

HOMework (Guide for Teachers)

Definition of Homework: Homework is a purposeful learning experience which is an extension and/or application of school learning that is assigned by the teacher to be done outside the school environment.

1. Homework has a definite place in the educational program when it serves the following purposes:
 - a. Stimulates and develops independent study habits, responsibilities, and self-direction in relation to the pupil's maturity and intelligence.
 - b. Reinforces school learning by providing necessary practice and application on needed skills.
 - c. Enriches and extends school experiences.
 - d. Helps children to budget time.
 - e. Leads children to use community resources.

Homework should be purposeful and appropriate to the needs of the child and/or the class. Wisely used, it is beneficial. Unwisely used, it can be a waste of time and even harmful (if it creates undue exhaustion, tension, or friction between parent and child.)

The best type of homework helps the child to accept responsibility, think for himself/herself, become more independent and reinforces classroom learning. It should strengthen the home school relationship and awaken in the child new interests and awareness of the world about him/her. Daily homework assignments should count not more than 20% of a student's final grade. This excludes short- and long-term curriculum based projects.

2. Guidelines for the primary grades (K-3): In grades K-3 homework is encouraged when the child and class will benefit. Possible types of homework assignments include:
 - a. Searching for articles for class collection or project.
 - b. Obtaining information from parents or others relating to a class activity.
 - c. Learning facts important to the pupil's well-being. (Address, telephone number, etc.)
 - d. Investigating immediate environment for purposes of observation and comparison of findings with other children.
 - f. Reading frequently in library books easy enough so that this is a pleasure rather than a chore.
 - g. Planning a story to be written in class the following day.
 - h. Planning ways to carry out a project (as with a committee).
 - i. Completing unfinished assignments.
 - j. Practicing the use of skills which have been taught.
 - k. Previewing work that he/she will encounter in the future.
3. Guidelines for Intermediate and Secondary Grades (4-12): Assignments which meet the following criteria serve the cause of good homework:
 - a. Homework should be an outgrowth of work done in the classroom and should fit the needs and interests of individual pupils or groups of pupils.
 - b. Homework should be designed to stimulate the child's intellectual curiosity, to improve his/her fundamental skills, and to advance his/her further knowledge.
 - c. Homework need not be assigned on a daily basis but may be a project of longer duration. With long-term projects, specific steps should be taken by the teacher to

check on the progress of the work in order to avoid a last minute rush on the part of the pupil.

- d. Homework should be regularly checked and evaluated and/or should be used in the daily program. Students should receive consistent feedback on assignments.
- e. The assignment should be a reasonable one in view of the pupil's home conditions.
- f. The pupils should understand what they are to do.
- g. Pupils should understand whether they are to do the assignment with or without the assistance of parents or others.
- h. Children in intermediate and secondary grades should be encouraged to:
 - i. Read for information and pleasure.
 - ii. Visit local places of interest.
 - iii. Study the community, neighborhood or city.
 - iv. Select radio and television programs related to good music, literature and art.
 - v. Work on suitable projects and experiments.

4. At any grade level, short-term assignments may be used as follows:

- a. After a prolonged illness.
- b. When a child has a specific weakness and the schools feels that he/she will benefit from additional practice after school hours.
- c. When work can be done easily and profitably at home.
 - i. When other resources are available to assist the child.
 - ii. When parents are aware of conditions suitable for good results (proper lighting, quiet room, appropriate period of time, etc.)

5. The Responsibility of the Parent: Parents do their part to improve homework when they cooperate in the following ways:

- a. Provide suitable study conditions.
 - i. Reserve a specific time for homework and help the child to budget his time.
 - ii. Provide a desk or table and the necessary supplies.
 - iii. Insure freedom from loud noises, household distractions, television and visitors.
 - iv. Avoid home emotional stresses and pressures as much as possible.
 - v. Be responsive to school organizers, homework pads and assignments.
- b. Show a genuine interest in the child's school and homework activities. They may talk things over with the children and help them to help themselves rather than to do the work for them.
- c. Encourage the pupil to work at and complete each homework assignment.

6. The Responsibilities of the Pupil: The pupil is expected to:

- a. Make an honest effort to successfully do the homework assignment.
- b. Return the homework to the teacher when asked to do so.
- c. Return in good condition books and materials taken home.

7. Do's and Don'ts for Homework:

- a. Keep homework criteria in mind when making assignments.
- b. Consider the length of time the assignment requires.
- c. Consider the child's ability when assigning homework.
- d. Know whether pupils have the resources necessary to do the homework.
- e. Don't use homework for disciplinary purposes.
- f. Don't assign homework and forget about it.
- g. Don't overload on homework.

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