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Homework Intervention
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Using Graphing and Teamwork to Increase Homework Completion

Description:

Homework problems among students can be attributed to certain characteristics they display. Some examples of these characteristics are:

- o poor motivation
- o problems in listening comprehension
- o lack of organizational skills

Graphing can help motivate students to work harder. It serves as a self-monitoring device where they are the ones recording if they did or did not complete their homework. By utilizing teamwork, students also become motivated by wanting to contribute positively to their team. Both can be very useful and motivating devices, especially when used together. A little competitive drive and insight can help improve student's homework completion.

Materials:

- Graphing paper
- Markers or crayons in the colors green, yellow, and red
- A tally sheet or score board to keep track of the teams progress

Preparation:

- Inform the students on which colors stand for what: Green for homework completion turned in on time, Yellow for homework turned in late, and Red for homework not handed in.
- Show them how to graph their progress on the graphing sheets
- Split the class in to groups (number of groups may depend on class size), and explain to them how the "friendly" competition will work.
- Create the graphing sheets (fit the type of class)

Steps in implementing the intervention:

Step 1: Split the class in to groups or "teams," and inform them on how their individual homework completion will help contribute positively to their team.

Step 2: Teach the students how to graph their homework completion as well as what the colors stand for.

Step 3: The competition will work on a weekly basis. Explain to the students how this will work. Students will be given homework assignments to complete at home each day (or when they are given).

- When they return to school the teacher will check everyone to see who completed their homework. For those who completed their homework, they will color their graph green for that homework assignment.
- Students who did not complete their homework will have 1 day extra to complete their homework for the next day in order to obtain the color yellow for that assignment.
- Others will color their graph red for no completion.

Step 4: For teams that have students not completing their homework, or who have a lot of red on their graphs, the teacher should encourage the team to talk to that student to motivate them to help the team.

Step 5: The teacher will keep score for the teams counting the green for 2 points and the yellow for 1 point.

Step 6: At the end of each week, the team with the most points can chose what their reward is; possibly extra recess time or special activity they would like to do.

Tips:
- This activity must be age appropriate (older kids may not think this is cool)
- Make sure to give praise when teams are doing well and encouragement to teams who are not

Reference:

Bryan, T., & Burstein, K. (2004). Improving Homework Completion and Academic Performance: Lessons from Special Education. *Theory Into Practice, 43(3)*, 213-219.