

Homework Tips and Ideas



PTA Presentation

November 8, 2011

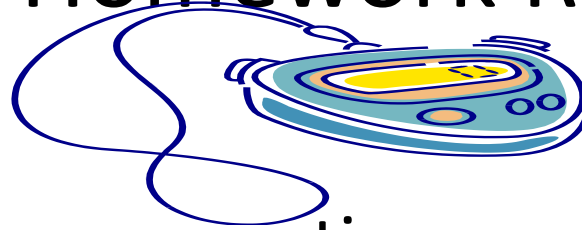
Sara Luesse, Professional School
Counselor

Home Study Space

- Set up a Home Study Space that is:
 - * Well Lit.
 - * Comfortable.
 - * Free from distraction.
 - * Well stocked with school items.
 - * Neat/tidy.
 - * Attractive.



Have a Homework Routine



- Students who have a routine are more likely to do their best everyday.
- Remember the routine has to fit around the parameters of your family schedule.
- Keeping a calendar or weekly schedule somewhere visible can help build organization in a child.
- Have a routine for what gets finished first. For example: math is first, reading is right before bed, etc.

Common Questions



- When should my child study/do homework?
 - What should my child study/do first?
 - How long should my child be spending on homework?
- *Evening. Late night is not the best time.*
 - *Typically the more difficult subjects should go first, they take up the most energy. However, some parents choose to have the more difficult subject in the middle, and that is fine, too.*
 - *Usually 10/15 minutes per the grade level: a kindergarten student might spend 10/15 minutes per night, whereas a 5th grader will spend closer to 1 hour or 1 half hour, depending on work speed. Remember every student works at his or her own pace.*

Common Questions



- Should I give my child breaks in between?
- Is it okay to play music or have the t.v. on during this time?
- Where should I be or what should I be doing during homework time?
- Yes, short breaks can help a student be more focused on the task at hand. Consider setting a timer so that the breaks have boundaries and talking with your child about how much time the break will be beforehand.
- This really depends on your child. For most children, music is okay. For some, the t.v. doesn't bother them. Consider having a t.v. "off-time" where everyone in the family is working on something – this way the child doesn't feel left out or isolated.
- * Keep proximity to your student, but try not to stand over his or her shoulder. Part of the reason why teachers assign homework is to learn independence and responsibility.
 - * It often helps children if other family members are working on a task at the same time. For example; organizing family documents, paying bills, organizing a purse or briefcase.
 - * Consider having your child work on his or her homework independently, then checking over the homework.

Remember the last part!

- Help keep the backpack organized.
 - After homework time, put all items back where they need to be for the next day.
 - Put your backpack, jacket, or whatever else is needed near the door, or some other location that is the same everyday.
 - Try to do this with your items, too, so that it becomes part of the family routine.



If a student is struggling...

Often, students struggle with homework. Here are some ideas on what to do...

* Wanting it to be perfect...

- Keep in mind that homework is for practice. Students are also getting that practice in class daily.
- Remind your child that in order to learn, sometimes we have to make mistakes, or keep on trying something. Very rarely does anyone “get” something on the first try. Consider letting your child see you miss something on the first try, or talking to them when you make a mistake.

* Not staying on task...

- Consider using a timer.
- Rearrange their homework schedule and build in breaks so that it suits their learning style. - Talk with the teacher about how long your child might take in class to get an idea of how long they should take at home. Remember that each child will do things at their own pace.

* Homework is taking too long...

- Set a timer. Remind your child that their free time will be shortened if they take too long with homework.

More reasons a student might struggle...

- * My student isn't bringing home all of his or her assignments...
 - Talk with his or her teacher. Set up a system so that the two of you can communicate about homework so that your child knows you can double check.
 - Insist on responsibility from your child...in some cases parents have taken away a fun activity (video games) if a student doesn't show them their homework right away...

- * I am unclear about the homework policy in the classroom...
 - Talk with the child's teacher. Make sure that you know if homework is taken only for participation, or for grade. Usually in younger grades, homework is participation and practice. In older grades, homework is worked in to a child's grade. All are important, however.

Advice from Teachers!!!

- * Students will benefit from 10 minutes of multiplication/addition practice each night.
- * I read, we read, you read is a good strategy to practice reading.
- * Let your students make mistakes on homework.
- * Write a note if something couldn't get finished.
- * Your interest in homework is worth a million bucks!
- * Reading logs/responses are meant to be a part of the homework process.

Other things to remember...



- Here are some things you can do to help encourage your child:
 - * Set an example: make sure your child sees you setting aside time to organize, read or work on something.
 - * Reward positive behaviors: praise your child when you see them working independently, being organized, putting their things away. Sometimes the simple act of thanking someone can go a long way!
 - * Practice together: go through the backpack together nightly, decide what papers to keep and what can go, hang up papers your student is proud of, talk to your child about how they feel about their work.
 - * Start small: remember that these behaviors are learned over time and have to be modeled, praised and worked on each day. Eventually, students will become independent 😊.

Happy Homeworking!!!