

**READING**

Directions: Read the texts from the following sources and answer the questions that follow.

**Source One:*****Should Kids Have Homework?***

Homework is an academic institution, but should it be? There's a growing trend of schools cutting down on homework or cutting it out altogether. What's your take? Should kids have homework?

<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Homework reinforces classroom instruction. Students need to practice what they learn on their own time, at their own pace.</li> <li>● Homework teaches responsibility. The responsibilities of homework mirror the responsibilities adults face at work and at home every day.</li> <li>● Homework prepares kids for higher grades. If students aren't given homework in elementary school, they won't be able to handle middle school, high school, or college.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Homework is busy work. Many teachers take a one-size-fits-all approach, and their assignments are rarely appropriate for the student's specific needs.</li> <li>● Homework stresses the family. Over 90 percent of American children say their parents are involved with their homework, according to a study by the Indiana University and Purdue University schools of education.</li> <li>● Homework squeezes out play. Unstructured play aids the development of academic and social skills.</li> </ul>

Citation: "Should Kids Have Homework?" Education.com. N.p., n.d. Web. 09 Jan. 2014.  
Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Testing & Evaluation , 2014

**Source Two:**

## *Rethinking Homework*

by Brenda Lasevoli

American students spend more time than ever on homework. If schools lighten the load, will kids still make the grade?

One Sunday night last year, fourth grader Jackson Berg was lying in bed. Suddenly, he sat up. "I forgot to do my homework!" he exclaimed. He would have to get up early to do math problems.

Jackson is not the only one with homework troubles. U.S. kids are hitting the books after school longer than ever. In 2004, the University of Michigan did a survey of 2,900 students. The results showed that in 1981, 9- to 11-year-olds spent two hours and 24 minutes on homework each week. By 2002, the amount of time spent on homework was three hours and 15 minutes. That amount only seems to be growing.

### **A Lighter Load**

Some school districts are telling kids to put down their pencils when the bell rings. Pleasanton Unified School District, in California, is one. Its new homework policy took effect in September. Students in kindergarten through fifth grade no longer have homework on weekends. Weeknight homework is limited to 30 minutes for second and third graders, and 50 minutes for fourth and fifth graders. Assignments during vacations and holidays are discouraged.

### **The Homework Battle**

Some teachers argue that homework prepares kids for state tests and for college. They worry that a lighter load will put kids at a disadvantage.

Harris Cooper is a homework expert at Duke University. He says research shows that in the elementary grades, homework has little effect on achievement. He believes assignments should be kept short. "When kids get tired, they turn off," he says.

Students in the Pleasanton school district say the new homework policy works. Fourth grader Noah Lee does his homework right away. Then he practices the cello, piano and guitar. He even has time to play football. "I don't have so much homework that I can't do the things I love," he says.

Citation: lasevoli, Brenda. "Rethinking Homework." Time for Kids (Grades 3-4) 2.1 O (2011): n. pag. EBSCO. Web. Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Testing & Evaluation , 2014

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Use the sources to create a list of reasons **(at least two from each)** why kids should have homework vs. why kids should not have homework. (RI.7 Use information to answer question)

Source	Kids should have homework	Kids should not have homework
Source 1: <i>Should Kids Have Homework?</i>		
Source 2: <i>Rethinking Homework</i>		

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## **WRITING**

Opinion Task:

The principal at your new middle school is trying to decide whether students next year should be assigned daily homework or not. They have asked for your opinion on the matter. Write an opinion piece clearly stating your thoughts on the matter. (W.1)

You will:

- introduce the topic and state your opinion (W.1)
- organize ideas logically to best support your opinion (W.1)
- use the informational texts above to provide evidence that supports your opinion (W.9b)

Write your opinion piece, on a separate sheet of notebook paper. Attach to this assessment.