

What you need to know about Reporting for each term

General Tips:

- Please make sure your child's name is on each piece of work that is submitted
- Keep in mind that we take a 'portfolio' approach to reporting, meaning I don't need to see every piece of work your child does, just a representative sample. Whatever you feel shows your child's best work in each subject area is what I want to see. I do recommend approximately 4-5 good samples for each subject, but this number is rather arbitrary and can depend on the types of samples submitted. For example, 4-5 grammar worksheets are ok, but they wouldn't showcase a student's writing as well as, say, an essay or short story, series of poems, or other writing samples that demonstrate writing in a 'real' situation. Quality is key rather than sheer quantity.
- Please clearly name/label ALL documents that you either email or post to the Dropbox. Giving electronic documents a proper name (subject, name of project, etc.) can really help organizationally, rather than a series of numbers which your camera or scanner assigns.

Anecdotal Reports

It is extremely helpful for me if each family sends an **anecdotal summary** outlining what their child has done in each subject area. Most families choose to type this up and submit it by email or Dropbox, while some write or type it and mail it with their child's work samples. Either of these options is just fine! Please keep in mind that the anecdotal report is not a huge onerous thing that you have to go on for pages and pages about...usually a small paragraph/set of point form notes for each subject is all that is needed, often a couple of pages total is the norm. Basically, I'm looking for a general outline of what's been done in each subject, not a day-by-day account of everything that's been done. If your child is participating in any Vclasses (novel study, Wacky Wednesdays, etc.) please make note of it in your anecdotal summary; Vclasses are great for learning and demonstrate active participation, not to mention assignments you do with Vclass teachers can be great work samples to send to me. As well, don't forget to include any lessons/sports/clubs/etc. that your child has participated in this term. :)

The following subjects need to be addressed in your reports each term:

1. Language Arts
2. Math
3. Social Studies
4. Science
5. Fine Arts
6. Physical Education
7. Health and Careers (i.e. life skills, healthy living, etc.)
8. Foreign Language* (only for Grade 5 and up)

I have also provided a set of sample anecdotal reports to help you if needed. Remember that you are the one who sees your child day-to-day, so anything you feel is important for me to know and to base the report card on should be mentioned in your anecdotal summary, as otherwise I won't know about it; basically, the more thorough your anecdotal summary is, the more thorough I can be in my reporting. :)

How much work to send in

For each of the four academic subjects (Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, and Science) I generally like to see at least 4 - 5 different samples of work, and the work sent in should match comments you make in your anecdotal summary (i.e. if you say your child has done a science experiment, it would be great to actually see a copy of that experiment write-up along with pictures). Obviously you won't be able to send in everything you include in your summary, and I wouldn't expect that, but it definitely helps me to report more fully if the work you send in has some sort of explanation attached in order to give it context. For the 'non-academic' subjects (Physical Education, Second Language Grade 5 and up, Fine Arts, and Health and Careers) I tend to rely more on anecdotal reports, although below I've listed some things that can be sent as samples for these subjects.

How to send work in

Many families use their Family Folder (set up by me) in Dropbox, where documents can be loaded directly by importing or even just clicking-and-dragging from your desktop or folders, and where I can see all that is added as well, so families no longer have to worry about sending attachments by email and wondering if their email has gotten through. If you'd like to try this option but don't know how to get started, just let me know and I'll be happy to help you with that.

Work can also be sent by email (attachments of work typed on the computer, scanned work, pictures, etc). Many families also mail things to me; if you do this, please keep in mind that we are relying on the mail system and so this can be slower and there is always the possibility of things going astray. However, in my seven years at EBUS only one such package of work has ever gone missing, pretty good odds considering how many packages I've received over the years! At any rate, if you are sending originals I'll photocopy them for my files and you will get them mailed back to you, but if you are nervous about sending original work just photocopy it and send the copy instead of the original...I will then just keep that in my file rather than sending it back to you. :)

Some things aren't practical to send in, such as science experiments or large posters, bigger projects, reporting for field trips where physical work samples weren't produced, or sports - if you have a digital camera you can just send in pictures/video clips of these things as part of your reporting. :)

****Please make sure that all student work has the student's name (first and last) and the date on it. :)**

Letter Grades

Letter Grades are given for Grades 4 - 7. Letter grades have a different significance for many families, so I just want to clarify some things about letter grades and hopefully anticipate the wide range of opinions about them that I know many of you might have.

