



Cheat Sheet by Allison Burr

Episode 11

Using the Library without Losing Your Mind

Guest: Jamie Martin

Meet Jamie Martin	2
In this Episode	2
Cheater's Guide	3
Major Takeaways	4
Show Notes	5

Meet Jamie Martin

Jamie Martin is the editor of the wildly popular SimpleHomeschool.net, and also blogs at steadymom.com. She is the homeschooling mother of three children and has authored several e-books: *Steady Days*, *Mindset for Moms*, *The Steady Mom's Freedom Guide*, along with *Secrets of a Successful Homeschool Mom*.



In this Episode

In this episode, Jamie discusses why she stopped taking her kids to the library a couple of years ago but still managed to use the library's many free resources – while meeting her family's needs at the time. Jamie also helps us strategize the best ways to utilize the library, how to decide what books are worth reading, and what reading aloud looks like in her home right now.

Cheater's Guide

Use this guide to skip to parts that most interest you, or [listen to the entire podcast](#).

- 4:42 Jamie shares about her family.
- 6:40 Why Jamie stopped taking her kids to the library — do what works best for your family right now.
- 12:14 Jamie's new way to approach the library: alone, with a list.
- 14:26 Approach your family life as seasons.
- 16:18 We all forget that WE (as the parents) are the experts on our family.
- 16:54 Focus on what's working now.
- 17:59 The next phase of library: one-on-one research.
- 19:44 The beauty, and convenience, of interlibrary loans.
- 21:26 Developing a relationship with your librarian.
- 25:45 How to handle twaddle.
- 31:32 Reading aloud in Jamie's home: lots of pegging onto mealtimes.
- 36:52 Jamie's favorite desert island read-alouds.

**It just comes down to what works for your family in that season.
That is what I want to give permission for people to do —
in this case with the library or really in any case
that comes to you in parenting or homeschooling...
you are the expert on your family, each of you.**

—Jamie Martin

Major Takeaways

1. Remember the maxim that you need to do what works best for your family *right now*.

If loading up the van with kids, strollers, and book bags and heading to the local library does not work for you right now, there should be no accompanying guilt. If you are listening to this podcast, you likely have already made the decision that books are important.

Eliminating regular trips to the library does not contradict that principle, because there are other ways to make the consumption of books a reality.

Moreover, parenting is not a simple trajectory. Your family life will be filled with ups and downs, steps forward and steps backward. This might be a season where your kids + the library = migraines for mama. Set it aside, and know that a new season will soon enough be on the horizon.

Remember what Jamie said? She thought she would eventually transition to one-on-one time at the library, but she didn't have to. Now she joyfully takes all three of her kids there again, and she is able to guide their book selections while still getting work done – a scenario she had never imagined. Take heart!

2. Don't make a big argument over twaddle.

Yes, you need to train your children, over time, how to identify and prefer quality books over mindless fluff. But engaging in an argument with your child (or multiple children) at every library visit will quickly extinguish everyone's desire to enjoy the benefits of the library.

Jamie's advice on how to handle the child with a penchant for twaddle? Tell your child to put two books back and they can pick out two more in a similar vein at the next visit. An added sign of solidarity may be to put one of your own books back as well. Simple, practical, and eminently doable.

3. Mastering the art of pegging: it is easier than you think!

Review Melissa Wiley's discussion of pegging in [Episode 7](#) for a refresher. In Jamie's house, linking reading with already-scheduled mealtimes is working beautifully. She reads aloud one chapter from their read-aloud at breakfast; at snack time, she reads aloud the Bible; and at lunch she reads one more chapter book or perhaps a library book. Recently, her husband

has started reading aloud a few minutes before dinner begins, to settle the troops around the table and allow mama a few more minutes to plate up and get dinner underway.

There is no magical formula here of how many and at what times. The point is that layering reading aloud on top of something you already do (effortlessly) may be the hidden snippet of time you have been looking for. Give it a try!

Show Notes

Books we talked about during the show:

The Roman Mysteries by Caroline Lawrence: *The Thieves of Ostia*, *The Secrets of Vesuvius*, *The Assassins of Rome*, *The Pirates of Pompeii* (and many others)

Pollyanna by Eleanor H. Porter

Ragweed by Avi

The Chronicles of Narnia by C.S. Lewis, beginning with *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*

A Picture Book of Harriet Tubman by David A. Adler

The Phases of Learning by Oliver and Rachel DeMille

Little House Nine-Book Box Set by Laura Ingalls Wilder

Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte

The Power of Positive Thinking by Norman Vincent Peale

Other links from this episode:

Jamie's posts about how the Little House books have had an impact on her family, [On Why I Stopped Taking My Children to the Library](#), and [Why We Won't Be Signing Up for the Library's Summer Reading Program](#)

Sarah's [What's Working Now](#) posts (it constantly changes!)

Jamie's Books (I've read and enjoyed all of them!)

[Mindset for Moms](#), [Secrets of a Successful Homeschool Mom](#), [Steady Days](#), [The Steady Mom's Freedom Guide](#)

To find more resources to help you build your family culture around books, visit ReadAloudRevival.com.