



HOMework 911

ONLINE RESOURCES - Check them out!

<http://www.homeworkspot.com>

<http://www.parentsconnect.com/parenting-your-kids/parenting-kids/learning-and-school/kids-homework-help/homework-help-websites.html>

<http://www.studytips.org>

<http://www.kidspell.com/load-custom-spelling-words2.php>

<http://www.teachersandfamilies.com>

<http://www.brighthub.com/education/k-12/articles/3521.aspx>

<http://school.familyeducation.com/homework/activity/34550.html>

<http://www.infoplease.com/homework>



CHAMPIONS
— FOR —
CHILDREN

Using Student On-line Achievement Resources (SOAR)

SOAR is an innovative program that makes it easy for parents to play an active role in their children's education. SOAR is designed for military families, and is easily accessible worldwide.

SOAR Home is an internet-based application. Students take an assessment aligned to state standards, and SOAR directs them to individualized tutorials to improve skills where needed. Parents can monitor their children's progress from anywhere, and are provided with resource materials.

Parent components include:

- ★ Easy access to their children's accounts
- ★ Links to military installations, transition resources and school websites
- ★ Resources for at-home learning activities including videos with ancillary materials
 - ★ State-specific resources, such as state learning standards
- ★ Links to Department of Education and other educational resources websites
- NEW** ★ Early literacy videos to help parents teach literacy and mathematics skills to preschoolers

Student components include:

- ★ Assessments aligned with state standards to identify their strengths and weaknesses in reading and mathematics
- ★ Tutorial lessons to reinforce and review skills not mastered
- ★ Videos based on specific skills with related ancillary materials
- NEW** ★ ACT/SAT prep materials including strategies, practice questions and more

Registering for SOAR

1. Log on to the Military Impacted Schools Association (MISA) website at www.militarystudent.org.
2. Click on the SOAR button on the website.
3. Register yourself and your children.
4. Students can begin taking assessments immediately.
5. Parents and children can then enjoy skills resources, analysis of assessments, utilize skills tutor lessons, view parent resources, and students can take additional targeted quizzes based on one skill.

Partners

The Military Impacted Schools Association (MISA) sponsors SOAR in partnership with the University of Northern Iowa, The Princeton Review, and Skills Tutor. We have come together to provide resources to assist with the unique challenges for military children.

Contact

Barbara Adams, MISA at barbsadams@gmail.com





Kindergarten Homework Tips:

*Develop a routine. Try to complete homework at the same time and at the same place every day.

*Provide guidance with homework, but not the answers. Allow your child to complete the assignments.

*Have materials to help your child complete homework assignments: crayons, paper, pencils, scissors, glue, etc. If you need help getting these

materials contact your child's teacher.

*Don't be afraid to ask questions. If you do not understand the directions or assignments talk to your child's teacher.

*If you have a positive attitude about homework your child will have a positive attitude about homework.

*Part of completing homework is having your child write his or her name at the top and the assignment should be completed neatly.

*It is important to practice skills such as sight words, letter recognition, sound recognition, number recognition, etc. on a regular basis. DO NOT "drill" your child. Take time to practice once a night.

Kindergarten Test Taking Tips:

Many assessments in kindergarten are individual assessments. This means it is one on one with your child and the teacher. Some examples of individual assessments are: letter recognition, sound recognition, calendar skills, and number recognition.

Some assessments may be given in small groups. This is when a few (three, four, five) children are seated with a teacher. The teacher gives directions and checks to make sure students are following along.

Some assessments can be given to the whole group. This means the entire class takes a paper/pencil test at the same time. Teachers walk around to monitor students and give directions. Some examples of whole group assessments are: letter writing, counting sets

and labeling, letter/word/sentence, producing models for number words.

Some kindergarten assessments are not paper/pencil tests. Assessments can be observations or student demonstrations.

Review your child's class work and homework. The skills we are currently working on will be assessed soon. Use these to help your child practice skills he or she may be struggling with.

