

Texas Agricultural Extension Service

People Helping People

SUPER STUDY AND OTHER CHALLENGES

Food, Fun, Safety and Study for Kids After School

Whether they like it or not, most kids have homework to do after school. By using your time wisely, you can get your homework done. Here are some ideas about doing homework on your own.

Some Good Ideas

- Always read the directions first, even if you think you already know what to do.
- If your teacher gives you time in class, do as much homework as you can. The teacher will be there to answer your questions, and you will have more free time when you get home!
- Have a homework phone friend. This is somebody you can call if you forget directions or what the teacher said in class. Your phone friend can call you for help too.
- If you get stuck on something, do not quit working. Go back and look at the sample problems or read the directions. If you still do not understand, skip that part or problem and go on to the next.
- If you do not understand a word you are reading, look to see if there is a glossary in the back of your book. A glossary is a small dictionary and will tell the meaning of special words in your book. The words in a glossary are arranged alphabetically.
- Have a dictionary to use. If you cannot find a word in the glossary of your textbook, you can look it up in the dictionary.
- If you have some really hard homework, do not try to do it all at once. Do one part of it and then put it aside. Do something

easier or a more enjoyable assignment, and then come back to the difficult work. That will make it go easier.

- Show all your homework to your parents and let them check it over later that evening.

When to Do Your Homework

There are many good reasons for doing your homework after school instead of waiting until after dinner. Think about these reasons:

1. You will have time to do other things later in the evening.
2. You can spend time with your parents when they are home.
3. It gives you something to do while you are by yourself.
4. You can get it done while the material is fresh on your mind.

Make a Study Center

Where do you study and do your homework? Your bed? The sofa? The floor? Working at a table or desk will make it easier to concentrate and get it done faster.

Make a study area for yourself and work there each day. It does not have to be fancy. You can use a desk or a table. But no matter where you study, make sure you have good lighting. Light filling a room prevents shadows and glare that makes your eyes tired. Also have a lamp on your table or desk to put light directly on your paper and books.

Here are some ideas for things to make for your study center:

Make a box like the one shown in figure 1 to hold your school papers. Take a clean detergent box, and cut off the top part on a slant. Cover the box with contact paper or glue colored paper on it and decorate.

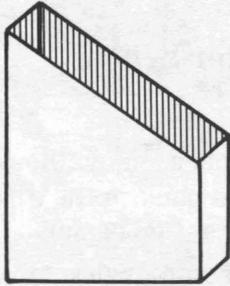


Figure 1. Box to hold school papers.

You can make a book holder for your textbooks too. (See figure 2.) Take a coat hanger and hold the hanger so the hook is at the top. Squeeze the hanger arms together, bend the ends of the arms forward and up, and fold the hook down behind the arms. Wrap colored tape around the wire to make it bright. The holder will keep your book up and open while you do math problems, copy references or read.

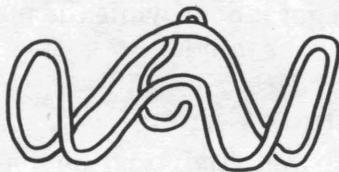


Figure 2. Book holder for textbooks.

Chores and Challenges

After-School Chores

Kids on their own after school can be a big help around the house and learn a lot about taking care of themselves at the same time.

Lots of kids have chores like these after school:

- feed the family pet(s)
- set the table
- pick up things in living room
- sweep kitchen
- dust furniture

Most kids have time for only one or two after-school chores if they have homework every day.

Think about one or two chores you could do to help at your house.

Pet Care and Responsibility

A family pet requires care which could become your responsibility when arriving home from school. Food and water are essential for all pets. Check to see that food and water bowls are full. Exercise is also important. If yours is a house pet (dog/cat), let him out in the yard when you arrive home from school. Keep an eye on your pet so he doesn't stray from the yard.



Pet Accidents

Sometimes housebound pets have accidents. Most of these accidents are easy to remedy. If your pet should have an accident, follow these easy instructions:

- clean up the accident immediately to prevent odor from penetrating the carpet or area where accident occurs.
- scrape up solids and blot liquids.
- sponge the spot with warm, soapy water.
- sprinkle dry baking powder or commercial carpet-odor powder on area.
- leave for several hours, then vacuum up.

Picker-Uppers

One of the best things a kid can be is a picker-upper. A picker-upper is anyone—an adult or a kid—who picks up and cleans up after himself.

A picker-upper remembers to:

- pick up dirty clothes and put them in the hamper.
- put dirty dishes from snacks in the kitchen sink or dishwasher.
- pick up trash from projects, hobbies or schoolwork and put it in the wastepaper basket.
- pick up toys, games and books and put them away after using.
- sometimes pick up something another family member has left out and put it away—just to be nice!

The better picker-upper you are, the less time your parents have to spend cleaning up after you. This gives them more time to spend with you doing the things all of you like to do.

Household Challenges

Sometimes things happen in a house or apartment that you may never have had to deal with by yourself, but you can learn some skills that will help you deal with these problems.

The Toilet Overflows

The best thing to do is reach under the toilet and turn off the water as in figure 3.

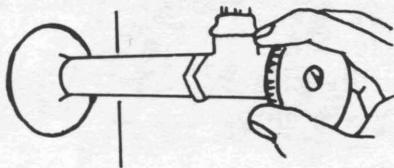


Figure 3. Turning off the water.

If your toilet does not have a shut off valve, have your parents teach you how to stop an overflow by lifting the tank float.

The Electricity Goes Out

When the electricity goes out, it is usually because of a storm or a problem with the system. If it is a winter afternoon when it gets dark early, you might not have much light.

Always have a flashlight someplace handy (like in a kitchen drawer). Never light candles, matches or lamps while you are by yourself.

Remember that the electric company will go to work right away fixing the problem, so it may only be a few minutes before the lights come back on.

A Weather Emergency

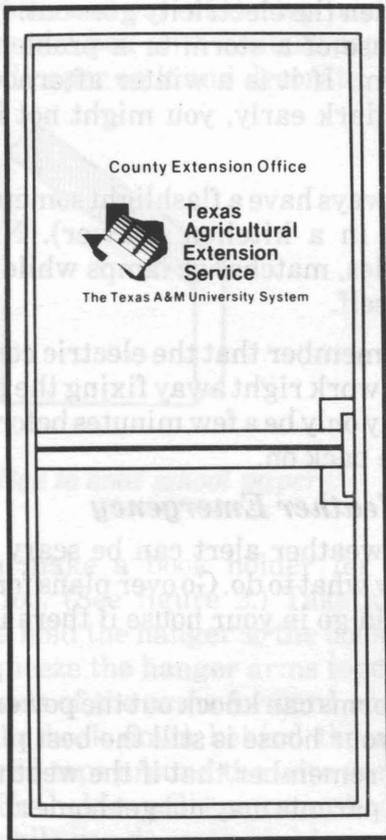
A weather alert can be scary unless you know what to do. Go over plans for where you should go in your house if there is a tornado alert.

Storms can knock out the power or phones, but your house is still the best place to stay. And remember that if the weather is really bad, parents may not get home at their usual time.

Keep a battery-powered radio with your flashlight and you can listen to the weather bulletins even if your electricity goes out.

Broken Glass

If you drop a glass or plate and it shatters, first check to see if you are cut. If you are barefoot, carefully move away from the glass to use your first aid kit. Then put your shoes on and sweep the glass into a dustpan. If there are slivers of glass you cannot sweep up, put newspaper or a cloth over the area and leave it until your parents get home. Do not try to pick up glass slivers with your fingers. Also make sure pets or younger brothers or sisters stay away from the area.



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