

QLD Homeschool Plan 2017-2018

Grade 7-8

Reasons for Homeschooling

C is a highly intelligent child. He has been attending private school for grades 3-7, taking part in the Gifted and Talented extension programs, and was accelerated from Year 3 into Year 5. Chas struggled since entering High School and it has become apparent he has some learning difficulties. Upon having him assessed by an Occupational Therapist and a Psychiatrist he has been diagnosed with a Functional Writing Impairment (formerly dysgraphia) and Autism Spectrum Disorder Level One (formerly Asperger's).

C frequently has issues with classmates and older students, and as a result is fearful and upset about going to school. We are also dissatisfied with the school culture and feel the teaching staff are hampered by the reporting requirements of the school and the National Curriculum. We believe that C will progress far more in his home environment than at school, and will regain his love of learning when given the freedom to explore his own interests, coupled with one-on-one instruction from his parents.

Our Homeschooling Environment

While C has a very high IQ, he also has some sensitivities which make mainstream schooling difficult for him. He is unable to regulate his behavior around other students, which frequently makes him the subject of negative attention from students and teachers alike. He is emotionally quite immature, while at the same time is intellectually quite mature, so is unable to relate to the students in his year level. He struggles with executive function and frequently forgets items required for class or home. We believe C will flourish in the comfortable, familiar environment of his home.

C has his own bedroom where he can spend time reading, playing, using his iPad and relaxing, and has his own desk in our office area where his laptop is setup. We will do much of our work at our dining room table which is in our well-lit, well-ventilated kitchen/dining area.

C has a love of writing stories and spends many hours absorbed in creating these.

We have our own yard and C can play on both grassed and concreted areas. He has a bike and can cycle in our local area to visit friends, shops etc.

Our Homeschool Style

C is a very fast learner, and when interested can advance very quickly. He has many, varied interests and we are excited that he will now have the opportunity to explore them more deeply, and fill his days with meaningful learning.

We will teach C using an eclectic, natural learning style, using the outcomes of the Australian Curriculum as a guide. C will follow his own interests and we will use these topics to create integrated learning pathways.

C's older brother B will also be homeschooled. They like to do everything together, and are quite similar boys in many ways, so their learning plans are very similar.

We have discussed with C his interests and future plans and have worked to align these with the Australian Curriculum.

Social Interaction

C has a group of friends who live nearby from school, who he will continue to socialise with.

We will take part in many field trips and homeschool group activities, as well as access tutoring in group classes for subjects such as Drama, Coding and French.

C's brother will also be homeschooled and the two boys are very close and play together all the time.

C enjoys online gaming with school friends who live out of our local area, and will continue socialise in this way in his allowed 'gaming' time.

C is a member of Mensa and the Queensland Association for Gifted & Talented Children. These organisations both organize activities throughout the year, which we will join. There are also days run for gifted children by Gateways and Brainwaves which C can attend several times a year.

Additionally, we will access mentors from the local community and do volunteer work when C's interests lead him there.

Our Short Term Goals

This year we intend for C to strengthen his foundation in math (especially comprehension of worded problems) to ensure he fully grasps increasingly harder material. He will continue with Year 8 level math and possibly go on to Year 9 work.

We would like C to begin to show deeper interest in, and understanding of, the underlying motivations of people, both in fiction and in real life.

We would like C to begin to understand and develop his own morals and opinions, based on full understanding of topics and situations.

C is also quite bossy, he does not like listening to other people, and prefers to talk in never-ending monologues on his current interests. As such, another of our goals is to help him learn how to read the facial cues and interest level of his audience and adjust his conversation to suit.

We also want C to remember how to play and be happy, as he is only just 11 years old, and too much of the last year has been unhappy for him.

Our Long Term Goals

C has requested that we teach him life skills as well as traditional school subjects, so we will be doing many practical lessons such as learning how to cook meals and how to navigate public transport.

C has always been different at school – smarter, smaller, less mature. We would like to help him to find out who he is without comparing himself to other people. We want to teach him self-confidence and self-awareness.

We would like to start to give C the tools he will need in the future if he decides to go to University, so we will focus on understanding assignment instructions, how to research and essay writing, as well as ensuring he knows how to approach people to get clarification on things he does not understand.

Assessment

We will monitor and assess C's learning progress in Math, English and Science by using the resources from the Assessment Bank on the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority website and sample tests from the Acara website as part of our curriculum.

For Humanities & Social Sciences, The Arts and HPE we will use work samples from the beginning and the end of the year to assess and monitor his learning progress.

