

How to Help Your Child with Homework

What if your child comes home with a problem and says, “I don’t get it!”

Your job is to think of questions that will engage him or her in the problem.

- ◆ What is the problem about? Tell me in your own words.
- ◆ What did you do in class to get started?
- ◆ Can you make a diagram or draw a sketch?
- ◆ What assumptions are being made?
- ◆ Are you solving the right problem?
- ◆ Could there be any missing or extra information?
- ◆ Can you solve a simpler version of the problem?

What if your child comes home with a problem partially done and is stuck, and doesn’t know what to do next?

Your job is to ask questions that will help him or her get unstuck.

- ◆ What have you already tried? What steps did you take?
- ◆ Can you tell me what you know so far?
- ◆ What is the important information you need to solve the problem?
- ◆ Did you check your arithmetic?
- ◆ Can we break the problem down?
- ◆ Is there a pattern?

What if your child comes home and says, “I don’t have any homework” or “I’ve already done all of my homework”?

Your job is to take a few minutes and go over the homework with your child.

- ◆ Does the answer make sense?
- ◆ Could there be more than one answer? How do you know?
- ◆ How do you know your answers are correct?
- ◆ Is there anything you could have overlooked?
- ◆ Did you do all parts of the problem?
- ◆ Did you check your arithmetic?
- ◆ Did you label your answers?
- ◆ Did you show all of your work?
- ◆ What do you think you were supposed to learn from this homework?
- ◆ What new questions or problems might you now pose and explore?

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