized Christian relief,
development and advocacy organization dedicated to
working with children, families and communities
to overcome poverty and injustice.*

**“Circle... take her measure... gaze long... climb ...
Then you can tell the next generation, detail by detail, the story of God.”** ~Ps. 48 12



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Explore His Earth

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Introduction



I love books. When I was a kid I wanted to be a librarian because I thought librarians spent their days reading all those books on their shelves. When I found out they didn't, I wanted to be a teacher so I *could* read all those books. Thus, when the Lord blessed us with our own little circle of children, what better way to spend my days than with the kids and good books?

Old books are like good friends. Seton and Burgess and Holling...and Hillyer. Lots of Hillyer. We would trek out with Hillyer through his book, *A Child's Geography of the World*, exploring His world from the couch. We appreciated how Hillyer spoke directly to us, how we developed a relationship with the author himself, how he romped through the world, teaching us along the way. But we always had questions. *Was it still that way in that country today? How had those cities, those people changed?* We wanted to know what the world was like *now*. And we wanted to see His Hand in it all — for the Earth and everything in it is His.

Thus this project...*A Child's Geography: Exploring His Earth* is about getting to know what is under our feet, over our heads and in the world around us — the atmosphere, the hydrosphere, the lithosphere — and then how to get around this world — maps, latitude and longitude. All the while, seeing Him everywhere.

These pages are, in some ways, really like exploring and scouting out various routes before a grand trip! While surveying the grand scheme of things, the sciences of His Earth, our appetite is whetted for the real march out, the countries of this Earth. The anticipation builds as we learn about the workings and the ways of His Earth. Then, when we have our bearings, we keenly set out to explore Earth's countries. (We look forward to beginning our trip around His globe at the beginning, with Him...in the Holy Land...and then trek through the countries of our world today, following the same path of our chronological study of history and times past.)

I've gathered our children around and we are thinking it looks a perfect day to go scouting. Care to join us on a glorious geographical adventure?

Geography

Islands and peninsulas, continents and capes,
Dromedaries, cassowaries, elephants and apes,
Rivers, lakes and waterfalls, whirlpools and the sea,
Valley-beds and mountain-tops — are all Geography!

~Eleanor Farjeon

A few travel thoughts before embarking



There is nothing nicer than curling up with a good book....and your children.

You are invited.

Come. Snuggle. Explore. Discover. Delight.

Worship our Creator.

READINGS

May I invite you to call the children, grab a blanket, and together begin the journey? If possible, read each chapter's main adventure text at one sitting. Then wrap up your read-aloud time with the notebooking segment, the writing of your postcard home.

Then, at the next sitting, you may choose to take up the segments "***Reaching out To His World***" and try one (or both!) of the "***Too-Fun-To-Resist Excursions.***" **Dividing** the chapter into two sittings will keep your young geographer fresh and will encourage them to revisit the adventure in their minds when they return for the second sitting. (If you really don't think you will return for the second sitting, please be sure to then conclude your one reading with "***Reaching out to His World.***" This segment is of the utmost importance. (See below for more information.)

SCHEDULING

Dividing your travels through ***A Child's Geography*** into two readings like this allows for various scheduling options. You may want to take up your geographical excursions twice per week, reading the chapter and notebooking on one day. Then, later in the week, returning to that adventure's "***Reaching Out to His World***" segment and the activity excursions. Or you may choose to embark on your geographical adventure only once per week, thus reading the chapter and notebooking one week and returning for the activities and "***Reaching Out to His World***" the following week.

NARRATIONS

Throughout the text are narration prompts: **Tell the folks at home all about it!** You may want to role-play a phone call with your young geographer for these narration prompts, you holding the phone, asking the narration questions, and your young geographer responding on his/her phone. Encourage your geographers to narrate whatever they recall. If, however, he/she seems at a loss, choose one or two of the **Memory Joggers** to kindle a more glowing narration. But give a child time to generate their own re-telling. **Memory Joggers** may also be used to highlight key discoveries of the adventure. Again, the narration prompts are merely guides to encourage a narration. It is best for learning and long-term memory to wait patiently and allow your young geographer to reconstruct the narration on his or her own. The **Memory Joggers** are guideposts to help map the way.

