

Homeschool High School Transcripts

While children are in elementary school, it's fairly easy to simply choose the next program, as your children incrementally move along in their education. But when it's time to start high school, suddenly you're faced with transcripts, and transcripts are for college, and college is for your children's future. If the transcript isn't right, can you break your children's future?

That is a good bit more intimidating than just making the transition from one grade to the next.

Here's the deal: **transcripts are not as scary as you think.** In fact, there's not even a standard form that school systems use. Admissions offices get different transcripts from every school. They know how to read what you submit.

Do a quick image search of high school transcripts on the Internet for some examples. You'll see that they are mostly straightforward grids, with class title, number of credits, and grade awarded. That's pretty basic, without details.

You're not going to break your children's future.

How to think of a transcript

Remember, there's not a standard form that

school systems use. A transcript is a snapshot of your children's school career, their resumé, if you will. You have raised and trained and taught your children. Now you get to market them.

A transcript is a concise way to share what they have learned.

How to create a transcript

Ideally, you start keeping track of your students' studies when they are in middle school. Sometimes students accomplish high school quality work in junior high, and it's good to have a record of that. And it's good to have some practice keeping track of what your students study.

But if you didn't start in middle school, all is not lost. Start where you are. Even though fall of senior year is not ideal, if that's where you are, that's where you are. You can do it.

But if it's not fall of senior year, it's easier to keep track of studies as you go. Every semester or year, jot down what your student has covered. English classes, history, math, science, electives (music, art, PE, driver's ed, health, religious studies, computing, culinary arts, etc.).

Again, a transcript is a generic overview of what you've covered. A "culinary arts" credit

does not have to have a description that includes “sautéing, broiling, knife skills” and dates for each. If you love record keeping, you might like that for your own gratification, but your transcript does not require it.

As for the format, transcripts fall into two categories. Either one works. Choose the one that makes more sense in your mind. *There is no one right answer.*

Some parents like to keep track of credits by year: freshman year had these studies, sophomore year had these. . . .

Other parents prefer to keep track of credits by subject matter: Literature included British Literature, World Literature, American Literature I and American literature two. Math included Geometry, Algebra 2, Trigonometry, and Calculus. . . .

One of the benefits of the latter method is that you can spread credits out. For example, if your state requires a half credit of fine arts to graduate, and you have a son who has many interests, but the fine arts are not one of them, you can spread this half credit over four years: three field trips to art museums, a few movies about various artists, a book here and there about artists and art history. . . .

Or the requirement from some places for a half credit in health. Cover reproduction, basic hygiene, the importance of movement, best kitchen practices, and so on. Do an intensive study, or a bit day-by-day, but in the end, satisfy yourself that you’ve covered health adequately, whether it took a week, or bits of time spread over four years.

How to submit a transcript

Most people, when they apply for a job, tailor their resumé to each different potential employer. Perhaps they’ve done some research about the prospective company, and highlight different aspects of their job experience that might be more attractive.

You might be able to do this for your high schoolers as well. To take one example: Sonlight’s 200 History program is officially titled “History of the Christian Church.” If your children wish to attend a Christian college, this would perhaps be an attractive title. If your children wish to attend a secular college, you might also—and legitimately—title this course “World Civilizations.” (The spread of the gospel has gone throughout the world, after all, and has been a formative force throughout history.)

If you can’t think of any creative adjustments, that’s okay. But if something comes to mind, make the adjustments necessary.

And after you print out the transcript in black and white, you might wish the principal (you? Your spouse?) to sign it in blue ink, just to give it a bit more pop.

In Conclusion

As you prepare to finish your homeschooling journey, remember: you’ve got this. You have done the hard work of teaching and learning. A transcript is the final step to acknowledge all this hard work. You and your children should be proud of what you’ve accomplished.

Suggested Credits for Sonlight's High School Programs

Sonlight is not an accredited school, and so these numbers are merely suggestions, not some form of official license. That said, here are suggested credits based on actual Sonlighters who have gone on to college.

Each state has slightly different graduation requirements, but 22 credits total is a round number to work towards.

100	200	300
American History: 1 credit Bible Study: 1 credit American Literature 100: 1 credit ¹ Language Arts: ½ to 1 credit <i>(your call, depending on the quantity of optional vocabulary workbook and such)</i>	History of God's Kingdom or World Civilizations: 1 credit Bible Study: 1 credit British Literature: 1 credit <i>(or "Sophomore English" or "English 10")</i> Composition: ½ to 1 credit	20th Century World History: 1 credit Bible Study: 1 credit 20th Century Literature or World Literature: 1 credit Composition: ½ or 1 credit
400	500	600
Government: ½ credit Economics: ½ credit Bible Study: 1 credit American Literature: 1 credit Composition: ½ or 1 credit	World History and Worldview Studies: 1 credit Bible Study: 1 credit World Literature: 1 credit Composition: ½ or 1 credit	British Literature: 1 credit ² Composition: ½ or 1 credit

Recommended Resource

Sonlight Advisors highly recommend Café Cohen's *Homeschoolers' College Admissions Handbook*, available from Sonlight.

¹Please note: many classes read only four or five titles in a school year. All the Sonlight high school programs have more than 20 books, and some have close to 30. Even if your children only read 70% of the assigned Sonlight titles, they will have done far more than their peers

²This is such a full course, you might choose to give a student 1 credit for Literature, a ½ credit for Poetry, and a ½ credit for Composition. So much of this course is dedicated to poetry, both short poems and longer poems like Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, that would be acceptable.