

Inside Report Card

News Of Cleveland County Schools

1982-83
Year of the
Public
Schools



NORTH CAROLINA

Focus On Homework

"A college professor objected to giving kids stars for doing well in school. Yet, no adults I know work for nothing."



— Dr. Jerry Blake, County Superintendent

Did you ever come home from work, open the door, and greet your kids doing "homework" in front of the television? I have. Not long ago, as I opened the door, I saw my two youngsters lying on the floor with paper and pencil in front of them, just a foot or so from the television. I thought to myself, "Gee that's not homework — that's home diddling."

I know my children see television as relaxation. The addition of a paper and pencil doesn't change that. I am not sure homework done by the light of the TV has any impact on learning.

Yet, time spent on homework has one of the most important impacts on learning. My homework observations I am sure I share with many neighbors, so in this Focus I will concentrate on homework and how it can help youngsters do a better job of learning. I have two ideas to share — the first in this article and the second later.

My first idea has to do with the homework environment. The homework environment needs to be supportive, and it can be in the following way:

Make a special time and place for homework. Include comfortable work resources — a good table and chair, a good light, a dictionary, possibly encyclopedias, and other books appropriate to his age that the youngster can use for reference.

Emphasis on work environment says two things: 1. The parent in my household feels homework is important; and 2: homework has a place in our family life. Both ideas are part of an important attitude for every successful student to experience.

The homework environment ought to make provision for a youngster to earn something he wants for doing his homework.

A college professor objected to giving kids stars for doing well in school. Yet, no adults I know work for nothing. Even nuns are guaranteed food and shelter for their church service. I could agree with

the professor that over emphasis on external rewards teaches a harsh value. Yet, every one of us has had to learn the lesson that despite our intrinsic rewards, our ambitions for our lifestyle are made possible by what we earn.

Hardly anyone would take the view that youngsters ought to be expected to do homework thoroughly and completely without recognition for it. Allowing a youngster to earn credits or money toward his leisure time activities or his new toys or his hamburger and movie excursions will do a great deal to improve his interest in his homework and perhaps even in chores he can do to earn for his leisure time activities.

Another aspect of homework environment is getting help. Parents can get together and establish a homework help network. In all schools some parents can answer questions on math or science or social studies or other skill areas. Parents can volunteer to do it.

Identifying people who could participate in a homework help network would make a great project for the parent-teacher organization. If the PTO publishes a directory of helpers who could be called, students would have a great resource. The directory can list people and phone numbers with acceptable hours for calls. The list could show helpers by subject area. Such a project has the potential to eliminate the worst frustration to homework success.

If your shopping list is long and your ideas are short, you may be able to substitute some items to help on homework for the constant distraction of TV and video games. A table or good dictionary may be the gift that keeps on giving for a lifetime of learning.

This last article before the holidays brings with it wishes for happiness and joy. In January, we shall explore a second idea on improving homework.

Signs Of Success For Hearing Impaired



Cleveland County School System has had four students since the 1975-76 school year.

Any student whose hearing is impaired to the degree that speech and language is delayed, is eligible for the program.

At the present, there are seven students enrolled in the hearing impaired program. An

elementary division is located at Central Cleveland School where four students attend. The secondary division, located at Burns Junior High School, serves three students.

After audiological evaluations, otolaryngology reports, and other pertinent information is obtained about each student, trained personnel determines to what degree the student can

participate in the regular program.

At the present, students are exposed to three different avenues of learning. They are: mainstreamed in the regular classroom with preferential seating; mainstreamed in the regular classroom with an interpreter; and self-contained with a trained teacher for the hearing impaired.

Hearing impaired students at Burns Junior High School are

given the freedom to participate in all activities.

The regular students take much time and interest with the students enrolled in the hearing impaired program and include them in social events. Some hearing students have become quite proficient with signing. The school personnel has been pleased with the student's progress and hopes this will continue in the future.

Patching A Good Program Together

For several years Mrs. Ann Elliott's third graders at Boiling Springs School have created quilts that are auctioned at the school's Spring Jubilee. This has been a yearly project in which every child is involved.

The main purpose of this project according to Mrs. Elliott is "to help the children develop creative awareness and to give the children an opportunity to work with their hands for hand-eye coordination.

The children also learn to work together in groups encouraging and respecting each other in a caring and environment and affords the opportunity for children to realize there are different outlets for excellence other than academics.

Thus far the children have made six quilts. The first was made in 1975. The children brought polyester squares and hand stitched them together. Mrs. Clifford Hamrick, Sr., helped with the quilt and then tacked and brier stitched the quilt for finishing. Mrs. Gordon Bridges helped the children make another polyester quilt several years later.

The second quilt was a bi-centennial one made in 1976. The twenty six children in her class designed squares using the letters of the alphabet. This pieced quilt was then finished by Mrs. Willie Byers whose grandchild was in Mrs. Elliott's room. Three of the quilts have been designed using liquid embroidery. In preparation for making their quilt squares, the children use the liquid embroidery on tee shirts. The designs of these quilts have been of state birds and flowers. The fifth quilt was a cross stitched quilt of shells and sand dollars. Mrs. Stella Humphries and Mrs. C.D. Rollins helped assemble and quilt these as well as other quilts.

At auction the quilts sold for various amounts with the top price being \$150.00.

Riding The Straight And Narrow

"Fantastic!" This is the response of Edith Bailey to the question, "What do you think of your bus policy?" Ms. Bailey is the driver of the twice-winning bus of students at Number Three School.

Each month students at Number Three compete for the end of the month award (paid for by the PTO) for best behaviour while riding to and from school on the bus. A school employee declared: "they know that 'hands to themselves, backs to their seats, and no talking' pays off!"

In addition to the incentive program, a disciplinary plan of action is enforced. Students reported by the driver for misbehavior are dealt with according to the following procedure:

First offense: the student is asked to describe improper behavior and to state the behavior that would be most desired. Then in his own words and in his own handwriting, the student writes a promise concerning his future behavior on the bus.

Second offense: the student is informed that his parents will receive a letter through the mail stating the first and second offenses and asking for their assistance in preventing other offenses.

Third offense: the student is spanked. Parents are called.

Fourth offense: Student is suspended from the bus for two weeks (10 school days). Parents are called and a letter is sent in the mail to them explaining the third and fourth offenses. Dates of the suspension period are stated.

Joyce Evans, driver of the bus who tied with Baily for the second month prize says "I think the policy is great! I feel better about the environment on the bus. The children also seem to feel better about themselves."

Mary Cameron, another driver, sums up: "The students can be commended for their improvement. The plan really works."

The bus discipline and incentive policies were developed by Jack Powell, principal, and Janet Walker, assistant principal.

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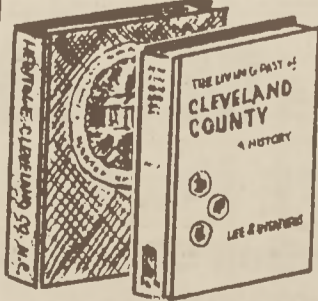
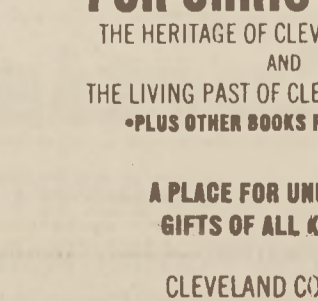
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