

## Chapter 5

### Determining High School Credit

Determining high school credit is the next step in making a transcript. High school credit sounds like such a scary and official thing, but it's really not difficult. A credit is simply a reflection of how



long and how hard a student has worked. Usually classes are listed on a transcript as either one whole credit or one half credit. Numerically that looks like 1.0 or 0.5. In this chapter you will learn the four ways to determine high school credit.

#### **Method 1: Credit for high school level work at any age**

High School credit can be awarded at any age. As homeschoolers, we know this better than anyone. Credit is based on a student's ability within a subject. If your child is younger than high school age, but is doing high school level work, you can include that work on their high school transcript. When you look carefully at my own transcript, you will see an example. On my

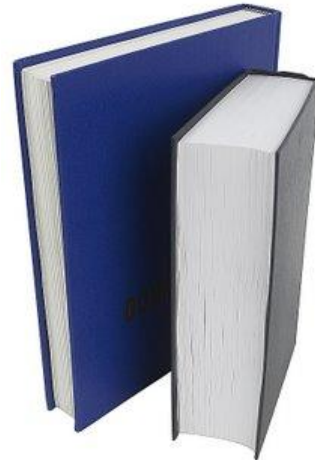
“**Transcript by Year**” I labeled those courses “**Early High School Credits.**” The top part of that transcript looked like this:

**Homeschool Senior High**  
**\*Home Address \* Our Town, WA, Zip Code\***  
**HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA AWARDED JUNE 11, 2006**

**Student:** Binz, Kevin      **Gender:** Male      **Birth Date:** 01/01/00  
**Parents:** M/M Matthew Binz      **Address:** Home Address, Our Town, WA Zip Code

| Academic Record by Year   |                                |                 |         |       |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|---------|-------|
| Year                      | Class Title                    | Completion Date | Credits | Grade |
| Early High School Credits | Algebra 1                      | 06/01           | 1.0     | 4.0   |
|                           | Latin 1                        | 06/01           | 1.0     | 4.0   |
|                           | Geometry                       | 06/02           | 1.0     | 4.0   |
|                           | Latin 2                        | 06/02           | 1.0     | 4.0   |
|                           | French 1                       | 11/02           | 1.0     | 4.0   |
| 2002-2003                 | English 1: American Literature | 06/03           | 1.0     | 4.0   |
|                           | Algebra 2                      | 06/03           | 1.0     | 4.0   |

Give high school credit for high school level work completed at any age, even if your children aren't old enough for high school. Once they have completed something that is high school level, include that on their transcript. The big question, then, is how can you determine if a course is high school level?



**The textbook company is a good place to start.** You will know a course is high school level if a textbook company says so. When Saxon says Algebra 1 is a high school freshman course, then you record it as such. If Apologia labels their Biology book as high school level, then you can feel confident doing the same.

**You can also determine high school-level curriculum according to its catalog listing.** A Rainbow Resource or Sonlight catalog might say something is appropriate for a 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grader, for example. Look at the homeschool catalogs that list your curriculum. When it is listed as a high school level course, you can too. By the way, any time “9<sup>th</sup> grade” is included in a description, it is high school-level.

Sometimes you can tell high school level work by the description from an accrediting program. Every once in a while I will hear that North Atlantic Regional High School (NARHS – an accrediting program in Maine) has considered a course of study as high school-level. For example, Rainbow Science is often considered high school level general science if you

complete it in one year. **If an accrediting agency identifies a course as high school level, then the course is high school level for your student as well.**

Sometimes the **parent will simply know best.** For example, one year we used Bob Jones World History over two years, even though it was supposed to be a one year course. While using each half of that textbook, we piled on the reading and added Teaching Company college level lectures. My students dove deeply

*Tips to  
Determine  
High School  
Level:*

*\*Textbook Author*

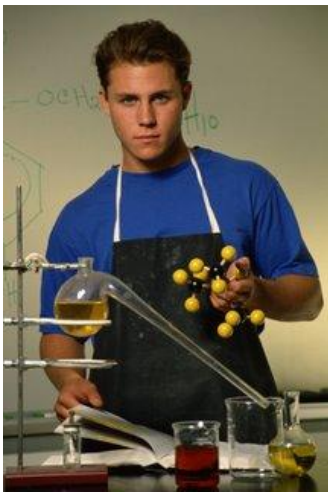
*\*Catalog Supplier*

*\*Accredited  
Sources*

*\*Parent Knows  
Best*

into the subject. I knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that everything we were doing to beef up that World History course would make each year one whole high school credit, even though the book was only supposed to be a one-year course.

