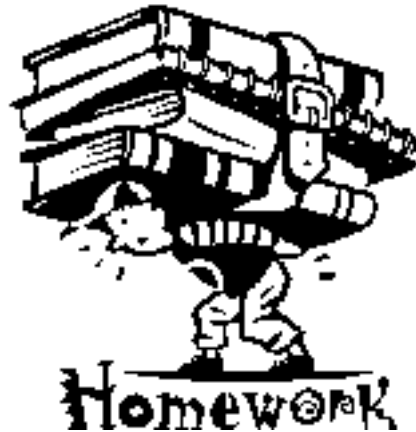




MERRIAM SCHOOL

HOMEWORK GUIDELINES

TABLE OF CONTENTS



| | |
|---|----------|
| Section I : General Overview | page 3 |
| Purpose of Homework | page 4 |
| Supporting Your Child in Homework | page 4-5 |
| Questions to Ask Your Child | page 5 |
| General Guidelines | page 6 |
| Homework Expectations | page 6 |
| | |
| Section II: Grade Level Guidelines | page 7 |
| Kindergarten Guidelines | page 7 |
| Grade 1 Guidelines | page 8 |
| Grade 2 Guidelines | page 9 |
| Grade 3 Guidelines | page 10 |
| Grade 4 Guidelines | page 11 |
| Grade 5 | page 12 |
| Grade 6 | page 13 |
| | |
| Section III: Resources | page 14 |
| Local & Internet Resources | page 15 |

SECTION I: GENERAL OVERVIEW

The mission of the Merriam School Community is to create and sustain an environment that promotes academic excellence, encourages social development, fosters emotional well-being, and instills a passion for life-long learning.

PURPOSE OF HOMEWORK

- Fosters a partnership between school and families
- Provides opportunities for application of skills and knowledge in context beyond the school
- Extends school experiences and learning
- Completes work and projects begun in school
- Reinforces concepts and skills learned at school
- Provides opportunities for time management skill acquisition
- Provides opportunities to work independently

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD IN HOMEWORK

The amount of homework support needed will vary by grade level, age of child, and learning needs and style. Initially, children may require more support in establishing homework routines. As children become more experienced with homework, the amount of support needed will naturally decrease. Appropriate ways to support your child include:

Time Management

Establish a regular homework schedule

- Try to find a consistent time to begin homework each day

Establish a homework routine

- Read over the assignments and create a schedule for completing those assignments
- Encourage your child to read aloud all directions before beginning
- Encourage your child to look over work completed each night
- Encourage your child to make note of any questions to ask their teacher the next day
- Encourage your child to take responsibility for putting the completed homework packet in his/her backpack
- Evaluate together how the schedule worked and make adjustments, if necessary, for the following week

Space

- Make sure your child has a quiet, well-lit place
- Try to remove interruptions and distractions such as loud music, TV, or video games
- Think of alternatives to working at home such as the school homework club, library, or rotating study groups organized by parents

Materials

- Have on hand general supplies such as paper, pencils, dictionary
- Some assignments and/or projects may require additional supplies such as poster board, stapler, glue, markers, etc. If providing these supplies is difficult, please contact your child's teacher

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CHILD

In spite of a parent's best effort to provide the above-mentioned support, difficulties may still arise. It is important for parents to remember that teachers need to know the type of difficulties a child is experiencing in order to plan instruction for that child. Teachers recommend guiding your child through questioning rather than by doing. Listed below are samples of general guiding questions:

Getting Started

- Have you read the directions out loud?
- Are there words you don't understand? Where can you find the meaning?
- Can you explain to me what those directions mean?

While Working

- What do you need to do to finish the assignment?
- Does your answer make sense to you?
- What are the steps for... (e.g. completing a long division problem)?
- What resources can you access to help you do this type of math problem?
- What do you need to do next?
- Are there other possibilities?
- Can you make a drawing to explain your thinking?
- How does this relate to ...?
- Do you need to review your notes (or reread) before you do this assignment?
- Has the question been answered?
- Can your explanation be made clearer? Did you support your reasons/opinion?
- Do you need to ask your teacher for help?
- Is there someone in your class you can call for help/clarification?
- What is the problem in the story?
- Does this remind you of someone or something you know? (A character in another book?)
- What do you think will happen next?
- What do you think the author means here?
- Why do you think the author wrote this story?

Final Check

- Did you check your work?
- Have you followed the guidelines of your assignment? (Let's look at the guidelines)
- Have you read over your writing to check that it makes sense?

- Have you read over your writing to check for spelling and grammar mistakes?
- Is your assignment complete?
- Do you have any questions to ask your teacher?
- Is your homework in your backpack?

