

# ZooBookKoo

*Helping you to help your children*

## Ten top tips to help your child with homework

These tips are designed to help parents develop a happy homework routine for primary school children, which will hopefully become a healthy habit by the time they reach high school

1. **When and where for homework**
2. **Parental role-model**
3. **Avoid distractions**
4. **Help get them started**
5. **Child completes homework (not parent)**
6. **Patience and praise**
7. **Look, say, cover, write**
8. **Tools of the trade**
9. **'Real-life' testing**
10. **Communicate concerns with teacher**

### 1. **When and where for homework**

Decide with your child a regular (daily / weekly as appropriate) time slot to do homework and stick to this. Check with your school as to the appropriate length of time for homework for your child and explain this to your child. **Choose a place to do homework:** Decide with your child where homework is to be completed eg at the kitchen table, specific desk... Initially you will need to be seated with your child, but with time you will be able to be busy with other tasks, but in the same room. Inevitably the kitchen tends to be the best place. Be ready to sit down if the child needs support.

### 2. **Parental role model**

Children copy the behaviour patterns of their parents and others around them. It is great if you can do your more 'administrative' chores (bank statements, letters...) while your child does their homework. Then they see you do your homework too – be ready for interruptions

### **3. Avoid distractions**

Turn off the TV, the Xbox, the DS and the computer – unless required.  
You need to help your child focus on their homework

### **4. Help get them started**

If your child has understood the work at school they will be able to explain what they have to do. You may need to gently ask some questions and/or inform, if the child did not understand. You may need to openly discuss how to get started and discreetly point them in the right direction.

### **5. Child completes homework (not parent)**

Ensure your child completes the work – you can explain where necessary but do not provide answers. This is a great opportunity for your child to think for themselves – encourage this

### **6. Patience and praise**

You may have to explain some things several times. Resist temptation to rush your child. Consider this quality time – try to be relaxed and jolly this is not a chore, it should be fun. If your child associates homework with quality time with you they will be more likely to do it and enjoy the routine. Praise your child often, particularly their efforts and not just final efforts: ‘I really like the way you are sitting their doing your homework...’

### **7. Look, say, cover, write**

Your child is unlikely to learn by just looking at work, so encourage them to LOOK at it, SAY it out loud, COVER it up, then WRITE it out

### **8. Tools of the trade**

Set your child up with pencils, pens, colouring pencils, ruler, rubber and a good pencil sharpener - all in a special stationary holder – you might make or decorate this together. Or choose and buy them together – you can add to it as rewards. Let your child choose a special notebook for writing out work when they are learning with the Look, Say, Cover, Write method

### **9. ‘Real-life’ testing**

Sometimes, perhaps in the car or out and about, you can discreetly test your child by incorporating what you know they should have learned recently. Try to make it relevant to the situation, so they do not feel ‘tested’ – and never at bed time

### **10. Communicate concerns with teacher**

Communicate all queries or notes to the teacher on the homework completed by your child. You could discuss this first with your child so that they understand what you are doing. Follow up on the response as any frustration and failure to understand should be addressed as soon as possible

Helpful educational homework 'helpers':

- Times Tables Cube Book
  - <http://www.zoobookoo.com>
- Funny snippets with useful info:
  - <http://itsaparentslife.blogspot.com/>
- Internet games:
  - <http://www.amblesideprimary.com/ambleweb/mentalmaths/numberbond.html>
  - <http://www.primaryresources.co.uk/index.htm>
- Word game ideas:
  - [http://www.suite101.com/article.cfm/family\\_travel/108297](http://www.suite101.com/article.cfm/family_travel/108297)