

Q&A EDUCATION

1 Is it true that we use only 10% of our brains?
Adrian Lewis, Newcastle



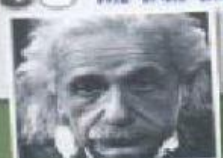
2 I'm thinking of homeschooling my children in the future. Is it a good idea?
Tricia Wright, Mitcham



3 I read that by the year 2100, computers will have replaced teachers. Is that true?
Phil Taylor, Stoke-on-Trent



4 My cousin keeps telling me that Einstein failed at school. Is he right?
Rebecca Rose, Leicester



a This is very unlikely. Teachers are more than just machines that provide learners with information and correct exercises. They show students how to use information, help them with their individual needs and questions as well as notice if someone is experiencing problems. Computers cannot provide this human and emotional side to learning. Also, students get distracted easily so if the teacher wasn't there to get them to pay attention, who would? Learners might just remain in front of the screen without getting any work done. However, it is true that as time goes by, we will see more and more learning taking place on computers, and teachers will work alongside the

b This is a popular belief, especially by those who are trying to prove the existence of psychic powers such as telepathy. They say that as we use only 10% of our brains, we will be capable of incredible things when we actually start using 100%. People probably got this wrong idea from scientific discoveries in the late 19th century that showed that only 10% of our brain is working actively at any one time. However, this does not mean that the remaining 90% is unused. We use every part of our brain, but at different times and in different amounts. The way we use our brain is similar to the way we use different muscles in our body. We do not use every single muscle all at once.

c No, it's a myth. In fact, he was a very good student. It's true that he failed university entrance exam when he was 16. However, this was because his education had focused more on Science and Maths and his knowledge of other subjects wasn't as strong. He failed the non-science part of the exam but the following year, he passed although he was a year younger than his fellow students. Nobody knows why this myth exists, but it could be because in his final year, his school reversed their marking system. The highest mark used to be 1 but it became 5. So, people looking back at his marks probably thought Einstein had failed with 50 many 1s. The fact that Einstein was an outstanding physicist and mathematician, so there's point in using him as an excuse for not doing your homework.

d Well, some people believe so but others don't. In the UK and USA a lot of children are educated at home every year, but it is still illegal in certain countries as many believe that it's got a lot of disadvantages. For instance, homeschooled children don't have the opportunity to interact with other children. Supporters of homeschooling say that their children don't actually miss out on anything as they spend time with their siblings and also take part in different social events where they interact with people of all ages. Homeschooled children are able to work at their own speed and receive more attention than in the classroom. However, homeschooling is not easy on the parents as it means that either the father or the mother can't work full-time, which can create financial difficulties for many families. It also requires a lot of organisation, time and planning by the parent who teaches their child. So, in the end, it's up to you!

D. Read the text again and write T for True or F for False.

1. According to the text, learners can get individual attention both from teachers and computers. ☐
2. Computers can help students who get distracted easily. ☐
3. Discoveries have shown that people with psychic powers use 100% of their brains. ☐
4. We don't use all of our brain, all of the time. ☐
5. Einstein did better in some subjects than he did in others. ☐
6. In the last year at the school where Einstein studied, '6' was considered a good mark. ☐
7. Teaching children at home, instead of at school, is not possible worldwide. ☐
8. Supporters of homeschooling believe that homeschooled children socialise as much as non-homeschooled children. ☐
9. Homeschooling is a good solution for families who have financial problems. ☐

E. Complete the sentences with the correct form of the words in brackets. All the missing words are in the text.

1. Do you believe in the _____ of aliens? (exist)
2. It was a popular idea and quickly gained many _____. (support)
3. Louis Pasteur made some important scientific _____. (discover)
4. Do you think the government spends enough money on _____? (educate)
5. Mrs Clarke helped us with the _____ of the event. (organise)
6. Archimedes was a great _____ of the ancient world. (mathematics)
7. There is a general _____ throughout the country that things will get worse before they get better. (believe)
8. Both my children are fast _____ and are doing very well at school. (learn)