

Good argumentative  
essay on homework  
is not helpful in the  
large amounts it is  
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[Family](#), [Parents](#)



- Introduction:
- The importance of education
- Homework is a great avenue for retention if applied in moderation.
- Thesis: homework is not helpful if it is given in large amounts.
- Initial Defense of Thesis
- Health issues
- Difficulty in prescribing work
- What constitutes too much?
- Consequences and Parental Guidance
- a. Examples of excessive homework: volume and difficulty
- Confidence issues
- Retention of details compared to moderately assigned homework
- Performance on assessments.
- Conclusion
- Reiteration of the necessity of homework
- Summary: reasons to avoid excessive assignments
- recommendations to consider

Being a high school student represents a huge time of transition from being a child to becoming an adult. In addition to biological and biochemical changes that students may or may not be aware of, there is also a change in what is expected of them as academic performers. There is a change in the workload in comparison to what they were used to as elementary and middle school students. One of the biggest changes is the amount of homework they receive and this is mainly due to the fact that they are required to

achieve mastery of more subjects from daily rotations through multiple classrooms during the day. Some of them are music and

### **Elective-type classes and some of them are mandatory classes such as science, math and English.**

The major or core classes are the ones for which students will have to take a standardized test and normally it is a statewide exam and it will impact the way they are viewed on college applications. For this reason it is understandable that a child in high school would have significantly more homework than ever before. However, when is it too much for one child to handle after school? That is the question on which this paper is focused. Very helpful and valid resources have been consulted in order to support the statement and belief that homework is not helpful if it is given in large amounts.

Homework is necessary and should be administered in moderation. Taking assignments home to apply the classwork “ plays a critical, long-term role in the development of children's achievement motivation” and “ provides children with time and experience to develop positive beliefs about achievement, as well as strategies for coping with mistakes, difficulties, and setbacks.”(Bempechat 189-196). The reason why too much homework is not helpful is because it can actually be harmful to the health of students. First, it can actually cause too much stress not only for the student but also for an entire family. Stress can manifest itself physically and emotionally and can cause problems such as weight gain or weight loss. It can cause excessive eating of unhealthy quick meals or insufficient nutrient intake because suddenly there is no time to cook. Mom or Dad has to help Johnny with his

boat-load of homework and there is no time to eat good food. Secondly, too much homework causes the inability to remember the information that was learned throughout the day. The problem with that is not retaining the details that would be needed for recall on an assessment in the classroom. This can actually lead to lower grades, lower class performance along with sleep deprivation. "Inadequate sleep time may be contributing to adolescent health problems such as increased stress and obesity" (Noland, James et al). In a research study featuring a sample of three Midwestern high schools, more than 90% obtained inadequate rest during the school nights of the week. Nearly 60% reported stress increase and lower grades. The ultimate consequence could be loss of confidence and if the student is not confident in themselves, they may give up and no longer continue to try as hard as they did in the beginning of the year. In support of this view is a statement found in the book entitled, *The Case Against Homework* by authors Sarah Bennett and Nancy Kalish. They recognize the health hazards of excessive homework to such a degree that they said, "Obesity, sleeplessness, and depression are at the highest levels recorded in children."

The right combination and amount of homework for each child is very difficult to prescribe. Since each child is different with different comprehension abilities and learning styles, it is impossible to say that every single child should have the same amount of homework. Because children are often involved in extracurricular activities (which is highly recommended) a different amount of homework should be required of different students. Each teacher often times may have no idea what other teachers are assigning even if the core subject teachers are on a team and have meetings

in the morning. The other reason why it is very hard to prescribe and tailor assignments for students is that they each have different responsibilities once they leave school. Some students have cheerleading, basketball or soccer practice after school. Some students help with the family business or restaurant or have some type of job after school. Some students are in a bridge program where they will attend another class on a college campus after school or during school so that they can obtain college credits by the end of the school year. This adds an additional sum of work that they must do at home on their own personal time. With these factors being obvious and very realistic, there is one way to best way to define too much homework in such a way that it could apply to any and all high school students. It is to say that too much homework is homework that would require a child to work on an academic assignment for more than 2 or 3 hours after school. Anything more than 2 or 3 hours at a time has a very good chance of interfering with dinner, extracurricular or family activities. " The Forum of Educational Organization Leaders recommends that schools assign two or more hours of homework per day to high school students" (Strother, 423-426).

One of the biggest lessons to be learned during the high school years as a result of having assignments after school is time management. This is just one of the many reasons why parental involvement is so important during this critical time in education for the young teenager. " Operating largely through modeling, reinforcement, and instruction, parents' homework involvement appears to influence student success insofar as it supports student attributes related to achievement (e. g., attitudes about homework, perceptions of personal competence, self-regulatory skills)"(Hoover-

Dempsey, et al. 195-209). If the parent is actively involved there are some great benefits that a student will experience. For instance, if there is a situation in which the student is receiving too much homework the parent can detect this early in the school year and set up meetings with administrators or teachers so that the problem can be adjusted immediately. The student can avoid being frustrated as not all students openly share with their parents what bothers them. Because they are becoming young adults, some students feel that this is a problem they must handle on their own but as the school year goes on they may or may not be able to manage. The parents involved can be ready to speak up for their child if there is too much homework and prevent aggravation thus ensuring student success. The second reason why parental involvement is important is because there might be a chance that the student is simply not organizing they're due dates and assignments in such a way that they can get everything done within the deadlines that are given to them. The parent can also make sure that television and other exciting media are out of reach until the assignment is done.

