

### *I Don't Have Time For Homework!*

As a classroom teacher, I used to hear excuses from a few students every morning about why they did not have their homework. Most of them had to do with extra-curricular commitments: "I couldn't do my homework last night because I had a baseball game." Or, "I had to go to my brother's basketball game." Some of the excuses were due to family obligations: "We had to take my grandma out for her birthday last night." The best excuse I ever heard... "I couldn't do my homework last night because I had to go with my mom to get her nails done."

Many teachers would agree that the number one reason students fail classes is due to missing homework. Creating excuses for homework lowers your grades and encourages a very bad habit for your future.

The single reason you go to school is to learn and prepare for your future; whether you will someday have a career, manage a home, or both, you will need to take responsibility. One of the main reasons teachers give homework is to help you exercise your responsibility skills. You will not last long in a job if you tell your boss, "Sorry I couldn't get that report done. I had to play soccer last night." You will not keep a roof over your head for long with excuses like, "Sorry I couldn't pay my bills last week... I was busy getting my nails done."

Rest, relaxation, and fun are all important elements in life, but there has to be a balance between fun and responsibility. You have to know your priorities. When you take care of your most important priorities first, you will automatically have time for the "fun stuff!"

Many adults never learn how to manage their priorities and have a hard time keeping a good balance in their lives. If you learn how to manage your priorities NOW, you will have a HUGE advantage when you are an adult. Not to mention the fact that you will improve your grades along the way!

#### **\*\*Action Plan\*\***

There are several things you can do to manage your time better and work around evening activities so that you can balance your homework with fun:

-Communicate with your family. On Sunday, ask your parents if they have anything planned for you for the week. This is the time to learn about dentist appointments, birthday dinners, your brother's baseball games, etc. It is always better to know about these things ahead of time, rather than at the last minute.

-Plan ahead. If you have a big assignment due on Thursday and you have a basketball game on Wednesday night, be sure to do the assignment on Tuesday evening.

-Keep all homework in one place. Do not stash your math homework in a text-book, your science homework in a notebook, and your English homework in your bookbag or you

will spend a lot of time just looking for your homework. Keep all papers in ONE folder to save the search time and complete your homework faster.

-Make use of “down” time. You spend a lot of time each day waiting...waiting for teachers to take attendance, for classmates to settle down, for your bus to come, or for an appointment. Tackle your homework during these times. Maybe you can get three math problems done while your teacher takes attendance. Perhaps you can do your science homework on the bus ride home. A few minutes here-and-there can quickly add up to 1 or 1.5 hours of free time later in the evening.

-Use a timer. If you struggle to stay focused when doing your homework, challenge yourself to be like Nike and “Just do it!” Set a timer for the amount of time you think you will need to do an assignment and challenge yourself to beat the timer. You may be surprised at how quickly you can finish your homework when you are focused.

**\*\*In Conclusion\*\***

Of course, there will be times when other priorities have to trump homework; family illness, a special event, or an emergency are a few valid reasons for missing an occasional homework assignment. However, the average family experiences these exceptions very rarely!

You have the power to work things out with your family and manage your time so that you can balance work + fun. When you take care of important things first (like homework), the fun will follow!

About the Author:

Susan Kruger is the author of SOAR Study Skills; A Simple and Efficient System for Earning Better Grades in Less Time. Get Susan's FREE Homework Rx Toolkit, featuring 25 Ways to Make Homework Easier...Tonight! at: <http://soarstudyskills.com>

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