

# Transcripts

## Making the Most of Extracurricular Activities

by Cindy Downes

Documenting extracurricular activities (a mission trip to Brazil, teaching a preschool class, starting a lawn business, etc.) is not only evidence of your child's learning and social experiences, but it could be a deciding factor to your child's being accepted at a particular school or college. Like most homeschool parents, you no doubt faithfully record these activities in the extracurricular portion of your child's transcript. Wouldn't it be better, however, if your child could gain academic credit for his activities as well? He can! Here's how.

### Activity vs. Credit Course

First, let's review the difference between an activity and a credit course. An **activity** involves time spent as well as participation in projects related to the particular activity. A **credit course** involves not only time spent and participation in projects but also completion of academic work including reading, research, and written compositions related to the learning experience. Therefore, to change an activity into a credit course, you must add an academic component.

### List Learning Experiences

The first step in doing this is to write down a list of different learning experiences that could be involved in the activity. For instance, in a **lawn-mowing business** your child could learn marketing, advertising, book-keeping, accounting, graphic arts, business ethics, and equipment repair and maintenance.

### Course Descriptions

Armed with this list of possible learning experiences, look over course descriptions from your local high school and decide to which course or courses these experiences could be applied. (A list of course descriptions is available on the Oklahoma Homeschool website at [www.oklahomahomeschool.com/courseDesc.html](http://www.oklahomahomeschool.com/courseDesc.html).)

For example, in a lawn-mowing business, the following courses would be relevant:

- General Business (1 semester, 1 credit)
- Business Management/Ownership (2 semesters, 2 credits) and Business Management/Ownership Internship (2 semesters, 2 credits)
- Marketing Education (2 semesters, 2 credits) and Marketing Education Internship (2 semesters, 2 credits)
- ComSci: Desktop Publishing (1 semester, 1 credit)
- Accounting I (2 semesters, 2 credits)

### Course Requirements

After you have determined which course or courses would enable your child to receive credit from his or her activity, jot down the necessary academic work needed to fulfill the course requirements. In the lawn business example above, you might first decide to have your child complete the ComSci: Desktop Publishing course in order to help him or her create a business logo, business cards, and customer invoices. Academic work that would fulfill this course requirement could include the following:

- **Reading and Research**
  - An instruction manual for your desktop publishing software
  - A book on advertising design
  - Research on the internet for sample logos, business cards, etc., for ideas
  - Taking a field trip to a desktop publishing business and interviewing the owner
- **Composition**
  - A short composition on effective advertising design or other topic related to the subject
  - Completion of a brochure, flyer, logo, business cards, invoice, and letterhead
- **Quizzes or tests, if needed**  
Create your own with the free, online Quiz Center (<http://school.discovery.com/quizcenter/quizcenter.html>).

### Documentation

As your child progresses through his academic work, keep appropriate documentation that could include:

- The number of hours worked or volunteered. Have your child's work or volunteer supervisor (if other than yourself) sign off on the number of hours he worked and assign a grade (if needed) for on-the-job training.
- Evidence of research done related to the course:
  - A list of books read
  - A list of research completed (internet, magazines, interviews, etc.)
  - Copies of research papers, compositions, and other written work
- A list of projects completed (include photos, if available)
- Photos of your child participating in the activity (if possible) and field trips taken
- Copies of quizzes or tests, if available
- A transcript showing final grade and number of credits received.
  - Note: 1 credit = 0.5 unit and one semester of work; 2 credits = 1 unit and two semesters of work.
  - (See [www.oklahomahomeschool.com/trans1.html](http://www.oklahomahomeschool.com/trans1.html) for more information on preparing transcripts.)

As your child continues the activity, continue to add appropriate coursework in order to earn additional elective credits. In the example above, your child could begin the Business Management/Ownership + Internship course next to earn an additional four credits. By completing these academic components, your child will not only demonstrate an exceptional learning and social experience but will also earn a number of high school elective credits as well!

NOTE: A GREAT RESOURCE FOR TEXTBOOKS RELATED TO ELECTIVE SUBJECTS IS YOUR LOCAL COLLEGE OR TRADE SCHOOL BOOKSTORE. WHEN MY SON WAS STUDYING COMPUTER GRAPHICS, I WENT TO A LOCAL COLLEGE BOOKSTORE AND PURCHASED THE SAME TEXTBOOKS USED AT THE COLLEGE FOR MY SON TO USE AT HOME. I PURCHASED A NURSING MATH TEXTBOOK FOR MY DAUGHTER. BOTH OF THESE CAME WITH SUPER WORKBOOKS THAT I USED FOR THEIR ACADEMIC WORK.

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