



ArcticTerns

Worldschooling Newsletter

Eleanor, about combining countries for a highschool diploma

Many parents worry if their teens can get into university through Worldschooling. But the truth is that Worldschooling expands your options to get into university. Worldschooling gives you the the whole world to choose from! Eleanor was able to combine these global options to get her kids into university in a system that fitted each child.

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Eleanor, about combining countries for a highschool diploma

Can you tell me a bit about your family and your travels?

Absolutely! So we started worldschooling when my daughter was 6 months old and my son was 2. We headed off to Egypt and lived there for a very happy three years. Egypt remains my favourite place in the world and I'd happily there forever if I could! After leaving Egypt, we had brief visits of a few months to Crete, France, Spain and Sweden, as well as spending time back in our home country of the UK. This time was very much a period of seeing where the wind took us and it was both rather glorious and a little tiring. One year we lived in six countries and it started to feel like a bit too much of a good thing! So we concentrated after that on going back to longer stints in individual countries.

We then lived in Kazakhstan, which was quite a culture shock, not to mention crazy cold with temperatures reaching -40 celsius. And from there had a wonderful period living in Bahrain and then in Thailand. By this time the children were in their early teens and we had started to think about exams and qualifications.

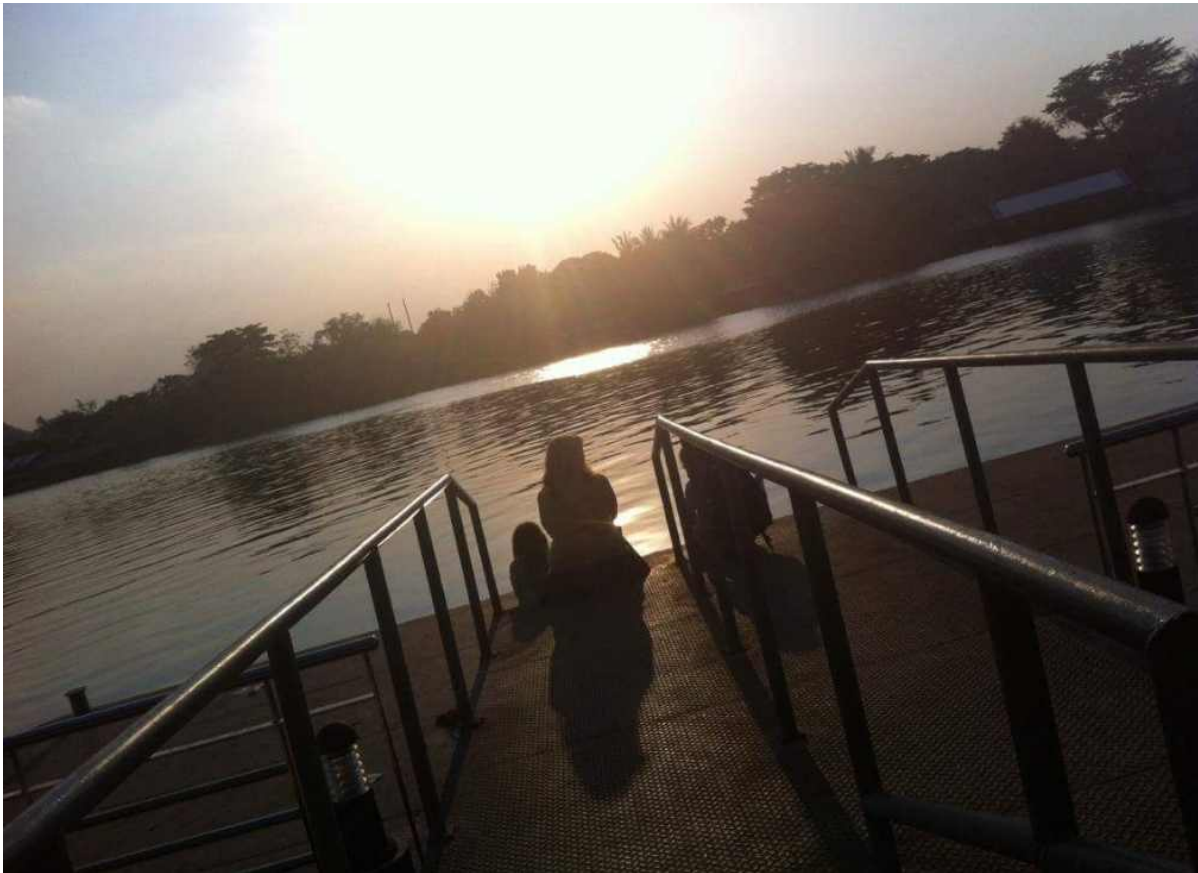


As your kids approached high school age, what considerations did you make?

This was the biggest period of change for us as we decided to move back to the UK on a semi permanent basis when the children started studying for their exams in their early teens. We made the shift to spending parts of the year abroad but making sure we were back in the UK for their exams each year. There's no doubt that entering exam age did shift the focus of our home schooling and it became a lot less immersive and a lot more book based.

Why did you decide on a different approach for both kids?

In actual fact, my two children both did the UK exam system and started their exams when they were both 13, spreading the GCSEs over three years each. But my son went on to study his A levels from home whereas my daughter seemed unlikely to want to do A levels and I'd always assumed she'd go to college in the UK. But one day I recorded an episode of my podcast on the American High School Diploma route, which was something I knew nothing about. What I learnt amazed me and from that episode on, I was hooked.



What is the difference between the British and the American system?

In a nutshell, the British system consists of GCSEs and A levels which will then get you into university. The American system is a diploma of many modules (credits) and then you can combine this with AP exams if you want to get into a top tier university.