Assessments will mimic class work and homework. Many tests are given in the same style so students will be familiar with the format. Make extra practice for your child based on the work sent home.

Assessments go home in the red Tuesday folder. If your child does not master a skill the first time, review the assessment. Go over the answers with your child. He or she will be given opportunities to try to master the skill again.

Do not wait until the end of the nine weeks to practice sight words and try to "cram" for the assessment. Practice them on a regular basis.

Communication is the key. If you don't understand an assessment, grading scale, or grade talk to **YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER**. Your child's teacher is the only one who will have information about your child's progress in the classroom.

First Grade Tips for Homework

- Practice in a quiet place
- Remain positive
- Let your child complete homework and then you check it for errors. Don't give your child the answers.
- After school, give your child a few minutes to relax prior to completing homework.
- If your child consistently has difficulty completing homework, discuss this with the teacher.

Test Taking Tips

- Have a positive attitude – If you stress, your child will get stressed.
- Study ahead of time. Homework is a reflection of the upcoming assessments. If your child has difficulty with a particular skill, provide some extra practice with the skill. Call your teacher for extra assignments or research on-line.
- Spelling – Study the spelling words throughout the week. Don't try to help your child learn all of them the night before the assessment. Practice writing sentences using the words. The sentence will need to make sense with the spelling word spelled correctly.

Academic Websites

www.figurethis.org

www.apples4theteacher.com

<http://aaamath.com>

www.softschools.com

www.pbskids.org

www.internet4classrooms.com

www.educationoasis.com/index.htm

www.teachingheart.net/readerstheater.htm

www.surfnetkids.com

www.hubbardscupboard.org

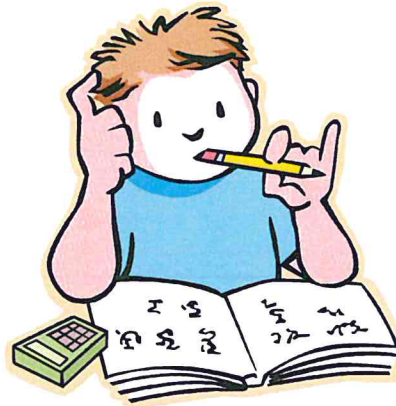
www.abcteach.com



Homework Tips for Parents (2nd Grade)

1. Be a stage manager. Make sure your child has a quiet, well-lit place to do homework. Make sure the needed materials (paper, pencils, dictionary) are available.
2. Be a motivator. Homework provides a great opportunity for you to tell your child how important school is. Be positive about homework. The attitude you express about homework will be the attitude your child acquires.
3. Be a role model. When your child does homework, don't sit and watch TV. If your child is reading, you read too. If your child is doing math, balance your checkbook. Help your child see that the skills they are practicing are related to things you do as an adult.
4. Be a monitor. Watch your child for signs of failure and frustration. If your child asks for help, provide guidance, not answers. If frustration sets in, suggest a short break.
5. Be a mentor. When the teacher asks that you play a role in homework, do it. Let your child complete homework and then check it with him/her! Homework is a great way for kids to develop independent, life-long learning skills. Over-involvement can be a bad thing!
6. Be an informer! Let the teacher know if your child is having difficulties with homework! ☺

3rd Grade Homework Tips for Parents



Show You Think Education and Homework Are Important

Children need to know that their parents and adults close to them think homework is important. If they know their parents care, children have a good reason to complete assignments and turn them in on time. There is a lot that you can do to show that you value education and homework.

Set a Regular Time.

Finding a regular time for homework helps children finish assignments. The best schedule is one that works for your child and your family. What works well in one household may not work in another. Of course, a good schedule depends in part on your child's age, as well as individual needs. For instance, one youngster may work best in the afternoon after an hour of play, and another may be more efficient after dinner (although late at night, when children are tired, is seldom a good time).

Outside activities, such as sports or music lessons, may mean that you need a flexible schedule. Your child may study after school on some days and in the evening on others. If there isn't enough time to finish homework, your child may need to drop some outside activity. Homework must be a high priority.

