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| **[A Golden Key to Successful Homework Completion](http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=EHVDU&m=3Wh6oE.k.cSbnEz&b=TMoPMpYWBu3knzDHinN7cg" \t "_blank)**  *“Did you do your homework?” Sound familiar? Well, it is that time of year again – school books, pencils, homework, and report cards… school is back in. If you think one of the most challenging aspects of the school year is getting your kids to do their homework timely and regularly, you are not alone. But do not fret… there is hope! Here are several things you can do to make homework time less stressful and more enjoyable this year, In sha Allah.*  **Initial Checks**  The first thing you want to do is rule out if your child has a learning disability. Some kids do not want to do their homework because they have special learning challenges. These children may need additional instruction or one-on-one help. Your child’s teacher should be able to help you determine if your child has a learning disability.  **Reward**  If a learning disability is not causing your child’s lackluster homework performance, try offering him something that will be an incentive to do his homework. Using an Incentive Chart is one of the best ways to motivate your child to do something he has little desire doing.  Of course, incentive charts and rewarding children for proper behaviour have become a controversial issue as of recent. Some are of the opinion that rewarding your child for good behaviour can send the wrong message. They feel that children should behave properly simply because this is the suitable thing to do. They also contend that it can make a child dependent upon being rewarded whenever they are encouraged to behave properly. There is validity in all of these points. However, throughout the Qur’an Allah (glorified and exalted be He) reminds us often of the reward we will receive for being righteous and obeying His laws.  “But those who heed their Lord will have Gardens through which rivers flow, to live in forever as a welcome from Allah. What is with Allah is better for those who are truly good.” [[Qur’an: Chapter 3, Verse 198](http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=EHVDU&m=3Wh6oE.k.cSbnEz&b=spICunDGNN5UmKOz9TTcLg)]  “But whoever comes to Him as a believer having done righteous deeds – for those will be the highest degrees [in position]:” [[Qur’an: Chapter 20, Verse 75](http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=EHVDU&m=3Wh6oE.k.cSbnEz&b=HjJq7YyGWw7qOz5apown9w)]  Adults with their full mental faculties receive encouragement from Allah (glorified and exalted be He) to obey His rulings. Children, who are of less sound mind, can benefit from incentives, as well.  **Make a Star Chart**  One of the simplest incentive programs is the Star Chart system. It is really quite easy to set up. When you set up your Star Chart system, explain the new program to your child prior to implementing it. Let him know you have found a fun new way to help him do his homework. Get a blank sheet of paper and write your child’s name at the top. Inform him that each day he completes his homework on time, he gets a star. Let him know that after he earns 10 stars, he gets a special treat. Then the two of you brainstorm different places he would like to go or toys he would like you to purchase or some other special activity he would like to participate in.  Keep in mind the reward need not be expensive or lavish. Maybe he would like to have his friends over to spend the night. Ensure the selection of rewards is what you are willing to follow through on. Then post the star chart and list of rewards where your child can view them often. The refrigerator or bedroom door are good places where he will see them often as a reminder.  Some parents prefer using more elaborate charts to help their child feel how special the Star Chart system is. Ready-made colourful charts can be purchased at school supply stores and some department stores in the stationary section. You can also design your own star chart with colourful pictures, fancy drawings or adhesive stickers to make the program initially more exciting. This can be a special activity for you and your child to work on together. It can make the chart even more special, because it allows you and your child to participate in an enjoyable activity together.  Each day your son does his homework, place a star on his chart. Be sure to let him know he has a star when you put it up. The days your son neglects completing his homework, remove a star at the end of the day. If he does not have stars to remove, put up a check. Checks are used with the Star Chart system and should be explained to your child as well. They are given when your son fails to complete his homework for the day. Make sure you let him know he has a star off (or check) for not doing his homework.  Avoid squabbling with your child over his failure to complete his homework. Let the stars and checks speak for you, instead. If your son gets 6 checks, deprive him of a privilege he enjoys. You can take away the computer for 1, 2, or 3 days (depending on age); take away his outside playtime, or whatever you deem he would dislike giving up.  Keep in mind that every set of 10 stars earns a reward. Once a set of 10 has been earned, the individual stars from that 10 cannot be removed.  **Incentive Ideas**  Here are some rewards you can use for your star chart:   * Outings * Small toys * Friends over * Slumber party * Special dessert * Help mom cook * Play game with mom * Bubble bath * Select menu for dinner * Mom helps with a chore * Get a dollar * Extra time on computer * Extra TV time * Extra time on video game * Take a walk with mom * Remove six checks from the chart   **Disincentive Ideas** Here are a few ideas you can use for penalties:   * Less or no computer time * Less or no TV time * Less or no video game time * No outing * Pay money * 100 jumping jacks * 20 push-ups * Clean house * Fold clothes * Wash dishes * Stay in room for time out (1 minute per year in age) * Write standards * Go to bed early   Keep in mind, some children may defensively make comments such as “I don’t care about stars anyway!” or “So what?” Ignore these comments and continue with the program.  Do not give up on the Star Chart system. It is a remarkable discipline method that brings amazing results. Keep up the good work, and you are sure to see success, In sha Allah.  Using the Star Chart system for homework is a marvelous way to help you and your child become more productive this school year. Children no longer have to listen to constant nagging from parents. Parents are able to inspire good homework habits by using gentle encouragement instead of harsh enforcement. This makes homework time more pleasurable for both parent and child.  *Now you are all set with a golden key for a productive school year of homework with you and your child. Share your experience with the Star Chart system in the comments section below.*    **About the Author:**  **Grandma Jeddah** is the mother of 11 children and 13 grandchildren. She has taught hundreds of students at an Islamic school in Los Angeles, California for over thirty years. She is the author of Discipline without Disrespecting: Discover the Hidden Secrets of How to Effectively Discipline Your Muslim Child– And Keep Your Peace of Mind While at It. Subscribe to her free newsletter at: [www.grandmajeddah.com](http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=EHVDU&m=3Wh6oE.k.cSbnEz&b=YI7yfDmEMnPUGZBtgLWe5w).  https://ci5.googleusercontent.com/proxy/RjxTemEIRQzi91eJwxazWkLcWVZaUbV2X44w1F9_fG7ozwYGOXm6JGDt4G90-sC9B-FOq6kMAVUD1DV9GW3_-WzsJT-XRAcSgWT6-ukuOj3SYehx=s0-d-e1-ft#http://feeds.feedburner.com/~r/ProductiveMuslim/~4/5nxC5edbP7s |