

*A Considered Booklist*  
*Building a Booklist for a Year of Study*  
*How and Where to find Living and Worthy Books for Home Education*

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*Book Resources: Finding Worthy Books*

**1000 Good Books List by John Senior**

- [1000 Good Books list](#) organized by grade

**History Book Resources: Books About Books**

- [Let the Authors Speak](#) by Carolyn Hatcher (oop)
- [Reading the Saints](#) by Janet McKenzie
- [A Literary Education](#) by Catherine Levison
- [For the Love of Literature](#) by Maureen Wittmann
- [A Picture Perfect Childhood](#) by Cay Gibson
- [A Landscape With Dragons](#) by Michael O'Brien (booklist in back of book)
- [Books Children Love](#) by Elizabeth Wilson
- [Who Reads What When](#) by Jane A. Williams
- [Books To Build On](#) by E. D. Hirsch
- [Books That Build Character](#) by William Kirkpatrick
- A subscription to [mater et magistra](#), a magazine for Catholic home educators.

**History Resources Online: Web Sites About Books**

- [Reading Your Way Through History](#)
  - [Reading Your Way Through History blog](#)
- [RC History Booklists](#)
  - [Volume 1](#) (Old Testament -- Ancient Cultures/63BC)
  - [Volume 2](#) (New Testament/63 BC -- Early Medieval/1066 AD)
  - [Volume 3](#) (Mid 11th - 17th century)
  - [Science in History](#)
  - [The Arts in History](#)
- [Penny Gardner's History booklists](#)
- [Literature to Supplement History](#)
- [ReadingWell Step-Up Books](#) - for beginning readers
- [Julian Messner Biography Series](#)
- [Mary's Books](#) has helpful lists of oop classics:
  - [World Landmark](#)
  - [American Landmark](#)
  - [Discovery Series - Garrard Publishing](#)
  - [World Explorers - Garrard Publishing](#)
  - [Americans All Series - Garrard Publishing](#)
  - [American Indian Series - Garrard Publishing](#)
  - [How They Lived - Garrard Publishing](#)
  - [North Star Books](#)
- [Dujarie Press Booklist](#) - this is a wonderful Catholic series of books that are mostly oop, although [Mary's Books](#) is in the process of reprinting them. They were published from the 1940's - 1960's. These are wonderful biographies.
- [Mary O. Daly :: Ye Hedge School - History Booklist](#)

- [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com) - Amazon's search engine can be a very useful tool in discovering books that could be pertinent or related to books you are searching for. Let's walk through an example of how this might work:
  - Let's say that you know you'll be using [The Red Keep](#) by Allen French as part of your booklist this year (Middle Ages). Click over to Amazon and look up [The Red Keep](#)...
    - ▶ ...and you scroll down to see what **\*Customers Who Bought This Item Also Bought\***
    - ▶ ...and you find a few other books that seem promising, look interesting, and you click on them one at a time...
    - ▶ ...and one at a time, you discover another new book and another...
    - ▶ ...and you read reviews to investigate the new books you've found...
    - ▶ ...and you may just find a treasure you knew nothing about...
    - ▶ ...if you do...make sure you **click on that author's name** to see what else they've written!!!
- HOW MANY treasures have I uncovered by doing just that!!
- [4Real Learning](#) - Home Education Message boards that invite and encourage sharing and support for those home educators using and emphasizing living books and designing their own curriculum.
- [Love2Learn.net](#) - A review site which is very helpful in looking up books.

#### **Science Book Recommendations and Booklists:**

- [Mary Daly's science book recommendations](#)
- MacBeth Durham has a website she maintains, [MacBeth's Opinion](#), and offers several suggestions for science reading across the different science branches. This web resource is simply invaluable for anyone tackling science emphasizing living books.
  - [Elementary Science](#)
  - [High School Science](#)

#### **Living Math Recommendations:**

- [Penny Gardner's living math recommendations](#)
- [MacBeth's Opinion living math](#)
- [Living Math reader lists](#)

#### **Panoramic Geography:**

- [Penny Gardner's geography booklist](#)
- [MacBeth's Opinion Geography](#)

## *Getting Started: From Ideas to Building the Booklist*

### **1) Build a yearly booklist - choose books using the resources listed above and consider...**

- books that already live on your shelves
- availability from your library
- ability to secure books inexpensively through used sources (bookstores, library sales, online vendors)

You don't have to buy every single book on your booklist right now! More on how I stagger purchases at **step 3!!**

- **Scheduling Books and Pages:** I compiled a tool to use as a reference table for approximating how many books to choose based on age/grade and broken down by term and year. It is based on a sample Charlotte Mason/Parents National Education Union (PNEU) schedule which can be accessed online. It can be a helpful tool, but should never trump your own knowledgeable and insightful considerations regarding your own child's abilities. Remember to be CONSIDERATE in choosing books...consider your children, their needs, abilities, your days and a variety of other factors...and then consider how many books you have chosen.
  - [Scheduling Books and Pages.](#)
- I prefer to build booklists in a table format incorporating columns which reflect details on:
  - **Subject** (and **credit hours** for my high school student)
  - **Book title**
  - **Author**
  - **Term the book will be read** (this may list one term, or it may list all 3)
  - **Term notes** (this is where I note how many pages will be read per term/per day)

### **2) Break the yearly booklist down into terms** (divide up the books you've listed into the 3 terms, or 4 quarters).

