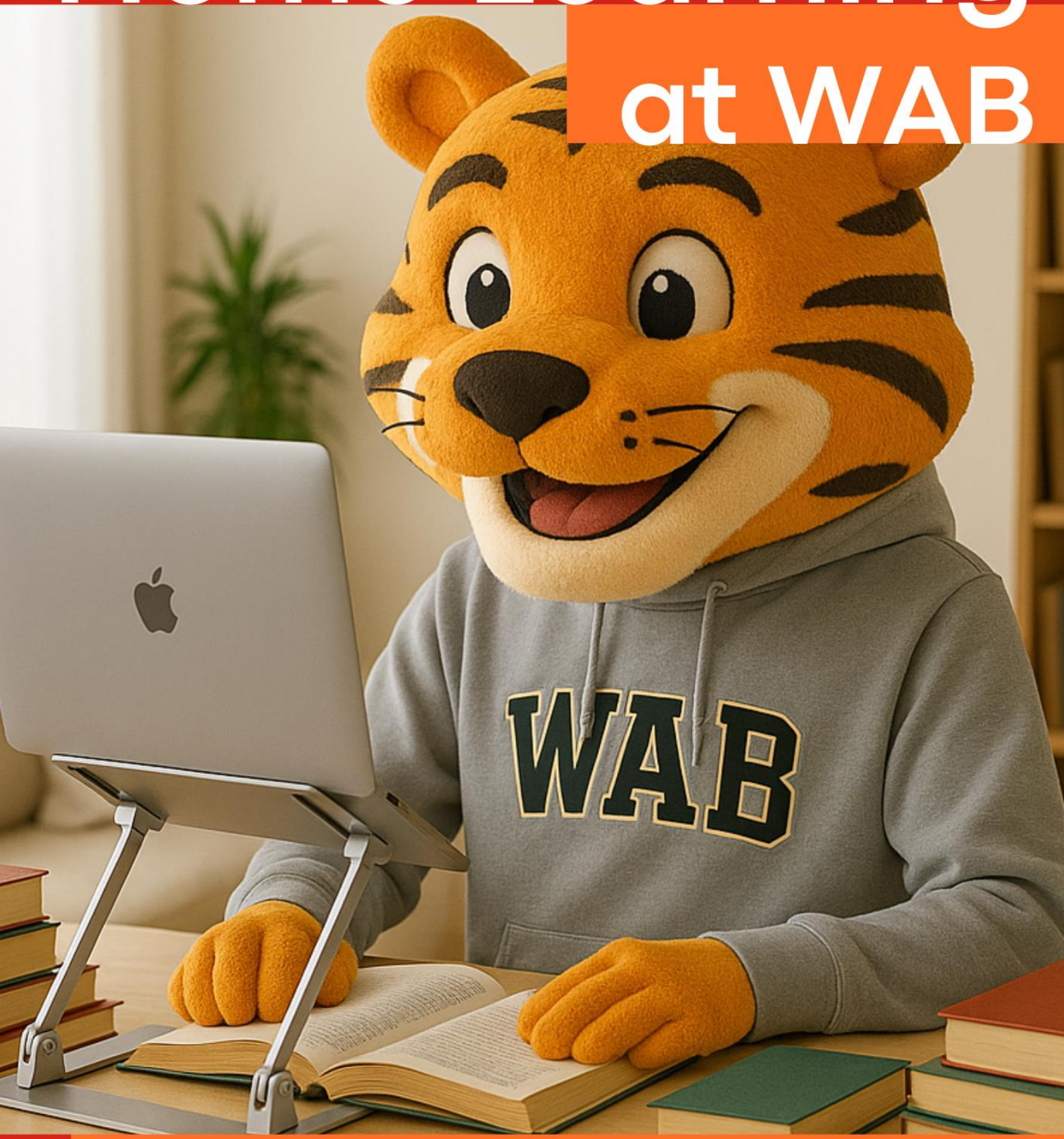
Home Learning at WAB



Guidelines

For WAB EY-G12

2025-26

Western Academy of Beijing

WAB's Home Learning Guidelines outline the purposes and structures of Home Learning at WAB, from elementary school to high school.

Philosophy

WAB is an intentionally inclusive and innovative school that serves a diverse community of learners. **WAB's Home Learning Guidelines** align with our **Definition of Learning**:

> *"Learning at WAB is a transformative process, which is intentional and iterative, challenging and joyful, and serves an authentic purpose."*

Philosophy Statement: Home Learning at WAB

WAB values the home-school partnership in ensuring our students are challenged and inspired, whilst valuing balance, wellbeing and the opportunity to engage in extra-curricular activities.

At WAB, home learning is designed to:

- Support and extend learning beyond the classroom in a positive way.
- Foster learner agency and responsibility in students.
- Protect balance, wellbeing, and time for family and extracurricular activities.
- Recognize that learning is diverse and personal, and that emotional engagement drives attention and learning.

