



HOMEWORK THAT WORKS FOR EVERY CHILD

HOME WORK

Home Work could be described as the activities that keep life moving. These activities of daily life provide learning experiences that are unique to the home. Children develop language and math skills, independence, order, coordination, responsibility, self confidence and a sense of belonging and significance within the family.

Ideas for Home Work:

- ◇ Set the table
- ◇ Fold the laundry, put away the laundry
- ◇ Help measure ingredients for cooking
- ◇ Wash fruits and vegetables
- ◇ Butter toast
- ◇ Use a dust pan and brush
- ◇ Wash or dry dishes
- ◇ Rake leaves
- ◇ Pull weeds
- ◇ READ TOGETHER

Notes on Home Work:

Home Work is generally meant to be done together, including daily living tasks from tidying up the living room to folding laundry. Make these tasks fun and part of the family dynamic. Remember Mary Poppins singing “A spoon full of sugar helps the medicine go down” as the children clean their room.

Create an environment for success:

- ◇ Have easy to use, child accessible, storage for clothes, toys, dishes and utensils, and any thing else children use daily.
- ◇ Adjust the daily schedule so there is a reasonable amount of time for children to complete tasks they do themselves, such as dressing or eating. Use a timer if needed to set expectations of completion.¹



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RECORD KEEPING

Keeping records is a uniquely human activity, whether it's cave paintings, drawing, writing, photography, or digital data. Introducing children to record keeping develops abstract thinking and a scientific frame of mind. It also develops math and language skills.

Ideas for Record Keeping:

- ◇ Mark off each day on a calendar.
- ◇ Put up a thermometer and record the temperature in the morning and evening.
- ◇ Check the weather each morning. Record on a calendar, chart or notebook.
- ◇ Put up a bird feeder and keep a list of birds observed.
- ◇ Look at the same tree everyday and record any changes—flowers, leaves growing or falling, birds or squirrels visiting.
- ◇ Go on a nature walk and collect things from nature. Create a collage or sort by type; things from plants or animals, rocks and minerals, man-made items. (nothing removed from live plants)
- ◇ Create a chore chart and record completed activities.
- ◇ Record the mileage from the odometer each time you go to the gas station.
- ◇ Record daily menus.
- ◇ Keep a record of books read and how many times.
- ◇ Talk to family members and create a family tree.

Notes on Record Keeping:

- ◇ Lists, charts, drawings, collage (gluing), and photos are all forms of record keeping. Use a notebook or keep a file for records.
- ◇ Keep supplies in a handy location so record keeping is an easy habit.
- ◇ Have the child choose the record keeping activity to do with you and do the recording whenever possible.
- ◇ Keep a daily journal.



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OBSERVATION

Children use their senses to make discoveries, refine their observational skills, build vocabulary and verbal skills by discussing what they observe, and develop a positive attitude toward scientific inquiry. These skills are useful for academic and social success.

Ideas for Observations:

- ◇ Lay under a tree with your child and gaze up into it's branches. Discuss.
- ◇ Gaze at the clouds in the sky. Discuss.
- ◇ Look at family photos. Discuss.
- ◇ Gaze at a starry sky. Discuss.
- ◇ Pick up a rock and see what's underneath. Discuss.
- ◇ Look at a square foot of grass to see the plants and animals living there. Discuss.
- ◇ Look at a rock, insect, leaf, some sand, some dirt, or picture from a newspaper or magazine with a magnifying glass. Discuss.

Notes on how to observe:

- ◇ Observation cannot be rushed.
- ◇ There are no wrong answers.
- ◇ State your observations in simple terms, "I see a lot of branches on this tree."
- ◇ Ask open ended questions such as "What do you see?" and "What do you think about that?"
- ◇ You can record what you observe, an important part of the scientific process, in writing, by taking photos or video or by having your child draw a picture.
- ◇ If your child is interested you could follow up with a children's book with a similar theme. For instance, after an observation of trees, When Sophie Gets Angry, Really, Really Angry by Molly Bang would be interesting because Sophie climbs a tree to help her calm down.



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OUT AND ABOUT

There are learning opportunities everywhere you go with your child. Think of the gas station, the supermarket and the park as field trips. Children learn about the community, social interaction, daily living skills, math and language, as well as observational skills. New places expand children's awareness of the world around them.

Some Special Places to go:

- ◇ The library
- ◇ Lawrence Hall of Science
- ◇ Sunol Park
- ◇ The Lindsey Museum
- ◇ Sulfur Creek Nature Center
- ◇ UC Berkeley Botanic Garden
- ◇ The beach
- ◇ Ride on Bart or a train
- ◇ Monterey Bay or other Aquarium, or a fish store
- ◇ The Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose
- ◇ The zoo
- ◇ Fort Funston
- ◇ Cal Academy of Science

Notes on Field Trips:

- ◇ Talk to your child about where you are going, how you will get there and what will happen when you arrive.
- ◇ If you have been there before, ask your child what they remember about the previous trip.
- ◇ Review any guidelines before you leave, such as holding hands in the parking lot, coming when called, or that you might look at things for sale but nothing will be purchased.
- ◇ Be prepared to leave immediately without threats or discussion if guidelines are not followed.
- ◇ Extend the fun and learning by recording events, observations and questions from the trip.



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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- ◇ The Preschooler's Busy Book by Trish Kuffner 365 ideas for things to do, play, make and experience together at home.
- ◇ www.montessoriforeveryone.com The website teachers use for materials.
- ◇ www.enchantedlearning.com Lots of free printable ideas as well as subscription materials.

Notes on “academic” activities:

- ◇ Everything children do at this age can be considered academic, not just letters and numbers. Remember; they are building foundations for the future.
- ◇ Hands-on activities support the special learning needs of preschoolers and kindergartners.
- ◇ Computer time should be counted toward the total time a child spends looking at screens, including TV and video games. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends no more than 1 to 2 hours a day for children over 2 years old.
- ◇ Active play is essential to brain development at this age, especially for, but not limited to, coordination, spatial reasoning, problem solving and social skills.