



Homework Guidelines for Parents

The Purpose of Homework:

- To promote independent learning skills,
- To encourage self discipline and develop a positive work ethic
- To reinforce or extend work covered in class

Supporting your children is a valuable contribution towards your child meeting these aims, and developing their success at school. Creating the right environment for homework is important.

The Right Homework Environment

Establish good habits and routines. Parents can help children develop these habits by providing a regular time for doing homework, a place where they can work, and an environment that promotes work completion.

Time

Students need a regular time to study which respects their need to have a break from school, and to have time to relax before bedtime. Right after dinner is often a good choice. Be alert to how much time is spent on homework – too little is unrealistic for producing work of a good standard, too long can be demoralizing, resulting in stress and anxiety. Please refer to the tutor group homework timetable for the expected duration of homework tasks.

Insulation

A student's homework location should be "insulated" from the TV, mobile phone, Internet, and other distractions. For some students, familiar music played quietly provides "insulation."

Space

Students need a clear, uncluttered, open place to set out their materials and supplies for homework. A kitchen table is usually a better workspace than a desk covered with models, projects, and collections. Such a space means the student can be observed and supported discreetly, but requires monitoring for interruptions.

Position

Many students are unaware of simple adjustments they can make to increase their comfort and energy while working. A relaxed, tripod pencil grip, and alert, comfortable upright position in a chair and workspace of appropriate height help sustain energy for work.

Lighting

Adequate lighting without glare supports homework completion. Inadequate lighting can contribute to mental fatigue and eye-strain.

Necessities

All the necessary study materials - paper, rulers, erasers, colored pencils, markers, 3 by 5 cards, stapler, paper clips, dictionary, thesaurus, or other supplies can be kept together on a shelf or in a drawer or plastic container. Help your child to be organised.

If there are problems...

- Actively support homework completion
- Observe carefully before deciding what the problems are or what help is needed.
- Do not do for the child what he or she can do for himself.
- Model good work habits. Read or do desk work while your child is doing homework so that you are "modeling," not just "monitoring."
- Discuss and work with your child to identify "weak links" in the "homework chain."
- Understand the kinds of difficulties the child is having when he is doing homework.
- Problem solve to address the specific difficulties the child is having
- Communicate difficulties as specifically and clearly as possible to your child's tutor sooner rather than later. Contact by e mail or through the student diary is the most effective way to contact tutors.
- Develop a "team" approach to homework difficulties whenever possible, where teacher, child, and parent have defined roles and responsibilities.
- Avoid homework disintegrating into a battleground by problem solving early.