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Please keep in mind that it is impossible to predict the exact time necessary to complete assignments because of different learning styles and needs
- If your child is consistently having difficulty completing homework assignments or your child is spending an excessive amount of time completing homework, please contact your child's teacher
- Do not expect that your child will always produce a "perfect" paper. It is important for teachers to see what a child is capable of doing on their own
- Encourage your child to ask their teacher for clarification or help in a timely manner
- Encourage and support your child. Praise their efforts
- Work cooperatively with your child's teacher to resolve any homework difficulties

HOMEWORK EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS

- Pass in your homework on time
- Clearly label all work with your name and the due date of the assignment
- Neatly complete all parts of your assignments
- Take home all materials you need to complete your homework
- Learn to manage your time to complete your homework packet and long term assignments
- Check in with your teacher after being absent
- Do your best work
- Put forth "effective effort" (use strategies learned in class and allow the time needed to complete assignments)

SECTION II: GRADE LEVEL GUIDELINES

- Beginning in third grade, weekly homework packets are passed out on Fridays and are returned on the following Friday morning
- In grades three through six, teachers may ask students to wait to complete a particular homework assignment (especially in math) until a specific concept has been taught



Kindergarten Homework Guidelines:

There is no regular homework in kindergarten. Occasionally, there may be a simple activity to do at home with a family member that relates to a current classroom project.

Grade 1

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20-30 minutes per night including reading • Assignments may consist of any combination of the following: |
| Weekly Planner | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not Needed |
| Supervision & Support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents can support by reading with their child, having the child read to a parent and/or modeling reading for enjoyment • Parents can support math practice through games or engaging activities |
| Reading Responses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occasionally children will be asked to keep a reading log |
| Language Arts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sight Word Practice • 20 Minutes a day Reading |
| Math | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 minutes a day: Home Links will be sent home weekly for parents to work on with their children, but should not be returned to school |
| Social Studies/Science | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occasionally there will be a home-school connection assignment |
| Projects | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occasionally, a project will come home with a student that may need adult guidance and follow through |
| Feedback from Teachers | <p>There are many ways that students and parents will receive teacher feedback including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-correction • Teacher correction • Whole class discussion or question opportunities • Rubrics • Assessments • Teacher comments • Student-teacher conferences |

Grade 2

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30-35 minutes per night including reading • Assignments may consist of any combination of the following: |
| Weekly Planner | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not Needed |
| Supervision & Support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents can support by reading with their child, having the child read to a parent and/or modeling reading for enjoyment • Parents can support math practice through games or engaging activities |
| Reading Responses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occasionally children will be asked to keep a reading log |
| Language Arts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sight Word Practice • 20 Minutes a day Reading |
| Math | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10-15 minutes a day: Home Links will be sent home weekly for parents to work on with their children, but are not expected to be returned to school |
| Social Studies/Science | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occasionally there will be a home-school connection assignment |
| Projects | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occasionally, a project will come home with a student that may need adult guidance and follow through |
| Feedback from Teachers | <p>There are many ways that students and parents will receive teacher feedback including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-correction • Teacher correction • Whole class discussion or question opportunities • Rubrics • Assessments • Teacher comments • Student-teacher conferences |

Grade 3

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30-45 minutes 4x week including reading • Assignments may consist of any combination of the following: |
| Weekly Planner | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory • Student plans assignments for the week on their calendar plan, which is part of the homework packet • Parents should help students plan homework at the beginning of the year |
| Supervision & Support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May need more parent support at the beginning of the year • It is strongly advised that any Internet searches be supervised by an adult • Parents are asked to look over homework packets for completion of work but are not responsible for correcting or quality of work • Parents may provide feedback in the space provided in the packet |
| Reading Responses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are expected to read for 15 minutes 5 times a week • Students are expected to complete a one-sentence reading response 3 times a week |
| Language Arts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehension • Grammar practice • Spelling • Writing • Students are expected to follow directions that are provided |
| Math | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is recommended that one page of Home Links practice be completed per night • Additional skills practice • Enrichment/challenge: students should show evidence of attempt |
| Social Studies/Science | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assignments will vary based on the ongoing units of study based on what is happening in the classroom |
| Projects | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents are asked to review project information with their child • Parents are asked to carefully go over directions and timeline with their child • Parents are asked to assist with getting materials and obtaining research (trip to library) • Please contact your classroom teacher with any difficulties or questions |
| Feedback from Teachers | <p>There are many ways that students and parents will receive teacher feedback including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-correction • Teacher correction • Whole class discussion or question opportunities • Rubrics • Assessments • Teacher comments • Student-teacher conferences |