- Print it.
- Write all over it.
- Look at the books if you already have them.
- Flip through the pages.
- Look at the table of contents.
- Eliminate a few books at this point (this isn't a goal, but it always happens as I begin to narrow and focus).

### **I'M NARROWING MORE HERE....**

### **3) The yearly booklist is now divided into terms...from there divide up books into term total # of reading pages - this is purely mathematical:**

- --> number of pages in a book [**divided by**] number of terms the book will be read ...
- --> number of pages in a term [**divided by**] number of weeks in the term ...
- --> number of pages read in one week [**divided by**] the number of days during that week that the book will be read
- --> EQUALS the total number of pages a child needs to read a book each day that it is assigned to complete the book.
- --> LIST that number on your lesson plans. (Example: Read 4 pages)
  
- This is the point at which I begin to purchase books if I'm going to. **I purchase books one term at a time and find that this is a huge help to our budget.** (Use of libraries and making use of free ebooks is another great way to save, but we find building our home library a priority!)
  - I find that creating (private - viewable only by myself) Amazon wishlists with specific categories helps me remember which books I might want to buy - whether it is organizing books to purchase for the upcoming terms or in finding possible books for future years/topics of study. Examples of Amazon wishlist categories:
    - --> Preschool Story Books
    - --> Elementary History
    - --> Middle School Science
    - --> High School Geography
    - --> General Living Book Science
    - --> To be purchased Next Term

#### 4) Start building a weekly lesson plan for the term.

- Just like my yearly booklist, I prefer to build weekly lesson plans in a table format because they are intuitive in building, reading and living in our family. If lists work better for you - great! Build in a format that is most intuitive to you! I will share that building one weekly plan which works for an entire term of work means I can print fresh weekly plans at the end of each week (Thursday or Friday) and put them on the child's clipboard and they're READY TO ROLL....without having to stay up until 2 am on Sunday night writing lesson plans out for the next week.....*you know what I'm talking about don't you?*
  - I use a simple word processing program and drop a table into a document. (Spreadsheet formats may work well for some.) Tell the word processor how big to make the table (x number of columns by x number of rows), and you're off! I guess at how many rows I'll need and adjust as I build. For our weekly plan I like to list the days of the week across the top and the different learning blocks down the left side of the table.
- Using the considered yearly booklist, list the books and resources we'll enjoy on a daily and weekly basis on the lesson plan table.
- Further the mathematical computations and take the page counts down to a weekly and daily level.
- Print.
- Write all over the plan. (once it's written and printed it's often EASY to see areas that are over or under planned)
- Look at each day of the week on the weekly plan and count up the number of pages assigned for that day - circle totals at the top of each day.

#### 5) Reference [SCHEDULING BOOKS AND PAGES tool](#). Compare the number of pages I've assigned on given days to the number of pages Charlotte Mason (CM) assigned. Consider:

- Is it way more than CM used?
- Way under?
- Does it seem balanced overall?
- Is the amount assigned going to overwhelm a particular child?
- Does the amount of reading allow time for margin in the day so that it doesn't snuff out opportunities for creativity?
- Have I taken into consideration other things going on in a given day?
- Are we immersed in a themed unit study/rabbit trail? Page counts should not be as heavy.

#### 6) Adjust pages and books assigned as needed --> this may affect the weekly plan, the term plan, and the yearly booklist.

### I'M REALLY NARROWING THIS PLAN INTO SOMETHING WORKABLE NOW!!!

#### 7) Print again with the new changes reflected. If I'm working with an older child, I sit down with them at this point and invite their thoughts. Make further adjustments.

#### 8) Print WEEK 1 and live it!!!!

- **OBSERVE EVERYTHING** -- make notes directly on the lesson plans!!!
- Is the child overwhelmed?
- Is it clear that the amount of reading is a burden?
- Is the child able to read through the subjects of the day in a balanced way - in other words, some subjects aren't toppling others in terms of amount read?
- We enjoy making use of [weekly meetings](#) and I find it is super helpful for me in inviting the child's input. This can be done even with smaller children in a limited way, but it is such a wonderful way to communicate with your older student about the plan: what's working, what's not, what is especially enjoyed, and what is completed out of discipline. It is NOT inviting a decision from them...it IS inviting input and respecting it and really listening to what they're saying! I would go as far as to say that this is integral with a high school student completing a Charlotte Mason education.

#### 9) Further refine the lesson plans and continue living them.