

MetLife[®]



The MetLife Survey of

THE
AMERICAN
TEACHER

The Homework Experience

The MetLife Survey of *THE AMERICAN TEACHER*

THE HOMEWORK EXPERIENCE

A SURVEY OF STUDENTS, TEACHERS AND PARENTS

Conducted for:
MetLife, Inc.

Survey Field Dates:

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Parents: June 1, 2007 and June 14, 2007

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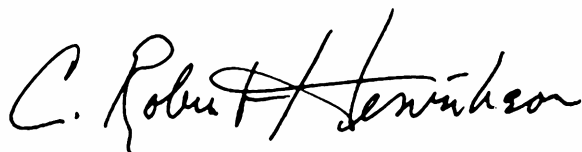
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Message from MetLife

In life and work, the phrase “doing your homework” means being prepared. In schools, of course, the meaning is more literal and specific. For most students, teachers and parents, homework is an almost daily fact of life. Still, it can also be about preparation, for the next day, for the next step in gaining the knowledge and skills needed for future success.

Homework is a subject of much debate: Is it done? Is it effective? Are its results worth the time required? MetLife places great value on hearing firsthand from stakeholders. This year *The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher* asked students, teachers, and parents to share their perspectives on homework, its purposes, the time involved, the benefit.

Frequently a topic of specific communications among parents, teachers and students, homework can also lead to larger discussions about teaching and learning, parenting, and preparation for work, college and life. This survey shares the voices and perspectives of those closest to the issues. As we all work collaboratively to strengthen education, we believe these views can stimulate larger, beneficial discussions in homes, classrooms, schools, universities and communities across the nation.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "C. Robert Henrikson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "C".

C. Robert Henrikson
Chairman of the Board, President and Chief Executive Officer
MetLife, Inc.

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INTRODUCTION

The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher, 2007: The Homework Experience was conducted by Harris Interactive®. This report is the twenty-fourth in a series of surveys sponsored annually by MetLife since 1984. This year's *MetLife Survey* focuses on issues related to homework. Homework is a fact of life for most students, teachers and parents. Each of these groups often devote time daily to homework assignments. In addition, homework reflects a practical, day-to-day aspect of interactions among students, teachers and parents. Homework's impact is directed at benefiting students' current schoolwork and also life skills beyond the classroom. In recent years, debates among scholars, educators and the general public have drawn attention to issues surrounding homework. This year's *MetLife Survey of the American Teacher* seeks to contribute to the understanding of homework by including the perspectives of teachers, students and parents. The *Survey* examines each of these groups' views and experiences regarding the quantity of homework assigned and completed, how and when homework is accomplished, the impact of homework, perceived goals and value of homework, the level of student engagement in learning, and the amount of time teachers spend on homework. A national sample of public school students in grades 3 through 12, public school teachers of grades K through 12 and parents of students in grades K through 12 participated in the 2007 *Survey*. In addition, public school principals, teachers and department chairs took part in an online strategy session on homework.

Research Methods

This research combined both quantitative and qualitative methods to gain a clear picture of attitudes and perceptions of teachers, parents and students.

Survey of Teachers

A nationally representative sample of 1,000 public school teachers of grades K through 12 was interviewed. Interviews were conducted on the telephone. Respondents were recruited using a targeted sample list. Telephone interviews averaged 12 minutes in length and were conducted between May 10, 2007 and May 16, 2007.

Survey of Parents

A nationally representative sample of 501 parents of children in grades K through 12 was interviewed. Interviews were conducted online. Respondents were recruited using the Harris

Interactive Panel Online (HPOL). Online interviews averaged 15 minutes in length and were conducted between June 1, 2007 and June 14, 2007.

Survey of Students

A nationally representative sample of 2,101 students in grades 3 through 12 was interviewed. A total of 976 students were surveyed during an English class using a self-administered questionnaire, and a total of 1,125 students were interviewed online using a self-administered questionnaire. Interviews averaged 15 minutes in length. The online interviews were conducted between April 16, 2007 and April 27, 2007 and the in-school interviews were conducted between March 28, 2007 and May 31, 2007.

Detailed methodologies of all surveys appear in Appendix A. All survey questionnaires, including the total responses to each question, appear in Appendix B.

Strategy Session Among Teachers, Principals and Department Chairs

In addition, Harris Interactive conducted a strategy session among twenty K through 12 teachers, principals and department chairs recruited from a targeted sample list. The session was conducted online using Harris Interactive's proprietary Advanced Strategy Lab[®] Online (ASL[®] Online) on June 12, 2007. Doug Griffen, Director of Strategy & Facilitation at the Advanced Strategy Center, moderated the session. Respondent comments from the group are included in the report.

A Note on Reading the Exhibits and Figures

An asterisk (*) on an exhibit signals a value of less than one-half percent (0.5%). A dash (–) represents a value of zero. Percentages may not always add up to 100% because of computer rounding or the acceptance of multiple answers from respondents. Calculations of responses discussed in the text are based on raw numbers and not percentages, therefore these figures may differ slightly from calculations based on percentages. The base for each question is the total number of respondents answering that question. Note that in some cases results may be based on small sample sizes. This is typically true when questions were asked of subgroups. Caution should be used in drawing any conclusions from the results based on these small samples. Percentages depicted may not add up to 100% because some answer categories may be excluded from the figure.

Project Responsibility and Acknowledgments

The Harris team responsible for the design and analysis of the survey included Dana Markow, Ph.D., Vice President; Amie Kim, Research Manager; and Margot Liebman, Research Associate. Harris Interactive Inc. is responsible for final determination of the topics, question wording, collection of data, analysis and interpretation in the report.

Public Release of Survey Findings

All Harris Interactive Inc. surveys are designed to comply with the code and standards of the Council of American Survey Research Organizations (CASRO) and the code of the National Council of Public Polls (NCPP). Because data from the survey may be released to the public, release must stipulate that the complete report is also available.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Homework provides a window through which to view many important aspects of education and gain insight into the attitudes and experiences of students, teachers and parents. Homework occupies an intersection between school, home and the community, and, as such, can serve as a channel of communication between the school and parent, as well as the parent and child. This year's *MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: The Homework Experience* presents the perspectives of students, teachers and parents on their attitudes about and experiences with homework. The findings reveal the central importance of homework for each of these key stakeholders and challenge some popular perceptions about the impact of homework on children's and families' lives.

More than eight in ten parents believe that their child's teachers assign the right amount of – or even too little – homework, and three-quarters of students report that they have enough time to do their assignments. These findings are somewhat surprising given recent attention in the popular press regarding parents who feel that too much homework is assigned, placing an undue burden on students' and families' time. In the current *MetLife Survey*, nine in ten parents report that helping their child with homework provides an opportunity for them to talk and spend time together. The majority of parents do not see homework as getting in the way of family time or as a major source of stress and disagreement in their family.

Although the majority of students report that they have enough time to do their homework, the one-quarter who report that they do not have enough time have higher rates of risk factors related to student achievement and other areas. Those who lack enough time for their homework are more likely to get low grades and are less likely to plan to go to college. They are less likely to believe that homework is important or to always finish their assignments. Frequent failure to complete homework may be an early signal of student disengagement that can lead to truancy and dropping out. Homework is not the only demand on their time – those students who do not have enough time for homework are also more likely to report that they do not get enough sleep.

Most parents, as well as students and teachers, believe in the value of homework. They think homework is important and helps students learn more in school. Minority parents, in particular, have high expectations for the impact of homework. They are more likely than non-minority parents to believe that homework is important and helps students in school and in the future.

Parents who do not believe homework is important appear to be more alienated and less connected to their child's school. Overall, most parents (and teachers) report that the quality of homework assigned by their school is less than excellent. One-third of parents rate the quality of homework assignments as fair or poor, and four in ten believe that a great deal or some homework is busywork and not related to what students are learning in school. These findings raise the possibility that increased parent satisfaction may come from improving the quality of homework and improving communication with parents about the purpose and relevancy of assignment.

Parents value having a quiet place for their child to do homework, but most students do their homework while doing other activities as well. Half of parents have a rule for their child that homework should be completed in a quiet place. Students also profess that having a quiet place to do homework is important to them. Yet while three-quarters of students agree that it is important to have a quiet place to do homework, this is not necessarily a goal that they put into practice. Most engage in other activities while doing homework. Among secondary school students, nine in ten are usually doing other activities, or "multi-tasking", while doing their homework, including 70% who listen to music and 51% who watch TV. Although not measured directly in the current *MetLife Survey*, these results imply that the amount of time students devote to homework may not reflect the quality of the attention they direct to this task.

Teachers frequently use homework to serve a variety of goals, including skills important to succeeding in school and to succeeding in life, such as developing a sense of responsibility and critical thinking. Half or more of teachers frequently use homework to help students practice skills or prepare for tests, develop good work habits, develop their critical thinking skills, motivate them to learn, and develop students' interests. Teachers also use homework as part of assessment and, less frequently, because they did not have enough time during class to cover all of the material; these usages are more common among secondary school teachers than elementary school teachers.

One striking finding of this year's *MetLife Survey of the American Teacher* is the impact that teaching experience has on teachers' views of the value of homework and how they incorporate homework in their lessons. Highly experienced teachers (21+ years of experience) are more likely than new teachers (5 years or less experience) to believe that homework is important: that it helps students learn more in school or that it helps students reach their goals for after high school.

New teachers are less likely than highly experienced teachers to provide students with feedback on homework or to review completed assignments during class discussions. In addition, new teachers feel less prepared to create engaging homework assignments. Both the belief in a multifaceted value for homework and a feeling of confidence in utilizing homework effectively for teaching and learning appear to grow significantly with teacher experience. These findings can have important implications for teacher education and new teacher induction.

An examination of homework provides important insights into education. Overall, the results of this year's *MetLife Survey of the American Teacher* show the role of homework in communication among teachers, students and parents and as a reflection of issues of teaching and learning, school achievement and the development of life skills.

MAJOR FINDINGS

Most teachers, students and parents believe in the value of homework. A majority of each of these key stakeholders thinks that doing homework is important and helps students learn more in school.

- Eight in ten teachers (83%) believe that doing homework is important or very important and nine in ten (91%) agree that doing homework helps students learn more in school.
- Eight in ten parents (81%) believe that doing homework is important or very important and nine in ten (89%) agree that doing homework helps students learn more in school.
- Three-quarters of students (77%) believe that doing homework is important or very important and seven in ten (69%) agree that doing homework helps them learn more in school.

Teachers' ratings of the quality and amount of homework have improved over the past 20 years.

- Teachers in 2007 are more likely than those in 1987 to rate the quality of the homework assigned by their school as excellent (24% vs. 12%).
- Teachers in 2007 are more likely than those in 1987 to rate the amount of homework assigned by the school as excellent (20% vs. 12%).

School-parent relations have improved since 1987, at the same time that parent-school contact is more common.

- More parents today give an "excellent" rating for relations between parents and teachers in their school (34% vs. 25% in 1987).
- More parents today have spoken on the telephone with a teacher or school official at least once during the school year (90% vs. 81% in 1987).
- More parents today have exchanged written notes with a teacher or school official at least once during the school year (76% vs. 66% in 1987).

Teachers and students devote substantial amounts of time to homework each week.

- Teachers spend an average of 8.5 hours a week on responsibilities related to students' homework, accounting for 15% of the time they spend on school-related responsibilities in a week.
- Three-quarters of students (77%) spend at least 30 minutes doing homework on a typical school day, and 45% of students spend at least one hour on homework on a school day.

However, sizable numbers of students say that their homework is not relevant to their current schoolwork or their future goals.

- One-quarter of students (26%) agree that their homework is busywork and not related to what they are learning in schools.
- Students who are not planning on going to college are more than twice as likely as others to believe that doing homework will not help them at all to reach their goals for after high school (19% vs. 7%).

A majority of parents believe that the right amount of homework is assigned.

- Six in ten parents (60%) think that their child's teachers assign the right amount of homework and an additional 25% think that too little homework is assigned.

Many teachers do not communicate with other teachers about homework quantity. More than one-third (36%) speak only a few times a year or less to their students' other teachers about how much homework they are assigning.

While most students say they have enough time to do their homework, one-quarter report that they do not have enough time and one-quarter do not always finish their homework.

- One-quarter of students (24%) say that they do not have enough time to do all of their homework. Students who typically get C's or lower are **less** likely than "A" students to almost always finish their homework (53% vs. 94%).
- One-quarter of students (23%) say that they finish their homework only sometimes, rarely or never, compared to 77% who almost always finish their homework.
- Half of secondary school students (50%) and over one-third of elementary school students (37%) spend one hour or more doing homework on a typical school day.

Nine in ten students (89%) feel stressed about doing homework, including one-third of students (34%) who frequently feel stressed about homework.

Lower achieving students and high achieving students differ in their approach to doing homework, with lower achieving students spending less time on homework and less frequently doing homework at home.

- Students who typically get C's or lower are **less** likely than "A" students to do homework after school (70% vs. 87%) or at home (77% vs. 89%).
- Students who typically get C's or lower are **less** likely than "A" students to say they have enough time to do all of their homework (70% vs. 80%).
- Students who typically get C's or lower are **less** likely than "A" students to be assigned homework every day (34% vs. 52%).
- Students who typically get C's or lower are **less** likely than "A" students to spend one hour or more doing homework on a typical school day (35% vs. 50%).
- Students who typically get C's or lower are **more** likely than "A" students to frequently feel stressed about doing homework (38% vs. 28%).

A sizable number of students, parents and teachers do not believe that homework is important.

- One-quarter of students (23%) do not believe that doing homework is important.
- Two in ten parents (19%) do not believe that doing homework is important.
- Nearly two in ten teachers (16%) do not believe that doing homework is important.

Students who do not believe that homework is important are lower achieving and say they receive a poorer quality of education than others.

Students who do not believe that homework is important are more likely than other students:

- To usually get C's or below (40% vs. 27%);
- To not plan to go to college after high school (26% vs. 15%); and
- To rate the quality of education that they receive as only fair or poor (29% vs. 13%).

Parents who report that the overall quality of education at their child's school is fair or poor are more likely than others to be dissatisfied with the frequency of contact they have with the school (72% vs. 16%).

Parents who do not believe homework is important feel more alienated from the school, are less likely to have rules about homework and are more likely to say that homework is burdensome and not relevant.

Parents who do not believe that homework is important are **less** likely than other parents:

- To rate the quality of homework assigned by the school as excellent (3% vs. 23%);
- To rate the availability and responsiveness of teachers when you need to contact them as excellent (18% vs. 38%);
- To report that their child's school provided them with information on how to help their child with homework assignments (56% vs. 75%) or on how to help their child develop good study habits (54% vs. 76%); and
- To require their child to complete homework in a quiet place (30% vs. 57%); to show them their completed homework (28% vs. 49%); or to complete homework before participating in extracurricular activities (27% vs. 45%).

These parents are **more likely** than other parents:

- To have felt awkward or reluctant about approaching a teacher to talk with them about their child (34% vs. 11%);
- To think that their child's teachers assign too much homework (39% vs. 9%);
- To think that a great deal or some of homework assigned to students is just busywork and not related to what they are learning in school (57% vs. 36%); and
- To say that the time their child spends doing homework gets in the way of their family spending time together (51% vs. 15% of others).

Half of parents believe that students should do their homework without help from their parents; but most parents report helping their child with homework.

- Half of parents (51%) agree students should do their homework without help from their parents.
- Seven in ten (73%) have reviewed, proofed or checked homework assignments during the past school year (84% of elementary school parents and 61% of secondary school parents). Seven in ten (70%) have helped their child with a project during the past school year (79% elementary school students and 61% of secondary school students).
- Nearly nine in ten (87%) say that helping their child with homework is an opportunity for them to talk and spend time together.

Minority parents have greater expectations for homework than others.

- Black and Hispanic parents are more likely than white parents to believe that doing homework is important (89% vs. 77%).
- Black and Hispanic parents are more likely than white parents to strongly agree that doing homework helps students learn more in school (67% vs. 56%).
- Black and Hispanic parents are more likely than white parents to think that doing homework will help their child a lot in reaching his or her goals after high school (77% vs. 59%).

Similar to parents, minority students place a higher value on the importance of homework than do white students, but they are also more likely to encounter friends who mock those who always do their homework.

- Black students (55%) are more likely than white (45%) or Hispanic (38%) students to believe that doing homework is very important.
- Minority students (Black and Hispanic) are more likely than white students to report that their friends make fun of people who always do their homework. (20% overall vs. 15%).

Teachers assign homework to meet a variety of student needs, including skills needed for their current school work, as well as skills that can be applicable to their future schooling, employment and ability to successfully navigate life in general. Secondary school teachers are twice as likely as elementary school teachers to use homework frequently as a continuation of class time to cover material not able to be addressed during class.

- Nearly nine in ten teachers (86%) frequently use homework to help students practice skills or prepare for tests.
- Eight in ten teachers (80%) frequently use homework to help students develop good work habits.
- Two-thirds of teachers (67%) frequently use homework to develop critical thinking skills.
- Two-thirds of teachers (65%) frequently use homework to motivate students to learn.
- Six in ten teachers (63%) frequently use homework to assess students' skills and knowledge.
- Secondary school teachers are twice as likely as elementary school teachers to frequently assign homework because there was not enough time during class to cover all the material (26% vs. 10%).

Teachers' level of experience distinguishes their views on homework's value and purpose, how they incorporate homework into their teaching, and how prepared they feel to create engaging and effective assignments. Highly experienced teachers (21+ years of experience) are more likely than new teachers (5 years experience or less):

- To believe doing homework is important (87% vs. 74%);
- To believe strongly that doing homework helps students learn more in school (60% vs. 36%);
- To agree strongly that homework helps students reach their goals for after high school (60% vs. 48%);
- To frequently use homework to develop students' interests (57% vs. 41%);
- To feel extremely or very prepared to create engaging homework assignments (74% vs. 58%);
- To review completed homework assignments in class discussions most or all of the time (76% vs. 59%); and
- To speak at least once a week to their students' other teachers about how much homework they are assigning (41% vs. 21%).

CHAPTER ONE

THE PURPOSE OF HOMEWORK

Overview

Homework – the concept is so ingrained in the public’s consciousness and view of education that it has even entered the vernacular as the object of the classic excuse: “the dog ate my homework.” As this expression suggests, students have long held conflicting feelings about homework. Today, homework is a source of controversy among adults as well. The issue of homework, including quantity, quality and impact both on education and home life touches upon several current hot button topics, including time, family, educational standards and student achievement. Time is seen by some as being in short supply for students and parents and much media attention has been devoted to this issue. Within the school day, different subjects vie for class time, often in the face of demands for standards and requirements. Outside of the school day, there is a growing concern that children’s lives are overscheduled and that parents and children do not have sufficient time to spend together. Potential distracters to students’ focused attention abound – including television, video/computer games, text messaging, instant messaging, and social networking websites – and multitasking is increasingly common.¹ Homework is often becoming a community topic too, as larger numbers of organizations serving children and youth provide homework assistance outside of school hours. Finally, as in any discussion of public education, student achievement is of critical importance to educators, parents and the general public – not only as it relates to individual students, but also to district and state standings, as well as the United States’ ranking compared to other countries and ensuring that the next generation of the U.S. workforce is competent and ready to both serve the population and compete globally.

Homework intersects with all of these topics. Interest in increasing student achievement focuses attention on how homework can be used to increase the amount and scope of student learning. Conversely, concern exists that the amount of time spent on homework has been increasing over the years, without a noticeable impact on learning. One study found that between 1980 and 2002, the percentage of sophomores who reported spending more than 10 hours per week on homework increased from seven to 37%.² There are even books, blogs and petitions organized around the idea of “stop homework.”

¹ Roberts, D.F., Foehr, U.G., Rideout, V. (2005). *Generation M: Media in the Lives of 8-18 Year-olds*. The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation.

² U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2007). *The Condition of Education 2007* (NCES 2007-064). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

These reactions raise the question of the extent to which doing homework currently is valued by educators, students or parents and what purposes, if any, homework does serve. This report features results from a new survey of teachers, students and parents in the United States. In this chapter, we examine teachers', students' and parents' perceptions of homework – the importance of homework, as well as the perceived impact on students' lives in the classroom and beyond. Subsequent chapters explore when, how and where homework is done; homework's impact on the lives of families; the relationship between homework experiences and school quality; homework's impact on teaching and parent engagement; and an examination of the challenges associated with homework and a discussion of possible solutions to these challenges.

How Important is Homework?

“I think [homework] is very important to reinforce what was taught in class that day. I see the results in students' performance if they have done their homework daily.” (Teacher)

“Homework alone should not have a devastating effect on a student's grade. Homework should be supplemental, not detrimental. Too many children have difficulties completing homework due to their varied home lives.” (Teacher and Department Chair)

Most teachers, students and parents believe that doing homework is important. Eight in ten teachers (83%) and parents (81%) think that doing homework is important, including half (50% of teachers and 56% of parents) who believe homework is very important. Only slightly fewer students hold this belief. Three-quarters of students (77%) say that homework is important, including 45% who say that it is very important.

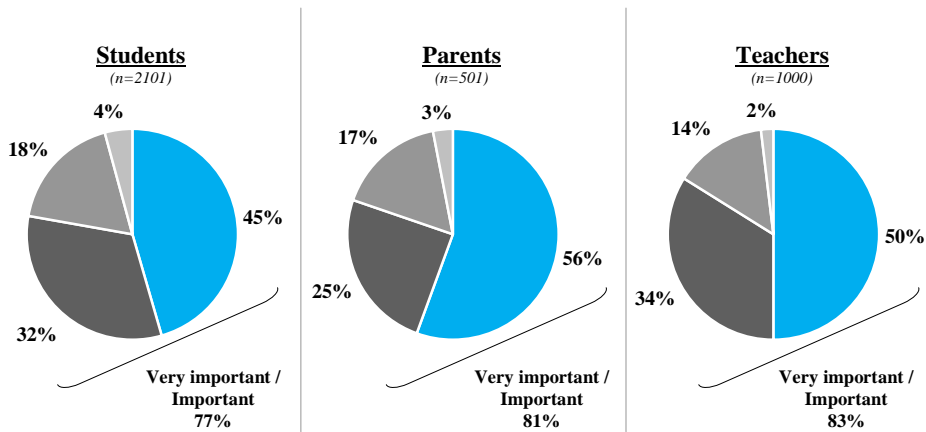
However, a focus on who agrees that homework is important is only part of the story. A sizable number of students, parents and teachers believe that homework is not important or only somewhat important. One-quarter of students (23%) and two in ten parents (19%) and teachers (16%) believe that doing homework is only somewhat or not important. (Figure 1.1)

Figure 1.1
The Importance of Homework – Students, Parents and Teachers

Q705 (Students): How important is doing homework?
 Base: All Students

Q650 (Parents): In your opinion, how important is doing homework?
 Base: All Parents

Q585 (Teachers): In your opinion, how important is doing homework?
 Base: All Teachers



Teachers’ perceptions of the value of homework differ based on what point they are in their teaching career. Belief in the importance of homework is lower among the least experienced teachers and greatest among those who are highly experienced. Highly experienced teachers (with 21 or more years of teaching) are more likely than new teachers (5 or fewer years of teaching) to believe that doing homework is important (87% vs. 74%). However, teachers’ belief in the importance of homework does not vary by such factors as school level or the income level or racial/ethnic background of their students. Teachers at both the elementary and secondary levels are equally likely to value doing homework, as are teachers in schools with high and low proportions of either low income or minority students. Teachers’ ratings of the importance of homework are similar for those who teach in schools with many or few low income students and many or few minority students.

Figure 1.2
The Importance of Homework – Teachers by Experience

Q585 (Teachers): In your opinion, how important is doing homework?
 Base: All Teachers

	Total	Years of Experience			Level of School	
		0 to 5	6 to 20	21+	Elementary	Secondary
Base:	1000	102	482	416	622	321
	%	%	%	%	%	%
VERY IMPORTANT/IMPORTANT (NET)	83	74	82	87	84	84
Very important	50	39	48	55	53	47
Important	34	35	34	32	31	37
SOMEWHAT/NOT IMPORTANT (NET)	16	26	17	12	16	16
Somewhat important	14	16	16	12	15	13
Not important	2	10	2	1	2	3

Unlike teachers, students’ views on the importance of homework do vary by grade level. Elementary school students (grades 3-6) are more likely than secondary school students (grades 7-12) to say that doing homework is important (83% vs. 73%). Students’ performance in school and their race/ethnicity also distinguish their perceptions of homework. Students who are struggling in school and have grades of C or lower are less likely than students who receive mostly A’s to say that doing homework is important (68% vs. 82%). Black students (55%) are more likely than white (45%) or Hispanic (38%) students to believe that doing homework is very important. However, students’ socioeconomic status, as measured by their parents’ level of education, does not distinguish the value they place on homework. Those students whose parents have only a high school diploma are as likely as those whose parents are college graduates to say that homework is important.

Figure 1.3
The Importance of Homework – Students

Q705 (Students): How important is doing homework?
Base: All Students

	Total	Grade Level		Grades		
		3 - 6	7 - 12	Mostly A's	A's and B's	C's and below
Base:	2101	922	1179	558	961	523
	%	%	%	%	%	%
VERY IMPORTANT/IMPORTANT (NET)	77	83	73	82	79	68
Very important	45	57	37	48	49	36
Important	32	25	36	34	30	33
SOMEWHAT/NOT IMPORTANT (NET)	23	16	27	18	20	30
Somewhat important	18	12	22	15	17	24
Not Important	4	4	5	3	3	7

	Total	Race/Ethnicity			Parent Education		
		White/Other	Black/African American	Hispanic	High school or less	Some college/ Associates degree	College graduate or more
Base:	2101	1532	308	261	371	496	1002
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
VERY IMPORTANT/IMPORTANT (NET)	77	77	81	72	74	77	78
Very important	45	45	55	38	40	46	47
Important	32	32	27	34	34	31	31
SOMEWHAT/NOT IMPORTANT (NET)	23	22	18	27	26	23	21
Somewhat important	18	18	15	24	20	20	17
Not important	4	5	3	4	6	3	4

Parents of elementary and secondary school students do not differ significantly in their belief in the importance of homework (78% vs. 84%). The importance of homework also does not vary by their own educational level. Those without a four-year college degree are as likely as those with a degree to believe that homework is important. However, more black or Hispanic parents than white parents believe that doing homework is important (89% vs. 77%).

Figure 1.4
The Importance of Homework - Parents

Q650 (Parents): In your opinion, how important is doing homework?
Base: All Parents

	Total	Level of School		Race/Ethnicity	
		Elementary	Secondary	White/Other	Black/Hispanic
Base:	501	257	244	393	108
	%	%	%	%	%
VERY IMPORTANT/ IMPORTANT (NET)	81	78	84	77	89
Very important	56	56	55	51	65
Important	25	21	29	25	24
SOMEWHAT/ NOT IMPORTANT (NET)	19	22	16	23	11
Somewhat important	17	19	15	20	10
Not important	3	4	1	3	1

The Purpose of Homework

Teachers' top two objectives for homework focus on improving skills for the classroom and for improving skills life beyond school. Teachers report that they most frequently use homework to help students practice skills or prepare for tests (86%) and to help students develop good work habits (80%). Other frequent uses of homework also focus on life skills development. Two-thirds of teachers frequently use homework to develop students' critical thinking skills (67%) and to motivate students to learn (65%), and half (51%) frequently use homework to develop students' interests. Six in ten teachers frequently use homework in their assessment of students' skills and knowledge (63%). Using homework as a continuation of class time because the allotted amount is insufficient to cover required material is less frequent. Fewer than two in ten (16%) teachers use homework very often or often because there was not enough time during class to cover all the material.

Using homework to help students practice skills or prepare for tests is equally common at the elementary and secondary school levels, with 85% of elementary school teachers and 88% of secondary school teachers using homework very often or often for this purpose. However, elementary school teachers are more likely than secondary school teachers to use homework very often or often to help students develop good work habits (83% vs. 75%). Elementary school and secondary school teachers differ in their use of homework in other ways as well, including secondary level teachers being more than twice as likely to frequently assign homework because there was not enough time during class to cover all the material (26% vs. 10%). In addition, secondary school teachers are more likely than elementary school teachers to use homework very often or often:

- To develop students’ critical thinking skills (76% vs. 60%);
- To assess students’ skills and knowledge (74% vs. 57%); and
- To develop students’ interests (56% vs. 48%)

New teachers and more experienced teachers use homework in different ways as well. Experienced teachers are more likely than new teachers to frequently use homework to develop students’ interests (57% vs. 41%).

Figure 1.5
Teachers’ Goals in Assigning Homework

Q560 (Teachers): How often do you use homework assignments to do the following? How often do you assign homework...very often, often, sometimes, rarely or never?

Base: Teachers who ever assign homework

% Very Often/Often

	Total	Years of Experience			Level of School	
		0-5	6-20	21+	Elementary	Secondary
Base:	968	100	465	403	606	311
	%	%	%	%	%	%
To help students practice skills or prepare for tests	86	81	88	86	85	88
To help students develop good work habits	80	82	78	81	83	75
To develop students’ critical thinking skills	67	62	65	70	60	76
To motivate students to learn	65	61	63	68	63	67
To assess students’ skills and knowledge	63	68	65	59	57	74
To develop students’ interests	51	41	49	57	48	56
Because there was not enough time during class to cover all the material	16	11	15	20	10	26

Underlying teachers' different uses of homework is the belief that **doing homework helps students learn more in school**. Nine in ten teachers (91%) agree with this statement, including 55% who strongly agree. The value teachers place on the relationship between homework and learning depends on both the grade level they teach and the teacher's years of experience. Among teachers, the belief that homework helps students learn more is stronger at the secondary school level than the elementary school level (95% vs. 88%). This belief is also more strongly held by those teachers with more experience. Six in ten highly experienced teachers (21+ years experience) and mid-level experienced teachers (6-20 years experience) (60% and 56%, respectively) strongly agree that doing homework helps students learn more in school, significantly more than the 36% of new teachers (0-5 years experience) who strongly agree with this view.

Parents also believe in the relationship between homework and classroom learning. Nine in ten parents (89%) agree that doing homework helps students learn more in school. Elementary school parents and secondary school parents are equally likely to hold this view. However, the racial/ethnic background of parents is a factor in their perceptions on this issue. Black or Hispanic parents are more likely than white parents to agree that homework helps students learn more (97% vs. 85%).

Compared to teachers and parents, students themselves are less likely to make the connection between homework and increased learning. Fewer students (69%) believe that doing homework helps them learn more in school. Factors that influence students' views on the efficacy of homework include the student's grade level, achievement level and race/ethnic background. Elementary school students are more likely than secondary school students to believe that doing homework helps them learn more (77% vs. 64%). This pattern is the reverse of that noted among teachers. Students who do well in school are more likely than others to believe in the efficacy of homework. Seven in ten students who get mostly A's (71%) agree that doing homework helps them learn more in school, compared to 62% of students who get C's or below. As mentioned previously, Black students are more likely than others to value the importance of homework. Similarly, Black students are more likely than white students to believe that homework helps them learn more in school (77% vs. 68%).

Figure 1.6
Homework Helps Students Learn More – Students, Parents and Teachers

Q700/3 (Students): How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
 “Doing homework helps me learn more in school”

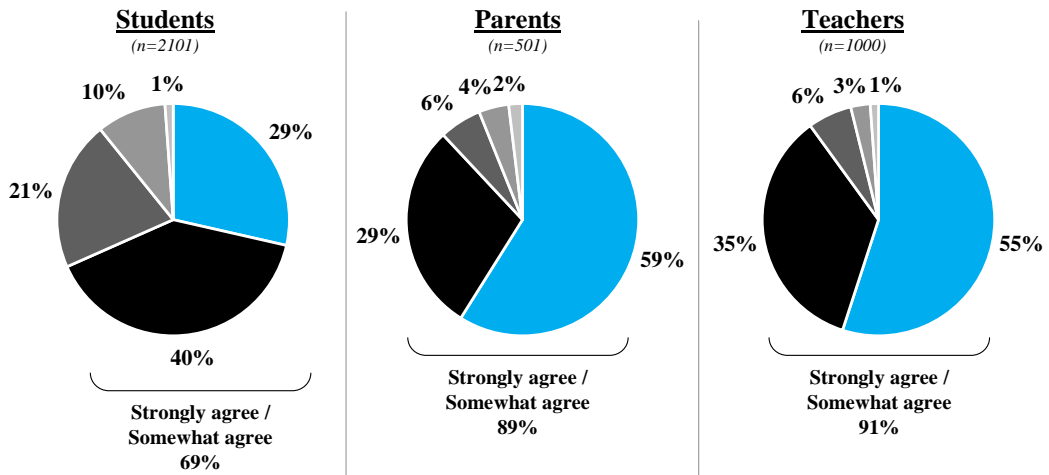
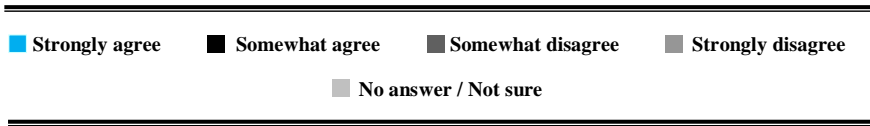
Base: All Students

Q670/3 (Parents): How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
 “Doing homework helps students learn more in school”

Base: All Parents

Q590/3 (Teachers): How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
 “Doing homework helps students learn more in school”

Base: All Teachers



+

Figure 1.7
Homework Helps Students Learn More – Teachers

*Q590/3 (Teachers): How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
“Doing homework helps students learn more in school”*

Base: All Teachers

	Total	Years of Experience			Level of School	
		0 to 5	6 to 20	21+	Elementary	Secondary
Base:	1000	102	482	416	622	321
	%	%	%	%	%	%
STRONGLY/ SOMEWHAT AGREE (NET)	90	84	90	93	88	95
Strongly agree	55	36	56	60	51	63
Somewhat agree	35	48	33	33	37	32
SOMEWHAT/STRONGLY DISAGREE (NET)	8	16	10	5	11	5
Somewhat disagree	6	11	7	3	7	4
Strongly disagree	3	4	3	2	4	1
Not sure	1	-	1	1	*	-

Figure 1.8
Homework Helps Students Learn More – Students

*Q700/3 (Students): How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
“Doing homework helps me learn more in school”*

Base: All Students

“Doing homework helps me learn more in school”

	Total	Grade Level		Grades		
		3 - 6	7 - 12	Mostly A's	A's and B's	C's and below
Base:	2101	922	1179	558	961	523
	%	%	%	%	%	%
STRONGLY/ SOMEWHAT AGREE (NET)	69	77	64	71	72	62
Strongly agree	29	41	21	30	29	27
Somewhat agree	40	37	42	41	43	35
SOMEWHAT/ STRONGLY DISAGREE (NET)	30	22	36	29	27	37
Somewhat disagree	21	15	25	21	20	23
Strongly disagree	10	7	11	8	8	14
No answer	1	1	1	1	1	1

Figure 1.9
Homework Helps Students Learn More – Parents

*Q670/3 (Parents): How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
 “Doing homework helps students learn more in school”*
 Base: All Parents

“Doing homework helps students learn more in school”

	Total	Level of School		Race/Ethnicity	
		Elementary	Secondary	White/ Other	Black/ Hispanic
Base:	501	257	244	393	108
	%	%	%	%	%
STRONGLY/ SOMEWHAT AGREE (NET)	89	88	90	85	97
Strongly agree	59	61	57	56	67
Somewhat agree	29	27	32	29	30
SOMEWHAT/ STRONGLY DISAGREE (NET)	10	11	9	13	2
Somewhat disagree	6	7	6	9	1
Strongly disagree	4	4	3	5	2
Not sure	2	1	2	2	*

Teachers also see a connection between homework and the more general life skill of being responsible. Nearly all teachers (98%) agree that homework develops students’ sense of responsibility. This is particularly true at the elementary school level, where 83% of teachers strongly agree with this statement, compared to 67% of teachers at the secondary school level. The belief in the link between homework and a sense of responsibility is also aligned with the previously cited finding that most teachers at the elementary (83%) and secondary school (75%) levels frequently use homework to help students develop good work habits.

