

Homeschool Report – year 8 2015 (ACT)

As a help for those wondering what a yearly report can look like, this is my reflection for 2015 for my daughter who was in year 8 at the time. I asked her permission and she said it was fine. This was for the yearly "report" in Canberra. [Photos and names have been removed from original document to protect privacy.]

Reflective Discussion: Trek

This year, E participated in a pioneer re-enactment event. This event ran over 3 days and involved pulling a handcart loaded with the supplies needed for those days, sleeping under the stars, eating pioneer food, wearing typical pioneer dress and undergoing various exercises that simulated some of the hardships of pioneer trekking.

E decided that she wanted to make her own pioneer garb from scratch. The first thing she did was research what time period the pioneer trek was set in and the clothing styles and fabrics of that age. She discovered that bright fabrics were popular, as were small floral designs. She also discovered that sleeve length and neck height varied but long skirts or dresses were standard. The next step was to find a pattern and fabrics that were similar in design to those of pioneers but also within our price range. After much searching she decided on a light fabric and a dark fabric, both with small florals on them. Then she needed to calculate how much fabric, trim and interfacing was needed. With the research and acquisition phase over, it was time for manufacturing. E needed to learn how to read a pattern, cut it out and assemble the pieces. This was a big learning curve for her and something she had never done before. This activity utilised comprehension, math, home-economics, history, and research, critical thinking and problem solving skills. In the end E made her pioneer dress and assisted in the making of her other one as well as her bonnet and apron.

With her clothing ready, shoes worn in, kit bag packed and sleeping gear organised, E set off.

Trek was hard. She tried new foods, was physically exhausted from pulling a handcart and walking for days, emotionally worn from spending every hour of every waking moment surrounded by people and from facing fears such as sleeping in the open where there were potential bug encounters. But she came through on the other side with a deeper understanding of her capabilities, having achieved making her own clothes, and having made it through such a tough experience.

On reflection afterward, she said she would not like to do it again but that she was glad that she had had the experience.

I feel that this was a beautiful representation of the growth that has happened in E this year. E thrives wherever there is a fact to be learned or knowledge to be gained but she shies away from real-life experiences and hates learning processes, especially without a manual. I have seen E begin to face her apprehension of trying new things and of trying things that she isn't going to be perfect at straight away. Another example of this is her decision to try piano lessons. She would not attempt this last year because she was afraid of failure but in 2015 she had some lessons and has grown exponentially in both her understanding of theory and her ability to play; and she plays beautifully.