

# **Common Academic Problems You and Your (Freshman) Child May Be Facing**

***“My child’s Math, Biology, or Religion grades are going up and down.”***

**Probable Cause:**

In these subjects, every chapter is a new topic. Some will naturally seem harder or easier than others.

**Probable Fix:**

As soon as a topic seems difficult, your child must speak up. Temporary help from friends, you, or the NHS after-school tutoring program could be the answer.

***“My child did much better in school last year.”***

**Probable Cause:**

Grammar and junior high school teachers have much more time for repetition and review. This is not possible in high school and may be throwing your child for a loop!

**Probable Fix:**

Homework becomes the key.

1. Your child must supply the repetition and review he/she needs. This is usually called “studying” and your child really has to work at things until they are committed to memory.
2. Your child must do all homework on a daily basis and must be able to honestly say when he/she doesn’t understand and get help **fast...** that night, if possible. The next day may be too late.

***“My child’s grades are low in general and I’ve never seen marks like this before.”***

**Probable Causes:**

1. In all fairness to your child, high school **is** harder than grammar school!
2. Lack of studying and/or reading may be the problem. In grammar and junior high schools, writing is designed to be the primary learning tool. In high school, emphasis slowly turns to reading.

**Probable Fix:**

1. If the level is the problem, you may just have to wait until your child adjusts.
2. Just doing written homework is not enough. Your child has to read textbooks and study each night — not just the night before a test.

***“My child and I feel overwhelmed.”***

**Probable Cause:**

Poor organization may be the culprit. Here at Sea, each teacher has a completely different teaching style and grading system.

**Probable Fix:**

Dig out all the papers you signed from the first week of school. Make sure you both understand what’s expected in each class and how each teacher will calculate your child’s grades. Check your child’s memo pad or planner. Ask if his/her locker is well organized, too.

***“I had no idea my child’s grades were this bad.”***

**Probable Cause:**

Your child is not bringing tests and/or deficiency reports home to you. Most teachers here at Sea give at least three major tests per marking period. Halfway through each marking period, some teachers send deficiency reports home to parents of students whose grades are 70 or below at that point.

**Probable Fix:**

Make a chart for your refrigerator! Your child’s report card should **not** be a surprise to either of you. Keep track of all grades and quizzes.

***“My child fell very far behind when he/she got sick.”***

**Probable Cause:**

Because there is little repetition in high school, absences can be **deadly** — whether long or short.

**Probable Fix:**

Your child needs the phone numbers of trustworthy students in each class. Even if the absence is only for one day, he/she needs to find out what happened in class — especially in terms of tests and quizzes. If the absence will be for a week or longer, you should call Sea and the school secretary will arrange for each teacher to make a list of assignments your child will miss.