

Why Homework Matters

One of the things that children commonly ask me is, why does homework matter? Why should I want to do homework? I think it's a very important thing for the children to ask, particularly because in many respects, some of the homework that is assigned to the children doesn't matter. There is a great deal of literature to question the idea of whether homework in the early grades actually enhances early achievement. But there are some reasons that I'd like for you to at least have at your fingertips so when you're talking with your children about the goals of doing homework, the value of doing homework, you have some important things for them to consider.

One of the reasons that homework might matter is that it prepares your son or daughter for the next day's lesson. If a teacher can connect an assignment to something that they're teaching or doing the next day, that might give the homework some value to your child.

It also provides children the opportunity to learn to use resources, such as the library, the internet, reference books if we still use them. Family members. It gives the children to learn more through the means that they cannot readily use in school. It's practice at using resources.

Homework also provides children with an opportunity for an in-depth, deeper explanation of what they've learned in school. There often isn't enough class time to really learn a lot about a topic, and going home and learning more about it and bringing that learning, that knowledge, back to school the next day can be very important and very valuable.

Homework also gives children the opportunity to learn about time management skills, study skills, and organizational skills under the tutelage or guidance of their family.

Homework can also help build positive work attitudes and habits. As my father always said, "If you're not going to do homework then we have time housework." Homework is one way of helping to establish a work ethic.

Homework also gives children the chance to share with their family what they are doing and learning in school. Sometimes it's simply a review of what you've learned so mom and dad can see what you've achieved, what you now know.

Homework also has the advantage of giving children the chance to teach their family members. I think homework assignments that ask children to teach their parents or their siblings something they have learned in school is particularly valuable.

Homework gives parents the opportunity to provide information to the teacher about their child's learning style, learning skills, gaps in learning. You can look at what your child's doing in homework and then give the teacher feedback about how your child approached the homework, their attitudes and their efforts. It's a two-way street, it's not just teachers assigning homework for children and parents.

Lastly, I think it's very important that homework be an opportunity for children to demonstrate what they've learned. Mastery practice, showing mom and dad the improvements, the skills that they are acquiring. Homework doesn't have to be a negative. It can be an opportunity to share and show what you know, practice, build mastery, work on organizational and study skills, build a positive work ethic. There are many reasons why homework can be of value for your child.