Avoiding Surprises with Planners

Family Tip Sheet | Primary and Elementary School

Introduction

Have you ever experienced the thrill of learning your child's big science experiment— the one you knew nothing about–is due tomorrow? Have you ever discovered your child signed you up for snacks that need to be at the school party in an hour? Have you ever realized the day of parent-teacher conferences that you have conferences scheduled for both your children at the same time? Life can sometimes get a little complicated. But your child's planner can help both you and your child make life less complicated. Knowing how to plan and schedule tasks and projects is useful throughout life. Learning how to use the planner is a good place for your child to start developing that skill. Read more for suggestions on how you and your child can get started using the school planner.

Table Talk

As you and your child look at the planner together, you might ask these questions:

1. Do you have any field trips this month?
2. Are there any special programs or presentations for which you need to prepare?
3. Are there any events, parties, or conferences that I should know about?
4. What assignments or tests do you have this week?

Tips & Tricks

- **Take the time to look over the planner with your child every day.** Make a commitment to set aside 15 minutes in the evening to go over your child's planner with her or him.
- **Take note of any big projects that are coming up.** If you see any big projects in your child's planner, work together to schedule time during the week to complete them.
- **Take note of any tests that are scheduled during the week.** If you see your child has tests scheduled for the week, set aside some of your own time to help her or him study for them.

Plan & Practice

You and your child can practice using the planner the very first day of school. Start a routine for using the planner right away.

- When your child comes home from school, ask to see the school planner and talk about how you can use it together to stay organized.
- The planner is a great way to communicate with your child's teacher. You can begin communicating the first day of school by jotting down a quick greeting to the teacher in the planner, and introducing yourself.
- Practice transferring information about upcoming events from your child's planner onto your own calendar or planner.
- Remind your child to write after-school activities into the planner, too. The planner is a great way to remember friends' birthdays, parties, sports tryouts and games.

Learn More

For more information on how using planners can help keep you and your child organized, check out the sites below:

- ***Global Post***
  http://everydaylife.globalpost.com/organization-tips-elementary-school-students-5843.html

  A site with suggestions for helping elementary school students get organized.
- ***Homework Tips***
  http://homeworktips.about.com/od/timemanagement/a/planner.htm

  An article with tips on how to help your students use a planner to help with time management.
- ***Mind Focus***
  http://mindfocusgeneration.com/2012/05/3-tips-to-help-students-stay-focused-on-academics-when-spring-fever-kicks-in/

  This site provides tips for helping students stay focused when "Spring Fever" arrives.
- ***School Family***
  http://www.schoolfamily.com/school-family-articles/article/6896-help-your-child-get-organized-for-school-success

  The article offers suggestions for helping your child get organized for success at school.

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