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Date: Mar 29, 2024



Middle School Advice 101

(Q&A)

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Welcome to Emma's Middle School Advice 101 column where your difficult middle school questions will be answered. Answers are provided by me, Emma Suhalj, a qualified middle schooler who has now almost two years of experience with being in middle school. I have been in three different schools ever since the beginning of my middle school journey. I have been in schools in Greece, United Arab Emirates and Italy. My answers are based on years of experience dealing with all sorts of obstacles. I have true experience of how it is being a middle schooler and I have all the solutions to your problems. I have gathered information and have answered a few questions dedicated to middle schoolers in hopes to help others resolve anything that's bothering them.

1. How will I be able to make friends in middle school?

Don't overthink it. Making friends in middle school is easier than you might think. Just be yourself and try to make conversation or find similarities with people all around your school and once time passes by, you'll have more and more friends. Even if you don't, that's fine; it takes time to build friendships and that's okay; everyone does things at a different pace; so if you see someone making friends faster than you, that doesn't mean that you have no chance in making friends, that you are not worthy enough like others to have friends or that no one likes you. Some people take time to warm up and that's completely normal. Just take your time, focus on yourself, your academics and don't rush into things; when it's time, you will find yourself around a quality group of friends.

2. I'm scared of getting bad grades. What should I do to prevent that from happening?

If you're scared of getting bad grades here's what you've got to do:

1. Organize yourself; get yourself together, plan out your day and make a list of what you have to complete/study everyday, therefore you will be able to focus and have a clear description of what you need to do in order not to do assignments wrong or study for tests at the very last minute.
2. Get a tutor; a tutor will help you in the subjects that you're having trouble with and that will help you with homework, test preparations etc.
3. Focus; just focus on what the teacher tells you to do and focus on yourself. Ask your classmates if you're a bit lost, read books about a specific problem whether it's about a subject or behavioral issues you might be having, focus on listening, ask lots and lots of questions in order for you to get a good grasp on what you need to do/learn.
4. Lastly, when your teacher provides you with a rubric, READ IT; reading the rubric is very important because the rubric that the teacher is giving you is the exact same material that they will be using to grade your work with, so if you apply the rubric to all your work/studies and correctly follow it step by step, you can get an extremely good or even perfect grade.

3. Is it wrong of me to drop my friend group for no reason and just go hangout with someone else?

Yes but at the same time no. It is wrong of you to just dump your friends out of the blue without you saying a word about it. For example you could say something like "I'm going to hangout with (person's name) right now." It's as simple as that. You don't have to make a big announcement. All you have to say is that you're going to just hangout with this person and that's it. If your friends have something bad to say about that or even worse, make you feel selfish for wanting to have other friends, then that's their problem since you aren't restricted to hangout with only a certain group of people; you're allowed to be with whoever you want but in order to not seem rude, don't leave abruptly, instead, simply tell them that you just want to hangout with someone else for a bit and they should be understanding and just do what you want to do.

4. I don't like being around my friends because I think they're fake but if I stop being friends with them I will be alone. Help.

Don't spend another second wasting your time and energy on them. Let them go; being alone is better than being with people whom you're not interested in being around. There is nothing to be ashamed of if you're alone; plus it will allow you to find better friends that are worth spending time with.

5. I always feel like people are criticizing me and I always feel like I'm being embarrassing. What should I do?

Everyone is too busy worrying about their own problems. Nobody has enough time to think about you! Nobody cares! And that's not saying it in a harsh way, think about it as a positive thing. You can do what you like to do and nobody cares! Even if people are judging you, even if someone thinks that you're embarrassing that should not stop you from being you. Stop caring about what others think about you; that's the bottom line, and once you realize that life is not about what others think about you, you'll be much happier.

6. I forgot to study for a super important test and it's tomorrow. Should I go to sleep or pull an all-nighter to prepare for it?

First things first, take a deep breath; ease your mind and plan. Don't stay up all night trying to prepare for a test. Instead, get some quality sleep so that you can feel fresh tomorrow, then, when you're setting up your alarm, make sure to set it a bit earlier than what you normally would so that you can have more time to study and prepare yourself for the upcoming test. Now, you have set your alarm clock for an early morning, you go get some rest and you wake up and immediately go study; you can also study on the way to school and in addition, study a few minutes before school starts. Now you are prepared, well-rested and ready to go and ace that test!

Hope this helps you to answer all your questions and concerns about middle school. Thanks for tuning in!