

Monona Grove School District

K-12 Homework Guidelines:

Teacher, Student and Parent

K-12 Homework Guidelines

Definition of Homework

Homework completed at school and outside of school is a valuable aide to help students maximize their learning experience. Research suggests that, in general, students who do complete assignments outside of school have higher achievement scores than students who do not. Research supports the assignment of homework in early grades not necessarily for its immediate effects on achievement, but rather for its potential long-term impact. It is our belief that homework provides necessary practice of learned skills and nurtures the development of work habits that will serve the student throughout his/her lifetime. Homework completed outside of school should be skill-level appropriate and relate in a meaningful way to the ongoing instruction in the classroom. Teachers, parents, and students have important roles and responsibilities in the homework partnership. The parent and teacher must respectfully communicate to establish an understanding of the student's needs and capabilities so that successful learning and performance can be assured for each child.

Purposes of Homework

Purpose	Reason	Examples
Completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To keep up-to-date with classroom work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completing classroom assignments, including reading responses, notes, exercises, pieces of writing, reading selections
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To prepare for the next day's class work or for upcoming lessons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collecting information, reading background materials, or studying for quizzes, tests and exams Using planners to establish regular study and review time
Practice & Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop, review, and reinforce specific skills To transfer skills or concepts into new situations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completing extra questions if an assessment item demonstrates that the student has not mastered a skill Writing a letter after being taught the components of a business letter Reviewing and drilling of number operations and troublesome spelling words, where necessary Being read to, reading aloud, and independent reading Practice skills learned in music, foreign language
Extension / Creative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To enrich classroom experiences and deepen the student's understanding To provide opportunities for problem-solving and critical thinking To integrate skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying local plant and animal life in one's environment Working on projects, research and independent study Inventing a product to solve a problem Creating designs, stories, drama

Time

Care should be given by teachers to recognize individual student needs so no child is overloaded with too many homework expectations within the same time period. Homework must be planned to strike a balance between academics, family life, and the child's needs. If a child or parent has concerns regarding the length or difficulty of any assignment, s/he needs to communicate that concern directly to the teacher.

The amount of time a student spends on homework depends on a number of factors:

- Student's needs
- Age and grade
- Work habits
- Specific subjects and their difficulty for the student
- School and home schedules
- Proximity of tests
- Project due dates
- Opportunities to complete homework during the school day

It should be noted that times will vary from individual to individual and at various times throughout the school year. The following are recommended total time allocations for homework assignments across **all** classes (e.g., including all electives):

<u>Grade Level</u>	<u>Recommended Time Allocations*</u>
K – 1st	10 - 20 minutes
2 nd – 3 rd	20 - 30 minutes
4 th – 5 th	40 - 60 minutes
6 th – 8 th	60 - 90 minutes
9 th – 12 th	90 - 150 minutes

*These time allocations include elementary in-class work time, middle school tutorials and high school study halls.

Parents and teachers should be aware of the differing homework expectations between these transition grades: 2nd and 3rd grade, 5th and 6th grade, and 8th and 9th grade.

Homework

Teacher Best Practices

For Students

- Design assignments that your students may complete with minimal parental assistance.
- Identify and communicate the purpose of assignments to students.
- Teach and model effective study skills in the classroom.
- Teach and monitor the skills to prepare students to be able to complete homework assignments.
- Establish an appropriate learning environment within the classroom to facilitate successful completion of assignments.
- Clearly describe the consequences for missing or late homework assignments and explain the role of homework in determining student progress.
- Limit make-up work, due to illness or other absence, to essential concepts covered. Allow sufficient time to complete assignments.
- Explain the purpose of assignment notebooks/planners and show students how to complete them at the beginning of the school year. Using assignment notebooks/planners clarifies for students what they are supposed to do and helps organization and prioritization of their work.
- Check that students have the necessary materials to complete assignments.
- Monitor, evaluate, or check assignments as appropriate.
- Give timely and specific feedback on homework.
- Vary the approaches to providing feedback. The level of the feedback should be based on the purpose of the homework assignment.

For Teachers

- Collaborate with other teachers to assure that the amount of homework assigned is reasonable.
- Assignments should not be too lengthy. Consider carefully the time necessary for students to complete their assignments.
- Homework Hotline, email and teacher web pages can be excellent ways to inform students and parents of homework assignments. Students confused about a homework assignment or parents checking assignments due to a child's absence may use these forms of communication.
- Determine which skills are worth practicing and monitor the effect of homework on student learning.
- Communicate with parents and appropriate staff when students demonstrate difficulty completing homework responsibilities.
- Avoid giving assignments/projects over Thanksgiving, winter and spring breaks.

Homework

Student Best Practices

- Listen to class directions for assignments.
- Be clear about the purpose/reason for the assignment(s).
- Ask for further explanation from the teacher when an assignment is not clear.
- Be sure you know how the work will be evaluated.
- Write assignment instructions that include the date due. Keep an up-to-date assignment notebook at appropriate grade levels.
- Use time well during the school day for opportunities to work on assignments.
- Take home the instructions and materials needed to complete the assignment. Be careful and responsible for school property.
- Set a daily time to complete the homework.
- Start long-term assignments far ahead of the due date, dividing the assignment into manageable parts. Don't wait until the last night before the assignment is due to begin working on it.
- Do your own work, but ask your parents for assistance if needed.
- Ask your teacher for help the next day if you did not understand the assignment.
- Do your best work.
- **Read for pleasure.**
- Share with your parents your completed work.
- Return completed assignments on the date due.

Homework

Parent Best Practices

Parent/Teacher Communication

- Meet teachers early in the year.
- Find out about homework policies, degree of parental involvement with homework.
- Maintain communication throughout the year.
- Attend orientation, open house/back-to-school night, and parent/teacher conferences.
- Check the district web page for district and school information:
www.mononagrove.org
- Check various means of communication (folders, backpacks, assignment notebooks/planners, Homework Hotlines)
- Read school newsletters.
- Communicate with the teacher if you have concerns regarding your child's homework or if your child demonstrates difficulty completing homework responsibilities.

At Home

- Give homework assignments a high priority when considering family activities and obligations
- Establish a consistent homework routine at an early age.
- Build consistency by having an educational time each day at home even if your child does not have homework
- Provide a quiet organized place with needed materials
- Establish a time of day for homework.
- Accommodate for differences in your children's abilities.
- Keep in mind what works for one child may not necessarily work for others.
- Reinforce good study habits.
- Monitor course selection, number of extracurricular activities and after school employment to allow for recreation/relaxation time.
- Maintain a healthy sleep and eating schedule.

Parent Support

- Provide encouragement without doing the homework for your child. Your involvement may interfere with your child's learning if you give answers or complete assignments. Ask questions to help guide your child through the process. If you support independence, your child's achievement will increase.
- Stay out of power struggles with your child. Allow your child to make mistakes, the springboard for further learning.
- If your child becomes frustrated with a homework assignment, suggest a brief break before returning to the assignment.
- Provide assistance/support when research is needed (e.g., internet supervision, transportation to public library)
- Understand the importance of homework in your child's education. Maintain a positive attitude and show interest. More homework will be completed if you are involved.
- Stay flexible to accommodate for different learning styles of your children, and recognize that you child may have different styles of learning and ways of demonstrating their knowledge.
- Positively reinforce your child for his/her efforts by displaying his/her papers and artwork at home.
- Praise your child for persevering, completing and taking responsibility for homework.

Homework References and Resources

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