How to Build Professional Home Library for Teenagers?

(guide for novice parents and pedagogues)

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Disclaimer

THE AUTHOR OF THIS DOCUMENT IS NEITHER PROFESSIONAL MEDICAL WORKER, NOR PROFESSIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST, NOR PROFESSIONAL ANTHROPOLOGIST, NOR PROFESSIONAL PEDAGOGUE, NOR PROFESSIONAL LAWYER, NOR PRACTICING PARENT. ALL PUBLISHED INFORMATION IS BASED ON AUTHOR'S EXPERIENCE OF READING SEVERAL HUNDREDS LITERARY MATERIALS FOR DIFFERENT PURPOSES SINCE CHILDHOOD.

Introduction

This guide is based on literary self-studies performed by me in teenage and adult years (which included reading several hundreds literary materials), and partially related to several other similar guides/articles written by me during the latest year. You should consider all information published here as very biased. The topic of necessity and usefulness of professional home library for teenagers is outside of this guide; please, check professional pedagogical literature to explore it deeper.

Definition

The term *professional home library for teenagers* used in this guide describes library that fits the following criteria:

- it contains materials that either cover 2-3 professional topics completely up to doctorate level, or provides limited amount of professional materials (about 2-10 items per field) that allow entering (on different levels) about 10 professional fields (it is supposed by me that latter case is preferred if you don't know yet what are the real interests of your kid);
- about 50% of materials should be on popular level to provide smooth entrance to professional topics.

As a result of documented limits, the total amount of materials in the library is expected to be *several hundreds* items.

Content

- If you have not deep personal/professional/business connections in some specialized fields of science or industry, if you don't know such fields well by yourself, and if you cannot assist your kid in some other ways to be employed in these fields later, then you should not concentrate your library at some specific topics, it is better to cover wide range of topics in such case.
- At least 20% of purchased literary materials must be extensively illustrated, and at least 20% more should have some illustrations plus illustrated covers (both estimates are based just on my personal preferences).
- At least 30% of purchased literary materials should be in paper format, and these paper materials should include not only introductory/popular level content but content of doctorate level too in equal proportion in relation to all library materials (it is again estimate based just on my personal preferences).
- The library should include about 5-10 full collections of works of some authors with about 5-20 books in each, and/or about 5-10 series of books with about 5-20 books in each series written by different authors that completely cover some topics. It may be just my personal preference, but it is supposed that presence of such collections and/or series may train your kid to dive deeply into specialized topics. With the same purpose of training to dive deeply, you may purchase for your library large novels, large collections of stories, large eposes, and scientific monographs.
- Globalization trends make life unpredictable, that's why having materials that cover multiple exotic regions may be more correct strategy in the perspective for 20+ years.
- It is worth to buy materials on techniques of reading to train your kid to read efficiently.
- Scientific materials on anthropological and social topics are very easy for reading in fact because they contain minimum of mathematics, may contain many photos, and generally,

are written in rather clear language; so, even high school student may absorb them without any issue. If you purchase a lot of classic, ancient/medieval, and historical literary materials then it is good idea to counterweight them with scientific researches of modern social life.

- Due to global redistribution of labor, engineering topics may have very negative flare from the point of view of typical modern teenager; if you want to attract your kid to engineering, then maybe you should buy engineering materials for construction of yachts, geology of gems, and production of other luxury objects.
- Scientific research materials may be published as monographs and as collections of publications; some of such collections are built very well to provide comprehensive review of complex topics without necessity to dive deeply.
- It is supposed that placing purchased literature in home library chaotically is better for educational purposes than structuring it in according to some standard classification.

Reading

- In early childhood it is worth to practice group reading with family members or playmates.
- Pay special attention to lighting conditions, chairs used for reading, ebook/display models used for reading, and sizes of fonts used in the books. Do not use tablets for reading at all; desktop computers should be used for reading short online materials only; all other materials should be read either in paper or in e-ink devices. Consultation with professional medical worker is desired to be made in advance.
- Train your kid to practice sportive breaks at least each several hours in the process of reading. Reading in nature is recommended too. Consultation with professional medical worker is desired.
- You should expect that your kid may invent her/his own techniques/practices of reading and may have strict preferences to some environments for reading.
- The amount of time required to extract and absorb complex ideas from literary materials may vary from several hours up to several days of continuous reading; the amount of time required to immerse into large topics may vary from several weeks up to several months of continuous reading with several hours of reading per day. So, you should not disturb your kid in such periods, if you want reading to be really useful.
- Some kids may start reading or browsing professional literature as early as about getting 7 years old or so (it is note based on my personal experience).
- The fact that kid is very interested in reading zoological, artistic, erotic and similar literature may just signal about lack of connection to nature or lack of socialization, no more.
- Writing essays in different styles upon reading large portions of literature and/or participating in discussions about this literature with other teenagers may bring some benefits, as I guess. But I never did it by myself seriously except following school

requirements which were very relaxed in Russia of 1980's and 1990's. Please, check professional pedagogical literature to find more information on this topic.

