

Friends School Haverford

Sixth Grade

Homework Policy

As 6th grade students prepare to step into a middle school atmosphere in 7th grade, it is important that they build their stamina for a rigorous homework load. The greatest benefit of nightly homework is that it gives needed time to review and reflect upon what has been explored on a particular day while the child works in a comfortable setting. In addition, homework assignments reinforce and extend concepts taught in class.

Tips for Better Homework:

1. Before leaving school

- a. Assignments should be carefully recorded in the homework planner and will be reviewed at 2:45 each day.
- b. At the close of the day students should gather all necessary supplies, checking the assignment board for clarification.
- c. Before leaving school, students should make sure they understand each assignment, speaking with their teacher for clarification, as necessary.

2. At home

- a. Students should choose to work in a well-lighted, comfortable place.
- b. Parents should encourage children to tackle the hardest or longest assignment first, while their energy level is highest.
- c. Taking short breaks can do wonders: five minutes for stretching, getting a drink or a snack after twenty or so minutes of study can be most helpful.
- d. No longer should daily checking of the planner be necessary. It is helpful, however for students to verbalize their assignments and responses. Parents are encouraged to discuss homework assignments with their child.
- e. If asked by your child, please go over and proofread your child's work.
- f. Help your child study for the regular tests they will encounter during 6th grade.

Students can expect to spend an average of one to two hours completing homework most nights. This will include a 1/2 hour each of reading and math. Long-term assignments such as research projects, reports, and science projects require careful planning. While our study skills program calls for considerable attention paid to this aspect of each assignment, 6th grade students are expected to handle a larger share of the time management portion of such assignments than was the case with 5th grade students. Additionally students will be expected to prepare for the regular tests taken while in 6th grade. Again, while our study skills program will focus on test-taking techniques, most of the actual preparation will be completed at home.

Should I help my child with his/her homework when problems arise? Our thinking is that if the child has made an independent effort and, even with parental encouragement, the child is still unable to satisfy an assignment, then it is acceptable to give the child guidance in any of the following ways:

1. Have the child explain the assignment to the parent
2. Ask the child further questions to elicit further and deeper thinking
3. Encourage the child to brainstorm a list of possible ideas
4. Have the child call a friend
5. Suggest a different problem-solving strategy (a mnemonic, for example)
6. Take a break and come back to the assignment later with a fresh outlook
7. Have the child call the Teacher Barbara for clarification
8. Ask the child to write a note to Teacher Barbara explaining the difficulty, or to leave a message at the teacher's school extension, 610-642-2334, Ext 141.
9. In regard to assignments requiring a written response, we offer the following suggestions:
 - a) Speaking the response aloud before writing is a good pre-writing technique
 - b) Once your child has proofread a written piece, read it over and point out errors you notice have been missed. Allow your child to discover the specific solution to fix it.

Should a problem arise with respect to homework time, or any other issue pertaining to homework, I request that you contact me directly, so I can make any necessary adjustments to better meet your child's needs.

What should my child do if there appears to be no homework? Each 6th grade student is expected to read every evening. Additionally, if no math has been assigned he/she should play a math game on line, or with a family member. Tutoring and math play with a parent is also acceptable. This should continue for 1/2 hour.

What should my child do if there is too much work? After 1/2 hour of consistent effort, I recommend that your child stop, write a note to me and continue with other work. I will work with your child at school the next day.

Thank you for your ongoing collaboration,

Tr. Barbara