

# John Greer Homework Policy

## Homework Defined

Homework is any time spent on school-related work at home.

## Rationale for Assigning Homework

Research evidence does not connect homework completion with academic achievement in elementary schools. However, homework at John Greer Elementary is assigned to accomplish the following purposes:

- To provide practice of skills and concepts taught in class.
- To improve study habits by reviewing skills and concepts taught in class.
- To encourage in-depth exploration of concepts taught in class through integration of varied skills on a single task, such as a book report or science project.
- To promote learning independence with an emphasis on self-direction, self-discipline, and time management.
- To convey that learning never ends and can occur during leisure time.
- To create opportunities for parents to participate in their child's education.

## Quantity of Homework Assigned

It is recognized that John Greer Elementary School has little control over factors that affect homework completion such as home atmosphere, student involvement in community activities, and differences among students. Research suggests that students should receive a *maximum* of 15 minutes of homework per night, multiplied by the student's school grade.

- Grade 5 = 75 minutes per night
- Grade 6 = 90 minutes per night

These minutes include the time needed at home by the typical student, who is using class-time wisely, to:

- Complete all assigned work, including projects.
- Study for tests.
- Engage in silent sustained reading.

## Administrator Responsibilities

The John Greer Elementary School administrator will:

- Communicate the John Greer Elementary Homework Policy to teachers, parents, and students.
- Be a resource for teachers, parents, and students requesting homework assistance.
- Monitor implementation of the John Greer Elementary Homework Policy.
- Serve as mediator should disputes arise between teachers, parents, and/or students regarding homework.

## Teacher Responsibilities

John Greer Elementary School teachers will:

- Honor the *Quantity of Homework Assigned* policy.
- Assign high-quality homework that:
  - Is related to the topic under study.
  - Includes a clear purpose.
  - Includes direction on how the assignment might be best carried out.
  - Communicates what a student needs to do to demonstrate that the assignment has been completed.
- Occasionally assign homework that gives students some choice that allows them to use their own learning style.
- Occasionally assign homework that encourages students to use previously taught skills and content as opposed to homework that only encourages students to practice newly acquired skills and content.
- Receive questions and concerns communicated from students and parents in regard to homework.
- Require that students use their assignment book. Class time will be given every school day for students to fill in their assignment book.
- Provide resources for students to use to review content and skills prior to tests. These may include review in class and/or study aid handouts to take home. If no study aids are provided, students can always benefit from reviewing Chapter Review Questions, Section Review Questions, and bolded chapter words.

## Student Responsibilities

John Greer Elementary School students will:

- Use class time wisely so not to take home more work than the typical student.
- Ask questions if instructions are not understood.
- Take necessary materials home to complete all assigned work.
- Keep an updated assignment book that is returned to school daily and taken home daily.
- Manage time at home to complete assignments, review for tests, and engage in silent sustained reading.
- Complete all assigned homework, in proper form, by its due date.

- Confer with teacher if homework overload occurs.

## Parent Responsibilities

John Greer Elementary School parents are encouraged to:

- Schedule a daily time when your child can complete homework assignments. Be consistent, using the same time period every day.
- Help your child create an appropriate location to complete homework assignments that contains:
  - Good lighting.
  - Minimal visual and audio distractions.
  - A flat working surface.
  - A few extra supplies (pens, pencils, paper, dictionary, etc...)
- Allow your child to work on his/her own but be available as a resource and consultant. It is acceptable to check your child's work but not to complete the work for him/her.
- Be available to study with your child, using the study aids discussed in *Teacher Responsibilities*.
- Compare your child's work with the assignment book to determine if work is complete.
- Put assignments away for a while if your child becomes frustrated.
- Be encouraging. Remember that sometimes the best help is a hug, a smile, or a word of approval.
- Contact your child's teacher if you encounter problems with homework. Acceptable ways to communicate include a letter, a note written in the assignment book, a phone call, or an email.

## Scoring of Homework

Research evidence indicates that the intermittent scoring of homework is no less effective than scoring every assignment. At John Greer, most homework is practice and is not used for assessment purposes. As a result, it is essential that students receive feedback on their homework. However, that feedback doesn't need to be a score in order for the homework to have a positive effect on the students. Though teachers may score most homework, other options for feedback may be utilized. Most commonly, students will receive a check plus, check, or check minus.

## Academic Assistance Available to Students

John Greer Elementary School and the Hoopston community provide the following forms of homework assistance:

- John Greer Homework Labs: Morning, Noon, and After-School. (283-6667)
- John Greer Social Academic Instructional Groups that teach academic and organization skills.
- John Greer teachers available in their rooms before/after school.
- John Greer Teacher-created websites to communicate assignments.
- John Greer Teachers available by e-mail through the John Greer Website *Meet the Staff* page.
- John Greer *Homework Checklist for Parents* Pamphlet.
- Confidence Builders through DACC (283-4170)
- Rising Leaders at the Hoopston Multi-Agency – Monday – Thursday – 3:00 – 6:30 pm (283-5544)
- Rankin Methodist Church – Wednesday 4:00 – 5:00 pm (397-2461)
- Hoopston Public Library that provides a quiet location to complete homework or projects.
- Homework Check-in, Check-out

## Homework for Absent Students

The following principles apply to homework for absent students:

- When students are absent from school, parents are encouraged to call in the morning and request student work. When this occurs, teachers will prepare the work and have it available in the office by the end of the school day.
- When student absences occur, students will have the same number of school days they were absent to complete and turn in their work without incurring a consequence.
- Teachers may choose to send students who were absent to Noon Homework Lab, not as a penalty, but as an opportunity to catch up on the work that was missed.
- Teachers will administer missed tests per their classroom policies. However, no consequence will be applied to any makeup test.

## Late/Incomplete Homework Policy

The Goal of the *Late Homework Policy* is to create an opportunity for students to complete late work on the day it is due to avoid an accumulation of late work. Late work is defined as homework that is incomplete or not present when requested by the teacher. For most teachers, all homework is due at the beginning of the day.

Students who have incomplete work will be assigned by their teacher to Noon Homework Lab for either 20 or 40 minutes. In addition, once a student accumulates 2 pieces of late work in a week, the next piece of late work will result in an after-school detention with the teacher. Additional late work that week will result in the student being sent to Noon Homework Lab for the rest of the week. Positive rewards may be given by the homeroom teacher to those students who have turned in all work for the week.