



27 Top Homework Pros And Cons

By Chris Drew (PhD) / January 20, 2023



There are both pros and cons of homework. This makes whether schools should assign homework a great debating topic for students.

On the side of the pros, homework is beneficial because it can be great for helping students get through their required coursework and reinforce required knowledge. But it also interferes with life outside of school.

Key arguments for homework include the fact it gives students structure, improves their learning, and improves parent-teacher relationships. Arguments for the cons of homework include the fact it interferes with playtime and causes stress to children.

Contents [[show](#)]

Pros And Cons Of Homework (Table Summary)

Pros of Homework	Cons of Homework
Pro 1: Homework teaches discipline and habit	Con 1: Homework interferes with playtime



Pro 2: Homework helps parents know what's being learned in class	Con 2: Homework interferes with extracurricular activities
Pro 3: Homework teaches time management	Con 3: Homework discourages students from going outside and exercising
Pro 4: Homework gives students self-paced learning time	Con 4: Homework leads to unsupervised and unsupportive learning
Pro 5: Homework can reduce screen time	Con 5: Homework can encourage cheating
Pro 6: Homework gives students productive afternoon activities	Con 6: Homework contributes to a culture of poor work-life balance
Pro 7: Homework reinforces information taught in class	Con 7: Homework discourages children from taking up hobbies
Pro 8: Homework helps motivated students to get ahead	Con 8: Homework creates unfairness between children with parents helping and those who don't
Pro 9: Homework gives parents and children time together	Con 9: Homework causes stress and anxiety
Pro 10: Homework improves parent-teacher relationships	Con 10: Homework is often poor quality
Pro 11: Homework helps teachers get through the crowded curriculum	Con 11: Homework is solitary learning
Pro 12: Homework provides spaced repetition for long-term memorization	Con 12: Homework can widen social inequality
Pro 13: Homework supports a flipped learning model to make the most of time with the teacher	
Pro 14: Homework improves student achievement	
Pro 15: Homework helps the national education system keep up with other countries' systems	

Pros Of Homework

1. Homework Teaches Discipline And Habit

Discipline and habit are two soft skills that children need to develop so they can succeed in life.



Regular daily homework is a simple way that discipline and habit are reinforced. Teachers can talk to students about what they do when they get home from school.

They might develop a habit like getting changed into a new set of clothes, having an afternoon snack, then getting out their homework.

Teachers can also help students visualize these habits and disciplines by talking about *where* they will do their homework (kitchen table?) and *when*.

2. Homework Helps Parents Know What's Being Learned In Class

Parents often appreciate being kept in the loop about what is going on in their child's classroom. Homework is great for this!

Teachers can set homework based on the current unit of work in the classroom. If the students are learning about dinosaurs, the homework can be a task on dinosaurs.

This helps the teachers to show the parents the valuable learning that's taking place, and allows parents to feel comfortable that the teacher is doing a great job.

3. Homework Teaches Time Management

Children often have a wide range of after school activities to undertake. They need to develop the skill of managing all these activities to fit homework in.

At school, children's time is closely managed and controlled. Every lesson ends and begins with a bell or a teacher command.

At some point, children need to learn to manage their own time. Homework is an easy way to start refining this important soft skill.

4. Homework Gives Students Self-Paced Learning Time

At school, a lesson has a clear beginning and end. Students who are struggling may be interrupted and need more time. Homework allows them to work on these tasks at their own pace.

When I was studying math in high school, I never got my work done in time. I understood concepts slower than my peers, and I needed more time to reinforce concepts.

Homework was my chance to keep up, by studying at my own pace.



5. Homework Can Reduce Screen Time

Paper-based homework can take students away from their afternoon cartoons and video games and get them working on something of more value.

Screen time is one of the biggest concerns for educators and parents in the 21st Century. Children spend approximately [5 to 7 hours](#) in front of screens per day.

While screens aren't all bad, children generally spend more time at screens than is necessary. Homework tasks such as collecting things from the yard or interviewing grandparents gets kids away from screens and into more active activities.

6. Homework Gives Students Productive Afternoon Activities

Too often, children get home from school and switch off their brains by watching cartoons or playing video games. Homework can be more productive.

Good homework should get students actively thinking. A teacher can set homework that involves creating a product, conducting interviews with family, or writing a story based on things being learned in class.

But even homework that involves repetition of math and spelling tasks can be far more productive than simply watching television.

7. Homework Reinforces Information Taught In Class

For difficult tasks, students often need to be exposed to content over and over again until they reach mastery of the topic.

To do this, sometimes you need to do old-fashioned repetition of tasks. Take, for example, algebra. Students will need to repeat the process over and over again so that they will instinctively know how to complete the task when they sit their standardized test.

Of course, the teacher needs to teach and reinforce these foundational skills at school before independent homework practice takes place.

8. Homework Helps Motivated Students To Get Ahead

Many students who have set themselves the goal of coming first in their class want to do homework to get an advantage over their peers.

