

Parent's Names

Dan and Kathy Gelzer (Kathy is a WHO Board Member)

Children - now 26, 23, and 21; homeschooled from K thru high school**Why did you decide to homeschool?**

We decided to homeschool for many reasons, and the number of reasons to do so increased as we went along. We wanted to have more time together as a family, we wanted to pick and choose the curriculum to fit our kids and our values, we wanted to have a better "teacher to student" ratio, and we wanted to avoid germs and bullying.

How did you cover the 11 Required Subjects?**1. Reading**

Phonics Pathways was how all our kids learned to read. It was simple and straightforward, and it worked. Then we had the kids progress through easy readers from the library. Sometimes we had to just tell the kids to read for x number of minutes before they really caught the bug. The more they read, the better they got, and the more they enjoyed it--a lovely cycle! Also, we read lots of books from when they were babies to even after they could read themselves, even into the teen years.

2. Writing

We used many different cursive books, including *Handwriting Without Tears*. Copywork was what we did when they were just learning to write words and sentences, and it was very simple stuff at the beginning. At the beginning, just doing some writing of some sort every day was important to me. As they got older, we liked the IEW curriculum.

3. Spelling

I found online programs easy to use, and we used several different ones over the years. This also reinforced typing skills. Also, just practicing spelling words they ran into with other subjects was helpful.

4. Language

Rod and Staff English really helped my kids learn the parts of speech and grammar rules. It is very comprehensive.

5. Math

We used *Saxon Math* all the way from elementary through high school. It is a solid program. Even though it is not perfect, and my kids did not always appreciate it, we chose to stick with one math curriculum for the long haul instead of switching it up. This provided good continuity and kept us on track during the high school years.

6. Science

In middle and high school, we used *Apologia*. When they were younger, we used several different nature study journaling books.

7. Social Studies

Besides our history and geography studies, we talked as a family about current events, society, and culture in more general ways to help make connections.

8. History

For the early years, we used *Story of the World* which allowed me to teach all three kids together. It was fun and easy to do. We also used *A History of US* and other history books for the high school years.

9. Health

I cannot remember the title, but we found a Health curriculum at the consignment store that covered health in a holistic way--spiritual, mental, physical, social, etc. We had a lot of good discussions and added in research papers and essays on various topics.

10. Occupational Education

As my kids grew and found their passions, we let them actively pursue those, believing that those skills and tasks they loved would eventually (ideally) overlap with job and career choice. For example, one of our daughters took classes in theatre, and one took classes in American Sign Language. Also, my children had the opportunity to take a piano pedagogy class from their piano teacher which led to teaching opportunities.

11. Art and Music Appreciation

My kids all took piano lessons for all their years at home. Their piano teacher was excellent at incorporating music history and appreciation into their lessons. Art was accomplished largely through co-op classes. My husband and I love the fine and performing arts, so we took them to concerts, theatre, and museums from early on. They loved it!