WAB's Home Learning Principles

The following principles guide WAB's approaches to Home Learning.

Consolidating Learning

Effective home learning consolidates classroom learning, It allows students to apply concepts, engage with material in new contexts, and strengthen understanding through review, reflection, and exploration.

Home-School Communication

Effective home learning gives parents and caregivers a window into the classroom. It helps parents understand what their children are learning and offers opportunities for meaningful dialogue about learning goals, progress, and interests.

Balancing School Learning with Family Learning

At WAB, we recognise that our diverse community of learners have needs beyond the requirements of the school curriculum. WAB's guidelines ensure that academic expectations leave time for personal pursuits, exploration, and rest.

Balancing Academic Learning with Personal & Social Wellbeing

While home learning contributes to academic growth, it must be balanced with healthy routines, sleep, nutrition, physical activity, and social connection. WAB emphasizes holistic development so students can flourish.

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Home Learning in the Elementary School

See the ES Handbook here: https://wab-press.wab-edu.cn/developing-independence/
See also "Home Learning in WAB Elementary School", shared at Back to School Nights.

Home Learning connects home and school, offering opportunities for parents and children to share in the child's learning journey. It is tailored to individual student needs, supporting and extending learning in a positive way.

For younger learners, home learning nurtures positive attitudes and habits and may involve family participation to reinforce early skills. For older elementary students, it increasingly promotes student agency and independence.

Recent neuroscience and developmental psychology highlight that emotion drives attention, and attention drives learning. Therefore, students have choice in their home learning. Teachers offer a range of options connected to classroom learning and transdisciplinary skills, while students make responsible choices that balance their interests and areas for growth.

Parent Partnership
Parents are encouraged to engage with their child's learning through reading, discussion, and curiosity-based exploration. The Parent Portal provides further guidance on supporting learning at home. We encourage parents to check their student's Toddle portfolio and have conversations about their student's learning and growth.

Recommended Time allocated to Home Learning Daily in Elementary School

Home Learning tasks will most likely be undertaken by students from Monday to Thursday and may be teacher or student directed. There may be some differences in the amount of time that tasks take to complete therefore time spent on home learning may be distributed throughout the week. Students are encouraged to make balanced choices in their home learning.

- Early Years/JG1- Reading/discussions as appropriate (Not required)
    - *Home Learning is not expected in EY-JG1.*
- Grade 1- 15 min (10 min homeroom, 5 minutes Languages)
- Grade 2- 20 min (10 min homeroom, 10 minutes Languages)
- Grade 3- 30 min (15 min homeroom, 15 minutes Languages)
- Grade 4- 40 min (20 min homeroom, 20 minutes Languages)
- Grade 5- 50 min (25 min homeroom, 25 minutes Languages)

One of the strongest contributors to academic success is reading. We encourage parents to read with their children, and to make use of our extensive library resources.

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Home Learning in the Middle School

See the MS Handbook here: https://wab-press.wab-edu.cn/keeping-organized-2/

WAB Middle School aims to help all students reach their academic potential through a collaborative effort among students, parents, and teachers. Homework is meaningful, manageable, and connected to classroom learning.

Types of Home Learning

- **Application**: Reinforcing classroom concepts (e.g., review notes, practice math, conduct a home experiment).
- **Extension**: Thinking more deeply about questions that matter (e.g., reading or discussing related articles).
- **Creative Work**: Using imagination and originality (e.g., generating designs or ideas).
- **Preparation**: Readiness for upcoming learning or assessment (e.g., completing organizers, studying for tests).

Time Guidelines

Students may spend around one hour per night completing homework, varying by subject and grade level. Work not completed during class time may need to be finished outside of class (e.g., at lunch, Day 9 workshops, or after school).

Time Management

Students are expected to plan effectively, especially for long-term projects. The Student Planner supports organization and tracking. Parents can assist by encouraging consistent work habits and avoiding last-minute completion.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Students**: Responsible for completing work thoughtfully and on time.
- **Parents**: Provide structure, setting, and encouragement.
- **Teachers**: Assign purposeful tasks and offer feedback.

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Home Learning in the High School

See the HS Handbook here: https://wab-press.wab-edu.cn/keeping-organized/

Home learning continues to play a crucial role in academic success, preparation for university, and the development of time-management and organizational skills. Students, teachers, and parents work together to sustain these habits. Subject teachers will also clarify their home learning expectations with students.

Purpose of Home Learning

Home learning supports academic growth through:

- **Reinforcement and Supplementation**: Applying and extending class learning.
- **Completion**: Finalizing tasks not finished during class, such as revising or proofreading.
- **Review and Preparation**: Regular study, advance reading, and consolidation of prior learning.
- **Checking feedback and improving learning**: Students receive a lot of written, verbal and interactive feedback. Home learning is a great opportunity to consolidate this feedback into improvement on their work.
- **Reflecting on learning strategies**: Metacognition (thinking about learning) is a powerful factor in becoming successful, independent learners. Students should reflect on their approaches to learning, setting plans for personal improvement.