While teachers emphasize the role of homework in increasing learning and developing a sense of responsibility, a majority (60%) also believe that homework makes learning fun. Elementary school teachers are more likely than secondary school teachers to hold this belief (63% vs. 56%). Teachers’ level of experience is another factor in their belief in homework’s impact on the enjoyment of learning. Experienced teachers are more likely than new teachers to believe that homework makes learning fun (63% vs. 49%). This difference may underlie the previously noted finding that experienced teachers are more likely to use homework frequently to develop students’ interests.

Figure 1.10
Homework Develops Students' Sense of Responsibility – Teachers

*Q590/5 (Teachers): How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
 "Homework develops students' sense of responsibility"
 Base: All Teachers*

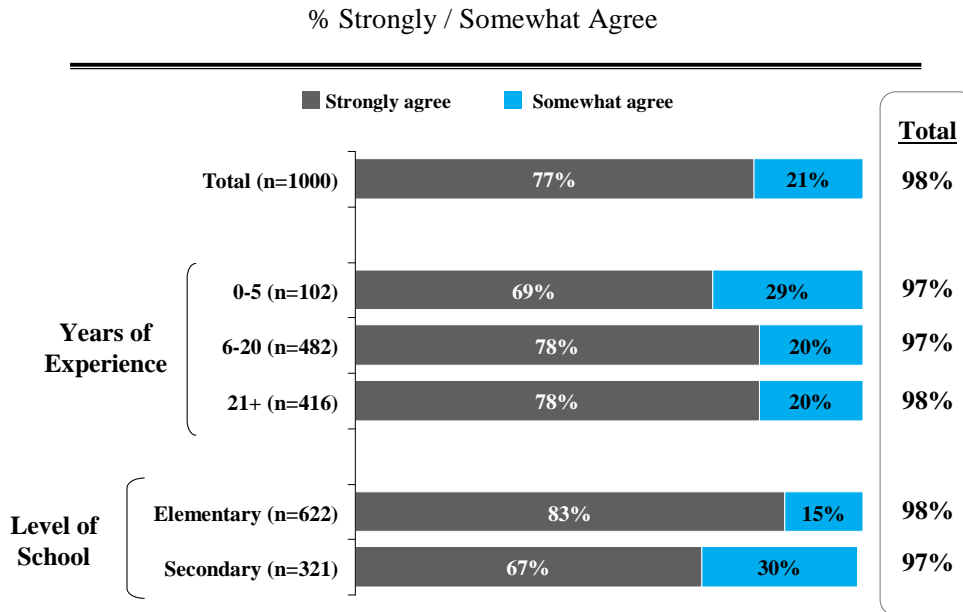


Figure 1.11
Homework Develops Students' Sense of Responsibility – Teachers Both Agree and Disagree

*Q590/5 (Teachers): How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
 Base: All Teachers*

“Homework develops students’ sense of responsibility”

	Total	Years of Experience			Level of School	
		0 to 5	6 to 20	21+	Elementary	Secondary
Base:	1000	102	482	416	622	321
	%	%	%	%	%	%
STRONGLY/ SOMEWHAT AGREE (NET)	98	97	97	98	98	97
Strongly agree	77	69	78	78	83	67
Somewhat agree	21	29	20	20	15	30
SOMEWHAT/ STRONGLY DISAGREE (NET)	2	3	3	1	2	3
Somewhat disagree	1	1	2	*	1	2
Strongly disagree	1	2	*	1	1	1
Not sure	*	-	-	*	*	-

Figure 1.12
Homework Makes Learning Fun – Teachers

Q590/6 (Teachers): How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
 Base: All Teachers

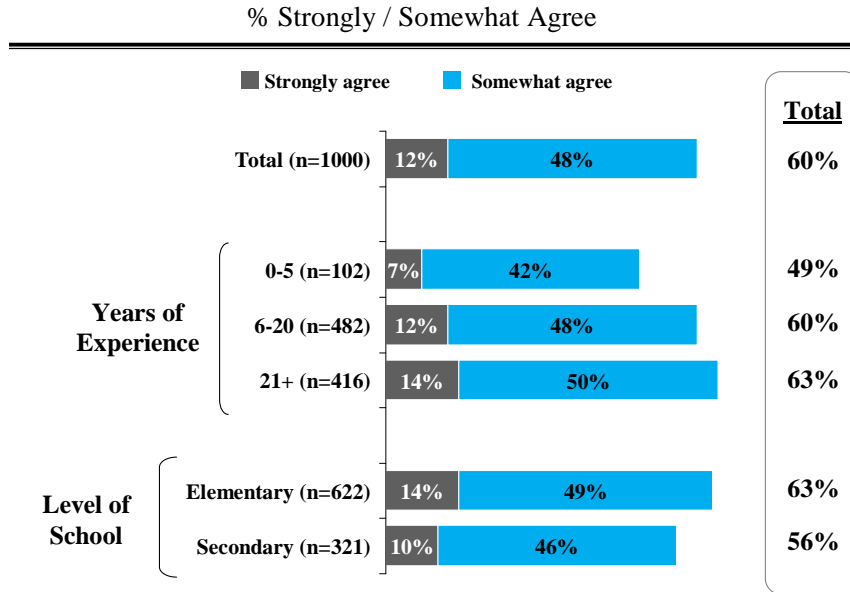


Figure 1.13
Homework Makes Learning Fun – Teachers Agree and Disagree

Q590/6 (Teachers): How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
 Base: All Teachers

	“Homework makes learning fun”					
	Total	Years of Experience			Level of School	
		0-5	6-20	21+	Elementary	Secondary
Base:	1000	102	482	416	622	321
	%	%	%	%	%	%
STRONGLY/SOMEWHAT AGREE (NET)	60	49	60	63	63	56
Strongly agree	12	7	12	14	14	10
Somewhat agree	48	42	48	50	49	46
SOMEWHAT/STRONGLY DISAGREE (NET)	39	50	39	34	36	42
Somewhat disagree	29	32	30	26	27	31
Strongly disagree	10	18	9	8	9	11
Not sure	1	1	1	1	1	1

Homework's Impact Beyond School

Teachers, students and parents believe that the impact of doing homework will resonate beyond the K-12 school years. Nine in ten teachers (90%) agree that doing homework helps students reach their goals for after high school – a belief shared equally by elementary and secondary school teachers. Experienced teachers in particular hold this belief. Sixty percent of experienced teachers strongly agree that doing homework helps students reach their goals for after high school, compared to 48% of new teachers.

A majority of students (56%) think that doing their homework will help them a lot in reaching their post-high school goals and two-thirds of parents (64%) believe that doing homework will help their child a lot in reaching his/her goals. Fewer secondary school students than elementary school students think that doing homework will help them a lot with their post-high school plans (49% vs. 67%), although their child's school level does not distinguish parents' views on this issue. Following the pattern seen previously with the belief in the importance of homework and its impact on the amount of learning school, Black students (62%) are more likely than white (56%) or Hispanic (52%) students to believe that doing their homework will help them a lot to reach their goals for after high school. Minority parents are also more likely than white parents to believe that doing homework will help their child a lot in this area (77% vs. 59%).

Not all students believe that their homework assignments are pertinent to their future plans. One in eleven students (9%) thinks that doing homework will not help them at all in reaching their post-high school goals. Students who are not planning to attend college after high school are twice as likely as college-bound students to believe that homework will not help them at all (19% vs. 7%).

Figure 1.14
How Much Will Homework Help Students Reach Goals in Life? – Teachers

Q590/4 (Teachers): How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
 Base: All Teachers

“Doing homework helps students reach their goals for after high school”

	Total	Years of Experience			Level of School	
		0 to 5	6 to 20	21+	Elementary	Secondary
Base:	1000	102	482	416	622	321
	%	%	%	%	%	%
STRONGLY/ SOMEWHAT AGREE (NET)	90	84	90	92	88	93
Strongly agree	55	48	52	60	53	58
Somewhat agree	35	36	37	32	35	35
SOMEWHAT/ STRONGLY DISAGREE (NET)	8	15	9	6	10	6
Somewhat disagree	6	10	6	5	7	4
Strongly disagree	3	5	3	1	3	2
Not sure	1	1	1	2	2	1

Figure 1.15
How Much Will Homework Help Students Reach Goals in Life? – Students and Parents

Q720 (Students): How much do you think doing your homework will help you to reach your goals for after high school?
 Base: All Students

Q674 (Parents): How much do you think doing homework will help your child reach his/her goals after high school?
 Base: All Parents

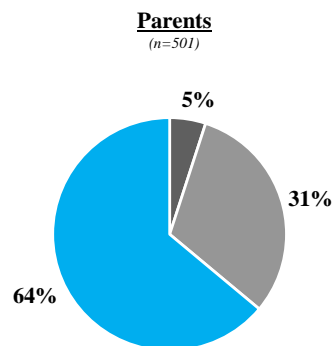
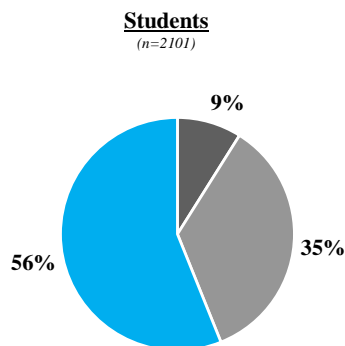


Figure 1.16
How Much Will Homework Help Students Reach Goals in Life? – Students by Grade Level and Ethnicity

Q720 (Students): How much do you think doing your homework will help you to reach your goals for after high school?

Base: All Students

	Total	Grade Level		Race/Ethnicity		
		3 - 6	7 - 12	White/ Other	Black/ African American	Hispanic
Base:	2101	922	1179	1532	308	261
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Not help at all	9	6	11	9	7	10
Help a little	35	27	40	35	31	38
Help a lot	56	67	49	56	62	52
No answer	*	1	-	*	*	*

Figure 1.17
How Much Will Homework Help Students Reach Goals in Life? – Parents

Q674 (Parents): How much do you think doing homework will help your child reach his/her goals after high school?

Base: All Parents

	Total	Level of School		Race/Ethnicity	
		Elementary	Secondary	White/ Other	Black/ Hispanic
Base:	501	257	244	393	108
	%	%	%	%	%
Not help at all	5	7	3	6	3
Help a little	31	28	34	36	20
Help a lot	64	66	62	59	77

Teachers’ and Parents’ Assessment of the Quality of Homework

While large numbers of parents and teachers believe that doing homework is important and is useful for overall learning as well as the development of specific skills, most parents and teachers report that the quality of homework assigned by their school is not “excellent”. In fact, one-third of parents (33%) say that the quality of the homework assigned by their child’s school is fair or poor. Fewer teachers (16%) give such low marks to the quality of homework in their school.

However, the assessment that homework in secondary schools is more likely than that in elementary schools to be only fair or poor quality is shared by both parents (39% vs. 27%) and teachers (25% vs. 10%).

THEN AND NOW:

Twenty years ago, *The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher, 1987* posed the same questions about the quality of homework to teachers and parents. According to teachers, the number of schools achieving excellence in the quality of the homework assigned has increased. Twice as many teachers today as in 1987 rate the quality of the homework assigned by their school as excellent (24% vs. 12%). However, parents today (19%) are just as likely as those in 1987 (17%) to rate the quality of homework as excellent.

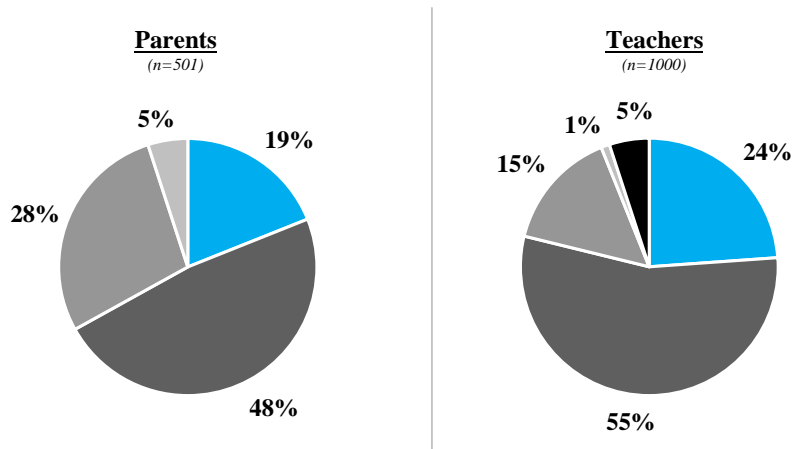
Figure 1.18
Perception of the Quality of Homework – Parents and Teachers

Q525 (Parents): The following are several aspects on which public schools can be judged. How would you rate yours on each of the following?

Base: All Parents

Q505 (Teachers): Would you rate your school excellent, good, fair, or poor on...? "The quality of the homework assigned by the school"

Base: All Teachers



In this chapter, several factors emerge as influencing teachers', students' and parents' perceptions of homework. These include teachers' years of experience, students' grade level and students' and parents' race/ethnicity. Experienced teachers place more value on homework than do new teachers and they also have different goals for its use. Elementary school students have more favorable views towards homework than secondary school students. Black students and parents believe in the importance and efficacy of homework more so than white students and parents. These factors of grade level, race/ethnicity and teachers' level of experience are explored throughout this report to examine their influence on other aspects of the homework experience.

CHAPTER TWO

THE STATE OF HOMEWORK TODAY

Overview

This chapter examines the basic characteristics of homework – how much is assigned and completed, when and where it is done and what is being assigned – in order to gain a deeper understanding of students’ experiences with homework today. An important place to start is understanding the **quantity** of homework that students face – the frequency it is assigned, the amount of time students devote to homework each day, and how that compares to the time students spend on other activities. The next component examined is the **context** in which homework is completed: when and where homework is done, the extent to which homework receives students’ focused attention or is conducted while multitasking with other activities, and to whom, if anyone, students turn for help. The third component examined in this chapter is the **nature** of the homework assignments themselves – the subjects that have the most frequent and most interesting assignments and what types of tasks students are asked to do.

Time Spent on Homework

One indication of the quantity of homework is how **frequently** it is assigned. Homework is a nearly daily part of school life for most students, particularly those who are earning high marks in school. Three-quarters of students (77%) are assigned homework at least three days a week, including 42% who are assigned homework every day. Daily homework assignments are more common at upper grade levels. Nearly half (46%) of 7th – 12th graders are assigned homework every day, compared to 35% of 3rd – 6th graders. Daily homework assignments also are associated with achievement in school. Students who get mostly A’s (52%) are more likely than those who get A’s and B’s (43%) or who get C’s or below (34%) to have homework assigned every day.



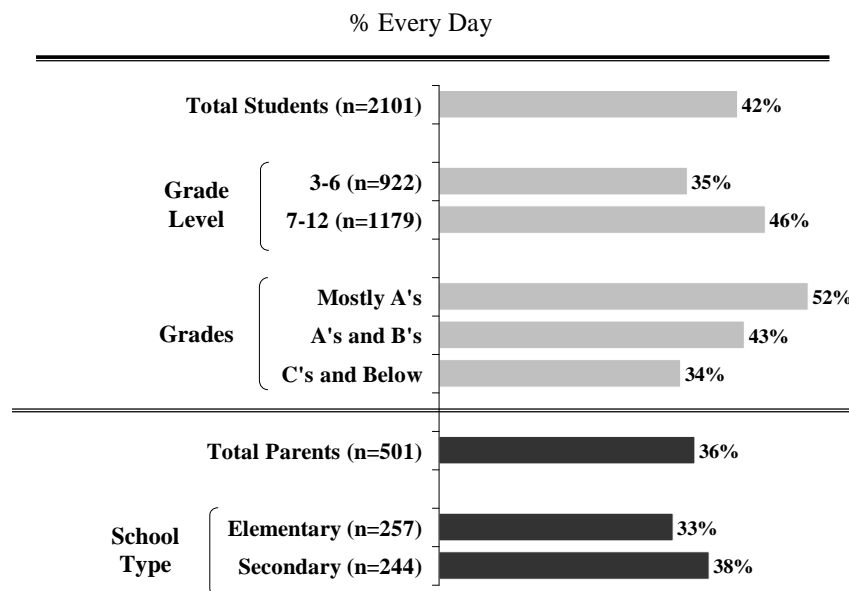
OBSERVATION:

Some research has shown that homework does have a positive effect on student achievement. However, a study also found evidence that too much homework is not associated with higher grades and is consistent with the practice of the “10-minute rule” in which teachers add 10 minutes of homework as students progress each grade. For example, a third grader would be assigned 30 minutes of homework a night, while a twelfth grader would be assigned two hours.³

Figure 2.1
Number of Days Per Week Homework is Assigned – Students and Parents

Q600 (Students): In a typical school week, how often are you assigned homework?
Base: All Students

Q600 (Parents): In a typical school week how often is your child assigned homework?
Base: All Parents



³ Cooper, H., Robinson, J.C., Patall, E. (2006). *Does Homework Improve Academic Achievement? A Synthesis of Research, 1987–2003*. Review of Educational Research, Vol. 76, No. 1, 1-62.

Figure 2.2
Students: Number of Days Per Week Homework is Assigned – Students by Grade Level and Grades

Q600 (Students): In a typical school week, how often are you assigned homework?

Base: All Students

	Total	Grade Level		Grades		
		3-6	7-12	Mostly A's	A's and B's	C's and Below
Base:	2101	922	1179	558	961	749
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Every day	42	35	46	52	43	34
3 or 4 days	35	47	27	33	33	39
1 or 2 days	16	14	18	11	16	21
Less often than one day a week	7	4	9	4	8	7

Another indication of the quantity of homework is the **amount of time** that students devote to homework each day. On a typical school day, 45% of students report that they spend at least one hour on homework. Most students (77%), regardless of grade level, spend at least 30 minutes doing homework on a typical school day. Overall, however, the total amount of time spent on homework increases with grade level. At the elementary school level, nearly four in ten students (37%) spend at least one hour a day on homework, including 9% who spend two hours or more doing homework. Half (50%) of secondary school students (grades 7 – 12) spend at least one hour a day on homework, including 21% who spend two hours or more doing homework.

Interestingly, 8% of secondary school students report that they do not spend any time doing homework on a typical school day. This is four times more common than among elementary school students, only 2% of whom say they do not do homework on a typical school day. However, on a typical **weekend** day, four in ten students (42%) do not spend any time doing homework, a situation more prevalent among elementary school students (56%) than secondary school students (33%). In fact, 31% of secondary school students spend at least one hour doing homework on a typical weekend day.

Spending more time on homework is associated with better grades in school, although this relationship is not necessarily causal. Students who earn mostly A's are more likely than students who earn C's or below to spend at least one hour on homework on a typical school day (50% vs. 35%) or on a typical weekend day (33% vs. 14%).

Figure 2.3
Amount of Time Students Spend Per Weekday on Homework – Percent of Students who Spend an Hour or More

Q630 (Students): On a typical school day (Monday-Friday), how much time do you spend doing homework?

Q635 (Students): On a typical weekend day (Saturday-Sunday), how much time do you spend doing homework?

Base: All Students

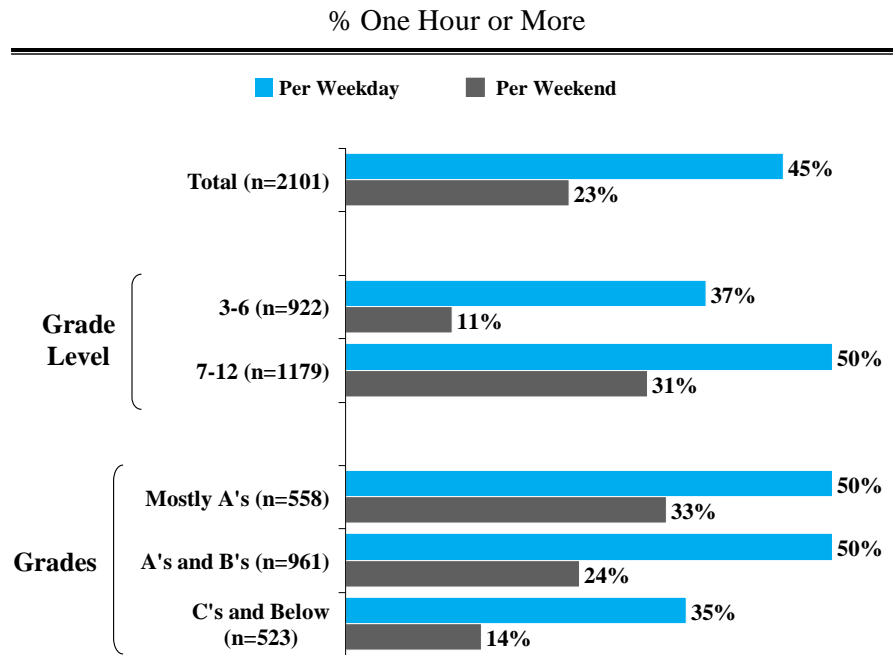


Figure 2.4
Amount of Time Students Spend Per Weekday on Homework – Students by Amount of Time

Q630 (Students): On a typical school day (Monday-Friday), how much time do you spend doing homework?

Base: All Students

	Total	Grade Level		Grades		
		3 - 6	7 - 12	Mostly A's	A's and B's	C's and below
Base:	2101	922	1179	558	961	749
	%	%	%	%	%	%
None	6	2	8	4	5	8
5 minutes	5	5	4	3	4	7
15 minutes	12	15	10	12	10	14
30 minutes	19	23	17	17	19	21
45 minutes	13	18	10	15	12	15
1 HOUR OR MORE (NET)	45	37	50	50	50	35
1 hour	18	18	18	17	20	16
1.5 hours	10	9	11	11	10	9
2 hours	8	5	9	11	8	6
2.5 hours	3	2	4	4	4	1
3 hours or more	6	2	8	7	8	3
No answer	1	*	1	*	1	*

Figure 2.5
Amount of Time Students Spend Per Weekend on Homework – Students

Q635 (Students): On a typical weekend day (Saturday-Sunday), how much time do you spend doing homework?

Base: All Students

	Total	Grade Level		Grades		
		3 – 6	7 - 12	Mostly A's	A's and B's	C's and below
Base:	2101	922	1179	558	961	523
	%	%	%	%	%	%
None	42	56	33	35	40	50
5 minutes	6	5	6	4	4	9
15 minutes	10	10	10	8	12	8
30 minutes	12	12	12	13	13	11
45 minutes	7	5	8	7	6	7
1 HOUR OR MORE (NET)	23	10	31	28	24	17
1 hour	9	6	11	12	10	6
1.5 hours	4	2	5	6	4	3
2 hours	4	1	6	8	4	2
2.5 hours	1	*	2	1	2	*
3 hours or more	4	1	6	6	4	3
No answer	1	*	1	-	1	1

Parents’ and Teachers’ Assessments of the Amount of Homework

Parents’ understanding of the frequency of homework assignments and the amount of time their children spend completing them can be based on direct observation, speaking with their child about the assignments or communicating with their child’s teachers. However, as will be seen later in this report, not all homework is done at home where the parent can directly observe, and the frequency with which parents and children discuss homework varies. Perhaps then it is not surprising that parents’ estimates of the amount of homework their children receive varies from what the students themselves report, particularly at the secondary school level. Compared to students, parents appear to slightly **underestimate** the **frequency** with which homework is assigned, but slightly **overestimate** the **amount of time** students, particularly those at the secondary level, spend doing homework.

Parents of elementary school students appear to have an accurate sense of their children’s homework responsibilities. One-third of elementary school parents (33%) report that their child

is assigned homework every day and 35% report that their child spends at least one hour completing it on a school night. These levels are similar to what the students themselves report – 35% say they are assigned homework daily and 37% say they spend at least one hour doing their assignments each day.

Parents of secondary school students are less in touch with their children’s homework load than are elementary school parents. Parents are slightly less likely than students themselves to report that their children receive daily homework assignments (38% vs. 46%). However, more parents than students report that students spend at least one hour on homework each night (64% vs. 50%). Parents’ assessment of the time students spend doing homework on weekends is more accurate, with 33% of parents reporting that their children spend at least one hour doing homework on a typical weekend day, similar to the number of students (30%) reporting this activity.

At both the elementary and secondary school levels, teachers report that a typical homework assignment from their class takes students between 15 to 30 minutes to complete. However, one in nine secondary school teachers (11%) reports that it takes students one hour or more to complete a typical homework assignment from their class.

Figure 2.6
Parents’ Estimate of Number of Days Per Week Homework is Assigned

Q600 (Parents): In a typical school week how often is your child assigned homework?
 Base: All Parents

	Total	School type		Race/Ethnicity	
		Elementary	Secondary	White/ Other	Black/ Hispanic
Base:	501	257	244	393	108
	%	%	%	%	%
Every day	36	33	38	38	30
3 or 4 days a week	41	42	40	40	42
1 or 2 days a week	17	20	13	13	24
Less often than one day a week	4	4	5	6	1
My child does not receive homework	1	1	2	2	1
Not sure	1	*	2	1	2

Figure 2.7
Parents' Estimate of Time Child Spends on Homework

Q602 (Parents): On a typical school day (Monday-Friday), how much time does your child spend doing homework?

Q605 (Parents): On a typical weekend day (Saturday-Sunday), how much time does your child spend doing homework?

Base: All Parents

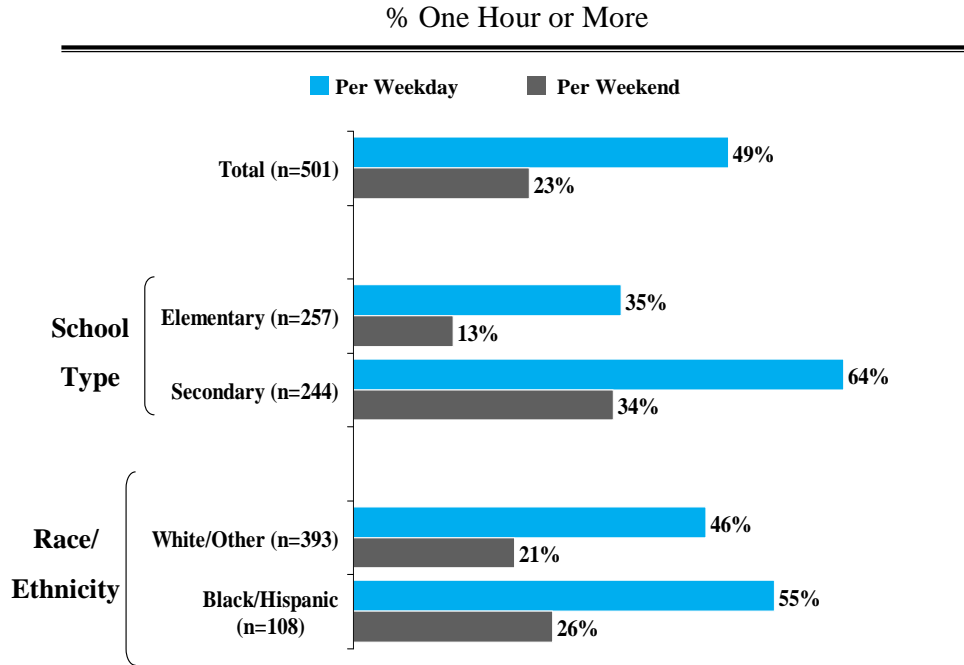


Figure 2.8
Parents' Estimate of Time Child Spends on Homework Per Weekday

Q602 (Parents): On a typical school day (Monday-Friday), how much time does your child spend doing homework?

Base: All Parents

	Total	School type		Race/Ethnicity	
		Elementary	Secondary	White/ Other	Black/ Hispanic
Base:	501	257	244	393	108
	%	%	%	%	%
None	3	2	4	2	3
5 minutes	3	5	*	2	4
15 minutes	10	16	3	7	16
30 minutes	21	29	11	25	11
45 minutes	12	12	12	14	6
1 HOUR OR MORE (NET)	49	35	64	46	55
1 hour	21	17	25	21	21
1.5 hours	12	10	14	10	17
2 hours	10	5	15	10	8
2.5 hours	3	1	6	3	3
3 hours or more	4	3	5	2	7
Not sure	4	2	6	3	4

Figure 2.9
Parents' Estimate of Time Child Spends on Homework Per Weekend

Q605 (Parents): On a typical weekend day (Saturday-Sunday), how much time does your child spend doing homework?

Base: All Parents

	Total	School Type		Race/Ethnicity	
		Elementary	Secondary	White/ Other	Black/ Hispanic
Base:	501	257	244	393	108
	%	%	%	%	%
None	37	45	27	37	37
5 minutes	2	3	*	2	*
15 minutes	10	12	7	10	8
30 minutes	14	16	11	15	12
45 minutes	9	8	10	8	11
1 HOUR OR MORE (NET)	23	13	34	19	38
1 hour	10	5	16	11	7
1.5 hours	6	4	7	3	11
2 hours	5	2	7	5	5
2.5 hours	1	*	1	*	2
3 hours or more	2	1	2	2	1
Not sure	6	2	11	7	5

Figure 2.10
Teachers' Estimate of Time Students Take to Complete Homework Assignments

Q545 (Teachers): How long do you think it takes students to complete a typical homework assignment for your class?

Base: Teachers who ever assign homework

	Total	Years of Experience			Level of School	
		0 to 5	6 to 20	21+	Elementary	Secondary
Base:	968	100	465	403	606	311
	%	%	%	%	%	%
5 minutes	3	5	3	3	5	-
15 minutes	36	29	37	37	40	28
30 minutes	42	41	42	43	39	49
45 minutes	10	13	9	10	8	13
1 HOUR OR MORE (NET)	8	14	8	6	6	11
1 hour	6	9	7	5	5	8
1.5 hours	1	2	1	*	1	1
2 hours	*	-	*	*	*	*
2.5 hours	*	-	-	*	*	-
3 hours or more	*	-	-	*	-	*
Not sure	1	-	1	1	1	1
Decline to answer	-	-	-	-	-	-

Homework in the Context of Other Activities

In addition to measuring the frequency of assignments and the amount of time spent on homework, an assessment of the quantity of homework needs to consider the time students spend on other activities in their lives. Students were asked about the time they spend on a typical school day with family, hanging out with friends, participating in activities (such as sports, clubs, music, art or hobbies), and doing chores or working at a job. In terms of the other areas in their lives, homework ranks after time with family, time with friends and time spent participating in activities as a pursuit that occupies at least an hour of their time on a school day.

The greatest number of students report spending the longest amount of time with their family. Half of students (53%) spend at least three hours a day with their family, including 62% of elementary school students and 47% of secondary school students. More than eight in ten students (84%) spend at least one hour hanging out with their family on a school day. However, this means that 15% of students (11% of elementary school students and 17% of secondary school students) spend **less than an hour each day** just hanging out with their family, decreasing opportunities to discuss school and other important things going on in their lives

In addition to spending time with their families, a majority of students (65%) spend at least one hour on a typical school day participating in activities such as sports, clubs, music, art or hobbies. More students spend time on these activities than they spend hanging out with friends for at least an hour when not at school (65% vs. 55%). However, students are more likely to spend at least an hour doing homework on a school day (45%) than they are to do chores (33%). Secondary school students are more likely to spend at least an hour doing homework on a school day (50%) than doing chores (37%) or working at a job (22%).

Figure 2.11
Percent of Students Who Spend an Hour or More on Homework and Activities

Q548 (Students): On a typical school day (Monday - Friday), how much time do you spend...
 Base: All Students

% One Hour or More

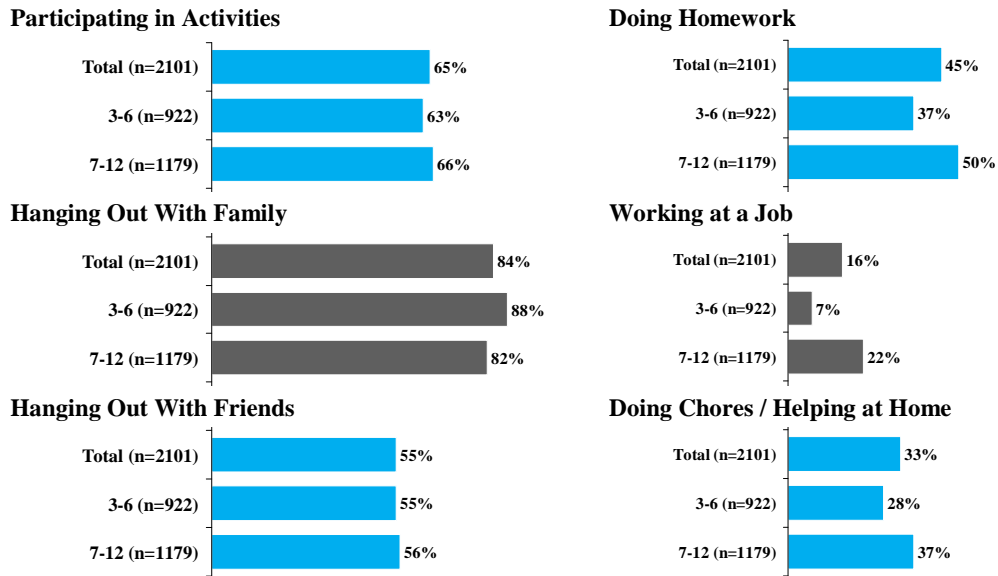


Figure 2.12
Amount of Time Students Spend on Activities and Homework

Q548 (Students): On a typical school day (Monday - Friday), how much time do you spend...
 Base: All Students

	Hanging Out With Friends			Hanging Out With Family			Participating In Activities		
	Total	Grade Level		Total	Grade Level		Total	Grade Level	
		3-6	7-12		3-6	7-12		3-6	7-12
Base:	2101	922	1179	2101	922	1179	2101	922	1179
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
None	23	23	23	4	3	5	19	18	20
5 minutes	3	3	4	1	1	1	1	1	1
15 minutes	5	5	4	3	1	3	2	2	2
30 minutes	9	9	9	5	3	6	7	9	6
45 minutes	4	5	4	2	3	2	6	6	5
1 HOUR OR MORE (NET)	55	55	56	84	88	82	65	63	66
1 hour	13	14	13	10	6	13	17	19	16
1.5 hours	6	8	5	5	5	5	10	10	9
2 hours	10	11	10	11	9	12	16	14	16
2.5 hours	5	6	5	5	6	5	7	5	8
3 hours or more	21	17	23	53	62	47	16	15	16
No answer	*	1	*	1	1	*	1	1	1
Mean	1.3	1.2	1.3	2.2	2.4	2	1.4	1.3	1.4

	Doing Chores / Helping At Home			Working At A Job			Doing Homework		
	Total	Grade Level		Total	Grade Level		Total	Grade Level	
		3-6	7-12		3-6	7-12		3-6	7-12
Base:	2101	922	1179	2101	922	1179	2101	922	1179
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
None	8	10	7	79	87	75	6	2	8
5 minutes	7	10	5	1	1	*	5	5	4
15 minutes	17	19	15	1	2	1	12	15	10
30 minutes	25	24	25	1	2	1	19	23	17
45 minutes	10	9	10	1	1	1	13	18	10
1 HOUR OR MORE (NET)	33	28	37	16	7	22	45	37	50
1 hour	16	15	16	2	2	2	18	18	18
1.5 hours	6	4	7	1	1	1	10	9	11
2 hours	5	4	6	2	1	2	8	5	9
2.5 hours	1	1	2	1	1	1	3	2	4
3 hours or more	5	4	6	10	3	15	6	2	8
No answer	1	1	1	*	1	*	1	*	1
Mean	0.8	0.7	0.9	0.4	0.2	0.6	1.0	0.8	1.1

The Sleep Dilemma

In such busy lives, sleep gets less time than many students would like. Nearly half of students (46%) think that they do not get enough sleep. While this experience is more common among secondary school students (57%), 29% of elementary school students report also that they do not get enough sleep. And they are probably right. The National Sleep Foundation recommends that children between the ages of 5 and 12 get 9 to 11 hours of sleep each night and that teens get 8 ½ to 9 ½ hours. Yet according to students' self-reports, nearly half of elementary school students (48%) get fewer than nine hours of sleep on a school night, and 60% of secondary school students get fewer than eight hours of sleep on a school night.

