

# *Level 1 Suggested Daily Rhythm*

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## **Goals: daily practicing diligence, independent learning, time management, and organization through lessons**

This is a tender age with hormones running about rampantly and freely, so I suggest that you sit down with your student before lessons or coop begins and lay out a plan of action for your boy-man and girl-woman. What will your M, W, F schedule/expectations contain? What about the weeks they have HW but we are not meeting in person?

Have your student create a list of consequences for times when their attitude stinks, work lags, he/she procrastinates, or does not do his/her work to the best ability, and, especially, for work left for the last minute. This will save you both great angst and frustration-- IF you are consistent in your expectation and consequences---as the year progresses.

Always use honey AND vinegar. Example: wake up in the 5 minutes allotted and I read aloud to you while you enjoy a breakfast you make. Vs. sleep until minute 6 and a different mama comes down to awaken you from your sweet slumber, you get right upstairs and to work with breakfast following first lessons and you go to bed immediately following dinner (when dad is home). No argument and no need to get angry.

Middle School should be child-led and parent-guided with the goal of the parent-guidance to lessen as the year(s) progress. You ***do remain*** your child's inspiration to model the art of becoming educated. If you are squeezing them in amidst your screen alerts it may not be successful. However, it is fair for you to have your own time to do your own work IF you have time available to work together. As the 'teacher-becomes-guide-becomes-goalie' you will help create the proper setting, teach how to organize and access needed material, be available to unpack and/or offer requested explanations, keep your child(ren) on task, and then give them room to stand on their own feet or indicate they still need your help. In our home, we have a saying that comes out around middle school, **"We will only control you in the areas in which you are not controlling yourself."**

Middle School years focus more toward a traditional approach to learning (HW, tests, deadlines) while working with the students as they become independent learners, self-motivated, organized, and responsible for their time and education. Ideally, this will carry beyond the classroom to their 'future selves'.

However, this is a process, so be patient, offer grace and mercy, allow re-do's, as you help guide them, keep them accountable, and have them check the quality of their schoolwork. At a minimum, you need to check their work at least once a week, requiring that they submit their composition for you to read (also) at least once a week (you don't have to make edits but you can if you do so tenderly and limited), and have them show you any requested corrections. Start strong and stay strong in your commitment to gauging your student's progress. They need to know that you are there- especially at this juncture filled with internal and external change.

### Math: Daily

If help is needed:

Review your notes

Go back a few pages in your textbook to look at examples and lesson

Kahn Academy.org has great video support and explanations

YouTube is full of additional teaching videos and explanations

### Composition: Daily

20-30 minutes per day on creating and/or improving your writing. An essay is never completed early as there is always room for improvement! Neatness counts and illustrations are a bonus.

Utilize any/all resources to expand your child's knowledge of the assigned subject in order that they might break down the original text and then rebuild using their own words and newly acquired knowledge.

Choose a resources that are dry as well as those that draw on the imagination, explain what is going on politically, and offer opposing theories. We must understand that which we do not agree with in order to defend that which we believe.

Teach how to utilize the fun of color—high light, various colored markings/symbols, colored illustrations

Teach them to take notes beginning with the chapter title, page numbers, bold words, topic titles toward advancing/maturing toward defining the terms in their own words, further researching difficult concepts, and illustrating parts/wholes.

**Personal notes are NOT a time for neatness.** You will dampen your student's spirit if you insist upon professional quality. They will need to take notes quickly yet efficiently. Focus on efficiency and creating a method of shorthand, circling items to connect with related items with lines/arrows, numbers, Roman numerals—anything that makes sense in their mind.

Grammar Workbooks: Daily (Daily Grammar Practice, Worldy Wise, or Daily Grammar Practice are our faves)

These small workbooks are packed with all that you need for a year of grammar! It is **vital** that you help your student learn how to use their workbook before setting them to the task. It is the only way they will fall into these easy methods of learning grammar.

**Grammar Songs:** Practice grammar songs from YouTube, make up your own. You can find a link to our silly songs here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=49qIKgP4dd0> . Some we made up while others we got from CC or YouTube. These will help markedly with grammar HW.

**Science:** 2-5X week; less if woven with another subject such as literature or composition

Utilize your textbooks to learn how to understand how the material is input using various forms from regular/bold text to images/boxes with additional information. Teach your student to read everything paying special attention to bold words, inserts, and any word/concept they do not fully understand.

Choose a textbook that draws on the imagination, explains what is going on politically, and offers opposing theories. We must understand that which we do not agree with in order to defend that which we believe.

Consider using many sources, texts, books, and sites rather than a single book. You can study any science at this point with no need to follow through on a single topic, such as physical science or biology, until high school. Enjoy this time of freedom to study broadly!

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**Nature Walk:** 1-3X week as a luxury rather than a demand; best if parent joins in

Go outside daily to move about slowly using skills of observation. The power of observation is overlooked as wasted time but many detail skills are heightened by one's ability to observe the 'big picture'.

Having to sketch something of interest gives purpose to a 5 to 15 minute period of observation. Rather than set this expectation from 0 to 60, work slowly up and join them in mind, body, soul, and purpose. It will make it all the more palatable for them if you are 'suffering' with them and you might rediscover a joy that has lain dormant.

Spend time over a full week adding detail, researching further information, color, and go back to re-observe or find another of the same to observe in a different place/manner.

There is a download companion Nature Study Suggestions to be used alongside several lovely books.

**History:** 2-5X week; less if woven with another subject such as literature or composition

Using a separate history text at this age often leads to myopic vision rather than the desired world view. My point is that if you only study in what you believe from a standpoint of America the Great (which it is), you will miss that other cultures/nations/religions have their viewpoint as well, and your children will not know how to defend their beliefs due to not understanding another's history/culture/point of view from any other vantage point than their own.

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Historically based literature is a wonderful way to weave curriculum, meet the needs of two subjects with one source, and give various viewpoints. When weaving subjects, be sure to extend the time expectation. Literature may be 20 minutes/day, but when woven with another subject, increase it to 40 minutes/day.

Read alongside, aloud to one another, ask questions/narration (tell back) and definitely excitedly have discussions. History can be so very dry, but if you are excited by what has occurred in the past, they will become curious to learn more.....which will be great leading into possible dry high school/college history classes/texts.

For younger children, as you read aloud it is wonderful to have them draw pictures of that which you are reading. Chapter by chapter, picture by picture, you will create a personal history book.

**Timeline:** This can be quickly done using Veritas Press of Classical Conversation time line cards or self-created using cut outs, print offs, drawings pasted along a ribbon on the wall. Introduce a small set, master, add on, master, and so on.