

St. Catherine of Siena School

Homework Information Sheet

Why do we do Homework?

According to education experts, homework is supposed to do all kinds of important things:

- Prepare for upcoming lessons
- Dig deeper into subjects than you can during class
- Learn how to find information in the library and on the Internet
- Review and reinforce classroom lessons
- Teach self-discipline and independence

Above all, homework is not optional. Each child at St. Catherine is required to do his/her homework every night. Parents should not argue or bargain with their child about homework. Let them know it must be done, no matter what other things they need or wish to do. Playing or participating in sports is second to homework. It is not a coincidence that the term "student athlete" has "student" first!

How much homework should your child have?

Experts say that 10 minutes per grade level is the right amount of homework for school students. This is an average amount and will differ each night. If your child is spending more than the recommended amount of time, it doesn't necessarily mean that their teachers are being hard on them. Everyone does schoolwork at a different pace. If your child consistently has more than this recommended amount, talk to his/her teacher.

What is the Parent's Role in Homework?

Homework is an opportunity for students to learn and for parents to be involved in their child's education. A parent's interest can spark enthusiasm in a child and help teach the most important lesson of all--that learning can be fun and is well worth the effort. Parent participation in homework is extremely important. Parents should make sure that students have a good place and time to do homework. If you have several children, they should all be doing homework, or other quiet activities, at the same time. Parents need to make sure students understand what they are doing so they can get started and then check homework when completed. Do not sit and do homework with your child. They need to learn to be independent. When they are finished, check the homework carefully. If something is incorrect, simply say it is and then have the child redo the work telling you why it was incorrect. If they do not understand, teach them the process, don't do the work or give them the answer. When all homework is completed, check your child's agenda to make sure they have done everything and then sign if requested. **Please do not sign if the homework had not been completed and/or you are not satisfied with the quality of the work.** By taking an active part in your child's education, they will be more willing to do homework.

For quizzes and tests, have your child study on their own first. After they feel they know the material, test them. This can be done in the format given or you can create your own questions or problems that deal with the same content.

Flash cards are the most important homework tool for learning at the primary level. There is no better way to learn basic word recognition and math facts. If you don't do flash cards, your child will be behind! Make this part of your child's regular homework whether or not it is assigned. Make a game of them if possible. Children should know the word or math answer within a second or two. If not, put it back into the stack. Create your own flash cards out of index cards for words or problems your child struggles with. Computer games can also be used for this. Math Blaster is a great way to practice different math computation problems at different levels.

Helpful Homework Tips for Students

Make sure you know what to do and have everything you need before you leave school.

You can't do homework if you don't know what to do and don't take books, study guides, etc. home with you. Fill out your agenda each period. Make sure you write specific instructions that your parents can understand. They will be the ones checking it. Before you leave school, check your agenda and make sure you have all of your materials. If you are not sure if you will need a book, take it with you!

Know WHAT you have to hand in and WHEN you have to hand it in.

As soon as a teacher gives you an assignment, write it down in detail. For large projects that are not due the next day, write them down several places in your agenda to remind you and encourage you not to put them off. Don't wait until the last minute to do large projects. Start on them early, especially on days you don't have a lot of other homework. If you wait until the last minute, you may have other homework or activities that keep you from having the time to do them properly.

Make and keep a study schedule.

Set aside certain hours each day for class assignments and test review. Keep the same schedule regularly day to day. The amount of time needed for study will vary each day.

Pick a special study place.

Make that your only study area. When you use the same place to study day after day, your body becomes used to it. When you go to that "special place" each day, your body will know that it's that time again.

Avoid distractions!

Select a spot that's quiet, but not too comfortable. Some say that it is easier studying on the bed with the radio or TV on. This is an invitation for your body to take a nap or get caught up in a show. It doesn't work! Study desks/tables should be cleared off and located in a quiet place free from distractions like the Internet, phone, or TV. Studies have found that the right surroundings improve concentration.

Get organized before you start.

Your study area should have everything you need to do your homework -- paper, pencils, pens, resource books, calculator, etc. This will eliminate unnecessary interruptions.