Generation Y

a

The first thing you notice when you walk into a modern classroom is the noise and energy. I've never seen such chaos! Today's children discuss and share ideas and find solutions to problems. It seems a different world to the classroom of old where children sat for long periods with their heads down. (1)_____ How has such a huge change come about in just a single generation? Technology lies at the root.

In the past, many school subjects, like history, focused on learning and memorizing facts. Today, information is easier to obtain, and memorizing facts and details is not so important. In history, for example, lessons now concentrate on interpreting events and documents from the past. Class time is spent on discussion and project work.

Working collaboratively like this also prepares people for the modern working world. In a computerized age, many tasks are too complicated to be done by an individual. (2)_____ Twenty people can brainstorm more ideas than just one person. Likewise, when today's students make decisions, they want to vote on the best solution. Everyone's opinion should be heard.

Working on teams is completely natural for so many teens and young adults (the so-called Generation Y). (3)_____ Much of their time is spent online, interacting with other people via networking sites or an MMOG (a Massively Multiplayer Online Game, such as World of Warcraft). This requires people skills that easily translate to the workplace: how to allocate roles or negotiate to resolve a conflict. Generation Y wants feedback as well. A simple grade is not good enough for them. (4)_____ That's normal if you're used to learning by questioning. Many young people will also give an employer their opinion from day one. They know that experience on its own is not enough to get the job done. Ideas and teamwork are more important.

One downside is that Generation Y also wants the constant change they are used to from online environments. Often they will quit a job if it's not interesting enough to challenge them. (5)_____ They often complain that "the job was just so boring," but it's unlikely their parents would have felt like this. (6)_____ A boss is likely to be furious to discover a worker checking Facebook when an urgent deadline is due. But the world has changed. Some companies think that if they pay their employees enough money, everyone will be happy, but that's not true for Generation Y. They're not in it for the money. What they want is to feel part of a team and to have their voices heard.

b

a Read the article quickly. Does the writer agree with the quote?

"Young people growing up in a digital age prefer working on teams to working alone."

YES **NO**

b Read the article again and answer the questions.

1 What is Generation Y?

2 What does the writer say about the style of education in image a?

3 What does the writer say about the style of education in image b?

Fill in blanks 1–6 in the article with sentences a–f.

a They want to know why things are right or wrong.
b Many people leave a great career for no particular reason.
c They've grown up doing it, in schools and online.
d On the other hand, older generations often don't understand Generation Y's ability to multitask.
e And to find creative solutions, working as a team is better.
f The days of the "chalk and talk teacher" are over.

a Work in pairs. Check your answers to 3. List four characteristics of Generation Y according to the article.

1

2

3

4