Students who want to excel should not be stopped from doing this. If they enjoy homework and it makes them smarter or better at a task, then they should be allowed to do this.



9. Homework Gives Parents And Children Time Together

When a parent helps their child with homework (by educating and quizzing them, not cheating!), they get a chance to bond.

Working together to complete a task can be good for the relationship between the parent and the child. The parents can also feel good that they're supporting the child to become more educated.

10. Homework Improves Parent-Teacher Relationships

Parents get an inside look at what's happening at school to improve their trust with the teacher, while also helping the teacher do their job.

Trust between parents and teachers is very important. Parents want to know the teacher is [working hard](#) to support students and help them learn. By looking at their children's homework, they get a good idea of what's going on in the classroom.

The parent can also feel good about helping the teacher's mission by sitting with the child during homework and helping to reinforce what's been learned at school.

11. Homework Helps Teachers Get Through The Crowded Curriculum

Teachers are increasingly asked to teach more and more content each year. Homework can be helpful in making sure it all gets done.

Decades ago, teachers had time to dedicate lessons to repeating and practicing content learned. Today, they're under pressure to teach one thing then quickly move onto the next. We call this phenomenon the "crowded curriculum".

Today, teachers may need to teach the core skills in class then ask students to go home and practice what's been taught to fast-track learning.

12. Homework Provides Spaced Repetition For Long-Term Memorization

Spaced repetition is a strategy that involves quizzing students intermittently on things learned in previous weeks and months.

For example, if students learned division in January, they may forget about it by June. But if the teacher provides division questions for homework in January, March, and May, then the students always keep that knowledge of how to do division in their mind.



Spaced repetition theory states that regularly requiring students to recall information that's been pushed to the back of their mind can help, over time, commit that information to their long-term memory and prevent long-term forgetting.

13. Homework Supports A Flipped Learning Model To Make The Most Of Time With The Teacher

Flipped learning is a model of education where students do preparation before class so they get to class prepared to learn.

Examples of flipped learning include [pre-teaching vocabulary](#) (e.g. giving children new words to learn for homework that they will use in a future in-class lesson), and asking students to watch preparatory videos before class.

This model of homework isn't about reinforcing things learned in class, but learning things before class to be more prepared for lessons.

14. Homework Improves Student Achievement

An influential [review of the literature on homework](#) by Mazano and Pickering (2007) found that homework does improve student achievement.

Another [review of the literature](#) by Cooper, Robinson and Patall (2006) similarly found that homework improves achievement. In this review, the authors highlighted that homework appeared more beneficial for high school students' grades than elementary school students' grades.

Several [progressive education critics](#), especially [Alfie Kohn](#), have claimed that homework does not help student grades. We have not found the critics' evidence to be as compelling.

15. Homework Helps The Education System Keep Up With Other Countries' Systems

All nations are competing with one another to have the best education system (measured by [standardized tests](#)). If other countries are assigning homework and your country isn't, your country will be at a disadvantage.

The main way education systems are compared is the OECD ranking of education systems. This ranking compared standardized test scores on major subjects.

Western nations have been slipping behind Asian nations for several decades. Many Asian education systems have a culture of assigning a lot of homework. To keep up, America may also need to assign homework and encourage their kids to do more homework.

See Also: [Homework Statistics](#) List



Cons Of Homework

1. Homework Interferes With Play Time

[Play-based learning](#) is some of the best learning that can possibly occur. When children go home from school, the play they do before sunset is hugely beneficial for their development.

Homework can prevent children from playing. Instead, they're stuck inside repeating tasks on standardized homework sheets.

Of course, if there is no homework, parents would have to make sure children are engaging in beneficial play as well, rather than simply watching TV.

2. Homework Interferes With Extracurricular Activities

After school, many children want to participate in extracurricular activities like sporting and community events.

However, if too much homework is assigned to learners, their parents may not be able to sign them up to [co-curricular activities in the school](#) or extracurricular activities outside of the school. This can prevent students from having well-rounded holistic development.

3. Homework Discourages Students From Going Outside And Getting Exercise

Homework is usually an indoors activity. Usually, teachers will assign spelling, math, or science tasks to be repeated through the week on paper or a computer.

But children need time to go outside and get exercise. The [CDC](#) recommends children ages 6 to 17 need 60 minutes of moderate to intense exercise per day.

Unfortunately, being stuck indoors may prevent children from getting that much needed exercise for well-rounded development.

4. Homework Leads To Unsupervised And Unsupportive Learning

When students get stuck on a task at school, the teacher is there to help. But when students are stuck on a homework task, no support is available.

This leads to a situation where students' learning and development is harmed. Furthermore, those students who *do* understand the task can go ahead and get more homework practice done while struggling students



can't progress because the teacher isn't there to help them through their hurdles.