## **Method 2: Work completed at high school age**



**Give high school credit for every class your student completes at high school age.** If a high school student takes a class at home, in a co-op, or in a school setting, it goes on their transcript.

This may seem obvious enough if your child is working at grade level, and doing the ordinary classes seen in high school. But this strategy also is valid for other situations. If your child was enrolled in a public school, and was not quite up to grade level in English, all their classes would still be included on their transcript. Each class would be labeled accurately -- something like “Remedial English” or “Basic English Composition,” – but the class would still be on the transcript. **Whether your student is above or below grade level, when they are doing work at a high school age it should be included on their transcript.** Don’t put your kids at a disadvantage just because they aren’t at grade level in every subject. Clearly labeled remedial work can go on the high school transcript.

This does NOT mean, however, that you have to graduate every student when they reach a certain number of high school credits. You determine graduation requirements for your student. They can remain in your homeschool until you decide they are ready to graduate. You can decide they will graduate in five years instead of four. However, I do suggest that you include on their transcript all work they do at a high school age.

### **Method 3: College level work at any age**

If your student does any college level work, include it on their transcript. When kids are homeschooled, and they love their particular area of specialization, they can get to a college level while still in high school. This works for public schooled children as well, so don't think for a minute that you are cheating! When a child is enrolled in a public school and is enrolled in a community college at the same time, it's called "Dual Enrollment" and it just means that a

***Parents with younger children might be surprised that a high school student can work at a college level – but it can happen!***

student can receive college credit and high school credit at the same time. Parents with younger children might be surprised that a high school student can work at a college level – but it can happen!

You will know it is college level material when your student can pass a college level test, like a CLEP or AP exam. Students attending community college while in high school are doing college-level work. Your transcript should include all college-level courses, including dual enrollment in community college, AP exams, CLEP tests, and any college credit earned with correspondence school or distance learning. All of them should be included as high school credit.

#### **Method 4: Credit based on Demonstrated Expertise**

If a student is working with **adult-level expertise**, you can give them high school credit. High school credit can be awarded to a student based on demonstrated expertise. For example, if your child has work published in a magazine, they are functioning on an adult level in their area of specialization. I know a homeschooled student who was published by National Geographic. He wrote an



article on the migratory patterns of birds, and sketched all the artwork himself.

This certainly demonstrates expertise! Christopher Paolini wrote Eragon when he was a 15-year-old homeschool student. It became a New York Times Bestseller. Don't you think his mother included that on his transcript? I'm sure she could have! **Feel confident about putting expertise on your transcript.**

My son had his essay on the economist, Friedrich Hayek published in a national magazine when he was sixteen. This demonstrated his expertise in economics, and I was able to include that credit on his transcript. There are other ways to demonstrate adult level knowledge. You can also tell that your child has demonstrated expertise when a college professor, high school teacher, or professional in the field tells you your child is working at an adult or expert level.

#### **Including Driver Education on a Transcript**

I am often asked about including Driver Education on a transcript. As with most things, there are many “right” ways to do it, and you can choose to do it any way that you like! With my boys I simply put “pass” because I had read a book that suggested it. Since that time, I’ve read other books that suggest grading it, and other books that suggest you leave it off the transcript altogether. Based on all of that information, I’d say that including Driver Education on your transcript is completely and totally 100% your preference. Keep in mind that if a college

***Demonstrated  
Expertise  
Tips:***

***\*Published  
as an adult***

***\*College professor  
recommendation***

***\*High school  
teacher  
recommendation***

***\*Professional in  
the field  
recommendation***

doesn't want to use that grade, they will just drop it. Colleges often take the classes they LIKE and figure the GPA of those grades only. With that in mind, anything you do for Driver Education class will be fine – you make the call.

~~~~~

Get my book,

**[Setting the Records Straight](#)**

**How to Craft Homeschool Transcripts and Course Descriptions  
for College Admission and Scholarships**

Copyright 2010 Lee Binz  
All Rights Reserved