

English in Mind Second edition

Level 5 Unit 3

Lesson Plan

The school on a sofa

THE INDEPENDENT

AIMS

- to read extensively and study a text related to the Unit theme
- to practise note-taking and summarising skills
- to distinguish between fact and opinion
- to understand the meaning of new vocabulary from context
- to build awareness of adverbial position in a sentence
- to promote discussion
- (further work) to develop writing/oral skills

Total time (approx): 1 hour 45 minutes

(Note: Some exercises can be set for homework)

summarise the points in their own words. They should use their notes rather than looking back at the text. NB: the Key lists some of the main points touched on in the text (para numbers in brackets).

Key:

Reasons: dissatisfaction with mainstream schooling (2,8); problems for children with learning difficulties (6); large classes (6); expense of private schools (7); bullying (8)

Methods: flexi schooling, home-schooling co-ops, family schools (8); Internet/virtual schools (3, 9, 10, 11, etc.)

Advantages: avoiding 'perils' of mainstream schooling (1); learning at your own pace (6); skills more relevant (9,10); financially beneficial (7); better exam results (7,12); more choice (1,14)

Disadvantages: easier to 'skive' (4); may create 'screen addicts' (11); socialisation problems (12, 13, 14)

Time: 15 minutes

Lead-in

- 1 Write the title of the article ('The school on a sofa') on the board and ask your students if this sounds like a nice idea! The idea of home schooling might seem strange to them and not permitted in their home country. In England and Wales it is perfectly legal, so long as parents are able to prove that they are providing their children with a satisfactory education. Read through the questions with your students. Then put them into pairs or small groups to write notes in the 'our ideas' column, leaving the other column blank. Ask different groups to share their ideas briefly with the class. Do not intervene to comment at this stage.

Time: 10–12 minutes

Reading comprehension (1): skimming

- 2 This task requires students to skim the text for general information and provides practice in note-taking and oral summarising. Distribute the article and ask them to read it through quickly. They can tick off (✓) any ideas of their own that also appear in the article, adding any new ones they come across in the 'School on a sofa' article' column. Encourage them to note down key words rather than complete sentences. They can do this task individually, before sharing what they have found with their partner or group, and helping each other to locate relevant passages. Select students from each group to

Reading comprehension (2): fact or opinion?

- 3 This exercise requires students to differentiate between some of the facts and opinions contained in the text. It is best done in two stages. Firstly, they must choose between two alternative terms (most – but not all – of which are opposites) to complete each statement so that it agrees with **what is stated in the text**. They should be able to attempt this task from memory. Then they should work in pairs to find passages in the text to back up their choices. Check their answers. For the second part of the task, students continue working in pairs to decide whether each statement expresses a fact (F) or an opinion (O). Allow some discussion and disagreement between them on this point. Check answers as a class.

Key: 2 doesn't encourage (O) (para 4); 3 untypical (O) (para 5); 4 unhappy (F) (para 6); 5 too expensive (O) (para 7); 6 irrelevant (O) (para 9); 7 different (F) (para 10); 8 less likely (O) (paras 12, 13, 14); 9 extends (F) (para 14); 10 change (O) (paras 14, 15).

Time: 12 minutes

Vocabulary (1): words in context

- 4 The article contains some items of vocabulary which may not be familiar to your students. A number of

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those selected here may also cause pronunciation problems (phonemic spellings are provided to help students with these). Model them yourself and get your students to repeat. Make sure they also use the correct stress, indicated by () placed before the stressed syllable. Once they have learnt the pronunciations, ask them to work in pairs to find the words in the text and guess their meaning from the context, before matching them to the definitions. Monitor to check that they are continuing to pronounce the words well.

Key: 2 endeavouring 3 furore 4 skiving 5 detention
6 awash 7 chasm 8 adamantly 9 foster 10 distraught
Time: 10 minutes

Vocabulary (2): idiomatic phrases

- 5 The idiomatic phrases highlighted in this exercise may also cause students problems. Again, they will need to find them in the text before matching them to their definitions and noting down who or what is being referred to in each phrase. This will ensure that they look at the context closely and develop a good understanding of how the expressions are used. While some answers require students merely to pick out words and phrases from the text, others may be expressed more loosely and in their own words. Be flexible in how you mark these.

Key :

2 e the annual furore (over secondary school places)

3 c anxious parents (waiting to hear about secondary school places)

4 g 'virtual schooling'

5 a Emily and Ben (not working hard)

6 f Emily's learning speed

7 b expectations of children's education

Time: 12 minutes

- 6 In this exercise students can practise using the phrases they have learnt in Exercise 5 above in a personal way. You may need to help with a few suggestions to get them started, e.g. 1. *thorny issues* – choice of future career, when to get married. Put students into groups to share ideas.

Time: 10 minutes

Grammar: position of adverbs

- 7 Exercises 7 and 8 revise and extend the work done on the position of adverbs in Unit 3 (p.19). In this first exercise students are asked to insert the adverbs/adverbial phrases in the extracts *without looking back at the text*. Remind them that adverbs/adverbial phrases may come at the beginning of the sentence, in the middle (they should indicate exactly where) or at the end. After marking their chosen place, they can look at the text to check.

Key: See text for answers. Alternative positions in some cases might be: 1 'It's *frankly* hardly surprising...' (acceptable but clumsy); 'It's hardly surprising, *frankly*, ...' (acceptable but commas necessary)

6 '...and as a result her learning has *dramatically* improved.'

7 'But however advanced we become *technologically*, ...'

Time: 5 minutes

- 8 To consolidate students' understanding of the grammar behind the position of adverbs, they must now match the sentences to the guideline statements. Point to the use of terms such as 'usually', 'normally', 'may', which indicate that these are guidelines rather than absolute rules.

Key: 1c 2b 3e 4a 5e 6d 7a 8b

Time: 5 minutes

Discussion

- 9 The three discussion questions in this exercise give students the opportunity to explore further the topics and issues raised in the article, both on a personal level and more generally. Students work initially in pairs or small groups before an open class discussion.

Time: 10 minutes

Further work

- 10 This follow-up activity provides a valuable opportunity for students to practise a range of oral skills as well as writing in a specific style.

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Project: School of the Future brochure. Put students into groups of 4–6 to design a ‘future school’. Write some questions on the board to prompt ideas, e.g.:

- What would children learn?
- Would there be teachers?
- What part would technology play?
- Would there be exams?

The results can be presented as a school brochure. Each member of the group should contribute

some written work, which can be peer-corrected, before being finally checked by you and rewritten for the final version. The group can then work together on the design and layout of the brochure.

This article first appeared on Sunday, 28 October 2007, at www.independent.co.uk/news/education/schools/internet-schools-the-school-on-a-sofa-397902.html.

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