



Homework without tears! Parent Booklet March 2022

There are 4 types of home learning:

1. Practice homework

These are activities where a child is practising things that they have learned at school or are using and applying skills that they have.

Regular reading, learning spellings and tables as well as handwriting all are types of practice homework that you will regularly see.

Teachers will also set practice homework after teaching something in school so that the children have a chance to consolidate the learning and show that they can do it independently at home.

2. Preparation homework

This homework consists of material that hasn't been taught in the classroom just yet, so these tasks are designed to introduce your child to the content that will help them acquire concepts taught later on in class. This might be a task that helps them to recall prior learning about something. It might also be a task that asks them to do some research or collect material that they will then use as part of their learning in class for example interviewing someone at home or finding out some facts about a topic.

3. Extension homework

Students are asked to apply their skills to other content or at greater depth than they have in school. Often they will be set a special project in this homework style that is assigned over a period of time for example to present a project about a river, to make a model of a dinosaur or to create a poster about a famous person.

4. Integration homework

These tasks often look like extension activities – but teachers have set them to give the students the opportunity to use skills and knowledge from more than one curriculum area together. For example to create a PowerPoint presentation about a history topic or to create a model for a famous landmark.

Knowing which type of homework helps to clarify the purpose of the task and that can lead to better decisions about what is important about how it is done and what means it has been successful.



Tips for sharing wordless books or picture books.

1. Describe what you see:

Describing the pictures encourages us to use language that is different from how we normally speak. This will expose children to a rich variety of language.

2. Point things out:

Take your time and point things out in the pictures. Pointing and labelling helps children to learn the meaning of new words. This will also help draw their attention to details in the illustrations.

3. Go beyond the pictures:

Ask the children open ended questions about what might be happening and why. Be sure to give children plenty of time to think about their responses. When children reply, repeat what they say and add more information. For example, if a child points out a child in a puddle ask what he might be thinking and what his Dad might be thinking?

4. Use story language:

When you're reading the story, try using simple words and phrases like 'next' and 'then'. These linking words help children catch the idea of the flow of a story and how to tell a story in order.

5. Play with the story:

You don't always have to tell the story in the same way. If there is more than one character in the book, tell the story from different perspectives. You can make up a different story every time. Use toys or puppets to act out the story.

6. Play 'I spy' with the pictures:

Build confidence with sounds and phonics by playing a game to spot things beginning with different sounds. To really build skills play variations of the game e.g. I spy something that ends with ck.

7. Quiz time:

Have your child test you on what can be seen in the pictures by asking you questions using the 5W words – who, what, where, why, when.

8. Out and about:

Encourage memory and recall by revisiting things from the story when you are out and about with your child. If the story was set in a park, visit the local park and when you are there ask them to recall which things from the storybook park are also in your park. If the story has shopping or cooking in – try and do similar things and encourage your child to recall or make links.

Hints for Daily Reading.

Sharing books - Always remember that we teach phonics to help our children learn to read and write and in order to do this successfully they need to love books! The best way to help your child is to read as many books as possible in both English and your child's home language if that is not English. Read anything that your child is interested in (including magazines, menus, etc). You don't have to read all (or any) of the words each time. Remember to use silly voices, make sound effects, pull faces, act things out, talk about what you can see, talk about what you both think and feel and have fun!

Once is never enough! - Encourage your child to re-read favourite books and poems as well as their school reading scheme book. Re-reading helps children read more quickly and accurately.

Take control of the distractions- It's difficult for reading to compete with TV, computer games etc. Encourage reading as a distraction free activity and quality time together.

Be patient - When your child is trying to sound out an unfamiliar word, give him or her time to do so. As your child to say each sound and then blend it together. Break longer words up into syllables and sound each one then put them together – cover and reveal to support this.

Pick books that are at the right level - Help your child pick books that are not too difficult. The aim is to give your child lots of successful reading experiences. Use the 5 finger rule – if you need to tell your child more than 5 words on a page then that book is not quite right yet.

