

South Pasadena Unified School District

South Pasadena Middle School

Homework Policy

I. School Statement

Relevant and purposeful homework can contribute to academic achievement, self-discipline, independent learning habits, the building of responsibility, and can be a tool for communication among teachers, students and parents. Homework can be a safe place to make mistakes, and thus provides an opportunity for the student to make better sense of academic content. Assignments should be based on student needs and be differentiated to the greatest extent possible.

Homework assignments at South Pasadena Middle School fall into the following four categories:

Type/ Focus of Homework	Definition/Outcome	Prerequisites
<i>Formative Practice or Review</i>	Work that reviews and reinforces standards-based skills and concepts taught in class	Students must already be able to independently perform required skills. If this is not the case, differentiate the assignment.
<i>Preparation</i>	Background work that prepares the student for upcoming standards-based lessons and taps into prior knowledge and experience.	Students must have free access to any required materials.
<i>Extensions</i> e.g. standards-based projects, internships	Work that applies learning in new contexts or integrates and expands classroom learning to facilitate problem solving, creativity, and critical thinking	Students must have free access to materials to deepen understanding and relate learning to “real-world” contexts.
<i>Completion</i>	Work assigned during class not completed in class	If a student has completion homework on a regular basis, differentiate the classroom program.

II. Amount of Homework

The amount and type of homework students receive should reflect current research on the value of homework at different developmental stages, and its impact on the overall success and well-being of students. The amount and type of homework assigned depends on such factors as:

1. The student's grade level, subject, and academic schedule.
2. Learning ability and learning needs.
3. The student's ability to work independently.
4. The balancing of previously assigned work such as tests, examinations and short/long term project due dates.

Completion of homework for middle school-aged students can contribute to improved student achievement. Efforts will be made to have homework assigned for completion, practice, preparation, or extension should be clearly articulated and carefully planned, in collaboration with core and elective teachers. **Homework may be assigned five nights a week (Monday through Friday.) The total estimated completion time should be "10 minute X grade" rule or less, all classes combined, nightly (6th Grade: 60 minutes; 7th Grade: 70 minutes and 8th Grade: 80 Minutes.)** The typical "10-minute rule" for 6-8 should only be considered as a *maximum* amount of time for homework assignments. If more time is regularly needed by a student, teachers should be contacted in order to discuss the students' individual needs.

The completion time suggested above does not include time spent on reading assignments or studying in preparation for an assessment.

Students in honors, accelerated, or AP courses may expect a higher homework completion time due to the level of rigor of these courses.

III. Student Responsibility

Students are expected to make their best efforts to complete the homework on their own. If the student is unable to complete homework independently on a regular basis, the teacher should be notified to discuss options.

Students should be provided an appropriate work environment and sufficient time in order to complete assignments.

Teachers will provide clear expectations, instructions and timelines. Teachers are a resource for support and clarification, if needed. Assignments will be in alignment with classroom instruction.

Access to Resources and Homework Help

1. Library resource materials: Students may check out materials that augment classroom-learning activities.
2. Assistance and/or tutoring: South Pasadena Public Library offers online homework assistance.
3. Many of the schools' programs provide online student resources. Teachers will notify student if and when these materials are available.
4. Afterschool tutoring is offered for identified students in need.

IV. Homework Expectations

Students are expected to make their best effort to product work that is complete, on time and meets the quality of the expectations set in class.

V. Scheduling Homework and Teacher Feedback

Homework shall not be assigned on scheduled holidays as outlined in the school year calendar or on days of established significance.

As appropriate, homework will be commented on to provide feedback for future learning. This includes direct feedback on answers, identification of emerging patterns of strengths and/or weaknesses, and recommendations for improvement.

VI. Grades and Homework

Homework may be given points based on the teacher's grading system.

If homework is not completed, consequences shall not be punitive, e.g. withhold brunch or lunch, etc.

VII. Homework Makeup

When students are absent, they will work with the teacher to determine which essential assignments need to be made-up and the appropriate timeline for completion. Consideration will be made based on the length of absence and the impact on the student.

VIII.

Teachers will meet quarterly to plan and coordinate homeroom long-term assignments.