You'll need to work with your elementary school child to develop a schedule. An older student can probably make up a schedule independently, although you'll want to make sure it's a good one.

It may help to write out the schedule and put it in a place where you'll see it often, such as the refrigerator door.

Some families have a required amount of time that children must devote to homework or some other learning activity each school night (the length of time can vary depending upon the child's age). For instance, if your seventh-grader knows she's expected to spend an hour doing homework, reading, or visiting the library, she may be less likely to rush through assignments so that she can watch television. A required amount of time may also discourage her from "forgetting" to bring home assignments and help her adjust to a routine.

Pick a Place.

A study area should have lots of light, supplies close by, and be fairly quiet.

A study area doesn't have to be fancy. A desk in the bedroom is nice, but for many youngsters the kitchen table or a corner of the living room works just fine.

Your child may enjoy decorating a special study corner. A plant, a brightly colored container to hold pencils, and some favorite artwork taped to the walls can make study time more pleasant.

Remove Distractions.

Turn off the television and discourage social telephone calls during homework time. (A call to a classmate about an assignment may, however, be helpful.)

If you live in a small or noisy household, try having all family members take part in a quiet activity during homework time. You may need to take a noisy toddler outside or into another room to play. If distractions can't be avoided, your child may want to complete assignments in a nearby library.

Provide Supplies and Identify Resources.

For starters, collect pencils, pens, erasers, writing paper, an assignment book, and a dictionary. Other things that might be helpful include glue, a stapler, paper clips, maps, a calculator, a pencil sharpener, tape, scissors, a ruler, index cards, a thesaurus, and an almanac. Keep these items together in one place if possible.

For books and other information resources, check with the school library or local public library. Some libraries have homework centers designed especially to assist children with school assignments (there may even be tutors and other kinds of individual assistance).

You may want to ask the teacher to explain school policy about the use of computers--or typewriters or any special equipment--for homework. Certainly, computers can be a great learning tool and helpful for some assignments. They can be used for word processing and on-line reference resources, as well as educational programs and games to sharpen skills. Some schools may offer after-school programs where your child can use the school computers. And many public libraries make computers available to children.

Set a Good Example.

Children are more likely to study if they see you reading, writing, and doing things that require thought and effort on your part. Talk with your child about what you're reading and writing even if it's something as simple as making the grocery list. Tell them about what you do at work. Encourage activities that support learning--for example, educational games, library visits, walks in the neighborhood, trips to the zoo or museums, and chores that teach a sense of responsibility.

Show an Interest.

Make time to take your child to the library to check out materials needed for homework (and for fun too), and read with your child as often as you can. Talk about school and learning activities in family conversations. Ask your child what was discussed in class that day. If he doesn't have much to say, try another approach. For example, ask your child to read aloud a story he wrote or discuss the results of a science experiment.

Another good way to show your interest is to attend school activities, such as parent-teacher meetings, shows, and sports events.



GENERAL HOMEWORK TIPS FOR PARENTS

★ **Make sure your child has a quiet, well-lit place to do homework.**

Avoid having your child do homework with the television on or in places with other distractions, such as people coming and going.

★ **Make sure the materials your child needs, such as paper, pencils and a dictionary, are available.**

Ask your child if special materials will be needed for some projects and get them in advance.

★ **Help your child with time management.**

Establish a set time each day for doing homework. Don't let your child leave homework until just before bedtime. Think about using a weekend morning or afternoon for working on big projects, especially if the project involves getting together with classmates.

★ **Be positive about homework.**

Tell your child how important school is. The attitude you express about homework will be the attitude your child acquires.

★ **When your child does homework, you do homework.**

Show your child that the skills they are learning are related to things you do as an adult. If your child is reading, you read too. If your child is doing math, balance your checkbook.

★ **When your child asks for help, provide guidance, not answers.**

Giving answers means your child will not learn the material. Too much help teaches your child that when the going gets rough, someone will do the work for him or her.

