



Helpful Homework Hints

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The Purpose of Homework

- In general, homework should be used to reinforce lessons and skills already introduced in class
- It is a way for students to practice and strengthen skills, not learn and master new material
- Research suggests that homework can increase student achievement but other factors including parental involvement, type and quality of assignments, and degree and effectiveness of monitoring can affect the influence of homework on achievement.

Benefits of Homework

- Homework can help teach students about personal responsibility and time management.
- Here at RMS, it can help to prepare them for the increased academic demands of high school.
- Homework is not intended to cause significant levels of stress either for the student or parent!



Homework and Special Education

- Children with learning differences or other conditions which affect school achievement and learning abilities may find homework to be more difficult.
- Often, they will spend longer on homework and experience higher levels of frustration.
- For these students it is often challenging and tiring to keep pace in the classroom during the academic day. Upon coming home, an additional demand of homework can seem overwhelming.
- Parents are often left trying to negotiate with their child to complete work, serving as teachers and tutors in explaining and reviewing material, and as detectives in trying to track down assignments and materials that may have been misplaced!



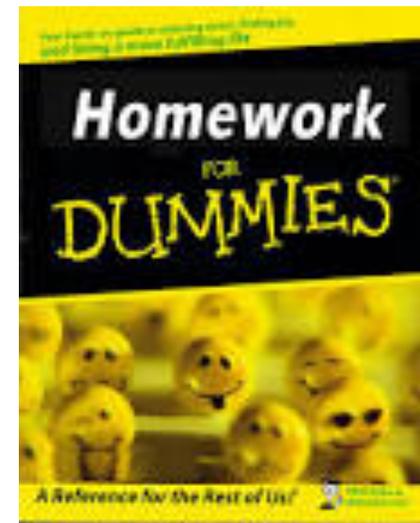
Strategies to Make Homework Painless

- We will discuss some simple strategies and ideas that can assist you at home in working with your children and establishing good habits that will benefit them moving forward.



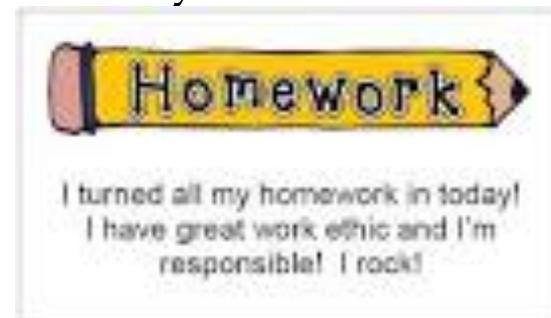
Organization

- For some parents, finding out what your child has due for homework is the biggest challenge!
 - Blogs
 - Organizer
 - Homework club
 - Check list for packing up



Find the Right Time and Space

- Find a quiet time, when your child can focus best.
 - May be shortly after school day ends
 - For others, may be later in the evening
 - Develop a routine
 - Breaks should be periodically schedules (every 15 minutes per hour if not more often)
 - Sandwich: easy-hard-easy
- Designate a space for homework.
 - Quiet, free of distractions
 - May need to “check in” periodically
 - Well lit
 - Have necessary supplies handy

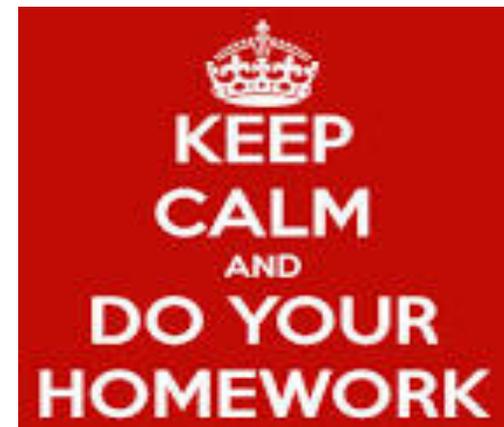


Incentives

- Simple Incentives:
 - Grandma's law: When you are finished with x, you may do y! i.e.- When you are finished with your math homework, you may play on the iPad
 - Build in breaks
 - Give choice (order of work completed, time when child will complete work)
- Incentive plans
 1. Identify problem
 2. Set a goal
 3. Decide on possible rewards or penalties
 1. Offer both smaller and larger rewards
 2. Have variety
 3. May be necessary to have punishments/loss of privileges
 4. Develop a contract

Make it a family affair!

- Involve siblings and family
 - Develop a similar plan for other children with appropriate goals
 - Child could work to earn something that benefits the entire family (i.e. dinner out)
 - Model good organizational and study habits



Long Term Assignments

1. Know what assignments are due when.
 - weekly assignment book and monthly calendar
 - may need to periodically send in the calendar and ask teacher to verify that it's up-to-date
2. Break long term assignments into sub tasks.
 - make out a list of steps necessary to complete the assignment
3. Draw up a time line.
 - each subtask should than have due date attached to it



Parent Role: How much help is too much?



- Many parents of children who may be struggling in school, wrestle with the question of how much help they should give their children.
 1. Discuss with their children the nature of the assignment to ensure understanding, and guide them on first few items.
 2. Parents may want to review assignments to check for neatness and accuracy.
 3. A good rule of thumb is that children should be able to get at least 70% of a homework assignment correct working on their own
 4. Communicate with teacher so he/she has understanding of what child struggled with

Set Limits



- Homework should not be an all night endeavor, particularly at this age.
- Adolescents need “down time” at home to relax and rest in order to be ready to enter school the next day.
- If your child is spending a significant amount of time on a certain assignment and making little progress, it may signify that they do not understand the concept and need additional help.

Suggested websites

- <http://www.nasponline.org/families/>
 - National Association for School Psychologists
- <http://www.youtube.com> or teachertube.com
 - Videos presented by students and teachers that teach concepts or provide examples
- <http://www.quizlet.com/>
 - Quizlet (online learning tool with over 35 million user-generated flash card sets)
- <http://www.learnZillion.com>
 - short videos where a specific skill is taught by a teacher