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Help for Disorganized Students!



Let's face it. We've all had unorganized students. You know the ones I mean. These are the kids who never remember their homework (or the fact that they even had homework). They don't bring their supplies to class, even a pencil. If you walk by their desk or locker, be careful not to breathe too hard or you'll find an avalanche of papers fall to the ground. Here is a list of ideas to try with students who are lacking in organizational skills. If you have a technique that has worked for you, please leave it in the comments!

- Create calendars to keep track of assignments and due dates. You can find some free ones to print at the [Mead website](#). [Google Calendars](#) can also be very handy when creating calendars.
- Create a daily schedule along with a list of required materials.
- Help the student color code their folders and notebooks by subject.
- Provide an agenda or assignment book for the student to record their homework assignments. For young students, it is imperative to include parent-teacher communication. Students can be required to show their assignment book to their parents each night, which helps the parents know what homework has been assigned. The parents sign or initial it and the student has to show it to the teacher the next day. After the student writes the day's homework assignments in it, they take it to be signed by the teacher. There must be consequences at home and at school if the agenda is unsigned or not present.
- Have the student help with organization in the classroom.
- Be a model of organization in your classroom.
- Give the student a place to store their belongings.
- Reinforce the student when they are prepared and allow natural consequences when they are not.

Here are some other helpful sites on student organization:

- [Education World](#)
- [School Family](#)
- [Inside the School](#)

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Have a happy, organized day! Thanks so much for visiting!

Joy

This entry was written by [mrsjoyhall](#), posted on April 3, 2012 at 10:28 am, and filed under [behavior](#) and tagged [disorganized students](#), [student organization](#).

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9 Comments



1 Jonathan

Posted April 3, 2012 at 9:54 pm | [Permalink](#)

Hi Joy,

I am nowhere near organized enough to make this work in my own classroom, but I had a teacher who did do it and it worked really well for me as a student.

At the beginning of the year each student set up a three-ring binder with a certain number of divided sections. All papers for every subject went into this binder in an organized fashion. Prior to handing out a worksheet, notes, homework, etc., the teacher would write in the top right corner the letter of the section it was to go under (M for math, E for English, HW for homework, etc.) followed by a number. As worksheets and papers were passed out, the number in the top corner just increased in ascending order.

This made keeping my binder organized an easy task. It also made it really easy for classmates to help each other organize their materials. And from a teacher's perspective, this would help eliminate those desks that just overflow with loose papers.

Hope this suggestion can help someone. 😊

Jonathan



2 mrsjoyhall

Posted April 4, 2012 at 8:53 am | [Permalink](#)

Hi, Jonathan!

Wow! That sounds like a very intense way to organize! I bet it was very helpful in teaching organizational skills to students, though. Did the binders go home each day or were they just for school?

Thanks so much for sharing this idea!

Joy 😊



3 Jonathan

Posted April 4, 2012 at 10:29 pm | [Permalink](#)

If I recall correctly they went home with us each night. I do remember at the end of each quarter my teacher would take the time to have us take out all the page numbers that we could take home and those that we didn't take

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home were added to a folder that we used at the end of the year as a study guide. It seems kind of crazy now but I don't remember any students in my class having a real difficult time following this method of organization.

 **4. mrsjoyhall**
 Posted April 5, 2012 at 9:37 am | [Permalink](#)


I'm thinking your teacher must have been super organized, Jonathan! I am afraid if I let the kids take them home, they would never come back. Another question I have for you: How were the binders stored? Did they stay in students' desks or did the teacher have a central location for them? Have a super day!
 Joy 😊

 **5. Tammy Aiello**
 Posted July 27, 2012 at 10:31 am | [Permalink](#)

Love this post! I'm going to share it on my facebook page 😊

Thanks, Joy!

Tammy (aka Madame Aiello)

 **6. Kenyatta Ernstes**
 Posted July 27, 2012 at 12:35 pm | [Permalink](#)

Excellent, this will go inside my bookmarks!

 **7. Amy**
 Posted August 12, 2012 at 9:22 pm | [Permalink](#)

I do something very similar to what Jonathan writes above, and I am NOT a super organized teacher, by any means. This is super easy, and just takes a little practice to make it habit.

I teach freshman English, and part of their final exam is to turn in an organized binder. I set up the binder with my students during the first week of school. They have 5 sections, and must have a three-ring binder. I always have left over binders from when I grade them at the end of the year, so if a student doesn't have his or hers (I give them three days to get one, starting on the first day of school), then I let them borrow one. I also have packages of brightly colored paper they can use if they forget to get dividers. I also have some notebook paper they can use if they forgot, to get them started. I won't supply them for the whole year, though. Their sections are Vocab, Book—this is general for whatever main piece of literature we are studying—Writing, Grammar, and Journal/Misc. I give them a paper that lays all this out, but I take about 30 minutes to help get everyone set up, so by the second week of school, everyone is ready to go. Also on this day, I take old manila folders that I don't use anymore and hand one to each student. They put their name on it, and pass it back to me. I keep them in a drawer in the classroom, and whenever they want, they can put their completed and graded papers into it, to keep their binders lighter. They don't have to use it, but I give them the option as a way to help them keep all their papers throughout the year. Most students use it, and find it really helps.


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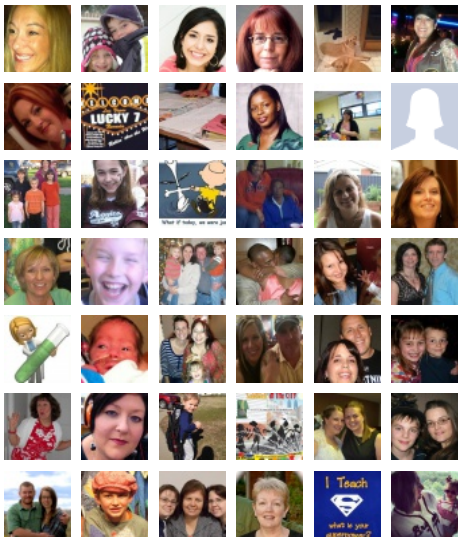
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As I pass papers back, I tell them what section to put it in, but once they get used to it, they can usually tell where it should go. The sections are specific enough, that they know vocab quizzes should go in the vocab section!

Once we finish a literature unit, and I have passed back all papers from that unit, I spend about 20 minutes one day and help them clean out their binders. I tell them “anything that has to do with Romeo and Juliet (for example) should be out of your binder.” There are somethings, like grammar, and MLA information that needs to stay in their binder all year, but everything else gets taken out and put into the folder. At the end of the year, they organize their entire binder from what they’ve kept n their folder, and it works as a great study tool too!

 **mrsjoyhall**
 Posted August 17, 2012 at 6:28 pm | [Permalink](#)

Amy,
 I LOVE the idea of having a file folder in a filing cabinet for the kids to put papers in that they want to keep. What a great way to introduce organization. I am kind of a binder nut, but the thought of having to keep track of student binders makes me crazy! I think it is different with elementary than with high school...but probably not as different as I think.
 Thank you so much for leaving your strategy!
 Joy 

 **Mertie Skogstad**
 Posted August 29, 2012 at 3:24 pm | [Permalink](#)

A pleasant post together with good suggestions.

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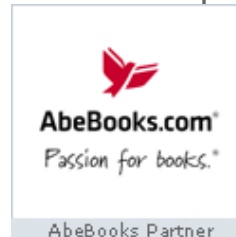
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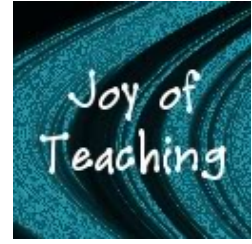
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