Risks

- It may happen that by 18 years old (or another noticeable day), your kid who has read the most part of purchased literature will decide that he/she has no interest anymore in any of topics that were read, and needs to go another way in life, much more prosaic and routine or much more extreme and dangerous than you expected.
- Your kid may become less socialized than you expected and will gradually join some community of "alternatively thinking" people.
- In the periods of deep concentration on reading that may last for months, your kid may become too vulnerable to different standard dangers, or vice versa, may turn to be too dangerous for other people if he/she has higher physical abilities, if he/she drives car/bike regularly, or if you keep firearm or large dog at home.
- Also, these periods of deep concentration may be considered as symptom of some disease by school psychologists or medical workers and cause unnecessary medical intervention.
- Your kid will find travel, hitchhiking, mountaineering and similar blogs and guides by herself/himself in any case; to avoid unpleasant surprises, it would be better if you would compile subscriptions/collections of such materials by yourself, and discuss each of these materials with the kid in details.
- And finally, upon reading a lot of literature your kid may decide to become writer or try to practice some activities described in literature with non-adequate or outdated theoretical and practical training (not only travel/sportive activities but everything else too). "*If you like bread, it does not mean that you can cook it*", as I was told at one Internet forum; it may be good to explain this wisdom to your kid too before active reading will be started. Also, you should explain that some life paths and behavior models described in literature may be significantly outdated by modern standards, and should be absorbed very carefully even if read material has been written just 5-10 years ago (writer could just retell 500-year old story in modern environment, as it is done sometimes).

Navigation for Inexperienced Parents

The following informal list of topics is taken from my self-studies and it is definitely not exhaustive, it is provided just as a reminder for inexperienced parents that some types of literature exist (because they may be absent in local book store and even difficult to find online). The topics are sorted in random order. Structuring is performed not from the point of view of librarian, but from the points of view of pedagogue, parent, and teenage reader. I suppose that such approach will provide better navigation in literary world to compile library for your kid.

Large fiction literature
(modern and classic periods cover 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries)
Modern and classic novels
Modern and classic collections of stories
Modern and classic large poems
Ancient and medieval novels
Ancient and medieval eposes (in prosaic and in poetic forms) and large poems
Ancient and medieval myths, stories, and fairy tales (in prosaic and in poetic forms)

Short poetry
Pathetic and propagandist
Romantic
Ancient and medieval

Popular literature
Adventure novels
Crime novels
Love novels
Biographies of personalities
Conspiracy materials
Cryptozoological materials
Sportive guides
Pet breeding/caring guides
Psychology
Parenting
Medicine
Military materials
Business and finances
Popular science online newsfeeds

Linguistic literature
Grammar guides
Dictionaries
General linguistic materials
Stories/articles in foreign languages

Revolutionary literature
(I grew up in USSR, there was a lot of such stuff everywhere :))
Fiction revolutionary literature
Historical revolutionary literature
Autobiographies of personalities
Biographies of personalities
All listed above but about scientists

Magazines
World news
Science news
Teenage culture
Sports

Professional and scientific literature formats
Introductory materials
Monographs
Collections of research publications
Guides
All listed above but with autobiographic elements
Industrial online newsfeeds
Technical documentation
Open access repositories of all listed above
Blogs of science and industry professionals with possibility of direct communication

Travel diaries, blogs, and guides
Standard tourism
Hitchhiking
Mountaineering
Zoology
Anthropology
Medicine
Sea travels
All listed above but outdated or historical

Encyclopedias
General
Artistic
Ethnographic
Zoological
Technological

Theatrical and cinematographic literature
(modern and classic periods cover 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries)
Modern and classic plays
Ancient and medieval plays
Screenplays
Directing and producing guides
Documentation for computer graphics tools

Science fiction and similar literature
Technological
Biological
Anthropological
Adventure
Fantasy

Erotic and sexological literature
Artistic
Ethnographic
Scientific
Humorous
Modern, medieval, ancient, and fantasy
Sportive
About sexual minorities