

Heritage Academy Homework Policy

Homework is defined as those learning activities that are assigned to students by teachers and completed during non-classroom hours.

Rationale

At Heritage Academy, we believe that homework is instrumental in building lifelong learning skills. Unique to Heritage Academy is our guarantee that no new learning will ever be assigned as homework in an attempt to reduce the stress and anxiety that many students face when dealing with a learning disability. For example, all text-book reading is done within the class orally, as well as all homework questions are read through, explained, and expectations are laid out before students are sent home.

There are many positive outcomes to completing homework that include but are not limited to the following:

- Promote task commitment and time management, thus building self-esteem and guiding students in taking responsibility and initiative
- Strengthen the partnership between the school and home
- Assist students in the development of self-discipline
- Realize that learning can take place in a variety of settings
- Assist students in the development and practice of problem solving
- Guide students in decision-making processes, and in learning to accept the consequences of not completing work
- Establish a rapport between parents and children
- Help parents gain a better understanding of their children's areas of strengths and difficulties
- Increase the student's academic achievement

Assessment

The Ontario Provincial Report Card provides an assessment of the learning skills and work habits demonstrated by the student. The six categories of learning skills and work habits are: Responsibility, Organization, Collaboration, Independent Work, Self-Regulation, and Initiative. Homework completion is related to each of these learning skills. When evaluating homework, teachers at Heritage Academy will be using the following expectations as a guide:

- Completes homework on time and with care
- Comes to class prepared for learning
- Puts forth consistent effort
- Follows directions and completes all homework tasks
- Shows attention to detail
- Demonstrates interest and enthusiasm in homework assignments
- Organizes materials and equipment effectively
- Begins work promptly
- Follows directions and completes tasks
- Chooses and uses materials and equipment correctly, safely, and creatively
- Utilizes time effectively
- Perseveres with complex projects that require sustained effort
- Attends to task at hand
- Demonstrates flexibility and adaptability

Types of Homework

Practice	Provides students with the needed review and reinforcement about materials or skills presented in a previous lesson.
Extension	Gives students an opportunity to expand on concepts that were taught in class.
Creative/ Enrichment	Includes analysis, synthesis, and evaluation in which students use multiple resources to demonstrate an understanding of the curriculum in a non-standard way.

Roles

Administrators/ Teachers

- Teach the necessary skills required to complete homework assignments
 - Give clear, explicit instructions and feedback
 - Provide homework assignments which are integrated into the instructional plan for the class and appropriate for the varying abilities and circumstances of the students
 - Stress the importance of homework to students
- Record data regarding homework completion to assist in completing the learning skills section of the Ontario Provincial Report Card
- Communicate to both the students and parents the role of homework in the evaluation of the student
- Communicate with the school administration and other teachers to coordinate test schedules, exam schedules, and project deadlines to minimize overload on students as much as possible

Students

- Understand expectations and ask questions for clarification
- Complete homework tasks to the best of his/her ability
- Seek assistance from the teacher as necessary
- Submit homework assignments on time
- Arrange for the completion of homework due to absence
- Avoid excessive commitments outside of school which impede homework completion
- Use the student planner to assist in remembering and organizing tasks for optimal use of time

Parents

- Create an encouraging and supportive climate for the child in the home
- Establish a regular time and place for work to be done at home
- Help the child plan his/her time to both complete assignments and allow time for recreation and family events
- Communicate directly with the teacher as necessary

Time Commitments

The amount of time a student spends on homework depends on the student's course selections, abilities, needs, interests, out-of-class involvements, and family priorities. There are a wide variety of programs offered at the elementary and secondary level, each with different expectations regarding homework (See Subject guidelines below for more details). These factors make it extremely difficult to set a guideline for maximum time to be spent on completion of homework and home study. However, it is not unusual for a student at the secondary level (grades 9-12) to spend 1- 2 hours per evening on homework, a student at the junior level (grades 6-8) to spend 30 minutes – 1 hour per evening on homework, and a student at the elementary level (grades 1-6) to spend a maximum of 30 minutes per evening on homework.

Once in secondary school, students are responsible for ensuring that they understand all assigned work and subsequent due dates. All students are given a school planner at the start of each school year to assist them with time management and the organization of homework, tests, and assignments.

Subject Guidelines

Homework guidelines for courses will be given to each student as part of the Course Outline and Evaluation overview provided at the start of each semester. These guidelines will be based on current Ministry curriculum.