



“How can I support my child’s learning?”

Parents often ask how they can help their child find success in the classroom. With this in mind, the Social Studies at Earl Marriott Secondary has compiled some suggestions below. Some suggestions are specific to achieving success in the Social Studies classroom, while others are equally applicable to all of the subjects areas. Regardless of which suggestion you adopt and which are already in place be prepared to invest a significant amount of time in your child. Quality help takes time.

Suggestion #1 – Set goals and establish expectations with your child about their academic performance.

Goal-setting and performance monitoring is an important skill in and out of the classroom. Research shows that students who set achievement expectations in collaboration with their parents are more likely to have success. Additionally, students who work with parents on a plan to meet those expectations and track their progress towards them are much more likely to achieve. These goals need to be realistic and re-examined frequently to make the most progress.

Suggestion #2 – Students need a quiet environment.

Students will benefit from a quiet place to study, do homework and complete projects. Computers, while a valuable research and work tool, should not be located in your child’s study area. Studies have shown that they are more safely and efficiently used when they are out in the open under the supervision of parents.

Suggestion #3 – Students need ample equipment.

Students need a variety of resources to complete assignments and prepare for tests. Pens, pencils, pencil crayons, glen d paper for sure, so consider the following items that may help with review and test preparation.

- Recipe cards / cue cards
- Sticky notes / Post-it notes
- Highlighters, and coloured markers
- Laminated wall calendar
- Dictionary / Thesaurus / Atlas

Years of experience in the classroom have taught us that students lose things. Be prepared to occasionally replace study tools.

Suggestion #4 – Discuss homework and review major ideas.

Have your child discuss what was talked about in class each day with you. Social Studies bring up some important and often controversial topics like discrimination, war and human rights. Ask

them what they think, feel, believe? Students can benefit from reviewing the main ideas discussed in class each day, especially if it is through a discussion with you. Don't let kids fool you, new topics and ideas are discussed virtually every day. The curriculum is too full not to. Ask what's for homework and have them show you what they have done when they are finished. If your child repeatedly says they have no work to do, call us! This is usually not the case. Discussing homework and task completion in relation to step one's achievement goals and expectations may be more effective with older students than the 'parental lecture'.

Suggestion #5 – Become a Study strategy!

Studying and review are often something that students get in the habit of doing in isolation. When problems arise or exhaustion sets in students become distracted and get off task. Quiet doesn't have to mean alone. Engage your child in review and test preparation. Have them make up flash cards with key terms and quiz them. Have them make up review questions for their unit and answer them together. Make a game out of studying, where each of you makes quizzes for the other and try to get a high score. When they are tired, tell them to take a break.

Suggestion #6- Encourage World Affairs and Encourage Reading

It is simple to say, but harder to do. To participate more fully in classroom discussions and debates, it benefits the student to be aware of current events around the world. While this can be done by watching the news with your child, you can also promote reading by reading the newspaper together on a regular basis. Begin with one section or one article and take turns if needed. Be sure to discuss the content afterwards; it is amazing what thoughts and insights students have when given a chance to express them!

Suggestion #7 – Encourage Geographic Awareness

One of the biggest concerns that teachers of junior Social Studies have is the general lack of geographic awareness of students. Have your child put up a map of the world in their room or keep a small laminated one stuck to the fridge. When different regions, countries or cities of the world are mentioned in the news, have them locate them on the map and show you. Have them identify which hemisphere it is in, what continent it is on, what countries or land features are around it.

Suggestion #8 – Get involved in all areas of your child's school.

Parent-teacher meetings are a critical start to getting involved, but there are other things that you can do. Email teachers to introduce yourself or ask for a periodic update on your child's progress. Don't expect a mark every time, but you should be able to get qualitative feedback on your child's progress. Attend the school open house and meet the school leadership. Take your child to sporting events and dramatic performances at their school. There is considerable evidence that shows kids, whose parents take an interest in school and learning, perform better in all academic areas.