Figure 2.13
Students Who Believe They Do Not Get Enough Sleep

Q510 (Students): In general, do you think you get enough sleep?
 Base: All Students

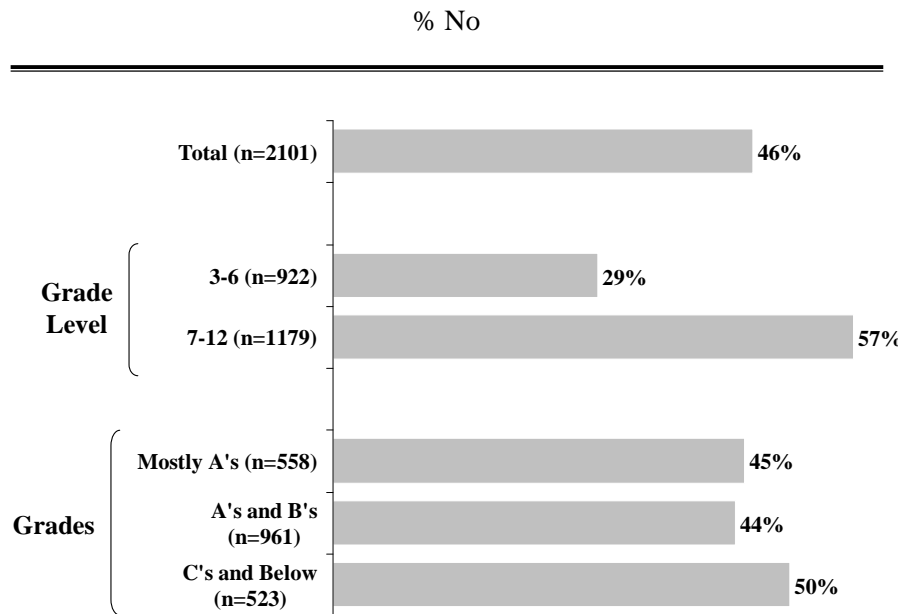


Figure 2.14
Amount of Sleep Students Get on a Typical School Night

Q505 (Students): On a typical school night (Sunday – Thursday), how many hours do you sleep?
 Base: All Students

	Total	Grade Level		Grades		
		3 - 6	7 - 12	Mostly A's	A's and B's	C's and below
Base:	2101	922	1179	558	961	523
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Less than 5 hours	4	2	6	3	4	6
5 hours	5	1	7	2	5	6
6 hours	13	5	18	13	13	15
7 hours	22	11	29	26	21	23
8 hours	28	29	27	30	28	28
9 hours	18	32	10	19	19	16
10 hours or more	9	18	3	8	10	5

What are students doing with the time they could otherwise spend on sleep? Students who say they do not get enough sleep are spending more time than others doing homework and working for a job, and less time hanging out with friends or family.

- Students who do not get enough sleep are more likely than others to be assigned homework every day (50% vs. 35%).
- Students who do not get enough sleep are more likely than others to spend at least 1.5 hours doing homework on a typical school day (33% vs. 22%).
- Secondary school students who do not get enough sleep are more likely than those who do to spend at least 3 hours a day working at a job (18% vs. 11%).
- Students who do not get enough sleep are as likely as others to spend at least 2 hours a day hanging out with friends (37% vs. 35%).
- Students who do not get enough sleep are **less** likely than others to spend at least 3 hours a day hanging out with family (44% vs. 61%).

Students' lack of sleep has an impact on their ability to get to school and pay attention in class. Four in ten students (37%) very often or often have trouble waking up in the morning. One-third (34%) frequently feel tired during class, three in ten (29%) daydream in class and seven percent frequently fall asleep during class. One in seven students (14%) also frequently gets too hungry to be able to pay attention in class. These experiences are consistently more common among secondary school students than elementary school students. These experiences are also more pronounced among those students who do not get enough sleep. Students who do not get enough sleep are more likely than others to frequently:

- Have trouble waking up in the morning (56% vs. 22%);
- Feel tired during class (56% vs. 14%);
- Daydream in class (41% vs. 19%);
- Get too hungry to be able to pay attention in class (19% vs. 10%); and
- Fall asleep during class (13% vs. 3%).

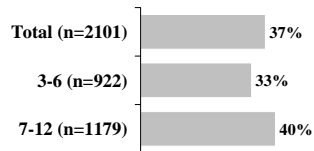
Figure 2.15
Consequences Often or Very Often Experienced by Students Not Getting Enough Sleep on a Typical School Night

Q515 (Students) How often do the following things happen to you?

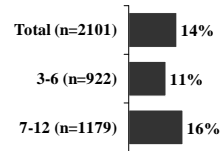
Base: All Students

% Very Often / Often

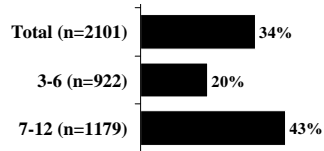
Trouble Waking Up in the Morning



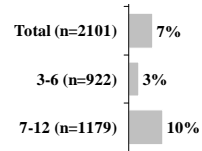
Too Hungry to Pay Attention in Class



Feel Tired During Class



Fall Asleep During Class



Daydream in Class

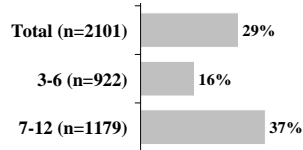


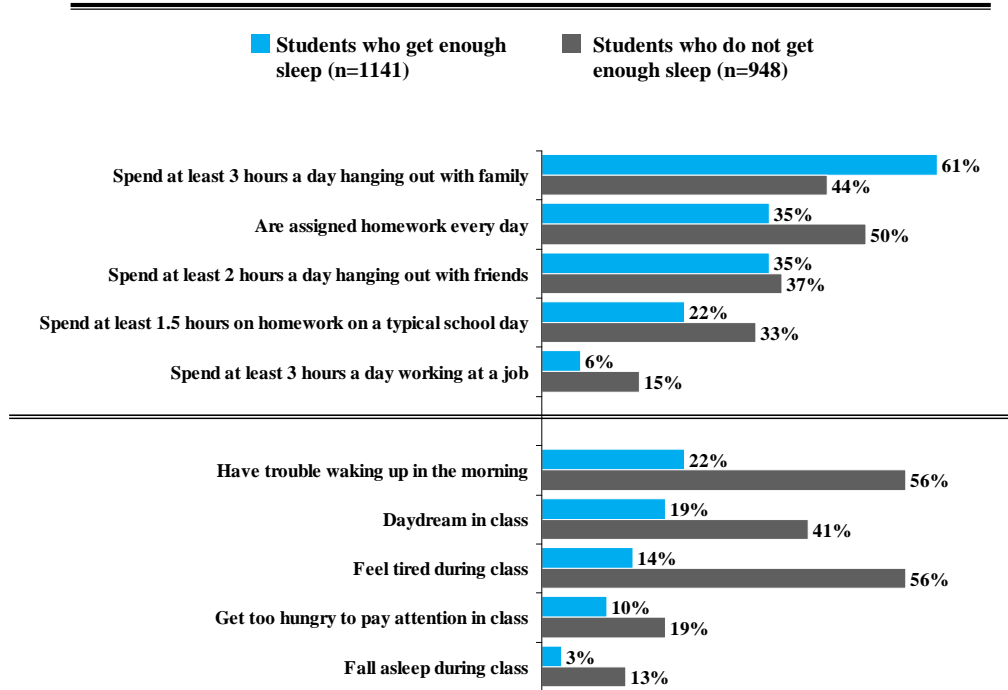
Figure 2.16
Consequences of Students Not Getting Enough Sleep on a Typical School Night by Grade Level

Q515 (Students) How often do the following things happen to you?
 Base: All Students

	Trouble Waking Up in the Morning			Fall Asleep During Class			Feel Tired During Class		
	Total	Grade Level		Total	Grade Level		Total	Grade Level	
		3-6	7-12		3-6	7-12		3-6	7-12
Base:	2101	922	1179	2101	922	1179	2101	922	1179
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
MORE OFTEN (NET)	37	33	40	7	3	10	34	20	43
Very often	20	17	21	3	1	4	16	11	20
Often	18	16	19	5	2	6	17	9	23
Sometimes	34	33	35	16	7	22	35	31	37
LESS OFTEN (NET)	28	34	25	76	89	67	31	48	20
Rarely	20	22	19	26	18	31	21	29	15
Never	8	12	6	50	71	36	10	19	5
No answer	*	*	*	*	1	*	1	1	*

	Daydream in Class			Too Hungry to Pay Attention in Class		
	Total	Grade Level		Total	Grade Level	
		3-6	7-12		3-6	7-12
Base:	2101	922	1179	2101	922	1179
	%	%	%	%	%	%
MORE OFTEN (NET)	29	16	37	14	11	16
Very often	14	8	18	7	5	8
Often	16	9	20	7	6	8
Sometimes	30	31	30	21	16	24
LESS OFTEN (NET)	40	52	32	65	73	60
Rarely	22	24	21	34	35	34
Never	18	28	11	31	38	26
No answer	1	1	*	*	*	*

Figure 2.17
Profile of Students Who Do and Do Not Get Enough Sleep



Teachers seem to underestimate the extent and impact of lack of sleep. On average, teachers report that 28% of their students do not get enough sleep. Elementary school teachers report that an average of 22% of students do not get enough sleep, compared to an average of 37% among secondary school teachers. Two in ten teachers report that their students frequently have difficulty concentrating (19%) or daydream (17%). Six percent report that students frequently are too hungry to concentrate and five percent report that students frequently fall asleep or doze in their class.

Figure 2.18
Teachers' Estimate of Percentage of Students Who Do Not Get Enough Sleep

Q625 (Teachers): What percentage of your students do NOT get enough sleep?
 Base: All Teachers

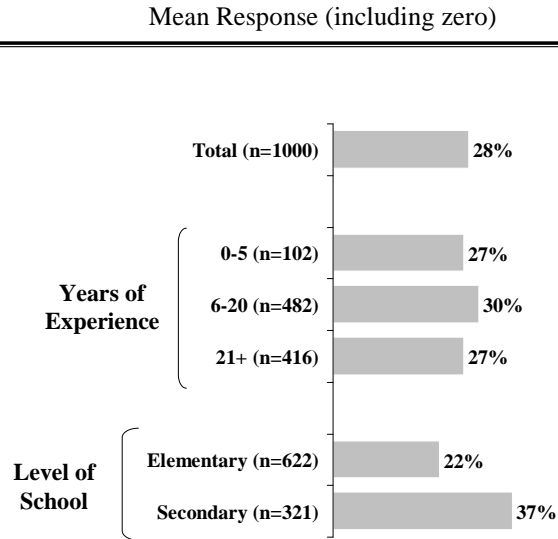


Figure 2.19
Teachers' Observations of Student Behaviors Often or Very Often Occurring in Classrooms

Q620 (Teachers) How often do students do the following things in your classroom?
 Base: All Teachers

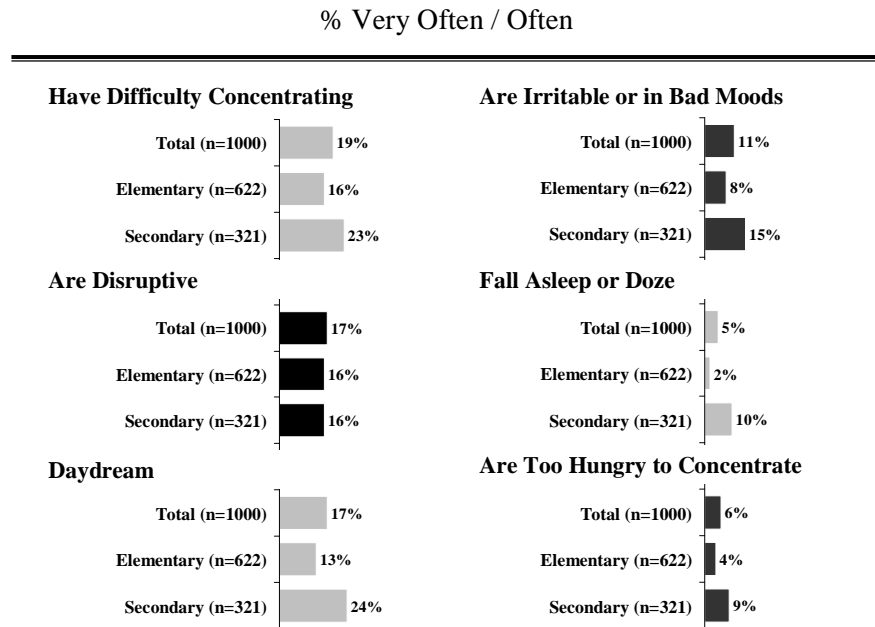


Figure 2.20
Teachers' Observation of Student Behavior in Classrooms

Q620 (Teachers) How often do students do the following things in your classroom?
Base: All Teachers

	Fall Asleep or Doze			Have Difficulty Concentrating		
	Total	Grade Level		Total	Grade Level	
		Elementary	Secondary		Elementary	Secondary
Base:	1000	622	321	1000	622	321
	%	%	%	%	%	%
MORE OFTEN (NET)	5	2	10	19	16	23
Very often	2	1	3	6	4	8
Often	3	2	6	13	12	15
Sometimes	20	16	26	58	60	56
LESS OFTEN (NET)	74	81	64	22	23	21
Rarely	44	43	46	21	22	20
Never	30	38	18	1	1	1
No answer	*	*	--	1	1	*

	Are Irritable or in Bad Moods			Are Disruptive		
	Total	Grade Level		Total	Grade Level	
		Elementary	Secondary		Elementary	Secondary
Base:	1000	622	321	1000	622	321
	%	%	%	%	%	%
MORE OFTEN (NET)	11	8	15	17	16	16
Very often	3	3	4	5	5	4
Often	8	5	11	12	11	13
Sometimes	46	45	47	46	49	43
LESS OFTEN (NET)	43	47	38	36	34	40
Rarely	39	41	36	32	30	35
Never	4	6	2	4	4	5
No answer	*	1	*	1	1	*

Figure 2.20 (continued)
Teachers' Observation of Student Behavior in Classrooms

	Daydream			Are Too Hungry to Concentrate		
	Total	Grade Level		Total	Grade Level	
		Elementary	Secondary		Elementary	Secondary
Base:	1000	622	321	1000	622	321
	%	%	%	%	%	%
MORE OFTEN (NET)	17	13	24	6	4	9
Very often	4	4	5	1	1	2
Often	13	9	18	5	3	7
Sometimes	56	59	52	26	23	28
LESS OFTEN (NET)	26	27	23	67	72	60
Rarely	24	26	20	44	47	40
Never	2	2	3	23	25	19
No answer	1	1	1	1	*	3

Time for Homework

Despite conflicting demands and busy schedules, three-quarters of students (75%) agree that they have enough time to do all of their homework, including a majority of elementary school students (84%) and a smaller, but still sizable, majority of secondary school students (69%).

However, one-quarter of students (24%) report that they do not have enough time to do all their homework. The sense of time pressure is twice as great for secondary school students as elementary school students. Thirty-one percent of secondary school students do not feel they have enough time to do all of their homework, compared to 15% of elementary school students. Those who do not get enough sleep feel even more pressed for time than others, with 35% not having enough time to do their homework compared to 15% of students who do get enough sleep. Of particular note, students who are not doing well in school (getting C's or below) are more likely than "A" students to report that they do not have enough time to do all of their homework (29% vs. 19%).

THEN AND NOW:

Today, 31% of secondary school students do not feel they have enough time to do all of their homework. Five years ago, this sentiment was similar. In the *MetLife Survey of the American Teacher 2002*, 41% of secondary school students said they wished they had more time for school work, including studying or homework. However, the desire for more family time was even stronger. More than half of secondary school students (54%) said they wished they had more time for being with their parents.

Although the majority of students (75%) report that they do have enough time to do their homework, the one-quarter who do not have enough time have higher rates of risk factors related to student achievement and other areas. A comparison of those students who lack enough time to do their homework to other students reveals the following profile:

- Students who do not have enough time to do their homework are more likely than others to usually get C's or below (35% vs. 28%).
- Students who do not have enough time to do their homework are **less** likely than others to plan to go to college after high school (76% vs. 83%).
- Students who do not have enough time to do their homework are more likely than others to not always finish their homework (59% vs. 17%).
- Students who do not have enough time to do their homework are more likely than others to not get enough sleep (67% vs. 39%).
- Students who do not have enough time to do their homework are more likely than others to believe that doing homework is less than important (39% vs. 18%).

Furthermore, many students report that they **do not always finish their homework**. One-quarter (23%) only finish their homework sometimes, hardly ever or never. Like the feeling of time pressure, this behavior is more common among secondary school students than elementary school students (31% vs. 11%) and more prevalent among those who do not get enough sleep (31% vs. 15%) and those whose parents have only a high school degree or less (33%, compared to 15% of those whose parents have a college degree). Completing homework is noteworthy as it is related to student achievement. Nearly half (47%) of students who are not doing well in school (C's or below) do not always finish their homework, compared to only 6% of "A" students.

THEN AND NOW:

The *MetLife Survey of the American Teacher 2002: Student Life: School, Home & Community* found that 30% of secondary school students have skipped a class or school during the past two years because they did not complete an assignment and 24% had skipped a class or school because they did not feel ready to take a test.

Figure 2.21
Students' Perception of Time to Finish Homework

Q700 (Students): How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
Base: All Students

"I have enough time to do all my homework"

	Total	Grade Level		Grades		
		3-6	7-12	Mostly A's	A's and B's	C's and below
Base:	2101	922	1179	558	961	523
	%	%	%	%	%	%
AGREE (NET)	75	84	69	80	75	70
Strongly agree	37	55	26	44	37	33
Somewhat agree	37	30	42	36	38	37
DISAGREE (NET)	24	15	31	19	24	29
Somewhat disagree	16	10	20	15	17	16
Strongly disagree	9	5	11	5	8	13
No answer	1	1	1	1	1	1

Figure 2.22
Students' Frequency of Finishing Homework

Q695 (Students): How often do you finish your homework
Base: All Students

	Total	Grade Level		Grades		
		3-6	7-12	Mostly A's	A's and B's	C's and below
Base:	2101	922	1179	558	961	523
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Almost always	77	88	69	94	83	53
Sometimes	17	9	23	4	13	34
Hardly ever	4	1	5	*	1	10
Never	2	1	2	1	1	3
No answer	1	*	1	-	1	*

Parents and teachers are much less likely than students to recognize the need for more time. Only 13% of parents (7% of elementary school parents and 19% of secondary school parents) report that their child does not have enough time to do all of their homework. Only 14% of parents (10% of elementary school parents and 19% of secondary school parents) believe that their child does not nearly always complete their homework assignments on time and completely. Furthermore, only six percent of teachers (2% of elementary school teachers and 11% of secondary school teachers) say that their students do not have enough time to do all of their homework. Teachers report that, on average, 77% of their students complete their homework assignments during a typical week. Teachers whose schools have few low income students (one-third or fewer) report that an average of 81% of their students complete their homework assignments, compared to an average of 72% of students reported by teachers in schools with two-thirds or more low income students. A similar pattern is found in those schools with low vs. high proportions of minority students. Teachers whose schools have one-third or fewer minority students report that an average of 79% of students complete their homework, compared to an average of 72% of students reported by teachers in schools with two-thirds or more minority students.

Figure 2.23
Students', Parents', and Teachers' Perceptions of Time to Finish Homework

Q700 (Students): How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Base: All Students

Q670 (Parents): How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Base: All Parents

Q590 (Teachers): How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Base: All Teachers

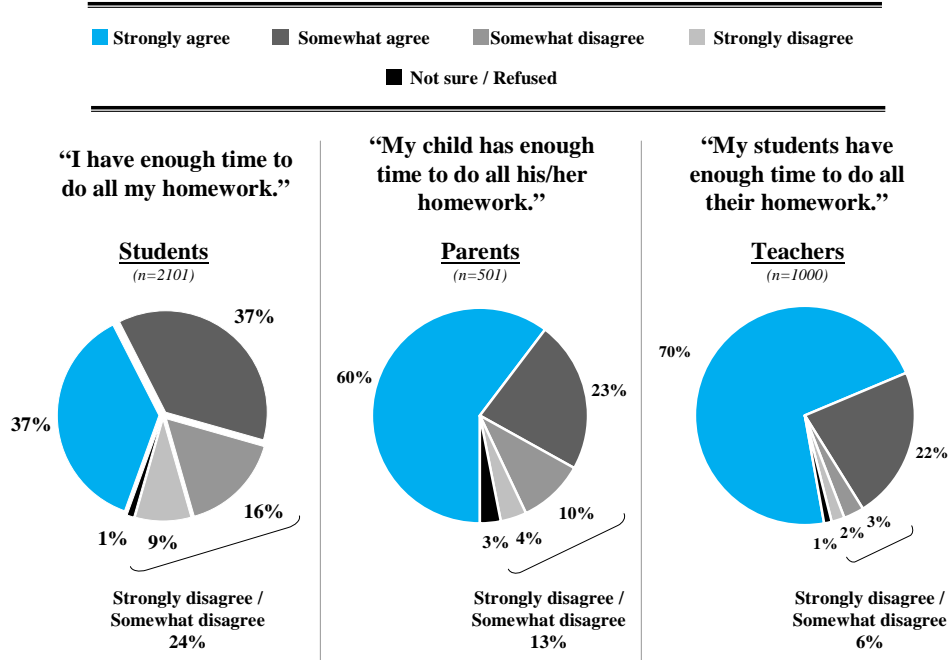


Figure 2.24
Parents' Perception of Time to Finish Homework

Q670 (Parents): How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
 Base: All Parents

“My child has enough time to do all his/her homework”

	Total	School Type		Race/Ethnicity	
		Elementary	Secondary	White/ Other	Black/ Hispanic
Base:	501	257	244	393	108
	%	%	%	%	%
AGREE (NET)	84	90	78	84	85
Strongly agree	61	71	50	54	75
Somewhat agree	23	19	28	29	10
DISAGREE (NET)	13	7	19	15	10
Somewhat disagree	10	6	14	10	8
Strongly disagree	4	2	5	4	2
Not sure	3	3	2	2	5

Figure 2.25
Teachers' Perception of Time to Finish Homework

Q590 (Teachers): How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
 Base: All Teachers

“My students have enough time to do all their homework”

	Total	Years of Experience			Level of School	
		0 to 5	6 to 20	21+	Elementary	Secondary
Base:	1000	102	482	416	622	321
	%	%	%	%	%	%
AGREE (NET)	93	87	94	93	96	87
Strongly agree	70	53	72	73	79	56
Somewhat agree	22	34	22	20	17	30
DISAGREE (NET)	6	13	4	5	2	11
Somewhat disagree	3	6	2	4	2	6
Strongly disagree	2	7	1	2	1	5
Not sure	1	-	2	1	1	2
Refused	*	-	*	*	*	*

Figure 2.26
Parents' Observation of Time Needed to Finish Homework and Completeness of Homework

Q607 (Parents): When teachers assign homework to your child, how often does he/she complete it on time and completely?

Base: All Parents

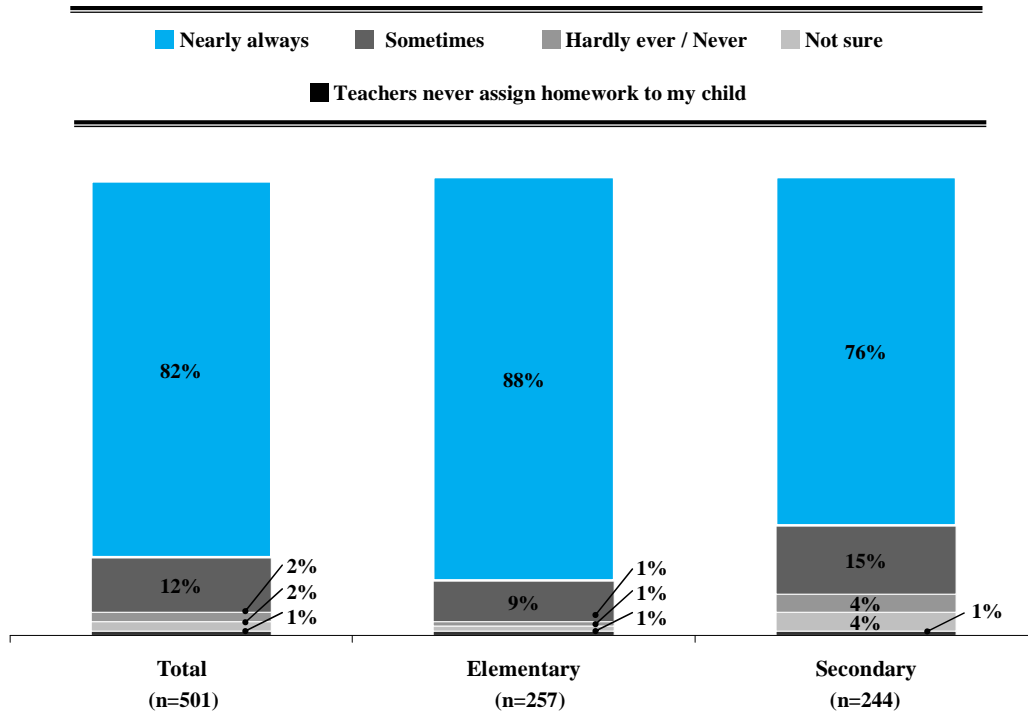


Figure 2.27
Teachers' Estimate of Percentage of Students Who Complete Their Homework

Q550 (Teachers): What percentage of your students complete their homework assignments during a typical school week?

Base: Assigns homework in typical week

	Total	Years of Experience			Level of School	
		0 to 5	6 to 20	21+	Elementary	Secondary
Base:	933	96	449	388	588	297
	%	%	%	%	%	%
91 – 100%	27	20	27	29	35	14
81 – 90%	24	17	28	22	27	19
71 – 80%	25	27	24	25	22	30
61 – 70%	6	6	5	6	4	10
51 – 60%	3	2	2	4	2	4
41 – 50%	6	11	6	5	5	8
31 – 40%	2	-	3	2	1	4
21 – 30%	1	1	*	2	*	2
11 – 20%	3	7	2	1	1	4
1 – 10%	2	1	1	3	1	3
0%	2	6	1	1	1	3
Mean	77	69	79	78	83	69

When, How and Where Homework Gets Done

Homework is not only an after-school activity and students may work at multiple times throughout the day. While eight in ten students (81%) usually do their homework after school, half of students (49%) do their homework during the school day and a smaller proportion (14%) squeeze in their homework before the school day starts. At the elementary school level, most students (92%) do their homework after school, and 30% also do their homework during the school day. By the secondary school years, this distribution has changed. Three-quarters (75%) of 7th-12th graders do their homework after school and six in ten (62%) do their homework during school.

The locations where students usually do their homework reflect the time of day that homework gets done. The findings also indicate that for many students, homework is worked on in more than one location. The most common place that students do their homework is at home. Nine in ten elementary school students (89%) and eight in ten secondary school students (81%) usually do their homework at home. The next most popular place for doing homework is at school. One-third of elementary school students (34%) and two-thirds of secondary school students (65%) usually do their homework at school. Hispanic students are less likely than white students to do their homework at school (46% vs. 56%), while Black students do not differ significantly from these two groups in doing homework at school (49%). One in ten students (12%) usually does their homework in transit – either on the school bus or traveling to or from school. Libraries (8%) and after-school programs/community centers (6%) are also used to do homework, the former location more popular among secondary school students (12% vs. 3%) and the latter location more popular among elementary school students (10% vs. 4%).

Where and when homework is done is related to the grades students achieve at school. Students who get mostly A's in school are more likely than those who get C's and lower grades to usually do their homework after school (87% vs. 70%) and to do it at home (89% vs. 77%).

Figure 2.28
Time of Day Homework Is Done

Q640 (Students): When do you usually do homework?
Base: All Students

	Total	Grade Level		Grades		
		3-6	7-12	Mostly A's	A's and B's	C's and Below
Base:	2101	922	1179	558	961	523
	%	%	%	%	%	%
After school	81	92	75	87	86	70
During school	49	30	62	50	49	51
Before school	14	6	18	14	13	14
I never do homework	3	1	4	2	2	5
No answer	*	*	*	*	*	-

Figure 2.29
Where Homework is Done

Q645 (Students): Where do you usually do your homework?
Base: All Students

	Total	Grade Level		Grades		
		3-6	7-12	Mostly A's	A's and B's	C's and Below
Base:	2101	922	1179	558	961	523
	%	%	%	%	%	%
My home	84	89	81	89	86	77
School	53	34	65	54	54	54
School bus/Traveling to or from school	12	14	11	11	13	11
My friend's home	10	8	10	8	11	8
Library	8	3	12	11	8	8
After-school program or community center	6	10	4	5	8	5
My relative's place	2	3	1	2	1	2
Outside	1	1	1	1	1	1
Work	1	*	1	1	*	1
Daycare	*	1	-	*	-	1
Restaurant/Café	*	*	*	-	*	*
Church	*	*	*	-	*	*
Anywhere	*	-	*	*	*	-
Somewhere else	1	1	1	*	1	*
I never do homework	3	2	4	2	2	5
No answer	1	1	1	*	1	*

Students' sources of help and support for doing homework change markedly in-between the elementary and secondary school years. For elementary school students, the most common source for help with homework is a parent. Nine in ten elementary school students (88%) ask their parents for help with their homework. Next on elementary school students' "go to" list are teachers (45%), followed by their friends or classmates (35%). Yet, for secondary school students, the order of priority is completely reversed. Secondary school students are most likely to ask their friends for help with homework (67%), followed by their teachers (61%), with parents in third place as a usual source for secondary school students (53%). Another source of homework help for some students is websites. Twelve percent seek help on a non-school website and four percent get help through their school's own website. Students whose parents' highest level of education is a high school degree are less likely to go to their parents for homework help than students whose parents have a college degree or more (59% vs. 74%).

Figure 2.30
Sources of Help with Homework

Q685 (Students): If you need help with your homework, how do you get it?
Base: All Students

	Total	Grade Level		Grades		
		3 - 6	7 - 12	Mostly A's	A's and B's	C's and Below
Base:	2101	922	1179	558	961	523
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Ask my parents	67	88	53	66	69	64
Ask my teacher at school	55	45	61	56	59	49
Ask my friends/classmates	54	35	67	60	56	50
Ask my brother/sister	29	28	29	29	32	24
Ask for help on another website	12	7	16	14	13	10
Ask for help through my school's website	4	4	4	3	4	6
Ask my relative	2	5	1	2	3	2
Refer to notes/textbook	1	*	2	1	1	3
Another way	1	*	1	*	*	2
Ask someone (unspecified)	*	1	*	1	*	*
Do it myself	*	*	*	*	*	*
Calculator	*	*	-	*	*	*
Dictionary/encyclopedia	*	*	*	*	-	*
No one – I don't have anyone to ask	2	1	3	2	1	3
I never need help with my homework	4	3	5	6	4	4
No answer	*	*	*	1	-	*

While half of students (54%) will go to friends when they need help with their homework, this does not necessarily mean that they regularly work on their homework together with their friends. Only one-third of students (34%) report that they and their friends work on homework together always or sometimes, and this is a more common behavior among secondary school students than elementary school students (37% vs. 29%).

Figure 2.31
How Often Homework Is Done With Friends

Q670 (Students): How often do you and your friends work on homework together?
Base: All Students

	Total	Grade Level		Grades		
		3 - 6	7 - 12	Mostly A's	A's and B's	C's and Below
Base:	2101	922	1179	558	961	523
	%	%	%	%	%	%
ALMOST ALWAYS/SOMETIMES (NET)	34	29	37	37	37	28
Almost always	4	3	4	5	4	2
Sometimes	30	26	33	32	33	26
HARDLY EVER/NEVER (NET)	66	70	63	63	63	72
Hardly ever	31	29	32	36	32	26
Never	35	42	31	27	31	46

Most students value having a quiet place to do their homework, but the extent of this belief varies by the grade level and race/ethnic background of the student. Three-quarters (75%) agree that it is important to have a quiet place to do homework. But this is a view more likely to be shared by elementary school students than secondary school students (84% vs. 69%). Hispanic students (67%) are less likely than white students (76%) or Black students (78%) to believe that it is important to have a quiet place to do homework.

The homework habits of students of all ages indicate that a quiet place to do homework is more of an ideal goal than an actual practice. Over half (55%) listen to music and nearly half (45%) watch TV while they do their homework. As for the social aspect of homework, two in ten students report that they are usually talking on the phone (20%), instant messaging or emailing (20%) or text messaging (17%) while they do their homework. All these behaviors are more common among secondary school students than elementary school students. While three in ten elementary school students (31%) report that they do nothing else while working on their homework, only one in nine secondary school students (11%) have this habit. Therefore nine in

ten (89%) of secondary students are doing other activities, or “multi-tasking”, while they are doing their homework, including 70% who listen to music and 51% who watch TV. A similar pattern was found by the Kaiser Family Foundation in their 2005 survey of 7th- 12th graders. In that study, 80% of secondary school students multitask with media (phone, instant messaging, TV, music, Internet) at least a little of the time while doing homework.⁴

This year’s *MetLife Survey* examined the relationship between students grades and whether they multi-task while doing homework or not. Students’ grades do not distinguish whether or not they focus solely on homework when they are working on assignments. Students who get mostly A’s are as likely as those who get C’s or below to do nothing else when they are working on homework (20% vs. 17%).

Figure 2.32
Importance of Quiet Place to Do Homework

Q700 (Students): How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
Base: All Students

	Total	Grade Level		Grades		
		3 - 6	7 -12	Mostly A's	A's and B's	C's and below
Base:	2101	922	1179	558	961	523
	%	%	%	%	%	%
AGREE (NET)	75	84	69	77	75	71
Strongly agree	36	47	29	33	37	34
Somewhat agree	39	37	40	44	38	37
DISAGREE (NET)	24	15	30	23	24	27
Somewhat disagree	17	11	22	17	17	19
Strongly disagree	7	4	9	5	7	9
No answer	1	1	1	-	1	1

⁴ Roberts, D.F., Foehr, U.G., Rideout, V. (2005): *Generation M: Media in the Lives of 8-18 Year-olds*. The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation.

Figure 2.33
Other Activities Done While Doing Homework

Q660 (Students): What else do you usually do while doing homework?
 Base: All Students

	Total	Grade Level		Grades		
		3 - 6	7 - 12	Mostly A's	A's and B's	C's and below
Base:	2101	922	1179	558	961	523
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Eat or drink	59	50	64	58	61	57
Listen to music	55	33	70	53	55	60
Watch TV	45	36	51	45	49	41
Talk on the phone	20	11	26	16	22	23
IM or email	20	6	28	23	21	16
Text message	17	4	25	16	16	20
Talk to people	1	1	1	*	1	1
Play games	1	1	*	*	1	1
Play with children/animals	1	1	1	*	*	2
Surf the web	*	*	1	1	1	*
Dance/Sing	*	*	*	*	1	-
Read	*	*	*	*	*	-
Sit in class	*	-	*	*	*	-
Spend time w/friends	*	-	*	*	*	*
Play piano	*	-	*	*	-	-
Anything	*	-	*	-	*	*
Draw/Sketch	*	-	*	-	-	*
Something else	2	2	2	1	1	3
Nothing else	19	31	11	20	19	17
No answer	*	*	*	*	*	*

What Homework is Assigned

The preceding discussion examined the questions of how much homework is assigned and when, where and how it is completed, and this discussion explores the nature of that homework. Nearly all students receive at least one homework assignment each week. The subjects that students are most likely to receive a weekly or more frequent homework assignment are math (70%) and English or reading (59%). These are the most common subject areas for elementary school and secondary school students. Slightly less than half of students (46%) get at least one homework assignment each week in social studies or history, while four in ten (41%) get at least one homework assignment each week in science. Secondary school students are more likely than elementary school students to receive at least weekly assignments in social studies (52% vs. 36%), science (49% vs. 29%) or a foreign language (31% vs. 6%). It is also interesting to note that students who are doing poorly in school (C's or below) are less likely than other students to receive weekly homework assignments across the range of subject areas

Figure 2.34
Homework Subjects

Q605 (Students): In which subjects do you get at least one homework assignment each week?

