

## Helping Students With Homework: A Guide for Teachers

A recent guide produced by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement of the U.S. Department of Education offers ideas and guidelines, along with solid research, on homework practices and recommendations and a checklist poster for parents.

Its contents include: Homework: A Concern for Teachers, Overcoming the Obstacles, Tips for Getting Homework Done, Conclusions, and References and Resources.

Among the helpful tips are

- Lay out expectations early in the school year.
- Create assignments with a purpose.
- Make sure students understand the purpose.
- Create assignments that challenge students to think and to integrate.
- Give assignments that make learning personal.
- Assign an appropriate amount of homework.
- Provide constructive feedback.
- Give help as needed.
- Communicate with parents.

*Helping Your Students With Homework: A Guide for Teachers* is available from the U.S. Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents, Mail Stop SSOP, Washington DC 20402-9328. Bulk copies of the poster (Stock No. 065-000-00977-3) are available from the same source. For ordering information, call (202) 512-1800.

## Guides to Free Materials

The 1998-1999 *Educators Guides to Free Materials* are now available from Educators Progress Service. For teachers and librarians on a tight budget, these guides open a world of remarkable resources, providing teaching aids to enrich and supplement textbooks and classroom presentations. Guides are available for computer materials; films, filmstrips, and slides; social studies materials; multicultural materials; guidance materials; health and physical education materials; science materials; home economics and consumer education materials, as well as printed materials guides for elementary teachers, middle school, and secondary teachers. Guides are sent on a 15-day approval basis. The complete series costs \$325.80, plus shipping and handling; individual guides cost \$32.95 to \$38.95 (plus \$3.95 each for shipping and handling). Call toll free 1-888-951-4469 or write to Educators Progress Service, Inc., Dept.

D8A, 214 Center Street, Randolph, WI 53956. Fax: (920) 326-3127.

## Wanted: Funny School Stories

*The School Administrator* magazine is seeking amusing anecdotes for its monthly humor page known as "Leadership Lite."

They would like to receive humorous tales that involve some aspect of work in school administration. Slice-of-life episodes should be based on real experiences—something seen or heard in a school setting, administrative office, school board or PTA meeting, educational administration class, etc. They also would like quotable quotes or malapropisms (the unintentionally funny misuse of a word or phrase). Send submissions for Leadership Lite to *The School Administrator*, 1801 N. Moore St. Arlington, VA 22209 or by E-mail to [magazine@aasa.org](mailto:magazine@aasa.org).

## American Bible Society Launches Year of the Bible

To try to get more people to study their Bibles, the American Bible Society has launched a daily reading program based on its easy-to-understand Contemporary English Version of the Bible. It has also designated 1999 as the Year of the Bible, and is making a variety of free materials available, such as "Year of the Bible" New Testaments, buttons, bookmarks and bumper stickers, and special kits for pastors.

For information, call toll free 1-888-3-BIBLE-5 or write to Elaine Nole, American Bible Society, 1865 Broadway, New York, NY 10023-7505; fax: (212) 408-1456 or E-mail: [enole@americanbible.org](mailto:enole@americanbible.org).

## A Look at Teacher Pay and Characteristics

The average salary for public school teachers in the U.S. rose rapidly in the mid-1980s, then fell slightly, when adjusted for inflation. Average salary in 1996-1997, the most recent year for which information is available, was \$38,509.

During the 1993-1994 school year, almost three-quarters of public elementary and secondary school teachers were female (73 percent), and 87 percent were white non-Hispanics. Some 65 percent of teachers had at least 10 years of full-time teaching experience, and almost all teachers held at least a bachelor's degree.—From *Mini-Digest of Education Statistics 1997*, National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education.

## High School Graduation and Dropout Rates

The number of U.S. students graduating from high school in 1996-1997 totaled about 2.6 million, of which about 2.4 million graduated from public institutions. The ratio of high school graduates to 17-year-olds has remained relatively stable for two decades, increasing slightly in the late 1980s and early 1990s. In 1995, about 87 percent of all 25- to 29-year-olds had completed high school. The dropout rate among 16- to 24-year-olds has fallen in the past 20 years. The decline has been greater among blacks, making their dropout rates closer to those of whites. The dropout rate for Hispanics remained relatively high at 29 percent in 1996, compared to seven percent for whites and 13 percent for blacks.—From *Mini-Digest of Education Statistics 1997*, National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education.

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