NOTEBOOKING

Travelers will be writing of their adventures on oversized, large pieces of cardstock. Postcard templates are available for you on the CD-ROM. It probably would be most convenient if you cut out a stack of a dozen oversized cards now — large enough so the geographer can write/notebook lots, small enough so as not to overwhelm the traveler with all that space to fill. You know your geographer best—cut the cardstock accordingly.

Ask any world traveler — if they don't log their journeys in a journal, so many details of the trip slip away, forever lost in a sea of long-forgotten memories.

Don't let that happen. It only takes a moment to hand your geographer a pencil and piece of cardstock and get the adventure written down. (Or you may have your geographer orally narrate the postcard to you as you jot it down for them.) Even one or two lines of writing are better than neglecting the postcard entirely. Notebooking on a postcard after each adventure will deeply enrich your geographer's experience. *You can do this!*

REACHING OUT

Knowledge without love is an empty, heartbreaking gong. It would be a very sad state if our young geographers knew much of His world...but had hearts that were indifferent to the people with whom we share our home. What are we without love? As a teacher or parent nurturing the learning of children, it may be tempting to read the main text of each chapter and then omit the “***Reaching Out***” segment. May I gently exhort you to not only read through this segment in each chapter, but to follow through on its encouragements. We are called to be Christ's hands and heart to a hurting world. Let's not fail Him!

READING LISTS

Reading lists have been included at the end of every chapter. These titles are only suggested to supplement ***A Child's Geography***. **None are necessary.** Your library may be a wonderful resource for more titles. Books from a creationist standpoint have been noted as such on the reading list. I encourage you to peruse all books before sharing with your young geographer. Some titles may have had wonderful graphics that are most beneficial, while the text may not uphold God as Creator. Weigh the balance, and, knowing your own geographers and family situation, trust your own discernment.

ACTIVITIES

The optional activities are just that—**optional**. The text of each chapter is the substance, or the “meat”, of the learning. The activities are simply supplemental, or “dessert.” Please do not feel obligated to do the activities. Each of the “***Too-Fun-To-Resist Excursions***” were chosen because, Lord willing, they extended the learning of that chapter's adventure, they were simple and practically doable for a teacher with many responsibilities — and they were fun! Your young geographers may well be able to set out on many of the excursions by themselves. And if you can resist the excursions, you still will have enjoyed a grand adventure nonetheless!

COPYWORK

Geography Copywork for each chapter is included on the CD-ROM. Encourage your geographers to copy out the definitions, Scripture, appropriate hymns and poetry that correspond with the chapter reading. Not only will doing so solidify knowledge discovered, expand your geographer's horizons, and give further written record to the journey, the act of transcribing has far-reaching language arts benefits. Determine which combination of notebooking and copywork will work best for your family. Again, do not feel obligated to do it all. The copywork selections may also be used for **Recollections**---reviewing and recalling previous adventures!

RECOLLECTIONS

Often review your postcards on a ring to recall past travels—perhaps before adding a new postcard, briefly review past explorations. Feel free to briefly review the definitions of past travels (from the copywork section on the CD-ROM) before heading out on your next adventure. Consistent trips down memory lane of past chapters will keep the adventures and knowledge fresh---and soon those discoveries will be a natural part of your geographers' tales!

BOARDING PASSES READY?

With the traveling details now nicely attended to, I invite you to step on board to memorable adventures across His glorious globe! Hold on to your hats, folks — His world will take your breath away! And don't forget to drop a postcard in the mail, telling the folks at home all about it!

***“The whole earth is full of
His glory!”
~Isaiah 6:3***

AUNTIE EM, THERE IS NO PLACE LIKE HOME



Chapter 1



Have you ever pulled an old blanket over a table, dragged in some pillows and stuffed friends and stood back to admire your new home? Or hammered together some planks of wood high up in a tree, then climbed up amongst the leafy branches and called it “**Home**”?

Home is where we all belong, a place we come back to, a place just for us.

Perhaps you call home a secluded cabin tucked away in quiet woods? An apartment overlooking the twinkling lights of the city? A

hut squatting on stilts in a tangle of jungle clearing? A floating boat, docked at the end of a pier?

