

Questions and *Answers*

Everything we get asked, answered properly.

Most education companies show you a little and then ask you to book a call. We would rather just answer things here, at length, before you spend anything.

If your question is not in here, there is a form on the page you downloaded this from, and a real person reads what comes in.

What this is

What is The Promontory Academy?

An interdisciplinary curriculum for students roughly ages 8 to 14. You buy it, download it, and run it at home yourself.

Every week is built around one big question. Take the week about disease. Your student works out death rates from real parish burial records kept during a plague year. To do the math at all, they have to read a document written in 1348 and ask what the priest keeping it might have got wrong or left out. The math and the history are the same job, not two lessons that happen to share a topic.

Is this a school?

No. We write and publish the curriculum. You teach it.

We do not enroll students. Your child's education stays in your hands, exactly as it is now.

Is it accredited?

No, and it does not need to be, because we are a publisher rather than a school.

What matters for you is meeting your own state or country's home education rules. There is a full answer about that near the end.

Is it online? Is there a login or videos?

No. It arrives as PDFs that are yours to keep. Your student reads them on a screen and writes their work by hand in a notebook.

Nothing to log into. Nothing that expires. No lessons to sit through. If your internet goes down for a week, nothing stops.

What makes it different?

Two things.

The subjects are not taught separately. In that week about disease, your student does the math from the burial records. They read what people at the time wrote about what was killing them. They follow how doctors eventually found the real cause. One investigation, four subjects.

And the work asks for more than a right answer. By Friday your student has to say what they think happened and give reasons for it.

Whether it fits your child

What ages is this for?

Roughly 8 to 14.

We do not use grade levels. Most children are ahead in one subject and behind in another, and a grade label hides that.

My child reads well above level but struggles with math. Which one do I buy?

Both. It costs no extra. Every purchase includes the Lower Division and the Upper Division of the same week.

So your strong reader can do the Upper Division reading and history while doing the Lower Division math, in the same week, on the same question.

That is not a workaround. It is how most families use it, because most children are uneven.

What is the difference between the two divisions?

How much the work asks for. Not your child's age.

Both are written in plain English. The Upper Division wants more evidence, longer reasoning, and an argument that holds up when you push back on it. The Lower Division asks the same sort of questions and expects a shorter answer.

What if it turns out to be too hard?

Every task is written at five levels on the same page, and your student picks which one they are doing.

The first asks them to read closely and write down what is actually there. The second asks them to put it in their own words, or spot the pattern. The third asks them to work it out and show the steps. The fourth asks them to compare two things and say which one the evidence supports better. The fifth asks them to make a claim and back it up.

So your student might work at the hardest level in reading and an easier one in math on the same day. That is normal. And because all five sit on one page, they can move up whenever they feel ready. They do not have to ask you.

My child gives up the moment something gets hard.

Worth thinking about honestly before you buy. Two things help.

The easiest level of every task is genuinely doable, so there is always a way to start. And the material is about real things, which gives a child a reason to keep going that a worksheet never does.

Do the two week trial and find out with your own child rather than taking our word for it.

Will this work for a child who learns differently?

The five levels mean the material never assumes one pace. The day comes in pieces rather than one long stretch. Nothing is timed. Nothing is missed by being slow, because there is no class moving on without you.

You know your child better than we could from a page like this, which is why the trial is two full weeks and not a few sample pages.

What it asks of you

Do I need to know this material to teach it?

No, and you will not get caught out on a Wednesday. This is our most asked question, so here is the full answer.

You open the day and read the opening with your student. It is a short piece of writing, not a set of instructions. Then they start working and you are nearby.

When they get stuck, there is more help built in than you might expect. Every math skill comes with two worked examples showing exactly how it is done. Then there is a page where the setup and the first line of working are already printed, so your student is never facing a blank page. Then a page with a worked solution that has a mistake in it, and the job is to find the mistake. The answers are in the back of their own book, with the working shown. And if a skill first came up in an earlier week, the page tells you which week, so you both know where to look.

When your student says I do not get it, try this before you explain. Ask them to read the question out loud, slowly. Then ask which word in it they are least sure about. Nine times out of ten, that is the problem. Then send them to the worked example.

If none of that works, help them. Nobody expects you to sit and watch your child struggle. We are only asking that you do not give the answer in the first thirty seconds, because that is the moment they would have worked it out.

What happens on Friday?

Friday is a discussion, and it works fine with two people.

The whole week has been building to one question. Your student takes a position on it. Your job is to argue the other side, whether or not you believe it. Push back. Ask how they know. Point at the bit that does not fit.

It feels odd the first time. Families tell us it becomes the best hour of the week. There is no winner and no score. It is the difference between a child who has an opinion and a child who can defend one, and you cannot get them there by agreeing with everything they say.

The guide walks you through it, including what to do when it stalls.

How much time does this take each day?

Two to four hours for your student, depending on the child and how deep they go.

Your own time is up to you and what your child needs. Some parents sit alongside the whole way. Others read the opening, get on with their day, and come back for the discussion. Both work. You will find your own rhythm within a couple of weeks.

