

# The Role of Homework

*This document explains the role of homework in math.*

Supporting Kindergarten

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## Role of Homework

The role of homework in teaching for deep understanding is important. Children should be given unique problems and tasks that help children to consolidate new learnings with prior knowledge, explore possible solutions, and apply prior knowledge to new situations. Although drill and practice does serve a purpose in learning for deep understanding, the amount and timing of the drill will vary among different learners. In addition, when used as homework, drill and practice frequently serves to cause frustration, misconceptions, and boredom to arise in children.

As an example of the type or style of homework that can be used to help children develop deep understanding of Kindergarten Mathematics, consider outcome NK.4:

Represent the partitioning of whole numbers (1 to 10) concretely and pictorially.

[C, CN, ME, R, V]

As a homework task, children could be asked to select a certain quantity of objects at home and create and record as many different ways of arranging the objects as possible. Upon returning to class, the children could share their different arrangements with a partner and then with the whole class. The class could then discuss questions such as:

- How could we sort the arrangements of the objects?
- Did anyone have the same number of objects that they were arranging?
- How are the arrangements of the objects similar?
- How are the arrangements of the objects different?
- Are there any missing arrangements?

The teacher can then use the children's prior knowledge and understandings that emerge through the class discussion and sharing to move the children forward in learning.



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