

# Gateway Lab School

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## TOPIC: Time-Limited Homework

Parents, at Gateway Lab School we have a different style of homework. We hear in many of the family interviews that homework was overwhelming in the past. What was expected to take just a few minutes at home, took the average family several hours with much tears and frustration.

Our 'different style' of homework, is called Time-Limited Homework. The goal of this work at home is to encourage healthy family relationships, expand the background knowledge of our students, build fluency in basic skills, develop a larger bank of vocabulary words, build healthy eating and fitness habits, and to share with parents what is going on in school. In addition we want to build the capacity of our students to succeed with homework expectations once they leave us and go on to high school. Time-Limited Homework means that you will set a timer for the amount of time identified by the teacher; ten minutes per grade level\*, approximately. Your child will complete what they can in that time, for example, math fact problems. You will record how many were finished correctly in that time. The teacher will be able to differentiate this work by leveling up your child as he/she gets better and better. This is only one example. Your child's teacher will give specific directions for the Time-Limited Homework to be completed. You will be spending the same amount of time or a little less as you did before, but without the frustration and tears.

Here are some **examples** of items that a teacher may assign but is **not limited to**:

Expand background knowledge in person or online:

- Visit an exhibit
- Attend a play or musical performance
- Watch a history or science channel program together
- Research an interesting topic together on the internet
- Read out loud to your child from classic/quality literature
- Visit Historic sites
- Complete an At Home Project to expand on what was learned in class

Build Fluency:

- Practice with math flash cards or vocabulary/spelling word cards for a specified amount of time
- Time your child as he/she completes as many math problems in a specified number of minutes as possible.
- Have your child read a book or story out loud to you. The same story or book can be repeated several times in a week to build fluency
- IXL, Study Island, or Wonders online learning curriculum

Build Vocabulary

- Play educational games with your child on the computer
- Read out loud to your child from a variety of books
- Talk about words and how they are connected to other words through similar beginnings and endings or with similar meanings e.g. rhyming words.

Healthy eating and fitness habits

- Play outside together as a family
- Take a walk or go to a playground
- Participate in a fitness class at the YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, or other center
- Planning and cooking healthy meals together

- Participate in a fitness plan designed by your child that fits your family's physical capacity

All of these help to bring about healthy family relationships. Some of these things and others, you may be asked to do with your child for "homework". For the any items above that are not assigned, we encourage you to do so on your own.

Children are encouraged to work hard at school. Given this, if a child does not work at school, they will be expected to complete the school work at home. This is for the student who blatantly refuses to work at school even with our encouragement and support. If your child is trying to complete the work at school, then you will not see the classwork coming home.

It is very important that our parents are aware of what his/her child is doing in school. We have several ways for parents to keep themselves informed:

- Ask your child to "teach" you what he/she learned in school that day or week
- Communicate with teachers using their GLS emails posted on our website

Home Access Center is where the grades for assignments are made available to parents. We recommend that each parent check this weekly.

School-wide Expectation: In order for students to get better at reading they need to be reading books and articles at a level that is comfortable for them on a regular basis. Our teachers will work with you to help find not only the appropriate level of book but also books that are interesting to your child. It is up to the parent to decide which nights work best in your family schedule for the week assignment to be completed.

Please contact me for any questions or concerns about the homework policy, curriculum, instruction, or assessment.

Marlin White  
Interim Principal  
Gateway Lab School

**\*Homework Timeline Guide (approx.)**

- 3<sup>rd</sup> grade – 30 mins.
- 4<sup>th</sup> grade – 40mins.
- 5<sup>th</sup> grade – 50 mins.
- 6<sup>th</sup> grade – 60 mins.
- 7<sup>th</sup> grade – 70 mins.
- 8<sup>th</sup> grade – 80 mins.