

THE BENEFITS OF HOMEWORK

by Meredith Engel

2020

10th Grade

FONT SIZEAAAA

In this article, Meredith Engel discusses the benefits of assigning students homework.



["Untitled"](#) by Alissa De Leva is licensed under CC0.

[1]The debate over the benefits of homework is almost as old as the public school system itself. While most students' opinions of homework may remain the same, the feelings of educators, parents, and administrators tend to rise and fall over time. However, there is a bevy¹ of evidence demonstrating the positive impact of homework, particularly for students in middle and high school. Popular or not, homework remains a crucial component of a well-rounded education.

The purpose of school is to educate young minds, so when examining the necessity of homework, the first question to ask should be: *Does homework improve students' academic performance?* The answer is a resounding yes. According to a publication by the U.S. Department of Education, "In seventh grade and beyond, students who complete more homework score better on standardized tests and earn better grades... [than] students who do less homework." Clearly, when students spend additional time completing homework, it has a positive impact on their understanding of the content.

Homework has been shown to have a positive impact specifically on the academic performance of high school boys. When two professors from Texas Tech University studied the topic in 2017, they found that "homework time by any measure increases the probability of college attendance by age 20 for boys." This is particularly important in light of the recent decline in enrollment of male undergraduate students. If the objective of education is academic progress, homework clearly has a significant role to play.

Some parents argue that homework cuts into time that could be better spent on non-school activities. They also assert that students, particularly high school-aged students, are swamped with the number of assignments they must complete at home.

[5]Rather than viewing homework as stealing time from other activities, parents and guardians should envision homework completion as an opportunity to bond. When families choose to engage in this way, they are actually likely to improve students' overall success in school. According to the U.S. Department of Education, "When family members read with their children, talk with their teachers, participate in school... and help them with homework, they give children a tremendous advantage." By making homework a cooperative affair, families and friends can reduce the negative feelings students may harbor toward it.

Although some teenagers may complain about homework, on average, high school students are not actually overwhelmed by their assignments. The Brookings Institution completed a survey of high school students in 2014 and found that "only a little more than one-third of the sampled students, devoted more than six hours per week to homework and studying when they were on the verge of attending college."

It is difficult to argue that students are overburdened with homework when two-thirds of the high school students who plan on attending college the following year study less than six hours per week. That's only an hour of homework a night for twelfth-grade students, during the supposedly busiest, most challenging time of their high school education.

In fact, given the amount of work students are expected to complete if they attend college, one could say they are not being assigned *enough* homework in high school. When Randy Riddle, Senior Consultant in Duke Learning Innovation, examined the amount of time college students spent studying outside of class, he found that, "nationwide, college students self reported spending about 17 hours each week on homework, reading, and assignments."

The drastic increase in the amount of work assigned outside of the classroom may shock former high school students. We should assign more homework — not less — to high school students in order to prepare them for the transition to college, should they choose to attend.

[10]It's obvious that homework correlates² with higher test scores, increases the likelihood that students will attend college, and prepares them for college. Furthermore, creative parents can use homework time as an opportunity to engage with their children in a positive way. Homework may not be students' favorite part of school, yet it plays an integral role in their future success.

Text: "The Benefits of Homework" by Meredith Engel. Copyright © 2020 by CommonLit, Inc. This text is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0.

Image: "Untitled" by Alissa De Leva is licensed under CC0.

Notes

1. a large amount
2. in which one thing affects another