Base: All Students

	Total	Grade Level		Grades		
		3 - 6	7 - 12	Mostly A's	A's and B's	C's and below
Base:	2101	922	1179	558	961	523
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Math	70	74	67	79	70	61
LANGUAGE ARTS (NET)	62	66	59	71	62	53
English or Reading	59	61	58	67	60	52
Spelling	3	8	-	6	3	2
Language Arts	1	2	1	1	1	1
Creative Writing	*	1	*	1	*	*
Social Studies or History	46	36	52	55	44	44
SCIENCE (NET)	41	29	49	52	41	35
Science	41	29	49	52	41	35
Chemistry	*	-	1	1	*	*
Biology	*	-	1	1	*	*
Physics	*	-	*	*	*	*
Foreign Language	21	6	31	31	22	14
OTHER (NET)	4	1	6	5	4	4

The subjects that most often assign homework are not necessarily the same subjects that are viewed as having the most interesting homework. Math (30%) and science (24%) top elementary school students' list of the subjects with the most interesting homework. For secondary school students, science (23%), math (15%) and social studies (15%) are considered the subjects with the most interesting assignments. However, 14% of students indicate that no subject has the most interesting homework.

Figure 2.35
Subject with Most Interesting Homework

Q620 (Students): Which subject has the most interesting homework?
Base: All Students

	Total	Grade Level		Grades		
		3 - 6	7 -12	Mostly A's	A's and B's	C's and below
Base:	2101	922	1179	558	961	523
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Science	23	24	23	26	24	21
Math	21	30	15	22	22	19
Social Studies/History	15	15	15	15	16	16
English/Reading	14	14	14	19	13	12
Foreign Language	4	*	6	4	4	4
Art	1	*	1	1	1	1
Spelling	1	2	-	*	1	1
Biology	*	-	*	-	*	-
Creative Writing	*	1	*	1	*	1
Speech	*	*	*	*	*	-
Language Arts	*	-	*	-	*	-
Something else	1	*	2	*	2	2
None	14	11	17	10	13	19
No answer	3	2	3	1	3	3

Finally, what are the types of homework assignments that students are asked to complete? A homework assignment can range in complexity and creativity from worksheets/exercises and studying for tests to a creative project or report. Nine in ten students have been asked to complete worksheets or exercises (88%) or study for a quiz or test (85%) as a homework assignment during their current school year. Math problem sets (80%) and assignments to read chapters or a book (79%) are also a common type of homework. Other types of homework assignments occur, but are more frequently found at the secondary than elementary school level:

- Write a story/essay (81% vs. 59%);
- Creative project (74% vs. 55%);
- Research report (68% vs. 46%);
- Research or find information (59% vs. 36%); and
- Lab reports (43% vs. 12%).

IN THEIR OWN WORDS: Your Favorite Homework Assignment

When asked to describe their favorite homework assignment, most students do have a winner. These assignments, representing a variety of subject areas, are typically larger, more involved projects and are characterized by the creativity they require and their applicability to real life. Many of the assignments seem also to have been designed to involve parents or other adults, allowing opportunities to engage parents in their child's education and provide students the opportunity to practice the broader life and workplace skill of teamwork.

"to make a movie of my dog" (girl, 3rd grade)

"I had to make a biography of my life for every year I was alive. I made a book with pictures of me. I still have it." (boy, 3rd grade)

"When I had to ask my parents what they did at school when they were kids." (girl, 3rd grade)

"building the Empire State Building with popsicle sticks" (girl, 4th grade)

"making a volcano for a science project" (boy, 4th grade)

"book report on a mystery and then do a project to hide clues to the mystery" (girl, 4th grade)

"The best homework assignment I had was when I need to do a family tree. I learned a lot about my family history." (girl, 5th grade)

"I made a flashlight from a pop can." (girl, 5th grade)

"We did a group project about the history of the Mayan Indians and there were five people: three girls and two boys and we each did a part of the project. We had to make posters and charts and we each got a grade plus a group grade." (girl, 5th grade)

"Constructing a temple to our own made up gods and then writing a myth about an important event in the gods/goddesses life." (girl, 6th grade)

"to design my own T-shirt for a class project we had a blast doing it as I love to draw" (boy, 6th grade)

"built a habitat in a bottle to study acid rain, erosion, temperature and other stuff" (boy, 6th grade)

"To write up a report on the dissection of an eye we did a day before." (girl, 7th grade)

"I am working on it now. I have to create a book about myself. It must be bound, will have 9 chapters, a table of contents, prologue, dedication, and explores different writing styles." (girl, 7th grade)

“for science we had to take Petri dishes and rub your fingers in them. One before you washed your hands, the second one after you used a waterless hand cleaner and the last one after you washed your hands. Then we sealed them and watched the differences in the germs growing.” (girl, 7th grade)

“Make a toy from the Colonial Period.” (boy, 8th grade)

“My assignment was to interview a star from the sixties. My dad and I played the rolls of Elvis Presley and an interviewer. My dad was Elvis and I was the interviewer.” (girl, 8th grade)

“...we started a business and I created poster board etc. Our business plan, commercial, and had all my group organized. Tie, shirt everything transitioned well from every part of the presentation.” (boy, 9th grade)

“Out of Africa Project: 2 month assignment where I studied several dictators in Africa and gave a 30 minute speech on at the end.” (boy, 9th grade)

“I had to make a video clip of a job interview in Spanish.” (boy, 10th grade)

“Do a community service project involving something we enjoyed doing. I held a food/toys drive for the King County Humane Society.” (girl, 10th grade)

“My Favorite Musical project, where you picked a musical, made a handout with the opening, original Broadway cast, interesting facts, and performed a scene or song from the show.” (girl, 11th grade)

“a fake trip to Peru. We had to do a brochure and a presentation. It was so much fun.” (girl, 11th grade)

“Make up a lab/hypothesis for Physics and use school laptops and video cameras to conduct whatever experiment you created.” (boy, 12th grade)

“We did a series of short drama sketches accompanied by musical narration for a presentation over the social classes of revolutionary France.” (boy, 12th grade)

Figure 2.36
Types of Homework Assignments

Q615 (Students): What types of homework have you had this school year?
Base: All Students

	Total	Grade Level		Grades		
		3 - 6	7 - 12	Mostly A's	A's and B's	C's and below
Base:	2101	922	1179	558	961	523
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Worksheets/Exercises	88	86	89	90	89	84
Study for Quiz/test	85	81	88	90	88	79
Math problem sets	80	86	77	87	82	75
Read books/chapters	79	78	80	87	81	72
Write a story/essay	72	59	81	80	74	67
Creative project	66	55	74	77	69	58
Research report	59	46	68	69	62	50
Research/Find info.	50	36	59	62	51	41
Book report	47	49	45	53	48	42
Lab Reports	30	12	43	43	32	21
None of these	1	1	2	1	1	2
No answer	*	*	*	-	*	*

A recurring question in discussions about homework today is whether the amount of homework assigned to students places undue demands on their lives. The current survey reveals that the majority of students report that they do have enough time to do their homework. A sizable minority of one in four students does not have enough time to do all of their homework, but twice as many – one in two students – do not get enough sleep. Each of these factors can impact a students' educational experience and secondary school students often feel this strain more strongly. Homework is often done in locations in addition to the home and at the same time as other activities, suggesting that an understanding of students' attention and focus, as well as overall time spent on homework, is an important aspect of understanding factors that can influence how homework gets done.

CHAPTER THREE

HOMework'S IMPACT ON THE LIVES OF STUDENTS, PARENTS AND FAMILIES

Overview

As seen in the previous chapter, most students do work on their homework at home. This intersection between school and home has potential benefits as well as negative consequences. A child's bringing his or her work home can provide an opportunity for parents to learn more about what goes on during the school day and what their child is learning, as well as a way for teachers and the school to communicate, at least indirectly, with parents. However, if the homework amount or difficulty level is seen as too burdensome, it can have a negative impact on a student's family life. Sometimes problems with homework can be a proxy for the larger dynamic of evolving, and sometimes tense, child-parent relationships. This chapter explores parents' views on what they perceive to be their role in the homework equation and how homework affects their relationship with their children.

Homework as a Topic of Conversation

Overall, two-thirds of parents (66%) speak with their children at least twice a week about their homework, including four in ten parents (40%) who report that their child discusses his or her homework with them every day. But this overall number belies a very different pattern among parents of elementary school students and parents of secondary school students. While over half of elementary school parents (56%) say that their child discusses his or her homework with them every day, only 22% of secondary school parents report speaking to their child about homework this frequently. In fact, just as many parents of secondary school students (24%) report that they rarely or never discuss homework with their child.

There appears to be a **disconnect between parents and students** regarding their perceptions of how often homework is discussed, particularly at the secondary school level. When students themselves are asked about the frequency with which they discuss their homework with their parents, 45% of elementary school students and only 12% of secondary school students say that they discuss their homework with their parents every day. Furthermore, 54% of secondary school students and 21% of elementary school students report that they rarely or never discuss their homework with their parents.

Figure 3.1
How Often Students Discuss Homework with Parents

Q655 (Students): How often do you discuss your homework with your parents?
 Base: All Students
Q610 (Parents): How often does your child discuss his/her homework with you?
 Base: All Parents

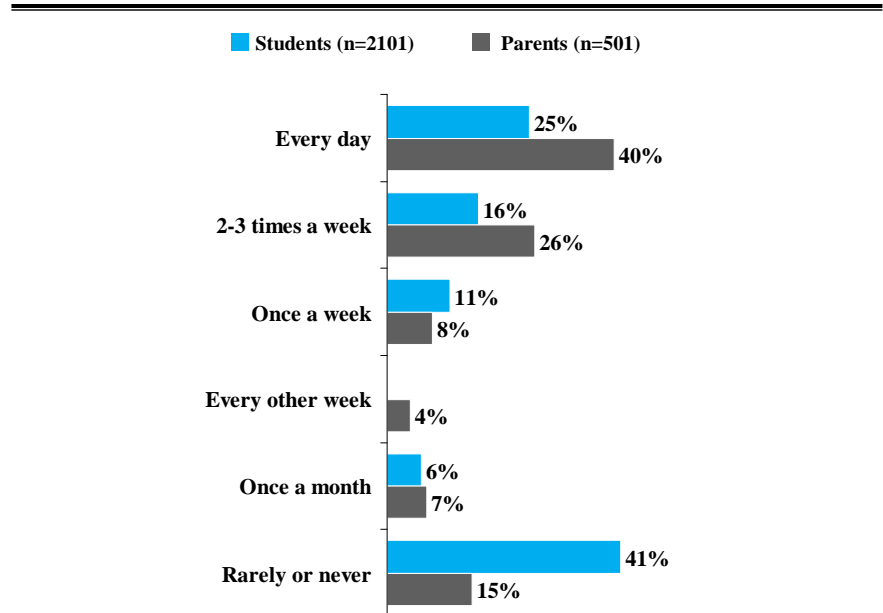


Figure 3.2
How Often Students Discuss Homework with Parents by Grade Level

Q655 (Students): How often do you discuss your homework with your parents?
 Base: All Students

	Total	Grade Level		Grades		
		3 - 6	7 - 12	Mostly A's	A's and B's	C's and below
Base:	2101	922	1179	558	961	523
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Every day	25	45	12	21	28	23
2 – 3 time a week	16	20	13	20	15	13
Once a week	11	9	13	13	12	8
Once a month	6	5	8	5	6	8
Rarely or never	41	21	54	40	38	48

Figure 3.3
How Often Students Discuss Homework with Parents by Ethnicity

Q610 (Parents): How often does your child discuss his/her homework with you?
 Base: All Parents

	Total	School Type		Race/Ethnicity	
		Elementary	Secondary	White/ Other	Black/ Hispanic
Base:	501	257	244	393	108
	%	%	%	%	%
Every day	40	56	22	37	46
2 – 3 time a week	26	24	27	29	19
Once a week	8	7	9	6	13
Every other week	4	4	5	4	5
Once a month	7	2	13	6	9
Rarely or never	15	6	24	18	8

THEN AND NOW:

Compared to a generation ago, the frequency with which students discuss homework with their parents has become more polarized. In the 1988 *MetLife Survey of the American Teacher*, students were less likely than they are today to speak to their parents daily about their homework (18% vs. 25%). However, students today are also more likely than those in 1988 to rarely or never discuss homework with their parents (41% vs. 32%).

Parents' Homework Rules

Although they may not frequently discuss homework with their child, most parents have established rules for their children about doing homework. Only one in nine parents (11%) – 6% of elementary school parents and 17% of secondary school parents – have no rules about homework. The most common rule that parents of students at both levels have is that homework is completed before their child can do something else that they want to do. Seventy percent of parents (76% of elementary school parents and 63% of secondary school parents) have this rule for their child. Other types of rules vary in prominence depending upon the age of the child. For elementary school parents, the next most common rules are that their child must show them that the homework is completed (66%), that homework is to be completed at a particular time of day (63%) and that homework is to be completed in a quiet place (59%). For secondary school

parents, having a rule about homework being done in a quiet place (44%) is more common than rules for completing it at a particular time of day (35%), completing before participating in extracurricular activities (33%) or showing an adult that homework is completed (22%).

Figure 3.4
Rules Parents Have About Homework

Q620 (Parents): Which of the following rules about homework, if any, do you have for your child
Base: All Parents

	Total	School Type		Race/Ethnicity	
		Elementary	Secondary	White/ Other	Black/ Hispanic
Base:	501	257	244	393	108
	%	%	%	%	%
Homework is to be completed before he/she can do something else that they want to do	70	76	63	66	78
Homework is to be completed in a quiet place	52	59	44	47	62
Homework is to be completed at a particular time of day	50	63	35	47	56
My child has to show a parent or other adult that his/her homework is completed	45	66	22	44	48
Homework is to be completed before he/she can participate in extracurricular activities	41	49	33	38	49
None – I don't have any rules about homework	11	6	17	13	8

Parental Help with Homework

Overall, parents have a split opinion as to whether students should do their homework without help from their parents (51% agree, 49% disagree). The balance does shift slightly depending on the age of the student. The view that students should do homework independently from their parents is held by a slight majority of parents of secondary school students (55% vs. 44% who disagree); while elementary school parents are more likely to disagree with this view (53% vs. 46% who agree).

Figure 3.5
Parents' Perspective on Parental Help with Homework

Q670 (Parents): How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Base: All Parents

	“Students should do their homework without help from their parents”				
	Total	School Type		Race/Ethnicity	
		Elementary	Secondary	White/ Other	Black/ Hispanic
Base:	501	257	244	393	108
	%	%	%	%	%
AGREE (NET)	51	46	55	52	48
Strongly agree	12	13	11	10	18
Somewhat agree	38	33	44	42	30
DISAGREE (NET)	49	53	44	47	52
Somewhat disagree	30	28	32	30	31
Strongly disagree	19	25	12	17	22
Not sure	1	1	*	1	--

Regardless of whether parents should or should not help their children with homework, **a large number of parents feel unprepared** to do so. Four in ten parents (43%) feel unprepared, or only somewhat prepared to help their child with his or her homework. A majority of secondary school parents (57%) feel less than well prepared to help their child with his or homework, compared to 29% of elementary school parents. Parents’ feelings of preparedness are related to their own education level as well. Parents who have a college degree or more are more likely than other parents to feel prepared or very prepared to help with homework (74% vs. 49%).

Parents’ feelings of lack of preparedness are concentrated in specific subject matters. They are most likely to feel less than well-prepared to help their child with foreign language (43%) and math (43%). Parents’ sense of lack of preparation to help with math is especially noteworthy, given that this subject has the most frequently homework assignments, as noted in Chapter 2. At the secondary school level, at least half of parents do not feel well-prepared to help their child in these subjects. Science is another subject area where parents feel ill-equipped to help, particularly if they do not have a college degree. One-quarter of parents without a college degree (25%) feel less than well-prepared to help their child with his or her science homework, compared to nine percent of those who have a college degree or more.

Figure 3.6
Parents' Level of Preparedness to Help with Specific Subjects in Children's Homework by Grade Level, Ethnicity

Q628 (Parents): In which subjects do you feel less than well-prepared to help your child?
 Base: All Parents

	Total	School Type		Race/Ethnicity	
		Elementary	Secondary	White/Other	Black/Hispanic
Base:	501	257	244	393	108
	%	%	%	%	%
Foreign language	43	31	57	51	27
Math	43	33	53	43	41
Science	19	18	21	20	18
English or Reading	10	10	10	12	6
Social studies or History	7	5	9	8	4
Something else	1	*	3	1	3
None – I feel well-prepared in all my child's subjects	24	34	13	19	33

Types of Parental Help

Most parents have engaged in a variety of activities throughout the year to support their child in doing his or her homework. The most common activity is talking about homework assignments with their child. Eight in ten parents (78%) have done this with their child. But parents' engagement often takes a more active role. Nearly three-quarters (73%) have reviewed, proofed or checked homework assignments and seven in ten (70%) have helped with a project. Even at the secondary school level a majority of parents have engaged in these activities at least occasionally during the school year. In addition, seven in ten secondary school parents (72%) have suggested places to their child where they can go for information or help with homework. Overall, two in ten parents (18%) have arranged for someone else to help their child with homework, a level that does not significantly differ across socioeconomic levels.

Figure 3.7
Actions Parents Have Taken to Help Their Children with Homework

Q612 (Parents): During this school year, which of the following have you done so that your child could do his/her homework? Please select all that apply.

Base: All Parents

	Top Responses				
	Total	School Type		Race/Ethnicity	
		Elementary	Secondary	White/Other	Black/Hispanic
Base:	501	257	244	393	108
	%	%	%	%	%
Talked about homework assignments with your child	78	81	74	80	73
Reviewed, proofed, or checked homework assignments	73	84	61	75	69
Helped with a project	70	79	61	70	72
Suggested places to go for information or help with homework	64	55	72	63	64
Arranged for someone to help your child with homework	18	14	21	17	19

The Impact of Homework on Family Life

Overwhelmingly, parents (87%) view helping their child with homework as an opportunity for them to talk and spend time together. This is a view shared equally by both secondary school (87%) and elementary school (86%) parents. In addition to viewing homework as a positive opportunity, the majority of parents do not feel that homework gets in the way of family time (78%) and do not say homework is a major source of stress (71%). Homework is more likely to be viewed as a burden by parents who do not believe that doing homework is important. At least half of parents who believe that homework is not important or only somewhat important agree that homework is a major source of stress and disagreement in their family (55% vs. 23% of others) and agree that the time their child spends doing homework gets in the way of their family spending time together (51% vs. 15% of others).

Figure 3.8
Does Homework Bring Parents and Children Together or Drive Them Apart?

Q676 (Parents): How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
 Base: All Parents

% Strongly/Somewhat Agree

	Total	School Type		Race/Ethnicity	
		Elementary	Secondary	White/ Other	Black/ Hispanic
Base:	501	257	244	393	108
	%	%	%	%	%
Helping my child with homework is an opportunity for us to talk and spend time together	87	86	87	85	91
The time my child spends doing homework gets in the way of our family spending time together	22	22	22	21	26
Homework is a major source of stress and disagreement in our family	29	30	28	32	23

A majority of parents subscribe to the view that a child’s vacation should not include homework. Two-thirds of parents (64%) do not believe that teachers should assign homework to be completed during school vacation. Of note, minority parents are more likely to strongly agree that homework should be assigned during vacation (29% vs. 6%). However, a majority of teachers (55%) have done this, if only rarely. Only nine percent of teachers frequently assign homework for vacations. The teachers most likely to engage in this activity are those whose school populations are heavily low-income or minority. Two in ten teachers (22%) in schools where at least two-thirds of the students are minorities and 17% of teachers in schools where at least two-thirds of the students are low-income frequently assign homework to be completed during school vacation. This compares to only five percent of teachers whose students are either less than a third minority or low-income.

Figure 3.9
Parents' Opinion on Assigning Homework During School Vacation

Q670 (Parents): How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Base: All Parents

“Teachers should assign homework to be completed during school vacations”

	Total	School Type		Race/Ethnicity	
		Elementary	Secondary	White/Other	Black/Hispanic
Base:	501	257	244	393	108
	%	%	%	%	%
AGREE (NET)	33	36	30	29	42
Strongly agree	13	17	8	6	29
Somewhat agree	20	19	22	23	14
DISAGREE (NET)	64	62	67	69	55
Somewhat disagree	24	22	27	24	24
Strongly disagree	40	40	40	44	30
Not sure	3	2	3	2	3

Figure 3.10
Frequency of Teachers Assigning Homework During School Vacation

Q555 (Teachers): How often do you assign homework to be completed during a school vacation?
Base: Teachers who ever assign homework

	Total	Years of Experience			Level of School	
		0 to 5	6 to 20	21+	Elementary	Secondary
Base:	968	121	453	394	578	355
	%	%	%	%	%	%
OFTEN (NET)	9	10	9	8	10	6
Very often	4	8	4	4	6	2
Often	4	2	5	4	4	4
Sometimes	15	13	16	16	14	18
RARELY/NEVER (NET)	76	77	76	76	75	76
Rarely	31	32	28	34	26	38
Never	45	44	48	42	49	38
Refused	*	--	--	*	*	--

Perceptions of Parental Involvement with Homework

Substantial numbers of teachers believe that the majority of parents are not sufficiently engaged in their children’s education. Four in ten teachers (38%) believe that many or most parents neglect to see that their children’s homework gets done. One-third (32%) believe that many or

most parents take too little interest in their children's education. One-third (32%) also believe that many or most parents fail to motivate their children so that they want to learn in school.

Parents themselves are critical of other parents. Four in ten believe that many or most parents take too little interest in their children's education (41%) and fail to motivate their children so that they want to learn in school (41%). More than one-third (36%) believe that many or most parents neglect to see that their children's homework gets done.

THEN AND NOW:

Compared to a generation ago, parents are more critical today of other parents when it comes to seeing that homework is completed. Today, two-thirds (64%) say that many or most parents neglect to see that their children's homework gets done, compared to 49% of parents in the 1987 *MetLife Survey of the American Teacher*.

In contrast, teachers today note improvements in this area. Teachers in 2007 are less likely than those in 1987 to think that most or many parents neglect to see that their children's homework gets done (38% vs. 50%).

Figure 3.11
Perceptions of Parents' Involvement with Children's Homework

Q605 (Teachers): How many parents do you think do the following... most, many, some, or hardly any?

Base: All Teachers

Q690 (Parents): How many parents do you think do the following... most, many, some, or hardly any?

Base: All Parents

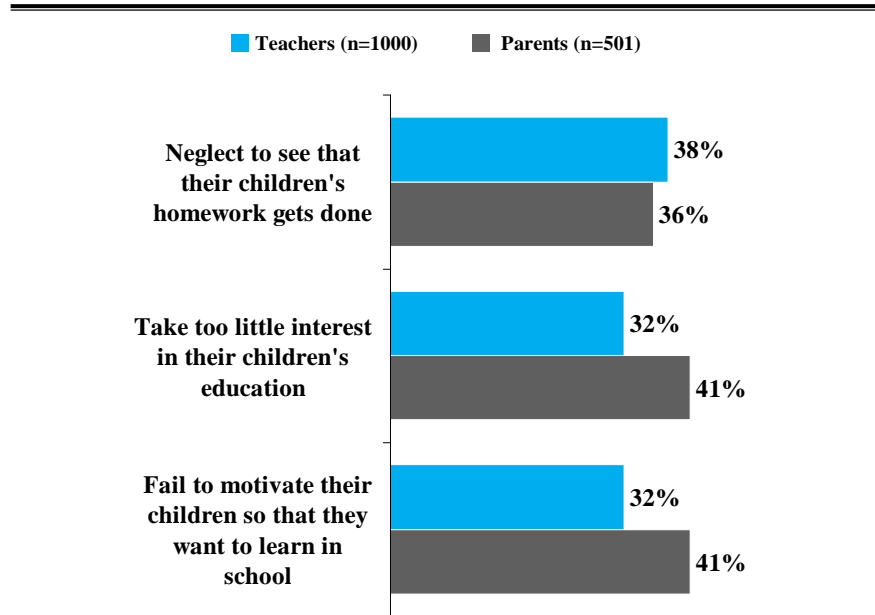


Figure 3.12
Perceptions of Parents' Involvement with Children's Homework - Teachers

Q605 (Teachers): How many parents do you think do the following... most, many, some, or hardly any?

Base: All Teachers

	Total	% Most/Many				
		Years of Experience			Level of School	
		0 to 5	6 to 20	21+	Elementary	Secondary
Base:	1000	102	482	416	622	321
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Neglect to see that their children's homework gets done	38	50	39	34	26	58
Take too little interest in their children's education	32	44	32	28	25	43
Fail to motivate their children so that they want to learn in school	32	41	31	31	23	47

Figure 3.13
Parents Perceptions of Other Parents' Involvement with Children's Homework

Q690 (Parents): How many parents do you think do the following... most, many, some, or hardly any?
 Base: All Parents

	% Most/Many				
	Total	School Type		Race/Ethnicity	
		Elementary	Secondary	White/ Other	Black/ Hispanic
Base:	501	257	244	393	108
	%	%	%	%	%
Neglect to see that their children's homework gets done	36	35	37	36	36
Take too little interest in their children's education	41	40	41	39	45
Fail to motivate their children so that they want to learn in school	41	40	42	42	40

CHAPTER FOUR

SCHOOL QUALITY AND HOMEWORK EXPERIENCES

Overview

Homework experiences occur in the context of the larger educational setting. While preceding chapters explored student, teacher and parent perceptions about homework along with documenting student experiences with homework, the current chapter examines the perceptions concerning the overall educational experience and its potential impact on students' homework practices and attitudes. Students who rate their overall quality of education as lacking and students who do not have needed support from school staff report less engagement in homework as well as poorer performance in school.

Student Attitudes about School

Most students have a positive attitude towards learning. Nine in ten students (88%) agree that learning new things is fun. In general, students also have a positive regard for their teachers. Nine in ten students (87%) report that they get along well with their teachers and eight in ten students (79%) report that their teachers care about them. However, while the majority of students (72%) say that they like school, one in four students (27%) reports that they do not like school. Secondary school students are more likely than elementary school students to say that they do not like school (31% vs. 21%) and less likely to agree that their teachers care about them (74% vs. 87%).

THEN AND NOW:

Secondary school students today seem to like school more than they did in the past. Today, 68% of secondary school students report that they like school, a slight improvement compared to six years ago when 61% said they liked school (*MetLife Survey of the American Teacher 2001*).

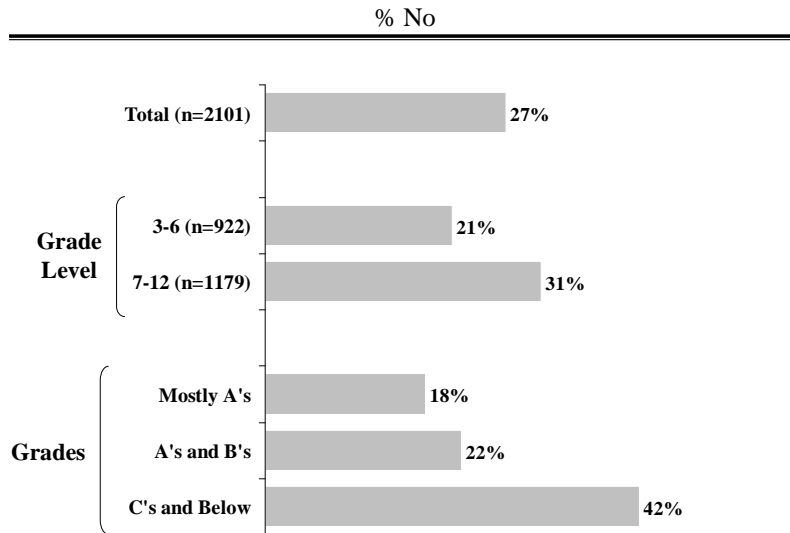
Figure 4.1
Student Attitudes about Learning and Teachers

Q535 (Students): How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
Base: All Students

	% Strongly/Somewhat Agree					
	Total	Grade Level		Grades		
		3 - 6	7 - 12	Mostly A's	A's and B's	C's and below
Base:	2101	922	1179	558	961	523
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Learning new things is fun	88	87	89	93	89	83
I get along well with my teachers	87	89	86	94	90	77
My teachers care about me	79	87	74	87	80	70

Figure 4.2
Student Attitudes about School

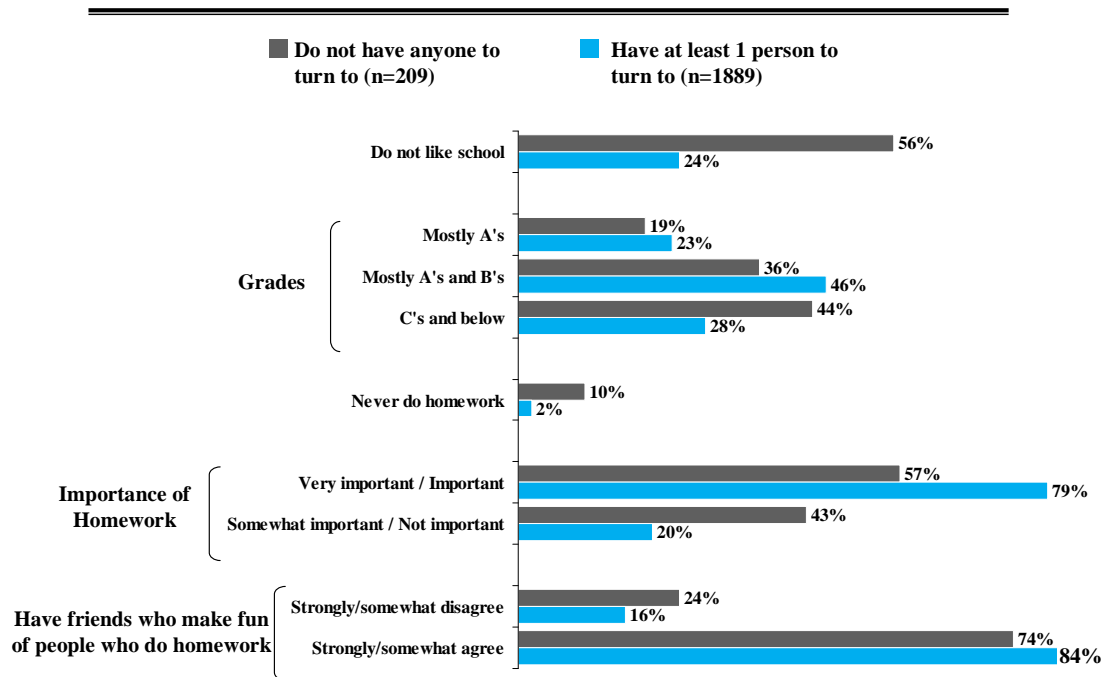
Q530 (Students): Do you like school?
Base: All Students



Lack of Teacher Support and Homework

As noted previously, while a majority of students feel that their teachers care about them, a sizable minority – twenty percent – do not feel this way. Furthermore, one in nine students (11%), including 14% of secondary school students, reports that at their school there are no adults they feel they can go to if they had a problem. This **lack of connection** with school staff is associated with a constellation of other negative experiences and risk factors. Students who experience this lack of supportive adults at school are twice as likely as others to not like school (56% vs. 24%). They are also more likely to get grades of C or below (44% vs. 28%). Homework experiences and attitudes also differ between students who have supportive adults at school and those who do not. Students who do not have any adults at school to whom they can turn are more likely than others to never do homework (10% vs. 2%), to believe that homework is not important or only somewhat important (43% vs. 20%), and to have friends who make fun of people who do their homework (24% vs. 16%).

Figure 4.3
Profile of Students Who Have People at School to Turn to For Help



Quality of Education

When students are asked to rate the overall quality of the education they receive, 31% say that the quality is excellent and an additional 52% say that it is good. Two in ten students (17%) say that the overall quality of the education they receive at their school is fair (14%) or poor (3%). More secondary school students than elementary school students give their school a fair or poor rating (22% vs. 9%).

Figure 4.4
Perception of Quality of Teachers, School and Overall Education

Q520 (Students): How would you rate the overall quality of the education you receive at your school?
Base: All Students

	Total	Grade Level		Grades		
		3 – 6	7 – 12	Mostly A's	A's and B's	C's and below
Base:	2101	922	1179	558	961	523
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Excellent	31	45	23	44	34	17
Good	52	46	55	47	53	55
Fair	14	8	18	8	11	23
Poor	3	1	4	1	2	5
No answer	*	*	--	*	*	*

Quality of education distinguishes student attitudes towards and experiences with homework. Students who rate their quality of education as only fair or poor are less likely than others to believe that doing homework is important or very important (59% vs. 80%) and less likely to believe that doing homework helps them learn more in school (52% vs. 72%). In addition, students whose quality of education is only fair or poor do less homework and receive less support for their homework than do students whose quality of education is excellent or good. Students with only a fair or poor quality of education have the following homework characteristics compared to students receiving an excellent or good education:

- They are less likely to report that their homework is interesting (26% vs. 48%);
- They are less likely to get feedback from their teachers on their homework most or all of the time (16% vs. 30%);

- They are less likely to discuss homework with their parents at least twice a week (23% vs. 44%);
- They are less likely to do homework at home (74% vs. 86%) and more likely to do it during school (56% vs. 48%);
- They spend less time doing homework (32% spend 15 minutes or less, compared to 20% of other students);
- They are less likely to have enough time to finish their homework (62% vs. 77%); and
- They are less likely to almost always finish their homework (55% vs. 81%).

Figure 4.5
Profile of Students Whose School Quality Is Excellent/Good vs. Fair/Poor

	Quality of Education	
	Good/ Excellent	Fair/ Poor
Base:	1760	337
	%	%
Importance of homework		
Very important / Important	80	59
Somewhat / Not important	19	39
Doing homework helps me learn more in school		
Strongly/somewhat agree	72	52
Strongly/somewhat disagree	27	47
Frequency of being assigned homework		
Every day	42	41
Three or four days a week	36	30
Less often than one or two days a week	15	20
Time spent doing homework		
15 minutes or less	20	32
Have enough time to finish homework		
Almost always / Sometimes	77	62
Hardly every / Never	22	37
Where homework is completed		
Home	86	74
School	52	59
Frequency of discussing homework with parents		
Every day	27	14
Two or three times a week	17	9
Once a week or less	55	76
Frequency of getting feedback from teachers on homework		
All of the time / Most of the time	30	16
Sometimes	34	29
A few times / Hardly ever	36	54
Homework is interesting		
Strongly/somewhat agree	48	26
Strongly/somewhat disagree	51	74

Figure 4.6
Profile of Students Whose School Quality Is Excellent/Good vs. Fair/Poor - Continued

	Quality of Education	
	Good/ Excellent	Fair/ Poor
Base:	1760	337
	%	%
Grade level		
3-6	43	21
7-12	57	79
Grades in school		
Mostly A's	25	12
Mostly A's and B's	47	36
C's and below	26	49
Race/Ethnicity		
White/Other	69	59
Black/African American	14	21
Hispanic	17	19
Parent's highest level of education		
High school or less	29	35
Some college	27	29
College or more	32	25
Number of adults can go to for support		
0	9	20
1 or more	91	80
Plans to go to college		
Yes	83	73
Attitudinal Statements (% A lot / Somewhat like me)		
I get along well with my parents	92	82
I have a lot of friends	91	80
I feel safe	90	70
I get into trouble a lot	82	71
I have been happy at school this year	82	58
I often feel sad and unhappy	76	60
I am often bored	42	31
Get enough sleep	57	36

Unlike some areas of the school experience where they often disagree, students and parents are in close agreement when it comes to their ratings of the quality of education that students receive. Similar to students, three in ten parents (31%) give an excellent rating for the overall quality of the education that their child receives, with an additional 47% giving a good rating. Two in ten parents (22%) say that the overall quality of the education that their child receives is fair or poor. Parents' and students' ratings contrast greatly with the ratings of teachers on this issue. Over half of teachers (55%) report that the overall quality of the education that students receive at their school is excellent, with an additional 39% giving a rating of good. Only six percent say that the overall quality of education is fair or poor. However, teachers whose schools have high proportions of low income or minority students are more likely than those with few such students to rate the quality of education as fair or poor. Teachers whose schools have two-thirds or more low income students are more than three times as likely as those with few low income students (one-third or less) to rate the overall quality of education as fair or poor (10% vs. 3%). Teachers whose schools have two-thirds or more minority students are also more than three times as likely as those with few minority students (one-third or less) to rate the overall quality of education as fair or poor (14% vs. 5%).

