

PYP home learning guidelines

BACKGROUND & PRINCIPLES

- Many students already read on a daily basis at home, and research suggests that reading self-selected texts (at home) has a positive impact on learning.
- Best practice suggests that in order for home learning to be effective, tasks must be set to enrich learning rather than to repeat activities. It must be individualised, purposefully planned, and timely feedback must also be given.
- Not all students have access to scaffolded parent support, time, and learning spaces in their homes.
- Many students are involved in weekly after school activities, and the skills gained through involvement in extracurriculars can enhance the learning that happens at school. The PYP promotes physical activity both within and outside the school, and supports students' participation in extracurricular and community-based activities.
- Traditional 'homework' can impact home relationships and the self-esteem of students. It can perhaps even negatively impact upon student opinion of specific subjects.

Based on the above, ISB PYP teachers do not generally assign homework tasks.

- We recommend that **daily reading of self-selected texts** is a part of every student's home learning.
 - Reading at home is an excellent means of developing thinking skills, increasing fluency, developing language skills and helping children develop confidence with their reading.
 - Reading in English, Danish and home language should be a regular part of home learning. Teachers will ensure that 'just right' books are available to take home.
- On occasion, where there is a **relevant, authentic connection, short home learning tasks may be assigned**. These will be individualised, purposefully planned, and timely feedback will be provided.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do students self-select texts?

'Texts in multiple languages in the home and the learning community are opportunities to understand different perspectives and develop understandings of the multilingual nature of our world. Family literacy traditions vary widely among different cultures, and teachers show interest in learning about these in order to better support students and their families.'

Children learn to read by reading. In order to develop lifelong reading habits, learners need to have extended periods of time to read for pleasure, interest, and information, experiencing an extensive range of quality fiction and non-fiction texts.

As learners engage with interesting and appealing texts, appropriate to their experiences and developmental phase, they acquire the skills, strategies and conceptual understanding necessary to become competent, motivated, independent readers.'

A guide for finding a 'just right' book is provided by [Reading Rockets](#).

What might a 'relevant, authentic connection' be and what might this home learning task look like?

Interviewing parents, making home language connections (i.e. working with parents to find key UoI words), bringing an artefact, taking a photo of recycling habits at home, preparing something to share in class about a personal hobby or interest.

How will these occasional home learning tasks be communicated to parents?

Primary School aged students are still developing their self-management skills, especially in relation to organisation. While some are very adept at managing time and tasks effectively, others still require support. Given that many of our students have after school activities each week, it would make sense that parents are made aware of occasional learning tasks. Seesaw seems a logical way to communicate these.

What is a reasonable timeframe for completion?

This depends on the task duration. If it's just a case of translating a central idea, asking parents a question or bringing an artefact, probably a two day minimum. Many students in K1-P5 have after school activities, so they don't always have 'free' time to complete home learning tasks.

What about students that need more 'practice' in a subject?

Current research suggests that home learning tasks should enrich rather than repeat learning.

Why is there no homework, or why it is different from last year?

"No homework" is inaccurate. We recommend daily reading plus occasional authentic and relevant tasks that are connected to the learning. A review of PYP philosophy and current research on home learning shows that:

- There is evidence that reading self-selected texts (at home) has a positive impact on learning.
- Time doing homework tasks could be spent doing other extra-curricular activities that perhaps have equal or greater value. Outside school learning needs to be valued. Children need to have a school/life balance.
- Students do not necessarily have equal opportunities e.g. consistency of parental support, time set aside.
- Home learning tasks need to be individualised, purposefully planned and reflect the plan-teach-assess cycle. Consistent and timely feedback from teachers is essential, and without it, home learning tasks are not effective.
- Traditional 'homework' can damage home relationships and the self-esteem of students. It can perhaps even negatively impact upon student opinion of specific subjects.

What about the students/parents who want homework?

We recommend daily reading plus occasional authentic and relevant tasks that are connected to the learning. Parents are welcome to set home learning tasks, though teachers are not obligated to recommend resources.

MYP has homework, so don't we need to prepare students for this?

While students are assigned homework (see [MYP Homework Policy](#)), and we try to facilitate as smooth a transition as possible for our students into MYP, the MYP teachers are conscious about introducing the homework policy to their students gradually.

What about reading logs?

While it is important to be able to track the books that are being borrowed from the library (i.e. to make sure they come back!) it is not necessary for teachers to monitor whether students are actually reading.

How much time should be set aside for 'daily reading'?

15 minutes seems to be the “magic number” at which students start seeing substantial positive gains in reading achievement; students who read just over a half-hour to an hour per day see the greatest gains of all.

Between kindergarten and twelfth grade, students with an average daily reading time of 30+ minutes are projected to encounter 13.7 million words. At graduation, their peers who averaged less than 15 minutes of reading per day are likely to be exposed to only 1.5 million words. The difference is more than 12 million words. Children in between, who read 15–29 minutes per day, will encounter an average of 5.7 million words—less than half of the high-reading group but nearly four times that of the low-reading group.