



Why homework?

Homework can help students develop in our Helios Learner Outcomes:

- ***Self-Management:***
 - Practice with time management
 - Assess for themselves whether they have finished
- ***Self-Awareness:***
 - Learn their best individual working style
 - Fewer distractions than a busy classroom
- ***Knowledge, Academic Skills, and Active Learning:***
 - Independent practice to solidify learning
 - Pursue excellence to their own satisfaction
 - Adjust the time to complete a task or learn a topic without pressure to work at the same rate as peers



Why not?

Inappropriate homework can have negative effects, and most schools do not have the ability to adapt homework for individuals.

- Rote, repetitive worksheets that are not engaging and are not at the correct level are boring or frustrating and can turn kids off from school
- Homework can contribute to parent/child power struggles
- Homework takes time away from kids' other interests and free time. Unstructured play is an essential part of a child's life.

Inappropriate assignments have led some to suggest that all homework should be eliminated at all levels of education.



How should homework be different for gifted children?

Used correctly, homework complements classroom learning in a way that cannot be replicated during the school day. At Helios, we know that gifted children need to get the same **value** out of school as typical children get from their schools.

These homework features that are good for all children are especially important for gifted children:

- Practice with less repetition
- Appropriately leveled work
- More opportunities to pursue their own ideas through projects
- More unstructured “down time” after school
- More time to pursue outside interests after school



How is the Helios approach different?

Students should expect to do meaningful work at home, in an amount that is manageable for their age. You will notice that at Helios:

- Younger students have less homework than at other schools.
- Older students who set a high bar of excellence may have around the same amount of homework as other schools.
- Most homework involves student choice, creativity, or reflective thinking: passion projects, theme projects, lit circle reflections, or self-adjusting math assignments.



How much homework should we expect?

In K-2:

- Students may make connections between home and school through *occasional theme assignments*.
- Math classes send home optional packets connected to students' learning at school, but these are not required, corrected, or collected unless the student is placed in a *middle-school level math* group.

EVERY DAY
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How much homework should we expect?

In grades 3-6:

- Students have weekly *Literature Circle* assignments that require 1-3 hours to complete at home sometime during the week.
- *Theme projects* that are not completed at school for a variety of reasons may require time at home to complete.
- *Passion Projects* are completed primarily at school but may occasionally require time at home, especially if a student has fallen behind.
- Students placed in *middle school-level math classes* should expect 30-40 minutes of homework four nights per week.

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How much homework should we expect?

In grades 7-8:

- Students have weekly **Literature Circle** assignments that require 2-3 hours to complete at home sometime during the week.
- **Theme projects** are more extensive. Many projects are planned to be completed at least partially at home.
- **Passion Projects** are also more extensive and require some work at home.
- **Middle school-level math classes** require 30-40 minutes of homework four nights per week.

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How Helios Homework Prepares Students

A Helios graduate who has been supported to do independent work at home will be prepared to handle the homework load in high school.

They will expect to find value in the work they do; they will make connections and find meaning in the assignments they are given, understand how the work can help them improve, and assess their own work for quality.

Students will be able to find a productive place to study at home, focus during their work time, and manage a calendar and project schedule.

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How can I learn more?

For questions about particular assignments, contact your student's teacher directly.

For questions about the Helios philosophy behind work done at home, contact the Assistant Head of School, Linda Zadik.

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