



Homework Policy

Generally, in other Primary schools, homework is given to gauge whether a child has understood a particular lesson. This is necessary when a teacher gives a lesson to twenty or thirty students at a time.

Our teachers work with children individually or in groups of three or four students and Montessori materials are designed to be self-correcting. These two factors combined ensure that the teacher is completely in touch with the child's individual comprehension of work and on-going requirements and therefore, homework is generally not necessary.

However homework, in a Montessori sense, is work that the child does at home as an extension of his or her own interests. This work should be meaningful and of high interest to the child; it should have a purpose.

Homework can include a variety of activities, including household chores. It can help the child develop language skills, cultural awareness, make mathematics a real part of the home environment, and give the child a voice in family decisions.

No education system can be successful in preparing children for a place in society without parental support. Education is, in fact, a cooperative effort that begins at home and is supplemented by the school. For these reasons it is assumed and expected that parents take an active part in choosing home activities, appropriate for the child.

The teacher can suggest activities that are related to the memorisation of math's, facts or other typically academic activities, but this is a minor facet of homework. Homework is best when it consists of real life activities. In addition to these activities that interest the child, homework may also consist of activities that have a great deal of meaning to parents. Sharing that kind of activity with a child may be a way to expand the child's horizons and build a bond around that shared activity. Activities that parents and children enjoy together add to the child's repertoire of enjoyable activities which may serve to enrich the child's entire life.

The following is a brief list of real-life activities that may provide homework activities for parents and children:

- letter writing (invitations, thank you notes, etc.)
- comparing newspaper ads for food prices
- writing stories
- doing the grocery shopping together
- weekly library trips
- preparing food together
- reading aloud
- scanning the newspaper for headlines and discussing new topics
- drawing objects in the home environment or neighbourhood
- taking walks together: look for leaf shapes; identify plants, animals, birds; look for different kinds of architecture
- setting up a lunch money/bus money jar so that the child can count out what's needed
- involving the child in planning the dinner menu and writing out a shopping list
- setting the table and cleaning up afterwards
- recycling
- doing simple science experiments
- using maps to plan outings
- visit the zoo or museums together
- attend musical events together
- make music together as a family

Parents can help their children be successful in life by helping them develop a good attitude about work - whether it is doing chores or doing other activities together. This will only occur if the activities are done in a fun way and not as a drill. Parents need to let their child know that they believe he or she will be successful — in doing the chores, in doing other activities together, and in doing work at school.

As all Montessori education is an aid to what is to come, homework may be given at the senior end of the school to prepare the children for high school. This is usually in the form of a project to be completed over a period of time. In

order to be successful with homework children need to be organised with their time, skilled at prioritising and able to focus. Because the Montessori environment utilises these same skills on a daily basis, the child, if able to exercise these skills at school, should be well equipped to manage their homework.

Source

Montessori Australia

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