THEN AND NOW:

According to teachers, the overall quality of education has improved over the past 20 years. Compared to findings in the *MetLife Survey of the American Teacher 1987*, more teachers today rate the overall quality of the education that students receive as excellent (55% vs. 30%). However, parents' ratings have not shown a similar improvement. Parents today are just as likely as those in 1987 to rate the overall quality of the education that their child receives as excellent (27% in 1987 vs. 31% in 2007).

Figure 4.7
Perception of Quality of Teachers, School and Overall Education

Q520 (Students): How would you rate the overall quality of the education you receive at your school?
 Base: All Students

Q525 (Parents): How would you rate the overall quality of the education your child receives?
 Base: All Parents

Q505 (Teachers): How would you rate the overall quality of the education that students receive at your school?
 Base: All Teachers

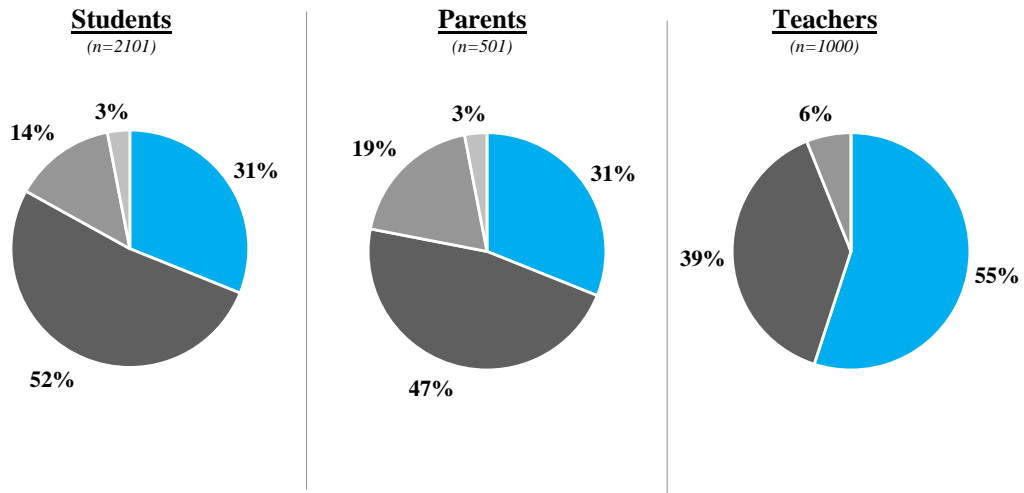
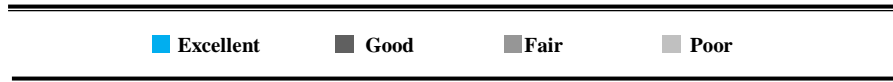


Figure 4.8
Perception of Quality of Teachers, School and Overall Education - Parents

Q525 (Parents): How would you rate the overall quality of the education your child receives?
 Base: All Parents

	Total	School Type		Race/Ethnicity	
		Elementary	Secondary	White/Other	Black/Hispanic
Base:	501	257	244	393	108
	%	%	%	%	%
Excellent	31	32	30	31	31
Good	47	49	44	43	56
Fair	19	16	22	23	11
Poor	3	2	3	3	2

Figure 4.9
Perception of Quality of Teachers, School and Overall Education - Teachers

Q505 (Teachers): How would you rate the overall quality of the education that students receive at your school?
 Base: All Teachers

	Total	Years of Experience			Level of School	
		0 to 5	6 to 20	21+	Elementary	Secondary
Base:	1000	102	482	416	622	321
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Excellent	55	47	55	56	63	42
Good	39	43	39	38	35	45
Fair	6	10	5	5	2	12
Poor	*	--	1	--	*	1
Don't Know	*	--	*	--	--	*
Refused	*	1	--	--	--	*

CHAPTER FIVE

HOMEWORK'S IMPACT ON TEACHING AND PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Overview

An examination of homework's impact on teachers' lives and of parental involvement with homework broadens and deepens the understanding of homework. In addition to students, teachers spend many hours each week on homework-related activities. Teachers devote resources in terms of time during class and outside of class to planning, reviewing and providing feedback on students' homework. Homework can also be a tool through which teachers can communicate with and engage parents. These activities, as well as others, inform the context by which teachers and parents judge the quality of the educational experience provided by the school.

Teacher Quality

Overall, teachers rate the qualifications and competence of the teachers in their school highly. Nearly all (96%) give their colleagues a rating of excellent (69%) or good (27%). Several school characteristics distinguish which teachers get the highest ratings. Elementary school teachers are more likely than secondary school teachers to rate their colleagues as excellent (77% vs. 58%). Teachers in schools with one-third or fewer minority students (73%) are more likely than those with more than two-thirds minority students (55%) to rate the qualifications of their colleagues as excellent. Similarly, teachers in schools with one-third or fewer low-income students (75%) are more likely than those with two-thirds low-income students (59%) to rate their colleagues as excellent.

Parents' ratings of teachers are less generous than those of teachers themselves. Eight in ten parents (79%) rate the qualifications and competence of the teachers in their school as excellent (30%) or good (49%). Parents' ratings do not vary significantly by school type, parent's income, educational attainment or race/ethnicity.

THEN AND NOW:

According to teachers, the qualifications and competence of teachers in their school has improved over the past 20 years. Compared to findings in the *MetLife Survey of the American Teacher 1987*, more teachers today rate the qualifications and competence of teachers in their own schools as excellent (69% vs. 51%). However, parents' ratings have not shown a similar improvement. Parents today are just as likely as those in 1987 to rate the qualifications and competence of teachers in their schools as excellent (26% in 1987 vs. 30% in 2007).

Figure 5.1
Perception of Qualifications and Competence of Teachers in Your School – Parents and Teachers

Q505 (Teachers): Would you rate your school excellent, good, fair or poor on the qualifications and competence of teachers in your school?

Base: All Teachers

Q525 (Parents): The following are several aspects on which public schools can be judged. How would you rate yours on the qualifications and competence of teachers in your school?

Base: All Parents

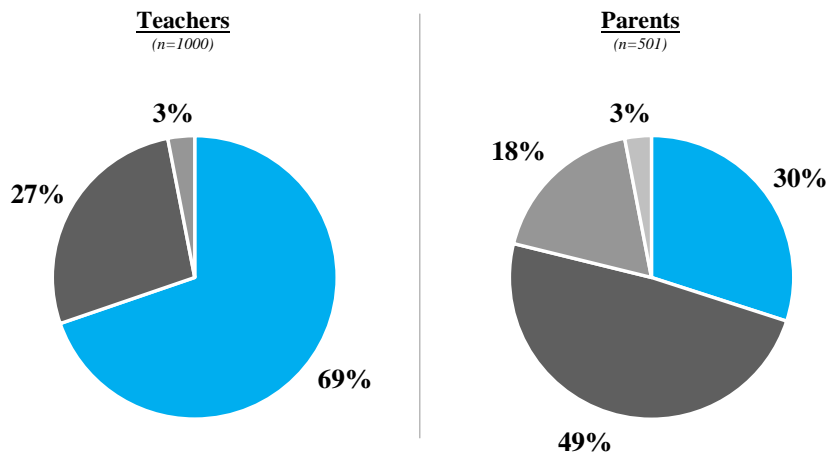


Figure 5.2
Perception of Qualifications and Competence of Teachers in Your School - Teachers

Q505 (Teachers): Would you rate your school excellent, good, fair or poor on the qualifications and competence of teachers in your school?

Base: All Teachers

	Total	Years of Experience			Level of School	
		0 to 5	6 to 20	21+	Elementary	Secondary
Base:	1000	102	482	416	622	321
	%	%	%	%	%	%
EXCELLENT/GOOD (NET)	96	95	97	96	97	94
Excellent	69	51	71	73	77	58
Good	27	43	26	23	20	36
FAIR/POOR (NET)	3	5	3	3	2	6
Fair	3	5	2	3	2	5
Poor	*	--	*	--	--	*
Don't know	*	--	--	1	*	--
Refused	*	--	1	--	*	--

	Total	Low Income Students			Minority Students		
		0 – 33%	34% - 66%	67% or more	0 – 33%	34% - 66%	67% or more
Base:	1000	337	310	300	554	197	215
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
EXCELLENT/GOOD (NET)	96	98	98	94	97	100	93
Excellent	69	75	71	59	73	74	55
Good	27	23	27	35	24	25	38
FAIR/POOR (NET)	3	2	1	5	3	*	5
Fair	3	3	1	4	3	*	4
Poor	*	--	--	1	--	--	1
Don't know	*	--	*	--	--	--	*
Refused	*	--	--	1	--	--	1

Figure 5.3
Perception of Qualifications and Competence of Teachers in Your School - Parents

Q525 (Parents): The following are several aspects on which public schools can be judged. How would you rate yours on the qualifications and competence of teachers in your school?

Base: All Parents

	Total	School Type		Race/Ethnicity	
		Elementary	Secondary	White/Other	Black/Hispanic
Base:	501	257	244	393	108
	%	%	%	%	%
EXCELLENT/GOOD (NET)	79	83	75	76	87
Excellent	30	34	27	32	26
Good	49	50	48	43	61
FAIR/POOR (NET)	21	17	25	24	13
Fair	18	15	21	21	11
Poor	3	2	3	3	2

Teachers’ Time Spent on Homework

As with students, homework is a prominent part of teachers’ weekly activities. Nearly all teachers (94%) assign homework at least once a week, including over half (56%) who assign homework 4 to 5 days a week. Teachers report that they spend an average of 8.5 hours each week doing work related to students’ homework. On average, this represents 15.4% of the total number of hours teachers spend on school-related responsibilities, inside or outside the classroom or at home. Secondary school teachers spend more hours each week (11.2 vs. 7 hours) and a greater proportion of their work hours (18.7% vs. 13.6%) on homework than do elementary school teachers. This finding reflects the pattern noted in Chapter Two in secondary school and elementary school students’ time spent on homework.

Figure 5.4
Frequency with Which Teachers Assign and Work on Homework

Q525 (Teachers): During a typical school week, how often do you assign homework?

Base: All Teachers

Q510 (Teachers): In an average week, how many hours do you spend, in total, on school-related responsibilities, including all responsibilities in the classroom, any responsibilities outside the classroom, and any work you do at home? Q520 (Teachers): How many hours would you say are related to students' homework?

Base: All Teachers

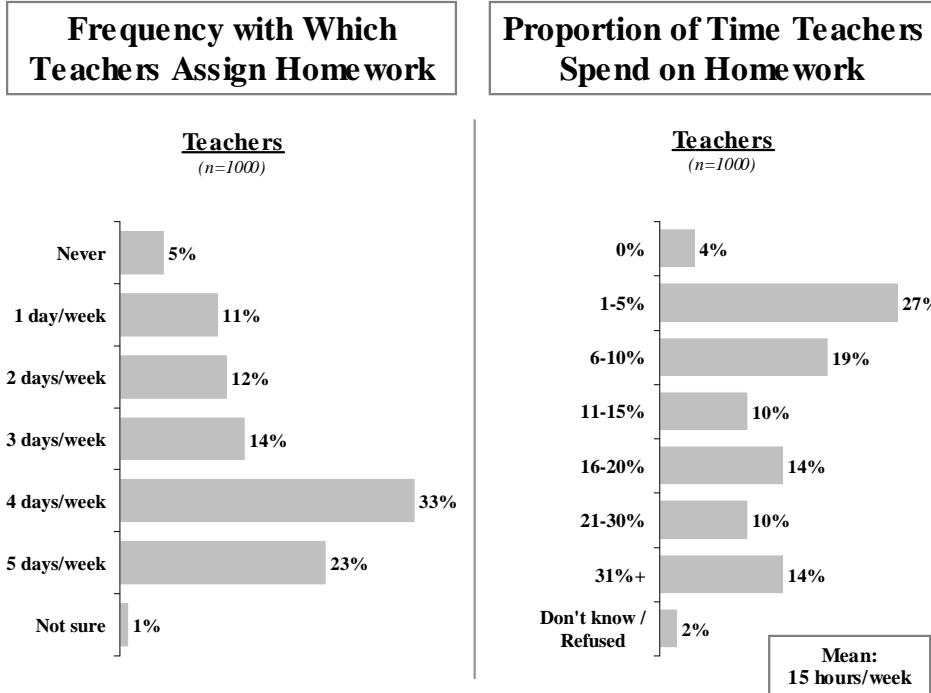


Figure 5.5
Frequency with Which Teachers Assign Homework

Q525 (Teachers): During a typical school week, how often do you assign homework?
Base: All Teachers

	Total	Years of Experience			Level of School	
		0 to 5	6 to 20	21+	Elementary	Secondary
Base:	1000	102	482	416	622	321
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Never	5	5	5	5	4	6
1 day a week	11	12	13	8	12	9
2 days a week	12	10	11	14	6	21
3 days a week	14	27	14	11	9	23
4 days a week	33	32	33	34	43	18
5 days a week	23	14	23	25	24	21
Not sure	1	1	*	2	1	2

Figure 5.6
Proportion of Time Teachers Spend on Homework

Q510 (Teachers): In an average week, how many hours do you spend, in total, on school-related responsibilities, including all responsibilities in the classroom, any responsibilities outside the classroom, and any work you do at home?

Q520 (Teachers): How many hours would you say are related to students' homework?
Base: All Teachers

	Total	Years of Experience			Level of School	
		0 to 5	6 to 20	21+	Elementary	Secondary
Base:	1000	102	482	416	622	321
	%	%	%	%	%	%
0%	4	2	5	4	5	2
1-5%	27	27	28	25	34	15
6-10%	19	17	19	19	21	16
11-15%	10	10	10	10	6	16
16-20%	14	14	13	15	12	18
21-30%	10	11	10	9	8	13
30% or more	14	15	13	15	12	19
Don't know / Refused	2	4	2	2	2	2
Mean	15.4	17.7	14.4	15.7	13.6	18.7

As noted in Chapter Two, one in four students (24%) report that they do not have enough time to do all their homework and three-quarters (77%) spend at least 30 minutes doing homework on a typical school day, including 45% who spend at least one hour doing homework. Teachers' perceptions of the time students spend on homework differ than students' reports. Teachers' expectations for the amount of time students spend completing a typical homework assignment is between 15 and 30 minutes. Eight in ten teachers (78%) think it takes their students 15 or 30 minutes to complete a typical homework assignment from their class.

Most teachers do not speak frequently with other teachers about their students' homework load from other classes. Four in ten teachers (39%) teachers speak at least once a week to their students' other teachers about how much homework they are assigning. However, nearly as many teachers (36%) report that their level of coordination with other teachers is much less frequent – only a few times a year or less. Frequent coordination with other teachers is a characteristic of more experienced teachers. More experienced teachers (21+ years of experience) are more likely than new teachers (5 years or less experience) to speak at least once a week to their students' other teachers about how much homework they are assigning (41% vs. 21%).

Figure 5.7
Teachers' Perceptions of How Long It Takes Students to Complete a Typical Homework Assignment

Q545 (Teachers): How long do you think it takes students to complete a typical homework assignment for your class?

Base: Ever assigns homework

	Total	Years of Experience			Level of School	
		0 to 5	6 to 20	21+	Elementary	Secondary
Base:	968	100	465	403	606	311
	%	%	%	%	%	%
5 minutes	3	5	3	3	5	-
15 minutes	36	29	37	37	40	28
30 minutes	42	41	42	43	39	49
45 minutes	10	13	9	10	8	13
ONE HOUR OR MORE (NET)	8	12	8	6	7	10
1 hour	6	9	7	5	5	8
1.5 hours	1	2	1	*	1	1
2 hours	*	-	*	*	*	*
2.5 hours	*	-	-	*	*	-
3 hours or more	*	-	-	*	-	*
Not sure	1	-	1	1	1	1

Figure 5.8
Coordination among Teachers on Amount of Students' Homework

Q565 (Teachers): How often do you speak to your students' other teachers about how much homework they are assigning?

Base: All Teachers

	Total	Years of Experience			Level of School	
		0 to 5	6 to 20	21+	Elementary	Secondary
Base:	1000	102	482	416	622	321
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Never	17	19	15	18	18	14
LESS THAN ONCE A WEEK (NET)	41	57	41	36	40	42
Few times a year	19	28	16	20	18	21
Once a month	11	9	15	8	12	10
2-3 times a month	10	20	10	8	10	11
AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK (NET)	39	21	41	41	37	43
Once a week	18	7	21	19	19	17
2-4 times a week	13	10	13	13	11	17
Every day	8	4	7	9	7	9
Not sure	3	4	2	4	4	1
Decline to answer	1	--	1	1	1	*

Homework in the Classroom

Homework can be a focus of in-class, as well as at-home, activities. Nine in ten teachers (92%) report that they explain the purpose of specific homework assignments to students most or all of the time. Slightly fewer teachers (83%) report that they provide students with a grade or comment on their homework this frequently. Less common still are teachers who review completed homework assignments in class discussions, with 71% of teachers reporting that they do this activity most or all of the time. More experienced teachers (21+ years of experience) are more likely than new teachers (5 or fewer years of experience) to provide students with a grade or comments on their homework (87% vs. 74%) or review completed homework assignments in class discussions (76% vs. 59%) most or all of the time.

Figure 5.9
Level of Interaction of Teacher and Students Concerning Homework

Q540 (Teachers): How often do you do the following related to homework?
Base: Ever assigns homework

	Total	% All/Most of the Time Years of Experience			Level of School	
		0 to 5	6 to 20	21+	Elementary	Secondary
Base:	968	100	465	403	606	311
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Provide students with a grade or comments on their homework	83	74	83	87	80	90
Explain the purpose of specific homework assignments to students	92	91	93	91	91	95
Review completed homework assignments in class discussions	71	59	70	76	68	77

Creating Engaging and Interesting Assignments

Over half of students (55%) do not think that their homework assignments are interesting. Secondary school students, in particular, hold this view (62% vs. 44% of elementary school students). Teachers themselves report varying degrees of confidence in their ability to create engaging homework assignments. Overall, seven in ten (69%) teachers feel extremely or very prepared to create engaging homework assignments, leaving 29% who feel less prepared. A teacher's years of experience does distinguish their assessment of preparedness. While three-quarters of teachers with more than 20 years of experience feel extremely or very prepared to create engaging homework assignments, only 58% of new teachers (5 years or less experience) feel this way.

THEN AND NOW:

Homework can be one of the tools teachers can use to communicate to parents and engage them in their child's education. As noted above, **fewer new teachers than experienced teachers feel prepared to create engaging homework** assignments. Previous *MetLife Surveys of the American Teacher* have shown that engaging families is an area they feel least prepared to address as new teachers. In the *MetLife Survey of the American Teacher, 2004-2005*, one of the top two areas teachers felt least equipped to address in their first job was engaging families in supporting their children's education. One-quarter (23%) of teachers feel not too or not at all prepared in this area. New teachers themselves may be less aware of the gap in their preparation. More experienced teachers (21+ years experience) are more likely than new teachers (5 years or less experience) to report that, in their first teaching position, they were not too or not at all prepared to engage families in supporting their child's education (30% vs. 17%, *MetLife Survey of the American Teacher, 2006*).

Figure 5.10
Teachers' Preparedness to Create Engaging Homework Assignments

Q575 (Teachers): How prepared do you feel to create engaging homework assignments -extremely prepared, very prepared, prepared, not too prepared or not at all prepared?

Base: All Teachers

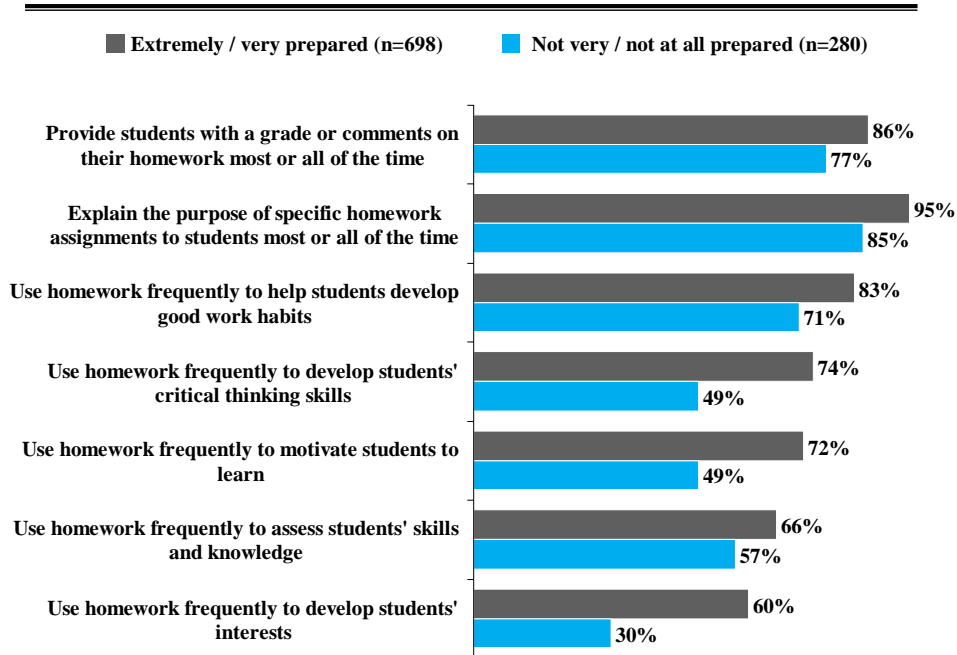
	% Extremely/Very Prepared					
	Total	Years of Experience			Level of School	
		0 to 5	6 to 20	21+	Elementary	Secondary
Base:	1000	102	482	416	622	321
	%	%	%	%	%	%
EXTREMELY/ VERY PREPARED (NET)	69	58	68	74	71	67
Extremely prepared	25	15	24	30	26	24
Very prepared	44	43	43	45	45	43
LESS PREPARED (NET)	29	41	30	24	28	30
Prepared	27	37	28	23	26	29
Not very prepared	1	1	1	1	1	*
Not at all prepared	*	3	*	--	*	1
Not sure	1	1	2	1	1	2
Decline to answer	1	--	1	1	*	1

More prepared and less prepared teachers do not differ significantly in the amount of time that they spend doing homework. However, they do differ in how they use homework in their teaching approach and how they interact with students regarding homework. Teachers who feel extremely or very prepared to create engaging homework assignments are more likely to provide students with students with a grade or comments their homework most or all of the time (86% vs. 77%) and to explain the purpose of specific homework assignments to students most or all of the time (95% vs. 85%). They are also more likely than others to frequently use homework assignments for the following purposes:

- To help students develop good work habits (83% vs. 71%);
- To develop students' critical thinking skills (74% vs. 49%);
- To motivate students to learn (72% s. 49%);
- To assess students' skills and knowledge (66% vs. 57%); and
- To develop students' interests (60% vs. 30%).

These findings indicate that teachers who feel more prepared to create engaging homework assignments are also finding ways to maximize the impact of these assignments.

Figure 5.11
Profile of Teachers Prepared to Create Engaging Homework Assignments
Level of Teacher Preparedness



Teacher-Parent Communication about Homework

Most parents (73%) report that their child’s teacher discusses their child’s homework assignments with them less than once a month. This includes a sizable number of parents (19%) who report that teachers never discuss homework with them. The frequency of these discussions does vary quite a bit by the child’s grade level. Elementary school parents are twice as likely as secondary school parents to discuss homework with their child’s teacher at least once a month (36% vs. 18%), while secondary school parents are twice as likely as elementary school parents to never discuss homework assignments with the teacher 24% vs. 13%).

Figure 5.12
Frequency that Teachers Discuss Children’s Homework Assignments with Parents

Q550 (Parents): How often does your child’s teacher discuss your child’s homework assignments with you? Please include written notes or emails, telephone conversations or face-to-face meetings.

Base: All Parents

	Total	School Type		Race/Ethnicity	
		Elementary	Secondary	White/Other	Black/Hispanic
Base:	501	257	244	393	108
	%	%	%	%	%
AT LEAST ONCE A MONTH (NET)	27	36	18	24	35
Once a week or more	14	19	9	13	17
Once a month	13	17	9	11	17
LESS THAN ONCE A MONTH (NET)	45	43	46	47	40
Every other month	10	11	8	9	11
2 or 3 times a year	35	32	38	38	29
ONCE A YEAR OR LESS (NET)	28	21	36	29	26
Once a year	9	7	11	9	10
Never	19	13	24	20	16
Mean	3.3	3.7	2.9	3.2	3.6

Teacher-Parent Interactions

Most parents (95%) have met in person, one-on-one with a teacher or school official during the school year, including 30% who have met more than three times. Nine in ten (90%) have talked on the telephone with a teacher or school official at least once during the school year, including 27% who have had a phone conversation more than three times. Other types of interactions are less common. Three-quarters (76%) have exchanged written notes or emails with a teacher or school official about some problem their child is having, and 62% have visited the school to observe classes, speak to a class or help a teacher with their work.

THEN AND NOW:

Parents today are more likely than those 20 years ago to have had contact with a teacher or school official through a phone conversation or written note. Compared to findings in the *MetLife Survey of the American Teacher 1987*, more parents today have spoken on the telephone with a teacher or school official (90% vs. 81%) or exchanged written notes with a teacher or school official (76% vs. 66%) at least once during the school year. The increase in written contact may be in part due to technology. This year's survey included email exchanges in the definition of written notes.

Figure 5.13
Actions Parents Have Taken to Engage at Children's School

Q540 (Parents): How often do you do each of the following?
Base: All Parents

% At least once a year

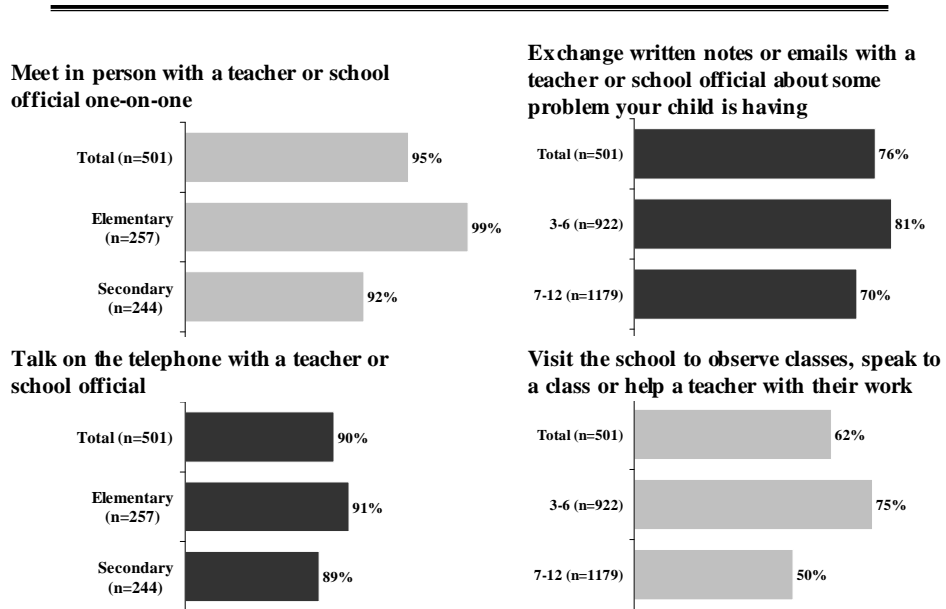


Figure 5.14
Actions Parents Have Taken to Engage at Children’s School

Q540 (Parents): How often do you do each of the following?
 Base: All Parents

	Meet in person with a teacher or school official one-on-one			Talk on the telephone with a teacher or school official		
	Total	School Type		Total	School Type	
		Elementary	Secondary		Elementary	Secondary
Base:	501	257	244	501	257	244
	%	%	%	%	%	%
More than 3 times a year	30	41	18	27	35	20
2 or 3 times a year	48	47	50	40	35	44
Once a year	17	11	24	23	21	25
Never	5	1	8	10	9	11

	Exchange written notes or emails with a teacher or school official about some problem your child is having			Visit the school to observe classes, speak to a class or help a teacher with their work		
	Total	School Type		Total	School Type	
		Elementary	Secondary		Elementary	Secondary
Base:	501	257	244	501	257	244
	%	%	%	%	%	%
More than 3 times a year	32	37	26	19	28	9
2 or 3 times a year	28	30	26	27	31	23
Once a year	16	14	19	17	16	18
Never	24	19	30	37	25	50

Over one-quarter of parents report that their school does not provide important guidance on their child’s education. Three in ten parents have not received information from their child’s school on how to help their child with homework assignments (28%) or how to help their child develop good study habits (28%). One-third of parents (33%) report that their child’s school has not provided them with information on how to motivate their child. Secondary school parents are more likely than elementary school parents to have not received these types of information. Furthermore, parents who report that the overall quality of education at their school is only fair or poor are significantly more likely than others to report that they have not received information on how to help their child with homework assignments (68% vs. 17%), help their child develop good study habits (69% vs. 17%) or motivate their child (75% vs. 22%).

Teachers' assessment of their schools' performance on these issues is more positive. One in eight or fewer teachers report that their school has not provided parents with information on how to motivate their child (13%), how to help their child with homework assignments (10%) or how to help their child develop good study habits (9%).

Figure 5.15
Are Schools Providing Information to Aid Parents in Helping with Their Children's Homework

Q535 (Parents): Has your child's school provided you with information on how to do each of the following?

Base: All Parents

Q610 (Teachers): Has your school provided parents with information on how to ... or not?

Base: All Teachers

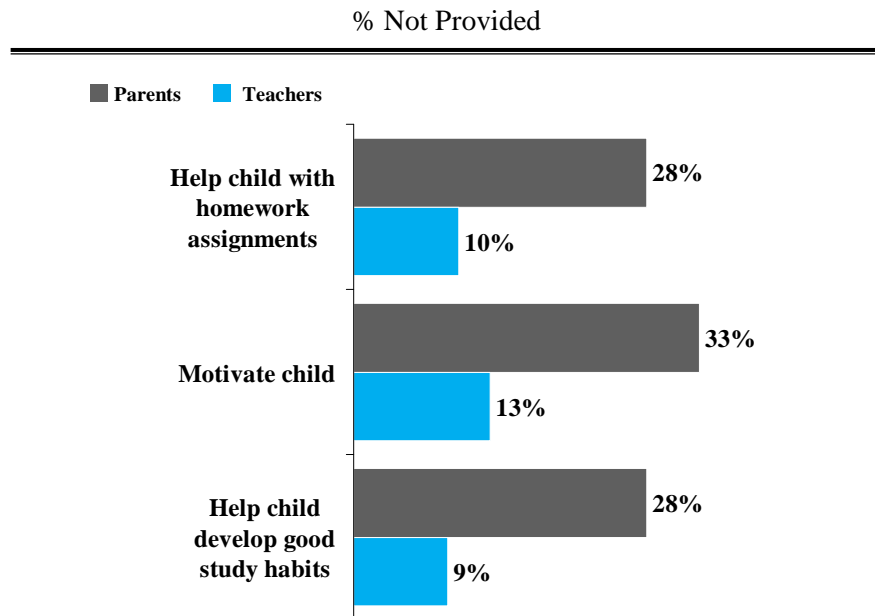


Figure 5.16
Are Schools Providing Information to Aid Parents in Helping with Their Children’s Homework

Q535 (Parents): Has your child’s school provided you with information on how to do each of the following?

Base: All Parents

% “Not Provided”

	Total	School Type		Race/Ethnicity	
		Elementary	Secondary	White/Other	Black/Hispanic
Base:	501	257	244	393	108
	%	%	%	%	%
Help your child with homework assignments	28	22	35	31	22
Motivate your child	33	25	42	39	22
Help your child develop good study habits	28	21	36	32	19

Figure 5.17
Are Schools Providing Information to Aid Parents in Helping with Their Children’s Homework

Q610 (Teachers): Has your school provided parents with information on how to ... or not?

Base: All Teachers

% “Not Provided”

	Total	Years of Experience			Level of School	
		0 to 5	6 to 20	21+	Elementary	Secondary
Base:	1000	102	482	416	622	321
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Help their child with homework assignments	10	24	9	7	7	15
Motivate their child	13	32	11	11	9	21
Help their child develop good study habits	9	17	10	6	7	13

Parents’ level of dissatisfaction with the amount of contact with their child’s teachers and school is similar to the levels of those with infrequent contact about homework and those who do not receive important guidance on their child’s education. Three in ten parents (28%) are dissatisfied with the frequency of contact they have with their child’s school. While elementary school and secondary school parents do not differ in this regard, parents who report that the overall quality of education at their school to be fair or poor are more likely than others to be dissatisfied with the frequency of contact (72% vs. 16%). It is also important to note that 15% of parents report

having felt awkward or reluctant about approaching a teacher to talk with him or her about their child.

Figure 5.18
Parents' Satisfaction with Level of Interaction with Children's Teachers and School

Q555 (Parents): How satisfied are you with the frequency of contact you have with your child's teachers and school?

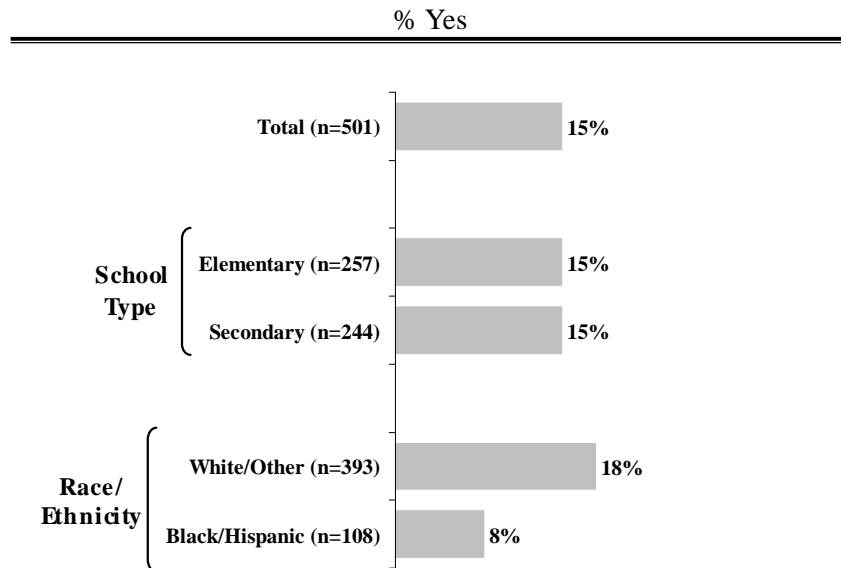
Base: All Parents

	Total	School Type		Race/Ethnicity	
		Elementary	Secondary	White/Other	Black/Hispanic
Base:	501	257	244	393	108
	%	%	%	%	%
VERY/SOMEWHAT SATISFIED (NET)	72	77	66	71	74
Very Satisfied	44	55	33	44	45
Somewhat satisfied	28	22	34	27	29
VERY/SOMEWHAT DISSATISFIED (NET)	28	23	34	29	26
Somewhat dissatisfied	19	15	24	21	15
Very dissatisfied	9	8	10	8	10

Figure 5.19
Parents' Reluctance to Talk to Teachers about Their Child

Q560 (Parents): Have you ever felt awkward or reluctant about approaching a teacher to talk with them about your child?