But the main differences are in the way it's assessed and where its focus is placed. The primary element I loved about the High School Diploma was that it allowed my daughter to carry on pursuing her passions and interests and these then got converted into credits for her diploma. This contrasted to the British GCSE route where you choose a subject and then study the curriculum for that. The GCSE route is equivalent to going on a holiday where everything is mapped out for you and you have no choice where you go and what you do. The American diploma route is more like a bespoke holiday where you make all the choices yourself. This allowed my daughter's HSD to have credits for things like video editing, cultural immersion and horse riding, as well as the usual credits for maths and English literature.

I loved the fact that my daughter would be centre stage in her learning and that all her wonderful passions and abilities were recognised in the HSD route, rather than being constrained to what was tested in an exam. Plus, the fact that there are no exams for the American diploma is a massive bonus. It is all down to you and your child to assess their process and report it on their diploma. It's a wonderful amount of freedom and autonomy for both of you and, in my eyes, truly reflects the core values of home schooling.

How does combining the American and British system create the best combination for your daughter?

We were really tempted to bin off the British system and just go full pelt for the High School Diploma but, by the time I found out about the American route, my daughter already had three of her GCSEs and was all set for another two. So we decided to combine the two approaches together. This meant that she had her British GCSEs but also her American High School Diploma. This way, if she was to choose to go to university, she could

combine them together to get entry into many universities without having to sit further exams. We just transferred her learning for her GCSEs onto her diploma and then added extra credits for all the wonderful 'extracurricular' learning our children get up to all the time.



What are your kids plans for the future?

My son who went the traditional British route is about to start his gap year where he'll be mixing backpacking with volunteering and work experience. He's planning to go to university in the Netherlands and so there's a fair amount of learning Dutch in his plans as well! My daughter is also finishing up her education this year as she's on her final year of her High School Diploma and her credits for this year are all based on her own plans, which are to spend her time volunteering in Sri Lanka and Thailand, and doing online learning in trauma and counselling. So for the first time in many years, they will be very busy and I will be very quiet!

What would you recommend to parents who are uncertain about what to do for the high school years?

