

What to Do With School Papers and Artwork

Wondering what to do with all of those year-end papers and artistic creations? As a starting point, ask yourself, as a recent college graduate, what would you have wanted your parents to have given you from your elementary school years, and let that be your guide.

Start out by making a pile of artwork and a separate pile of school reports, report cards and other school papers from the past school year. Next, take a look through the artwork pile and pare it down by tossing anything that does not show something about your child at that stage of development. Put the items in chronological order and using your phone or camera, take pictures of the items that remain and put them on a CD. Label the CD with the grade and year. Pick a few very special items and frame them to be hung in your house (these also make great Grandparent, Aunt or Uncle gifts). For the rest of the items, save a few favorites, and toss the others, especially if they are oversized or three-dimensional.

Now it is time to work on the school papers. Take a quick pass through the pile and toss anything that does not reflect something personal about your child at that age. You may want to save amazing reports, essays and / or poems that they wrote, but toss old spelling tests, math assignments, etc. Buy a large binder, tab dividers, sheet protectors, a plastic lidded file box and Pendaflex files. In the binder, make one tab per grade and do the same for the Pendaflex files that will be put into the file box, make one file per grade and put them into the file box in grade order. Take the pile of papers that you are left with and put the awards, special papers, and report cards into the binder, either by punching holes or using sheet protectors. You may need more than one binder to take you through the elementary school years, but try to limit yourself to three large binders. Use the file box to store the CD of pictures of artwork from that school year, larger booklets / memory books the kids have made and bulkier items that are to be kept (you may even choose to keep the report cards in the files instead of in the binder). Now for each grade, you will have a corresponding tab in the binder and file folder in the file box.

Having this type of an organizing system for artwork and papers will allow your children the opportunity to look back at their past years of school work and have fun seeing the progress they have made, and will let them enjoy the fond memories of past years.

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