Re: Homework – clarified

Thanks to parental suggestions, we have made some changes to our “Homework” page on our Wiki site.

Instead of grading every homework assignment at school (research supports there is no link between grading homework and student achievement), I am hoping to empower families to provide support for their students as they work on monthly homework options. Once homework is submitted, I like to honor the great work and thinking of students by displaying it in our hallway.

You will now find a document called “Homework Exemplars,” which contains about five examples of homework done well. There is also a rubric (“Writing Journal Explanation”), which contains general guidelines in order to receive a 4, 3, 2, or 1 on an assignment. This can apply to all homework assignments. Finally, there is a list of “No Excuse Words.” These are the most common words in the English language, and words that we expect third graders to write correctly every time.

Regarding math, just as a reminder, I do not grade and return nightly math homework. Instead, I quickly scan them in the morning and touch base with students to clarify any misconceptions indicated by the results of their homework.

I also plan to send home a second, alternate, Homework Journal to reduce the lag time between submitting homework and re-receiving journals as students start on the following month’s homework assignments.

Finally, you will see a note at the top of the “Homework” page encouraging you to adapt assignments to your students’ interests as you see fit. My goal – and hopefully yours, as well – is for students to make meaningful connections between home and school, show creativity, and develop independence as they choose topics of interest to them.

All of this should result in clearer expectations for your children as they work to complete assignments. I appreciate family feedback as we work to improve our homework system. Thank you for your suggestions.

Best,

Mr. Carlson