★ **When the teacher asks that you play a role in homework, do it.**

Cooperate with the teacher. It shows your child that the school and home are a team. Follow the directions given by the teacher.

★ **If homework is meant to be done by your child alone, stay away.**

Too much parent involvement can prevent homework from having some positive effects. Homework is a great way for kids to develop independent, lifelong learning skills.

★ **Stay informed.**

Talk with your child's teacher. Make sure you know the purpose of homework and what your child's class rules are.

★ **Help your child figure out what is hard homework and what is easy homework.**

Have your child do the hard work first. This will mean he will be most alert when facing the biggest challenges. Easy material will seem to go fast when fatigue begins to set in.

4TH GRADE HOMEWORK TIPS FOR PARENTS



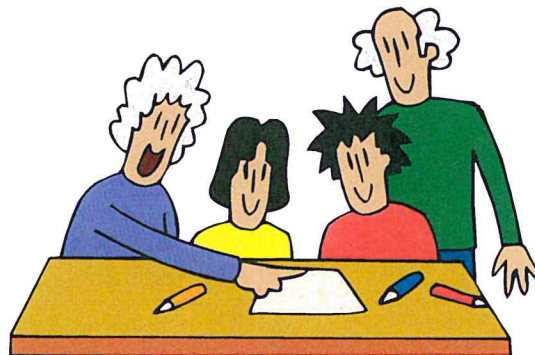
- **Make sure your child has a quiet, well-lit place to do homework.**
Avoid having your child do homework with the television on or in places with other distractions, such as people coming and going.
- **Make sure the materials your child needs, such as paper, pencils and a dictionary, are available.**
Ask your child if special materials will be needed for some projects and get them in advance.
- **Help your child with time management.**
Establish a set time each day for doing homework. Don't let your child leave homework until just before bedtime. Think about using a weekend morning or afternoon for working on big projects, especially if the project involves getting together with classmates.
- **Be positive about homework.**
Tell your child how important school is. The attitude you express about homework will be the attitude your child acquires.
- **When your child does homework, you do homework.**
Show your child that the skills they are learning are related to things you do as an adult. If your child is reading, you read too. If your child is doing math, balance your checkbook.
- **When your child asks for help, provide guidance, not answers.**
Giving answers means your child will not learn the material. Too much help teaches your child that when the going gets rough, someone will do the work for him or her.
- **When the teacher asks that you play a role in homework, provide guidance.**
Cooperate with the teacher. It shows your child that the school and home are a team. Follow the directions given by the teacher.
- **If homework is meant to be done by your child alone, let them be independent.**
Too much parent involvement can prevent homework from having some positive effects. Homework is a great way for kids to develop independent, lifelong learning skills.
- **Stay informed.**
Talk with your child's teacher. Make sure you know the purpose of homework and what your child's class rules are.
- **Help your child figure out what is hard homework and what is easy homework.**
Have your child do the hard work first. This will mean he will be most alert when facing the biggest challenges. Easy material will seem to go fast when fatigue begins to set in.
- **Watch your child for signs of failure and frustration.**
Let your child take a short break if she is having trouble keeping her mind on an assignment.
- **Reward progress in homework.**
If your child has been successful in homework completion and is working hard, celebrate that success with a special event (e.g., pizza, a walk, a trip to the park) to reinforce the positive effort.

MATH HOMEWORK TIPS FOR PARENTS

- Encourage your child to use a daily math assignment book.
- Follow the progress your child is making in math. Check with your child daily about his homework.
- If you don't understand your child's math assignments, engage in frequent communication with his or her teacher.
- If your child is experiencing problems in math, contact the teacher to learn whether he or she is working at grade level and what can be done at home to help improve academic progress.
- Request that your child's teacher schedule after-school math tutoring sessions if your child really needs help.
- Advocate with the principal for the use of research-based peer tutoring programs for math. These tutoring programs have proven results, and students really enjoy them.
- Use household chores as opportunities for reinforcing math learning such as cooking and repair activities.
- Try to be aware of how your child is being taught math, and don't teach strategies and shortcuts that conflict with the approach the teacher is using. Check in with the teacher and ask what you can do to help. Ask the teacher about online resources that you can use with your child at home.
- At the beginning of the year, ask your child's teacher for a list of suggestions that will enable you to help your child with math homework.

