

Homework help scripts and homework hour plan

End the nightly homework fight with the same plan every school day, and give whoever is supervising (you, the helper or a grandparent) the same words to use. The child does the homework; the adult keeps it calm and on track.

Child _____ Level _____ Supervising today _____

1 Our homework hour

The same order every day. Choose block lengths that suit your child: shorter blocks for lower primary, longer for upper primary.

 1 Snack and rest Eat, drink, move a little	 2 Set up Check the handbook: what's due?	 3 Work block Hardest piece first
 4 Short break Stretch, water, no screens	 5 Work block Spelling, ting xie, reading	 6 Pack and sign Bag ready, notes signed

2 This week

Day	Start time	Who supervises	What's due (worksheets, spelling, projects)	Needs a signature?	Done
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Weekend					

3 Before we start

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Same table, same time, TV off | ☐ Water bottle and pencil case ready |
| ☐ Phones and tablets away (unless the homework is online) | ☐ The adult sits nearby, not over the child's shoulder |

Encourage: What to say

For the adult on duty. Cut the cards out and keep them by the homework table. Coach the effort, not the answer.

ENCOURAGE**When they're stuck**

- "Read the question to me out loud."
- "What is it asking you to find?"
- "Which part do you understand? Start there."
- Still stuck after a few tries? Circle it and move on. Come back later or ask the teacher.

ENCOURAGE**When they rush**

- "Slow is fine. Check one line before you go on."
- "Read your answer back to me. Does it make sense?"
- Praise care, not speed: "You checked your work. That's what good students do."

ENCOURAGE**When they refuse**

- "You don't have to like it. Let's do just the first question together."
- "Five minutes, then a stretch."
- Stay calm and stay near. Offer a choice: "Maths or spelling first?"

ENCOURAGE**Praise the effort**

- "You kept going even when it was hard."
- "You tried a new way. Tell me how you did it."
- "You finished without help today."
- Name what they did, not how clever they are.

ENCOURAGE**If you can't read the subject**

- You can still help. Ask the child to teach you: "Explain this to me."
- Check the routine, not the answers: started on time, every page attempted, bag packed.
- Write a short note for the parent if something was hard.

ENCOURAGE**Spelling and ting xie**

- "Say it, cover it, write it, check it."
- Read the words aloud from the list; let the child write and then check against the list themselves.
- Short and often beats one long session the night before.

When to stop and what not to do

Homework that ends in tears every night needs a conversation with the teacher, not a longer evening.

WHEN TO STOP

Stop for tonight when

- We have gone past the end time we agreed.
- It is near bedtime. Sleep matters more than one more worksheet.
- The child is in tears or too upset to think, even after a break.
- The same question has taken a long time and you're both still stuck.

WHEN TO STOP

How to stop well

- "We've done enough for tonight. You worked hard."
- Mark what is unfinished with a small dot, so the child can show the teacher.
- Write a short note in the handbook (below). Tell the parent.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't give the answers

- Don't tell them the answer or write it in for them, even to finish faster.
- Don't correct every mistake in the book. The teacher needs to see what they can do.
- Do ask questions that help them find it themselves.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't compare

- Don't compare with a sibling, a cousin or a classmate: "Your brother could do this at your age."
- Don't talk about marks or positions in class during homework time.
- Do compare with themselves: "Last week this took you longer."

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't make it a punishment

- Don't threaten ("No dinner until it's done") or add extra work as a punishment.
- Don't shout or call the child lazy or stupid.
- Do keep play and rest in the day, whatever happened with homework.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Don't hover or do it for them

- Don't sit over their shoulder or hold the pencil.
- Don't finish projects for them.
- Do stay close enough to help, and step back when they're working.

① A note for the teacher

Copy into the student handbook when homework could not be finished, or when it often takes much longer than expected. Teachers want to know.

Dear Teacher, tonight's homework _____

took about _____ Stopped because _____

Please could you _____ Signed _____