

How to Get Good Homework Grades

You have a much better chance of getting good grades in your homework assignments if you follow the **UDS** method:

- **U**nderstand what you have to do - *exactly*
- **D**o what you have to do - *exactly*
- **S**how that you have done what you had to do - *clearly*

Understand what you have to do

When the teacher writes the homework on the board, copy it carefully into your planner. The teacher will normally say something to explain further what to do. In this case, you should write notes in English or, better still, in your own language to make it clear to yourself what is needed. *Make sure you know the due date!*

If you don't understand the homework fully after the teacher has explained it, here is what you can do:

- ask the teacher to explain again, either during or after the lesson
- ask a fellow student to explain after the lesson
- ask your ESL teacher later *

* Your ESL teacher will always be ready to help if she can, but very often it will not be clear, just from the words you have written in your planner, what you have to do.

Remember: Your teachers have a duty to make sure you understand exactly what they want, and you have a right to ask if you do not.

Do what you have to do

This is clear. If your teacher wants 3 pages of double-spaced computer writing at 12pt Times New Roman, then this is what you must do.

If your teacher wants you to give a 5-10 minute presentation about the causes of an environmental problem, then you cannot expect a good grade for a 3 minute presentation mainly about the effects of an environmental problem.

Remember: Do exactly what your teacher wants - and do it *on time!*

Show that you have done what you had to do

Your teachers are busy people! Make it easy for them to see that you have done what they asked for. Here are some suggestions:

- make sure your name is on your work
- write the title
- organize long text into paragraphs
- write paragraph (sub-topic) titles
- write clear topic sentences
- label pictures and diagrams
- use a ruler to draw lines

Remember: Not only are teachers busy, but they are also people! They will have a positive feeling about you if they think you have taken a little care to present your work neatly, and in a way that makes it easy for them to see that you have done what they asked you to do.