



# Homework in the Elementary Years: How to Make It Work for Your Child

[www.kidsacademy.mobi](http://www.kidsacademy.mobi)

There's no other topic in the world of education and among parents that have caught more flack in recent years than homework. A seriously contentious topic among "mommy blogs" and forums, homework has also been criticized and amongst educational experts as ineffective, and sometimes even harmful, arguing that homework can needlessly stress out children, without raising test scores.

But as you may well know, another hot topic in education is the role and function of standardized testing, which is often looked upon by educators as negative and harmful in its own right. So if we as parents base the purpose of homework solely on whether it helps raise test scores, the studies may not be so valid if we look at other purposes behind the role and utility of homework.



Homework can indeed have a meaningful impact on children's lives, but as with anything else, it must be integrated in the right way, and too much of anything can be harmful. Keep reading to find out how to make homework work for your child in the primary years, and beyond.

## Character and Work Ethic: Promoting the Value of Education

Talk to any teacher, and they will likely bemoan the fact that many of their students simply do not value education. Increasingly in our society, students and parents alike take for granted the value of the education kids receive, while families get lost in extracurricular activities and athletics.

According to a [2010 study](#), students in America focus on sports more than students in most other countries. While studies have also proven that extracurricular activities strengthen academic achievement, too much of a good thing usually yields poor results. Homework can be a powerful tool if used correctly by teachers and parents in the primary years. Rather than focusing on achievement and test scores, homework can be used as a tool for instilling a healthy sense of obligation, work ethic, and personal responsibility.

Indeed, parents can use homework to promote the value of education and the importance of meaningful practice. So long as parents communicate and discuss expectations and are consistent with supervision of the completion of homework, kids will build positive work ethic and individual responsibility throughout the primary years.

### How Much is Too Much?

Another raging debate in the world of education is if homework can be helpful to kids, how much of it is effective, and how much is just too much? As mentioned above, too much of a good thing can actually be detrimental.

**„10-20 minutes per night in the first grade, and an additional 10 minutes per grade level thereafter.“**

According to the National PTA guidelines, and prominent [educational researcher Harris Cooper](#), “10-20 minutes per night in the first grade, and an additional 10 minutes per grade level thereafter (e.g., 20 minutes for second grade, 120 minutes for twelfth)” is appropriate for kids in elementary school.

Of course, this may change in later grades, but it's clear that early on, homework should be given in short bursts. This will help children practice necessary skills, learn to manage their workload over time, while avoiding placing too much pressure and stress on kids.

## How to Make it Work?

Increasingly educators are incorporating new technology into the lessons they teach, as well as the homework they assign.

- Homework can be done online through [innovative interactive programs](#) that your kids love.
- If you are homeschooling your child, or looking to offer more academic support for your little learner, it's important to make that homework fun and engaging.
- Chances are, your child loves to use devices like smart phones or a tablet to play games, and would enjoy doing something like playing iPad math games. This would make learning more like a game, destigmatizing the word "homework" for your child. Of course there's nothing wrong with old school homework methods, like [rhyming worksheets](#), for instance.
- As with anything in life, moderation is key; for younger children, make learning fun, repetitive, and in short (but meaningful) bursts.

## The Takeaway

The debate over homework will likely persist for many years to come. However, so will the homework itself. Educators and educational theorists realize the positive role that homework can make in a child's life if it is done in moderation, and is implemented correctly and consistently at home. If children are raised to believe that education (and likewise homework) is important, valuable, and leads to success, kids are likely to grow up with healthy regard for work ethic and responsibility.



Watch on [YouTube](#)

Not every homework is daunting! Let your kids practice the way they love most - through a game! Check out this [all-in-one early interactive program for kids aged 2 to 7](#) and keep your little learner busy with his riveting learning pathway and interactive homework!

