



## 11 Surprising Homework Statistics, Facts & Data

By Chris Drew (PhD) / January 13, 2023



**The age-old question of whether homework is good or bad for students is unanswerable because there are so many “*it depends*” factors.**

For example, it *depends* on the age of the child, the [type of homework](#) being assigned, and even the child’s needs.

There are also many conflicting reports on whether homework is good or bad. This is a topic that largely relies on data interpretation for the researcher to

come to their conclusions.



To cut through some of the fog, below I've outlined some great **homework statistics** that can help us understand the effects of homework on children.

**Contents** [ [show](#) ]

## Homework Statistics List

### 1. 45% Of Parents Think Homework Is Too Easy For Their Children

A study by the [Center for American Progress](#) found that parents are almost twice as likely to believe their children's homework is too easy than to disagree with that statement.

**Here are the figures for math homework:**

- **46%** of parents think their child's math homework is too easy.
- **25%** of parents think their child's math homework is not too easy.
- **29%** of parents offered no opinion.

**Here are the figures for language arts homework:**

- **44%** of parents think their child's language arts homework is too easy.
- **28%** of parents think their child's language arts homework is not too easy.
- **28%** of parents offered no opinion.

These findings are based on online surveys of 372 parents of school-aged children conducted in 2018.



## **2. 93% Of Fourth Grade Children Worldwide Are Assigned Homework**

The prestigious worldwide math assessment Trends in International Maths and Science Study (TIMSS) took a [survey](#) of worldwide homework trends in 2007. Their study concluded that 93% of fourth-grade children are regularly assigned homework, while just 7% never or rarely have homework assigned.

## **3. 17% Of Teens Regularly Miss Homework Due To Lack Of High-Speed Internet Access**

A 2018 [Pew Research poll](#) of 743 US teens found that 17%, or almost 2 in every 5 students, regularly struggled to complete homework because they didn't have reliable access to the internet.

This figure rose to 25% of Black American teens and 24% of teens whose families have an income of less than \$30,000 per year.

## **4. Parents Spend 6.7 Hours Per Week On Their Children's Homework**

A 2018 [study](#) of 27,500 parents around the world found that the average amount of time parents spend on homework with their child is 6.7 hours per week.

Furthermore, 25% of parents spend more than 7 hours per week on their child's homework.



American parents spend slightly below average at 6.2 hours per week, while Indian parents spend 12 hours per week and Japanese parents spend 2.6 hours per week.

## **5. Students In High-Performing High Schools Spend On Average 3.1 Hours Per Night Doing Homework**

A study by Galloway, Conner & Pope (2013) conducted a sample of 4,317 students from 10 high-performing high schools in upper-middle-class California.

Across these high-performing schools, students self-reported that they did 3.1 hours per night of homework.

Graduates from those schools also ended up going on to college 93% of the time.

## **6. One To Two Hours Is The Optimal Duration For Homework**

A 2012 peer-reviewed study in the *High School Journal* found that students who conducted between one and two hours achieved higher results in tests than any other group.

However, the authors were quick to highlight that this “t is an oversimplification of a much more complex problem.” I’m inclined to agree. The greater variable is likely the *quality* of the homework than time spent on it.

Nevertheless, one result was unequivocal: that *some* homework is better than *none at all*: “students who complete any amount of homework earn higher test scores than their peers who do not complete homework.”

## 7. 74% Of Teens Cite Homework As A Source Of Stress



A [study](#) by the Better Sleep Council found that homework is a source of stress for 74% of students. Only school grades, at 75%, rated higher in the study.

That figure rises for girls, with 80% of girls citing homework as a source of stress.

Similarly, the study by Galloway, Conner & Pope (2013) found that 56% of students cite homework as a “primary stressor” in their lives.

## 8. US Teens Spend More Than 15 Hours Per Week On Homework

The same study by the Better Sleep Council also found that US teens spend over 2 hours per school night on homework, and overall this added up to over 15 hours per week.

Surprisingly, 4% of US teens say they do more than 6 hours of homework per night. That’s almost as much homework as there are hours in the school day.

The only activity that teens self-reported as doing more than homework was engaging in electronics, which included using phones, playing video games, and watching TV.

## 9. The 10-Minute Rule

The National Education Association (USA) endorses the concept of doing [10 minutes](#) of homework per night per grade.

For example, if you are in 3rd grade, you should do 30 minutes of homework per night. If you are in 4th grade, you should do 40 minutes of homework per night.



However, this 'rule' appears not to be based in sound research. Nevertheless, it is true that homework benefits (no matter the quality of the homework) will likely wane after 2 hours (120 minutes) per night, which would be the NEA guidelines' peak in grade 12.

### **10. 21.9% Of Parents Are Too Busy For Their Children's Homework**

An [online poll](#) of nearly 300 parents found that 21.9% are too busy to review their children's homework. On top of this, 31.6% of parents do not look at their children's homework because their children do not want their help. For these parents, their children's unwillingness to accept their support is a key source of frustration.

### **11. 46.5% Of Parents Find Homework Too Hard**

The same online poll of parents of children from grades 1 to 12 also found that many parents struggle to help their children with homework because parents find it confusing themselves. Unfortunately, the study did not ask the age of the students so more data is required here to get a full picture of the issue.

## **Interpreting The Data**

Unfortunately, homework is one of those topics that can be interpreted by different people pursuing differing agendas. All studies of homework have a wide range of variables, such as:



- What age were the children in the study?
- What was the homework they were assigned?
- What tools were available to them?
- What were the cultural attitudes to homework and how did they impact the study?
- Is the study replicable?

The more questions we ask about the data, the more we realize that it's hard to come to firm conclusions about the [pros and cons of homework](#).

Furthermore, questions about the [opportunity cost](#) of homework remain. Even if homework is good for children's test scores, is it worthwhile if the children consequently do less exercise or experience more stress?

Thus, this ends up becoming a largely qualitative exercise. If parents and teachers zoom in on an individual child's needs, they'll be able to more effectively understand how much homework a child needs as well as the type of homework they should be assigned.

Related: [Funny Homework Excuses](#)

## Conclusion

The debate over whether to assign children homework will not be resolved with these homework statistics. But, these facts and figures can help you to pursue a position in a school debate on the topic – and with that, I hope your debate goes well and you develop some great debating skills!



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Dr. Chris Drew is the founder of the Helpful Professor. He holds a PhD in education and has published over 20 articles in scholarly journals. He is the former editor of the Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education.

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