I'd say to explore your options. Don't feel that just because you're from one country you are tied to their qualification system. And also not to be afraid of trying something a bit different. After all, that's what home schooling and world schooling are all about! Just make sure you do your research, ask questions of those who have been there before you and remember that, just because you're entering exam age, doesn't mean your child has to take exams. There is a whole world of options open to you to explore!

If you'd like to hear more from me, please check out my podcast! <https://homeeducationmatters.podbean.com/>

The Peace Palace in The Hague

Den Haag / The Hague is the political capital of the Netherlands. Here, the Dutch government is located and the king has its palace. But also, Den Haag is the city of international peace and justice. During Worldschoolling Netherlands we will go by the national and international highlights of democracy, peace and justice. Also we will pay a visit to the Dutch miniature park that shows all the highlights of the Netherlands in scale in a fun and engaging way.

The Peace Palace

The Peace Palace is a globally recognized center of international peace. It's the place where countries from all over the world come together to decide on peaceful and diplomatic solutions to disagreements. It houses the International Court of Justice and the Permanent Course of Arbitration, both crucial for maintaining global peace. The Peace Palace is more than it's legal functions though. It's a symbol of the collective effort of nations around the world to maintain justice, peace, and unity. Its creation is a testament to this unity, with most country worldwide making a contribution to the materials and artworks that lead to the grand halls and beautiful gardens that exist today.



Worldschoolling Netherlands

Flashback to Worldschoolling Bansko

- Jan 20 2024 -

Another week went by at Worldschoooling Bansko filled with activities. Here's a quick rundown of the awesome week we had:~

Monday started with parent and kids' activities for our littlest ones and skiing with friends for the daredevils. Later the kids had a chance to become magicians, and learn a few tricks, while the teens and parents dived into the world of Bulgarian cuisine with banitsa cooking. Teens and parents also learned a few tricks in video editing during our skill share activity. The day ended with a game night: young Dungeons and Dragons enthusiasts rolled the dice, while the parents and teens played a game of Risk.

Tuesday was filled with family activities: fun times swimming in the pool, a teen restaurant visit, a museum adventure, and a magical family dinner with a real magic show!

Wednesday was spent with more skiing with friends, Bulgarian dance and music activity, farming projects for the little ones, and 3D drawing for the artsy teens. The kids also made fruit crocodiles in the Kids' Restaurant, and the teens got their leadership coaching. While the kids were kept busy, parents discussed the ins and outs of financing worldschoooling. Oh, and an evening dip in the hot springs – a signature activity at Worldschoooling Bansko!

On Thursday, despite the rain, many volunteered for Bansko Street Dogs taking the doggies on a walk in the city park, and went ice-skating afterwards. Later while the kids enjoyed a movie night, and the teens embarked on Dungeons and Dragons adventures, parents were free to have a fancy night out at a fondue restaurant!

Friday was spent with another round of skiing with friends. The kids also had puppet show, face painting and the bigger ones embarked on a secret club mission to find the elusive elf. All kids had video editing lessons, and had a blast at the science class creating DNA strings from marshmallows and sugar sticks. Teens also made a spaghetti tower. Parents had the opportunity to give feedback and bond with the help of a fun connecting activity.

The day ended with a little magic show presentation by the kids. The little ones played board games, the bigger kids were in the gaming club, and the teens hung out in their space. This again gave an opportunity for the parents to have some hot wine, yummy waffles and a nice chat.

In addition to all the incredible activities, this week showcased the true strength of our community. When one of our single parents had an accident on the slopes, our community rallied together without hesitation. The support and assistance provided, especially during a parent's most worrisome moment, exemplify the genuine bonds we share. Knowing that, even in a foreign country, you and your kids have a supportive network is one of the invaluable advantages of being part of a worldschoooling hub.

If you're considering joining us, it's never too late to be a part of this incredible community!

#traveling #travelers #worldschoooling #worldschoolers #skiing #worldschooolinghub #hubs #bansko
#worldschooolingbansko #bulgaria #community #skating #swimming

Worldschoooling Bansko



















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