When no specific homework is assigned, students should read, write, or review previous material to stay prepared and confident.

Time Guidelines

Students should expect 20–30 minutes of homework per subject per evening, amounting to 80–120 minutes total across all subjects. This will vary depending on assessment deadlines.

Teacher Guidance

Teachers are expected to:

- Assign work directly related to classroom learning.
- Communicate tasks and due dates clearly.
- Enter assessments into the Assessment Calendar.
- Monitor completion and contact parents if concerns arise.

Late Submissions

Teachers plan timelines carefully and expect punctual submissions. Students who miss deadlines must attend make-up sessions (lunch, after school, or Day 9) until work is complete.

Grade 11–12 and IB-Specific Deadlines

Deadlines tied to the IB Diploma Programme (Internal Assessments, Extended Essay, TOK, CAS) are non-negotiable. Work not submitted on time will receive an "N" (no credit) and may affect diploma eligibility. Students should plan for early completion and adhere strictly to published timelines.

Examples of Unacceptable Reasons for Incomplete Assessment:

- Misreading the timetable
- Oversleeping or lateness
- Holidays, family moves, social events, or competitions

In the case of illness or serious circumstances, students must request extensions in writing before the due date.

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Creating the Conditions for Effective Home Learning

Home learning can promote personal and academic growth when managed intentionally and under supportive conditions.

Teachers Should…

- Assign purposeful tasks.
- Focus on consolidation, extension or preparation.
- Be mindful of balance and student workload.
- Provide effective feedback.

Students Should…

- Set goals for learning.
- Organise time & space.
- Seek help when needed.
- Make balanced choices.
- Reflect on their learning.

Parents & Caregivers Should…

- Provide calm, well-lit and comfortable study spaces.
- Provide encouragement and support.
- Encourage reading & discussion in any language.
- Challenge but don't rescue in home learning tasks.
- Show interest without taking control.
- Promote health routines.

Home Learning: What Works and What Doesn't?

How home learning is completed is more important than how much is done.

Effective Practices

- Clear purpose and goals.
- Student choice & agency.
- Focused effort.
- Regular reading & discussion.
- Consistent routines and spaces.
- Balanced, healthy schedules.
- Feedback that emphasises growth.

Non-Effective Practices

- Unclear purposes.
- Excessive or restrictive tasks.
- Extensive, unstructured "work" that depletes energy and wellbeing.
- Inconsistent routines.
- Stress over grades, rather than learning.
- Tasks with no feedback for improvement.

Additionally, for older students…

As students move through middle and high school and are balancing multiple subjects and extracurricular commitments, the following strategies can be effective:

- Setting a regular schedule for home learning that fits around extra-curricular and family commitments.
- Planning "micro-deadlines" as they work towards larger tasks.
- Adjusting routines to the student's body clock and energy levels.
- Sleep!
- Effective study strategies (such as interleaving, spaced repetition and retrieval practice), rather than extensive time on re-writing notes.
- Making informed choices about effective use of technology.
- Avoiding "multitasking" or distractions.
- Ensuring balanced, healthy nutrition and exercise.
- Seeking and reflecting on feedback to improve their learning, then evaluating their approaches to learning so that they can be more effective.

WAB does not recommend external tutors for families. If families choose to engage in external support, they should make sure that the tutor is understanding of the school's approaches to teaching and learning and does not create mixed messages.

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HEALTHY HOME LEARNING



Encourage Short Bursts of Focused Work

- Schedule and follow a productive routine.
- Take breaks to refocus and move.



Provide a Well-Lit, Comfortable Space

- Create a designated space for home learning.
- Avoid noise, distractions and darkness.
- Maintain comfortable temperature & sound.



Use Technology Productively

- Make and follow a productive plan.
- Designate a tech-space for charging.



Avoid Digitial Distractions

- Turn off non-essential notifications.
- Keep distracting devices away when learning.



Practice Good Posture

- Sit with your back straight, with the screen at eye-level. Don't bend over.

Take Movement Breaks

- Exercise, walk or stretch your body.



Provide Healthy Nutrition

- Fruit, vegetables, healthy snacks.
- Avoid sugary snacks and drinks, energy drinks or coffee.



Ensure Healthy Sleep

- Set a regular bedtime.
- Avoid screens 60-90 mins before bed.
- Keep devices out of the bedroom.

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References & Resources

These Guidelines have been developed with reference to the following sources.

In summary: Home learning can have positive impacts on the development of agency and self-regulation. At younger ages, home learning should be limited, with benefits increasing as students get older. More importantly: how homework is done is more impactful than how much is assigned.

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Related Policies

WAB's Learning Policy Ecosystem approach ensures all learning policies are connected, coherent, updated and operable (learn.wab.edu/learn/policy). Related policies include:

- Curriculum, Assessment, Academic Integrity & AI Policies
- Flourishing at WAB: Learning Community Wellbeing