Student’s Name

November 13, 2008

What do you spend 10 hours a week doing, and hating every second of? Homework! In this speech I will explain to you why teachers should not give homework. The next time your Social Studies or English teacher tries, you’ll have a logical excuse to say no.

First of all, teachers should not give homework because students simply don’t have the time to complete their homework. A survey of 46 students found that 76% of them spend five or more hours a week outside of school with sports, clubs, intramurals, and lessons. Between sleep, school, and extracurricular activities, students barely have any time to just be kids, so why should teachers steal that time with lengthy assignments? 7th grade student Tyler Schmitt says, “I wake up at 6, am at school until 2:30, have football until 5, eat dinner, spend 3 hours on my homework some nights, and don’t go to bed until 10 or 11 some nights.” Is it fair to ask a student to work from sun up until sun down and miss out on the best years of his or her life? I say no!

Next, not all students have the same help or resources at home. Some students go home to parents who sit down and help them with all their math problems. Their parents or siblings let them borrow paper, calculators, use the computer, and look up words in the dictionary. Other students get home and have to watch their siblings, cook dinner, do chores, and don’t have the help of anyone with their homework. How can students type a speech if they don’t have a computer? Do math without a calculator? Or interview a family member when they don’t have a telephone? About 46% of American students go home to an empty house and 34% are living below poverty and can’t afford school supplies. Should these students be required to do the same homework as someone who has the help at home?

Next, homework wastes resources. If you have one homework assignment a night in just three classes, that’s a minimum of three pieces of paper that you’ve used. That’s 15 pieces of paper a week. That’s 540 pieces at the end of the school year. Do you want to live with the guilt of having cut down the equivalent of nine trees just to do math problems? No! No homework means a better environment.

Finally, why should students do work at home when they’ve been working for the past 7 hours? Teachers are given 45 minutes a day, 5 times a week, 9 months of the year to teach their content. They have a degree in education and sometimes even a Masters. If teachers can’t figure out how to teach all of their content in the school day, that’s their fault, not the students’. One teacher, Mrs. Shaffer, says, “If I’m not there to help the student if they have a question, it’s not fair to them so I allow students time in class to complete their work.”

However, the principal said that learning needs to happen every day, so homework is a good way for students to practice skills so they won’t forget them. I disagree. What happens if a student takes their homework home and didn’t understand the assignment? They may do 20 problems incorrectly or write an entire paper the wrong way. They just wasted their time and may have taught themselves a bad habit that takes twice as long to unteach.

Also, one student stated that if teachers don’t give homework, they won’t have enough time in class to do the fun stuff, like games. I don’t agree. If a teacher is giving homework, it normally isn’t to make time for fun things in class. The Spanish teacher doesn’t give homework, but still has fun games in her class; yet my Math teacher gives homework and we never play games. Homework usually doesn’t affect how the teacher teaches.

Today I explained why teachers shouldn’t give homework: because it takes too much time, isn’t fair to students, wastes trees, and makes students work too hard. Also, I proved that homework doesn’t help students and doesn’t make more time for fun stuff in class. So what do you think, in 50 years will you remember everything that homework taught you, or will you remember what you learned in class?