

Assistant Principal Message

HOMEWORK – Marzano Model Stresses Timing and Quality

Homework Help has started for the 2017 year. Every Wednesday students in 3-6 classes can go to Mrs. Mill's and Miss. Dearing's room to get help with their homework tasks. It is impressive to note the number of students who have taken up the Wednesday after school session of Homework Help. From speaking with parents and results of our previous Parent Opinion Surveys, it is my impression that parents believe homework has a positive impact on student learning and results.

Dr. Robert J. Marzano and the Learning Sciences Marzano Centre have done a great deal of research on homework. The research reveals that giving students homework to practise skills taught in the classroom increases students' chances of academic success. Homework provides students with the opportunity to really take in the work that has been taught in the classroom. Furthermore the research answers some big questions on homework.

Does homework work the same for all age groups?

Dr. Marzano notes that, at least in grades Prep – 3, "The clear pattern is that homework has less effect at the lower grade levels". However even with the limited benefits of homework in lower grades he still believes it has value. He believes with other researchers who recommend: "that students in P-3 be given homework even though it should not be expected to improve test scores". Homework for young children should focus on building reading stamina and help them develop good study habits, foster positive attitudes towards school, and communicate to students the idea that learning takes work at home as well as school". (P.90 The Art and Science of Teaching – Robert.J Marzano). Marzano's review of research on homework finds that the effect of homework increases significantly as children get older.

How much time should be spent on homework?

Research shows that 7-12 hours per week has the largest impact however there are considerations to be made for different grade levels. In The Art and Science of Teaching, Marzano recommends a prep student to have 10 minutes and a student in Year 5/6 50 minutes per night. It is important to note that in his research Marzano records that poorly structured homework, regardless of time spent, may not be productive at all, and can even be counterproductive. The quality of the homework matters. This is why our teachers set homework at all year levels that is reflective of the work done in the classroom. All the homework your child receives should support the learning that is done in the classroom.

How much should parents involve themselves in homework?

Parents are not expected to provide the answers or be experts in the various subjects students are completing homework for. Parents are encouraged to ask guiding questions to help the child summarize what has been learned and the children should be expected to show and explain their work to the parents. Another way parents can support their children with homework is to provide the routines and space for the homework to be successfully completed.

If you have questions regarding homework or how to assist your child please see your child's classroom teacher and they will be more than happy to assist you.

"Nothing in the world is worth having or worth doing unless it means effort, pain, difficulty....I have never in my life envied a human being who led an easy life. I have envied a great many people who led difficult lives and led them well". – Theodore Roosevelt

Warmest Regards,

Kathy Cvitkovic – Assistant Principal (3 – 6 Learning Community)

REMINDER:

- Family Fun Night is tomorrow Friday 24th February
- Pancake Day is on Tuesday 28th February.
NO LATE ORDERS
- Tuesday 28th: Last day to order Grade 6 Tops
NO LATE ORDERS
- Grade Prep students are required to attend school next Wednesday 1st

Message from our School Vice Captains

Hello parents/ guardians,

In the 5/6 classes we have been learning about historical narratives, escalation and de-escalation. We all hope M.W.P.S students are settling in with their amazing teachers of 2017. We are looking forward to an amazing year and a lot of education and fun ☺

School Vice Captains
Alith Panthum & Jessica Hodge



Getting it right in Writing!

Developing Successful Writers



Writing is an essential skill. It is more than just putting words on paper. Writing is a process of communication that plays an important role in your child's life—both in and out of the classroom. Our focus at school is to teach students transferrable skills that will assist them with any writing task that they undertake- we teach the writer, not the writing.

Teachers plan learning opportunities for students to develop key skills in writing, while gaining confidence and independence in writing a variety of different text types and forms and for a variety of purposes and audiences. Students are taught the craft and conventions of writing, as well as the process of planning, drafting, revising and editing. Students are also supported with strategies to help them develop their writing stamina.

You can make a big difference in helping your child to develop writing skills and become successful in writing. There are many opportunities you can provide at home to allow your child to apply the skills they are learning beyond the classroom and into some purposeful, real-life contexts.

Below are some suggestions of how you can support your child to become a successful writer:

- ❖ Be a good model of writing. Let your child see you write and talk with them about how you use writing in your life- making lists, writing letters, emails, notes to family members
- ❖ Find reasons for your child to write- help with the shopping list, cards to family members, thank you notes, books for younger or older siblings to read at bed time. A journal is a great way for your child to record things that happen day to day or when away on a family trip.
- ❖ Share stories from your life with your child. Your life stories are more interesting to your child than made up stories or TV shows... these become great inspiration for writing.
- ❖ When your child wants to tell you about an interesting thing that happened during the day, enjoy listening and encourage him or her to jot the event down. It encourages their enthusiasm and might make a good piece of writing later.
- ❖ When your child shows you his or her writing, focus on what your child is doing **well**. Writing is very personal and confidence can be easily crushed, so respond to **what** they write rather than **how** they write it.
- ❖ Stress the importance of the writing process of planning, drafting, revising and editing, not just the final product.
- ❖ Provide writing materials for your child- paper with lines and no lines, pencils and pen, shaped notepads, journals, spiral bound books, coloured pencils, stencils, markers and erasers.
- ❖ A child's speaking vocabulary is greater than written vocabulary. Help with spelling as needed, but do not expect your child to spell every word correctly. If children only use words they know how to spell, their writing will be dull and lifeless.