For all subjects, we also assess and monitor C's learning progress using our own observations and notes made throughout the year. I will record learning and activities daily and will take photos frequently.

All samples will offer feedback to C, and be dated.

Resources

I have mentioned some of the types of resource we will use in each section, and include a more comprehensive list of the resources we will use at the end of this document.

English

C loves writing, and has a fairly advanced vocabulary, but his spelling and command of grammar need work. We will continue to expand his vocabulary and understanding by taking note of unfamiliar words as we come across them, and looking up their meanings, and ensuring correct spelling and grammar is used at all times. As C has recently been diagnosed with a Functional Writing Impairment we will not require him to produce hand-written work, but will encourage him to write for enjoyment.

We would like C to show deeper understanding of concepts and critical thinking in his writing and will work with him to develop these skills. We will discuss the reliability of

various sources of information, and how language can influence the chosen audience, and how the chosen audience can influence the style of the writing.

We will work with C to study a selection of writing styles, including fiction, non-fiction, articles and poetry. We will introduce biographies in his areas of interest, such as *Anzac Heroes*, by Ivancic & Gill, and will do book/movie comparisons several times during the year. We will complete a book/movie review of *Tomorrow, When the War Began*, by John Marsden, and will write a news article from the point of view of both the Australians and the Invaders, as well as a persuasive text on an ethical area from within the novel. We will read and analyze the poem *Cargoes*, by John Mansfield and construct our own poem in a similar style.

English will be woven throughout all areas of our home school curriculum and C will be learning through reading for much of his time. C will learn to recognize various text structures and language modes, and will be encouraged to write in many different styles.

We will use resources such as our local public libraries, our own ever-growing collection of books, online news sites, movies and documentaries.

Mathematics

C has been studying accelerated mathematics at Grade 8 level at school, but has shown weakness in problem solving. Our goal is to provide a firm base of knowledge in problem solving so he can continue to advance.

We will follow the content set by the Australian Curriculum for Year 8 and Year 9, including simple and compound interest, study of rates, ratios and percentages, index law, expanding and factorizing algebraic equations, two-way tables, Venn diagrams, linear equations and relationships, outliers effects, probabilities and area, simple and compound interest, study of the Cartesian plane, Pythagoras' Theorem, probabilities with tree-diagrams and arrays, probabilities, stem-and-leaf plots and histograms focusing on understanding and interpreting results.

We will allow C to progress through the Khan Academy High School programs at his own pace. We will also provide resources such as books and online courses for learning more about Pi and the Golden Ratio.

C is very interested in designing houses, so we will assist him to explore this interest by providing him with graph paper and resources on architecture. He can then build his creation in Sims 4 if he wants.

We intend to ensure C continues to advance in mathematics, while incorporating his other interests such as history and technology. We can see many opportunities for this and will use resources such as books, Khan Academy, Mathletics, books, Minecraft, Lego, board and card games and real-life situations such as planning shopping or excursions, saving for a goal and planning and starting a small business.

Science

C has an innate interest in science and has had many specific areas of interest over the years. He consumes science documentaries and reference books at a great rate

and currently is deeply interested in chemistry. C has previously only been interested in the experiments themselves, so we will encourage him to plan and record these, to formulate his own theories, test his ideas and critically analyze his outcomes, and consider modifications for future tests and outcomes, and to use scientific language.

We will follow the ideas and content set by the Australian Curriculum Year 7 and Year 8, including study of separating substances, unbalanced forces, sustainability and Earth systems, interactions and differences between organisms, how different types of science and cultures have been used to solve real-world problems, the particle model, energy transformations and transfers, as well as structure and function at cell level.

We will foster C's interest in science through access to resources, field trips to places like museums and areas with natural features which align with his interests such as Inverell for sapphire fossicking.

C enjoys cooking and we will incorporate chemistry into our kitchen skills as well as using our chemistry set to create and replicate experiments from books and the internet.

We will study the natural environment as we travel through it and will discuss land formation, erosion, flora and fauna both at Australia and throughout the world.

We will use resources such as our local public libraries, our own books, online websites such as NASA, the International Space Station and Google Earth, science-fiction movies, documentaries by scientists such as Bill Nye, Brian Cox and Neil DeGrasse Tyson, visits to museums and natural environments and online courses such as Khan Academy and Coursera.

Humanities and Social Sciences

C is very interested in how the Earth has changed since its creation, both geographical and historical, and how religions are formed.

C currently has a very egocentric world view, so we would like to help him understand his place in the world. We would also like to help him understand ethics and sustainability, and what the world might look like in the future.

