Homework Practices: Myths and Realities

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Purpose
The purpose of this essay is to present research pertaining to homework practices.

The Article
This essay is presented in a unique and engaging way as a fictitious conversation between a new teacher and an experienced teacher discussing homework. Throughout the essay the authors present research pertaining to homework practices. They introduce four myths about homework practices and present findings from research about each myth. These myths/realities include 1) Myth: American public opinion about homework has been consistently positive across time. Reality: American public opinion has shifted across time about the value of homework. 2) The primary purpose of homework is to improve students’ academic achievement. Reality: Homework serves different purposes across the grade levels. 3) Myth: Homework improves students’ academic achievement. Reality: Homework may positively impact student academic achievement, but it may also negatively impact their academic achievement. 4) Myth: Parents, teachers, and students have positive perceptions about the value of homework. Reality: Perceptions about the value of homework vary considerably. The essay includes a sample of research-based district homework policy and concludes with suggestions for teachers to consider when planning and implementing their own homework practices.

What this Means for the Field
This essay provides an example of an everyday conversation between two teachers. Without meaningful, researched-based conversations between colleagues, teachers may struggle in classrooms wondering what they should do about everyday teaching practices. This essay shows the need for homework to be carefully assigned with purpose and should be worth the students’ time as it is students, not their parents or friends, that should be engaged in their homework.

Citation

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