



The Areas of Language Arts you should include in the Middle and High School Years

Reading/Literature

For literature during these years, I recommend a mix of short stories, poetry, essays (non-fiction), drama, and novels. These can be found either separately or in the form of a literary anthology and additional novels to read alongside the anthology.

Along with the novels, you will want to use some kind of novel study guides (that will also assist you with suggested vocabulary words and various questions).

Suggested Homeschool Literary Resources to Assist you in your Literature Study

[Total Language Plus](#) (novel study guide)

[Progeny Press](#)

[Mosdos Press Literature Anthologies](#)

Skills and Concepts for Literature Study

There are a number of skills and concepts you will want to include in your literary study.

These skills include -

- Vocabulary – I recommend using words from your reading for your vocabulary words because it saves you time and money from using a separate vocabulary program or curriculum. Most of all, in my experience it is more effective. The words are in context of what your learner is reading and will be understood and remembered more effectively because it is part of a story they will remember. It also gives your learner the practice in figuring out what words mean using their context within a sentence.
- Comprehension and Higher Order Thinking Skill Practice
 - Recalling detail
 - Comprehending and understanding what they read (being able to identify the “main idea” or “theme” of the story)
 - Application skills – using what they have learned from the reading to problem solve



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- Analysis – drawing conclusions, comparing this written work to another from the same author or another author, or comparing what they have read to a personal experience.
 - Evaluation - critiquing the writing, selecting an issue from the writing and debating it.
 - Synthesis – taking a point, idea, theme, character from your reading and creating something new from that piece.
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- Elements of a story - plot, conflict, setting, characters, point of view, mood, tone
 - literary devices and writing techniques such as similes, metaphors, imagery, personification, onomatopoeia, hyperbole, alliteration.
 - Study different Genres – forms of writing and rhetoric – speeches, drama, essays, short stories, poetry, non-fiction, and novels.
 - Study different literary time periods and areas around the world.
 - American Literature – Native American, Pre-colonial/Puritanism, Colonial, Revolutionary (age of Enlightenment/Reason), Romanticism (includes American Gothic, Transcendentalism), Realism/Naturalism/Regionalism, Modernism, Contemporary
 - British – (some crossover from American) Old English/Anglo-Saxon, Middle English/Medieval, Renaissance, Puritanism, Enlightenment, Romantic (Regency), Victorian, Modern
 - World Literature – (Western, Eastern, Other) Can focus primarily on Ancient works from Greek Philosophers or Christian authors, or a broad cross-section of countries, authors, and time periods from around the world.
 - Semester Specialty Classes – Poetry, Shakespeare, Drama, Journalism, Creative Writing, Research and Composition, specific types of literature or specific authors or parts of the world.
 - Worldview – Christian Worldview expressed by author and content or Secular/Humanist view.
 - Author Biography and Time Period in which he/she lived or wrote about.
 - Literature can be a reflection of cultural, religious, societal, and historical views, beliefs, and events written from the author’s point of view or the content itself.
 - Literature can also be an influencer of cultural, religious, and societal beliefs from the time period and society in which it is written or the author’s point of view and intent. It can influence thinking and historical events.



Writing and Composition

I recommend using your literature study as the jumping off point for essay writing and composition. However, before you can begin with that practice, your middle schooler and early high school student has to have some basic foundation in writing skills.

Middle schoolers should master the proper format of a paragraph –

A Hook to capture the reader’s interest and a Topic Sentence

At least 3 detailed supporting sentences that gives more information directly related to the topic sentence.

A concluding sentence that brings that paragraph to a close.

By the time learners start their first year in high school, they should be working on mastering the proper 5 Paragraph Essay (in this case an informative essay). I recommend having your learner pick a topic they could talk to you about off the top of his/her head for 15 minutes without really having to think much about it. This topic lends itself to writing this kind of essay and the learner can concentrate on the format of the paper instead of what to write.

Proper 5 Paragraph (Informative) Essay

A Hook and topic (thesis) sentence with an introductory paragraph that include mentioned the three subtopics (or details about the main topic) that you will be discussing in the paper.

3 Body – detailed, supporting paragraphs in the order in which they were mentioned in the introductory paragraph. – Include transition words and sentence variation.

Concluding paragraph which includes a rewording of the topic sentence with a mention of the 3 subtopics and a Clincher sentence (could be a big statement, last thought, question, or a call to action).

Then you are ready to use your literary pieces as a basis of other essays –

Persuasive essay

Analytical essay

Research (and/or MLA, APA, Chicago format) essay



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Persuasive essay with citations

Compare and Contrast essay itself to college application essays)

Literary Criticism

Grammar

Use your learner's writing to assess what skills they need to review and practice each week.

Other review and practice for grammar skills can be found with these resources –

[Rod and Staff](#) – (books go up to 8th grade, but the concepts and skills are up through high school work.) These books use diagramming and are very well explained. If you have a learner that loves following and making lists of steps and learns best this way, you might want to try diagramming. However, if it is frustrating or challenging for you or your learner to understand the “diagramming process”, it may not be worth using that method to learn the grammatical concepts.

If you have a hands-on learner, you may want to check out [Winston Grammar](#). This program uses a hands-on approach and labels parts of speech and how the words are used in a sentence.

Another program I recommend is the [Easy Grammar](#) series. The Easy Grammar books have the text and instruction to learn and practice new skills and the Daily Grams are workbooks that have a daily review with 5 different kinds of grammar concepts with one sample of each per day for a total of 5 quick review samples to practice. Loved this! As your child moves into high school, you may want to use the Ultimate Series that has the text and instruction and the practice in each. There are placement tests on the website to assist you.

Spelling

Spelling for middle school can still be in a phonics based spelling book as recommended in my Language Arts for Elementary Ages podcast such as [Building Spelling Skills by Christian Liberty Press](#). You can also look at your learner's writing and include words they misspell in your weekly spelling list. If you have a learner who is ready to tackle more complex words, I recommend [Spelling Power](#), an inclusive book that you will be able to use for years through high school and multiple learners. It supplies word lists and ways to study and learn the words each week.



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