

Christiano-Christy Homework Philosophy and Expectations

August 28, 2017

Dear Families,

Homework for elementary students is a constantly evolving, hot topic in education. Research on homework exists in a multitude of capacities and philosophies. As we know, every child and family is different and that is certainly true in regard to individual family views on homework. We know some students and families would love homework every night, others not at all, and many fall somewhere in the middle.

Recently, we as a 3rd grade classroom team, have spent time on research, thought, and discussion in regard to the homework debate. As teachers, we have more than fifty years of combined classroom experience. Our own philosophies about homework continue to change and evolve as we strive to do what is best for our students and their families. Over the years we've seen and done it all in regard to homework!

Foremost, we do not want homework to become a negative factor in students' academic interests and growth. We want students to view their school day as a positive, enjoyable experience. Extending the school day with what may be considered "traditional" homework practices (book logs, packets, worksheets, etc.) can create a negative attitude toward school in general. The time students spend on homework means that time can't be spent outdoors, in clubs, sports, music, etc.

We have made the following decisions in regard to homework practices for our 3rd graders this year.

- We support the need for family time, outdoor time, sports, hobbies, clubs, and other interests to help develop well-rounded, happy students. Non-academic priorities are necessary for balance and well-being for all of us.
- Current research suggests that homework is beneficial when it is used for reading enjoyment. Our expectation is that students will read independently for 20-30 minutes at least 4 times per week. Reading at home is critical for continued reading development. We will support students in the practice of transporting books between home and school on a regular basis so that their enjoyment of daily reading during the school day can continue in the evening.
- Realistically, students become better readers by reading, students need to read at home.
- We will be using our morning meeting time to develop students' listening and speaking skills. Preparing for their sharing will be a key part of a 3rd grader's homework. Students will be expected to select sharing items carefully, and practice their presentation skills at home. Students should refer to our sharing calendar as they prepare for their day..
- On occasion there will be an assignment that helps promote our sense of community and student growth~for example next week's "All About Me Bag". (Specific information will be sent home about this assignment on Wednesday, August 30, 2017.)

We look forward to all students and their families benefitting from this program. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Christine Christiano & Kathy Christy

Research placeholder:

http://www.salon.com/2016/03/05/homework_is_wrecking_our_kids_the_research_is_clear_lets_ban_elementary_homework/

<http://www.edutopia.org/blog/research-trends-is-homework-effective-youki-terada>

<http://news.stanford.edu/2014/03/10/too-much-homework-031014/>

<http://www.cnn.com/2015/08/12/health/homework-elementary-school-study/>

<http://www.lifehack.org/385878/research-finds-the-effects-of-homework-on-elementary-school-students-and-the-results-are-surprising>