Grade 4

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30-45 minutes 4x a week including reading • Assignments may consist of any combination of the following: |
| Weekly Planner | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student plans assignments for the week on their calendar plan, which is part of the homework packet • Parents should help students plan homework at the beginning of the year |
| Supervision & Support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May need more parent support at the beginning of the year • It is strongly advised that any Internet searches be supervised by an adult • Parents are asked to look over homework packets for completion of work but are not responsible for correcting • Parents may provide feedback to the teacher |
| Reading | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are expected to read for at least 20 minutes 4 times a week • Students may be asked to respond to reading |
| Language Arts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehension • Grammar practice • Spelling • Writing • *Students are expected to follow directions that are provided |
| Math | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is recommended that one page of Home Links practice be completed per night • Skill practice • Enrichment/challenge • Information for families regarding mathematical concepts |
| Social Studies/Science | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assignments will vary based on the ongoing units of study |
| Projects | <p>Some projects may require additional support from home.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents are asked to review project information with child • Carefully go over directions and timeline with your child • Assist with getting materials and obtaining research (library) |
| Feedback from Teachers | <p>There are many ways that students and parents will receive teacher feedback including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-correction • Teacher correction • Whole class discussion or question opportunities • Rubrics • Assessments • Teacher comments • Student-teacher conferences |

Grade 5

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 45 minutes 4x week • Additionally, 2 hours of reading per week • Assignments may consist of any combination of the following: |
| Weekly Planner | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will practice time management skills utilizing a checklist, calendar plan, or agenda book |
| Supervision & Support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents are encouraged to supervise homework planning especially at the beginning of the year • It is strongly advised that any Internet searches be supervised by an adult • Students are encouraged to ask teachers for support/clarification as needed • Parents are asked to indicate the type and amount of homework support provided (if any) on the parent feedback section of the homework packet |
| Reading Responses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading responses are not expected to be polished writing pieces although basic grade level conventions are expected (complete sentences, etc.) • Reading responses initiate critical thinking & prepare students for reading group discussions • Students will work throughout the year on providing evidence in their response for their ideas • Students are asked to complete reading assignment before beginning response |
| Language Arts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language Arts homework may consist of vocabulary, grammar, and/or writing • Vocabulary assignments usually consist of studying for weekly quizzes and completing any unfinished class assignments (if necessary) • Writing assignments vary and may require research, a rough draft only, or a finished, polished draft |
| Math | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly math homework may consist of skills practice, problem solving, reflective responses, and/or optional challenge work • It is recommended that one page of Home Links practice be completed per night |
| Social Studies/Science | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Studies and Science work is given as needed to support curriculum units • Assignments will vary |
| Projects | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects may be assigned for home only or a combination of home and school • Projects may be assigned for individuals, partners, or small groups • When projects are assigned, other assignments will be modified to allow students to focus on project work |
| Feedback from Teachers | <p>There are many ways that students and parents will receive teacher feedback including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-correction • Teacher correction • Whole class discussion or question opportunities • Rubrics • Assessments • Teacher comments • Student-teacher conferences |

Grade 6

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 45 minutes 4x week • Additionally, 2 hours of reading per week • Assignments may consist of any combination of the following: |
| Weekly Planner | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will practice time management skills utilizing a checklist, calendar plan, or agenda book |
| Supervision & Support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents are encouraged to supervise homework planning especially at the beginning of the year • It is strongly advised that any Internet searches be supervised by an adult • Students are encouraged to ask teachers for support/clarification as needed • Parents are asked to indicate the type and amount of homework support provided (if any) on the parent feedback section of the homework packet |
| Reading Responses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading responses are not expected to be polished writing pieces although basic grade level conventions are expected (complete sentences, etc.) • Reading responses initiate critical thinking & prepare students for reading group discussions • Students will work throughout the year on providing evidence in their response for their ideas • Students are asked to complete reading assignment before beginning response |
| Language Arts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language Arts homework may consist of vocabulary, grammar, and/or writing • Vocabulary assignments usually consist of studying for weekly quizzes and completing any unfinished class assignments (if necessary) • Writing assignments vary and may require research, a rough draft only, or a finished, polished draft |
| Math | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly math homework may consist of skills practice, problem solving, reflective responses, and/or optional challenge work • It is recommended that one page of Home Links practice be completed per night |
| Social Studies/Science | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Studies and Science work is given as needed to support curriculum units • Assignments will vary |
| Projects | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects may be assigned for home only or a combination of home and school • Projects may be assigned for individuals, partners, or small groups • When projects are assigned, other assignments will be modified to allow students to focus on project work |
| Feedback from Teachers | <p>There are many ways that students and parents will receive teacher feedback including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-correction • Teacher correction • Whole class discussion or question opportunities • Rubrics • Assessments • Teacher comments • Student-teacher conferences |

SECTION III: RESOURCES



SCHOOL RESOURCES

- Merriam School Library: School Hours
- Merriam Homework Club: see Merriam Mornings catalog

LOCAL RESOURCES

- Acton Memorial Library: hours change seasonally (Internet access available)
- Minuteman Network: access to Middlesex County Libraries
- Citizens Library

INTERNET RESOURCES

An Internet page of resources (portaportal) has been set up for home use. In order to access this page, please go to <http://www.portaportal.com> and log in under guest access. Use the guest name, merriamhw

**Teachers strongly urge that parents supervise their children while on the Internet. All sites posted have been previewed, however, parents should use their discretion to determine whether sites are appropriate for their children.*