

How to help your child with their math homework even when you have NO idea what they are doing!

- Set aside a time each day to accomplish math and challenge your student to maintain a steady approach to homework. Math is best learned when it is “touched” each day – binging math homework for the week in one day does not help the student to fully develop their understanding of the concepts.
- Encourage your child to complete a few problems and then check them from the back of the book and/or the answers provided to them. (Most math books list the odd answers in the back of the book.) Practice does NOT make perfect – PERFECT practice makes perfect! Completing the entire homework assignment before checking answers is not beneficial because it allows a student to have a lot of practice making mistakes. By checking answers as-they-go, a student will learn what kinds of mistakes they are prone to make and can recognize the steps they need to double-check while they are completing the problems.
- When your child finds that their answer does not match the book’s answer, remind them to look for a simple computation error within their solution. A wrong answer does not necessarily mean they are hopelessly lost, but many students start out assuming that they are completely stuck because their answer is wrong. Very often it is a simple mistake rather than an utter conceptual misunderstanding that causes an incorrect answer.
- If they do not find an error in their computation, suggest that they compare their work with what the teacher did in class and/or to the examples in the textbook. If they cannot find the error, the student should mark this problem to ask the teacher/tutor about during the next interaction.
- Encourage your child to verbally explain the steps they took in solving a few problems on each homework assignment – even if you have no idea what they are talking about! When a student attempts to explain their steps, it is easy to identify any part of the problem that they do not fully understand. Having the right answer is not the only goal – we also want them to be able to apply that concept in future problems.

Let me know if I can help you in any way!



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