



Homework Purpose and Expectations Lower School



The purpose of homework is to offer practice, to individualize, and to develop skills and study habits. Meaningful homework provides a bridge between home and school, and allows parents a chance to know what skills their child is working on. It enables parents to become more involved and actively supportive of their child's academic development. Research shows there is little benefit to a regular regimen of homework in younger grades.

At New Garden Friends School teachers select meaningful assignments to complement the in-class instruction and provide benefit to the student. Optional extensions are provided for students who are ready for additional challenges.

We value a balance of schoolwork, home life, and other activities. We do not want to encroach upon decisions families make about after school activities and family time. No assignment, homework or otherwise, is more important than the well-being of our students and families. Our children must sleep. If a parent or student feels that assignments are too challenging or too much time is required for homework completion, we advise them to communicate this concern to the teacher.

We provide a logical progression of expectations from one grade level to another, and have an awareness of increased independence as students get older. At the K-2nd grade level homework helps set expectations that learning will be extended at home, and that families need to find time in their routines to accomplish homework. At the 3rd-6th grade level homework shifts from parent guided homework to independent student work.

Grade Level Expectations

Sunrise (Kindergarten):

The most important homework in Sunrise is to read to your student every day, even after your student becomes an independent reader. Each week students are provided books on their independent reading level to read aloud with their parents/guardians at home. The books should be read several times and returned at least every week to be exchanged. On an as-needed basis, teachers will provide supplemental materials that describe optional activities for parents or guardians of kindergarten students to use at home. These activities may include information about skills learned that week including letter formation and math concepts. Occasional additional projects will be assigned related to specific classroom units of study.

Rainbow (1st and 2nd Grade):

Rainbow students are encouraged to read for about 20 minutes every night. Students can read books on their level or listen to an adult read aloud. Students record reading in a reading log. Students receive a homework folder on Mondays that is due the following Monday. First graders complete math or word work assignments (about 10 minutes for the week). Second graders complete math or word work assignments (about 20 minutes for the week). Occasional additional projects will be assigned related to specific classroom units of study.

Horizon (3rd and 4th Grade):

Horizon students are encouraged to read for about 20 minutes every night. Students have daily math homework and weekly spelling homework. In addition, Horizon students will have one long-term project due in conjunction with each of their three units of study. Students will receive a unit contract at the beginning of each unit with the relevant due dates and details for these projects. Horizon students have about 30- 40 total minutes of homework nightly to practice skills introduced in class. Students who study violin practice for 5-15 minutes a night. At this level and beyond, day to day communication about homework is directed to the students as we hope to build a sense of responsibility for each of them to take care of the work expectations. Homework assignments are posted in Parents Web.

Galaxy (5th and 6th Grade):

Galaxy students have weekly spelling words, reading journal entries, reading assignments, and math homework. Students will have long-term projects due in conjunction with each of their three units of study. Students will receive a unit contract at the beginning of each unit with the relevant due dates and details for these projects. Galaxy students have about 50-60 total minutes of homework nightly to practice skills introduced in class. Students who study violin practice for 20-25 minutes a night. At this level and beyond, day to day communication about homework is directed to the students as we hope to build a sense of responsibility for each of them to take care of the work expectations. Homework assignments are posted in Parents Web.

Our policy is based on research about homework guidelines, with special recognition to the work of Connecticut Friends School.