I read to you, you read to me - Take turns reading aloud – read a sentence each, paragraph each or page each.

Reading together – read in unison with your child so the story stays fluent. This is great for taking the pressure off – and you can often drop out but the child doesn't notice. Think of this like stabilisers on a bike!

One more time with feeling - When your child has sounded out an unfamiliar word, have him or her re-read that sentence. Often kids are so busy figuring out a word they lose the meaning of what they've just read



Dig deeper into the story - Ask your child questions about the story you've just read. As questions to encourage recall but at as your child gets older encourage inferencing (reading between the lines). Say something like, "Why do you think he did that?" Also talk about why the author picked those words – why did they write enormous and not big.

Use all the resources available – as well as school reading books and books at home, your child has access to an online library called MyOn. You may have a Kindle or e-reader and these are great like the MyOn books for being able to offer an audio version of the story to share too. You can also join the local library to extend the range of books available and the librarians run holiday reading schemes which are great for keeping reading going over a school break.

Role model – sometimes it is good for everyone to be reading and for your child to see that this is something you do for pleasure too.

Feedback to school – do use the home school reading record to share how the reading went for students at Key Stage 1.

Remember a rest is as good as a break – if your child is not keen on reading for a while, ease off the formal reading and step up the informal reading opportunities so that they don't focus on that aspect of the activity. You can read rules of a new game to play, a recipe to cook something together or a programme of events at the sports centre to pick something to do at the weekend.



Learning Spellings: ideas for repeating the same words in different multi-sensory ways

Pipe-cleaner Words

Materials

- Word List
- Pipe cleaners
- Paper/card
- Pencil

In advance write a few words on individual pieces of card or paper.

Ask your child to listen carefully while you say a word. Challenge your child to use the pipe cleaners to form all of the letters they hear. Show your child the word card and support them to use their pipe cleaners to add or change the letters they need to spell the word correctly.

Water Words

Materials

- Words on card or paper
- Paintbrushes
- Water

Write several words on separate pieces of card or paper.

Ask your child to write a word two or three times on the patio or path. Repeat with a different word.

Challenge: - can they write a sentence that includes the word?

Gooey Words

Materials

- Re-sealable plastic bags
- Hairstyling gel or finger paint
- Masking tape

Fill the re-sealable bag with gel or finger paint. Use masking tape to secure each bag to a table or other flat surface. Invite your child to choose a word from the Word List and use one finger to press the letters of their word into the gel or paint.

Your child can erase their word by gently rubbing the bag with the palm of their hand until it is evenly distributed inside the bag.

Secret Words

Materials

- Word List
- Large sheet of paper
- Pencil
- Scissors

Write three words on a large piece of paper from the word list. Write out the same three words and cut them up. Lay them out in front of your child. Tell your child that one of the words is a 'secret word'. Choose a word from the paper and say each one of the letters in random order. Support your child to find the letter. Can they rearrange them to find the 'secret word'?

Extra Extra

Materials

- Word List
- Paper
- Scissors
- Glue
- Magazines/newspapers

Write a selection of words from the Word List in random order on a piece of paper. Read the words to your child. Ask your child to find the word in the magazine, cut it out and glue it to the appropriate word. (Give your child one page from a magazine and check that the words they are searching for are on the page.)

More challenging version: find and cut out letters to make the words and glue them down.

Spelling Rainbows

Choose your 3 favourite crayons to rainbow write your spelling words.

Write each word first in pencil on your page. Then trace over each word three times. Each time you trace, you must use a different colour crayon.

Silly Sentences

Write ten silly sentences using a spelling word in each sentence.

Please underline your spelling words! Write your sentences neatly!

Example My dog wears a blue and purple dress when he takes a bath.

ABC Order

Write your spelling words in alphabetical order. Be sure to look at the first letter of each word. If the first letter is the same, look at the second letter.

Spelling Paragraph

Write a paragraph using ALL of your spelling words. Be sure to underline your spelling words in your paragraph.

Don't forget a topic sentence and a concluding sentence.