Every person, everywhere, has a home.

Once when my little brother was at the zoo, he got lost, and couldn't find his way home. And a kind man stopped to ask the teary-eyed little fellow where his home was. What did it look like? How big was it? Did he know the name of the people who lived in his home?

Do you think he responded something like this?

“My home is held up in the middle of space. Home is like a big, round ball, slowly turning so every twelve hours it soaks in warm sunshine and then sleeps the next 12 hours in darkness. My home is so big more than 6 billion people, speaking several thousand languages, live there — along with lions and parrots and beluga whales and polar bears and pythons. And there are 350 million cubic miles of water to sail about right in my home!”

If my brother had explained his home like that, wouldn't the man have been most surprised? He would have wanted to know WHO could make a home like THAT!

My brother would have said, “God made a home like that! He made it not with wood and nails, or bricks and mortar, but simply by speaking the earth into being. He spoke the words, “*Let there be light. Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters*” (Gen. 1) and there was my home—EARTH!”

Earth is home to all people everywhere. And God made our home like no other home that has ever been made! Would you like a brief tour of our home?

If you do, that makes you a **geographer!** What is a geographer? Someone like you—someone who wants to explore our home, Earth, to ask questions about what is under our feet and over our heads, to ask why some areas of our home look so very different from other areas, and to meet all the different kinds of people who live in your home with you!

Geographers study geography. The word “**geography**” comes from the Greek language and simply means “*to write about the earth.*” So, together, let’s be geographers and write about God’s home for us, Earth!

While your home has a front door, and maybe a back door, perhaps an upstairs or a downstairs, the home God made for us has no front or back, top or bottom. That is because our earth is like a big ball. Geographers (like you and me) refer to earth as a “*sphere*” because in Latin “**sphere**” means “*ball.*”

While I could see your home from the street, you can’t see the home God made for us by standing back a little. The home God made for us is much bigger than just what you see outside your window, bigger than what is down your street, bigger even than what is across your country. The home God made for us is STUPENDOUSLY HUGE!! So huge, we can’t really see it all! That sounds strange, doesn’t it?

Have you ever laid your forehead against someone else’s forehead and looked into their eyes? What did they look like? They looked like ALL eyes, didn’t they? You were so close to their eyes, you didn’t even see their toes, did you? But what if you ran to the very far end of the street and looked back at the same person? Wouldn’t that same person who was once ALL eyes, now seem very small? You wouldn’t be able to see their eyes, or even their toes, now. But now you could see the whole shape of the person.



This is a copy of the very first picture ever taken of the whole of our Earthly home. Photographed some 30,000 km. (18,641 miles) out in space, south is at the top while North America is in the bottom right. NASA

When you look out your window, and see our earth, that is much like looking eye to eye with another person. You are so close to earth, you can't see all the parts of our home. If you wanted to see more of our earth you would have to go further than the end of your street, further away from earth even than an airplane. You would have to go way, way, WAY back into outer space to see our home, Earth, it is so big.

Just how big is Earth? Are you ready for some VERY astounding numbers?

Let's say there was one flat path all around the world. Then say you stuck a flag in the dirt and began walking down that long path around our home of Earth. If you walked ten long hours every day, you might cover slightly more than 22 miles (35 km.) every day. If you did that every single day, rain or shine, until you walked back to your flag, you would have walked the 24,860 miles (39,990 km.) all the way around Earth! Not only is that one very long walk, but you would be almost 3 years older—and have worn out a LOT of shoes!!!

The surface area, how much area our earth takes up, is 196,951,000 square miles (316,894,000 km.)! That means you would have to have 733 states of Texas to fill up this home God made for us!

Do you know how heavy our home is? The mass of Earth is a whopping 6.6 billion trillion tons (6 trillion trillion kilograms)! That is how much 1,100 million, million, million elephants would weigh!! Imagine the bathroom scale reading that ENORMOUS number!

