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## ***Suggestions for Conducting the First Session***

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Student: \_\_\_\_\_ : Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ : First Lesson Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **What to take with you**

1. Your own notebook and possibly iPad or similar
  2. *Parent Expectations*, downloadable from our website and attached here, is useful to give to the parent.
  3. The Executive Function Assessment, if you have it. (The parent fills this out online, and we will send it to you, ideally before the first lesson. Print it out, if possible, but in any case, make a note below of the executive function areas that seem most challenging to the student.
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### **Meeting the Parent(s)**

1. Let's take a minute for me to introduce myself. (Brief summary of your background.) As you know HomeworkCoach is a little different from regular tutoring in that we will work on your child's overall organization and homework management, as well as build their Executive Function skills. Can I ask, what are your reasons for bringing in a coach?

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2. If the student is there (recommended), ask them to respond to the parent's comments, see if they agree or want to add anything.

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***Dismiss parents, give them the Executive Function Assessment and Parent Expectations doc***

### **Checklist of Topics You Really Should Cover in the First Session with Student**

1. Give me the big picture: what subjects are you taking this semester, what are your grades, where do you need most help?

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2. Let's go online and you can show me how you keep track of what's happening in each class. *And be sure to look for missing assignments, failing grades, upcoming assignments... then if you feel you're building a level of trust:* Can I get the login for your school portal, that will save us time if I can review it before each session.

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- Portal URL:
- Portal Login:
- Portal Password:

3. What sort of planner do you use? Let's create a plan for what you need to do this week. *Don't impose your favorite planner on your student, they need to buy into a method for tracking assignments. Try different things – big desk calendar, specialized EF planner, erasable white board; or phone app – but ideally it will be shareable, like a shared google doc.*

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*The above 3 items seem most important to help you quickly begin to get a handle on how you can help your student get on top of schoolwork. But here are some questions you can ask as time permits, as they will bring to light Executive Function challenges you can begin to work on in future sessions. Remember, open-ended questions are best!*

- Do you try to have a regular homework time? How do you get yourself started?
- Where do you do homework? Do you have a specific space where all your supplies are to hand?
- Do you find you get distracted during homework? Do you sometimes get stuck because you do not have what you need?
- How do you study for tests? Do you work better when someone quizzes you verbally or do you prefer to just review the study guide on your own?
- How do you motivate yourself to get work done? Do your parents have any reward system for you?

### Plan for Next Session

1. If you have not worked out an ongoing schedule, do so before you leave

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2. Let's make a list of what you need to accomplish between now and our next session (*write it down, make a copy for yourself and it's not a bad idea to have a copy for the parent, perhaps email it when you get home, drawing the parent's attention to ways they can help, with gently reminders of upcoming tests for example*).

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3. If the next session is a week or several days out, plan a between-sessions check in by phone or zoom

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### Downloadable Resources:

[Lesson Record Sheet](#) (for Coach)

[Daily Homework Planner](#)

[Weekly Planner](#)



## Welcome to HomeworkCoach!

Thank you for choosing our service, which we have developed over the past ten years with the help of learning specialists and by listening to hundreds of parents like you.

HomeworkCoach does not offer a cookie-cutter service. Our coaches are contractors who are well-versed in our approach to homework tutoring and executive function skills building but are expected to use their own skills and empathy in helping each student succeed in their own way. It will take time to discover the best way to work with your child. This may mean adapting the schedule as we find out what works.

Thanks again for granting us the privilege of working with your child. We will check in with your coach frequently to make sure everything is going well. You in turn are welcome to call or email us at any time.

### Parent Expectations

1. Make sure you and your coach exchange contact information.
2. Give the process time to work. Resist the temptation to micromanage or second-guess the coach! This is especially important if you have been butting heads with your child over homework.
3. If you have concerns about the coaching process, you may email or call the coach or call HomeworkCoach directly. Point 2 above notwithstanding, if your gut tells you things are off to a bad start, don't delay in telling us.
4. Honor the coach/student relationship. This builds trust and increases the student's self-confidence and self-advocacy. Let your student know your concerns before contacting the coach. We are working toward an open and honest communication process.
5. If necessary, assist the coach in contacting teachers. Provide login information to the school's homework and grade reporting website.
6. If rewards are a part of a plan you, your student and your coach agree on, be consistent and timely in providing the agreed upon reward.
7. Please don't expect the coach or your child to provide a blow-by-blow report after every session. Set up a schedule with the coach for regular progress reviews.
8. Do not casually cancel sessions if there is no homework that day. Keeping to a regular schedule is an important executive function skill we are working to instill in your student!
9. Maintain a positive outlook about your student's progress. Remind yourself to praise the positive actions taken, large and small. Coaching and learning are done step-by-step and each person learns at a different pace. All students, in their hearts, would like to succeed and you can help them by believing in them.