READING HOMEWORK TIPS FOR PARENTS

- Have your child read aloud to you every night.
- Choose a quiet place, free from distractions, for your child to do his nightly reading assignments.
- As your child reads, point out spelling and sound patterns such as *cat*, *pat*, *hat*.
- When your child reads aloud to you and makes a mistake, point out the words she has missed and help her to read the word correctly.
- After your child has stopped to correct a word he has read, have him go back and reread the entire sentence from the beginning to make sure he understands what the sentence is saying.
- Ask your child to tell you in her own words what happened in a story.
- To check your child's understanding of what he is reading, occasionally pause and ask your child questions about the characters and events in the story.
- Ask your child why she thinks a character acted in a certain way and ask your child to support her answer with information from the story.
- Before getting to the end of a story, ask your child what he thinks will happen next and why.



Test Taking Tips

- Keep a positive attitude throughout the whole test and try to stay relaxed. If you start to feel nervous take a few deep breaths to relax.
- Don't stay on a problem that you are stuck on, especially when time is a factor.
- Use process of elimination.
- Pace yourself, don't rush. Read the entire question and pay attention to the details.
- Ask the teacher for clarification if you don't understand what they are asking for on the test.
- Write legibly. If the grader can't read what you wrote, they'll most likely mark it wrong.
- Always read the whole question carefully. Don't make assumptions about what the question might be.
- Read the question more than once if you need to in order to understand it better.
- If you don't know an answer, skip it. Go on with the rest of the test and come back to it later. Other parts of the test may have some information that will help you out with that question. But, remember to go back, a blank answer is always a wrong answer.
- Don't worry if others finish before you. Focus on the test in front of you.
- If you have time left when you are finished, look over your test. Make sure that you have answered all the questions. Only change an answer if you misread or misinterpreted the question because the first answer that you put is usually the correct one. Watch out for careless mistakes and proofread your essay and/or short answer questions.



5th Grade Homework Tips for Parents



Are you a student or parent who dreads homework time at your house? You will find a great variety of resources on the internet that can make homework more manageable for everyone.

If you need information on a specific topic, go to www.askanexpert.com, which links students with the web sites of experts on such topics as science, animals, arts, health, trades, industry, and many others.

At [Homework Helper](#) you will find tips on writing, over 100 general reference links, and help with math problems - you can input a math problem and it will help you solve it!

Specific help in all the basic subjects is available at www.bigchalk.com. Click on the subject where help is needed.

Find help with science fair ideas, solve math problems, and create your own crossword puzzles and word searches at <http://school.discovery.com>. Also at this site, click on BJ Pinchbeck's Homework Helper, where you'll find over 700 links to homework help websites.

[Homework Spot](#) is full of helpful ideas and tips for homework and studying, as well as subject area assistance.

[JPL Live Homework Help](#) is an online classroom service designed to assist those from grades 4 to 12, Live Homework Help also provides assistance for those approaching college. Subjects include Math, Social Studies, Science, and English. Tutors are available every day, 2pm to midnight. Lessons and assistance in Spanish are also provided Sunday thru Thursday, 2pm to 10pm. Services are not available on Thanksgiving, Christmas, or New Year's Day.

