

4P's Homework High-Flyers

This project is a valuable tool for allowing students to take ownership of their work, as students are rewarded and recognized in various ways when they take daily responsibility for completing their homework. Parents also become involved since an adult signature is required each night in order for homework to be considered complete. With the science unit, students learn about physical, earth, and space sciences through reading, research, journal writing, demonstrations, and experimentation.

Curriculum/State Standard

Through homework completion, all areas of the curriculum are addressed, including Social Science: students learn that when working in a group environment, they have individual and shared responsibilities; students understand some work is accomplished only when an individual takes initiative; students understand the concept of incentives; students learn school and classroom rules and individual responsibilities.

The weather unit relates to many areas of the state and district science curriculum, specifically inquiry, physical science, and earth and space science: observe and describe familiar events, identifying details, similarities and differences; ask questions about the objects and events observed; suggest and describe ideas about, 'how', 'why', and 'what would happen if;' plan and conduct a simple

investigation knowing what is to be compared or looked for; describe and communicate observations through discussions, drawings, simple graphs, and writing; represent an understanding that materials can exist in different states, including solid, liquid, and gaseous, and identify different characteristic properties of materials in each state; represent an understanding that the sun supplies heat and light to the earth; use qualitative or quantitative measurement to investigate the concept that warmer things put with cooler ones lose heat and the cool ones gain heat, until they are all at the same temperature; observe and describe that change is something that happens to earth materials; investigate conditions in which water can be a liquid, a solid, or a gas; illustrate that some events in

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3-4

GRADE LEVEL



ARTS



LANGUAGE



MATH

Misc

MISCELLANEOUS



SCIENCE



HISTORY



SOCIAL STUDIES

9

MONTHS

\$300

TOTAL BUDGET



THIS WINNING LESSON PLAN WAS SUBMITTED BY:

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“4P’s Homework” project continued...

nature have a repeating pattern. The weather changes some from day to day, but things such as temperature and precipitation show annual rhythms particular to a geographical area; observe and show that air has properties that can be identified and measured, such as wind speed and direction, temperature, moisture, the occurrence of clouds, and the fall of precipitation; know that together these properties and events for a particular place and time is called weather.

Overview

Each day, students complete their homework and have each assignment signed by their parents, putting them in the running for a weekly prize. Next, a drawing takes place for a monthly “kite” with the names of all students who consistently complete their homework, which is displayed all year. Our culminating activity involves a scientific weather unit, making and flying individual kites, assisted by a professional from the area, and final grand prize drawings for the year.

Objectives

- Students will develop responsibility.
- Students will consistently complete their homework.
- Students will effectively communicate with parents about their studies.
- Students will gain knowledge in physical, earth, and space sciences, as well as gain experimentation and research skills.
- Students will discover new concepts through investigations, cooperative learning, experimentation, and journal writing.

Materials

Assignment notebooks, various weekly prizes (books, pencils, highlighters, bookmarks, pencil cases, calculators), hand-made paper kites displaying the students' names who completed their homework for the month, one kite for each student who completes homework consistently for the year, one grand prize stunt kite for a final drawing from all students who completed homework consistently throughout the year, “Eyewitness: Weather” video, “The Magic School Bus Kicks Up a Storm” video, science journals, variety of books to research and use for book reports, science materials for weather and air experiments, depending on specific experiments used, kite representative and equipment

Readiness/Activity

Students are given an assignment notebook on Day 1 of school. They are introduced to the daily procedure of writing down all homework and getting nightly signatures from an adult after homework is completed. It is stressed that they are to be responsible for the notebook, only receiving one for the entire year. For the science unit, students can be introduced by going outside and beginning cloud journals (illustrations and written descriptions), or through the use of a video or experiment.

Strategies/Activities

Beginning on Day 1 of school, students write down all assignments and long-term projects for the night in a notebook, including any required reading. Students must have an adult sign the homework notebook each night. Any questions or comments from parents are also welcome, as the book soon becomes a communication tool. The practice of nightly homework signatures is continued on a daily basis throughout the year.

Each day, if their assignment notebook is signed and homework is turned in, students put a name card in a basket.

On Friday, a name is chosen to win a weekly prize.

At the end of the month, names of students who consistently completed their homework for the month go into another drawing to get a large poster board kite. This kite has the names of all of the students who were in this drawing, and is displayed in the corridor all year.

When appropriate (we begin in the spring), a science unit is implemented. The unit consists of the following pieces: a book report about a particular aspect of weather is assigned, consisting of a flyer that includes ten facts and two illustrations; a cloud/weather journal is kept throughout the unit; experiments with weather and air pressure are completed, depending on grade level and appropriateness; books about various weather concepts are read with students; two videos about weather are shown and discussed; a class game is played with two teams answering questions about the entire unit.

At the end of the science unit (toward the end of the school year), a professional kite maker is hired to come in. He shows pictures of various kites, along with books, pictures, and a video. Each child is assisted in making his/her own kite, personalizing it to his/her liking. We then take the kites outside in the school field to fly them. Parents, administrators, and media personnel are also invited to this event, which lasts approximately two hours.

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“4P’s Homework” project continued...

Culminating Activity

One culminating activity is a classroom game, based on the information learned throughout the science unit. This game is based on all material covered, including the book reports. The other activity includes parent participation. A professional kite maker is invited in to share information, pictures, and videos of kites in motion. He then proceeds to assist each student in making his/her own individual kite, and we take the kites outside and fly them in the school field. Finally, all students who consistently completed their homework throughout the school year, as shown by the displayed monthly kites, receive recognition and prize kites, and we have a grand prize drawing for a stunt kite for those students as well.

Evaluation

Daily, weekly, and monthly logs of homework completion are kept and posted in the classroom. Monthly paper kites are displayed with the names of students who completed their homework for the month. Within the science unit, journals, booklets, projects, experiments, and book reports are completed and discussed. An objective test is given to all individuals, along with a class competition on the unit material.