

Subject Area: Study Skills/ Learning Strategies

Grade Level(s): K-12

Title of Instructional Method: Guiding Students to Complete Homework Using Different Organizational Skills

Description of Each Instructional Method:

The research article was designed to increase responsibility for completing and handing in homework for grades three, four, and five. With 128 students in the total study dispersed amongst three grades, 28 of the student were chosen to learn strategies to aide in completing homework. Nine major strategies were employed. These consist of (1) provide students with an assignment notebook, (2) provide students with a homework organizer, (3) conduct parent workshops, (4) develop an after school study program, (5) make homework assignments visually accessible to students, (6) assign a study buddy, (7) limit the amount of homework assigned, (8) teach study skill strategies, and (9) use assignment books and classroom newsletters as a means of communication for teachers and parents. After the analysis of grades and teacher comments, it was found that all 28 students successfully learned strategies of organization skills and completing homework assignments.

References in APA format:

- Shepard, J.M. (1999). Developing responsibility for completing and handing in daily homework assignments for students grades three, four, and five. *Nova Southeastern University*. Retrieved January 16, 2007, from <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/search?vid=2&hid=106&sid=c70c9ae5-acb0-40e3-8618-fa1b19a701eb%40sessionmgr109>
- Finstein, R.F., Yang, F.Y., & Jones, R. (2007). Build organizational skills in students with learning disabilities. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 42(3). Retrieved January 16, 2007 from <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=4&hid=106&sid=c70c9ae5-acb0-40e3-8618-fa1b19a701eb%40sessionmgr109>
- Hillman, E.H. (2006). Improving the organizational skills of students with learning and attention problems. *Council for Exceptional Children*. Retrieved January 16, 2007,

from

<http://www.cec.sped.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Home&CONTENTID=757&TEMPLATE=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm>

“How To” Information:

Students will have the teacher present to give the students verbal reminders to complete and hand in homework on a daily basis. Teachers should also use concrete prompts using pictures. Another method can be the use of color codes. The codes can be posted in the order of most important to least important. The students can write the information in an assignment planner, and the teacher can verify the information is physically written down before the student leaves the classroom for the day.

The students can use a calendar that tracks their assignments and also visually tells them if they are turning in their assignments in on time. For example, if a student turns in a homework assignment on time, they get to color in the box with a green crayon. If the student completes the assignment but turns it in late, the student will color the half of the box yellow, to serve as a caution sign. If the student did not turn in the assignment at all, the student would color the box with a red crayon. This is a visual tracker for the student to assess their homework habits.

Assignment folders or notebooks can be used for each student to track the assignments that are completed and those that need to be completed. This will help the students become more organized and be more prepared with each subject area. Each student will have a pouch or container for writing tools like pens, pencils, highlighters, and erasers. The students should also have different pouches for different subject areas. For example, a protractor, compass, or ruler can be stored in the math pouch for easy access.

Teachers can help students by breaking down tasks into parts. Note cards can be used to break down longer assignments. These note cards, in sequential order using numbers or letters, can help the student follow the directions at their own pace. If the student's homework assignment is a book report presentation, the teacher would have to break down the steps to get to the end of that task. This would begin with Note Card 1. The first note card would be choose a topic of interest to the student. The second note card would be to find a book on the topic. The third note card would explain to the student to write down notes on high interest points on note cards while reading the book. Following the reading, the fourth note card would explain to the students to create a rough draft from the information taken from the reading. This process can also be used to remind students what they need to bring home for homework assignments. Throughout the day, they can write down each assignment on the note card, and at the end of the day review them and gather the appropriate materials they might need for that night.

The teacher can also use explain to the students the importance of asking for help when they need it. The teacher can have a list of resources posted and also explain daily the resources the students have to go to like the library, their parents, the teacher, or a tutor. The teacher can also set up peer groups for those students that need consistent reminders.

Another way the classroom teacher can serve as a reminder to the student is to always use descriptive praise. If a student remembers to turn in their homework on time, the teacher can say, "Good job!" The better way to praise the student would be to say "I like how you remembered to turn in your assignment!"

Implications for Practice/Other Considerations:

The strategies that proved to be most effective in the study were assignment notebooks with daily check-in and check-outs with the teacher and parents, homework organizers, and after school study sessions. Assignment notebooks should be provided for all students in order for wide range success with the students. However, not every student is going to benefit from using this strategy. Every child learns in a different way.

Although these strategies should be implemented, other strategies should be used as well to help with students who may need more practice. Many of these strategies can be modified for all types of students.

Additional Links:

http://staffweb.peoriaud.k12.az.us/Harold_Suffron/study_skills.htm

<http://www.tourettesyndrome.net/Files/Warger2001.pdf>

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