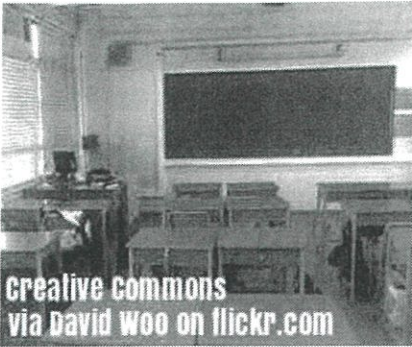


BreakingNewsEnglish - The Mini Lesson

Why do children go to school?

3rd September, 2016



What is school for? This may seem an easy question to answer, but a poll taken in the USA shows people have different opinions on why kids go to school. The poll is called the 'Public's

Attitudes Toward the Public Schools'. It is from a global association of education professionals called PDK International. PDK asked Americans to name the biggest purpose of school. Just 45 per cent of people who took part in the poll said the main goal of school was to prepare students to pass exams. Around a quarter of people said the main purpose was to get kids ready to join the workforce. Just over 26 per cent of Americans believed the biggest reason for school was to teach children about citizenship.

Joshua Starr, CEO of PDK, said the poll questioned whether today's schools were doing the right thing. He said: "One has to really question whether the direction we've been going is consistent with what the public wants." He quoted from author James Baldwin, who said in 1963 that the purpose of school is "to ask questions of the universe and learn to live with those questions." Students had different ideas about what school was for. Elena Brankov, 15, said school was to teach children to be creative, to share ideas with others and to use technology make the world a better place. Lyndon Bailey, also 15, said school, "is just to make poor kids into robots who work and make rich people richer".

Sources: WashingtonPost.com / usaNews.com / edsource.org

Writing

School is the best way to educate children. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

easy question / school / association / education / quarter / workforce / citizenship / the right thing / direction / author / universe / ideas / creative / technology / rich

True / False

- The article says it seems easy to say what school is for. T / F
- A poll was taken by an association of technology CEOs. T / F
- Half of people said kids getting a job was the main reason for schools. T / F
- A quarter of people said teaching citizenship is the purpose of schools. T / F
- The polling company CEO was sure schools were doing the right thing. T / F
- The CEO quoted a writer from the twentieth century. T / F
- The writer said school was to ask questions of the universe. T / F
- A 15-year-old said schools were to make poor kids richer. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1. easy | a. writer |
| 2. opinions | b. participated |
| 3. global | c. proper |
| 4. took part | d. views |
| 5. main | e. way |
| 6. right | f. imaginative |
| 7. direction | g. simple |
| 8. author | h. most important |
| 9. creative | i. wealthy |
| 10. rich | j. worldwide |

Discussion – Student A

- What did you think of school?
- How could we make schools better?
- What are schools for?
- What will schools be like in 50 years from now?
- How difficult is it to be a teacher in a school?
- What's the best thing about school?
- What's your best memory of school?
- What is citizenship and how important is it to teach it?

School

1. What's the poll called?
2. What did 45% of people say?
What did other people say?
3. What did James Baldwin say the purpose of school was?
4. What did Elena Brankov say?
5. What did Lyndon Bailey say?
6. What do you think is the purpose of school is?

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Nearly 1 billion obese people in developing world

5th January, 2014



There are now almost one billion obese adults in the developing world. This figure was around 250 million in 1980. The number of

very overweight people has almost quadrupled in the last 35 years. A report from the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) said one in three people is overweight. The institute wants all world governments to do more to change what people eat. The biggest reasons that people are fatter are that they have more money and they are spending it on fast food. Fewer people are eating traditional, healthier food. Steve Wiggins from the ODI said: "Changes in lifestyle, the increasing availability of processed foods, advertising have all led to dietary changes."

It's not all bad news. Two countries (Denmark and South Korea) have done very well in the past few decades to deal with the obesity problem. Denmark introduced laws against trans-fatty acids. Restaurants and food producers must be very careful about the kind of fats they use to cook their food. South Korea started a public education programme 20 years ago. It warned people about the problems of obesity. Mr Wiggins said: "A few decades ago the government of Korea said we must encourage our traditional foods, which are low in fats and oils, high in vegetables, high in sea food and so on. There was a lot of public education, a lot of training, and a sense that Korean food is good for you."

Sources: BBC / The Guardian / Sky News

Writing

There should be a very high tax on fast food. Discuss

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

obese / developing world / quadrupled / governments / spending / fast food / lifestyle / bad news / restaurants / fats / public education / traditional foods / vegetables / sense

True / False

- a) In 1980, there were half-a-billion obese people in the developing world. T / F
- b) The number of obese people has gone up by 50% in the last 35 years. T / F
- c) A big reason for people becoming overweight is that they are wealthier. T / F
- d) A development worker said advertising was also responsible. T / F
- e) The article said it was all bad news. T / F
- f) Denmark has laws about what fat restaurants can use. T / F
- g) Obesity rates in Korea have gone up a lot in the past few decades. T / F
- h) Korea introduced education programmes about obesity for its people. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. figure | a. unpleasant |
| 2. institute | b. causes |
| 3. reasons | c. cautioned |
| 4. fewer | d. number |
| 5. increasing | e. recommend |
| 6. bad | f. growing |
| 7. deal | g. awareness |
| 8. warned | h. organization |
| 9. encourage | i. cope |
| 10. sense | j. not many |

Discussion – Student A

- a) Do you need to gain or lose weight?
- b) Why do people eat too much?
- c) What do you think the situation will be like 50 years from now?
- d) What can governments do to reduce obesity?
- e) Why do people eat fast food if they know it's fattening?
- f) How has your lifestyle changed in the past decade or two?
- g) Do food companies have a responsibility to make healthier food?
- h) When was the last time you ate too much?

Obese

- 1.What does obese mean?
- 2.How many obese adults were there in 1980?
- 3.What are the biggest reasons people are fatter?
- 4.What 2 countries have done well dealing with obesity?
- 5.Do you think you need to lose weight?
- 6.What are some ways we can lose weight or control our weight?