Base: All Parents



One-quarter of parents (24%) also report that their school does not do a good job of encouraging parental involvement in educational areas, a view held by **three times as many** secondary school parents as elementary school parents (36% vs. 12%). Two in ten parents (21%) report that their school does not give parents the opportunity for any meaningful roles and four in ten parents (43%) report that their school only contacts parents when there is a problem with a child.

Figure 5.20
Parents Perceptions of School’s Giving Parents a Chance to Get Involved with Their Child’s School

Q530 (Parents): Do you agree or disagree with each statement about your child’s school?
 Base: All Parents

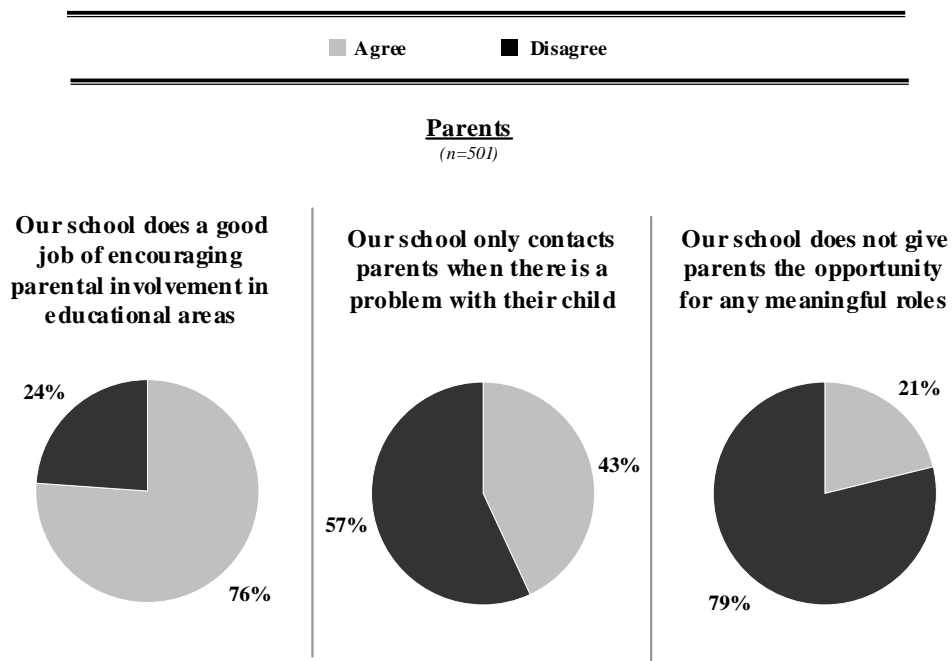


Figure 5.21
Parents Perceptions of School's Giving Parents a Chance to Get Involved with Their Child's School

Q530 (Parents): Do you agree or disagree with each statement about your child's school?
 Base: All Parents

	Total	Level of School		Race/ Ethnicity	
		Elementary	Secondary	White/ Other	Black/ Hispanic
Base:	501	257	244	393	108
	%	%	%	%	%
Our school does a good job of encouraging parental involvement in educational areas					
Agree	76	88	64	74	83
Disagree	24	12	36	26	17
Our school only contacts parents when there is a problem with their child					
Agree	43	33	54	42	45
Disagree	57	67	46	58	55
Our school does not give parents the opportunity for any meaningful roles					
Agree	21	17	26	20	24
Disagree	79	83	74	80	76

Given parents' report of these experiences, it is perhaps not surprising that many do not rate school-parent relations highly. Two in ten parents or more give their school a fair or poor rating on the availability and responsiveness of teachers when they need to contact them (25%) along with the relations between parents and teachers in their school (22%). It is interesting to note that minority parents are less likely than white parents to give their school a fair or poor rating on these attributes. Black and Hispanic parents are less likely than white parents to rate their school as fair or poor on the relations between parents and teachers (12% vs. 26%) and on the availability and responsiveness of teachers when they need to contact them (13% vs. 30%).

When teachers are asked to assess parents' engagement and support they are even harsher than parents' assessment of teachers. Four in ten teachers (39%) give a fair or poor rating to their school for the availability and responsiveness of parents when they need to contact them and 36% give a fair or poor rating for the amount of support for the school shown by the parents.

THEN AND NOW:

Teachers and parents both note some improvement in school-parent relations over the past generation. Compared to findings in the *MetLife Survey of the American Teacher 1987*, teachers today are more likely to say the availability and responsiveness of parents when they need to contact them is excellent (23% vs. 16%). More parents today than in 1987 give an “excellent” rating for the amount of support for the school shown by the parents (34% vs. 26%) and the relations between parents and teachers in their school (34% vs. 25%).

Figure 5.22
Quality of Parent-Teacher Relationships

Q525 (Parents): The following are several aspects on which public schools can be judged. How would you rate yours on each of the following?

Base: All Parents

Q505 (Teachers): Would you rate your school excellent, good, fair or poor on...?

Base: All Teachers

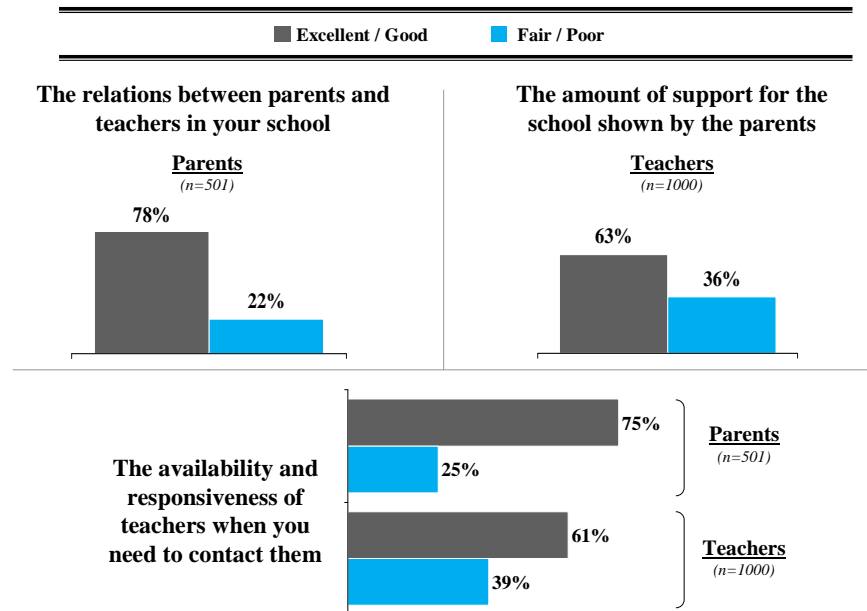


Figure 5.23
Quality of Parent-Teacher Relationships - Parents

Q525 (Parents): The following are several aspects on which public schools can be judged. How would you rate yours on each of the following?

Base: All Parents

	Total	School Type		Race/Ethnicity	
		Elementary	Secondary	White/ Other	Black/ Hispanic
Base:	501	257	244	393	108
	%	%	%	%	%
The relations between parents and teachers in your school					
EXCELLENT/GOOD (NET)	78	81	74	74	88
Excellent	34	37	34	32	38
Good	44	45	44	42	50
FAIR/POOR (NET)	22	19	26	26	12
Fair	18	15	20	21	9
Poor	4	3	5	5	3
The availability and responsiveness of teachers when you need to contact them					
EXCELLENT/GOOD (NET)	75	81	69	70	87
Excellent	34	43	24	31	39
Good	41	38	45	38	48
FAIR/POOR (NET)	25	19	31	30	13
Fair	19	15	24	24	10
Poor	6	4	8	7	3

Figure 5.24
Quality of Parent-Teacher Relationships – Teachers

Q505 (Teachers): Would you rate your school excellent, good, fair or poor on...?
 Base: All Teachers

	Total	Years of Experience			Level of School	
		0 to 5	6 to 20	21+	Elementary	Secondary
Base:	1000	102	482	416	622	321
	%	%	%	%	%	%
The availability and responsiveness of parents when you need to contact them						
EXCELLENT/GOOD (NET)	61	51	62	62	64	56
Excellent	23	20	23	24	27	18
Good	38	31	39	38	37	38
FAIR/POOR (NET)	39	49	37	38	36	43
Fair	28	35	27	27	25	34
Poor	11	14	10	11	11	10
Don't know	*	--	--	*	--	*
Refused	*	--	1	--	*	*
The amount of support for the school shown by the parents						
EXCELLENT/GOOD (NET)	63	56	64	65	65	59
Excellent	27	22	29	27	32	19
Good	36	35	35	38	33	41
FAIR/POOR (NET)	36	44	35	35	34	40
Fair	24	26	24	24	22	28
Poor	12	18	12	11	12	12
Don't know	*	--	*	*	*	*
Refused	*	--	*	1	1	--

CHAPTER SIX

FACING HOMEWORK'S CHALLENGES AND CREATING SOLUTIONS

Overview

This year's *MetLife Survey of the American Teacher* has documented the many types of challenges and opportunities that students, teachers and parents face regarding homework, including those related to resources, standards of quality and perceptions of relevance. Two important resources are **time and attention** – students' time to focus on and complete homework and the impact of homework on students' time with parents, as well as teachers' time to create and review assignments. Other resources are the **support and assistance** of parents and teachers, as well as the **availability of materials**. Another challenge is the relationship between the goals of homework and the perceived relevance of actual assignments; teachers differ in how they use homework as an educational tool, and parents and students do not always understand the connection between assignments and educational goals. For teachers, their level of experience influences their perceptions of the benefits of homework and their own confidence about the purpose and use of homework.

This chapter explores students', teachers' and parents' evaluation of homework's benefits and challenges. In addition, the perspectives of a group of education leaders are incorporated regarding perceived problems and potential steps towards improvement.

Educator Insights: Benefits and Challenges for Students

A group of twenty public school teachers, department chairs and principals representing a diverse range of schools from across the United States participated in an online strategy session to discuss their perceptions of the current homework experience and provide deeper insight into its surrounding issues. The group participating in the strategy session expressed belief in the importance of homework, giving it an average importance rating of 7.6 on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is "not at all important" and 10 is "extremely important". The group's views on the importance of homework was similar to the findings of the survey, which found that 83% of teachers say that doing homework is important or very important (Chapter One).

The group of educators also provided their insights into the purpose of homework and the characteristics of engaging and effective assignments. The results of the survey found that teachers most frequently use homework to help students practice skills or prepare for tests and to

help students develop good work habits (Chapter One). The educators in the strategy session also emphasized the linkage of homework to classroom and life skills goals. For this group, the most important purposes of homework are to reinforce what is taught in the classroom, to enable students to practice concepts taught in class, as well as to build strong work habits and teach skills of organization and responsibility. These educators were also asked what they considered to be the characteristics of engaging and effective homework assignments. They indicated that the most important characteristics are: being relevant to the day's lessons, allowing active reinforcement of classroom concepts, being achievable and not frustrating the student, allowing students to "work it out" on their own, reinforcing previously presented material, and containing elements of exploration and creativity.

The group of educators also discussed the challenges that students and teachers face regarding homework. When asked about the challenges that confront students, they indicated several obstacles and also rated the severity of impact that each of these challenges have on a student's education on a scale of 1 to 5 (1=not at all severe, 2=somewhat severe, 3=severe, 4=very severe, 5=extremely severe). The group believed that technological distractions most severely impact students' education. The challenges mentioned by the group, as well as their rating of severity of impact on a student's education, included:

- Distractions of modern technology (TV, text messaging, Internet, videogames, etc.) (mean 4.3)
- Poor organizational skills (mean 3.9)
- Lack of parental support (mean 3.8)
- Lack of motivation (mean 3.8)
- Lack of time (mean 3.6)
- Other responsibilities at home (siblings, chores, etc.) (mean 3.6)
- Not understanding the assignment (mean 3.5)
- Simply don't have the skill (mean 3.5)
- Not seeing the larger purpose of homework (mean 3.4)
- Not knowing where to go for help (mean 3.1)
- Extracurricular activities (mean 3.1)
- Feeling overloaded by the assignment (mean 3.0)
- Noisy homes (mean 3.0)

These educators cited several drawbacks or dangers to students as it relates to homework. Mostly, they focused on the consequences of having assignments that take too long to complete or require resources or supplies the students may not have. These education leaders believe that the school may inadvertently create a sense of failure for students who don't understand or can't complete their assignment, further leading to an overall negative attitude toward school.

Educator Insights: Teacher Challenges

The educators in the strategy session offered that in order for an assignment to be engaging and effective, it must be relevant to the lesson, actively reinforce the concept, be challenging yet doable, be applicable to students' lives, and be creative. The perception that students should always be given homework can lead some teachers to assign something out of obligation, which can result in busywork that students find boring and are thus unmotivated to complete. The educators in the session provided several reasons why homework can be considered busywork not related to what students are learning in school. The educators elaborated on possible underlying causes:

“Teachers feel pressured to assign ‘something.’” (Secondary School Teacher)

“Homework is an expectation in the American education system.” (Elementary School Principal)

“Teachers feel homework is a requirement that fulfills their curriculum. Busywork that doesn't reflect authentic work allows the teacher to follow up on his/her philosophy that homework needs to be given each night.” (Elementary School Principal)

“The truly engaging homework takes a skilled teacher to produce and equally talented to make it useful with descriptive feedback.” (Elementary School Principal)

Repetitive busywork, these education leaders said, is a reason why some students do not care about homework or are not motivated to complete their assignments. Along with student apathy and neglect, the education leaders cited the following challenges when it comes to homework:

- Dealing with a range of student abilities to complete assignments
- Dealing with different parent philosophies about homework
- Balancing homework with students' extracurricular activities
- Parents who create excuses for their kids

- Building in time the following day to share assignments
- Handling vacations and absent children
- Taking the time to provide genuine feedback on the assignments
- Work that simply is not done to standard

With these challenges in mind, educator leaders were asked to rate the severity of impact each has on their ability to do their jobs well (1=not at all severe, 2=somewhat severe, 3=severe, 4=very severe, 5=extremely severe). At the end of the day, educator leaders say that student apathy (mean 3.8) and neglect (mean 4.0) most severely impact their ability to do their jobs well. In their own words, teachers and educators share some of their struggles:

“Select students who habitually do not bring homework back to school completed – then the list of excuses. (Elementary Principal)

“You have a kid who never does homework. How many recesses can you take away?” (Elementary School Principal)

“Giving students constructive, relative feedback regarding their homework.” (Secondary School Department Chair)

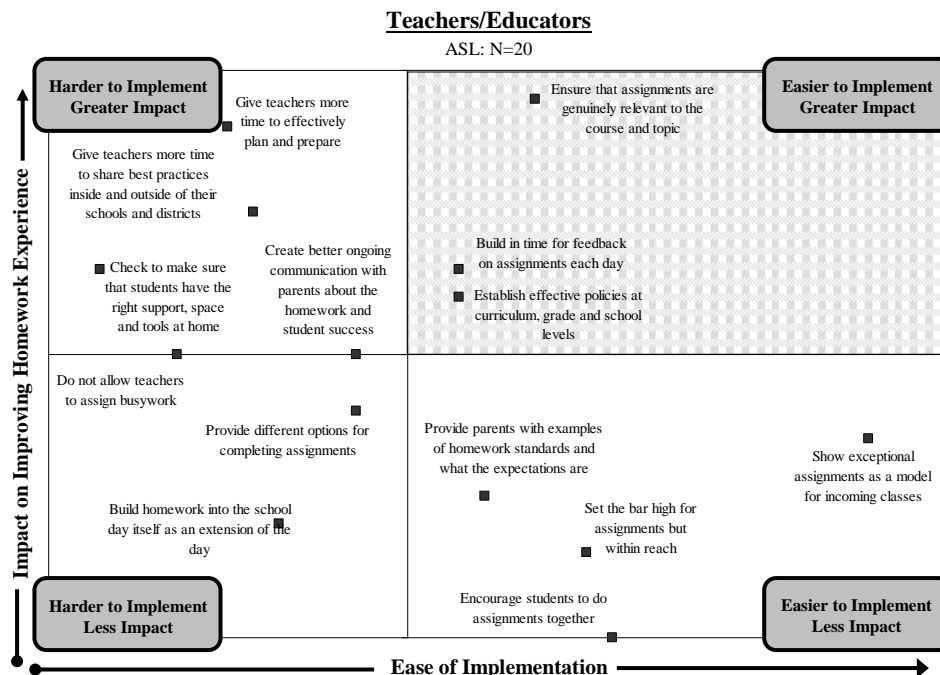
“Parents don't value education as much as they should...” (Secondary School Teacher)

- Ensure that assignments are genuinely relevant to the course and topic
- Build in time for feedback on assignments each day
- Establish effective policies at curriculum, grade and school levels

It is also worth considering those solutions that may not be rated as easy to implement but could have a significant impact on improving students' homework experience. These approaches are illustrated in the upper left hand corner of the chart below) and include:

- Give teachers more time to effectively plan and prepare
- Give teachers more time to share best practices inside and outside of their schools and districts
- Check to make sure that students have the right support, space and tools at home
- Create better ongoing communication with parents about the homework and student success
- Do not allow teachers to assign busywork

Figure 6.2
Impact of Approaches on Students Versus Ease of Implementation





IN THEIR OWN WORDS: Homework Improvement Strategies

“Have a homework academy to support kids that don’t have the proper homework setting at home. Our foundation funds this for my school.” (Elementary School Principal)

“Allow teachers time to talk to teachers at other schools/districts to discuss ideas.” (Secondary School Department Chair)

“We have a parent/school action team that plans parent education evenings. Some are for parents only; some are structured for parents to learn alongside the students.” (Elementary School Principal)

“Better communication with parents as to the connection to school and success – relevance.” (Elementary School Principal)

“Quality not quantity.” (Secondary School Principal)

“Creative assignments that motivate rather than hinder learning.” (Elementary School Principal)

“Show children that learning has meaning by relating concepts to their home lives.” (Secondary School Department Chair)

“Administration needs to take a look at what all teachers in school/district are giving ...and see if the [homework] is busywork or not! (Secondary School Teacher)

“Provide opportunities in school for students to get [homework] done or started and be able to ask questions if need be (last minutes of the day).” (Elementary School Teacher)

Student Views on Homework’s Challenges

In the strategy session, educators indicated that among the challenges of homework faced by students are feeling overloaded (stress) and not understanding the larger purpose of the assignments (relevance). This year’s *MetLife Survey of the American Teacher* asked students for their own views on these and other potential challenges they face related to homework. Stress can result from many sources, such as limited time and other resources to complete assignments and to do them well, and the *Survey* found that homework-related stress is common among students. Nine in ten students (89%) feel stressed about doing homework, including one-third of students (34%) who frequently (very often/often) feel stressed about homework. The students most likely to feel frequently stressed about homework are older students, those who are struggling in school, as well as those who do not receive quality support at school or their home lives. The following students are more likely than others to feel frequently stressed about homework:

- Secondary school students (38% vs. 28% of elementary school students);
- Students who get C's or below (38% vs. 28% of "A" students);
- Students who rate their school quality as poor or fair (44% vs. 32% of students whose school is excellent/good);
- Students who do not have any adults at school they can turn to for help (46% vs. 33% of those who have supportive adults);
- Students who do not get enough sleep (47% vs. 23% of those who get enough sleep);
- Suburban students (38% vs. 30% of rural students and 30% of urban students); and
- White (35%) or Hispanic (37%) students (vs. 25% African-American students).

Figure 6.3
Frequency of Students Feeling Stressed about Doing Homework

Q535 (Students): How often do you feel stressed about doing homework?
 Base: All Students

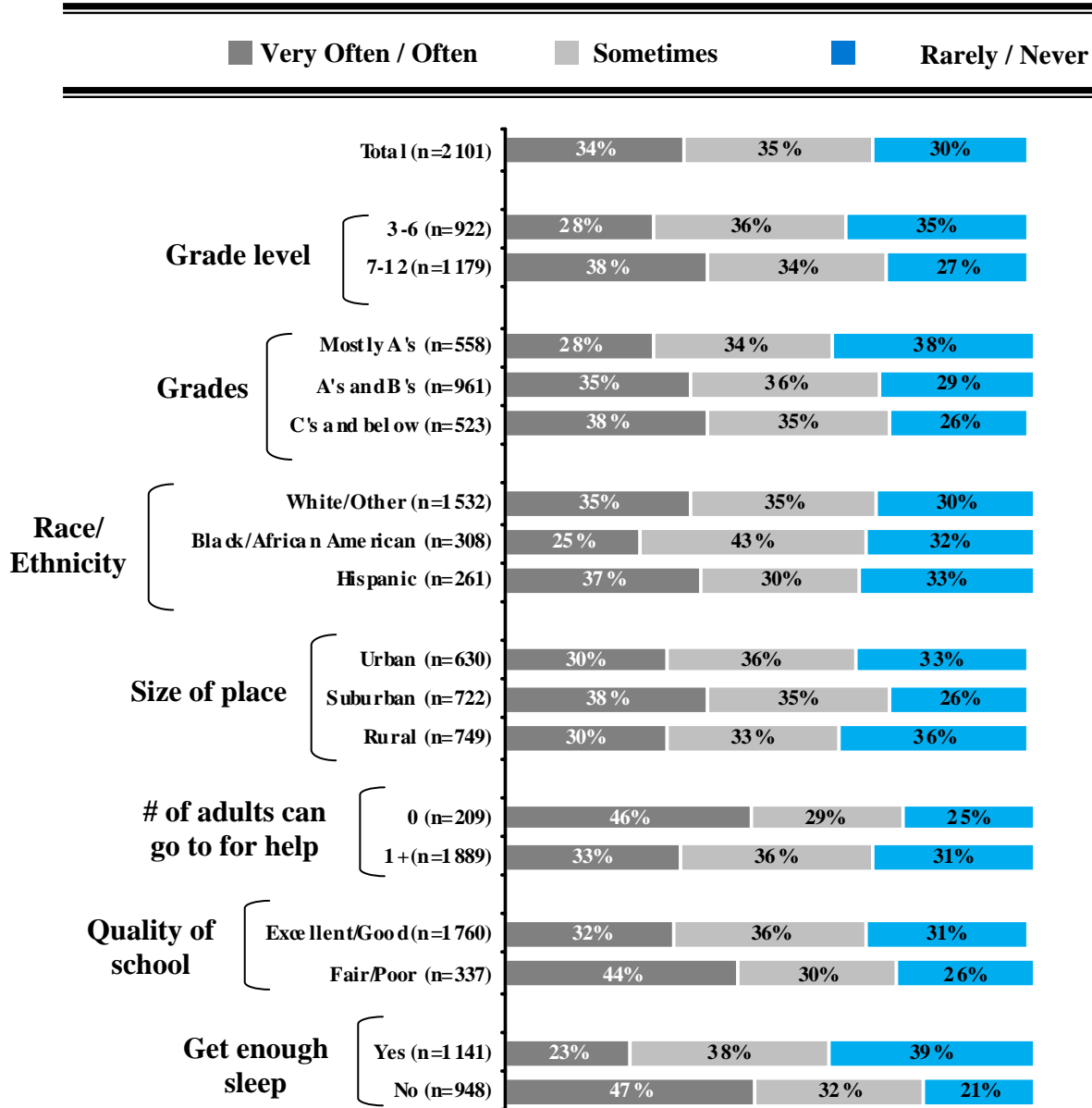


Figure 6.4
Frequency of Students Feeling Stressed about Doing Homework by Type of Student

Q535 (Students): How often do you feel stressed about doing homework?
 Base: All Students

	Total	Grade Level		Grades		
		3 - 6	7 - 12	Mostly A's	A's and B's	C's and below
Base:	2101	922	1179	558	961	523
	%	%	%	%	%	%
VERY OFTEN / OFTEN (NET)	34	28	38	28	35	38
Very often	15	12	17	12	15	17
Often	19	15	21	16	20	21
Sometimes	35	36	34	34	36	35
RARELY / NEVER (NET)	30	35	27	38	29	26
Rarely	19	22	17	27	19	14
Never	11	13	10	11	10	12
No answer	*	1	*	*	*	1

Figure 6.5
Frequency of Students Feeling Stressed about Doing Homework by Demographics

	Total	Race/Ethnicity			Size of Place		
		White/ Other	Black/ African American	Hispanic	Urban	Suburban	Rural
Base:	2101	1532	308	261	630	722	749
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
VERY OFTEN/ OFTEN (NET)	34	35	25	37	30	38	30
Very often	15	16	10	16	13	17	15
Often	19	19	16	21	17	22	15
Sometimes	35	35	43	30	36	35	33
RARELY/NEVER (NET)	30	30	32	33	33	26	36
Rarely	19	18	19	24	20	18	21
Never	11	12	13	9	13	8	16
No answer	*	*	*		1	*	*

Figure 6.5 continued

	Total	# of Adults at School Can Go to for Help		Quality of School		Get Enough Sleep	
		0	1+	Excellent/ Good	Poor/ Fair	Yes	No
Base:	2101	209	1889	1760	337	1141	948
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
VERY OFTEN / OFTEN (NET)	34	46	33	32	44	23	47
Very often	15	25	14	14	22	8	24
Often	19	21	19	18	21	15	23
Sometimes	35	29	36	36	30	38	32
RARELY / NEVER (NET)	30	25	31	31	26	39	21
Rarely	19	11	20	20	15	25	13
Never	11	14	11	11	11	14	8
No answer	*	*	*	*	*	1	*

As noted above, having supportive adults at school is associated with students feeling less stressed about homework. The attitudes and actions of other students can also present challenges to homework. Two in ten students (17%) report that their friends make fun of people who always do their homework. This view is particularly prevalent among those students who do not plan on going to college (22% vs. 15% of those who do). Minority students (Black and Hispanic) are more likely than white students to feel this way as well (20% overall vs. 15%). The percentage of teachers (18%) and parents (21%) who believe that students at their school make fun of those students who always do their homework is similar to the percentage of students who make this assessment (17%). Teachers whose school population is more than two-thirds low-income are more likely than those with one-third or fewer low-income students to report this view (23% vs. 9%), as are students whose school population is more than two-thirds minority students (24% vs. 15%).

Figure 6.6
Students' Attitudes towards Those Who Do All Their Homework

*Q700 (Students): How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
 "My friends make fun of people who always do their homework"*

Base: All Students

*Q590 (Teachers): How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
 "Students in my school make fun of those students who always do their homework"*

Base: All Teachers

*Q670 (Parents): How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
 "Students in my child's school make fun of those students who always do their homework"*

Base: All Parents

■ Strongly agree
 ■ Somewhat agree
 ■ Somewhat disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree
 Not sure/
 No answer

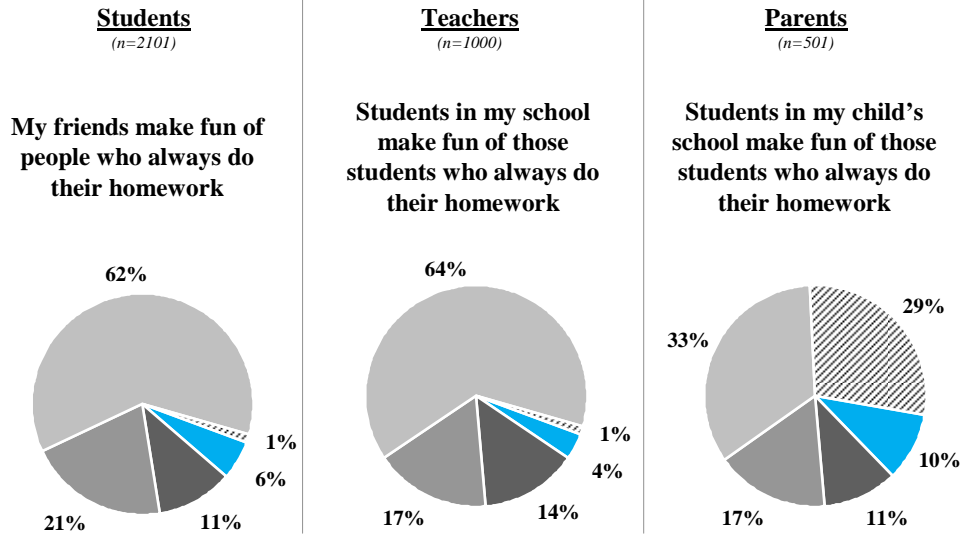


Figure 6.7
Students' Attitudes towards Those Who Do All Their Homework

Q700 (Students): How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
 Base: All Students

“My friends make fun of people who always do their homework”

	Total	Grade Level		Grades		
		3 - 6	7 - 12	Mostly A's	A's and B's	C's and below
Base:	2101	922	1179	558	961	523
	%	%	%	%	%	%
AGREE (NET)	17	14	18	18	14	20
Strongly agree	6	6	5	6	6	6
Somewhat agree	11	8	13	12	9	14
DISAGREE (NET)	83	85	81	82	85	79
Somewhat disagree	21	17	23	22	21	20
Strongly disagree	62	68	58	60	64	59
No answer	1	1	1	1	1	1

	Total	Race/Ethnicity		
		White/ Other	Black/ African American	Hispanic
Base:	2101	1532	308	261
	%	%	%	%
AGREE (NET)	17	15	19	21
Strongly agree	6	5	7	9
Somewhat agree	11	10	12	12
DISAGREE (NET)	83	84	80	78
Somewhat disagree	21	20	20	23
Strongly disagree	62	64	60	55
No answer	1	1	1	1

Figure 6.8
Teachers' Perceptions of Students' Attitudes towards Those Who Do All Their Homework

Q590 (Teachers): How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
 Base: All Teachers

“Students in my school make fun of those students who always do their homework”

	Total	Years of Experience			Level of School	
		0 to 5	6 to 20	21+	Elementary	Secondary
Base:	1000	102	482	416	622	321
	%	%	%	%	%	%
AGREE (NET)	18	14	20	16	8	33
Strongly agree	4	5	5	2	2	6
Somewhat agree	14	9	16	14	6	28
DISAGREE (NET)	81	86	78	82	90	66
Somewhat disagree	17	19	15	18	11	25
Strongly disagree	64	67	64	64	80	41
Not sure	1	--	1	2	1	1
Refused	*	--	*	*	*	*

	Total	Low Income Students			Minority Students		
		0 -33%	34% - 66%	67% or more	0 – 33%	34% - 66%	67% or more
Base:	1000	337	310	300	554	197	215
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
AGREE (NET)	18	9	25	23	15	22	24
Strongly agree	4	1	6	5	3	5	5
Somewhat agree	14	8	19	17	12	17	19
DISAGREE (NET)	81	90	73	76	84	75	76
Somewhat disagree	17	18	19	13	18	14	16
Strongly disagree	64	71	54	64	66	61	60
Not sure	1	1	2	1	1	3	*
Refused	*	*	--	--	*	--	--

Figure 6.9
Parents' Attitudes towards Those Who Do All Their Homework

Q670 (Parents): How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
 Base: All Parents

“Students in my child’s school make fun of those students who always do their homework “

	Total	School Type		Race/Ethnicity	
		Elementary	Secondary	White/ Other	Black/ Hispanic
Base:	501	257	244	393	108
	%	%	%	%	%
AGREE (NET)	21	18	25	18	27
Strongly agree	10	11	8	6	17
Somewhat agree	11	6	17	12	10
DISAGREE (NET)	50	59	41	51	49
Somewhat disagree	17	19	14	18	13
Strongly disagree	34	40	27	33	35
Not sure	29	23	34	30	24

Doing homework that does not appear to students to serve a purpose or be useful is another challenge that they face. One-quarter (26%) of students say that their homework is just busywork and is not related to what they are learning in school. More secondary school students feel this way than do elementary school students (30% vs. 19%). Students who are not doing well in school are also more likely to feel this way (31% of “C or below” students vs. 25% of “A” students). Students who are not planning on going to college are more likely than college-bound students to feel that their homework is just busywork and is not related to what they are learning in school (32% vs. 25%). In addition to feeling that their homework is not relevant to their current studies, students who are not planning on going to college are more than twice as likely as others to believe that doing homework will not help them at all to reach their goals for after high school (19% vs. 7%).

THEN AND NOW:

Today, 30% of secondary school students say that their homework is just busywork and is not related to what they are learning in school. How does this compare with their views on the larger category of school work? The *MetLife Survey of the American Teacher 2002* offers some insights on this. At that time, three-quarters of secondary school students (74%) agreed with the statement that “most of my **school work** is “busywork”. Furthermore, 44% of secondary school students reported that they did not get to be creative and use their abilities at school.

Figure 6.10
Students’ Perceptions About How Much of Homework is Busywork

*Q675 (Students): How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
 “My homework is just busywork and is not related to what I am learning in school”*

Base: All Students

Q660 (Parents): In your opinion, how much of the homework that is assigned to students in your child’s school is just busywork and is not related to what they are learning in school?

Base: All Parents

Q580 (Teachers): In your opinion, how much of the homework that is assigned to students in your school is just busywork and is not related to what they are learning in school?

Base: All Teachers

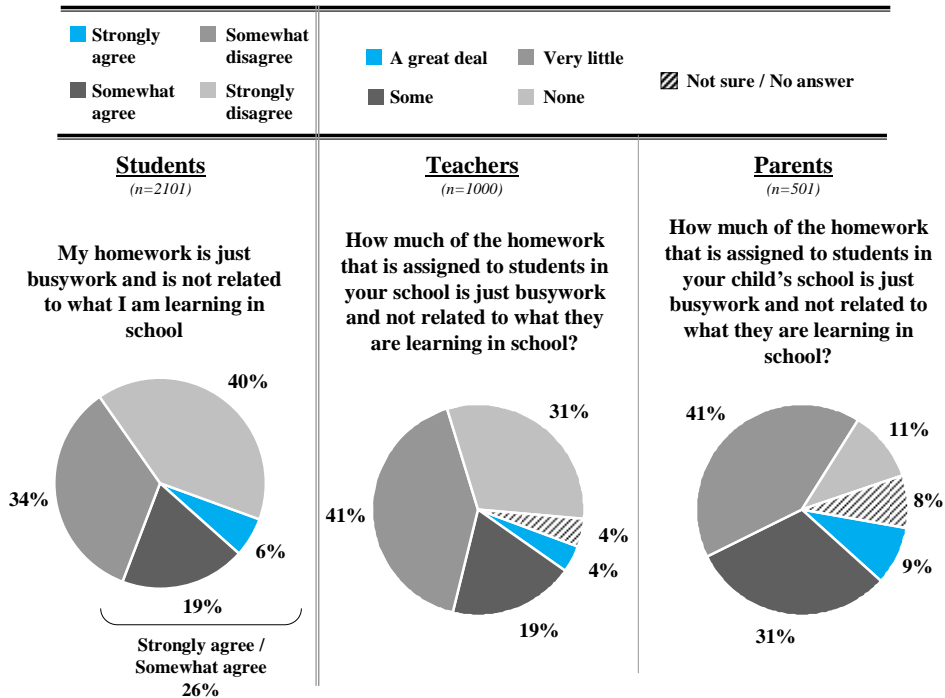


Figure 6.11
Students' Perceptions about How Much of Homework is Busywork by Grade

Q675 (Students): How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
 Base: All Students

“My homework is just busywork and is not related to what I am learning in school“

	Total	Grade Level		Grades		
		3 - 6	7 - 12	Mostly A's	A's and B's	C's and below
Base:	2101	922	1179	558	961	523
	%	%	%	%	%	%
AGREE (NET)	26	19	30	25	23	31
Strongly agree	6	6	7	6	5	8
Somewhat agree	19	14	23	19	18	23
DISAGREE (NET)	74	80	70	75	76	68
Somewhat disagree	34	27	38	35	34	33
Strongly disagree	40	53	31	40	42	35
No answer	*	1	*	*	*	1

Parent and Teacher Views on Homework's Challenges

It is not only students who feel that their homework is just busywork. One-quarter of teachers (24%) believe that a great deal (4%) or some (19%) of the homework assigned at their school is just busywork and not related to what students are learning. Even more parents feel this way. Four in ten parents (40%) say that a great deal (9%) or some (31%) of the homework assigned at their child's school is just busywork. Teachers at the secondary school level are more likely than those at the elementary school level to feel this way (33% vs. 18%), but parents' views do not differ by school level.

