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Can Studying Be Harmful?

The [Oxford Dictionary](#) defines studying as the time devoted by a particular person to gaining knowledge of an academic subject, typically at school. High school students study an average of 17 hours a week to prepare for their classes. We have all learned from school countless times, by teachers and parents that the most successful way to succeed in academics is to study. However as students take more honors and advanced classes, the workload can soon become overbearing. Studying can be just finishing homework or reading assignments allocated by students, but there is also extra time in cramming for tests and quizzes. Although studying can help improve one's grades, studying can also bring many negative effects, and could even be considered unhealthy. Studying at a moderate rate can help a student succeed in school, however the irony is that too much studying or too little studying can bring adverse effects, potentially negatively affecting a student's grades in the future.

Studying can bring negative effects to one's mental health. Procrastination, anxiety, and stress are a couple examples of how studying can affect a teen's psychological structure. Anxiety is caused by stress in response to situations where a person feels under pressure. Pressure can be caused by a number of things such as the lack of time, the importance of that test, or by cramming everything at the last minute. This procrastination could be caused by a number of things including technology and just pure laziness. Technology influences one's procrastination

because students get easily distracted, and would much rather look on social media rather than study. Procrastination causes stress and anxiety as students work last minute to write a final paper or study for a test. This puts students at a high level of stress, and can actually burn students out. Procrastination can also cause depression on individuals as school and family pressures can cause extreme levels of anxiety and stress. [“Being depressed is not just about feeling sad, but can often be the lack of feeling of being stuck and not having the words to explain how you feel the way you do.”](#) Depression causes a slippery slope of unhealthy effects such as the inability to focus and study can actually cause even poorer concentrations, changes in sleeping pattern, and changes in weight/diet. Procrastination is a major component when it comes to one’s studying because the lack of studying can develop stress, anger, disappointment, and anxiety inside a person’s mind. However, overstudying can be more harmful than not studying at all.

Overstudying could actually make a student lose more information than gain information. It places all that crammed information into short term memory rather than long term memory. When students pull all-nighters to cram the last bit of information they need, they do not realize it is doing more harm than good. [“Short term memory extinguishes rapidly”](#) and only lasts a few minutes to a few hours. But how much studying is considered overstudying? A study performed by a Stanford researcher found that [“students who completed 3.1 hours of homework per night were more susceptible to developing health problems, depression, sleep deprivation and a lack of balance in their lives”](#) in their lives. Other times overstudying could just mean the simple act of pulling all-nighters. Although this may seem normal in a high schooler’s life, getting uneven and disproportional hours of sleep each night can bring detrimental health effects on a student’s

body. The lack of sleep and the cramming of last minute facts can be a whirlwind of disaster for an individual. Sleep deprivation can cause even higher levels of stress and anxiety, and a lack of appetite. [Studies](#) have found that all these factors can cause conditions such as obesity, depression, diabetes, and heart disease. Constant tiredness and exhaustion can be hard for students because they need to balance their sleep with school life. However pulling all-nighters to study could actually decrease one's success in school because of their inability to concentrate and focus. Other health factors of overstudying are caused by sitting. Students sit for long periods of time each day studying and shoving their faces in books. However [research](#) showed sitting for long periods of time has led to increased blood pressure, high blood sugar, and metabolic syndrome.

All of these mental and physical health factors are connected to studying. The lack of studying and procrastination can cause even more stress and anxiety, causing students to pull all-nighters for their inability to manage their time wisely. This constant stress and anxiety students face everyday can lead to depression as well as other health complications. Students just fourteen to eighteen years old should not have to face such high levels of depression and inflications at such a young age. If one studies too little, there are numerous consequences that come to play, however if one studies too much, there are also countless obstructive effects that can hurt an individual. But, there is a middle ground. A place where studying can benefit an individual's mental and physical health, as well as sustaining good grades at school.

The main problem that many students struggle with is the inability to find effective ways to study. [To deal with poor study habits](#), teens must first recognize where their problems lie. To combat procrastination, students need to find a way to manage their time instead of cramming

their work all in one night. This means teens should spread their work out in a period days, rather than taking in all the information the night before. This will allow the information to soak in the long-term memory part of the brain rather than the short-term. It will also help with stress levels and the overwhelming of an individual. Students should stick to a specific plan when studying to keep track of time and learn concepts of [time management](#). As the day wears on, the brain becomes more tired. This causes brain function to be slower as nighttime nears. This makes performance for learning and memory higher in the morning than at night. However time management can also be hindered by the use of technology such as television, cell phones, and social media. The answer to these problems is simple: just turn off these cell phones and sign out of these social media accounts. The constant checking of these notifications only distracts your focus from studying. What many students do not understand is what they perceive as the main goal or point of studying. It should not be to simply memorize or just remember information, but to truly understand. Understanding the concepts and being to apply it, and relate information can develop a deeper understanding of a material.

Studying is much like an exercise for the brain. It keeps the mind constantly wondering and thinking, and it allows one's academic goals become possible. There is also [evidence](#) where studying has given major benefits for an individual's health, even preventing or slowing down the onset of lower brain function or Alzheimer's at an old age. However, students need to find this balance of studying where they are not putting an excess amount of information in the brain nor lacking the necessary function to study. Too many students procrastinate and choose to study at the last minute which raises a number of psychological and physical health concerns, and overstudying brings many levels of anxiety, and can even affect a person's health in the future.

And even when there is a balance, there will always be a status of stress present in the student's life due to the significance of that test, essay, or project on a person's grade.

Every student is a unique learner whether they be visual, auditory, or kinesthetic.

