



## Hit Homework Head-on



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Most students head back to school in August or September. During the summer vacation, your study skills may have become a bit rusty.

This week, The Mini Page offers some tips to help you with your homework.

### Why is there homework?

Teachers assign homework in order to:

- reinforce what you are taught in school so that the knowledge stays in your mind.
- exercise the brain.
- teach responsibility.
- review things you have already learned so that your skills stay fresh.



photo courtesy U.S. Department of Education

Homework is usually related to what you've been learning in school. For example, if you learned fractions in math class, then your homework will probably be to practice problems with fractions.

### Making homework easier

Here are some tips to make doing your homework as rewarding as possible.

- Take a short break after school. Get a snack and relax a bit. But do not let yourself

get so interested in doing other activities that it is hard to begin your homework.

- Set up a study pattern that works for you, then stick to it.
- Gather everything you need before you start. Have all your paper, pencils, books and other supplies together at the start.

• Find a comfortable place to study. Some students like to work in the same place each day. Be sure you are not too hot or too cold, and find a place with good lighting. Choose a comfortable place to sit, or lie on the floor or on your bed.

• Turn off the TV. For most kids, television is a big distraction. Don't watch it until your homework is finished.

• If you have a cellphone, put it away. It can distract you while you're trying to study. Texts, emails and social media pull your attention away from your work and make it hard to focus.

Before you begin studying, silence your phone and leave it in another room. When your work is done, you can reward yourself by checking your phone!



photo courtesy U.S. Department of Education



### Mini Fact:

Study buddies can help if you get stuck on a homework problem.

### Get organized

Learning to be organized will help you have the tools you need to do your homework well and on time.

- Use a planner. This can be a special book that your teacher gives you or just a spiral notebook. For each subject, write down the details of your homework for the day, including:

1. Textbook page numbers and problem numbers that are assigned;
2. Tools you'll need at home, such as art or math tools or textbooks;
3. When the assignment is due;
4. Special details, such as if the assignment is to be typed or put in a folder.

• Do the most difficult homework first. If math is your hardest subject, tackle the homework while your mind is fresh. Then move on to your easier subjects.

• Pack your backpack in the evening, after homework. Don't leave this task until

morning, when you may be in a rush.

- Keep your school subjects organized in folders or sections of a binder.



### Resources



#### On the Web:

- [bit.ly/MPhomework](http://bit.ly/MPhomework)
- [bit.ly/MPhomework2](http://bit.ly/MPhomework2)

#### At the library:

- "Learning to Learn: Strengthening Study Skills and Brain Power" by Gloria Frender

## Try 'n' Find

Words that remind us of homework are hidden in this puzzle. Some words are hidden backward, and some letters are used twice. See if you can find:

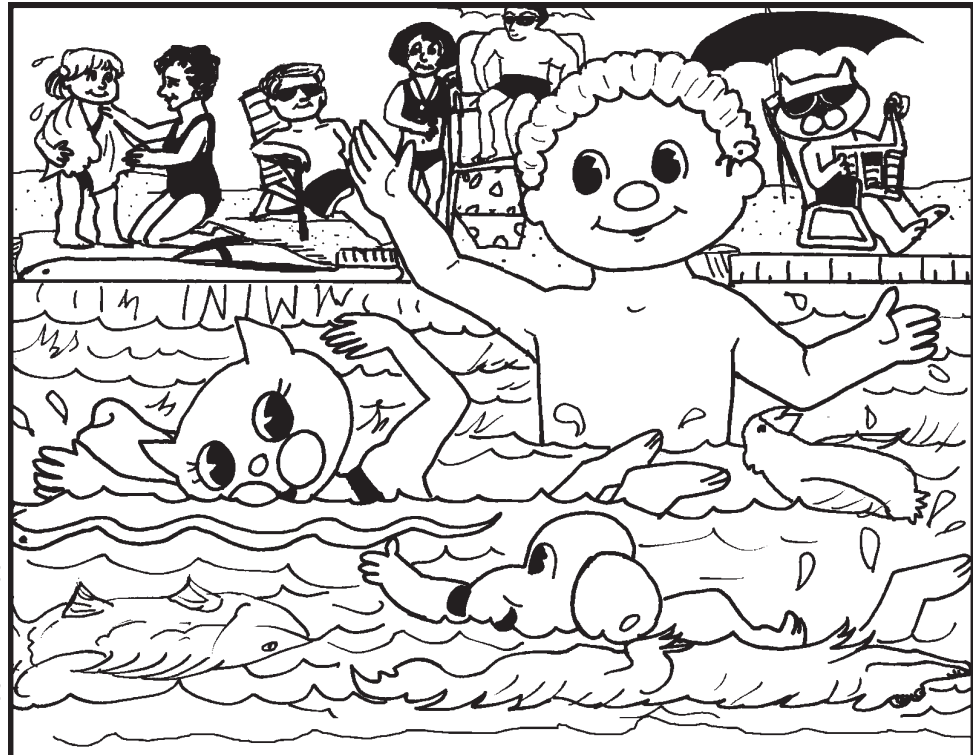


ASSIGN, BACKPACK,  
BINDER, BREAK,  
DIFFICULT, DISTRACTION,  
FOCUS, HELP,  
HOMEWORK, LIGHTING,  
PLANNER, REINFORCE,  
REVIEW, SCHOOL, SKILLS,  
SNACK, STUDENT, STUDY,  
SUPPLIES, TEACHER.

N P M R E I N F O R C E K Z C  
K L B H O M E W O R K A E R B  
C E S E I L P P U S L L I K S  
A H D I S T R A C T I O N L E  
P G N I T H G I L X S U C O F  
K K C A N S P L A N N E R H S  
C S C H O O L W R E H C A E T  
A N R E D N I B W E I V E R U  
B B I X M T L U C I F F I D D  
T N E D U T S P N G I S S A Y

## Mini Spy Classics

Mini Spy and her friends are having fun swimming at the beach. See if you can find the hidden pictures. Then color the picture.



Mini Spy Classics appear in the first issue of each month.

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- word MINI
- fish
- ruler
- snake
- caterpillar
- olive
- alligator
- tooth
- letter A
- cheese wedge
- letter D
- bird
- toothbrush

## Mini Jokes



**Sam:** What kinds of grades would insects have in school?  
**Solomon:** Probably a bee-average!

## Eco Note



A plague of locusts stripped much of a Greek Aegean island of its plants in early summer, causing sheep to starve because so much vegetation had been devoured. Vegetable gardens across the island were also ravaged. A local expert said the locusts would disappear by July or August, but are likely to come back because they are not of the migratory variety.

adapted with permission from Earthweek.com

## For later:

Are you ready for school? Start making a plan for where and when you'll do homework.

## Teachers:

For standards-based activities to accompany this feature, visit: [bit.ly/MPstandards](http://bit.ly/MPstandards)

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