

How Much Homework is Really Beneficial for Students?

When you witness students struggling daily with [insurmountable amounts of homework](#) assigned in their classes, with primary schoolers receiving an average of 2.9 hours weekly, middle schoolers receiving an average of 3.2 hours per teacher weekly, and high schoolers receiving an average of 3.5 hours per teacher weekly, you begin to wonder if a line must be drawn before homework reveals diminishing positive outcomes and becomes detrimental to students' health and well-being. To add on to assigned homework from school classes, a 2014 [U.S. Census Bureau report](#) showed nearly 6 out of 10 students also participate in extracurricular activities and jobs, as well as home and family responsibilities. Homework's ability to improve students' academic achievement, especially for students in grades 7 through 12, appears to be universally accepted, and was [proven by Dr. Harris Cooper](#), psychology professor at Duke University, who analyzed more than 60 research studies on homework between 1987 and 2003. Homework also helps reinforce concepts taught in class as students only retain about 50% of material taught in class, and helps students develop necessary life-skills to achieve success such as discipline, self-responsibility, critical thinking, time management. [Research from Johns Hopkins University](#) found that students in an interactive homework process known as TIPS (Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork), earned significantly higher report card grades and 18 weeks than did students who did not participate in the TIPS program. To avoid counterproductive effects of homework on children, which a [Stanford study](#) mentions include greater stress, reductions in health, and less time for family, friends, and extracurricular activities, educators should be assigning homework to students that comply with the 10-minute rule, prioritization of quality over quantity, and application of hands-on, life skills learning which aligns with students' interests and passions.

The meta-analysis conducted by Dr. Cooper suggests the 10-minute rule, a method of calculating the number of minutes of homework students should receive daily by multiplying 10 times the grade level (i.e. a third grader should get thirty minutes of homework daily), as a rule of thumb when assigning homework to students' in grades K-12. [A study using survey data from 4,317 students from ten high-performing countries nationwide](#) indicated that students had an average of three hours of homework daily which led to greater behavioral engagement in school, but more academic stress, physical health problems, and lack of work-life balance. The mental and physical health implications of increased time spent in homework and class, which a [University of Michigan study](#) asserts is roughly 7.5 hours more than children aged 6-17 spent on academics in the 1980s, can lead to suicide and other self-harm caused by teenagers, especially at the college level, where a [report from the American College Health Association](#) found that the suicide rate among young adults, ages 15-24, has tripled since the 1950s and is now [the second leading cause of death among people aged 10-34](#). [Students claim that the time spent on homework prevents time for physical activity](#) which increases students' risk for obesity and type II diabetes in extreme cases, and can cause a domino effect to create a multitude of other negative health and self-esteem related consequences for school-aged children.

[An article written by Kelly Wallace for CNN](#) features parents complaining about the effectiveness of the work their children are assigned as they see little value in it. If students are mindlessly completing a worksheet or textbook assignment that is little to no help in reinforcing a challenging concept, it is better to not assign it at all, or give the students the choice to complete it, as [one study's regression analyses](#) illustrated the importance for teachers to understand the meaning and relevance of assigned work and communicate that to students as these behaviors help students understand the relevance of schoolwork for their personal interests and goals in order to amplify interest, enthusiasm, and engagement in schoolwork. The Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) emphasizes that [increased student engagement in](#)

[schoolwork has been shown to make students more academically successful, have passing grades, and graduate high school on time.](#) One study which [observed 18,000 tenth grade students' survey and transcript data](#) collected from 1990 to 2002 suggested that instead of assigning students a designated amount of homework, educators should assign work that keeps students engaged for a short period of time while allowing a greater chance of retaining information. In effect, this would allow for time to be allocated towards extracurricular activities which teach young people other valuable lessons apart from academics.

One [research study](#) found that homework should be adapted to the needs and potentials of the students because if not, homework progressively undermines students' motivation and interest. If students' interests and motivation to be academically successful gradually diminishes, they will be less likely to work hard and may be more inclined to drop out, according to [James Marshall Crotty](#), who has taught and directed education development in American secondary schools and Columbia University for over three decades, and authored several education novels. Interest and passion in schoolwork matters as students who perceive value in course topics develop greater interest, work harder, perform better, persist longer, take additional courses, and complete their degree programs. [Graduate students of game design at New York University routinely play video games](#) in the Game Center at the Tisch School of the Arts in order to experience first-hand the style and craft of historic games to gain inspiration for their own inventions. In addition, students who see the value of a field of study experience greater involvement, more positive task attitudes, and greater identification with the domain according to [research led by Judith M. Harackiewicz of University of Wisconsin-Madison](#). Many argue that educators may not have the bandwidth to create multiple options of assignments for students to choose from that encourage them to explore their interests and passions, but there should be a flexible element integrated into curriculums that gives students the ability to think outside of the box to create their own assignment or project from scratch, thus forming a new manifestation of the assignment altogether which can promote students' creativity, interests, and motivation to perform well.