

IS HOMEWORK EVER USEFUL?

by:

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The significance of homework on student achievement has stirred conversations in the Philippines, particularly in the education sector, soon after the Department of Education released an official statement regarding no-homework policy bills. While some individuals argue that this will enable students to strike a balance between academic growth and leisure time with their families, others believe that removing assignments may do more harm than good. Homeworks promote good time management, compensates for the limited school hours, provides parent-child bonding through involvement in learning, and encourages students to become more proactive in gaining knowledge. Elimination of these activities is not the solution to the problem, rather, it is the elimination of non-objective, unreasonable, and unrealistic take-home activities which are placing a physical and financial burden upon students and families.

According to Paschal et al. (2001), the amount of home stimulation students receive can affect their achievement in school by as much as 50%. Homework is one way to increase the amount of time on task and promote student success. Homework assignments that are well-designed, well-planned, and meaningful to students are most effective (Ellsasser, 2007). The purpose of homework needs to be explicitly clear to all students so that they can understand how it will help them succeed. When students are interested, they are more likely to engage in a given task and are more likely to understand it and learn from it.

Another often overlooked benefit of homework is its effect on discipline, decision making, and study habits. Teachers may assign some homework to help students develop

their responsibility, perseverance, and time management (Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001). As a student's grade level progresses, he would need to learn the art of time management. To ensure that delegated outputs from all his school subjects will meet their deadline, a learner becomes trained to prioritize tasks, work on a schedule, and decide how to balance studies and leisure. These equip students for real life, where productivity is crucial both in the business world and in the workplace.

Assignments also create opportunities for students to interact with their parents. As the adage says, "Learning begins at home." Bob Keeshan, a producer and actor of children's television programs, took it one step further and elaborated that parents are the ultimate role models for children. Furthermore, Keeshan stated that every word, movement, and action has an effect. Truly enough, no other person or outside force influences a child more than his parents.

Homework is an important time to make connections and comprehend new or familiar information about the world and beyond. When teachers learn to prioritize the quality over quantity of tasks, these may help them gauge their students' mastery of lessons, consequently helping them to create lesson plans which will be adjusted to match their learners' level of understanding (Rodríguez, Regueiro, Blas, Piñeiro & Cereza, 2014). If done correctly, assignments would be beneficial and not burdensome, both to students and professors.

In conclusion, educators should not be forced to quit delegating homework altogether. The educational system should instead raise bars in creating guidelines concerning take-home activities to ensure a fruitful outcome. With specific objectives, teachers can begin removing unnecessary lengthy tasks that do not equate to learning and productivity. The four walls of a classroom should prepare students to overcome the challenges of the real world – an extremely competitive environment that only allows for the survival of the fittest. The last thing people should do is to let the youth become unprepared adults who cannot commit to conquering tasks as easy as their homework.

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