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One of the many elements we implemented in our home school student's college applications was a high school reading list. It was a partial listing of the books that they read in the course of their high school years. I point out "partial" simply because we never did a very good job keeping up with the amount of books they actually read. My children are voracious readers and, because of this, our books lists seemed very impressive to the colleges. It was the way in which my children preferred to learn. I wasn't able to KEEP them far from books. Even in college, when my youngest came home for vacation he chose to read Harry Potter, Lord of the Rings, CS Lewis, and Agatha Christie. He did not only read ONE of each of those, he read the full SERIES of each one. That is what he prefers to do, and this is the reason his book list looked like it did.

When they were in high school learning Christian Apologetics, I placed 35 books before the kids, and instructed them to read for simply one to two hours a week from those books. I was expecting them to read, maybe, ten in the course of the year. Instead, they read all of them. It was amazing to me, but that is what they loved to do - and they continue to enjoy it.

Initially, our plan was to work with a literature-based curriculum and simply pile it on. We started off home schooling by using Sonlight Curriculum. I supplemented using Jim Trelease Read Aloud Handbook. By the time they were in high school, we incorporated book lists from The Well Trained Mind, and a variety of "reading lists for the college bound" that I located online.

We did not work with literature guides, really. They usually simply read the books. When I would inquire about it, they just claimed it was good, and wanted the next one. It is not like we dissected each book in an intensive approach. They liked reading, and I provided them books!

There have been specific home school courses that I struggled to teach (including, art and state history.)#) For these courses, I noticed it worked better if I let my children learn from literature. Whenever I got completely frustrated by a subject, I just scheduled the boys to read. Which means that in place of studying art, we read art history. As an alternative for learning third year French, we read French books, and books about France. Reading is my kids' love language.

To maintain a reading list, you might have the kids record any book they read, yet that failed to work well for me. I have a better option! Maintain all of the receipts from the library and from the bookstore. Keep all of your assignment sheets, if you use them, as that might have the titles of books you used. You can include books on tape, and you might choose to include plays that come in book form (like Shakespeare, Death of a Salesman, etc)

By the time you complete home schooling high school, an passionate reader could have plowed through an amazing range of books. Remember to record them in a reading list (even if it is partial). This can show colleges that your students like to learn.

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