Figure 6.12
Parents' Perceptions of How Much of Homework is Busywork

Q660 (Parents): How In your opinion, how much of the homework that is assigned to students in your child's school is just busywork and is not related to what they are learning in school?

Base: All Parents

	Total	School Type		Race/Ethnicity	
		Elementary	Secondary	White/Other	Black/Hispanic
Base:	501	257	244	393	108
	%	%	%	%	%
A GREAT DEAL/SOME (NET)	40	38	41	41	37
A great deal	9	6	12	9	7
Some	31	33	29	32	30
VERY LITTLE/NONE (NET)	53	55	50	52	55
Very little	41	41	42	42	41
None	11	15	7	10	14
Not Sure	8	6	9	7	9

Figure 6.13
Teachers' Perceptions of How Much of Homework is Busywork

Q580 (Teachers): How In your opinion, how much of the homework that is assigned to students in your school is just busywork and is not related to what they are learning in school?

Base: All Teachers

	Total	Years of Experience			Level of School	
		0 to 5	6 to 20	21+	Elementary	Secondary
Base:	1000	102	482	416	622	321
	%	%	%	%	%	%
A GREAT DEAL/SOME (NET)	24	24	24	23	18	33
A great deal	4	8	3	5	3	6
Some	19	16	21	19	15	26
VERY LITTLE/NONE (NET)	72	74	71	72	77	63
Very little	41	45	42	39	42	39
None	31	29	29	32	35	24
Not Sure	4	2	5	5	5	4

Parents' concerns about homework emphasize quality rather than quantity. Forty percent of parents say that a great deal or some homework assignments are busywork, compared to only 15% who think that too much homework is assigned. In fact, more parents think that their child's teachers assign too little homework than too much (25% vs. 15%), and the majority (60%) believe that the assignments are the right amount. Teachers themselves, however, are not completely aligned with parents' views. Only three percent believe that their students' parents think they assign too much homework. Parents and teachers also differ in their overall ratings for the amount of homework assigned by the school. Four in ten parents (39%) rate the amount of homework assigned as only fair or poor, compared to one-quarter (23%) of teachers. These findings indicate that all three stakeholder groups hold differing views on this particular challenge related to homework and lack awareness of the others' perspectives.

THEN AND NOW:

Compared to five years ago, secondary school teachers today are more confident that parents agree with the amount of homework being assigned. In the *MetLife Survey of the American Teacher 2002*, 24% of secondary school teachers were not sure what parents thought about the amount of homework they assign, compared to only 11% who are unsure today. In addition, the number of teachers who report that parents believe they assign the right amount of homework or even too little has increased from 68% to 84%. This change has occurred during a period when students' homework load has been the subject of national and local debate.

Furthermore, more K-12 teachers today rate the amount of homework assigned by the school as excellent (20%) compared twenty years ago when 12% of teachers gave this rating (*MetLife Survey of the American Teacher 1987*). However, parents' assessment of the amount of homework has not changed significantly during this time.

Figure 6.14
Parents' Perceptions of Amount of Homework

Q640 (Parents): Do you think your child's teachers assign too much homework, too little homework or the right amount of homework?

Base: All Parents

Q570 (Teachers): Do your students' parents think you assign too much homework, too little homework or the right amount of homework?

Base: All Teachers

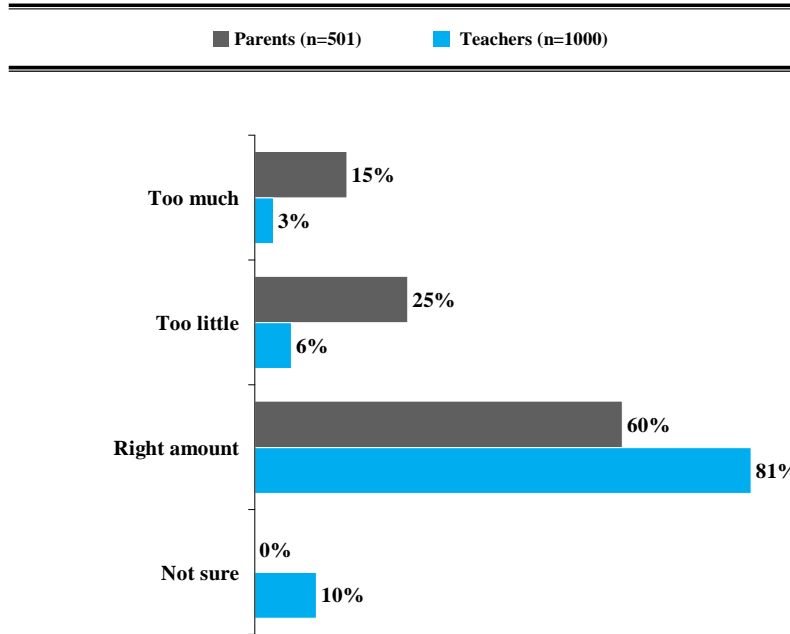


Figure 6.15
Parents' Perceptions of Amount of Homework by Demographics

Q640 (Parents): Do you think your child's teachers assign too much homework, too little homework or the right amount of homework?

Base: All Parents

	Total	School Type		Race/Ethnicity	
		Elementary	Secondary	White/Other	Black/Hispanic
Base:	501	257	244	393	108
	%	%	%	%	%
Too much homework	15	12	19	18	8
Too little homework	25	26	23	24	25
The right amount of homework	60	62	58	57	67

Figure 6.16
Teachers' Perceptions of Parents' Attitudes about Homework Levels

Q570 (Teachers): Do your students' parents think you assign too much homework, too little homework or the right amount of homework?

Base: All Teachers

	Total	Years of Experience			Level of School	
		0 to 5	6 to 20	21+	Elementary	Secondary
Base:	1000	102	482	416	622	321
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Too much	3	2	4	3	3	5
Too little	6	10	8	4	6	7
Right amount	81	81	78	83	83	77
Not sure	10	8	10	10	8	11

Figure 6.17
Parents' Perceptions of Amount of Homework

Q525 (Parents): The following are several aspects on which public schools can be judged. How would you rate yours on each of the following?

Base: All Parents

Q505 (Teachers): Would you rate your school excellent, good, fair or poor on...?

Base: All Teachers

“The amount of homework assigned by the school”

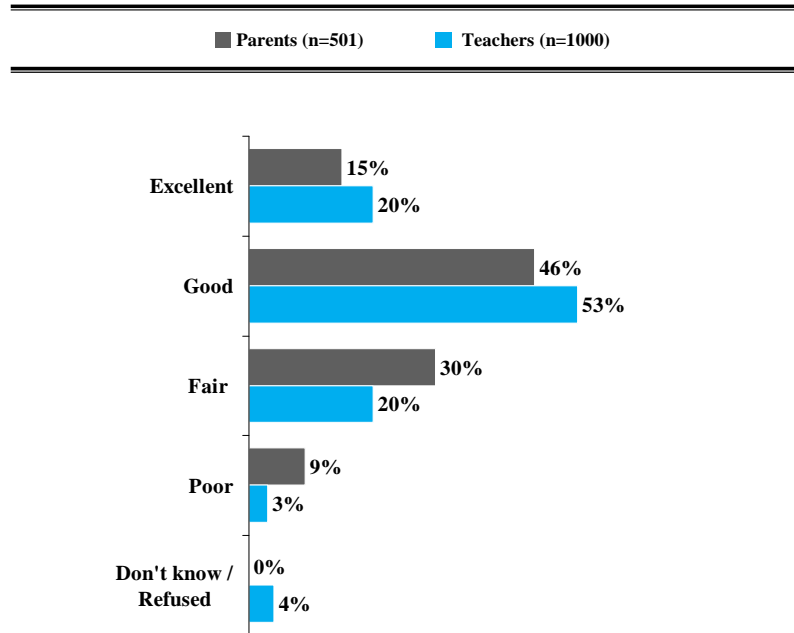


Figure 6.18
Parents' Perceptions of Amount of Homework

Q525 (Parents): The following are several aspects on which public schools can be judged. How would you rate yours on each of the following?

Base: All Parents

“The amount of homework assigned by the school”

	Total	School Type		Race/Ethnicity	
		Elementary	Secondary	White/ Other	Black/ Hispanic
Base:	501	257	244	393	108
	%	%	%	%	%
EXCELLENT/GOOD (NET)	61	68	55	57	71
Excellent	15	18	12	13	21
Good	46	50	42	44	50
FAIR/POOR (NET)	39	32	45	43	29
Fair	30	22	39	33	23
Poor	9	10	7	10	6

Figure 6.19
Teachers' Perceptions of Amount of Homework

Q505 (Teachers): Would you rate your school excellent, good, fair or poor on...?

Base: All Teachers

“The amount of homework assigned by the school”

	Total	Years of Experience			Level of School	
		0 to 5	6 to 20	21+	Elementary	Secondary
Base:	1000	102	482	416	622	321
	%	%	%	%	%	%
EXCELLENT/GOOD (NET)	73	69	77	70	79	64
Excellent	20	14	21	22	25	15
Good	53	55	56	48	54	49
FAIR/POOR (NET)	23	27	19	25	16	33
Fair	20	23	18	21	16	26
Poor	3	4	1	5	*	7
Don't know/Refused	4	4	4	4	5	3

The relevancy of homework emerges as an important issue for teachers, parents and students. Teachers emphasize that the relevance of homework is an important characteristic of engaging and effective assignments and indicate that the lack of this connection to a student's education, or a lack of understanding of this connection is a challenge for students. While most students recognize the value of homework, some students struggle with stress related to homework and do not always understand the usefulness or relevance of assignments. One-quarter of students describes their homework as busywork, a point of view more prevalent among those who do not plan to go to college or who are achieving low grades in school. More parents believe that some or many homework assignments are busywork than believe that too much homework is assigned. Ensuring that assignments are genuinely relevant to the class and subject area, as well as building in time for feedback on assignments each day emerge as tactics that can have greater impact on improving students' homework experiences and are relatively easy to implement.

By including the voices of teachers, students and parents, *The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher, 2007: The Homework Experience* highlights the impact of homework on all three groups. Homework is a daily experience for most students, and they, along with their teachers, devote many hours each week to this aspect of education. Most teachers, students and parents believe that homework is important. Parents see homework as an opportunity to connect with their children more than as an obstacle to family time. The *Survey* documented that homework is related to student achievement, finding that students who do well in school get more frequent assignments, spend more time doing homework, and are more likely to believe in homework's importance and its connection to their post high school plans. Many students, parents and teachers note that homework can frequently be uninteresting and seem like busywork. However, the *Survey* also revealed the important role of experienced and well-trained teachers in this area. Teachers who feel more prepared to create engaging homework assignments are also finding ways to maximize the impact of these assignments.

The potential power of homework lies in the way it links many different areas: students, teachers and parents; school, home and community; and skills for school and skills for life. Homework can be a bridge across communication gaps between teachers and students, students and parents, and parents and teachers. This link can strengthen connections between home and school and open discussions about the larger purposes and benefits of education.

APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGY

Methodology

The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: The Homework Experience utilized a multimodal methodology to capture the views of key school stakeholder groups. Teachers were interviewed by telephone; students were interviewed online and at their schools; parents were interviewed online; and additional teachers, principals and department chairs were gathered to participate in an online strategy session.

Teachers

A total of 1,000 public school teachers were interviewed by telephone between May 10, 2006 and May 16, 2006. Interviews averaged 12 minutes in length and were conducted by a data collection facility from Harris Interactive's network of approved suppliers.

Teacher Sample

A nationally representative sample of current public school teachers of grades K through 12 throughout the continental United States was interviewed. Harris Interactive purchased the sample from Market Data Retrieval. The sample included current U.S. public school teachers of grades K through 12. Before being asked to complete the actual interview, each teacher was screened to ensure that s/he was currently teaching at least part-time in a public school, and currently taught in grades K through 12. If the respondent passed the screen, the interview was either completed at that time or an appointment was made to complete the interview at a time convenient for the teacher.

Teacher Interviewing Procedures

Interviewing for the teacher survey was conducted by professional staff and was continuously quality monitored by the supervisory staff. Through direct supervision of the interviewing staff and continuous monitoring of the interviews, a uniformity of responses was achieved that could not have been obtained by other interviewing methods.

The computer-assisted telephone interviewing system (CATI) permits online data entry and editing of telephone interviews. Questionnaires are programmed into the system with the following checks:

1. Question and response series
2. Skip patterns

3. Question rotation
4. Range checks
5. Mathematical checks
6. Consistency checks
7. Special edit procedures

The CATI system reduces clerical error by eliminating the need for keypunching, since interviewers enter the respondents' answers directly into a computer during the interview itself. For questions with pre-coded responses, the system only permits answers within a specified range; for example, if a question has three possible answer choices (e.g., "Provides," "Does not provide," and "Not sure"), the CATI system will only accept coded responses corresponding to these choices. All data are tabulated, checked for internal consistency and processed by computer. A series of computer-generated tables is then produced for each sample group showing the results of each survey question, both by the total number of respondents and by important subgroups.

The data processing staff performs machine edits and additional cleaning for the entire data set. Edit programs act as a verification of the skip instructions and other data checks that are written into the CATI program. The edit programs list any errors by case number, question number and type. These were then resolved by senior EDP personnel, who inspected the original file and made appropriate corrections. Complete records were kept of all such procedures.

Weighting of Teacher Data

Data were weighted to key demographic (school level, sex, region, and size of place) variables to align it with the national population of U.S. elementary and secondary public school teachers.

Parents

A total of 501 parents of children in public school in grades K through 12 were interviewed between June 1, 2007 and June 14, 2007 via an online survey. Interviews averaged 15 minutes in length.

Parent Sample

Sample was obtained from the Harris Poll Online (HPOL) opt-in panel of millions of respondents. Invitations for this study were emailed to a stratified random sample drawn from the

Harris Poll Online database identified as United States residents, ages 18 years or older and having a child in the household. Qualified respondents were U.S. residents and parents of children in public school in grades K through 12.

To maintain the reliability and integrity in the sample, the following procedures were used:

- Password protection. Each invitation contained a password-protected link to the survey that was uniquely assigned to that email address. Password protection ensures that a respondent completes the survey only one time.
- Reminder invitations. To increase the number of respondents in the survey, one reminder invitation was mailed 2 days after the initial invitation to those respondents who had not yet participated in the survey.
- “Instant Results” of selected survey findings. To improve overall response rates, respondents were invited to access results to pre-determined, selected questions after completing the survey.
- HIPointsSM and HlStakesSM. HPOL panel members (age 13 and older) are enrolled in the HIPoints rewards program in which respondents earn points for completing surveys. These points can be redeemed for a variety of merchandise and gift certificates. In addition, survey respondents are offered entry in the monthly HlStakes sweepstakes drawing.

Parent Interviewing Procedures

Interviews were conducted using a self-administered online questionnaire via Harris' proprietary, web-assisted interviewing software. The Harris Online interviewing system permits online data entry by the respondents.

Online questionnaires are programmed into the system with the following checks:

1. Question and response series
2. Skip patterns
3. Question rotation
4. Range checks
5. Mathematical checks
6. Consistency checks
7. Special edit procedures

For questions with pre-coded responses, the system only permits answers within a specified

range; for example, if a question has three possible answer choices ("Agree," "Disagree," "Not Sure"), the system will accept only one response from these choices.

Weighting of Parent Data

Data were weighted to key demographic (education, age, sex, race/ethnicity, region, household income, number of children in the household 18 or younger, and sex and grade of child) variables to align it with the national population of U.S. parents of children in grades K through 12. Propensity score weighting was used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

Students

Students - School Survey

A total of 976 public school students in grades 3 through 12 were surveyed during an English class using a self-administered questionnaire. Interviews averaged 15 minutes in length and were conducted between March 28, 2007 and May 31, 2007.

The Harris national probability sample of schools and students is based on a highly stratified two-stage sampling design. This design employs features similar to the sample designs used in various national surveys of students and schools that are conducted by the U.S. National Center of Education Statistics. Sample is drawn from a list of approximately 80,000 public, private and parochial schools in the United States. It is selected to account for differences in grade enrollment, region and the size of the municipality where schools are located. For this study, only public schools were selected. A random selection of schools is drawn on the basis of the number of students in each cell proportionate to the number of students in the universe, creating a cross section of young people in a set of designated grades.

After sending a letter to principals soliciting their participation, Harris Interactive Inc. contacted the principals in selected schools by telephone to request their participation in the survey. An eligible grade was randomly assigned to each school. If the principal agreed to participate, a random selection process was then used to select a particular class to complete the survey. The principal was asked to alphabetize all classes for the grade assigned by the Harris firm. Using a random number selection grid, an interviewer identified an individual class. For junior and senior high school, where students attend different classes for each subject, only English classes were used to make the selection. Since all students in all grades must study English, this ensures a more representative sample of students by academic track and level of achievement.

A number of steps were included in the consent process in order to maximize response rates. The alert letter contained a brief description of the survey process and some background information on the Harris organization and schools were offered an incentive to participate. In addition, at a principal's request, calls were made to local boards or district offices to gain approval from the appropriate officials. If necessary, copies of the introductory letters and other materials were mailed or sent via fax to the principal and/or other school officials.

If a particular school could not participate, it was replaced by a school with similar demographic characteristics so as to preserve the integrity of the primary selection. Another randomly drawn school was chosen within the same region, with similar grade enrollment and size of municipality, and in the same or the nearest zip code to the original school.

Harris Interactive Inc. mailed instructions, a set of questionnaires and materials for return mail to the teacher of the selected class. In addition, teachers were provided with guidelines for administering the survey. By providing teachers with educational materials, including *The Basic Primer on Public Opinion Polling*, we hope to ensure that this exercise is woven into the classroom curriculum in a meaningful way. Furthermore, by surveying only one class in each school, we impose on the school as little as possible. Students were given envelopes in which to seal their completed surveys before returning them to the teacher. Please note that the survey instrument is anonymous; at no point was the student asked to provide his or her name.

All interviews were carefully edited and checked for completeness and accuracy. Surveys with significant errors or large proportions of missing data were removed; typically this represents less than 1% of the questionnaires that arrive in-house. However, as with all self-administered questionnaires, occasional questions were sometimes left blank. Findings for each question are reported based on the total number of potential respondents in the sample. As an overall check, each questionnaire was reviewed to ensure that a majority of all possible responses had been completed.

Students – Online Survey

The survey questionnaire was self-administered online by means of the Internet to 1,125 public school students in grades 3 through 12. Interviews averaged 15 minutes in length and were conducted between April 16, 2007 and April 27, 2007.

Sample was obtained from the Harris Poll Online (HPOL) opt-in panel of millions of respondents. Invitations for this study were emailed to a stratified random sample drawn from the Harris Poll Online database identified as United States residents and parents of 8-17 year olds, or United States residents and ages 13 - 18. Qualified respondents were U.S. residents, ages 8 - 18 and public school students in grades 3 through 12.

To maintain the reliability and integrity in the sample, the following procedures were used:

- Password protection. Each invitation contained a password-protected link to the survey that was uniquely assigned to that email address. Password protection ensures that a respondent completes the survey only one time.
- Reminder invitations. To increase the number of respondents in the survey, one reminder invitation was mailed 2 days after the initial invitation to those respondents who had not yet participated in the survey.
- “Instant Results” of selected survey findings. To improve overall response rates, respondents were invited to access results to pre-determined, selected questions after completing the survey.
- HIPointsSM and HInstakesSM. HPOL panel members (age 13 and older) are enrolled in the HIPoints rewards program in which respondents earn points for completing surveys. These points can be redeemed for a variety of merchandise and gift certificates. In addition, survey respondents are offered entry in the monthly HInstakes sweepstakes drawing.

Interviews were conducted using a self-administered online questionnaire via Harris' proprietary, web-assisted interviewing software. The Harris Online interviewing system permits online data entry by the respondents.

Online questionnaires are programmed into the system with the following checks:

1. Question and response series
2. Skip patterns
3. Question rotation
4. Range checks
5. Mathematical checks
6. Consistency checks
7. Special edit procedures

For questions with pre-coded responses, the system only permits answers within a specified range; for example, if a question has three possible answer choices ("Agree," "Disagree," "Not Sure"), the system will accept only one response from these choices.

Weighting of Student Data

Data were weighted to key demographic (sex, grade level, race/ethnicity, size of place, and highest level of parents' education) variables to align it with the national population of U.S. public school students in grades 3 through 12.

Reliability of Survey Percentages

The results from any survey sample are subject to sampling variation. The magnitude of this variation is measurable and is affected both by the number of interviews involved and by the level of the percentages expressed in the results.

Exhibit A.1 shows the range of sampling variation that applies to percentage results for this type of survey. The chances are 95 in 100 that the survey results do not vary, plus or minus, by more than the indicated number of percentage points from the results that would have been obtained had interviews been conducted with all persons in the universe represented by the sample.

For example, if the response for a sample size of 300 is 30%, then in 95 out of 100 cases the response of the total population would be between 25% and 35%. Note that survey results based on subgroups of a small size can be subject to large sampling error.

Exhibit A.1
Approximate Sampling Tolerances (at 95% Confidence) to
Use in Evaluating Percentage Results

Number of People Asked Question on Which Survey Result Is Based	Survey Percentage Result at 10% or 90%	Survey Percentage Result at 20% or 80%	Survey Percentage Result at 30% or 70%	Survey Percentage Result at 40% or 60%	Survey Percentage Result at 50%
2,000	1	2	2	2	2
1,500	2	2	2	2	3
1,000	2	2	3	3	3
900	2	3	3	3	3
800	2	3	3	3	3
700	2	3	3	4	4
600	2	3	4	4	4
500	3	4	4	4	4
400	3	4	4	5	5
300	3	5	5	6	6
200	4	6	6	7	7
100	6	8	9	10	10
50	8	11	13	14	14

Sampling tolerances also are involved in the comparison of results from different parts of the sample (subgroup analysis) or from different surveys. Exhibit A.2 shows the percentage difference that must be obtained before a difference can be considered statistically significant. These figures too represent the 95% confidence interval.

For example, suppose one group of 1,000 has a response of 34% “yes” to a question, and an independent group of 500 has a response of 28% “yes” to the same question, for an observed difference of 6 percentage points. According to the Exhibit, this difference is subject to a potential sampling error of 5 percentage points. Since the observed difference is greater than the sampling error, the observed difference is considered statistically significant.

Exhibit A.2
Approximate Sampling Tolerances (at 95% Confidence) to Use
in Evaluating Differences Between Two
Percentage Results

Approximate Sample Size of Two Groups Asked Question on Which Survey Result Is Based	Survey Percentage Result at 10% or 90%	Survey Percentage Result at 20% or 80%	Survey Percentage Result at 30% or 70%	Survey Percentage Result at 40% or 60%	Survey Percentage Result at 50%
2,000 vs. 2,000	2	2	3	3	3
1,000	2	3	3	4	4
500	3	4	4	5	5
200	4	6	7	7	7
100	6	8	9	10	10
50	8	11	13	14	14
1,000 vs. 1,000	3	4	4	4	4
500	3	4	5	5	5
200	5	6	7	7	8
100	6	8	9	10	10
50	9	11	13	14	14
500 vs. 500	4	5	6	6	6
200	5	7	8	8	8
100	6	9	10	11	11
50	9	12	13	14	15
200 vs. 200	6	8	9	10	10
100	7	10	11	12	12
50	9	12	14	15	15
100 vs. 100	8	11	13	14	14
50	10	14	16	17	17
50 vs. 50	12	16	18	19	20

Non-Sampling Error

Sampling error is only one way in which survey findings may vary from the findings that would result from interviewing every member of the relevant population. Survey research is susceptible to human and mechanical errors as well, such as interviewer recording and data handling errors. However, the procedures used by the Harris firm, including the CAI systems described earlier, keep these types of errors to a minimum.

Online Strategy Session Among Teachers, Principals, and Department Chairs

Teachers, principals, and department chairs participated in an online strategy session conducted on June 12, 2007. The session was conducted online using Harris Interactive's proprietary

Advanced Strategy Lab[®] Online (ASL[®] Online) on June 12, 2007. Doug Griffen, Director of Strategy & Facilitation at the Advanced Strategy Center, moderated the session. Twenty-four respondents were recruited for the session (10 teachers, 7 principals, 7 department chairs) and 20 participated. Participants represented a geographic spread across the country, and reflected a range of experience levels, grade levels, district sizes, school sizes, student income levels, subject areas, and gender.

Before being asked to take part in the online strategy session, all participants were screened to ensure that they were current teachers, principals or department chairs. Teachers were defined as current elementary and secondary school teachers in a public school system; individuals who teach at least part-time in the classroom; and individuals who assign homework at least a few times a month. Principals and department chairs were defined as current elementary and secondary principals and department chairs working in a public school system.

Participants were given an incentive to participate in these bulletin-board focus groups. All participants were given a \$100 incentive for their participation.

APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRES

**HARRIS INTERACTIVE
METLIFE: SURVEY OF THE AMERICAN TEACHER SURVEY 2007
STUDENT SURVEY**

SECTION 400: SCREENING AND INITIAL DEMOGRAPHICS

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS

Q414 How old are you?

MEAN=13

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS

Q416 Are you a boy or a girl?

1	Boy	51%
2	Girl	49%
9	No answer	*

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS

Q110 In which country or region do you currently reside?

244	United States	100%
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BASE: U.S. RESIDENTS (Q110/244)

Q174 U.S. Region-Harris Interactive Definition (Does not appear on screen)

1	East	15%
2	Midwest	28%
3	South	41%
4	West	17%

BASE: ALL DATA ENTRY OR ONLINE AND US AND 8 - 18 YEAR OLDS (Q400/2 OR (Q400/1 AND Q110/244 AND Q105/8-18))

Q420 What grade are you in?

3	3 rd grade	8%
4	4 th grade	11%
5	5 th grade	10%
6	6 th grade	10%
7	7 th grade	12%
8	8 th grade	10%
9	9 th grade	12%
10	10 th grade	10%
11	11 th grade	7%
12	12 th grade	9%

BASE: DATA ENTRY AND ONLINE AND US RESIDENTS IN SCHOOL (Q400/2 OR (Q400/1 AND Q420/2-13))

Q425 Is your school...?

A public school 100%

BASE: DATA ENTRY AND ONLINE AND US RESIDENTS IN SCHOOL (Q400/2 OR (Q400/1 AND Q420/2-13))

Q430 Is the school that you currently attend...?

1	In an urban or city area	29%
2	In a suburban area next to a city	49%
3	In a small town or rural area	23%

BASE: ALL DATA ENTRY OR ONLINE AND GRADES 3-12 AND PUBLIC SCHOOL (Q400/2 OR (Q400/1 AND Q420/3-12 AND Q425/2))

Q435 Who are the adults that you live with most of the time?

1	Your mother and your father	57%
2	Your mother and your stepfather	11%
3	Your father and your stepmother	4%
4	Your mother only	17%
5	Your father only	3%
6	One of your parents and his or her companion	2%
7	Your grandparents, aunts, uncles or other relatives	5%%
8	Some other adults (for example, guardians, foster parents, a group home)	1%
9	No answer	*

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS

Q435 Are you of Hispanic origin, such as Mexican American, Latin American, Puerto Rican, or Cuban?

1	Yes, of Hispanic origin	17%
2	No, not of Hispanic origin	73%
9	Decline to answer	10%

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS

Q440 Do you consider yourself...?

01	White	57%
02	Black	9%
03	Asian or Pacific Islander	3%
04	Native American or Alaskan native	1%
05	Mixed racial background	5%
06	Other race	9%
08	African American	7%
94	Decline to answer	2%

BASE: ONLINE AND U.S. RESPONDENT AND MIXED RACIAL BACKGROUND (Q400/1 AND Q110/244 AND Q440/05)

Q450 You indicated that you consider yourself of a mixed racial background. With which of the following racial groups do you most closely identify? Please select all that apply.

01	White	93%
02	Black	30%
03	African American	14%
04	Asian or Pacific Islander	18%
05	Native American or Alaskan native	37%
06	Other race	15%
94	Decline to answer	*

BASE: DATA ENTRY OR ONLINE AND U.S. RESIDENT (Q400/2 OR (Q400/1 AND Q110/244))

Q455 [HIDDEN COMPUTE QUESTION]

01	White	56%
02	Black	9%
03	Asian or Pacific Islander	3%
04	Native American or Alaskan native	1%
07	Hispanic	17%
08	African American	6%
05	Mixed racial background	4%
06	Other race	1%
94	Decline to answer	2%
99	Unknown	*

SECTION 500: HOME AND SCHOOL LIFE

BASE: ALLQUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q470 What grades do you usually get?

1	Mostly A's	23%
2	Mostly A's and B's	38%
3	Mostly B's	7%
4	Mostly B's and C's	17%
5	Mostly C's	4%
6	Mostly C's and D's	4%
7	Mostly D's	1%
8	Mostly D's and F's	2%
9	My school does not use grades	2%
99	No answer	*

BASE: DATA ENTRY OR ONLINE AND 8-17 YEARS OLD (Q400/2 OR Q400/1 AND Q105/8-17)

Q475 How much education has your mother completed?

1	Some high school	7%
2	Finished high school	27%
3	Some college or special school after high school	27%
4	Finished college	17%
5	School beyond college (like doctor, lawyer, professor, social worker, scientist)	8%
8	Not sure	14%
9	No answer	*

BASE: DATA ENTRY OR ONLINE AND 8-17 YEARS OLD (Q400/2 OR Q400/1 AND Q105/8-17)

Q480 How much education has your father completed?

1	Some high school	9%
2	Finished high school	29%
3	Some college or special school after high school	19%
4	Finished college	14%
5	School beyond college (like doctor, lawyer, professor, social worker, scientist)	8%
8	Not sure	20%
9	No answer	*

BASE: DATA ENTRY (Q400/2)

Q485 Not including email, about how much time did you spend on the Internet yesterday?

1	0 minutes	32%
2	5 minutes	4%
3	10 minutes	5%
4	15 minutes	9%
5	30 minutes	11%
6	45 minutes	7%
7	1 hour	9%
8	More than one hour	24%
9	No answer	*

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q500 [Q400/1: Now we'd like to ask you some questions about your life at home and school.]

How well does each of the following statements describe you?

Q501		<u>A lot like me</u>	<u>Somewhat like me</u>	<u>Not much like me</u>	<u>Not at all like me</u>	<u>No answer</u>
1	I have a lot of friends	54%	35%	8%	2%	*
2	I get along well with my parents	51%	40%	7%	2%	*
3	I am often bored	24%	36%	28%	12%	1%
4	I often feel sad and unhappy	8%	18%	38%	36%	1%
5	I have been happy at school this year	32%	45%	14%	7%	1%
6	I get into trouble a lot	6%	13%	28%	53%	1%
7	I feel safe	53%	34%	9%	4%	*

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q505 On a typical school night (Sunday – Thursday), how many hours do you sleep?

1	Less than 5 hours	4%
2	5 hours	5%
3	6 hours	13%
4	7 hours	22%
5	8 hours	28%
6	9 hours	18%
7	10 hours or more	9%
9	No answer	*

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q510 In general, do you think you get enough sleep?

1	Yes	54%
2	No	46%
9	No answer	*

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q515 How often do the following things happen to you?

Q516		Very often	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	No answer
1	I have trouble waking up in the morning	20%	18%	34%	20%	8%	*
2	I fall asleep during class	3%	5%	16%	26%	50%	*
3	I feel tired during class	16%	17%	35%	21%	10%	1%
4	I daydream in class	14%	16%	30%	22%	18%	1%
5	I get too hungry to be able to pay attention in class	7%	7%	21%	34%	31%	*

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q520 How would you rate the overall quality of the education you receive at your school?

1	Poor	3%
2	Fair	14%
3	Good	52%
4	Excellent	31%
9	No answer	*

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q525 At school, how many adults are there (for example, teachers, principal, counselors, coaches) who you feel you could go to if you had a problem?

1	None	11%
2	1	14%
3	2	21%
4	3	14%
5	4	7%
6	5 or more	33%
9	No answer	*

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q530 Do you like school?

1	Yes	72%
2	No	27%
9	No answer	1%

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q535 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Q536		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	No answer
1	Learning new things is fun	38%	50%	9%	3%	*
2	My teachers care about me	35%	44%	15%	5%	1%
3	I get along well with my teachers	44%	43%	8%	4%	*

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q540 On a typical school day (Monday – Friday), how much time do you spend hanging out with friends when you are not at school?

1	None	23%
2	5 minutes	3%
3	15 minutes	5%
4	30 minutes	9%
5	45 minutes	4%
6	1 hour	13%
7	1 ½ hour	6%
8	2 hours	10%
9	2 ½ hours	5%
10	3 hours or more	21%
99	No answer	*

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q542 On a typical school day (Monday – Friday), how much time do you spend hanging out with your family?

1	None	4%
2	5 minutes	1%
3	15 minutes	3%
4	30 minutes	5%
5	45 minutes	2%
6	1 hour	10%
7	1 ½ hour	5%
8	2 hours	11%
9	2 ½ hours	5%
10	3 hours or more	53%
99	No answer	1%

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q544 On a typical school day (Monday – Friday), how much time do you spend participating in activities (such as sports, clubs, music, art, or hobbies)?

1	None	19%
2	5 minutes	1%
3	15 minutes	2%
4	30 minutes	7%
5	45 minutes	6%
6	1 hour	17%
7	1 ½ hour	10%
8	2 hours	16%
9	2 ½ hours	7%
10	3 hours or more	16%
99	No answer	1%

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q546 On a typical school day (Monday – Friday), how much time do you spend doing chores or helping out at home?

1	None	8%
2	5 minutes	7%
3	15 minutes	17%
4	30 minutes	25%
5	45 minutes	10%
6	1 hour	16%
7	1 ½ hour	6%
8	2 hours	5%
9	2 ½ hours	1%
10	3 hours or more	5%
99	No answer	1%

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q548 On a typical school day (Monday – Friday), how much time do you spend working at a job?

1	None	79%
2	5 minutes	1%
3	15 minutes	1%
4	30 minutes	1%
5	45 minutes	1%
6	1 hour	2%
7	1 ½ hour	1%
8	2 hours	2%
9	2 ½ hours	1%
10	3 hours or more	10%
99	No answer	*

SECTION 600: HOMEWORK

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q600 [Q400/1 Next, we'd like to ask a few questions about homework.]

In a typical school week, how often are you assigned homework?

1	Less often than one day a week	7%
2	1 or 2 days a week	16%
3	3 or 4 days a week	35%
4	Every day	42%
9	No answer	*

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q605 In which subjects do you get at least one homework assignment each week? Please check all that apply.

1	Math	70%
2	English or Reading	59%
3	Science	41%
4	Social Studies or History	46%
5	Foreign Language	21%
6	Something else	3%
7	None	4%
99	No answer	*

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q615 What types of homework have you had this school year? Please check all that apply.

1	Worksheets or exercises	88%
2	Math problem sets	80%
3	Lab reports	30%
4	Read books or chapters	79%
5	Study for a quiz or test	85%
6	Book report	47%
7	Write a story or essay	72%
8	Write a research report	59%
9	Research or find information to prepare for class	50%
10	Creative project (such as a poster, building a model, or creating a website)	66%
11	None of these	1%
99	No answer	*

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q620 Which subject has the most interesting homework?

1	Math	21%
2	English or Reading	14%
3	Science	23%
4	Social Studies or History	15%
5	Foreign Language	4%
6	Something else	1%
7	None	14%
9	No answer	3%

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q630 On a typical school day (Monday – Friday), how much time do you spend doing homework?