So often families tell me of the many things they do at home that are of wonderful educational value but are hard to report on. While things like these may not get top grades and might not meet grade-level expectations exactly according to the ministry, they will certainly meet at least minimum standards which means your child is learning what they should - ultimately this is the most important thing and the main reason most families choose to homeschool, they can choose their own path based on family values and interests. Often we get hung up on thinking our kids should get all A's, but please keep in mind that basically, as long as your child is meeting expectations and submits the minimum requirement of a few different work samples done at grade level for each subject, he/she will get at least a C+. C+ means that the child meets expectations, it's a 'good' grade and actually where the vast majority of students are. 'B' is given for 'very good' work and 'A' is given for excellent/outstanding/above average work. If you are aiming for an 'A', please note that A's are given for above average work, so demonstrating that level of work generally means sending more than the minimally required 4 - 5 work samples per academic subject, and sending work of a quality above what might typically be expected for that grade. Worksheets are great to send as general work samples, but don't demonstrate 'above average' work. Remember, as I don't see your children every day it's up to the work you send to speak for itself. :)

More preferable samples of student work, at least in terms of showing higher learning and meeting expectations for higher grades, are actual writing samples, research reports, projects, experiments, etc. Including a copy of notes and rough drafts so as to see the whole writing project from start to finish is very useful for me as a teacher to see and demonstrates very clearly the thought processes and work habits/effort that went into a given project. Most importantly, please remember that we as teachers are basing a letter grade for a whole term based only on what you choose to let us see (with our high numbers of students in our classes at so many different grade levels it would be impossible to look at everything each student does), so keep that in mind when choosing which samples to send. 5 or 6 quality samples (paragraphs/essays, chapter tests, projects, etc.) are so much more helpful than dozens of pages of worksheets!!

What is expected for the four Academic subjects

I would recommend checking out our Elementary Website, where you'll find subject-specific outlines, resources, and such for each grade. Not all subjects are completed at this time, but they are being worked on as we go through the year. To access the site, go to the Elementary Website tab on the left in my Welcome to EBUS website, where I have links to each grade level page.

Language Arts:

Writing samples are very important. These could include: letters (if your child has not written any letters that you wish to share, he/she could write me an email and I would consider that as a writing sample), journals, stories, paragraphs, essays, poems, novel studies, etc. For the younger children (K-3) even a few sentences is great, or a paragraph, journal entries, stories - anything along those lines. Please note that 'real' writing samples are always preferable over worksheets wherever possible, for older students especially.

I also know that there is a lot of reading going on in homes too. A list of books your child has read would be great, or some children might want to write about a book they've read. Any activity sheets, spelling lessons, etc. can be all right too. Sometimes students send a taped sample or a digital audio recording (all computers have this capability) of their child reading.

Math

Samples of math work should include unit reviews/chapter tests for the intermediate (4-7) grades. For all grade levels, the following is also good to send: a list of work done on Riverdeep, worksheets, chapter review pages, info on hands-on activities which have taken place, etc...

Science/Socials

Many families go on field trips and do lots of hands-on activities for socials and science. This is great and the kind of evidence you can send for these is photographs, summaries/write ups/paragraphs/essays/posters students do based on the experience, etc. Other fantastic samples of work in these subjects include research reports, projects, science experiments, chapter questions, tests/quizzes, etc. The courses in the Elementary Website have some great suggestions for things to hand in!

What is expected for the 'electives'/non-academic subjects (PE, Health and Careers, Fine Arts)

Obviously lots of the learning in these subjects is discussion-based or hands on and anecdotal in nature rather than there being physical samples to send in, so be detailed in your anecdotal summary when reporting on these areas. Include pictures where possible, coach/teacher/instructor progress reports (e.g. skill level and proficiency in piano or sport), time spent on the subject, etc.

Foreign Language

A foreign language is required starting in Grade 5. Evidences of learning could include completed activity sheets, quizzes, assignments, a recording of speaking in the language of the student's choice, Rosetta Stone reports (these I get from our EBUS office if you have an online subscription through us), etc.

Fine Arts/Physical Education (art, drama, music, dance, sports)

Samples you could send include:

- original artwork, crafts, or pictures of artwork, crafts, etc.
- awards
- sports info
- a physical activity log/journal (eg. keep a calendar page or activity log for each month listing walks, swimming, skating, etc. for the 'log' part, and have your child write a short journal entry each week describing how they feel about their physical activity and goals they might like to reach the following week/month for the 'journal' part).

**Detailed completion of the reflection column in the PE Log really pushes a student's performance in PE from receiving average marks to B or even A letter grade range; a simple list of activities in the anecdotal summary, even if extensive, only tells me what a student is doing, not how well he/she is doing it and how actively he/she is participating in and reflecting on each activity.

- certificates/reports from teachers/coaches of classes, lessons, sports teams, etc.
- video clips/audio clips/CD showing your child in action in music, drama, sports, etc.
- a program for an event your child participated in

And so on... :)

Health and Careers

Basically, Health and Careers can be thought of as "Life Skills". Work in this area can include but is not limited to: typing/keyboarding; computers; baking/sewing; health and healthy living; family planning; goal setting; dealing with peers; body awareness/personal safety; volunteer work/reports/journaling, etc. Being really thorough in your anecdotal summary really helps in this area!

Generally I do up report cards in the order that I receive anecdotals/work samples from families, so the earlier work is received by me the more thorough I can be in writing the report card.