



Singapore Math with Dawn Swartz

Lesson 15: Singapore Math and Homework

Outline:

What is the objective of homework? What are we hoping our students will accomplish by doing homework?

- This is the independent part of the lesson that is done at home.
- This is the time to practice the concept that has been presented.
- This is your formative assessment.
- It is helpful for young children to revisit concepts after some time has passed.
- If we look at homework as practice, this will impact how homework is assigned and assessed.
 - We do want the students to get to the right answer, but if they are practicing what they learned in class that day, they will not get the right answer every time.
 - *In order to paint you will need to learn about the tools used, mixing paint, and the types of paints. You are going to have to practice a lot before you begin to paint. Your first painting is not going to look like your last painting. Work and practice are needed in order to become an accomplished painter.*
 - We need to help our students understand that they are practicing in their homework.
 - Math practice helps to solidify skills and concepts and helps to work toward understanding. It is a process and a practice.
 - ***Talk to your parents about how homework is an exercise in practice and not perfection.***
- What should the student do if they need help with homework?
 - When you are assigning math homework. You want to look at it together with your students. Work through an example problem in the assignment with your student. Decide whether students should do mental math or if you want them to show you their work.
 - Communicate with your parents that if the child gets stuck, they should not show them an alternate way to do the problem.
 - It will help your parents to know that it is ok for the assignment to come back unfinished. It is important for the students to learn a conceptual understanding and a problem solving process.





- The students need to work to solve problem with the bar model tool rather than with algebra. There is parent education involved with Singapore Math. Communicate with them about how to help their children with math.
- It is helpful to have Singapore Math nights. You can show parents how to do model drawing. Parents feel more equipped to help their children with math homework.
- *The teacher needs to see the unfinished homework when students get stuck in the homework. This is part of the formative assessment. You need to allow homework to come back unfinished.*
- Let the parent be the partner at home who evaluates when the student has struggled with the homework. Have the parent sign the book to show where the student got stuck.

How are you going to assess the practice?

- Come alongside your students to look at their practice.
- Work within your school's philosophy about homework and homework assessment.
- In early grades you need to see conceptual understand and that the students arrive at the right quantitative answer.
- In first, second, and third grade, give points for completed assignments. This meets the objective of learning to complete assignments.
- From early on, you can train students to check their own homework, do peer checks where they grade one another's homework. This takes training in being gracious with your friend's homework.
- Have ways of dealing with forgotten and incomplete homework.

Ways to look at the homework together:

- Answer question about the homework.
- Demonstrate how the student should read the question and the answer for the homework assignment review.
- When the class hears the answer that matches their answer in their book, the students say "check". If the answer does not their answer, the students say "uh oh". The student with an incorrect answer will then try to get to the right answer on their own.
- During transition time, walk around the room to look at every single workbook to look at how many the students got wrong. Train the students to write the number wrong at the top of the page.
 - Talk to the students about the homework.
 - Students may explain that they made the same repeated mistake.
 - If a student is expressing confusion, the teacher can pick up the book to see where the student went wrong. This is a quiet private interchange between the teacher and the student.
 - We can only teach from what students already know.



- We do not need to grade every math assignment.
- There may be a reason to grade for some math assignments.
- There is an objective of neat math homework. You might assess the students' homework for neatness.

We are working towards being better math students. Then more and more math problems will be correct in the end.