Too Tired to do Homework

Jose Martinez is nine years old. He is a fourth grade student at Washington Elementary School. It is 7:00 P.M. and Jose has just finished eating his dinner. His mother is standing at the sink washing the dishes. Jose walks into the living room and turns on the TV. Then he sits down on the sofa and puts his feet up on the coffee table.

“Jose,” his mother calls out from the kitchen. “What are you doing?”

“I'm watching TV,” answers Jose.

“It’s not time to watch TV,” says Jose’s mother. “It’s time to do your homework.”

“But Mom!” cries Jose. “It’s a baseball game between the San Diego Padres and the Los Angeles Dodgers! I need to see what happens.”

“Sorry, but your report on California is what’s happening in this house. Remember the report is due this Friday.”

“That’s right, Mom. It’s due on Friday. Today is only Tuesday. I have a lot of time to finish that report. I’m too tired to do homework tonight.”
Jose’s mother walks into the living room and turns off the TV. She says, “Listen, Jose. I’m tired too. I’ve been working hard all day. But your homework is very important. It is your responsibility and mine that you finish it. Now let’s sit at the table and get out the books, maps, pens, paper, and everything else you need to do a beautiful report on the state of California.”

“Oh, okay,” answers Jose. “I’ll work on the report.” Jose walks over to the kitchen table. “Mom, did you know San Diego is the second largest city in the state of California?”

“Oh?” says his mother.

“Yes! And San Diego has beautiful beaches, a warm climate, and a major league baseball team called the San Diego Padres.”

“That’s good information, Jose. You can write that in your report!”

“By the way,” says Jose. “The Padres are playing again on Thursday night. If I finish my report, can I watch the game on TV?”

“Yes,” laughs Jose’s mother. “If you finish your report, you can watch the game on Thursday night.”
Answer the questions.

1. How old is Jose Martinez?

2. What grade is he in?

3. Where does he go to school?

4. What is Jose’s mother doing at 7:00 P.M.?

5. Does Jose want to do his homework?

6. What does he want to do?

7. What is due this Friday?

8. What day is it today?

9. Does Jose’s mother turn on the TV?

10. Are Jose and his mother tired?
11. What school supplies do they need to get out?

12. Is San Diego the largest city in California?

13. What kind of climate does San Diego have?

14. What is the name of the major league baseball team in San Diego?

15. If Jose finishes his report, can he watch the game on Thursday night?

Ask a partner the questions.
Use the words in the box to label the pictures below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>doing homework</th>
<th>standing</th>
<th>sitting</th>
<th>working</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>eating</td>
<td>feeling tired</td>
<td>laughing</td>
<td>playing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>walking</td>
<td>calling out</td>
<td>washing</td>
<td>watching</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Family Literacy: Community-Based English Tutoring Program
Joint project by San Diego Unified and San Diego Community College District
Ann Gianola, August 1999
Use the phrases in the box to complete the missing words from the story below.

at Washington Elementary School
between the San Diego Padres and the Los Angeles Dodgers
on Thursday night
in the state of California

on the sofa
up on the coffee table
over the sink
into the living room

1. Jose’s mother is standing ____________________________
   washing dishes.

2. Jose is a fourth grade student _________________________
   ____________________.

3. The baseball game is _______________________________
   ____________________________________.

4. Jose can watch the game ____________________________.

5. Jose sits down __________________________ and puts his
   feet _________________________.

6. San Diego is the second largest city __________________
   ________________________.

7. Jose’s mother walks ______________________________
   and turns off the TV.
For discussion in groups:

1. Jose’s mother wants him to do his homework after dinner. Jose wants to watch a baseball game on TV and complains that he feels too tired to do his homework. What other excuses do children sometimes make to avoid doing their homework?

2. Is there a particular time of day that your children do their homework? Do they generally work in the afternoon, evening, or both? Which system works the best in your family?

3. Are you aware of when your child’s homework is due? Do you check their homework and make sure it is correct? How do you support your child?

4. Jose explains that his report on California isn’t until Friday. In your opinion, how much time does it take for a fourth grade student to write a report? Why isn’t it a good idea to wait until the last minute?
Following Steps of Good Homework Habits

1. Does Jose’s mother say that homework is important?  
   - Yes  - No

2. Does she tell Jose to begin his homework after dinner?  
   - Yes  - No

3. Is there a place for Jose to do his homework?  
   - Yes  - No

4. Does Jose’s mother have homework supplies available?  
   - Yes  - No

5. Does she check to see that Jose is doing his homework?  
   - Yes  - No

6. Does she turn off the baseball game on TV?  
   - Yes  - No

7. Does she encourage Jose as he works?  
   - Yes  - No

8. Does she promise a reward when he finishes?  
   - Yes  - No