



Fifth Grade FAQ's, and Answers!

1. ***I have heard a lot about the homework load in fifth grade, and my child seems concerned. What can you tell me?***

Here's the homework scoop for fifth grade.

* **Nothing assigned that is due the following day.**

* Project based homework, weekly online writing, reading at home, and excel math make up the 4 components of normally assigned homework.

* Social studies homework assigned by Ms. Dunn, science homework assigned by Mr. Marsh.

* Any assignment can be typed.

* Work must be neat and legible.

* Modifications and accommodations provided - please let us know if your child is spending more than 50 minutes per night on homework.

Here is the usual break down of assignments by day for fifth grade:

Monday night – Children receive 2 Excel math sheets and a reading log, all due the following Monday. TURN IN 2 Excel math and 1 reading log from week before. Continue working on blog post from prior week.

Tuesday night – Work on excel, blog post due Wed., reading.

Wednesday night –new online writing assignment (due following Wednesday), continue reading, Excel math

Thursday night – continue Excel math, reading, continue writing assignment.

Weekend: reading and finishing math, if needed.

You can see by looking at this breakdown that it is possible to stagger work as needed, and to work over the weekend if that is a family choice (project work, writing assignments, unfinished math). We believe this gives flexibility for outside activities such as baseball, swim, etc.

2. Are you seriously going to teach my child about human reproduction this year??????

Yup. Not only that, we are going to have fun doing it. :)

All kidding aside, there are specific requirements from the state about we teach.

We teach the female and male reproductive systems, how they work together to produce offspring, genetics (eye color, etc.), and general safety information, such as online safety and “stranger danger”. In addition to character education topics such as self-respect and refusal skills -- which we discuss throughout the year -- we talk about how to support others through a time of changing bodies, an influx of hormones, and rollercoaster emotions. Parents are welcome to meet with us prior to the start of human reproduction education to preview materials, if there is concern. (Usually begins in May, split by gender.)



3. My Child is nervous about graduation. What's the big deal?

Last year, as a fourth grader, your child came to see our rehearsal (unless they were absent). Our graduation ceremony is a long-standing tradition at Park School, in which every child speaks. For some children, this prospect can seem intimidating.

To prepare the children, we begin in 4th grade with Talking Calendars, and continue in 5th grade with a variety of public speaking projects (How-To speech, Colonial Fair Speech, Harry Potter Greek and Latin roots “duels” and book club presentations).

We also make rehearsals as low key and fun as possible, and we rehearse a lot.

4. Why does my child have to use email, and why did you want permission to view movies?

Let us set your minds at rest. Movie viewing is 95% educational movies, with possibly 1 or 2 “reward” movies per year (that’s if the kids earn enough class points for them). We like to celebrate our successes, and watching a movie is one way that we do this!

With regards to the email, it’s not the email so much as it is the use of Google products – we can only access the blogs if we have email through the district. However, we will teach email as a genre as one of the FIRST things we do when the students are all set up. This includes staying away from chain emails, using proper grammar, and basic common sense about the permanence of what you put online.



The blogs we use have been great at getting kids to write in detail and write for an audience. It is more engaging for MOST (not necessarily all) kids, and it allows them to illustrate their work and share it with far-away relatives, or whomever they want to. There will be instruction for the first few blog posts on how to pull your ideas together, and students will be given a blank master of a graphic organizer (which you can keep and make copies) for use with the blog if desired.

There is a commenting piece with the blogs as well. The children are trained on how to make an appropriate comment and we monitor these comments as well as the posts. We also require at least 3 comments – one close friend, one person you are comfortable with, and one person you hardly ever talk to. After those three, students can comment on whomever they would like.

Google docs are a great tool that can be used to share work, receive editorial review, and have a running log of all the drafts of a piece of work. Every time you revise, your original version is saved as well as the one containing the new work. You can also start work at school and continue at home (or vice versa).

We fifth grade teachers STRONGLY believe that technology is an effective and helpful tool. We are advocates for responsible use of technology, and for real-world applications, such as word processing, presentation development, communication, and research.

If you have any other burning questions, please email us or make an appointment to discuss them.

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We are looking forward to a fabulous year!