

Homework and Practice –

Purpose:

Provide students with opportunities to deepen their understanding and skills relative to content.

RESEARCH AND THEORY ON HOMEWORK

Four Generalizations to guide in the use of homework

1. The amount of homework assigned to student should be different from elementary to middle school to high school.
 - a. Lower grades should be given far less homework than students at higher grades.
 - b. How much homework? No clear answer
Rule of thumb: 10 times per grade level (a 2nd grader would spend 20 minutes, a 3rd grader, 30, and so on).
2. Parent involvement in homework should be kept to a minimum.
 - a. Role of parent is as a facilitator (e.g., providing a place; supporting a schedule)
3. The purpose of homework should be identified and articulated.
 - a. Common purposes for homework:
 - 1) Practice- student has high degree of familiarity
 - 2) Preparation or elaboration – begin thinking about; share what they have learned, apply knowledge
4. If homework is assigned, it should be commented on – written comments strongest effect

CLASSROOM PRACTICE IN ASSIGNING HOMEWORK

1. Establish and communicate a homework policy (see Sample I)
2. Design homework assignments that clearly articulate the purpose and outcome.
Example of a template for a daily calendar:
Subject:
Due Date:
What I have to do tonight:
Purpose of assignment: (Practice, Preparation, Elaboration)
What I have to already know of be able to do in order to complete the assignment:
3. Vary the approaches to providing feedback – Reality is that not all homework will receive the same level of teacher attention
 - a. Portfolio in classroom – teacher reviews, makes comments as much as possible
 - b. Practice homework to improve skill and accuracy – students may provide own feedback; If student desires feedback – time is scheduled to meet with those students

Note: More specific examples and suggestions may be found in *Marzano, Pickering, and Pollock; Classroom Instruction that Works- Research-based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement; 2001; ASCD*

Sample I: Teacher's Homework Policy

- Help set up a consistent organized place for homework to be done.
- Help your child establish either a consistent schedule for completing homework or help him create a schedule each Sunday night that reflects that particular week's activities.
- Encourage, motivate, and prompt your child, but do not sit with her and do the homework with her: The purpose of the homework is for your child to practice and use what she has learned. If your child is consistently not able to do the homework by herself, please contact the teacher
- If your child is practicing a skill, ask him to tell you which steps are easy for him, which are difficult or how he is going to improve. If your child is doing a project, ask him what knowledge he is applying in the project. If, your child is consistently unable to talk about the knowledge he is practicing or using, please call the teacher.
- Although there might be exceptions, the minutes your child should spend on home- work should equal approximately 10 times her grade level (a 2nd grader would spend 20 minutes, a 3rd grader, 30, and so on).
- When bedtime comes, please stop your child, even if he is not done.