

Working with Multiple Children at Home

Dear RMCA parents,

The greatest challenge for parents of multiple children during At Home Learning is managing all of their individual needs. What follows is an outline of how the work may be coordinated and accomplished with multiple children at once. Remember, more important than book-learning is maintaining an atmosphere of peace and joy in the home.

Enjoy breakfast together. Make sure that your students have a nutritious breakfast before you begin a day of lessons (and a good night's sleep beforehand). Encourage your child(ren) in their attitude toward their good work ahead of them. Ask questions about the previous day. Make sure the morning table is peaceful, joyful, and nutritious.

Set a time for morning and/or afternoon chores to begin and end. A checklist works for all children and beginning in Kindergarten, children are able to complete simple chores without supervision. It is best with multiple children to have set time for set work, rather than letting them drag out chores all day long.

Here are our recommended time frames for each grade:

Kinder	45-60 minutes
1st-2nd	60-75 minutes
3rd-4th	75-90 minutes
5th	90-105 minutes
6th-7th	105-120 minutes
8th	120-180 minutes

These are recommended guidelines. We understand that some students may need more time than these recommendations to complete their assignments. If you find that your student consistently needs a significant amount of time more to complete (+1 hour), be in touch with your homeroom teacher.

These time frames do not include enriching activities such as Family Read-Aloud, Morning Worship, handwork projects, playing outside, etc. Make sure that you leave time for other kinds of educational activities outside of the planned lessons.

Set a schedule for the day's work. The school day is best started with all children at the same time. Now is *not* the time to let your adolescent choose his/her own schedule, especially if you have younger children up early. It is best that everyone go to work at the same time. Your students who are older will have to work longer than your younger ones.

Have a resource box of quiet play activities for younger (preschool or younger) children. It is important to keep the younger ones quiet and easy to supervise while the older ones work. A basket of quiet activities would be helpful to have on hand. During school it is sometimes helpful to make the "activity bag" part of their schoolwork, to eliminate choice or dissatisfaction. It is important to keep the choices very simple and limited during school time or you will become distracted from your other students. Here are some ideas for activity bags: 1) paper, crayons, scissors 2) coloring book and crayons 3) legos or duplos, wooden blocks 4) a small bin of beans, rice, and measuring cups (with a clear space to play) 5) playdough, cutters, rolling pin.

Notice the absence of screens! If your children of any age typically use screens as a babysitter or distraction, this is a good time to help wean them off. It will be hard, yes, but there is never a perfect time to do this. Reserve screens of any make for specific times of your choosing, not theirs, and with a set duration. Reach out to other parents and teachers on additional ideas to engage children. Remember that our students above Kindergarten spend over 7 hours in a typical school day without screens. Remind your child(ren) of that reality as needed and aim for that ideal!

Bible time is best for the whole family. This would be best done in the morning or in the evening after dinner. Focus on making this a joyful time together. It would be most meaningful if your whole family participated in Bible Readings together. You may choose to engage with the school's video or live streaming on Facebook or other platforms (as directed). See the resource on Family Bible Readings for more helpful information.

Read Aloud can be for the whole family. Read Aloud would be done before rest time or in the evening after dinner. This too should be a joyful time. All of your children will enjoy the book we have chosen for Read Aloud. If you choose to read them just to your younger children, make sure your older ones are not around bringing distractions and disruptions. Reach out to your child's homeroom teacher or Mr. Byrd if you would like recommendations. You may also find many great ones on Ambleside's Online Library, <https://www.amblesideschools.com/library/asi-reading-list>. It includes recommendations based on grade level. You are also welcome to have your children join me on RMCA's

Facebook page to hear a read-aloud of a classic text to complement what you are doing!

Math and Reading for younger children will need adult support. These disciplinary subjects will require daily and steady discipline. Sustaining progress in these subjects will keep your students on grade level and maintain continuity between home and the classroom.

Stay in touch, ask questions, and relax! We are going to get through this together, by God's grace.

Serving together,

Brandon L. Byrd