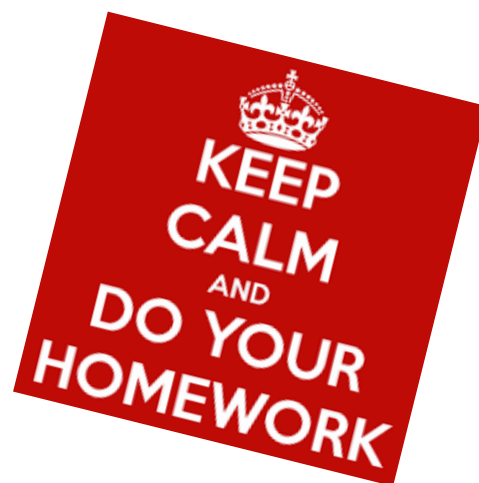


HOMEWORK POLICY

The value of homework to an individual child depends on his/her attitude toward continuing the learning experience. The student profits from homework when s/he understands the following:

- It has a definite purpose.
- It is preparation for sharing with others something that s/he has discovered, read, or created.
- It is practice to improve basic skills learned in class.
- It is planned to meet the needs of the students and has an essential place in the educational program.
- Homework is designed to:
 - Reinforce concepts and skills that have been presented in class.
 - Foster creativity and discipline through enrichment projects or research.
 - Train the student to work independently, manage their time and to accept responsibility.



Family time is important; therefore, Saint Hilary will not assign homework to be completed over holiday breaks. In grades Kindergarten through 4th grade no homework will be expected to be completed over the weekend. A minimal amount of homework will be given over the weekend in grades 5-8. Students may need and are encouraged to use weekends and holiday breaks to address late work, larger projects or to manage their overall family schedule as needed.

During extended school breaks:

Teachers should...	Teachers should not...
Recommend books that relate to class learning	Require students to do any newly assigned work
Encourage students to visit a museum, see a film, or participate in any other educational experience	Offer “extra credit” assignments that will be collected, evaluated, or assigned some points or a grade.
Allow students to make up missed work (only if in line with class/school policy and at teacher’s discretion).	
Allow students to revise any completed work that did not meet expectation	

*This chart was adapted with permission from Marin Catholic High School

Homework should be doable by the student independently. However, if a student is confused or in need of clarification, they are encouraged to be self-advocates. **If they do not understand, contact the teacher and they will work it out with the student.** *Parents are not expected to teach the students, but rather provide the environment needed for them to complete the work, stay organized and use their available resources (books, websites, teacher, etc).* Starting in 4th grade students should be contacting their teachers directly. Teachers will respond as quickly as possible and make communication with students a priority. However, emails after 6 PM may have to wait until the following day.

As assignments, content and subject allow, teachers are encouraged to offer flexible due dates and student choice. Student choices engage their autonomy and individual learning preferences, allow students to pick a certain number of problems on a particular page, for example, or to choose between the problems on two different pages. Some students will be perfectly happy writing spelling words a certain number of times each; others will learn better by using the same words in a story or puzzle. As a school we understand that families have busy schedules and students can have a *bad night*. For this reason we also try (when possible) to offer flexible submission dates. Students and parents are encouraged to watch for information from teachers regarding choice in homework policy and flexible due dates. This is designed to offer both suggested due dates that support strong time management and a final due date. Nightly homework will be fully posted by 4 PM each day, if not earlier.



The amount of time which different students in the same grade spend doing homework will vary. However, the following table provides guidelines for the maximum amount of time the typical elementary student should spend daily on homework. Teachers design homework based on these time limits; however, it is dependent on students using their class time wisely. Teachers plan time for students to begin their assignments. Students are strongly encouraged to use their class time wisely so their homework load remains reasonable.

Approximate homework times:

Grades 6-7-8	60-120 minutes
Grades 4-5	45-60 minutes
Grades 2-3	30-60 minutes
Grades 1	20-30 minutes

Parents, here are some helpful hints to support your child's completion of homework:

You can help your child succeed by encouraging them to have scholarly habits and to keep a positive attitude about the class and their own abilities. Consistent effort and perseverance is key for success in any challenge.

Observe your child when he or she is doing their homework:

- Are they using their in-class work, notes, textbook, and other resources?
- Are they doing their work in an organized manner?
- Are they noting questions that occur to them as they work? Mental notes can be easily forgotten.
- Is your child getting distracted while doing homework? Television, other people and music with lyrics can be distracting. Please have students put away cell phones and close all non-relevant Apps on the iPad during homework time.

Observe your child when he/she is studying for an assessment:

- Does your child know what concepts will be on the assessment?

On a regular basis, ask your child about the work they are learning in class. If they cannot explain it after reviewing their resources, then encourage them to seek help by asking questions in class or seeing their teacher at an appropriate time.

Encourage your child to take responsibility for their education:

- Encourage your child to meet one-on-one with the teacher if they are having issues with the class or if the homework takes too much time. Encourage your child to send an email to the teacher to arrange a meeting.
- Reinforce the fact that consistent hard work is key to success in school, and that attitude and an honest effort are key to success everywhere.
- Encourage your child to be positive about learning and not to give up on difficult assignments. Let them know that it's okay to be confused because everyone struggles from time to time, but struggle is a normal and necessary part of the learning process.

We live in an increasingly complex world, and your children's generation will be faced with very difficult problems that will need perseverance and insights to solve. Developing a positive approach to learning and working through the challenges they experience in class will not only help them retain the concepts they are learning, but it will help them to develop 21st century learning skills.