God has made us a very impressive home, don't you think? To think that it was made simply by God's command! The Bible says that our world was not created through natural processes but directly by God Himself: **"...[T]he worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible"** (Heb. 11:3). That means that everything you see around you came into being from things that *can't* be seen! Everything you see came into being by God's *words*! And *that* was how our home called Earth was made!



Tell the folks at home all about it!

What a home we live in! Tell us everything you know about your home of earth! (**Memory Joggers:** What is the shape of our home? How many people live in this home? What do we call people who write about Earth? Why is Earth referred to as a “sphere”? Tell me about how big and massive our Earth is. How did our home of Earth come into being?) There truly is no place like our home!



I have never gone so far back, all the way to outer space in a rocket, and looked back at our home! Neither have you! (But maybe someday you will have such an incredible experience to gaze upon the beauty of Earth from up in a space ship! For now, we must be satisfied with pictures.)



A home for us all, created by the WORD of His mouth!

NASA

white, rising gradually like a small pearl in a thick sea of black mystery. It takes more than a moment to fully realize this is Earth ... Home.

But there are men and women, called astronauts, who have flown some 370 miles (595 km.) way up into the universe on a space craft. Pressing their faces against the windows of the space shuttle, they have peered down at our home, Earth. How do you picture what our home looks like? Can you describe it?

An American Astronaut named Edgar Mitchell described Earth from space as ***“a sparkling blue and white jewel, a light, delicate sky-blue sphere laced with slowly swirling veils of***

Isn't it strange that Astronaut Mitchell had lived his whole life in his home but when he saw it from space, he didn't quite recognize it at first?! He had probably never thought of his home looking like a shimmering jewel in an ocean of blackness! Did you think our home looked like that?

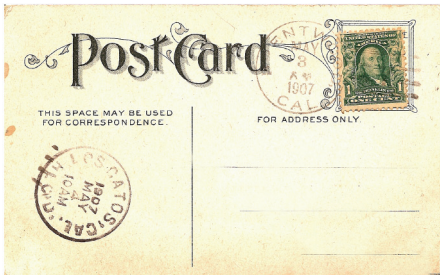
A Saudi Arabian Prince and astronaut, Sultan Bin Salmon Al-Saud, said this when looking down at our world from space, ***“The first day or so, we (astronauts) all pointed to our (different) countries. The third or fourth day, we were pointing to our continents. By the fifth day, we were aware of only one Earth.”*** Think of it---only one Earth, one home for all of us.

Another American Astronaut described Earth like **“a Christmas tree ornament hanging in the blackness of space. As we got farther and farther away it diminished in size. Finally it shrank to the size of a marble, the most beautiful marble you can imagine. That beautiful, warm, living object looked so fragile. Seeing Earth from space makes a man appreciate the creation of God and the love of God.”**

Aren't you thankful someone made the house you live in? A place for you to play and read and come in for dinner, a place with clean clothes and a warm bed—a place for you. How much more thankful we are that God made our Earth home! A place for us to breathe and run, discover and delight in—a place for all of us.



Flying 595 km (370 miles) overhead in space, do you recognize your home?
NASA



POSTCARD HOME

When you move into a new place to live, don't you want to tell everyone all about it? Why not share the wonder of Earth with someone! Cut a piece of cardstock to the dimensions of an oversized postcard. Draw and color what our home looks like from space. Then on the back of your postcard, write about our home of Earth.

What does it look like from space? How large is our world? What are some magnificent facts about our home of Earth? Write it all down on your postcard. Then punch a hole in the upper right hand corner of your postcard and place your large post card on your ring. You've just completed your first postcard in your geographic adventures! But this is JUST the beginning!

(Postcard templates are available on the CD-ROM in the back of your book)



Reaching Out to His World



Where do you sleep every night? Perhaps you have your own room, or share a room with a sibling. Maybe you even snuggle into the very same bed with a brother or sister. But you have a pillow somewhere that is just yours!

God made a home for *each* of us: Earth! There are folks, however, who live in our grand home of Earth...but don't have a place with a pillow just for them. We call these people **homeless**. Yes, homeless people *do* have a home: Earth. Homeless folks, however, do not have a roof over their heads, a safe place to eat dinner every night, or a place of their own to lay down with a pillow each night. Some of those who have no place in the world to call home are children younger than you! It is estimated that more than 100 *million children* on our Earth are homeless. Can you imagine a football stadium full of 55,000 *children*? Well, try to picture in your mind, *1,818 stadiums*, each full of a sea of only children, without adults. That gives you a picture in your mind of the vast number of children who have no place to come home to—tonight.

