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The following guide was developed by parent and teacher members of the PTA Homework Committee. The guide represents what the committee believes is appropriate to the needs of the children attending P.S. 11. In developing it, we tried to keep in mind both the purposes of homework and the short, busy day of a school child.

PURPOSE: The purpose of homework is to extend and reinforce learnings; to develop personal responsibility, independent thinking and a sense of self-discipline; and to offer a child an opportunity to develop his/her creative ability. Homework gives a child an opportunity to practice what was taught. It shows child and teacher what was well learned and what work needs more review.

Homework should be related to the needs, interests, and abilities of individual children as well as to a class as a whole. Assignments should be purposeful and consistent, clear and definite. Children should be alerted to the usual board location for assignments and be helped to develop a regular time for copying assignments. Homework should be assigned regularly, carefully checked and returned promptly, while the topic or skill is fresh in a child's mind and corrections and suggestions are meaningful.

The amount and kinds of homework a child receives are planned to achieve these goals.

KINDS OF HOMEWORK: Homework should be a balance of written work and home study.

Children in all grades should receive written work. Written work is usually assigned Mondays through Thursdays. Home study should be introduced to children in the early grades (as supplementary reading, selecting pertinent news articles, finding pictures or other unit materials, interviewing persons who relate to class study) and should be emphasized in the upper grade.

Children enjoy doing different kinds of assignments, and variety can keep alive interesting regular assignments. All need practice and review of skills and operations taught in class. Other kinds of homework may include special reading, research, book reports, independent projects. Original homework contracts can be developed between a teacher and a student, when appropriate.

In our effort to encourage the love of reading, we need to remember that the 25 book standard does not require a project for each book. Children should be given an adequate amount of time to complete each book and should not be mandated to read every night. The extra reading time may be given weekly or monthly and may be done on the weekends.

Care should be taken at the beginning of the school year and whenever a new kind of assignment is given to talk about how homework should be done. From time to time during the school year, these classroom practices can be reviewed with children.

TIME ALLOTMENT: The time necessary for homework depends on how old a child is and what grade he/she is in. It depends on the length of the day's daily assignment, plus time needed for a long range or ongoing work (e.g., book reports, current events, special projects, etc.).

The following schedule is based on generally accepted basic time allotments for all grades:

Grades 1 and 2: 15-20 minutes per day

Grades 3 and 4: 20-30 minutes per day

Grades 5 and 6: 45-60 minutes per day

From time to time when particular children or classes are involved in special projects or assignments, they may require the full time allowance for homework. This extra time is a maximum limit; it should not become the length of time needed to do daily homework.

NOTE: If you think your child is having difficulty with homework or needs some help in a particular skill, make an appointment to talk with the teacher.

HOMEWORK FOR SPECIAL PROGRAMS: Children in the ESL, bilingual and other programs may have assignments will be based on the children's abilities to function in English. The general guidelines are still appropriate.

PARENTS' ROLE: You can help your children by sharing an interest in school work and checking and signing all homework. Answering questions and listening to children's plans for special projects will help spark their enthusiasm for the review, practice, and experimentation that aid learning and growth.

REMEMBER, every child has his or her own way of doing assigned tasks, whether it is making the bed, clearing the table, or doing homework. At homework time, try to keep in mind your child's general work habits. Developing good habits and changing poor ones will be useful to the child all of his/her life.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an extension of the classroom activities. It can include reinforcement of skills previously taught and should be related to the grade's curriculum. There should be reinforcement of good **work habits.**

TEACHER GUIDELINES

1. Realize that there are different guidelines for different grades and levels.
2. Teach how to do homework as class lesson (s).
3. Allow adequate time for copying and explaining homework (i.e. copy homework at the same time each day).
4. Make provisions to allot time for students to ask questions pertaining to a problem he/she had with the homework.
5. If necessary, begin the assignment (page) with the class to insure understanding.
6. Vary assignment by making homework interesting.
7. Special arrangements should be made with regard to Resource Room and LEP children (i.e. less spelling words per week).
8. Parental contact - teacher should notify the home if student misses homework consistently (i.e. form letter).
9. Homework should not be used as punishment.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT OF HOMEWORK

1. Allow grace period of one day for messed homework. If x number of assignments are missed, notify parent.
2. Buddy system - to copy homework for missing children (i.e. use carbon paper, exchange pone numbers, etc.)
3. Ask children to time homework - this can be an indication for planning future assignments. Also, if checking homework in class takes too long, perhaps homework assignment has to be reassessed.
4. If homework is checked in class, it should be noted.
5. Have parent sign homework regularly and note if homework assignment is completed.
6. Send homework schedule for the week on Monday to parents - must be signed.
7. Use a special pad or sheet in notebook for copying homework.
8. Homework folders for rexos.
9. Positive reinforcement techniques:
 1. Merit System - reward for completion of x number of homeworks - pencil, prize
 2. Homework Chart - stars, stickers
 3. Contracts with individual students

10. Appropriate times for completion of missed assignments during school day.
 1. After lunch
 2. During center or break time
 3. See supervisor for other times
11. When planning long terms incorporate progress check dates.
 - A. Long term projects:
 1. Send cover letter to parents re: project expectation, sources needed, due dates, etc.
 2. Set up progress - check dates on a calendar or chart posted in the class
 3. Allow project time in class
12. In cases of chronic homework problems, teachers can send daily homework report sheet (i.e. obtain from guidance office or administrator).
13. Weekly teacher reports to parents.
14. Guidance Counselor will set up a conference with the parents to rectify the problem.

HOMEWORK SUGGESTIONS

SOCIAL STUDIES/SCIENCE

1. Have research question every week on blackboard
2. Collages
3. Map skills
4. Simple science experiments
5. Current events - vary assignments (e.g. news team - newscaster, sports, weather person)
6. Playwriting
7. Develop original research project
8. Project skills
9. Have research question every week on blackboard (various topics)
10. Science experiments
11. Collages related to social studies
12. Interview your family heritage

SPELLING

1. Assign words from basic list. Later incorporate vocabulary from different subject areas
2. Write words in sentences
3. Spelling story using five or more words
4. Find little words in big words
5. Spelling games - scramble, word search or find puzzles
6. Prepare for in-class Spelling Bees
7. Grammar - circle particular part of speech in favorite song, story, paragraph, etc.
8. Homework (i.e. verbs) circle verbs in your favorite song
9. Spelling - depends on level - basic list and then combine with vocabulary from different subject areas

MATH

1. Students write word problems. They will share with buddy in class the next day
2. Graph skills
3. Measurement of people, objects - do with someone (sibling, parents)
4. Average (10 problems or examples)

READING/LANGUAGE ARTS

1. Sequence - illustrate events
2. Interviewing skills - oral history, opinion polls, etc.
3. Reading literature - assign chapters to be discussed in class as a group - inferential and evaluative questioning
4. Brainstorming - in order to get a creation of activities from the children themselves
5. Students assigned part of reading or assignment and report to class on their parts only (shorter assignments per student)

6. Creative writing homework - pictures showing different actions - write about feelings involved, etc.

KINDERGARTEN - HOMEWORK

1. Up to the discretion of the teacher
2. For the non-English, a rexo may be sent home after discussion of assignment in the classroom
3. To make it easy for the parents, homework may be assigned on the same day of the week

The statements made here are suggestions that may be used in addition to the ones given in the Teacher's Guides, Learning Standards Manuals, Curriculum Guides, and your own homework strategies.