



HOMESCHOOLING HIGH SCHOOL WITH MEREDITH!

HOW DID HIGH SCHOOL GO THIS PAST YEAR?

It's that time of year again when homeschool conventions, curriculum catalogs, and all kinds of sales on homeschooling products are going on. What should you purchase for next year?



Before you order, sit down and make a plan. But, before you make a plan, evaluate the past year. Have you had one of those years where your child did all the work, but can't remember anything? Or maybe they did learn, while complaining how dry and boring the curriculum was. One year I got these wonderful high school history tapes. Katie Beth, my oldest daughter, endured them without complaint, but when it was Julianna's turn to use them, she let me know how difficult it was to listen to them. Jenny Rose has

never even heard of the tapes! I moved on to something new for American History.

Katie Beth succeeded with independent learning, but she missed being part of family fun. Looking back, I wish I'd included her in some unit studies. She did all her high school work, except for coops and dual enrolling for three classes at the local community college, on her own. She was in the house with us, but not part of what we were doing.

Julianna and Jenny Rose did a lot of work independently, but they were part of our history unit studies and other classes. It required creativity to weave everything together, making sure we stayed on track for high school requirements and credits, but it was worth the time and effort. Not only did the girls enjoy learning with the family, but it's good for the little ones to hear the wisdom that comes from high schoolers. Yes, I said wisdom. Teens thrive when they are heroes/role models to younger children and they rise to the occasion to dispense wisdom to younger siblings.

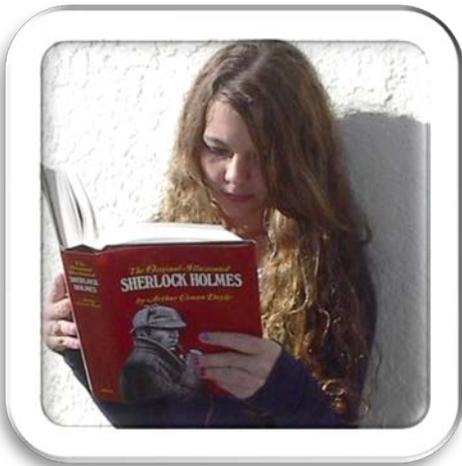
Don't assume that because your teenager can do schoolwork on their own, they don't need you anymore. Homeschooling is still a full time job in high school. One of the most important thing a mom can do when teaching high school is to discuss what is being learned. Intellectual discussion is stimulating and a way for teens to process all the material in their classes.

You might consider weekly dates with your teen at Starbucks to discuss their classes so that you can evaluate with them as you go through the year. Your son or daughter is changing so much during these high school years and formulating their worldview, life dreams, and personal goals. Be part of their thinking, dreaming, and learning!

When you evaluate, let your son or daughter be part of the process. A word of caution here... The goal of teaching your high school student is not that they have fun, but that they are educated, attaining knowledge and wisdom. Don't let your child complain about schoolwork being "too hard." This is the time teenagers acquire a lifelong work ethic. Require excellence. All students should work hard, as if working for the Lord.

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving."
(Colossians 3:23-24 NIV)

Now, here's the most important question to ask...Did your child learn the material he studied? What does he remember now that the year is finished? If he did all his work, but didn't learn the material, is the problem with the material, the student, or the teacher? Even with independent learning, sometimes my teens still need me to explain things. Was I on top of protecting our school hours? I can't run around grocery shopping, keeping doctor appointments, or inviting friends over to visit when I'm teaching. Your children may be completely trustworthy and self-motivated, but if I am away too long, I will return to see my teens on facebook or watching a movie.



Was a class not effective because of the student? Are there character issues? Was there laziness, procrastination, or poor scheduling? Shine likes to start with her fun subjects, Bible and literature, pushing Algebra to the end of the day, but that doesn't usually work for her. She ends up NOT doing math that way. So, we usually start our school days with math to give our brains a workout. But more than a preference for math first, we do it because when something you don't like is put off until later, somehow time runs out. So, Shine got behind in algebra. The solution? Start with the distasteful subjects first, then look forward to the more enjoyable ones!

Did he accomplish a credit's worth of work for every credit class? Oops, did you forget to log hours? My next article will include using folders for each class to keep everything simple and sane. In the meantime, estimate how much time was spent studying for each class. A high school transcript is a document that prospective colleges look at during the admissions process. Make sure that it is true and accurate, especially the credits and grades for each class. (*I don't even give any grades until high school, so it always feels strange to give grades to my children. I make the requirements for A's, B's, and C's clear at the beginning of the class.*)

Don't confuse record keeping or lack of record keeping with the need to evaluate your school year. Record keeping is not hard to get the hang of and once you do, it's smooth sailing administratively. Ask other moms of high school students to see what they do or read *Homeschooling High School: A Home-Designed Form-U-La* by [Barbara Sheldon](#). She makes the whole process of homeschooling high school, even designing your own classes, so easy!

Now, it's time to make a plan for next year. Continue homeschooling high school for the glory of God!