

My Homeschool Curriculum: What We Use

I am using a curriculum called My Father's World and I love it. I really do, and I can't say enough good about it. You can read more about it here: <http://www.mfwbooks.com/> . We have done the Exploring Countries & Cultures and Creations to Greeks and are now well into the Rome to the Reformation curriculum from the Grades 2-8 books. I buy as many of the books as I can use and buy the rest of them new to save on costs. My Father's World would cover Bible, history, reading, and science for 2nd to 8th graders. You would add in math, language arts, spelling, and foreign language for all and science for anyone in 7th or 8th grade. Even though my daughter is a 9th grader this year, we are going to finish out this curriculum and raise her math, language, and science to the 9th grade levels. History and Bible doesn't change because your grade level changes.

I used Singapore Math until just recently and then switched to Teaching Textbooks. We really liked the Singapore Math books and my daughter did very well with them; however, she is absolutely loving Teaching Textbooks! She will even go so far as to 'sneak' an extra lesson in now and then. Their website is: www.teachingtextbooks.com and you can give a placement test there. You can also go into each level and take sample lessons.

I use Spelling Power for spelling and love it. Here is their website: www.spellingpower.com I found it at a used curriculum sale and have been using it for years. You can probably find it on ebay for a good price. It covers spelling from elementary throughout high school.

I use Sandi Queen's Language Lessons for language arts (www.queenhomeschooling.com) and alternate that with Institute for Excellence in Writing (www.iew.com) courses. We just started using Rosetta Stone (www.rosettastone.com) for Spanish; however, we also found DuoLingo (www.duolingo.com) and like it (it is an app on the iPad).

And, my daughter is using Apologia Science (www.apologia.com). We enjoy reading the science that is given to us with the MFW teacher's manual, and sometimes doing some of those experiments too, but she is doing the Apologia Science on top of it.

Sometimes we will do a lapbook that is correlated with the subject we are working on or the subject of an upcoming field trip. You can do a search for lapbooks and find plenty, but the ones that I have found that I like the best are the ones from In the Hands of a Child (www.handsofachild.com). They have some that are free and some that are not free, but they have them on just about every subject and they have wonderful instructions (exactly what I need!).

I think I should mention the Prairie Primer - <http://cadroncreek.com/shop/prairie-primer/> . I used this book with my older daughter in her 4th grade year, my younger one in her 3rd grade year (she actually sat through it the first time around and didn't remember it). It is a unit study using the Little House on the Prairie books, so that means that each subject is geared to the same

subject. Our reading, grammar, science, history, home ec, and sometimes math came from that book. (I had math as an add-on as well.) It was a special year for us each time we did it.

Another curriculum that we've used is Alpha Omega Homeschooling – www.aophomeschooling.com - I have used their Lifepacs (workbooks) and their Switched On Schoolhouse (computer) and we liked both.

The best things that we have used though, have not been bought curriculum. They have been life experiences. Field trips and hands on classes with our homeschool support group are invaluable. Playing games as a family, reading out loud to each other, watching movies all day together, taking a drive just to see what's out there – those are all great learning tools. Laundry, dishwashing, cooking, and general housekeeping are not to be forgotten! And, unfortunately, the death of a loved one has also become a learning experience. We learn so much in our lives as adults without ever opening a textbook; our children can learn things that way too. That's not to say that book learning is bad, only that it isn't the ONLY way to learn – don't let the book learning overtake the ability to learn from life experiences.