

Natural Science Academy Homework Guidelines

Research examining time spent on homework, including large-scale international studies, shows a wide variation in the amount of time spent on homework and the associated academic benefits. However, overall, it seems that some homework is better than too much or none at all as it helps to establish study habits in students that will be helpful in the future. The time spent on homework needs to consider the student's age and development. Please note that we will not do homework for the sake of having homework (busy work). The work sent home will directly compliment what is being done at school. In addition, students of all ages should have opportunities for free time, leisure and physical activities outside of school.

Parents at Natural Science Academy are encouraged to show interest in their child's daily instructional effort by reviewing all school papers and making sure a nightly check-in time is established. Homework will be given according to the following criteria:

- 1 To complete any incomplete daily assignments.
- 2 To enrich and/or reinforce the concepts being taught in the regular classroom.
- 3 To strengthen and improve self-discipline and/or concentration skills.
- 4 To prepare for tests.
- 5 To improve reading and math computation skills.
- 6 To complete work following a student absence.

The four main types of homework are:

- 4.1. Practice exercises which will provide students with opportunities to review, revise and reinforce newly acquired skills, such as:

- practicing for mastery – spelling
- finding information about a current topic
- practice exercises – math facts, etc.
- reading for pleasure
- essay writing

- 4.2. Preparatory homework which will provide opportunities for students to gather background materials for a unit of study, making them better prepared for future lessons, including:

- background reading
- researching topics for a class unit of work
- collecting items

- 4.3. Extension assignments which will encourage students to pursue knowledge

individually and imaginatively, including:

- writing
- making or designing an art work
- investigating
- researching
- information and retrieval skills such as using a home computer to find material on the Internet

- 4.4. Study/Preparation for Tests - It is important that sufficient time be set aside for exam preparation and study. As part of regular homework, all students should be consistently reviewing new learning from each of their subjects. This review is essential preparation for tests. Families will be notified of upcoming tests in classroom newsletters and student planners.



Kindergarten Homework

Parents of Kindergarten students are asked to read to or with their child each evening. This could include bed-time stories, student take-home reading books, or fun reading. Students should be exposed to as much new vocabulary as possible during the day and during evening reading. Guided Reading books and math work are sent home with the students each week. Students also have “frequently used words” on a binder ring that should be practiced. Math, Science and Social Studies work will be sent home as needed.

Grade 1-2-3 Homework

First, Second and Third grade students at Natural Science Academy should have a nightly study time divided between the following activities:

- practicing weekly reading/spelling words
- practicing math facts (addition, subtraction)
- reading practice from any type of an assigned Guided Reading book, library book, book from home, classroom reading, etc.

Grade 4-5 Homework

Fourth and Fifth grade students at Natural Science Academy should have a nightly study time divided between the following activities:

- reading from a Guided Reading book or other book
- vocabulary and spelling practice
- math facts practice (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division)
- homework sent home to reinforce skills learned during the school day
- review Student Planner and include parent signature

Student Planners – Each student in grades 4-5 has a Student Planner that is intended to help with the organization of assignments and homework tasks. Each student is expected to have their planners at school. All homework and special events should be recorded in the planner. The Student Planner is a guide for parents to check on the work in the classroom and may also be used for communicating with the teachers.

How Parents Can Help

- Give encouragement and support.
- Ensure that there is a dedicated time and place set aside for homework.
- Read to/with your child every day.
- Minimize distractions while homework is being done – no TV, phone calls, messages, loud music, etc.
- Monitor what students are doing on the computer
- Students need to do their own work. Parents can assist their children with the assignments, but should not do their homework for them.
- Communicate with teachers any concerns or when things are going well.
- Check and sign the Student Planner.
- Balance homework with other important areas like sports, music and family.