After discussing the consequences of too much homework it is helpful to consider some examples of what too much work would entail. Too much homework can be viewed in terms of the volume of work and also in terms of the level of difficulty. For example, a student may come home with only three questions to answer from a history class. That does not seem like very much. However if each question requires research and resources to support the answers that come from something outside of regular classroom text book, a simple three questions assignment can become a six hour task

because of the level of difficulty. “ Studies suggest that if students are required to spend too much time on academic material, they are bound to grow bored with it” (Cooper). If the student did not pay attention in class or did not complete previous assignments and activities in class that were leading up to this three question assignment, that problem could add another 3 hours of work. In addition to a three questions history assignment the student might only have one easy math worksheet and math might be the student’s strong suit. However the math worksheet requires a written explanation for at least five of the 20 problems that needed to be done and the student must show all work for how the math problems were solved in order to get full credit,. Now the student is in a situation in which they have too much homework for that evening. Another example of a student in a situation with too much homework for the evening is 10 or 12 very easy and simple assignments four different subject classes. The first way to attack this kind of situation is to write down the due dates for each assignment and determine which ones really need to be completed in that evening and which ones could be put on hold for another evening. In both of these situations, the student's ability to retain the information for each class may be reduced for each number of classes requiring homework on the same due date. This is especially true for the subject areas that the student has to struggle to survive in or that the students simply have very little or no interest. Lastly, there are some assignments that do not require writing at all. Sometimes there's only reading or studying for an upcoming exam. This can add even more stress and anxiety to an already stressful situation especially if the student has become accustomed to cramming the night before a quiz or an

exam. Once again this screams the need for parental involvement and guidance in order for the student to receive help for this kind of workload management. Extra consideration must be granted to students who are learning English as a second language, or have learning disabilities.

There is a positive correlation between retention of academic information and performance on assessments including quizzes, exams and standardized tests. Retention is the ability to hold on to information that was taught and that a student has been able to absorb using their senses. This refers to information that they saw, heard or was able to manipulate with their hands. Repetition or practice is usually what enables a person to retain what they've learned. Students can remember their favorite rock song or hip-hop song verbatim simply because they have heard it many times and they have sung the song on the radio many times. Giving moderate and a healthy amount of homework serves this very same purpose. It allows a student to revisit and practice the information that was given in the classroom. It forces them to apply what they have learned and in doing so they are practicing what they have done and should be able to produce what they remember on an exam. In many cases at the high school level a lot of the questions are analytical and require highly detailed responses.

When homework is given in moderation and a student is able to complete it within a reasonable amount of time, it is even more possible for them to remember details because they did not have 25 different things to do for homework. Almost nothing in the world feels better than coming home with excellent grades to share with mom and dad. Not to mention, being able to cash in those excellent grades for lovely items like privileges, happier



holidays or birthdays, presents and trips with a friend to the mall, cash allowances and more. It is definitely a confidence-booster to be able to bring home a fantastic report card or high grade point average.

Most importantly, homework should serve to prepare the high school student for college. College represents a period of freedom and responsibility.

Discipline (that should have been acquired in high school) will require the student to leave their lecture halls and return to their dorm or apartment or favorite cozy spot in the library to read, study chapter questions, write and research without the professor even having to mention it. Hopefully the homework given during high school will not be in so much excess that it discourages the student, but will be in moderation so that the student is ready to do this kind of work in college and feels completely capable of rising to new challenges. Because of the health concerns, too much homework is discouraged. It can lead to sleep deprivation (which can suppress the immune system) and impair driving to and from school among other problems. Finally if a student feels as though they cannot simply enjoy being a teenager with part-time jobs, sweet telephone conversations at night before bed and time to have sports and family dinners; it really does take away from living a well-rounded life. College applications that require essays will be reviewed by people in academic institutions. They are looking to see that the student enjoyed a well-rounded life with time to volunteer, play sports or music. They do not want to read an essay that reflects a student that worked like a slave doing nothing but homework for classes all of the time. Just as the human body has biological systems that naturally work to maintain biochemical and physiological balance from the tiny cells to the

largest organ systems (in a process called homeostasis), a student's life must also have balance. Extracurricular activities that build confidence and teach people skills, business and time management, professional job retention skills and everything that young people must learn about life outside of the classroom are very important. They are equally a part of the education of the high school student.

In conclusion, there is no way to overstate the absolute necessity of homework in the academic life of high school students. Homework is a vital means by which children can receive the training they need to become mature learners (Bempechat). Hopefully, the student has had a chance to get used to doing homework from elementary and middle school. It is very important for practicing what was learned in class and preparing the mind for performance on assessments in school. It is also an excellent way to prepare for education beyond the high school diploma. These things should not be overlooked. However, it is not helpful to perform countless hours of excessive homework. If a parent suspects that their child is receiving more work than what is reasonable to manage, they should meet with the teachers, guidance staff and administrators of the school and express their concerns. Becoming active in the P. T. A. will allow for fellowship with other parents and together, parents can form organizations and speak in unity.

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