The following links provide helpful information on specific subjects:

Math

- [Math.com](http://math.com)
- [Math Homework Help](#)

Science

- [How Stuff Works](#)
- [Building Big](#)
- [NASA Education Program](#)

History

- [History Channel](#)
- [National Geographic Kids](#)
- [History Homework Help Page](#)

English

- [Grammar Help](#)

Reference

- [Encyclopedia.com](#)
- [Infoplease.com](#)
- [Encarta Encyclopedia](#)
- [The Internet Public Library](#)
- [Dictionary.com](#)
- [Encyclopedia Britannica](#)
- [Refdesk.com](#)
- [Encyclopedia Smithsonian](#)

Homework Checklist for Parents

- Provide a quiet, well-lit space, away from distractions and with all the right study materials -- paper, pens and pencils, books, a dictionary, a desk, etc.
- Try to find a separate space for each of your children, or schedule quiet times for homework in designated spaces.
- Create a regular schedule, allowing for adequate study and free time.
- Limit TV time, and do not allow it during homework.
- When possible, be available to answer questions. Try doing a problem or two together, then watch as the child tries the next one.
- Avoid simply giving an answer. Instead, ask questions that let your child see the problem in smaller, sequential steps.
- Check your child's agenda. When they're finished with their homework, compare the homework and the agenda to make sure everything is done.
- Review completed and graded assignments. Discuss errors to be sure your child understands the material.
- Be sure to let the teacher know if your child is having difficulty or is unable to do most of the homework by themselves.
- Fifth grade teachers allow your child some time in class to start their homework. Encourage your child to write down all of the examples that were given and ask their teacher questions during this time.

TeachersAndFamilies - Middle School Homework Tips



Middle School Homework Tips

Middle School students are busier people. They will also start to see long-range assignments that require more organization and planning - skills that will be crucial in high school. Here are some tips that can help with this transition.

Organize First - Encourage your child to plan each evening's studying carefully. Tackle assignments due tomorrow first. Then work on the project due next Monday. An assignment book is essential.

Special Supplies?? - Each afternoon, ask whether tonight's assignments require special books or supplies. Make that trip to the library or hardware store early!

Offer feedback - Encourage your child, but don't offer answers. Questions like, "Does that answer look correct to you?" will help your child without doing her work for her.

Don't procrastinate - Leaving a large assignment until the last minute can be tempting. Push hard to encourage your child to start projects early.

Enforce a routine - Middle schoolers have more distractions, activities, and friends. Remind them that these are all important, but homework is essential. Homework first; friends, computers, and hobbies later.

Take it with you! - Middle school students have LOTS of distractions. Encourage your child to be sure everything is packed up for tomorrow before he goes to bed.

Find more great ideas at TeachersAndFamilies - www.teachersandfamilies.com
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Top 10 Study Tips for Middle School Students

Written by: [Kellie Hayden](#) • Edited by: [Laurie Patsalides](#)

Whether it is back to school time or any time of the school year, studying equals academic success. However, some students do not know how to study. Try these 10 tips to improve study habits.

After watching countless [middle school students](#) struggle over the years, I created a top 10 list of what students can do to improve study habits to become better students.

Study Tip Number 10 – Select a consistent place to study. Some people need total quiet and other can study well with music in the background. The key is to find a comfortable place and study there regularly, such as the kitchen table, a desk, a favorite chair, bed, etc.

Study Tip Number 9 – Don't wait until the last minute. Study a little every night instead of cramming late the night before the test. A good night's sleep helps. Bleary [eyes](#) and a tired body do not.

Study Tip Number 8 – Buy an agenda book and use it. Most students have an agenda book, but they don't write anything in it. On Monday, write down all of the week's assignments. Most teachers have them posted in the classroom.

Study Tip Number 7 – Dedicate a space for every class in your book bag. In the department store aisles, there are boxes and boxes of binders, folders and organizational tools. For every class, dedicate a binder, folder or notebook. There should be a place for class notes, handouts and homework assignments. Some of the larger binders can accommodate all classes. It is really a matter of personal choice; just keep papers separated by class.

Study Tip Number 6 – Stay organized throughout the year. Most students have many binders and folders, but they do not use them. Many stuff every single paper from school into one binder. Half of their papers become misplaced or lost. Do not use the "shove" method when papers are returned, i.e. shove everything in one binder. Place them in the correct folder. If you are using a three-ring binder to keep papers organized, take the time to open the metal prongs and place them securely in it. If someone helps you organize your papers, take the time to continue putting everything in its place.

