

Objective Summary

LEARNING GOALS:

- I can assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience
- I can gather relevant information from multiple authoritative grade-appropriate print and/or digital sources

Notes for objective summary - *Basically, If someone asked what this article is about, what would you say? Keep it simple and focus only on the facts of what's presented. Keep all of your opinions on hold. You should include the following*

- Use the author's name/title/employer if relevant to add credibility. It also is advisable to mention names of experts prominently featured.
- Explain what specific topics are covered.
- Identify the point and/or perspective of this article.
- Identify the main arguments.
- Does it offer any solutions? What are they?

EXAMPLE: The 2010 Scholastic article "Stomp Out Bullying" by Jennifer Dignan shows why bullying is a problem and how it can be solved. The article discusses how one out of four teens is bullied. In fact, many schools and organizations have established anti-bullying programs to address this problem. To help stop bullying, students should speak up when they are bullied or when they see bullying happen.

Read the article below, or [linked here](#), and write a full objective summary.

Write your summary here

ARTICLE:

What's the Right Amount of Homework?

Decades of research show that homework has some benefits, especially for students in middle and high school—but there are risks to assigning too much.

By [Youki Terada](#), February 23, 2018 - Edutopia

Many teachers and parents believe that homework helps students build study skills and review concepts learned in class. Others see homework as disruptive and unnecessary, leading to burnout and turning kids off to school. Decades of research show that the issue is more nuanced and complex than most people think: Homework is beneficial, but only to a degree. Students in high school gain the most, while younger kids benefit much less.

The National PTA and the National Education Association support the "[10-minute homework guideline](#)"—a nightly 10 minutes of homework per grade level. But many teachers and parents are quick to point out that what matters is the quality of the homework assigned and how well it meets students' needs, not the amount of time spent on it.

The guideline doesn't account for students who may need to spend more—or less—time on assignments. In class, teachers can make adjustments to support struggling students, but at home, an assignment that takes one student 30 minutes to complete may take another twice as much time—often for reasons beyond their control. And homework can widen the achievement gap, putting students from low-income households and students with learning disabilities at a disadvantage.

However, the 10-minute guideline is useful in setting a limit: When kids spend too much time on homework, there are real consequences to consider.

SMALL BENEFITS FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

As young children begin school, the focus should be on cultivating a love of learning, and assigning too much homework can undermine that goal. And young students often don't have the study skills to benefit fully from homework, so it may be a poor use of time (Cooper 1989, Cooper et al. 2006, Marzano & Pickering 2007). A more effective activity may be nightly reading, especially if parents are involved. The benefits of reading are clear: If students aren't proficient readers by the end of third grade, they're less likely to succeed academically and graduate from high school (Fiester 2013).

For second-grade teacher Jacqueline Fiorentino, the minor benefits of homework did not outweigh the potential drawback of turning young children against school at an early age, so she experimented with dropping mandatory homework. "Something surprising happened: They started doing more work at home," Fiorentino writes. "This inspiring group of 8-year-olds used their newfound free time to explore subjects and topics of interest to them." She encouraged her students to read at home and offered optional homework to extend classroom lessons and help them review material.

MODERATE BENEFITS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

As students mature and develop the study skills necessary to delve deeply into a topic—and to retain what they learn—they also benefit more from homework. Nightly assignments can help prepare them for scholarly work, and research shows that homework can have moderate benefits for middle school students (Cooper et al. 2006). Recent research also shows that online math homework, which can be designed to adapt to students' levels of understanding, can significantly boost test scores (Roschelle et al. 2016).

There are risks to assigning too much, however: A 2015 study found that when middle school students were assigned more than 90 to 100 minutes of daily homework, their math and science test scores began to decline (Fernández-Alonso, Suárez-Álvarez, & Muñiz 2015). Crossing that upper limit can drain student motivation and focus. The researchers recommend that "homework should present a certain level of challenge or difficulty, without being so challenging that it discourages effort." Teachers should avoid low-effort, repetitive assignments, and assign homework "with the aim of instilling work habits and promoting autonomous, self-directed learning."

In other words, it's the quality of homework that matters, not the quantity. Brian Sztabnik, a veteran middle and high school English teacher, suggests that teachers take a step back and [ask themselves these five questions](#):

- How long will it take to complete?
- Have all learners been considered?
- Will an assignment encourage future success?
- Will an assignment place material in a context the classroom cannot?
- Does an assignment offer support when a teacher is not there?

MORE BENEFITS FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS, BUT RISKS AS WELL

By the time they reach high school, students should be well on their way to becoming independent learners, so homework does provide a boost to learning at this age, as long as it isn't overwhelming (Cooper et al. 2006; Marzano & Pickering, 2007). When students spend too much time on homework—more than two hours each night—it takes up valuable time to rest and spend time with family and friends. A 2013 study found that high school

students can experience serious mental and physical health problems, from higher stress levels to sleep deprivation, when assigned too much homework (Galloway, Conner, & Pope 2013).

Homework in high school should always relate to the lesson and be doable without any assistance, and feedback should be clear and explicit.

Teachers should also keep in mind that not all students have equal opportunities to finish their homework at home, so incomplete homework may not be a true reflection of their learning—it may be more a result of issues they face outside of school. They may be hindered by issues such as lack of a quiet space at home, resources such as a computer or broadband connectivity, or parental support (OECD 2014). In such cases, giving low homework scores may be unfair.

Since the quantities of time discussed here are totals, teachers in middle and high school should be aware of how much homework other teachers are assigning. It may seem reasonable to assign 30 minutes of daily homework, but across six subjects, that's three hours—far above a reasonable amount even for a high school senior. Psychologist Maurice Elias sees this as a common mistake: Individual teachers create homework policies that in aggregate can overwhelm students. He suggests that teachers work together to develop [a school-wide homework policy](#) and make it a key topic of back-to-school night and the first parent-teacher conferences of the school year.

PARENTS PLAY A KEY ROLE

Homework can be a powerful tool to help parents become more involved in their child's learning (Walker et al., 2004). It can provide insights into a child's strengths and interests, and can also encourage conversations about a child's life at school. If a parent has positive attitudes toward homework, their children are more likely to share those same values, promoting academic success.

But it's also possible for parents to be overbearing, putting too much emphasis on test scores or grades, which can be disruptive for children (Madjar, Shklar, & Moshe 2015). Parents should avoid being overly intrusive or controlling—students report feeling less motivated to learn when they don't have enough space and autonomy to do their homework (Orkin, May, & Wolf 2017; Patall, Cooper, & Robinson 2008; Silinskas & Kikas 2017). So while homework can encourage parents to be more involved with their kids, it's important to not make it a source of conflict.