

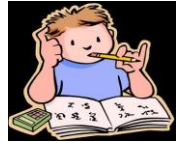
Homework Made Simpler

7 Steps to Helping your Child with Homework each Night

Homework can be a chore, but if you follow these steps it can be made simpler!

1. Understand the importance of Homework

The more a person bakes, the better she becomes at baking. The more an author writes the better writer he becomes. The more a student practices a skill, the better he becomes at that skill. This is one reason homework is assigned. Homework is assigned to give your child the practice that he/she needs to master a skill.



From the first day of school until the very last day, lessons are already scheduled for each day of the school year. This means that teachers cannot always ensure that every single student in class masters the skill before a test is given or before it is time to move on to another skill.

Students master skills at different rates. It may take one student five practices to master a skill, while it takes another student ten practices to master the same skill. Therefore, you need to understand that homework is important and necessary to help your child master needed skills for their development.

2. Develop a Homework Routine

Provide your child with a quiet comfortable place to do homework each afternoon. Research says that it takes 21 days to form a new habit. It is always best if your child does homework the same place and the same time every afternoon.



3. Let your child complete homework independently

Your child should be able to complete all homework with little or no help. If assistance is needed, always give your child at least 10 minutes to struggle through the work. This helps to teach your child not to depend on you all of the time for the answers. In school, students are learning to become problem solvers and one way to become problem solvers is for your child to wrestle to figure out the answer. After 10 minutes, if your child is still having problems with the homework, have him/her Google the topic on the computer to find instructional videos and how-to examples that may help with understanding. After viewing the videos, have your child return to the homework. If your child still does not understand the work, now intervene.

Have your child explain what he/she understands so far then explains only the sections that are unclear to him/her. Explain at least 3 problems from the homework; this should help your child start to get the hang of the work. If your child still does not understand the skill, you have two options . . .

- A. If you have time, assist your child with completing the rest of the assignment. Write a little note on the homework explaining to the teacher that your child had difficulties with the homework, let him/her know that you helped with the homework, and ask for additional resources for your child to practice the skill at home. Praise your child for working through the problems with you!
- Or
- B. If you do not have time to continue helping your child with this assignment, have your child do the best he/she can do. Write a little note on the homework explaining to the teacher that your child had difficulties with the homework, let him/her know that you helped with the homework, and ask for additional resources for your child to practice the skill at home. Having your child complete the homework anyway helps them understand that, “we just do not give up in life when things are hard, we just do the best we can.” Finally, praise your child when the work is done, for not giving up!

4. Check your Child's Homework



If your child completes the homework independently, please check it. Children take more pride in their work when they know it will be checked by their parent(s). This is a step that cannot be ignored. DO NOT sit and go over every single problem with your child. *If you go over every problem and have your child change all of the answers, this is now your work not your child's work.* When teachers check your child's work and all of the answers are correct, the teacher thinks that *your child understands the skill completely, and your child will not get any further assistance in the area even if it is needed.* You just want to check for understanding.

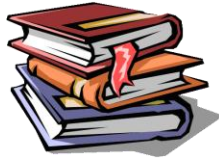
Randomly pick 2 to 3 problems and have your child explain each step that was used to get the answer. Or, ask your child which problem he/she would like for you to check.

5. Review your Child's Homework

After completing all assigned homework, have your child review a skill that he/she previously struggled with. This can be done on the computer. There are so many computer games that students can use to practice previously learned skills. You do not want them to forget all of the learning that has recently taken place.



6. Read each night



Reading should be a family affair. When we sit back and watch someone else on television, their lives develop. When we pick up a book and read, we are developing our own lives. Pick a half hour during the evening to turn off the television and read as a family. Everyone should be in the same room reading their own book. Some nights can be spent listening to one member of the family read, while other nights can be designated for reading independently. This develops a routine and children learn that reading is important in this family. Reading is a way to explore new territories, meet new people, and plan for the future.

7. Contact the teacher if your child is having problems understanding any homework.

As a teacher, we really appreciate when parents contact us concerning any problems. First, it lets us know that someone is actually going over the homework at home. Second, we can provide you with other resources that may help your child with the skill.



Never feel bad about not understanding all of your child's homework! I didn't understand all of the skills, myself! We are in this job of helping your child succeed together!

Please note: Your child should not be having problems with the homework on a nightly basis. If your child does, contact his/her teacher for a conference. This is a sign that your child is working below grade level and plans need to be put in place to make sure your child is successful!