

English in Mind Second edition

Level 5 Unit 3

Worksheet

THE
INDEPENDENT

The school on a sofa

Lead-in

1 Some parents in the UK decide not to send their children to normal school, but educate them at home.

- What do you think their *reasons* might be for doing this?
- What *methods* can be used to educate children at home?
- What would be the *advantages* and *disadvantages* of this type of schooling?

Work in pairs or small groups and write notes under the 'our ideas' section in the chart below. Leave the other section blank for the moment.

Home schooling:

	Our ideas	School on a sofa article
Reasons		
Methods		
Advantages		
Disadvantages		

Reading comprehension: skimming

2 Read through the article and check your ideas. Add any new points you find in the text under the 'School on a Sofa article' heading.

3 Underline the best alternative below, to make statements which agree with information given or views expressed in the article. Indicate whether the statement expresses a fact (F) or an opinion (O).

- 1 The government's inspectorate (Ofsted) is **happy** / **unhappy** about the performance of the majority of English secondary schools. F
- 2 Internet schooling **encourages** / **doesn't encourage** laziness.
- 3 Mr and Mrs Price are **typical** / **untypical** of parents who choose to educate their children at home.
- 4 Emily Price was **unhappy** / **bored** at school.
- 5 Ben's school was **too expensive** / **of a low standard**.
- 6 According to Dr Twining, much of what is being taught in schools today is **relevant** / **irrelevant** for the modern world.
- 7 *Schome* teaches **the same** / **different** skills from those learnt at normal schools.
- 8 Children who are schooled at home are **more likely** / **less likely** to develop good social skills.

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9 Internet schooling *extends* / *restricts* choice.10 Traditional schooling needs to *change* / *stay the same*.

Vocabulary (1): words in context

4 The words in the box below are highlighted in *italics* in the text. Practise saying the words with the correct stress.*adamantly* /'æd.ə.mənt.li / *endeavouring* /en'dev.ə'ɪŋ /*awash* /ə'wɒʃ /*foster* /fɒs.tə /*chasm* /'kæz.əm /*furore* /'fjʊ.rɔː /*detention* /dɪ'tent.ʃən /*offspring* /'ɒf.sprɪŋ /*distraught* /dɪ'strɔːt /*skiving* /'skaɪvɪŋ /

Working with a partner, find these words and try to guess their meaning from the context. Then match them to the definitions below.

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1 <i>offspring</i> _____ | children |
| 2 _____ | trying hard to do something |
| 3 _____ | furious reaction or activity |
| 4 _____ | avoiding doing your work (colloquial) |
| 5 _____ | a school punishment, where you are made to stay behind after class |
| 6 _____ | being present in large amounts |
| 7 _____ | a very wide gap |
| 8 _____ | very strong (of opinions, feelings) |
| 9 _____ | encourage (of ideas or feelings) |
| 10 _____ | extremely worried or upset. |

Vocabulary (2): idiomatic phrases

5 The article contains some idiomatic phrases. Find the following in the text and match them to their definitions on the right.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1 'a thorny issue' (para 2) | a working less hard |
| 2 'reaches fever pitch' (para 2) | b make the competition more difficult |
| 3 'wring their hands' (para 2) | c get very anxious |
| 4 'a techie buzz-phrase' (para 4) | d a subject of disagreement and debate |
| 5 'slacking off' (para 4) | e gets to a state of high excitement |

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6 'at her own pace' (para 6)

f at a speed suited to her

7 'raise the bar' (para 14)

g a fashionable expression relating to modern technology.

Now decide who or what is being referred to in each example and write your answers below.

1 d choosing a secondary school for your child

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

6 _____

7 _____

6 Discuss the following questions with a partner.

1 What *thorny issues* do you think you may have to face in your life?2 Can you remember when an event or situation reached *fever pitch*?3 What makes your parents *wring their hands*?4 Can you think of some *buzz-phrases* in your own language?5 What do your teachers or parents say when they see you are *slacking off*?6 What kinds of things do you like to do *at your own pace*?7 In what sports and other competitive events do organisers sometimes *raise the bar*?

Grammar: position of adverbs

7 Work with a partner. Without looking back at the text, insert the adverb in brackets in the extracts below where you think it fits best. More than one position may be acceptable.

1 'it's hardly surprising that roughly 55,000 of British children are now being home schooled' (*frankly*) (para 2)2 'they can fire off a question via the private instant-messaging service' (*simply*) (para 3)3 'while Angela runs her business from another laptop' (*elsewhere in the house*) (para 4)4 'Ian was opposed to the idea when Angela suggested it' (*adamantly*) (para 5)5 'but working from home allows Emily to do things' (*at her own pace*) (para 6)6 'and as a result her learning has improved' (*dramatically*) (para 6)7 'But however advanced we become' (*technologically*) (para 11)8 'the internet has opened up the education system to much-needed scrutiny' (*certainly*) (para 14)

Now find the phrases in the text and check your answers. What alternative positions might be possible?

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Worksheet**THE**  **INDEPENDENT****The school on a sofa****8 Match the sentences in Exercise 7 to the guidelines for the use and position of adverbs given below.**

- a** An adverb used to qualify an adjective generally comes before the adjective.
- b** In verb forms where an auxiliary is used, adverbs may immediately follow the auxiliary.
- c** Adverbs which express the author's opinion or qualify the whole idea of the sentence are usually placed at the beginning. Mid-position may also be acceptable.
- d** For emphasis an adverb may come at the end of a clause.
- e** An adverbial phrase normally comes at the end of a clause.

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____ 6 _____ 6 _____ 7 _____ 8 _____

Discussion**9 Discuss the following questions in pairs or small groups**

- 1** Would you like to be educated at a 'virtual school'? What would you miss about your normal school?
- 2** Think about the changes that schools have undergone in the past fifty years. How will they have changed in fifty years' time?
- 3** Do you agree with Dr Twining that much of what is taught in schools today is not relevant to our lives in the twenty-first century? How would you change the curriculum?

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