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Making students interested in submitting their assignments

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This small scale action research was undertaken to motivate five tenth graders who were not interested in submitting their class assignments. The objective of the study was to investigate the reasons behind their failure in submitting assignments. A home task which was to write a laboratory report on practical work that they did with enjoyment (with a complete information sheet and criteria for marking) was assigned to them. Students were expected to work independently and submit the assignment on a given date. A reminder note with the submission date highlighted was hung at the eye level of students in the classroom. Of the five students, only three submitted their assignments on time. As two students in the selected group could not reach the expected level, a better way of giving assignments was required.

As the second action, the students in the classroom were grouped randomly and a group assignment was given to make a booklet on simple machines using the given information, textbooks and other resources. This was expected to be completed in the classroom within the double periods of the lesson. Each group member was expected to do a specified portion of work. While students were engaged in doing the assignment, observations were conducted on how groups divided the task to complete the assignment on time. One did the cover page and another did the tables, and so on. While recording student behavior, feedback was given on identified weaknesses in order to encourage them. Students were able to complete the assignment on time. When engaging in group work, students were able to discuss with others and to recognize their own problems, different ways were adopted to complete the assignment and students also helped each other. At a subsequent discussion, students stated that they prefer to work in groups rather than on their own at home. They appreciated the opportunity to assess their strengths and weaknesses when they work as a group and to receive instant feedback to complete the assignment successfully. Creating challenging assignments to work in group environments make students more interested in working on assignments with sharing of ideas and which enables them to submit their assignments on time.