Study Tip Number 5—Make study cards. On the front of a note card write the word or idea. On the back, write the definition or important information. Have a friend or [parent](#) ask you about the word and you need to give the definition or visa versa.

Study Tip Number 4 – Make your own study guide. One great way to study is to make a list of the important information from a chapter and write it in your own words. Copy down any words that are written in bold or in italics. Look at chapter headings, section headings and review sections at the end of a chapter for other important information to add to your study guide. Merge this information with class notes.

Study Tip Number 3 – Talk about assignments with friends. Discussing assignments with friends is another way to study. This is very helpful for [studying](#) for novel tests. Friendly discussions about books help deepen understanding.

Study Tip Number 2 – If you are struggling, ask for help. Start by talking to the teacher. The guidance counselor generally has a list of tutors in the area. Some high school students need to complete community service hours to be in clubs or in honor societies. You may be able to get a free tutor.

Study Tip Number 1 – Make academics a focus in your life. Studying takes time and effort. Get organized, ask for help and put forth effort in improving your study habits now.

The lessons taught in [middle school](#) are building blocks for high school and college. Starting good study habits now will help you later in life. It does take more effort to study and to become organized; however, academic success will make you [feel good](#) about yourself and your parents smile.

Read more: <http://www.brighthub.com/education/k-12/articles/3521.aspx#ixzz1ZGSX2ORB>



home > [learning zone - info on learning styles, learning disabilities plus reading & homework help](#) > tips for helping kids and teens with homework and study habits

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Tips For Helping Kids and Teens With Homework and Study Habits

Certain key practices will make life easier for everyone in the family when it comes to study time and study organization. However, some of them may require an adjustment for other members of the family.

For lots of helpful FREE internet tools for research and mastering subjects check out these sites:

[Info Please - Homework Center](#)
[Homework Help from Library Association](#)
[Math Homework Site](#)
[Fact Monster](#)



Turn off the TV set. Make a house rule, depending on the location of the set, that when it is study time, it is "no TV" time. A television set that is on will draw youngsters like bees to honey.

What about the radio? Should it be on or off? Contrary to what many specialists say, some youngsters do seem to function all right with the radio turned on to a favorite music station. (Depending on the layout of your house or apartment, maybe an investment in earphones would be worthy of consideration.)

Certain rules should be set about the family phone during study hours. The more people in the household, the more restrictions on long and unnecessary phone calls are needed. A timer, placed next to the phone, can help to control the length of calls so that the telephone will be available if it becomes necessary to call a schoolmate to confirm an assignment or discuss particularly difficult homework.

Designate specific areas for homework and studying. Possibilities include the child's room or the kitchen or dining room table. Eliminate as much distraction as possible.

Since many young people will study in their own rooms, function becomes more important than beauty. Most desks for young people really don't have sufficient space to spread out materials. A table that allows for all necessary supplies such as pencils, pens, paper, books, and other essentials works extremely well.

Consider placing a bulletin board in your child's room. Your local hardware store sells wallboard that might not look too pretty and isn't framed, but a 4 x 3' section is inexpensive and perfect on which to post pertinent school items. You might want to paint or cover it with burlap to improve its appearance or let your child take on this project.

Encourage the use of a small book or pad for writing down assignments so that there is no confusion about when certain assignments must be turned in to the teacher.

Keeping general supplies on hand is important. Check with your child about his needs. In fact, make it his responsibility to be well supplied with paper, pencils, note pads, notebook paper, et cetera.

Regularity is a key factor in academic success. Try to organize the household so that supper is served at a standard time, and once it and family discussions are over, it's time to crack the books. If the student doesn't have other commitments and gets home reasonably early from school, some homework can be done before supper.

Consider your child's developmental level when setting the amount of time for homework. While high school students can focus for over an hour, first-graders are unlikely to last more than 15 minutes on a single task. Allow your child to take breaks, perhaps as a reward for finishing a section of the work.

