

HELPING WITH HOMEWORK

Home is where young children first learn how to learn. That's why homework – school work done at home on a regular basis – is an important part of every child's school life. By doing homework, young students acquire study skills, work habits, and attitudes that pave the way for lifelong learning.

"Parents have a lot of questions about homework and about what their role is," says Brent Carbery, principal and teacher at Sansbury Elementary in Saanich. "We try to reassure them that being

involved is really, really important but that the child has to develop independence and responsibility."

Parents of elementary-aged children in the Saanich school district have access to a

district homework handout. Because family support has so much impact on student success, Carbery says, the district aims to involve family members in school-related activities. Parents are encouraged to find out what's going on at school by communicating with the school through agendas, dialogue books, and parent-teacher interviews.

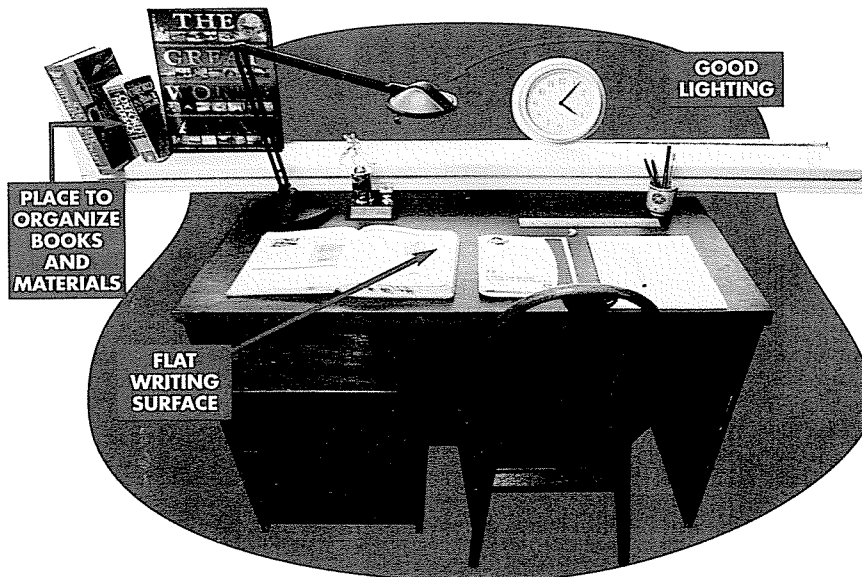
But parents should not expect homework to be assigned every night, says Carbery, who adds that more homework does not necessarily equal a better teacher.

The amount of homework varies from class to class, school to school and district to district. In the Saanich district, children may spend from 10 minutes (Primary grades) up to 45 minutes (Intermediate grades) doing homework on a given night.

Typically, your child will not be assigned homework at the Primary level. He or she may receive some work to take home, particularly in Grade 3, but the emphasis in Primary grades is on in-class progress. If homework is assigned, it should take no longer than a half-hour to complete.

When there is work to be completed at home in the Primary level, much of that work is done with the parent. A lot of home reading with the parent is encouraged. At the Intermediate level, most homework is done individually by the child.

How much and what kind of homework will vary tremendously depending on a child's age and skills, the time in the school year and class activities.



Tips to help your children develop good study skills:

- 1 Let your child know that schoolwork is their responsibility. You are there to support and answer their questions, but not do the work for them.
- 2 Set aside a designated area for children to study. Being in this spot helps children focus and gives them a sense of purpose.
- 3 Establish a scheduled study time each day that fits in with your family's routines.
- 4 Balance homework with lots of vigorous physical play.