

HOMework

A GUIDE FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS AND PARENTS

The New Zealand Curriculum (<http://www.lynfield.school.nz/Curriculum.html>) identifies five key competencies which are required for people to live, learn, work and contribute as active members of their communities.

These competencies are:

- thinking
- using language, symbols and texts
- managing self
- relating to others
- participating and contributing

The knowledge and skills found in different learning areas contribute to the development of these competencies in learners.

Because homework has always been set and has always formed part of what learning involves, the reasons for having it and the value it provides are seldom reflected on.

Homework is that part of learning that students do outside of the classroom in their own time. It helps build the skills that students need in order to develop these competencies and to become successful independent learners in the future. Specifically students learn to:

- To work on their own without close supervision (*managing self*)
- To prioritise, by establishing an after school routine that includes a time set aside for homework (*managing self*)
- To persevere with a task and be self-reliant (*thinking, using language, symbols and texts and managing self*)
- to be resourceful in finding information (*thinking, using language, symbols and texts, relating to others*)
- to manage time so a task is completed within a given time frame and the deadline is met (*managing self*)
- to follow instructions (*thinking, using language, symbols and texts*)
- to be personally well-organised with the necessary equipment, space and time for doing the homework tasks (*managing self*)

The tasks set generally fall into a couple of categories:

- They provide practice, consolidation and further exploration of what has been taught in class.

- They look forward to and prepare for the next period of instruction and learning.

Whatever the nature of the homework, it extends the students' learning beyond the school day and requires them to take responsibility for their own learning.

For every student there are clear and important benefits that come from completing homework activities within the expected time.

In the junior school

Although homework offers an opportunity for content and skills covered in the classroom to be consolidated and furthered, the primary value of homework at Year 9 and 10 is in the skills that the students develop.

In the senior school

The value of tasks completed outside the classroom alters significantly. The curriculum at senior level and the tasks set for qualifications, require independent study, research, writing and presentation far beyond what can be completed in class time. Success depends on the students being committed to devoting their own time to their studies. They will have difficulty if they have not already developed the skills mentioned above.

Homework, as work done in the students' own time, is as significant as classwork. This looks ahead to tertiary study where the majority of the learning and the completion of assessable tasks is done by the student outside of timetabled lecture hours.

Parental Involvement

Many parents closely supervise and sometimes assist their children's completion of homework while the children are at primary and intermediate school. Once the children are at secondary school the level of close supervision and assistance should decrease.

As teachers we do not want parents completing homework for their children; your direct assistance should be minimal. However, we rely heavily on parental encouragement, support and facilitation.

Parental support for Homework:

1. Expect homework to be set for each course at least twice a week.
2. Take an interest in the tasks that are being done, offering encouragement and support.
3. Emphasise the purpose and value of homework completion.
4. Telephone the Dean if you have any concerns about the homework being set. The Dean will liaise with the relevant Faculty Leader.
5. Be suspicious of any claim that no homework is being set!

Homework activities

Every day, regardless of whatever else may be specifically set, all students should be:

- Reflecting on what they have learnt and the skills they have used in each course each day
- Revising previous work
- Checking through exercise books, filing notes, and checking workbooks for completeness, setting out and spelling, etc
- Checking their homework and assessment deadlines, and forward planning
- Reading [see below]

There is no excuse for students saying they have nothing to do.

Some of the more regular homework activities include:

- Worksheets/work book pages
- Writing up experiments, reports or assignments
- Researching information from books, magazines, newspapers, internet
- Drawing maps, diagrams, sketches
- Making notes from textbooks/online resources
- Exercises, for example in Maths, Languages, Economics, etc
- Writing paragraphs or essays
- Constructing models, Science Fair projects, English projects
- Completing journals, creative writing, poetry tasks
- Surveying people's views or attitudes
- Photography or art work
- Continuing with practical work including Art work
- Practising a musical instrument or training in physical activity
- Watching a particular TV programme [eg news, documentaries],
- Revision for tests
- Reading novels, plays, non-fiction, poetry

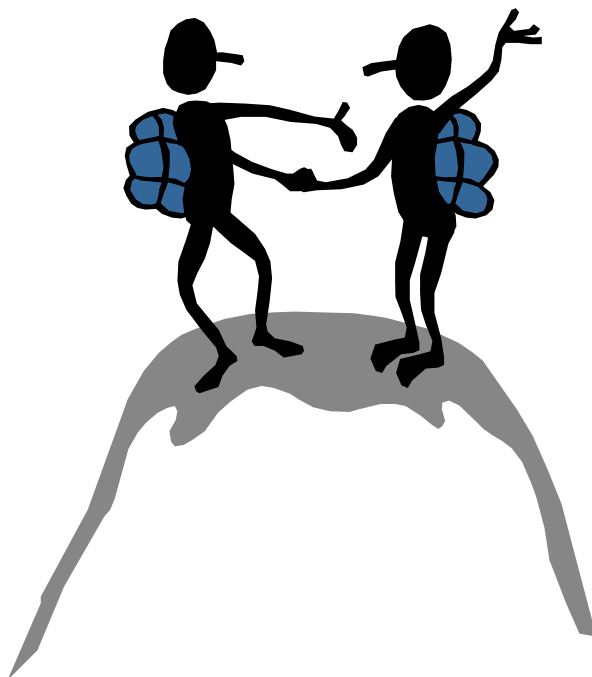
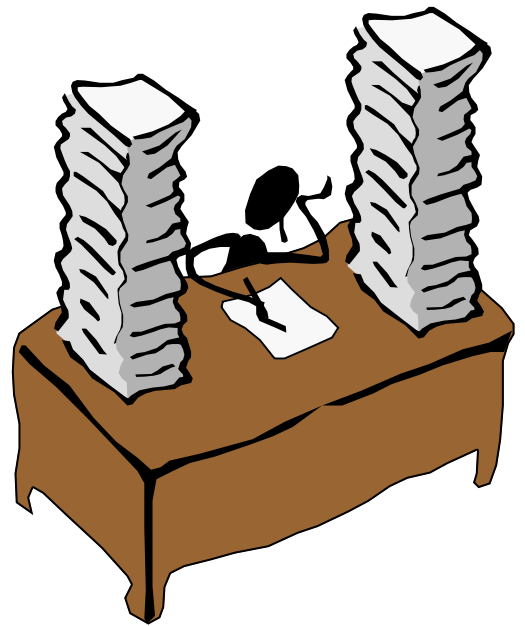
Reading is a priority in students' language growth. Students are expected to read every night.

English teachers will ensure that your child has adequate reading material. The best help you can give your child in this essential activity is to provide an appropriate model by reading yourself.



With a well-organised approach you will never need to feel worn out or frustrated over your homework.

Timetable yourself so you are not faced with everything due at the same time.



Success in all things depends on your being organised, focused and motivated.

This leaflet shows you how homework helps you to achieve in your academic studies.