

LEARNING AT HOME AND AT SCHOOL

If we learn all the time, what's school for?

Why is homework important?

We learn from the time we are born. The people we live with, what they tell us and in what languages, and how they treat us are all sources of knowledge and understanding. Their behaviour and attitudes, their stories and ideas about good ways to live are what our culture is. All of these form the basis for further learning.

Learning at home and at school need to be connected. Taking an interest and understanding what your child is learning at school is one of the most important ways to support your child's success at school. This article will help you to understand the importance of [learning at home and at school](#).

Learning starts with birth

What we learn before the time we go to school is most important. We learn more then, than we do at any other period of our lives. We get new information through our senses — sight, hearing, taste, touch and smell. Sight is very important. 'Seeing' is more than one quarter of all the work done by the brain. We become expert at doing lots of things by practising them over and over again. The more we practise, the more automatic they become and the less we have to think about them when we do them.

If we all learn all the time, what's school for?

We learn how to speak at home, but not usually how to read. Without really knowing how, we learn to ride a bike, but we need to be taught why water runs downhill. We can learn to kick a football or throw a basketball, but you can get better at these activities by being coached.

Just as traditional teaching and learning helped young people to live well in traditional ways, learning at school is designed to help them live well today, to give them the knowledge and skills to make them strong and confident and to give them choices about how they want to live their lives. At school, young people learn to express, connect and question ideas, and to explain how and why things happen.

School also provides students with practice in getting along with people who they wouldn't necessarily meet or spend time with. **This is a very important part of being at school.**

Connecting learning at home and at school

Taking an interest and understanding what your child is learning at school is one of the most important ways to support your child's success at school. From the earliest years of schooling, students will be encouraged to bring things home from school: paintings, pieces of work, books to read. Parents will also be called regularly for meetings to remain abreast with the school curriculum and strategies.

As time goes on, they will be asked to do tasks at home. Successful students do homework on their own. The further they get through school, the more necessary this becomes. Some of our alumni have shared - *'You've gotta put in the hours. You may have to give up a couple of things like I did.'* Older students need to do set homework tasks more regularly, and need to study for tests and exams. Or, just read habitually, across subjects for long term and in-depth retention.

You or someone living in the house, might be able to help them. Some schools have a homework centre - enquire whether your child's school has this facility; it may be available as at an extra cost.

Encouraging and participating in home activities prescribed by the school - especially the observation/experiment/fact finding/research/gathering items...kinds, in art / science / math etc., can be real fun and the perfect time to bond with your child. At time for learning with fun! It will also help you to know whether your children as conceptual clarity in applying the knowledge to the expected task..

Facts about learning that are true for everyone

- How you feel about yourself as a learner is very important. If you believe in yourself and work hard, your chances of success increase.
- Encouragement is valuable because it helps you to keep learning. Feedback about what you've done and how well you've done it helps you improve. Feedback is a crucial part of teaching and learning.
- The more you practise learning, the better you get at it. The more you know, the more successful you are likely to be in tackling new and unfamiliar situations.
- When you're learning, what you know beforehand matters. New knowledge (and that includes skills) means more when it is connected with what you know already.
- Learning is more effective when you can see its purpose and value for you.
- The more you concentrate, the better you learn. You can't learn new things if you're thinking about something else, or if you're worried, sick or tired. Your mind is already busy coping with those things. Also, as you get older, you should be able to concentrate for longer times.
- Learning is easier when tasks are clear and structured in small steps. You can succeed consistently, and get hold of something properly before you go on.
- Learning can be helped by - providing varied activities; - tackling learning task in different ways; and - changing activities, especially for young children.