Understanding and being able to figure what type of learner one is will allow him/her to see what studying tactics are most suitable for their learning. Learning these study tactics at an early age would bring an easier and more effective way of studying. However, there will be mistakes, and finding the "perfect" way of studying for you will take many tries, but once you have established your own way, there will no longer be a need to stay up hours and hours to study. For auditory learners like myself, I find that lecturing my notes helps me memorize and store the information in the long-term memory portion of my brain.

Students should be aware that their mental and physical health is more important than the grade present on a piece of paper. Although these grades may determine a person's future, so can the consequences of studying. These consequences such as poor concentration, sleep deprivation, depression, can negatively impact a person's grades more significantly than simply not studying at all. No one should have to face the extremities of stress and anxiety, and potentially kill themselves over the focus on maintaining a good grade in the class. One Harvard student named William Thornton Parker Jr. actually died from studying. A study after his death found that he died as a result of an "[abscess on the brain, a result of overstudy](#)." Overstudying and procrastination can bring "[unwanted and unneeded amounts of stress and tension](#)." Students need to take several hours a day or just once a week to cool down and take a break from all the stress and work thrown by school. Finding effective methods of studying can actually shorten the time needed for a student to retain information, and decrease studying time all together. Basically,

studying should be kept in moderation and be given your best effort every time, but don't get to the point where you go insane. Stressing out, procrastinating, pulling all-nighters to change a simple number on a piece of paper can do more harm than good, and we certainly don't need another instance like Mr. Parker.

Editorial Analysis Sheet

<https://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-mauldin-opioids-overdose-drugs-fentanyl-20190224-story.html>

<https://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-ol-patt-morrison-richard-beck-child-abuse-pizzagate-20190220-htmlstory.html>

Editorialists, Lauren Mauldin of and Patt Morrison of the LA Times are both opinion writers that touch upon the problems facing the world today. Lauren Maudlin wrote an article outlining the opioid crisis facing America today, by shedding light on a particular family affected. The family was kept anonymous and started off by describing the experience the wife had when seeing her husband lying on the floor, near death, after overdosing on opioids. The voice of the article was very unique, setting a scared and urgent tone, where the wife came into so many realizations after she found out that her husband had overdosed on drugs. The writer set the voice of this opinion piece in first person, quoting and picking out questions and answers that bewildered her throughout the entire process of figuring out that her husband was a serious addict. The piece was very descriptive, detailing the specific clothes he wore to showing how his behavior was so erratic and irregular. Then the piece was a more imaginative voice where

described the setting and how life had changed for her and her husband after his first overdose, but it also brought in statistics very subtle, instead of blatantly stating facts. The statistics of how opioid deaths increased “[almost 47% to 28,400 deaths in 2017](#)” were used to transition the story further, but also describe how her husband was one of many affected. These statistics and evidence were used to prove the ideas stated by her husband, and were well incorporated within the entire paper. This opinion paper had an incredible amount of pathos. It gave the perspective and shock of his wife to find her spouse lying on the ground, blue, with his limbs constricted. It painted a picture of how his overdose scene was so tragic and so disheartening that it should be a scene that no one should have to experience in their life. As the editorial continues, it lists facts of how her husband was able to obtain these drugs and how easily accessible these drugs were to anyone, and how the least expected and trustworthy people could be addicts. It was a very questioning paper, where she wondered how someone like her husband, “the smartest person” she knew could commit such a huge betrayal. The piece then starts to shift its focus of how her husband made a focus to rehabilitation, but had this constant reminder of subtle importance: opioid users are the most likely drug abusers to relapse. At the end of the editorial, the last words she says before her final paragraphs were “[When my husband told me I would never find him sputtering and unconscious again, he meant it, and I believed him.](#)” It leaves an eerie almost uneasy mood upon the reader, as I hoped that this was the end, but as the paper continues it paints another innocent picture of her husband just simply picking up a small package from China, and this time when his wife found him, his skin was no longer blue, but yellow. The paper ends with a final description of a “[patch of burgundy on his forearm where he had pushed the needle. He was cold, and he was 36 years old.](#)” It is a quite awe-striking ending, where it leaves

the reader with a simple age of when he died. I tried incorporating a case similar to this drug epidemic with a case of a student actually dying from overstudying. Just like how Maudlin ended her paper with the eventual death of her husband, my paper ended with the case of William Parker Jr. Both. They were victims to very different causes, but I was able to create a reflective mood at the end to question the reader of whether they value their grades rather than their lives.

The second opinion paper by Pat Morrison gave further details in the case of the SoCal preschool case and the false child abuse crimes. It started off with splitting the generations, of those who remember such a horrendous event in the past and those who were privileged to not be involved in this matter. It simply drew a line. I also drew a line in where studying would be considered unhealthy. Studying is good for a person's grades and can even affect how successful one is in the future, but I drew a line where at a certain point studying can do more harm and foul than good. The paper was more of a questionnaire towards one woman who was a child during the McMartin preschool case. The paper brought out injustices in the judicial system of America and how many innocent daycare teachers were falsely accused and convicted due to the prosecutors' inability to interview children properly. The prosecutors' mindset was driving this truth out of children instead of focusing on how to effectively interview a child instead of scaring him/her to say false truths. It was a mass hysteria after the McMartin case, with accusations coming from all over the United States. I focused Morrison's voice in my counterclaim by stating the case of the other person's argument and stating how many people may argue why studying is good for you, but I was able to uncover larger truths and hidden consequences like Morrison and use that for my advantage. Morrison also asked the anonymous woman questions about what factors like press and government played a role in the McMartin case. I also tried to

introduce factors of why people would think studying could impact a student positively, but the negative consequences were heavier than the benefits. I explained how a student's mental and physical health was specifically affected. Both these editorialists wrote about completely different topics, but each author spoke out to me in their own individual writing style, and I tried to incorporate their voice and diction in the way I wrote my essay.