Often, it's down to parents to pick up the challenge of teaching their children during homework time. Unfortunately, not all students have parents nearby to help them during homework time.

5. Homework Can Encourage Cheating

When children study without supervision, they have the opportunity to cheat without suffering consequences.

They could, for example, copy their sibling's homework or use the internet to find answers.

Worse, some parents may help their child to cheat or do the homework for the child. In these cases, homework has no benefit of the child but may teach them bad and unethical habits.

6. Homework Contributes To A Culture Of Poor Work-Life Balance

Homework instils a corporate attitude that prioritizes work above everything else. It prepares students for a social norm where you do work for your job even when you're off the clock.

Students will grow up thinking it's normal to clock off from their job, go home, and continue to check emails and complete work they didn't get done during the day.

This sort of culture is bad for society. It interferes with family and recreation time and encourages bosses to behave like they're in charge of your whole life.

7. Homework Discourages Children From Taking Up Hobbies

There is an argument to be made that children *need* spare time so they can learn about what they like and don't like.

If students have spare time after school, they could fill it up with hobbies. The student can think about what they enjoy (playing with dolls, riding bikes, singing, writing stories).

Downtime encourages people to develop hobbies. Students need this downtime, and homework can interfere with this.

8. Homework Creates Unfairness Between Children With Parents Helping And Those Who Don't

At school, students generally have a level playing field. They are all in the same classroom with the same resources and the same teacher. At home, it's a different story.



Some children have parents, siblings, and internet to rely upon. Meanwhile, others have nothing but themselves and a pen.

Those children who are lucky enough to have parents helping out can get a significant advantage over their peers, causing unfairness and inequalities that are not of their own making.

9. Homework Causes Stress And Anxiety

In a [study](#) by Galloway, Connor and Pope (2013), they found that 56% of students identified homework as the greatest cause of stress in their lives.

Stress among young people can impact their happiness and mental health. Furthermore, there is an argument to “let kids be kids”. We have a whole life of work and pressure ahead of us. Childhood is a time to be enjoyed without the pressures of life.

10. Homework Is Often Poor-Quality Work

Teachers will often assign homework that is the less important work and doesn't have a clear goal.

Good teachers know that a lesson needs to be planned-out with a beginning, middle and end. There usually should be formative assessment as well, which is assessment of students as they learn (rather than just at the end).

But homework doesn't have the structure of a good lesson. It's repetition of information already learned, which is a [behaviorist learning](#) model that is now outdated for many tasks.

11. Homework Is Solitary Learning

Most education theorists today believe that the best learning occurs in social situations.

[Sociocultural learning](#) requires students to express their thoughts and opinions and listen to other people's ideas. This helps them improve and refine their own thinking through dialogue.

But homework usually takes place alone at the kitchen table. Students don't have anyone to talk with about what they're doing, meaning their learning is limited.

12. Homework Widens Social Inequality

Homework can advantage wealthier students and disadvantage poorer students.



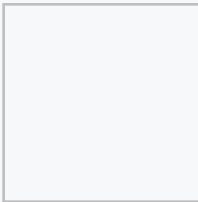
In Kralovec and Buell's (2000) [book](#) *The End of Homework: How Homework Disrupts Families, Overburdens Children, and Limits Learning*, the authors argue that poorer students are less likely to have the resources to complete their homework properly.

For example, they might not have the pens, paper, and drawing implements to complete a paper task. Similarly, they might not have the computer, internet connection, or even books to do appropriate research at home.

Parents in poorer households also often work shift work and multiple jobs meaning they have less time to help their children with their homework.

Conclusion

Homework can be both good and bad – there are both advantages and disadvantages of homework. In general, it's often the case that it depends on the [type of homework](#) that is assigned. Well-planned homework used in moderation and agreed upon by teachers, parents and students can be helpful. But other homework can cause serious stress, inequality, and lifestyle imbalance for students.



[Chris Drew \(PhD\)](#)

[Website](#) | [+ posts](#)

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.

Leave A Comment



Type here..

Post Comment »

This Article was Last Expert Reviewed on January 20, 2023 by Chris Drew, PhD

We cite peer reviewed academic articles wherever possible and reference our sources at the end of our articles. All articles are edited by a PhD level academic. [Learn more about our academic and editorial standards.](#)

Cite this Article in your Essay (APA Style)

Drew, C. (January 20, 2023). *27 Top Homework Pros and Cons*. Helpful Professor. <https://helpfulprofessor.com/pros-and-cons-of-homework/>

Search for a Study Guide

Search





































[Privacy Policy](#)
[Terms and Conditions](#)
[Disclaimer](#)
[Accessibility Statement](#)
[Video Transcripts](#)

[About The Helpful Professor](#)
Copyright © 2023 Helpful Professor

All the advice on this site is general in nature. Seek professional input on your specific circumstances. Students should always cross-check any information on this site with their course teacher.

As an Amazon Associate I earn from qualifying purchases.