So where do homeless children spend their days and nights if they have no home with a roof or windows? Homeless children live on the streets of cities. They beg for their food or root through the garbage, looking for something edible. While some wrap themselves up in newspapers and sleep in back alleys, others are too often scared to sleep on the streets at night. Would you want to sleep out on the sidewalk in the dark? That is why many street children, throughout the world, fall asleep in big underground pipes underneath cities.

One boy named Joby who has slept for the last 9 years in the windowless, smelly pipes with many other children said, "*Everyone here would like to have their own family and **home**.*"

Yes, everyone would like their very own home, with a door and a window and someone to love them. God said, "**It is not good that the man should be alone**" (Gen. 2:18). So God created us to take care of each other in our home we call Earth.

What could you do to reach out to people, adults and children, who have no place to come home to tonight?

- **Pray** together right now for the homeless and the street children—that they would feel the love of God in a very real way today.
- Do you know of a homeless person in your community? Maybe you could make a lunch and take it to them, invite them to your place for a meal, or just simply smile and talk with them today. Showing the love of God makes our Earth a better home for us all.
- We all want a home to come home to. And there are groups of individuals who build homes for the homeless. Perhaps you could get involved! **Habitat for Humanity** is one such worldwide ministry. Over the last 30 years, volunteers just like you have given freely of their time to help Habitat for Humanity build more than 175,000 homes for more than 750,000 people all over our Earth. Perhaps you can look for a Habitat for Humanity group near you and help them build a home someone can come home to!

(You can find Habitat for Humanity on the web at: <http://www.habitat.org/>)



Further Explorations

Earth From Above for Young Readers *by Yann Arthus-Bertrand*

(Gr. 4 and higher) Photographer Arthus-Bertrand leans out of a helicopter snapping bird-eyes views from all over the world. A breathtaking view of God's home for us, twenty-two scenes highlight African landscapes while the remaining photographs introduce other continents. (If you can't find this book, you simply cannot afford to miss the photographs at his website at <http://www.yannarthusbertrand.com>)

Children from Australia to Zimbabwe: a photographic journey around the world *by Maya Ajmera & Anna Rhesa Versola*

This unique alphabet books introduces children from all over their world and the unique places they each call home.

If the world were a village: a book about the world's people *by David J. Smith*

(Gr. 3-5, younger for reading aloud) Author David Smith makes the notion of our world more accessible by imagining the world as village of only 100 people. How many computers are owned in the global village? What we take for granted is appreciated through new, grateful eyes. A very informative, memorable book, that will raise awareness of how our home of Earth is experienced by our other family members.

Endeavor views the earth *compiled by Robert A. Brown*

"What you would have seen out the windows of the Space Shuttle had you traveled with us." Jay Apt, astronaut."

Earth from space *by Andrew K. Johnston*

(Older children) Join Smithsonian geographer Johnston as he photographs earth from space. Stunning satellite images introduce readers to scenes from our home such as the Grand Canal in Venice and what Earth looks like at night.

The Home planet *by Kevin W. Kelley*

(Older children) Gaze on 150 photographs of Earth taken from space. Read the accompanying by quotes from astronauts. What does an "Earthrise" look like, as seen from the moon? View our mountain ranges, canyons, coastlines, tropical storms and volcanoes from thousands of miles over our planet's surface. Reflect on the space explorers' realization that we are all part of one family here on Earth and the Earth a precious gift not to be neglected.

A House is a House for Me *by Mary Ann Hoberman*

(Gr. 1-3) A delightful book of rhyme, this book is a classic you will revisit again and again. Soon you will be seeing houses and homes everywhere---and will want to write your own version of A House is a House for Me! A lyrical, amusing way to introduce the notion that we all have homes everywhere... and the earth is a home for us all!



Too-Fun-to-Resist Excursion!



AND THIS IS THE HOME THAT GOD BUILT!

