

Holiday Work at FSM

We are often asked by parents what the children can do during the longer holidays to keep up with their school work. We do not set work for the children, as past experience has shown that only a small minority will complete it and those that do tend to rush it in a few days before the start of term!

However, we do recognise that much good progress can be lost over a long break and it would be very beneficial if your child could maintain their skills in reading, writing and number work. We have been delighted with the efforts of some children, for instance, who have produced fabulous holiday journals, which we have been able to celebrate with HMCs in Friday assemblies. There is certainly some onus upon parents to follow up holiday work suggestions, especially when it comes to Latin and French vocabulary which, by its very nature, needs to be rote learnt and regularly revisited. Both departments provide vocabulary booklets and the children make flash cards for the purpose.

The following are a few suggestions that should help keep your child ticking over during a longer break:

Middle School

1. Please encourage your child to read regularly. Studies have shown that there is a definite correlation between how much a child reads and the standard of his/her writing. If you are stuck for ideas for suitable books we recommend www.booktrustchildrensbooks.org.uk. It is a fabulous website where you can find booklists to suit your child's age and interest; their recommendations are good.

Story CDs on a long journey are a great idea and can enable children to enjoy a story that they might not be able to read for themselves.

2. Keeping a holiday journal or scrap book is a fun way of encouraging your children to write and order information. Entries can be made as and when they do something interesting and if carefully completed can make a wonderful keepsake. Budding authors might like to subscribe to 'Scribbler' a quarterly magazine for young writers. You will find details on www.youngwriters.co.uk
3. There are a number of websites available to help children practise their times tables and maths skills. For a free website try www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/maths/
4. We have a school subscription to www.MyMaths.co.uk which provides interactive lessons, assessment tasks, games and investigations covering levels 2 to 7. The Booster Packs are particularly useful for independent study. Our login detail is 'spots'
5. Also a very good home tutoring website is www.mathswhizz.com. It does come with a cost though in the region of either £20 a month or £150.00 a year. It is highly recommended by our maths department as it practises all the basic maths skills, gives a record of their progress and the children really enjoy it.

And those children who really enjoy maths might like to subscribe to Buzz, a mathematical magazine that is published three times a year. For more details go to www.circamaths.co.uk

6. There are several useful websites for practising French language skills: www.languagesonline.org.uk; www.atantot.com username: forressandlemanor password: 5641; www.francais-extra.co.uk and www.bbc.co.uk/schools/primaryfrench/games_all.shtml, for Middle School
7. For budding Scientists amongst us, you may like to log onto www.bbc.co.uk/schools/ks2bitesize/science/

Upper School

8. As mentioned above, there is a marked correlation between how much a child reads and the standard of his/her writing. Children who read a lot of fiction, for example, absorb many of the techniques used by the authors and adopt them in their own writing. They demonstrate a more mature writing style, expressing themselves well in a variety of sentence types – simple, compound and complex - and include a higher level of vocabulary – powerful verbs, adverbs, noun phrases etc. Moreover, reading widely will develop a child’s skills of comprehension, including understanding and appreciating authors’ use of language and imagery, as well as inferring and deducing – key skills tested at Common Entrance and Scholarship. Reading non-fiction will expose children to the different ways texts are structured – layout, use of sub headings, images etc. and make them appreciate language that has been chosen to suit that particular genre of writing, as well as the intended audience. The above mentioned www.booktrustchildrensbooks.org.uk is useful for the older children too. Other useful websites for revision of spelling and grammar, writing, reading and speaking and listening are the BBC KS2 and BBC KS3 Bitesize English found on www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/english/
9. As mentioned above, we have a school subscription to www.mymaths.co.uk which provides interactive lessons, assessment tasks, games and investigations covering levels 2 to 7. The Booster Packs are particularly useful for independent study. Our login detail is ‘spots’. And www.whizz.com mentioned above is also applicable to the upper school. It is the leading online Maths tutor for 5-13 year olds. A subscription provides a personalised, structured plan but it comes at a price, as shown above. The Woodlands Junior School site has a range of fun, interactive games that are good for cementing the foundations of number and shape topics. www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/maths/index.html NRICH is an excellent resource for children who enjoy extra challenges and extended puzzles on rich.maths.org/public/index.php We suspect that it goes without saying that constant practice of times tables is always a good idea.
10. There are several useful websites for practising French language skills: www.languagesonline.org.uk ; www.atantot.com username: forressandlemanor password: 7142 (this is only valid to the 31st October. From the 1st November 2015 the new password is 6245 ; www.francais-extra.co.uk and www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/french/ for Upper School only.
11. For history children may enjoy <http://www.schoolhistory.co.uk/games/> :
12. <http://www.activehistory.co.uk/amember/member.php> username:fsms password battle47
13. For geography we recommend www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/geography/
14. Finally for science we recommend www.bbc.co.uk/schools/ks3bitesize/science/ You might also like to browse http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science_and_environment/ It is a cracking read for the interested!

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