Fostering good writing habits will make a big difference in your child's attitude about writing!

Marvelous Maths

Simple Ways Parents Can Help Their Child with Mathematics

1. Look for shapes and patterns in real life
2. Have your child measure ingredients for a recipe you are making
3. Ask your child to explain the math skills he or she is working on in school
4. When helping your child with homework or school projects, ask him or her to explain how he or she got an answer
5. Help your child find some appropriate number problem solving games to play online
6. Play card or board games that involve counting patterns
7. Ask your child to count change at the supermarket, or to estimate the total cost while you are shopping
8. Compare:
Which is the tallest?

...the heaviest?

...the smallest?

...the fastest?

...the hottest?

...the most expensive?
9. Have tools such as a ruler, a scale, a calculator, and a measuring tape available to use in your house
10. Encourage your child to track or graph scores or stats for a favourite sports team
11. Use dice to make a game out of practicing math facts

Point out ways math is part of “real” life:

Money, computers, music, art, construction, cooking...



Developing independence in primary school

By Michael Grose

Practical ideas for parents to encourage real independence in children.

Your goal as a parent should be for your child to be completely self-managing by the end of primary school. That is, he can get himself and others up each morning; make his own breakfast; prepare his own schoolbag; collect his own school uniform; put any notes under your nose to be signed and returned to school; and so it goes on. Now, that doesn't

mean that kids will do all this all the time, because other factors come into play such as busy schedules and early starts; children will need some assistance at times. However, it's good to keep in mind that children, when left to their own devices, generally do remarkably well at organising their daily tasks. Sometimes they just need the opportunity.

Here are four practical ways to develop real independence in primary school-aged children:

1. Involve them in mealtimes

Mealtimes are the fulcrum around which healthy families operate. A shared meal is more than food. It's a ritual that binds people together; it's a vehicle for parents to influence their children; and it's an expression of love and care. It is also fundamental to children's wellbeing because there is a strong correlation between good mental health in young people and those who regularly share a family meal. Mealtimes also offer plenty of opportunities for children to help including running errands, preparing the meal, setting the table, clearing the table, packing the dishwasher and other jobs. There's something for everyone!

2. Use pocket money to develop independence

A regular allowance is a fabulous way to promote real independence in children. Start in lower primary school and gradually increase their allowance the older they become. Importantly, you need to increase the areas that their allowance covers. For instance, in lower primary school a child's pocket money might go towards the purchase of some sweets and one or two other items each week. However, in middle primary school it might increase to cover the cost of one or two lunch orders each week, their bus money and some treats.



Developing independence in primary school

In later primary school it could even cover some of their clothing purchases as well. The important thing is not to cover for kids if, for instance, they don't budget appropriately and run out of money for school-canteen lunches. They can either make their own lunches at home or perhaps borrow from a sibling and repay out of their next allowance. Pocket money used well is a fantastic way to develop independence in kids.

3. Look after pets

It's a quirk of life that most children want a pet, but they just don't want to look after it in the long term. Many kids discover that following the initial flush of enthusiasm looking after a pet can be a grind – walking the family pooch, cleaning out the guinea-pig cage, or feeding the family feline. But pet care offers priceless lessons in the development of grit, responsibility and nurturance – all necessary attributes for independent success.

4. Walk, ride or take public transport to school

The opportunity to go to school on your own devices was a luxury that previous generations enjoyed. While it may have seemed at the time like something to be endured rather than enjoyed, most people I discuss this matter with look back with fondness and nostalgia.

For most people it meant freedom, friendship and fun. For a short time each day kids experienced a delicious type of freedom away from both teachers and parents – a time to muck around, dawdle and mess around with mates. It also gave kids some familiarity with their neighbourhood.

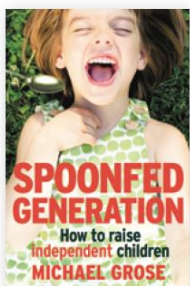
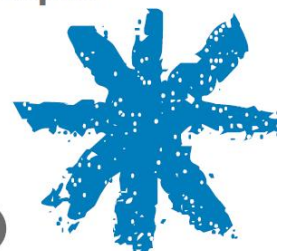
It's well established that currently more children are driven to school than ride or walk, which denies children the same opportunity for friendship, fun and freedom. Busy schedules, less child-friendly neighbourhood layouts and working parents are just some of the reasons that prevent kids walking to school. If possible, look for ways to allow your child to get to school on their own. It's fantastic for their independence and wellbeing. If children are too young, walk or ride with them some of the way until they are old enough and skilled enough to make the trip without you.

The age of opportunity

Children in this stage have an outward orientation and are exploring their place in the world. This is an age and stage for greater neighbourhood exploration, for taking on real responsibility and for developing personal confidence and efficacy before adolescence starts.



Visit our website for more ideas and information to help you raise confident and resilient young people.



Special note: I'm thrilled to announce that my latest book *Spoonfed Generation: How to raise independent children* is out. It's available at parentingideas.com.au