Our earthly home is a pretty big place! It would be very easy to get lost. Do you know where in our home you are?!! Let's see if together we can draw it out so we *know* more about the home that God built for you!

Materials needed:

- ~ a large piece of paper
- ~ pencil and crayons or pencil crayons
- ~ globe or atlases

Ready To Go? Let's Head Out!

- ~ Draw a relatively small picture of you on your piece of paper.
- ~ Now draw your house around you. Then draw your street. See if you can now draw a circle where your town is around your home.
- ~ Next, sketch out the shape of your state or province around your city. Are you beginning to see how BIG our home of Earth really is?!!
- ~ Draw your country around your state. Then your continent around your country!
- ~ Now, the LAST part of your home to draw! Draw EARTH around it all!

Can you now to point to the various features of your drawing as you sing along:

*"This is the Earth that
holds the continent ,
that holds the country,
that holds the state,
that holds the city,
that holds the town,
that holds the street,
that holds the house,
that is the home God built for me!"*

Take some time to write the actual names of your street, town, state, country, and continent on your drawing? Didn't God build an awe-inspiring home for us!?

Too-Fun-to-Resist Excursion!



MAKE YOUR OWN GLOBE!

We could never make a world as magnificent or amazing as the world God has made for us! You could, however, make your own small copy of our globe. God made our grand and glorious world in 7 days—and it may take you nearly that long just to make a replica globe that you can hold in your hands! And as you make your globe, think about how God made this entire planet of Earth by just *speaking* it into existence! Doesn't that make you want to praise Him?

Materials needed:

- ~ A round balloon
- ~ Lots of newspapers
- ~ Flour and water
- ~ An empty plastic container
- ~ Spoon
- ~ Pencil
- ~ Blue and Green paint
- ~ Paint Brushes
- ~ Marker

Ready To Go? Let's Head Out!

(Remember, God did not need to gather materials when He made Earth---He just *spoke* the Word, and things came into being! And *that* is truly awe-inspiring!)

~ First, get out a saucepan and mix 1 cup of flour into 1 cup of water until the mixture is thin. Stir into 4 cups of boiling water. Simmer for just a few minutes, then cool.

~ Then, tear a newspaper into lots and lots of strips. The strips should be about as wide as the length of your thumb (or about 1 inch). The strips can be any length.

~ Now take a deep breath and blow up your balloon. Tie it tight!

~ Roll up your sleeves and get ready for the gooey part! Dip each strip of paper into your water and flour glue, wipe off the excess with your fingers, and wrap the strip around the balloon. Cover the balloon with wet strips of paper. Cover the balloon in three coats of strips, but let your "globe" dry between the application of each layer for at least 8 hours (or overnight).

Once you have completed your three layers, let the globe dry completely. When your globe is completely dry, the balloon will usually pop by itself.

~ Now sharpen your pencil and pull out your atlases, or place an already finished globe in front of you. Mark a dot at the top and bottom of your globe with a pencil. One dot will represent the North Pole, the other dot will represent the South Pole.

Can you draw on your globe the area of land you live in? That shape of land is called a continent. What shape is that area of land, your continent? How big is it in relation to the globe? How far away is it from your dots of the North and South Pole? Looking at your atlas or finished globe, draw your continent on your globe.

Good for you! Now, asking yourself the same questions, draw the other continents on your globe. Don't forget any! (Drawing continents is challenging, isn't it? To think that God made REAL continents by just commanding it to be so!)

~ Now your globe needs some color! Lay out a bed of newspapers and paint each of your continents a dark green color to represent land. When you are finished, set your globe aside to dry.

~ God created water on the 2nd day of creation---so you need to now paint the rest of your small globe a brilliant sea blue! Again, lie out a bed of newspapers and paint around all of the green continents a watery blue to represent oceans and seas.

~ When the paint has dried, stand back and smile at your handmade globe! Can you take a marker and draw an x on the place where you live on Earth?

Finally write on your globe, "**O Lord, it is You who made the heavens and the Earth and the sea, and all that is in them.**" (Acts 4:24)

Yes, God made this marvelous Earth for us! And that should make us REALLY smile!