1	None	6%
2	5 minutes	5%
3	15 minutes	12%
4	30 minutes	19%
5	45 minutes	13%
6	1 hour	18%
7	1 ½ hours	10%
8	2 hours	8%
9	2 ½ hours	3%
10	3 hours or more	6%
99	No answer	*

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q635 On a typical weekend day (Saturday – Sunday), how much time do you spend doing homework?

1	None	42%
2	5 minutes	6%
3	15 minutes	10%
4	30 minutes	12%
5	45 minutes	7%
6	1 hour	9%
7	1 ½ hours	4%
8	2 hours	4%
9	2 ½ hours	1%
10	3 hours or more	4%
99	No answer	1%

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q640 When do you usually do homework? Please check all that apply.

1	Before school	14%
2	During school	49%
3	After school	81%
4	I never do homework	3%
9	No answer	*

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q645 Where do you usually do your homework? Please check all that apply.

1	My home	84%
2	School	53%
3	School bus or Traveling to or from school	12%
4	My friend's home	10%
5	An after-school program or community center	6%
6	Library	8%
7	Somewhere else	1%
8	I never do homework	3%
9	No answer	1%

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q655 How often do you discuss your homework with your parents?

1	Rarely or never	41%
2	Once a month	6%
3	Once a week	11%
4	2-3 times a week	16%
5	Every day	25%
9	No answer	*

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q660 What else do you usually do while doing homework? Please check all that apply.

1	Listen to music	55%
2	Watch TV	45%
3	Eat or drink	59%
4	Talk on the phone	20%
5	IM (instant message) or email my friends	20%
	Text message my friends	17%
6	Something else	2%
7	Nothing else – I only work on my homework	19%
9	No answer	*

BASE: USUALLY DO WHILE DOING HOMEWORK, SOMETHING ELSE (Q660/7)

Q665 What else do you usually do while doing homework?

	Eat or drink	59%
	Listen to music	55%
	Watch TV	45%
	Talk on the phone	20%
	IM or email friends	20%
	Text message friends	17%
	Talk to people	1%
	Play games	1%
	Play with children/animals	1%
	Surf the web	*
	Dance/Sing	*
	Read	*
	Sit in class	*
	Spend time with friends	*
	Play piano	*
	Anything	*
	Draw/Sketch	*
	Something else	2%
	Do not do homework	*
	Nothing else – only homework	19%
	No answer	*

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q670 How often do you and your friends work on homework together?

1	Never	35%
2	Hardly ever	31%
3	Sometimes	30%
4	Almost always	4%
9	No answer	*

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q675 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

		<u>Strongly</u> <u>agree</u>	<u>Somewhat</u> <u>agree</u>	<u>Somewhat</u> <u>disagree</u>	<u>Strongly</u> <u>disagree</u>	<u>No</u> <u>answer</u>
1	My homework assignments are interesting	7%	38%	30%	25%	*
2	My homework is just busywork and is <u>not</u> related to what I am learning in school	6%	19%	34%	40%	*

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q680 How often do your teachers give you feedback, such as comments other than grades, on your homework assignments?

1	Hardly ever	20%
2	A few times	20%
3	Sometimes	33%
4	Most of the time	19%
5	All of the time	9%
9	No answer	*

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q685 If you need help with your homework, how do you get it? Please check all that apply.

1	Ask my parents	67%
2	Ask my brother or sister	29%
3	Ask my teacher at school	55%
4	Ask my friends or classmates	54%
5	Ask for help through my school's website	4%
6	Ask for help on another website	12%
7	Another way	1%
8	No one – I don't have anyone to ask	2%
9	I never need help with my homework	4%
99	No answer	*

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q695 How often do you finish your homework?

1	Never	2%
2	Hardly ever	4%
3	Sometimes	17%
4	Almost always	77%
9	No answer	*

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q700 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

		<u>Strongly</u> <u>agree</u>	<u>Somewhat</u> <u>agree</u>	<u>Somewhat</u> <u>disagree</u>	<u>Strongly</u> <u>disagree</u>	<u>No</u> <u>answer</u>
1	It is important to have a quiet place to do homework.	36%	39%	17%	7%	1%
2	I have enough time to do all of my homework.	37%	37%	16%	9%	1%
3	Doing homework helps me learn more in school.	29%	40%	21%	10%	1%
4	My friends make fun of people who always do their homework.	6%	11%	21%	62%	1%

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q705 How important is doing homework?

1	Not important	4%
2	Somewhat important	18%
3	Important	32%
4	Very important	45%
9	No answer	1%

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q710 How often do you feel stressed about doing homework?

1	Never	11%
2	Rarely	19%
3	Sometimes	35%
4	Often	19%
5	Very often	15%
9	No answer	*

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q715 What do you want to do after you leave high school?

1	Work full-time	5%
2	Join the military	4%
3	Go to college	81%
4	Something else	8%
9	No answer	1%

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Q99/1)

Q720 How much do you think doing your homework will help you to reach your goals for after high school?

1	Not help at all	9%
2	Help a little	35%
3	Help a lot	56%
9	No answer	*

BASE: ONLINE AND QUALIFIED RESPONDENT (Q400/1 AND Q99/1)

Q725 What is the best homework assignment or project that you ever had?

Writing/Literature	15%
Building	7%
Art	10%
Media	3%
Performance	1%
Academic subject	30%
General	4%
Politics	1%
Other mentions	7%
Don't know	9%
None/Nothing	8%
Decline to answer/No answer	9%

**HARRIS INTERACTIVE
METLIFE: SURVEY OF THE AMERICAN TEACHER SURVEY 2007
TEACHER SURVEY**

SECTION 400: SAMPLE PRELOAD AND SCREENING QUESTIONS

BASE: TEACHERS (Q405/1)

Q410 Do you currently teach in a public school?

1 Yes, teach in public school **100%**

BASE: CONFIRMED PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS (Q410/1)

Q420 Do you currently teach at least part time in the classroom?

1 Yes, teach at least part time in the classroom **100%**

BASE: PART-TIME OR MORE TEACHERS (Q420/1)

Q421 Is your school an elementary school, a junior high or middle school, or a senior high school?

1 Elementary school (K-5th grade) **63%**
2 Junior high or middle school (6th – 8th grade) **22%**
3 Senior high school (9th – 12th grade) **22%**

BASE: PART-TIME OR MORE TEACHERS (Q420/1)

Q425 Is the area where your school is located considered inner city, urban, suburban, small town, or rural?

1 Inner city **14%**
2 Urban **13%**
3 Suburban **34%**
4 Small town **22%**
5 Rural **16%**
8 Not sure **1%**

BASE: PART-TIME OR MORE TEACHERS (Q420/1)

Q431 U.S. Region-Harris Interactive Definition

01 Northeast **17%**
02 Midwest **27%**
03 South **34%**
04 West **22%**

BASE: PART-TIME OR MORE TEACHERS (Q420/1)

Q435 What grades do you currently teach?

01	Kindergarten	14%
02	First grade	13%
03	Second grade	14%
04	Third grade	14%
05	Fourth grade	10%
06	Fifth grade	11%
07	Sixth grade	9%
08	Seventh grade	9%
09	Eighth grade	9%
10	Ninth grade	12%
11	Tenth grade	14%
12	Eleventh grade	15%
13	Twelfth grade	15%

BASE: PART-TIME OR MORE TEACHERS (Q420/1)

Q440 Altogether, how many years have you worked as a teacher?

Mean in years (Including 0)	18.2
Mean in years (Excluding 0)	18.2

SECTION 500: SCHOOL QUALITY AND HOMEWORK

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q505 I am going to read several aspects on which public schools can be judged. For each, please tell me whether you would rate your school excellent, good, fair or poor on that aspect. Would you rate your school excellent, good, fair or poor on?

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't Know	Refused
1 The qualifications and competence of teachers in your school	69	27	3	*	*	*
2 The amount of homework assigned by the school	20	53	20	3	4	*
3 The amount of support for the school shown by the parents	27	36	24	12	*	*
4 The quality of the homework assigned by the school	24	55	15	1	4	1
5 The availability and responsiveness of parents when you need to contact them	23	38	28	11	*	*
6 The overall quality of the education that students receive at your school	55	39	6	*	*	*

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q510 In an average week, how many hours do you spend, in total, on school-related responsibilities – including all responsibilities in the classroom, any responsibilities outside the classroom, and any work you do at home?

Mean in hours (Excluding 0) 52.3

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q520 Of the total hours you spend in an average week on school-related responsibilities, how many hours would you say are related to students' homework?

Mean in hours (Including 0) 8.5

Mean in hours (Excluding 0) 8.9

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q525 During a typical school week, how often do you assign homework?

1	Never	5%
2	1 day a week	11%
3	2 days a week	12%
4	3 days a week	14%
5	4 days a week	33%
6	5 days a week	23%
8	Not sure	1%
9	Decline to answer	-

BASE: NEVER ASSIGNS HOMEWORK IN TYPICAL WEEK (Q525/1, 8, 9)

Q527 During this school year, have you ever assigned homework, or not?

1	Yes, assigned homework	50%
2	No, never assigned homework	50%
8	Not sure	-
9	Decline to answer	-

BASE: EVER ASSIGNS HOMEWORK (Q525/2-6 OR Q527/1)

Q540 How often do you do the following related to homework? How often do you— all of the time, most of the time, half of the time, some of the time or none of the time?

	All of Refused the time	Most of the time	Half of the time	Some of the time	None of the time	Not sure	
1 Provide students with a grade or comments on their homework	56	28	5	8	4	*	-
2 Explain the purpose of specific homework assignments to students	68	24	2	5	1	*	-
4 Review completed homework assignments in class discussions	43	28	9	15	4	*	-

BASE: EVER ASSIGNS HOMEWORK (Q525/2-6 OR Q527/1)

Q545 How long do you think it takes students to complete a typical homework assignment from your class?

1	5 minutes	3%
2	15 minutes	36%
3	30 minutes	42%
4	45 minutes	10%
5	1 hour	6%
6	1 ½ hours	1%
7	2 hours	*
8	2 ½ hours	*
9	3 hours or more	*
98	Not sure	1%
99	Decline to answer	-

BASE: ASSIGNS HOMEWORK IN TYPICAL WEEK (Q525/2-6) [TREND 2002]

Q550 What percentage of your students completes their homework assignments during a typical school week?

Mean (Including 0)	77.2
Mean (Excluding 0)	78.6

BASE: EVER ASSIGNS HOMEWORK (Q525/2-6 OR Q527/1)

Q555 How often do you assign homework to be completed during a school vacation - very often, often, sometimes, rarely or never?

1	Very often	4%
2	Often	4%
3	Sometimes	15%
4	Rarely	31%
5	Never	45%
8	Not sure	-
9	Refused *	

BASE: EVER ASSIGNS HOMEWORK (Q525/2-6 OR Q527/1)

Q560 How often do you use homework assignments to do the following? How often do you assign homework – very often, often, sometimes, rarely or never?

		Very Often	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Not sure	Refused
1	To assess students' skills and knowledge	31%	32%	16%	9%	11%	*	*
2	To develop students' interests	18%	33%	34%	10%	4%	*	*
3	To develop students' critical thinking skills	29%	37%	27%	4%	3%	*	*
4	To motivate students to learn	27%	38%	21%	8%	5%	1%	*
5	To help students develop good work habits	39%	41%	14%	4%	1%	1%	*
6	Because there was not enough time during class to cover all the material	5%	12%	22%	26%	35%	1%	*
7	To help students practice skills or prepare for tests	49%	37%	9%	3%	2%	*	*

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS [TREND 2002]

Q565 How often do you speak to your students' other teachers about how much homework they are assigning?

1	Never	17%
2	A few times a year	19%
3	Once a month	11%
4	2-3 times a month	10%
5	Once a week	18%
6	2-4 times a week	13%
7	Every day	8%
8	Not sure	3%
9	Decline to answer	1%

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS [TREND 2002]

Q570 Do your students' parents think you assign too much homework, too little homework or the right amount of homework?

1	Too much	3%
2	Too little	6%
3	Right amount	81%
8	Not sure	10%
9	Decline to answer	*

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q575 How prepared do you feel to create engaging homework assignments – extremely prepared, very prepared, prepared, not too prepared or not at all prepared?

1	Extremely prepared	25%
2	Very prepared	44%
3	Prepared	7%
4	Not too prepared	1%
5	Not at all prepared	*
8	Not sure	1%
9	Decline to answer	1%

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q580 In your opinion, how much of the homework that is assigned to students in your school is just busywork and is not related to what they are learning in school?

1	A great deal	4%
2	Some	19%
3	Very little	41%
4	None	31%
8	Not sure	4%
9	Decline to answer	*

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q585 In your opinion, how important is doing homework? Is it very important, important, somewhat important or not important?

1	Very important	50%
2	Important	34%
3	Somewhat important	14%
4	Not important	2%
8	Not sure	*
9	Decline to answer	*

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q590 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree?

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Sure	Refused
1 My students have enough time to do all of their homework	70%	22%	3%	2%	1%	*
2 Students in my school make fun of those students who always do their homework	4%	14%	17%	64%	1%	*
3 Doing homework helps students learn more in school	55%	35%	6%	3%	1%	*
4 Doing homework helps students reach their goals for after high school	55%	35%	6%	3%	1%	*
5 Homework develops students' sense of responsibility	77%	21%	1%	1%	*	*
6 Homework makes learning fun	12%	48%	29%	10%	1%	*

SECTION 600: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND STUDENT ATTENTION
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BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q605 Let me ask about some criticisms that are sometimes made of parents. How many parents do you think – most, many, some, or hardly any?

	<u>Most</u>	<u>Many</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Hardly any</u>	<u>Know</u>	<u>Refused</u>
1 Neglect to see that their children’s homework gets done	12%	27%	50%	11%	1%	*
2 Take too little interest in their children’s education	8%	24%	52%	16%	*	*
3 Fail to motivate their children so that they want to learn in school	11%	22%	52%	15%	*	*

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q610 Has your school provided parents with information on how to, or not?

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don’t know</u>	<u>Refused</u>
1 Help their child with homework assignments	88%	10%	2%	*
2 Motivate their child	83%	13%	4%	*
3 Help their child develop good study habits	89%	9%	2%	*

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q620 How often do students do the following things in your classroom? – Does this happen to students in your classroom very often, often, sometimes, rarely, or never?

	<u>Very Often</u>	<u>Often</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Rarely</u>	<u>Never</u>	<u>Not sure</u>	<u>Refused</u>
1 Fall asleep or doze	2%	3%	20%	44%	30%	-	-
2 Have difficulty concentrating	6%	13%	58%	21%	1%	1%	*
3 Are irritable or in bad moods	3%	8%	46%	39%	4%	*	*
4 Are disruptive	5%	12%	46%	32%	4%	1%	*
5 Daydream	4%	13%	56%	24%	2%	1%	*
6 Are too hungry to concentrate	1%	5%	26%	44%	23%	1%	*

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q625 What percentage of your students do NOT get enough sleep?

Mean (Including 0)	27.9
Mean (Excluding 0)	29.3

SECTION 700: DEMOGRAPHICS

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q705 What subjects do you teach THIS SCHOOL YEAR? (MULTIPLE RESPONSE)

1	General subjects	40%
2	Math	33%
3	English	29%
4	Science	28%
5	Social Studies	26%
6	Foreign language	4%
7	Band/Orchestra/Music/Chorus	3%
8	Business courses	1%
9	Computers	4%
10	Physical education	4%
11	Special education	3%
12	Vocational education	1%
13	Other	6%
97	Not sure	-
98	Decline to answer	*

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q720 What percentage of students in your school come from low income families?

Mean (Including 0)	48.1
Mean (Excluding 0)	49.4

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q725 What percentage of students in your school come from minority families?

Mean (Including 0)	36.4
Mean (Excluding 0)	38.2

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q730 What percentage of students in your school speak English as a second language?

Mean (Including 0)	16.6
Mean (Excluding 0)	19.9

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q735 In total, how many students attend your school?

Mean (Including 0)	725.4
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BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q740 How many years have you been teaching in your current school?

Mean (Including 0)	11.7
Mean (Excluding 0)	11.8

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q750 Do you have teacher certification, or not?

1	Yes	99%
2	No	*
8	Not sure	-
9	Decline to answer	*

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q760 Gender

1	Male	25%
2	Female	75%

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q765 What is your year of birth?

Mean (Including 0) 1960

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q770 Are you of Hispanic origin, such as Mexican American, Latin American, Puerto Rican, or Cuban?

1	Yes, of Hispanic origin	5%
2	No, not of Hispanic origin	94%
8	Not sure	*
9	Decline to answer	1%

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q775 Do you consider yourself...?

01	White	87%
02	Black	2%
03	African American	3%
04	Asian or Pacific Islander	1
05	Native American or Alaskan native	*
06	Mixed racial background	*
96	Other race	*
98	Not sure	-
99	Decline to answer	2%

**HARRIS INTERACTIVE
METLIFE: SURVEY OF THE AMERICAN TEACHER SURVEY 2007
PARENT SURVEY**

SECTION 400: SAMPLE PRELOAD VARIABLES AND SCREENING

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS

Q102 Are you...?

1	Male	51%
2	Female	49%

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS

Q104 In what year were you born?

|||||

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS

Q105 Age computed from birth year

1	25-34	15%
2	35-44	23%
3	45-54	40%
4	55+	21%

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS

Q110 In which country or region do you currently reside?

244	United States	100%
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BASE: U.S. RESIDENTS (Q110/244)

Q410 U.S. Region - Harris Interactive Definition

1	East	21%
2	Midwest	22%
3	South	36%
4	West	20%

BASE: U.S. RESIDENTS (Q110/244)

Q420 How many children under the age of 18 live in your household?

MEAN=2

BASE: HAS CHILDREN UNDER AGE 18 IN HOUSEHOLD (Q420/1-15)

Q422 Are you the parent or guardian of any of the children that live in your household?

1	Yes	100%
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BASE: PARENT OR GUARDIAN OF CHILD UNDER 18 (Q422/1)

Q425 How many of your children were enrolled in public school in the following grades during this past school year (2006-2007)?

1	Kindergarten – 3 rd grade	MEAN=1.3
2	4 th – 6 th grade	MEAN=1.1
3	7 th – 9 th grade	MEAN=1.1
4	10 th – 12 th grade	MEAN=1.1

BASE: HAS CHILD IN GRADES K-12 (Q465/1-24)

Q466 FINAL GRADE ASSIGNMENT
[HIDDEN COMPUTE QUESTION DO NOT DISPLAY]

01	Kindergarten – 3 rd grade	29%
02	4 th – 6 th grade	23%
03	7 th – 9 th grade	24%
04	10 th – 12 th grade	24%

BASE: ALL U.S. RESPONDENTS (Q110/244)

Q435 Are you of Hispanic origin, such as Latin American, Mexican, Puerto Rican, or Cuban?

1	Yes, of Hispanic origin	16%
2	No, not of Hispanic origin	82%
9	Decline to answer	2%

BASE: ALL U.S. RESPONDENTS (Q110/244)

Q440 Do you consider yourself...?

01	White	75%
02	Black	12%
03	Asian or Pacific Islander	1%
04	Native American or Alaskan native	1%
08	African American	3%
05	Mixed racial background	1%
06	Other race	5%
94	Decline to answer	1%

SECTION 500: SCHOOL QUALITY AND SUPPORT

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q505 For the remainder of this survey we are going to ask you some questions about your child in
[INSERT TEXT SUBSTITUTION BASED ON Q466].

What grade is this child in?

1	Kindergarten	7%
2	1 st grade	6%
3	2 nd grade	8%
4	3 rd grade	9%
5	4 th grade	8%
6	5 th grade	7%
7	6 th grade	7%
8	7 th grade	6%
9	8 th grade	9%
10	9 th grade	10%
11	10 th grade	7%
12	11 th grade	11%
13	12 th grade	6%

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q510 How old is this child?

MEAN=11.6

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q515 Is this child a boy or a girl?

1	Boy	58%
2	Girl	42%

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q520 Is the school that your [INSERT TEXT SUBSTITUTION BASED ON Q505] currently attends...?

1	In an urban or city area	33%
2	In a suburban area next to a city	37%
3	In a small town or rural area	30%

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS [TREND 1987]

Q525 The following are several aspects on which public schools can be judged. How would you rate your child's school on each of the following?

Q526

		<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>
1	The qualifications and competence of teachers in your school	30%	49%	18%	3%
2	The amount of homework assigned by the school	15%	46%	30%	9%
3	The amount of support for the school shown by the parents	34%	46%	16%	5%
4	The quality of the homework assigned by the school	19%	48%	28%	5%
5	The availability and responsiveness of teachers when you need to contact them	34%	41%	19%	6%
6	The relations between parents and teachers in your school	34%	44%	18%	4%
7	The overall quality of the education that your child receives [ANCHOR]	31%	47%	19%	3%

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q530 Do you agree or disagree with each statement about your child's school? (TREND 1987)

		<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Agree</u>
1	Our school does a good job of encouraging parental involvement in educational areas	24%	76%
2	Our school does not give parents the opportunity for any meaningful roles	79%	21%
3	Our school only contacts parents when there is a problem with their child	57%	43%

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q535 Has your child's school provided you with information on how to do each of the following?

		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
1	Help your child with homework assignments	72%	28%
2	Motivate your child	67%	33%
3	Help your child develop good study habits	72%	28%

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q540 How often do you do each of the following?

		<u>More than 2 or 3x/ 3x/year</u>	<u>Once. year</u>	<u>Never</u>	
1	Meet in person with a teacher or school official one-on-one	30%	48%	17%	5%
2	Talk on the telephone with a teacher or a school official	27%	40%	23%	10%
3	Exchange written notes or emails with a teacher or school official about some problem your child is having	32%	28%	16%	24%
4	Visit the school to observe classes, speak to a class or help a teacher with their work	19%	27%	17%	37%

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q550 How often does your child's teacher discuss your child's homework assignments with you? Please include written notes or emails, telephone conversations or face-to-face meetings.

1	Never	19%
2	Once a year	9%
3	2 or 3 times a year	35%
4	Every other month	10%
5	Once a month	13%
6	Once a week or more	14%

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q555 How satisfied are you with the frequency of contact you have with your [INSERT TEXT SUBSTITUTION BASED ON Q505]'s teachers and school?

1	Very dissatisfied	44%
2	Somewhat dissatisfied	28%
3	Somewhat satisfied	19%
4	Very satisfied	9%

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q557 Who is the parent or guardian in your household who is most familiar with your [INSERT TEXT SUBSTITUTION BASED ON Q505 R]'s daily school-related activities?

1	I am	66%
2	Another parent/guardian	20%
3	Another parent/guardian and I are equally familiar	14%

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q560 Have you ever felt awkward or reluctant about approaching a teacher to talk with them about your child?

1	Yes	15%
2	No	85%

SECTION 600: VIEWS ON HOMEWORK

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q600 Next, we'd like to ask a few questions about homework.

In a typical school week, how often is your child assigned homework?

1	Less often than one day a week	4%
2	1 or 2 days a week	17%
3	3 or 4 days a week	41%
4	Every day	36%
5	My child does not receive homework	1%
9	Not sure	1%

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q602 On a typical school day (Monday – Friday), how much time does your [INSERT TEXT SUBSTITUTION BASED ON Q505] spend doing homework?

1	None	3%
2	5 minutes	3%
3	15 minutes	10%
4	30 minutes	21%
5	45 minutes	12%
6	1 hour	21%
7	1 1/2 hours	12%
8	2 hours	10%
9	2 ½ hours	3%
10	3 hours or more	4%
99	Not sure	4%

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q605 On a typical weekend day, how much time does your child spend doing homework?

1	None	37%
2	5 minutes	2%
3	15 minutes	10%
4	30 minutes	14%
5	45 minutes	9%
6	1 hour	10%
7	1 1/2 hours	6%
8	2 hours	5%
9	2 1/2 hours	1%
10	3 hours or more	2%
99	Not sure	6%

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q607 When teachers assign homework to your child, how often does he/she complete it on time and completely? (TREND 1994-mod)

1	Never	*
2	Hardly ever	2%
3	Sometimes	12%
4	Nearly always	82%
5	Not sure	2%
6	Teachers never assign homework to my child	6%

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q610 How often does your child discuss his/her homework with you?

1	Rarely or never	15%
2	Once a month	7%
6	Every other week	4%
3	Once a week	8%
4	2-3 times a week	26%
5	Every day	40%

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q612 During this school year, which of the following have you done so that your child could do his/her homework? Please select all that apply.

1	Arranged for someone to help your child with homework	18%
2	Reviewed, proofed or checked homework assignments	73%
3	Talked about homework assignments with your child	78%
4	Helped with a project	70%
5	Suggested places to go for information or help with homework (e.g. the library, a website)	64%
96	Something else	10%
97	None of these	3%

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q620 Which of the following rules about homework, if any, do you have for your [INSERT TEXT SUBSTITUTION BASED ON Q505]? Please select all that apply.

1	Homework is to be completed before he/she can do something else that they want to do (such as play with a friend, watch TV or play video games)	70%
2	Homework is to be completed before he/she can participate in extracurricular activities (such as sports or clubs)	41%
3	My child has to show a parent or other adult that his/her homework is completed	45%
4	Homework is to be completed in a quiet place	52%
5	Homework is to be completed at a particular time of day	50%
96	Something else	2%
99	None – I don't have any rules about homework	11%

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q625 How prepared do you feel to help your child with his/her homework?

1	Not prepared	5%
2	Somewhat prepared	38%
3	Prepared	27%
4	Very prepared	30%

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q628 In which subjects do you feel less than well-prepared to help your child? Please check all that apply.

1	Math	43%
2	English or Reading	10%
3	Science	19%
4	Social Studies or History	7%
5	Foreign Language	43%
96	Something else	1%
97	None – I feel well-prepared in all of my child's subjects	24%

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q640 Do you think your child's teachers assign too much homework, too little homework or the right amount of homework?

1	Too much homework	15%
2	Too little homework	25%
3	The right amount of homework	60%

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q650 In your opinion, how important is doing homework?

1	Very important	56%
2	Important	25%
3	Somewhat important	17%
4	Not important	3%

BASE: THINK HOMEWORK IS IMPORTANT (Q650/1,2)

Q655 Why do you think homework is [INSERT RESPONSE IN Q650]?

Enhances learning/Understanding material	56%
Teaches life skills	19%
Teaches academic skills	16%
Helps children in college/work place	4%
Helps students learn to do things on their own	5%
Other mentions	10%
None/Nothing	3%
Don't know	1%
Decline/No Answer	6%

BASE: THINK HOMEWORK IS SOMEWHAT/NOT IMPORTANT (Q650/3,4)

Q657 Why do you think homework is [only somewhat/not important-INSERT RESPONSE IN Q650]?

Believe that children should learn in school and have family time at home	43%
Assign more work than actually needed	9%
It should not reinforce what they learned in class that day	4%
Positive (general)	5%
Too much stress	4%
Busy work	3%
Teachers are not helpful	2%
Not enough time to do homework	2%
Other mentions	22%
Don't know	10%

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q660 In your opinion how much of the homework that is assigned to students in your child's school is just busywork and is not related to what they are learning in school?

1	A great deal	9%
2	Some	31%
3	Very little	41%
4	None	11%
9	Not sure	8%

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q670 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

		<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Somewhat Agree</u>	<u>Somewhat Disagree</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>Not Sure</u>
1	My child has enough time to do all of his/her homework	61%	23%	10%	4%	3%
2	Students in my child's school make fun of those students who always do their homework	10%	11%	17%	34%	29%
3	Doing homework helps students learn more in school	59%	29%	6%	4%	2%
4	Homework develops students' sense of responsibility	70%	23%	2%	4%	*
5	Homework makes learning fun	17%	37%	25%	13%	8%
6	Teachers should assign homework to be completed during school vacations	13%	20%	24%	40%	3%
7	Students should do their homework without help from their parents	12%	38%	30%	19%	1%

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q672 What do you think will be the first thing your child will do after high school?

1	Work full-time	5%
2	Join the military	5%
3	Go to college	70%
99	Not sure	18%
96	Something else	2%

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q674 How much do you think doing homework will help your child reach his/her goals after high school?

1	Not help at all	5%
2	Help a little	31%
3	Help a lot	64%

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q676 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

		<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Somewhat Agree</u>	<u>Somewhat Disagree</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>
1	Helping my child with homework is an opportunity for us to talk and spend time together	40%	47%	9%	5%
2	The time my child spends doing homework gets in the way of our family spending time together	5%	17%	25%	53
3	Homework is a major source of stress and disagreement in our family	11%	18%	24%	47

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q680 In general, do you think your child gets enough sleep?

1	Yes	70%
2	No	30%

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q690 Next, we'd like to ask you about some criticisms that are sometimes made of parents. How many parents do you think do the following?

		Most Hardly	Many	Some	any
1	Neglect to see that their children's homework gets done	13%	51%	33%	3%
2	Take too little interest in their children's education	13%	47%	37%	3%
3	Fail to motivate their children so that they want to learn in school	12%	47%	37%	5%

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS

Q695 What do you think your child's school should know about how homework affects your child's life?

<u>General (NET)</u>	<u>36%</u>
<i>Need balance between homework and other activities</i>	7%
<i>Don't give so much homework</i>	5%
<i>Time taken to complete homework</i>	4%
<i>Children need homework</i>	3%
<i>Lack of understanding/knowledge to do homework</i>	2%
<i>Everything</i>	1%
<u>Learning and Development (NET)</u>	<u>19%</u>
<i>Enhances learning</i>	6%
<i>Helps develop responsibility</i>	5%
<i>Helps them prepare for future</i>	4%
<i>Reinforces what was learned in class</i>	3%
<i>Other learning and development mentions</i>	7%
Staff/Teachers	4%
Stress	4%
Other mentions	5%
None/Nothing	16%
Don't know	9%
Decline to answer/No answer	10%

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS

Q216 What is the highest level of education you have completed or the highest degree you have received?

High school or less	37%
Some college	46%
College degree or more	17%

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS

Q210 What is your employment status? *Please check all that apply.*

1	Employed full time	52%
2	Employed part time	13%
3	Self-employed	10%
4	Not employed, but looking for work	2%
5	Not employed and not looking for work	1%
6	Retired	9%
8	Student	3%
9	Homemaker	23%

BASE: ALL RESPONDENTS

Q232 Which of the following income categories best describes your total 2006 household after taxes?

01	Less than \$15,000	5%
02	\$15,000 to \$24,999	8%
03	\$25,000 to \$34,999	7%
04	\$35,000 to \$49,999	13%
05	\$50,000 to \$74,999	20%
06	\$75,000 to \$99,999	13%
07	\$100,000 to \$124,999	16%
08	\$125,000 to \$149,999	6%
09	\$150,000 to \$199,999	3%
10	\$200,000 to \$249,999	1%
11	\$250,000 or more	*
994	Decline to answer	7%

Since 1984, MetLife has conducted this series of surveys that bring the views and voices of those closest to the classroom to the attention of policymakers and the public. Conducted by Harris Interactive, survey topics have changed to address key issues over the years – from reform to violence – but the premise remains the same: to give voice to teachers and others most familiar with classroom realities and most affected by education reform. The following is a list of the surveys in the series to date.

- **The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher, 2006, Expectations and Experiences** examines the expectations of teachers upon entering the profession, factors that drive career satisfaction, and the perspectives of principals and education leaders on successful teacher preparation and long-term support.
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- **The Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher, 1999: Violence In America's Public Schools: Five Years Later** revisits issues addressed in the 1993 study, and compares current findings with the state of affairs five years ago. This survey investigates the issue of school violence from the perspectives of students, teachers and law enforcement officers.
- **The Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher, 1998: Building Family-School Partnerships: Views of Teachers and Students** revisits issues addressed in the 1987 survey and compares and contrasts current teacher opinions on parental involvement in education with those of a decade ago. This report focuses primarily on the various ways parents can be actively involved with their children's education.
- **The Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher, 1997: Examining Gender Issues in Public Schools** examines the opinions of teachers and students on topics related to students' future goals and aspirations in the classroom. Gender differences and similarities are the primary focus of the report.
- **The Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher, 1996, Students Voice Their Opinions on:**
 - ***Violence, Social Tension and Equality Among Teens—Part I***, is the first in a series of four 1996 releases of students' opinions that provide insight and understanding to the issues of violence and social tension in the nation's public schools. (Out of print)
 - ***Their Education, Teachers and Schools—Part II***, provides students' views on their education and where improvements are most needed.
 - ***Learning About Values and Principles in School—Part III***, gives the education community a general understanding of students' receptivity to learning about values and principles of right and wrong in the classroom. (Out of print)
 - ***Learning About Multiculturalism—Part IV***, assesses students' opinions and interests about multicultural topics and provides an important and encouraging message to educators about the likely benefits if multiculturalism is given greater attention in the schools.
- **The Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher, 1984-1995, Old Problems, New Challenges** revisits concerns addressed in our first survey, in an attempt to find out whether the educational system has changed after years of intensive reform efforts. (Out of print)

- The Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher, 1994, *Violence in America's Public Schools: The Family Perspective* examines the contrasting views of parents and students about what goes on in and around the school building.
- The Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher, 1993, *Violence in America's Public Schools* illustrates the concerns of teachers, students and law enforcement officers across the country, about the increasing violence and fears of violence in their schools.
- The Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher, 1993, *Teachers Respond to President Clinton's Education Proposals* provides valuable insight into what teachers believe needs to be done to make our schools safe and productive places for learning.
- The Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher, 1992, *The Second Year: New Teachers' Expectations and Ideals* revisits the new teachers after completing two years of teaching in America's classrooms.
- The Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher, 1991, *The First Year: New Teachers Expectations and Ideals* returns to the cohort of new teachers who entered the classroom in the fall of 1990 and gauges their attitudes as they conclude their first year in the classroom.
- The Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher, 1990, *New Teachers: Expectations and Ideals-Part I Entering the Classroom* examines the views of first-time teachers entering the classroom in the fall of 1990.
- The Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher, 1989, *Preparing Schools for the 1990s* looks back at the changes in education through the 1980's and looks ahead to the changes teachers say would improve education.
- The Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher, 1988, *Strengthening the Relationship Between Teachers and Students* includes the views of students in grades 4-12, and focuses on minority teachers' satisfaction with teaching and ways to increase their participation in the profession. (Executive summary available)
- The Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher, 1987, *Strengthening Links Between Home and School* includes the views of parents of America's schoolchildren and reveals how parents and teachers are united in their commitment to educating America's youth. (Out of print)

- The Metropolitan Life Survey of American the Teacher, 1986, *Restructuring the Teaching Profession* explores the current structure of the teaching profession and ways to restructure it. (Executive summary available)
- The Metropolitan Life Survey of Former Teachers in America, 1986 reflects the views of those who left the teaching profession for other occupations. (Out of print)
- The Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher, 1985, *Strengthening the Profession* examines teachers' own agenda for educational reform. (Out of print)
- The Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher, 1984 analyzes attitudes of elementary and secondary school teachers toward both public education in the United States and educational reform. (Out of print)

MINI-SURVEYS—TEACHERS' VIEWS ON CURRENT ISSUES IN EDUCATION

- *The Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher, 1991, Coming to Terms* probes emerging problems related to tightened school budgets. (Out of print)
- *The Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher, 1992, Ready or Not: Grade Level Preparedness* examines teachers' perspectives on an issue that is key to the new national education goals. (Out of print)
- The series also includes several reports on individual states – two surveys of California teachers and one of New York teachers – whose questions parallel the 1984 and 1985 nationwide studies. (Out of print)

ALSO AVAILABLE:

- *Preparing Schools for the 1990s: An Essay Collection* contains the views of distinguished education leaders including Theodore R.Sizer, Albert Shanker, Michael W. Kirst, and Floretta Dukes McKenzie who discuss recent and future directions in the efforts to improve our public schools.

Copies of *The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher* are available while in print, by writing to: MetLife Survey of the American Teacher, 27-01 Queens Plaza North, New York, NY 11101. Visit our website at <http://www.metlife.com> to download a copy of this survey. The 2006, 2004-2005, 2003, 2002, 2001 and 2000 surveys and executive summaries of the 1999 and 1998 surveys are also available on the website.



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