THE HOMESCHOOL OPTION

Words

Look for the following words as you read the passage. Match each word with its correct definition.

Words

1. address
2. adequately
3. alternative
4. compulsory
5. concerned
6. dissatisfied
7. exceptional
8. instruction
9. latter
10. majority
11. mandate
12. novel
13. obligatory
14. periodic
15. philosophy
16. prior
17. relatively
18. tutor
19. vast
20. widespread

Definitions

A. n., teaching
B. adj., special, above average
C. adj., near the end
D. n., a private teacher
E. n., a choice
F. adj., required
G. n., the larger part, most
H. adj., before, previous
I. adj., required
J. adj., worried
K. n., set of beliefs and values
L. adj., not pleased
M. adj., common
N. adv., well enough
O. adj., very big
P. adv., in comparison to something else
Q. adj., new and unusual
R. v., to deal with a problem or issue
S. adj., repeated regularly
T. v., to order officially; require

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Reading

The Homeschool Option

Educating children at home as an alternative to formal education is an option chosen by families in many parts of the world. The homeschooling movement is popular in the United States, where close to one million children are educated at home. In Canada, 1 percent[1] of school-age children are homeschooled, and the idea also enjoys growing popularity in Australia, where 20,000 families homeschool their children. The movement is not limited to these countries. Homeschooling families can be found all over the world, from Japan to Taiwan to Argentina to South Africa.

Homeschooling is not a novel idea. In fact, the idea of sending children to spend most of their day away from home at a formal school is a relatively new custom. In the United States, for example, it was not until the latter part of the nineteenth century that state governments began making school attendance compulsory. Before that, the concept of a formal education was not so widespread. Children learned the skills they would need for adult life at home from tutors or their parents, through formal instruction or by working side by side with the adults of the family.

In the modern developed world, where the vast majority of children attend school, families choose homeschooling for a variety of reasons. For people who live in remote areas, such as the Australian outback or the Alaskan wilderness, homeschooling may be their only option. Children who have exceptional talents in the arts or other areas may be homeschooled so that they have more time to devote to their special interests. Much of the homeschooling movement is made up of families who, for various reasons, are dissatisfied with the schools available to them. They may have a differing educational philosophy, they may be concerned about the safety of the school environment, or they may feel that the local schools cannot adequately address their children's educational needs.

The legal environment surrounding homeschooling varies. In some places, a government-approved course of study is mandated, whereas in others, homeschoolers may be required only to follow general guidelines, or even none at all. Sometimes periodic progress reports, tests, or professional evaluations are obligatory. There are different approaches to homeschooling that individual families can take. Some follow a particular educational philosophy, such as the Montessori method or Waldorf education. Others use a mixed approach, borrowing from a variety of methods and materials. A large selection of prepared educational prod-

[1]BrE: per cent

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ucts is available to specifically address the needs of homeschooling families, and correspondence courses can also be purchased. In addition, homeschooling magazines and websites give families the opportunity to read about others' experiences and get ideas for different kinds of educational activities to try. As the homeschooling movement grows around the world, so, too, do the opportunities for homeschooling families to share experiences and ideas at conferences and on the Internet. Although most families continue to choose a traditional classroom education for their children, homeschooling as an alternative educational option is becoming more popular.

Answer the questions about **The Homeschool Option.**

Questions 1–3 1. 2. 3.

Which of the following reasons that families choose homeschooling are mentioned in the passage?
Choose ***three*** *answers from the list below.*

A The large size of local schools

B The exceptional talents of their children

C The lack of variety of instruction in the majority of schools

D Disagreement with the educational philosophy of local schools

E Belief that local schools cannot adequately meet their children's needs

F Opposition to the periodic testing of their children

Questions 4–8

Do the following statements agree with the information in the reading passage?

Write

TRUE *if the statement agrees with the information.*
FALSE *if the statement contradicts the information.*
NOT GIVEN *if there is no information on this in the passage.*

_____ 4. School attendance was mandated in the United States near the beginning of the nineteenth century.

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_____ 5. Before modern times, the majority of children did not attend school.

_____ 6. Many nineteenth-century tutors were not adequately trained for the job.

_____ 7. The majority of homeschooling families follow a similar educational philosophy.

_____ 8. Although there is growing interest in homeschooling, relatively few families practice[1] it.

My Words

Write the words that are new to you. Look them up in the dictionary and write their definitions.

Words	Definitions
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

[1]BrE: practise

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