

## HOMEWORK

Recent new state school homework guidelines have been released. Homework is considered to be an important part of students' lives, particularly in the secondary school. Homework allows students to practise school work in their own time, complete assessment programs and learn the importance of responsibility, time management and the implications of not adhering to due dates. Homework also helps students to develop independence, set goals and reach them.

Education Queensland is, however, aware of the fact that students need to develop and lead balanced lives - mindful of this, certain guidelines have been developed. It is suggested that students in Years 8 and 9 do one hour's homework per night five hours in total per week and that students in Years 10 to 12 should complete sufficient homework and study to fulfil their own program requirements. For a student with an academic program and tertiary aspirations this should equal a minimum of 30 minutes per subject per night. This might comprise homework and assignment completion as well as study for tests and exams. Students need to be encouraged to exercise their own judgements in assessing and fulfilling their own requirements.

In implementing such a policy teachers are requested to ensure that homework is regular, purposeful and beneficial. Such homework will be viewed more positively by students if it is appropriate and linked to both students' needs and learning. It would be of even greater benefit if time management and organisational skills were taught and modelled by both parents and teachers. It is similarly suggested that students can take responsibility for their own learning by:

- being aware of the school's homework policy
- discussing with their parents or caregivers homework expectations
- accepting responsibility for the completion of homework within set time frames
- following up on comments made by teachers
- seeking assistance when difficulties arise
- organising their time to manage home obligations, participation in physical activity and sports, recreational and cultural activities and part time employment.

In the same way the role of parents and caregivers in helping their students can be by:

- helping them to complete tasks by discussing key questions or directing them to resources
- encouraging them to organise their time and take responsibility for their learning
- encouraging them to read and to take an interest in and discuss current local, national and international events
- helping them to balance the amount of time spent completing homework, watching television, playing computer games, playing sport and engaging in other recreational activities
- contacting the relevant teachers to discuss any concerns about the nature of homework and their children's approach to the homework.

Effective study tips are outlined below. Students particularly need to realise that due dates are due dates and that particularly in the senior school, they are expected to submit an assignment or exam or some form of it, on the pertinent or due date. If students are absent on the day that an assignment is due, they or their parents must contact the school on the day to explain their absence.

### **Effective Study Tips**

Studying effectively means developing positive habits which can be routinely practised. Effective study practices will promote the achievement of your personal goals – academic, cultural, sporting and social – through effective time management.

## At School

1. Get to class on time.
2. Sit near the front of the classroom.
3. Be prepared and have all of your gear ready.
4. Engage your mind – participate, ask questions.
5. Be organised.

## At Home

1. Have a private place to study that is quiet and where you can leave things spread out for the next study session.
2. Plan your study time. Have a regular study timetable that you adhere to.
3. Arrange your time. Use every time management strategy possible. A lot can be achieved in five minutes.
4. Regularly review your work.
5. Understand your homework and assignment tasks – carefully read through the instructions or task sheet so that you can prepare yourself for the task.
6. Focus on one homework or assignment task at a time.
7. After each study session of 30-45 minutes, take a 10-15 minute break – have a healthy snack and drink plenty of water, take a walk, and have a good stretch.
8. Ask your guidance officer, teacher, friends and family to assist you to study more effectively.

## Going through the motions.....

It is much more important to study productively than it is to spend hours sitting at your desk going through the motions of study. Never go to your room with the intention of studying for an hour when, really, all you're going to do is this:

Organise desk, sharpen pencils	5 minutes
Decide what to study	5 minutes
Make cup of coffee	5 minutes
Arranges books and paper	5 minutes
Flick through books, do some problems	15 minutes
Think about food	10 minutes
Do more problems, very slowly	10 minutes
Pack up equipment, tidy up	<u>5 minutes</u>
	<u>1 hour</u>

If this is you, you have managed to spend much less than half the time actually studying. Why not just work hard for 25 minutes and spend the rest of the time relaxing? That would certainly be just as effective, and more beneficial. Many students study this way – do you? If so, you are not studying productively. If you've already decided to sit down for any length of time to study, then be organised and spend the whole hour actually doing it! Sitting at a desk, pretending to study for any length of time is anything but a guarantee of good marks.

There is a large number of internet sites that might be helpful. These are listed below.

## Study Tips

<http://wff1.ecom.unimelb.edu.au/tluwww/>  
particularly helpful for seniors (economics and maths)  
Student study handouts  
<http://www.utexas.edu/student/utlc/>  
university study site  
Webster's Dictionary  
<http://www.m-w.com/netdict.htm>  
good all-round dictionary (American)  
World Wide Web Virtual Library  
<http://www.vlib.org/>  
excellent site with links to many others. By subject, region or topic

My Virtual Encyclopaedia  
<http://www.refdesk.com/myency.html>  
designed to be of more use to senior students and university students  
Education Index (by subject)  
[http://www.educationindex.com/education\\_resources.html](http://www.educationindex.com/education_resources.html)  
the BEST directory of links by subject topic that I have found.  
Homework Help for students in Grades 6 - 12  
<http://www.thwww.com/mrwizard/homework.htm>