



Arlington Archers: New Family Orientation

Module 8: Homework and Evaluation



Table of Contents: Homework and Evaluation

1. Academic Expectations
2. Tutoring
3. Homework
4. Evaluation
5. Questions?

Academic Expectations

As a key philosophical assumption, the Academy holds that every student can learn. Our curriculum is rigorous and expectations of students are high; however, we are not an exclusive school for the best and the brightest. Our goal is to provide an environment that allows every student who wants to learn the opportunity to achieve academically. As human beings, we are equal in that we all have the capacity to learn and grow. But this equality in capacity cannot be confused with equality of academic results. Just as individuals differ in their physical gifts and characteristics, we all have different gifts and challenges in the subjects of learning. A student's desire to learn is the key to success and fulfillment at the Academy. Every student who has passed the appropriate prerequisites, is genuinely curious, and applies him or herself diligently on a daily basis will succeed.

Tutoring

All Great Hearts teachers offer regularly scheduled tutoring sessions before, during, and/or after school at no cost. Tutoring is an important opportunity for students to receive academic guidance and support. Students are strongly encouraged, and may be required, to see teachers for tutoring. Tutoring services are also available for students receiving special education services.

Private tutoring is the responsibility of a student's parents. Teachers employed by the Academy are not permitted to privately tutor their own students for pay.



Homework

We believe that the majority of class time should be spent in the collective pursuit of what is true, good, and beautiful about a specific subject.

Homework time, then, is reserved primarily for reading and for meaningful independent activities that support the curricular objectives of a given course. Students should expect to do meaningful homework each night.



Homework, continued

General nightly homework expectations for the average student at the Academy are as follows:

Kindergarten: 20 minutes

1st Grade: 30 minutes

2nd Grade: 30-40 minutes

3rd Grade: 35-45 minutes

4th Grade: 45-60 minutes

5th Grade: 60-75 minutes

Middle School: 15 minutes per content area



Homework, continued

We ask parents to help us communicate to students the importance of establishing a silent and distraction-free environment for completing all homework. If students do not work in such an environment they should expect that:

- it will take significantly longer to complete the assignments; and
- the student's thought will be fragmented, and his or her overall comprehension of the material will be deficient.

Often, success with homework is a condition of the student's self-regulation. Skillful self-regulators have strategies that enable them to achieve efficiently and effectively: help-seeking, planning, goal-setting, time-management, self-monitoring, and using feedback. Students who struggle often do not systematically employ these strategies, even though they may, in fact, spend a significant amount of time working/studying.

As students rise through the grades at the academy, they develop and strengthen their work skills.

Homework, continued

Teachers work carefully in measuring out a proper amount of work for their class and will coordinate with other teachers of a section of students in scheduling their major tests and projects. Thus, students will have no more than two major tests on the same day. It is the responsibility of the student to make up missed homework after any absence, planned or due to illness, in a timely manner. If a student is unable to attend school and seeks his or her assignments, he or she should contact their teacher for that information, not the school office. It is wise to coordinate with a friend (perhaps one who lives close by) early on in the year so that homework handouts might also be collected for the absent student.



Homework, continued

An absence on the due date of a major assignment (essay, lab report, project, etc.) or exam may not extend the due date of that assignment. The student should expect to submit the work and/or make-up the exam on the day of his/her return. Likewise, absences during the preparation time of a major assignment may not extend the due date. Please see the family handbook for specific guidelines regarding make-up work following absences.



Evaluation

A liberal arts education requires a special kind of written evaluation – one that offers a prose discussion of the student’s sense of wonder, depth of inquiry, specific areas of mastery and needs for improvement, and attitudes toward learning and towards others. The narrative treats student in a fundamentally human way, not by neglecting numerical scores, but by situating those numbers as one part of a fuller, more nuanced picture of the student’s progress in a given course.



Evaluation, continued

Deficiency Notices: Midway through each quarter, deficiency notices are mailed out to the parents of students who are currently not passing. These notices are intended to prompt students to make necessary changes and improve their academic standing before the end of the quarter.

Reports: At the end of the first and third quarters, parents will receive a report that indicates student performance in each subject area. At other reporting periods, teachers may write a narrative report for each student. These reports provide parents with specific feedback on a student's strengths and weaknesses within a given class. In addition to narrative commentary, these reports include student grades in various categories of assessment along with an overall letter grade for the semester.

Evaluation, continued

Parent-Teacher Conferences: At a specific point in the year, parents meet with the team of their student's teachers to discuss the first quarter and overall student progress in greater depth. Parents will be encouraged to come equipped with questions for the team of teachers present.

State Testing: Students will also be assessed according to state requirements. Please review appendix for list of state standardized exams. All state tests will be conducted during the school year and the results will be sent directly to families.



Questions?

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about Great Hearts Arlington! While we have endeavored to provide meaningful information about **homework and evaluations**, we recognize that there may be unanswered questions. Please feel free to reach out to us at info@greatheartsarlington.org. Go Archers!

In partnership,

The Great Hearts Arlington Team

