



**Oak Meadow**  
YOUR TRUSTED PARTNER IN JOYFUL LEARNING

# Helping Homeschoolers Thrive

Wendy Richardson  
Director of Admission  
[wrichardson@oakmeadow.com](mailto:wrichardson@oakmeadow.com)

DeeDee Hughes  
Curriculum Director  
[dhughes@oakmeadow.com](mailto:dhughes@oakmeadow.com)

# What to expect in this workshop

We'll examine ...

- The role of motivation and autonomy in independent learning.
- Elements of an effective home learning environment.
- Ways to document work for independent learners.
- How to use narrative assessment to support student progress.

# Differences between classroom learners and independent learners

## Classroom Learners

All students will do the same assignments.

Students are assessed relative to the peer group.

Teacher directs the learning.

Outside student interests rarely come into play.

## Independent Learners

Students will do different things.

Students are assessed on an individual basis.

Student has an active role in directing learning.

Student interest may play a large role in shaping learning.

# Challenges and opportunities of home learning

## Challenges

Students have to ...

- become self-motivated.
- take responsibility for keeping their work organized and keeping on track with assignments.
- learn to develop a strong focus and tune out home distractions.

## Opportunities

Students are able to ...

- pursue their interests more fully.
- set their own schedule.
- work at their own pace.
- incorporate interests into their learning.

# How to encourage student motivation



1. Give students choice and voice.
2. Encourage autonomy.
3. Teach organizational skills.

**Handout:**

Study Skills Toolkit

Time Management Skills

# Incorporate student interests into learning

Encourage students to ...

- identify what they are interested in.
- relate assignments to a personal interest.
- recognize their learning preferences.
- incorporate creative and artistic expression.



**Handout:**

**Options for Learning**

# Effective home learning environments

## Have a dedicated work space

- Keep supplies handy.
- Make a place for in-progress work to be undisturbed.
- Set up a desk/table and chair that fit the student.
- Provide shelves and files to organize books and papers.

## Limit distractions

- Keep younger siblings busy.
- Schedule breaks to check phone/media.
- Control sound environment.
- Minimize visual distractions.

**Handout:**

**Effective Home Learning  
Environments**

# Documenting work for independent learners

## Yearly Planner

Knowing goals keeps families involved.

Helps families stay on track.

Can guide choice of representative sample of work.

## Weekly Planner

Keep notes on skills that are developing.

Helps you keep track of assignments that are good samples for portfolio.

Checked-off tasks are record of student work.

## Learning Objectives

Objectives require students to display a variety of skills.

Learning targets help students be involved and accountable.

## Handout:

Tools for Documenting Work

Year-at-a-Glance Planner



# Using narrative assessments to support student progress

Grades can feel like a judgment; words can be encouragement.

Narratives are individual and provide concrete guidance and support.

Use feedback to prioritize skills and focus students' efforts.



**Handout:**  
Effective Narrative Assessments



**Questions?**

**Comments?**

**What works for you?**

# About Oak Meadow

Our experiential, nature-based approach allows families to set their own natural rhythm of learning and encourages creativity, critical thinking, and intellectual development through hands-on activities and interdisciplinary projects.

For resources, inspiration, ideas,  
and more, visit us at  
[oakmeadow.com](https://oakmeadow.com).



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