

# Can we just get rid of homework?

Laura Ingalls Wilder had a rough childhood. She had no heat, way too much snow, and she had to share a bed with an older sister who always had prettier dresses to wear.

But I don't remember that she trudged through the snow carrying piles of homework back to the little house on the prairie. And I can't imagine she had many school projects to complete on the weekends.

So when did children start bringing assignments home? Did it happen when everyone got electricity? Did it start when children didn't have chores to do, milking the cows and feeding the chickens? Or did parents bring this upon themselves, wanting to know what their children were learning and wanting to be involved?



I have no idea how it happened, but I do not like homework. My children will tell you that on weeknights when they have no homework, I am the one happily skipping around the living room planning an evening of fun, or even of nothing. Homework just gets in the way of living.

I feel this way even though our children don't bring home huge amounts of homework, and our second grader completes his mostly on his own. Homework is just a hassle—somewhere up there between twice-weekly soccer practices and having to clean the kitchen floor when a bottle of apple juice falls and spreads everywhere. If I ever get to run the world, I am going to abolish homework. There are just so many better ways to spend evening time together as a family. And I'm really not sure the children learn much from it at all.

I'll stop whining for long enough to tell you that I am not alone. This piece in Salon actually argues that research supports getting rid of elementary homework.

So there we go. See? I may still be figuring out how many vertices a hexagon has for that kindergarten worksheet, but at least I've done my homework on homework.

*How do you feel about homework?*

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