Organize study and homework projects. Get a large calendar, one that allows space for jotting down things in the daily boxes. Rip it apart so that you (and the child) can sequentially mount the school months for the current semester. For example, you can tear off September, October, November, December, and January and mount them from left to right across one wall. Have the child use a bold color writing instrument (felt tip pen) to mark exam dates in one color, reports that are coming due in a different color, et cetera. This will serve as a reminder so that things aren't set aside until the last dangerous moment.

Teach your child that studying is more than just doing homework assignments. One of the most misunderstood aspects of schoolwork is the difference between studying and doing homework assignments. Encourage your child to do things like:

- take notes as he's reading a chapter
- learn to skim material
- learn to study tables and charts
- learn to summarize what he has read in his own words
- learn to make his own flashcards for quick review of dates, formulas, spelling words, et cetera

Note-taking is a critical skill and should be developed. Many students don't know how to take notes in those classes that require them. Some feel they have to write down every word the teacher says. Others have wisely realized the value of an outline form of note-taking. Well prepared teachers present their material in a format that lends itself to outline form note taking..

Should notes ever be rewritten? In some cases, they should be, particularly if a lot of material was covered, and the youngster had to write quickly but lacks speed and organization. Rewriting notes takes time, but it can be an excellent review of the subject matter. However, rewriting notes isn't worth the time unless they are used for review and recall of important information.

A home dictionary is essential, but if it is kept on a shelf to gather dust, it won't do anyone any good. Keep it in an accessible place and let your child see you refer to it from time to time. If the family dictionary is kept in the living room and the child studies in his room, get him an inexpensive dictionary for his exclusive use.

Good dictionary, encyclopedia and organizational skills depend on the ability to alphabetize. See if your child's teacher practices alphabetizing in class. Try alphabetizing spelling words, family members' names or a few favorite toys at home as a way of practicing.

Help your child to feel confident for tests. Taking tests can be a traumatic experience for some students. Explain to your child that burning the midnight oil (cramming) the night before a test is not productive. Better to get a good night's sleep. Students also need reminding that when taking a test, they should thoroughly and carefully read the directions before they haphazardly start to mark their test papers. They should be advised to skip over questions for which they don't know the answers. They can always return to those if there's time. Good advice for any student before taking a test: take a deep breath, relax, and dive in. Always bring an extra pencil just in case.

During a homework session, watch for signs of frustration. No learning can take place and little can be accomplished if the child is angry or upset over an assignment that is too long or too difficult. At such times the parent may have to step in and simply halt the homework for that night, offering to write a note to the teacher explaining the situation and perhaps requesting a conference to discuss the quality and length of homework assignments.

Should parents help with homework? Yes-if it is clearly productive to do so, such as calling out spelling words or checking a math problem that won't prove. No-if it is something the child can clearly handle himself and learn from the process. And help and support should always be calmly and cheerfully given. Grudging help is worse than no help at all!


Read directions, or check over math problems after your child has completed the work. Remember to make positive comments - you don't want your child to associate homework with fights at home.

Model research skills by involving your child in planning a family trip. Help your child locate your destination on a map or atlas. Use traditional encyclopedia or a CD-ROM to find information about the place you will visit; try the Internet or books in the library.

How best to handle report cards? To save shocks and upsets, gently discuss from time to time "how things are going at school- with your child. Something casual, such as "How did the math test go?" "How did you do on the history report?" "How's your science project coming along? Need any help?" are questions that aren't "third degree" but indicate interest. Find out if it is a policy at your child's school to send out "warning notices" when work isn't going well. Generally, such notices require the parent's signature to verify that the parent has, indeed, been alerted. This is the time to contact the teacher of the course, along with your child, to learn what the difficulty may be. If such notices aren't sent, then grades on projects and reports and from tests may be the sole source of information short of what your child wishes to share. Be tuned in to statements such as "He's an awful teacher," "She goes too fast," etc. This may be the child's way of indicating frustration in understanding content or lack of study time with the subject. However, be cautious in contacting teachers without your child's approval or interest. It may disrupt good feelings between you and make you seem to be interfering and spying

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