

Procrastination



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Based on the article, why does procrastination occur? Discuss this question within the context of the nature-nurture debate. Could there be advantages in putting off a task until the last minute? Under what circumstances are procrastination likely to occur, and does this information provide insight into the nature-nurture issue with respect to procrastination? Many wonder why so many people could possibly want to put off a task until the day before it is due.

Whether it is from actively putting it off since the person has found something they would rather do giving them no motivation to complete the project, or just having no time to do the project until the due date is looming ever closer, both are still considered procrastination and could have serious consequences. In the article “ I’ll Do It Tomorrow” by Trisha Gura, it states that among many researchers, the nature-nurture issue is a key factor in understanding why such procrastination is happening in the world.

The theory behind the issue is whether procrastination is from the nature standpoint, the genetic inheritance from their parents, or a nurture standpoint, the environmental factors in how we are raised. This has been the age old debate on which of the two is the predominant explanation for procrastination, and the article does in fact answer that exact question. Based on the article, different researchers have varying opinions on the causes of procrastination.

Neuroscientist Barry Richmond from the National Institute of Mental Health tested that reward or a due date gets closer, the subject was more likely to stay on task and work hard to reach that goal, but the longer the time between the assign date and the day it is due, the less motivated the

subjects were. Another explanation for procrastination from the article is the “arousal procrastinator” who says they work best under pressure and they need that last minute rush to complete the assignment at all.

One final explanation is the “indecisive procrastinator” who just can’t make up their mind about what they are going to do until enough time has passed where they just cannot do it anymore. These explanations do not work for everyone since some may need that rush before the paper is due, while others just could not figure out which topic they wanted to write on. The greatest explanation is the nature-nurture argument. From the day we are born, our parents tell us how smart we are and how far we will go in life although we have not accomplished anything “great” yet.

For me, the early school days all the way up through high school was a breeze. I never felt the need to study for classes yet I still managed to get straight A’s. However, I would complete all of my projects the night before they are due and think nothing of it. Most people, myself included, just did not try their best because we were told we were more intelligent than we actually were, so we would not work to our full potential. There was always something better to do such as going to the beach with some friends, or taking the bike out and going for a nice ride.

Before we knew it, the due date just happened to be the next day, and everyone was once again hurrying to type out that term paper that was assigned weeks earlier. So why don’t students, or even adults for that matter, do a project or a paper once it is initially assigned? The answer goes back to the nurture argument, and that we are raised to think that we are some magnificent student that can get by with procrastination, yet here we

are in college, finally getting our first bad grades and wondering what the hell is going on.

Now it is not the parents' fault for saying we are smarter than we really are, it's our fault for interpreting that as " we don't have to work hard", and procrastinate. From the article and my own personal experiences, procrastination does occur based on how we are brought up, or the nurture part of the debate. Procrastination is not always a bad thing. For example, I find that my thoughts are more focused and that I produce my best work when I am pressed for time on a paper.

Some say that it is just a bad habit and could be bad for my health as well, yet I have never been stressed out in my life. Psychologist Gregory Schraw of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas learned that students have found ways to make this " bad habit" work for them. They would plan out their procrastination based on a class that gave them a detailed schedule so they could go out and do the things they wanted to do rather than worry about the next project that is due. Once the due date was upon them, they would finish the project and continue the process again. The students did the maximum amount of work in a minimum amount of time – with a minimal amount of pain. " In my own experience, this is exactly what I do, and not only has it worked, but I actually enjoy this system. I get to socialize with friends and then once I have exhausted everything I could possibly do, I start doing my work. In this college experience, students are in an environment where the pressure to do your homework and get good grades is just as strong as the pressure to go out and have fun.

As a freshman, we have come into a world where there is no boundary between the place where we do all of our work, where we sleep and the friends we socialize with. The thought to do all of our work is in the back of our mind, but it isn't what we want to do since all of our friends are around us. This alone is a huge factor in why many college students procrastinate. The transition from high school to college was such a large change for many people that it was too overwhelming to even think about work.

In high school, there was a large line between the school you go to and the home you sleep in, but procrastinating was still a part of it. According to the article, the more space there is between the assignment date and the due date, the more likely you are to procrastinate, and this is true for almost everyone that procrastinates. People always say there is time tomorrow to do it and just keep putting it off. Right now, I have a very large pile of laundry that I was going to take care of three days ago.

I just kept finding other things to do and then realize I don't have time to do it since I still have other work to do. Under these circumstances they can shed light onto the nature-nurture issue. The environment we are in as college students has changed drastically from what we are used to and has shaped is even more. We are now around friends all the time, so going back to what was stated earlier, the pressure to do your work is as great as the pressure to socialize. From this fact alone it can be determined that the nurture part of the argument is the main cause of procrastination.

In a perfect environment where there was no pressure to go out and have some fun then all of the school work would be done as soon as we get it since there would be nothing else to do. While this is a severely antisocial

concept, it is a very efficient and effective way to get work done, to shut yourself away from everyone until all of your work is done. Procrastination is a large part of human history, whether it was an agrarian society farming, or a college student in two thousand and thirteen writing a term paper on the causes and reasons of procrastination.

In the article “ I’ll Do It Tomorrow” by Trisha Gura, many researchers brought up the nature-nurture argument in the reasoning for why procrastination happens. The nurture side of this argument is the largest component to understand why such a phenomenon happens to so many people because it explains how the person was brought up and the environment they were brought up in. While procrastination may not be viewed as a good thing, it can have positive benefits such as more focused thoughts and great works can come from it. Procrastination does not work for everyone, but it is a concept that most people succumb to.