Do I have to grade anything?

No. There is nothing for you to mark and no scores to keep.

The answers are in the back of your student's own book, and they show the working, not just the number.

Parents often ask whether their child will just look them up. Some do, once or twice. Then they find that reading the answer before trying leaves them no better off, and they stop doing it. It sorts itself out faster than a rule would.

Nothing is graded, and nothing is sent to us.

Do you look at my child's work and give feedback?

No, we do not. Here is what you get instead.

The pack includes ready-written instructions that you copy and paste into an AI, along with your child's answer. There is one for each type of task, one for the Friday discussion, and one for the spoken defense at the end of an arc.

They are written to stop the AI doing the work for your child. It will not rewrite the answer or fill in a missing number. It tells you what the answer does well, whether it is finished, and gives one thing to work on next. Under 150 words, in language a ten year old can read.

If the AI is being too soft, add this question: could this answer have been written without reading the source? Show me the words that prove it was not.

And if you would rather judge the work yourself, one of the guides shows real answers side by side, a weak one and a strong one, with a note on what makes the difference.

What is the Defense of Learning?

At the end of every six week arc, your student talks through their thinking out loud and records it on a phone. Then they listen back on their own, before anyone else hears it.

That last step is the important one. Most children hear their own reasoning for the first time and spot the gaps themselves, without anyone pointing them out.

It is part of the design, but nobody here checks whether you do it. The guide explains how, if you want to.

What you get, and how

What arrives when I buy?

One download, and it is yours to keep.

Inside: the unit PDFs for both divisions, printable response sheets for the written work, and a small set of guides. How to run a week at home. What a good answer looks like. The feedback instructions. And a two page summary of what the program is built on.

The guides ship once. You never buy them again.

Do I have to print all of this?

No. The units are meant to be read on a screen. Printing them all would be an expensive way to do it.

The only thing worth printing is the response sheets. There are four of them, they are the same every week, so print as many as you need. Lined paper in a notebook works just as well.

Why does handwriting matter so much?

It is not about neat writing. It is about what the brain does while the hand is moving.

A 2024 study in Norway used EEG caps to compare students writing by hand with students typing. Writing by hand produced far more activity across the brain. An earlier study found the same in children.

The reason is simple. When you type, you can copy words down without thinking about them. When you write by hand, you have to decide what is worth writing and put it in your own words.

So we ask for one notebook, used from the front, dated, with nothing torn out. When your child crosses something out and fixes it, that page is worth more than a clean one.

Can I use it with more than one child?

Yes. One purchase covers your household, however many children are working through it.

Print as many response sheets as you need, and run two children at different levels of the same week if that suits them.

How does it work across a year?

Six arcs of six weeks each. Thirty six weeks of material, around 180 days.

You buy one arc at a time. Nothing renews on its own, nothing is a subscription, and stopping means simply not buying the next one. There are no contracts.

Money

What does it cost?

The first two weeks of Arc 1, in both divisions, with all the guides included, is \$29.

The rest of Arc 1 is \$121. So the whole arc is \$150 either way. The \$29 is not an extra charge on top.

Can I buy Arc 2 today?

You can, but we would rather you did not yet.

Do the trial. If it suits your family, do Arc 1. Each arc builds on the one before it, so slow and steady is how this works best. Arcs 2 through 6 will be there when you are ready. Nothing expires.

What if we buy it and it turns out not to be right for us?

All sales are final, and here is the honest reason.

When you buy, you get the whole download straight away. There is no way to hand it back. A refund would mean us hoping you deleted it, and we would rather not run things that way.

That is exactly why the \$29 trial exists. It is not a taster. It is two complete weeks in both divisions with every guide included, so you can see precisely what you would be buying before you spend more.

And you can stop whenever you like, by simply not buying the next arc. No contract. Nothing rolls over. Nothing owed.

Records and requirements

Will this satisfy my state's homeschool requirements?

Home education law is set where you live and varies from one country, state or province to the next. Meeting it is your responsibility, not ours, and we would be doing you no favors by pretending otherwise.

What we give you is the material to meet it with. The units, your student's handwritten notebook, written feedback based on real criteria, and a two page summary of what the program is built on and what a year of it produces.

What do I actually show someone who asks to see the work?

The notebook, mostly. That is one reason for the rule about never tearing pages out. A year of dated work in your child's own handwriting, with the false starts still in it, shows more than a folder of clean worksheets.

Alongside it, the two page summary, which is written for exactly that conversation.

Do you provide grades, transcripts or a diploma?

No. The material covers ages 8 to 14, so none of those come into it yet.

A reviewer has asked me for something specific. Can you help?

Ask us and we will try.

We cannot promise to produce whatever any authority asks for, because some ask for things no publisher can supply. What we can usually do is help you put together what you already have in the form they want it.

Still wondering about something?

Ask us. There is no call to book, no discovery session, and nobody will chase you afterward.

We may well not be the right fit for your family, and you should be able to work that out by reading rather than by talking to someone whose job is to talk you into it.

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Practice makes perfect.