

Action Research Plan

Does Homework Work?

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Section I

A. Introduction

The Action Research Plan includes a case study from the third-grade classroom of 25-30 students at Daphne East Elementary school in Daphne, AL. The detailed account is from the perspective of third grade teacher, Angela Lee. Daphne East Elementary School is a part of the Baldwin County School District where students have been given the privilege of 1:1 Chromebooks during school hours, but third graders are no longer allowed to take Chromebooks off campus due to loss/damage repair.

B. An Area of Focus Statement

When the Baldwin County District initially started the 1:1 laptop for every student, the students could bring devices home to use for homework. This past year this changed due to the cost of repairs/damage/loss. Only sixth through twelfth grade are permitted to bring devices home.

Our third-grade level works well together, sharing ideas, lesson plans, etc. However, two out of the seven of us disagree over giving homework to our third graders.

Observation 1-

There are those families who have no internet connection at home.

Observation 2-

Many students do not have access to technological devices, much less internet connection.

Assumption-

No internet connection from home creates an unequal scenario for those students concerning participation/grades.

C. Research Questions

Should homework be given according to internet access at home?

If some students have devices/connection and some do not, should the homework be different?

Does homework make a difference in student performance?

Should homework be assigned in the first place?

D. Related Literature

There are several articles, books, and plenty of research available relating to the benefits of homework and its effectiveness as well as no effectiveness. The variables I am considering throughout the action research plan are also focusing on internet available at home or not available, as well as homework being effective or ineffective.

One particular article, <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/wi-fi-enabled-school-buses-leave-no-child-offline/>, Leah Clapman, tells of a school district in Coachella Valley, California that provides iPads on the bus route home with wireless access. It doesn't end there; the district has 100 buses that are parked throughout particular parts of the county such as trailer parks and remote communities. These buses provide Wi-Fi access and part of a solution to bridge the "digital divide" to some answers to the variable of no internet access in the home. Though many school districts would not be able to afford this type of service, it is a great start to some answers and solutions for students that lack internet access from home. From NEA Today <http://neatoday.org/2016/04/20/the-homework-gap/>, McLaughlin addresses the homework gap for underprivileged children and some different plans in place to bridge the gap.

Some of the literature addresses the question of homework being effective and if it should even be assigned. Krueger addresses closing the Homework Gap in the 2015 article from The Journal, <https://thejournal.com/articles/2015/09/10/how-digital-equity-can-help-close-the-homework-gap.aspx>, bringing out the fact that ready mobility does not always assure equal access to every student.

Moyer addresses the possibility of grades school children bringing home too much homework in the article, http://www.slate.com/articles/life/the_kids/2017/01/are_grade_schoolers_doing_too_much_homework.html. The article mentions the ten minute homework rule, but also says that there is no proven benefit. The article brings out that every child is different and as parents have more power than realized and should judge for their own children.

E. Description of the intervention or innovation

I will begin with a parent survey to identify any student(s) that may not have internet access in the beginning of the school year. I will conduct surveys and interviews throughout the year to be aware if any situations have changed. I will look for data proving/disproving student performance. I will have parents decide if they want their child in the group of homework assigned students or no homework assigned students. Data and performance will be compared for progress in each individual students case.

Section II

A. Overview of your Data Collection strategies

Personal bias can skew results, so as a teacher researcher I will list two propositions to provide a starting point for examining my theories.

1. Homework can be beneficial in improving student performance, when all students have internet capability in their home environments.
2. Homework does not improve student performance whether students have internet capability or not.

To ensure validity I will use Walcott's Strategy checklist for interviews found in Mill's Action Research Figure 4-1. (p.95) This includes talking little, listening a lot, record accurately, begin writing early, report fully, be candid, seek feedback, and write accurately.

B. Data Sources

Major data sources used in this research action plan will be taken from a parent survey and student survey. Student scores will be analyzed from standardized tests and teacher made tests. Student interviews will be conducted throughout the year as well as parent surveys, questionnaires, examining data, and student performance.

C. Data Analysis plans

I will begin the analysis immediately after parent survey in the beginning of

the year. I will plan to share the parent survey in my Welcome letter. This will allow me to see what students have internet connection and identify those who do not. I will work with parents and admin to aid these students in finding internet connection to complete assigned computer tasks away from school. Student scores will be analyzed and coded, looking for themes from detailed interviews and surveys as well.

Section III

Students, parents, administration, and other teachers will take part in this action research plan. Students will be tested, questioned, and monitored by teachers and parents. Administration will help with finding solutions for those with no home internet connection. I will need to have administration and parents approve list of students who will and will not be included on the homework list. The projected timeline for collecting data will begin as soon as school starts until the Spring of the new school year. Analyzing data will take place throughout the year and interpreting data will happen the last few weeks of the school year. I will be able to use this research for the next school year to place goals that will best suit my future students. The third grade level will be involved in implementing this process and recommended results will affect the following school year of 2018-19 according to our results. This process will be recorded in Edmodo to give access to all teachers, students, administration, and parents.

References

Mills, G. (2007) *Action Research; A Guide for the Teacher Researcher*. Upper Saddle River, NJ; Pearson.

Appendix A. Literature Matrix

Author	Year	Variables Considered in the Study			
		Homework Effective	Homework Noneffective	Internet at Home	No Internet at Home
McLaughlin	2016	*		*	*
Vota	2010			*	*
Krueger	2015	*		*	*
Cyr	2013	*		*	*
Moyer	2017		*		
Bever	2016		*	*	*

Appendix B. Data Collection Matrix

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AREA OF FOCUS:

All students do not have internet access from home and they are unable to complete homework assignments.

RESEARCH QUESTION:

Does homework make a difference in student performance?

Research Questions	Data Source		
	1	2	3
Survey of students with/without internet access/device from home?	Administer student survey using Survey Monkey for entire class		
Do student scores differ when using Teacher Made Test/Standardized Tests for those who have internet access from home and complete/not complete homework?	Teacher Made Test Administered	Standardized Test Administered	Observation/any change in data
Interview students individually-Does homework help you understand new concepts better? Or not?	Interview personally and journal response	Give checklist for improved or unimproved concepts	Student survey/questionnaire
Questionnaires to parents/guardians- Does homework your child understand new concepts better? Or not? Does homework make a difference in student performance?	Survey for parent	Give checklist for improved or unimproved concepts	

Appendix C. Data Analysis Matrix

Data Analysis Matrix 9417: Action Research

AREA OF FOCUS:

All students do not have internet access from home and they are unable to complete homework assignments.

RESEARCH QUESTION:

Does homework make a difference in student performance?

Data Collection Technique	Data Analysis Strategy		
	1	2	3
Survey of students with/without internet access from home	Compile results	Group students with and without internet	Look for trends
Student scores taken from Teacher Made Test/Standardized Tests	Compile results and organize data in subject area of focus	Analyze data	Group and look for themes
Interview students on relevance of homework and individual understanding/performance	Compile data	Make checklist for improved or unimproved performance	Look for common themes and trends
Questionnaires to parents/guardians	Organize data	Look for patterns	Compare to survey and scores
Examine archival documents/Fieldnotes	Organize data and look for common themes		Look for commonalities and trends

Appendix D. Instrument that you developed

Use this link to go to the created parent survey using Survey Monkey.

Link to Parent Survey

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CX7T9VS>

Use this link to view results from parent surveys.

Link to results

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-BZH ZRF5P/>