Word searches

Make a word search of your spelling words on squared paper – or visit this website and enter your words to get one made for you to do: <https://www.senteacher.org/printables/literacy/>

We don't do it like that at school – helping with maths homework.

Support maths by keeping the basics sharp: count regularly; practice number facts and number bonds such as $5+5=10$, $2+8=10$; learn tables facts and use all of these in everyday contexts.

Put your child in the driving seat: get them to show you how they 'do it' and teach you how to do the task. Listen and ask questions rather than tell them what to do.

Set small targets and check in: rather than wait to the end and check to find it has all gone a bit wrong, ask your child to do 3 and check in so you can address any difficulties early.

Make it visual and concrete: most tricky maths concepts become easier to understand if you can visualise what is happening. Draw pictures and diagrams, use pasta as counters, create fractions out of biscuits – all of these things will help develop understanding. Drawing to solve problems really helps boost understanding.

Start from what you do know: if something is really tricky work back to the point at where your child is secure with what to do and build up from there. Often maths home learning is set in steps – start with the simplest one and build up if you need to.

Use an online video tutorial and do it together: websites like <https://myminimaths.co.uk/> have videos showing you how to do the different calculations. Watch and learn from these so that it becomes you and your child against the problem and the video.



Repetition is key for learning maths facts – so find engaging ways to do that: you can practice tables in the car on a journey, going up the stairs to bed, through card games, by learning songs and by playing online games that use them. You can even use some of those multi-sensory spelling strategies for this.

Problem solve in steps: where there word problems to do – read the problem, highlight the key information, find the words that tell you what calculation to do, work out your answer, check it and relate it back to the problem.

Use things to help you until you don't need them any more: where the focus is on learning how to do a calculation or solve a problem, using a tables chart, your fingers, counters or a number line to work things out is a sensible strategy. It is not cheating and doesn't mean you haven't done the task yourself. The key is to phase it out when you don't need it any more.

Do as much as you can – and stop: it is ok to stop after 30 minutes and let your teacher know that is as far as you got in that time.

Supporting your child with writing tasks for home learning

Ultimate multi-tasking – so prioritise: writing tasks involve a student applying a whole range of knowledge and skills at the same time. They need ideas/creativity, vocabulary, grammar, spelling, handwriting, proof reading, editing and resilience! So pick a focus for the task and work on that. If the teacher has included success criteria they are trying to guide you in picking that focus.

Talk, talk, talk: you cannot write what you cannot say! So spend some time talking about the task – maybe even at a different time to actually doing the writing. Jot down some notes or make a plan – your child might do this, or you might do it for them. Plans can be notes, bullet points, mind maps – you might even get a planner from the teacher with the task.

When you need to help one sentence at a time: Encourage your child to rehearse their sentence out loud before they write it down. Get them to say it more than once and count how many words there are on their fingers – sometimes it helps to have a counter (pasta works fine!) for each word that they put back in the pile as they write one word at a time - to help make sure they don't miss words out.

Use praise to motivate and encourage good habits: Do offer plenty of praise. Writing takes practice and perseverance, both of which are hard if you are feeling discouraged. Think of nice things to say ~ 'I love the way you've put that! It's brilliant.' Not 'I wish you would leave a space between your words.'

Variety is the spice of life! Sometimes it helps to do the writing in different ways – you can scribe for your child and they write it up if their focus is handwriting. You can let them write on the computer and print it out if you want them to focus on editing and improving their work as this means the presentation doesn't get messy or a further copy have to be made.

Write at other times too: show your child that writing is something that they can use in real life – to make shopping lists, to write cards, to keep a diary etc. It can help if adults role model this too.

Break the task up: sometimes you need to set small short targets to get through the task e.g. let's do the plan first, let's write 3 sentences, let's write the first paragraph. You might even split them over a couple of days for a bigger task.

Help to get started – and make sure we know when it will end: some children panic when faced with a blank page and may benefit from being given the first sentence or a sentence starter to help them over that hurdle. Some also need to know at the start when they will be done – so set an expectation or ask them to.