We will provide resources such as biographies, historical documentaries, Horrible Histories books & TV episodes, museums, Short & Curly podcasts, local public libraries, our own collection of books, online courses such as Khan Academy, research online, and statistical and census data from various times and countries.

The Arts

C enjoys creating artwork using a variety of resources, for example clay, painting, carving talc stone, textiles, natural materials and photography, and we will continue to encourage him in this. C also enjoys creating engineering craft projects, and we will assist him to analyse his creations and attempt them again with improvements.

C takes part in a weekly drama class, which he really enjoys. He will continue to do this, and to attend the holiday workshops the drama club puts on.

We have software for creating and editing movies and C has previously shown an interest in creating stop-motion movies with Lego. We will encourage this by watching other people's Lego and Claymation movies on YouTube, and ensuring he always has access to the equipment and resources required.

We will visit GOMA and local art galleries and will discuss the different styles and techniques, as well as try to get an impression of what the artist is trying to convey. We will look at many artistic styles and discuss life in different time periods and cultures and how it may influence styles.

C's father is a carpenter and C has requested he be taught how to use tools and create woodwork projects.

C also has access to many resources through his grandfather who is a retired engineer, his grandmother who creates papercraft and a family friend who is an artist. When he has the desire, he can access all of these things.

We will use resources such as technology, art supplies and books from our home collection, model kits, online courses, power tools from home, and possibly access homeschool or after school art groups.

HPE

C is not a very athletic child, he does not have great teamwork skills, so does not enjoy team sports. We will continue to encourage C to work on his teamwork when we are in group situations, such as his weekly drama class.

C has previously achieved an Orange Belt in Tae Kwando and if he wants to he can continue these lessons. He has also had private tennis lessons for around 12 months and may want to continue this.

We have a dog and an important part of every day is to take him to the beach for a walk, where C runs up and down the sand dunes playing with the dog.

We also have a treadmill at home and C often runs on this while watching YouTube on his iPad.

It is important that C continues to be active every day, and that he understands how to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

C has expressed an interest in learning how to look after himself, including things like doing laundry, planning meals and cooking. He will learn these things through experiencing them as part of daily life.

C likes to watch documentaries, including those on health, so we will continue to make these available on Netflix and as a family will watch and discuss them. As part of this we will also learn about where food comes from, what sort of foods are better and worse for us, and about worldwide sustainability. We will also incorporate

science by learning about calories and energy, and by growing our own vegetables in the garden.

C wants to know about how to get a job, how to plan for future study, how to write a resume and other early adult skills, so we will have many discussions around this and will look at examples on the internet and talk to our wider community about their experiences.

We have very open communication style with C, and he is encouraged to ask questions about things he doesn't know. He has already had a couple of years of 'Sex Ed' at school, but we continue to have discussions around this and will provide books and other reference material if he wants more information.

It is important to us that C continue to meet and interact with many different people to improve his social skills. We will ensure he maintains regular contact with his school friends and will also join with the local homeschooling community on a regular basis to build new friendships.

Languages

Chas taken two years of Chinese at school. We will provide access to online learning for him to continue this through Language Perfect, and through tutoring if he requests it. We will also allow him to learn French, as his brother does, or another language if he chooses.

Resources

There are many others we may access, including those on the attached HEU Resource List, but these are some that I have considered and found valuable so far:

How Stuff Works website
NASA website
International Space Station website
TryScience website
The Exploratorium website
Science Toys website
Bill Nye the Science Guy shows & website
Science News for Kids website
BrainPOP website
Crash Course YouTube Channel
Extreme Science website
Human Body app by TinyBop
David Attenborough documentaries
Dr Brian Cox documentaries
Neil DeGrasse Tyson documentaries
Horrible Histories series
Horrible Geography series
Coursera courses
Language Perfect
Khan Academy
Garage Band
Mathletics

Short & Curly podcast
Year by Year – and many other DK books
Anzac Heroes (Ivancic & Gill)
Tomorrow series (John Marsden)
Maze Runner series
Hunger Games series
Percy Jackson series
Heroes of Olympus series
Magnus Chase series
The Lord of The Rings series
13 Reasons Why series
That Sugar Film
Michael Mosley documentaries
Super Size Me Documentary
Hungry for Change Documentary
Fed Up Documentary
Sugar Coated Documentary
The Chemical Maze Book
Heston Blumenthal Books
foodtimeline.org
Ted Talks
Scishow Kids website
FrenchLearner.com
Open2Study
V-Sauce YouTube Channel
Webucator.com