

READING AND USE OF ENGLISH PART 6

You are going to read a magazine article about an innovative school in New York. Six sentences have been removed from it. Choose the missing sentence (A–G) that fits each gap (1–6). There is one sentence you don't need.



SCHOOLS OF THE FUTURE

Educational psychologist Neil Akidil visits a school with a modern approach to teaching and learning.

Although society has changed dramatically with the advent of information technology, education has not changed as much as might have been expected.

Classrooms now contain computers, but there is more that is the same about education now compared with 60 years ago than is different. (1) A typical school day is divided into periods for different subjects, which are studied in isolation. There may be occasional projects, but these are often pushed to the sidelines and not allowed to get in the way of the 'real' work of completing the academic syllabus.

The Portfolio School in Tribeca, New York is different and may give us a glimpse into the schools of the future. (2) This method is centred around an interdisciplinary model of learning, and project work is central to the approach. Children are not divided into grades by age and the school day is not divided into subjects.

Instead, the year is broken into 'learning units' lasting three or four months, each of which can be approached from a variety of angles. (3) So, for example, in a lesson on colour, the students designed and made a lightbox projector and programmed an LED bonfire.

The Portfolio School has other differences from regular schools, too. There is no homework – research has shown it is not very useful. Teachers are not seen as the possessors of knowledge which they then pass on

to their students. (4) According to the school, their approach causes deep learning to occur in children, fuelled by genuine curiosity rather than obligation. The philosophy of the school is based on preparing children for the actual world they will live in, which is technological, global and entrepreneurial. There is an emphasis on thinking skills and self-reflection, which are vital in the modern world.

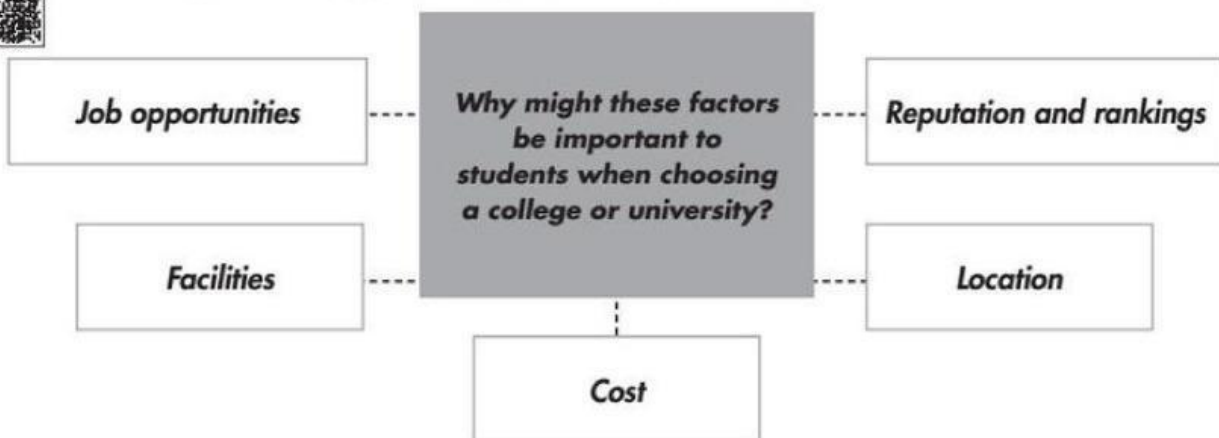
The parents of children who attend the school are delighted with their children's progress. The system focuses on creating a need for learning, rather than teachers simply teaching facts from a pre-defined syllabus. (5) However, at Portfolio, this soon changed. When the same child wanted to build a model, she quickly realised that in order to do so she needed to learn how to carry out certain measurements and calculations. Suddenly she had a motivation to learn maths and now, a few months on, she loves the subject. Her father points to his daughter's developing educational independence and says that these days she 'skips to school'.

The Portfolio School is, sadly, not accessible to everyone. (6) However, the school is keen to reach out to the wider community and serve as a model of what education can be. The school may have world-class facilities, including 3D printers for the children to use, but they emphasise that these are just tools. It is the philosophy and approach that makes the school what it is. In theory, this could be replicated anywhere. So, the question is, will all schools look like Portfolio in the future?

- A** For example, one mother highlighted the fact that her daughter had struggled at maths at regular schools because of the lack of practical application of the subject.
- B** The annual fees of \$35,000 are discouraging for the vast majority of parents and the student capacity of the school is limited.
- C** There are tests but children can take them any time they feel ready and they mark them themselves.
- D** The school's approach is research-based and has been developed by an impressive panel of experts in learning and child development.
- E** Students still generally sit in rows with a teacher at the front and the curriculum is specified in advance, usually by governments or local authorities.
- F** Rather, they are considered mentors who guide and assist the learners.
- G** The focus is always on creativity, design and practical learning.

SPEAKING PART 3

- 1** **07** Listen to two students, Mario and Yuriko, doing the first part of the Part 3 task below. For each factor shown, decide if they agree or disagree on how important it is.



- 2** Look at these expressions from the audio. Match them to their function (A–D).

- 1** I'm afraid I completely disagree with you there.
- 2** I suppose you might be right.
- 3** I'd go along with that.
- 4** I'm not so sure about that.
- 5** It means ...
- 6** I see your point.
- 7** I agree up to a point.
- 8** What I mean by that is ...

- A** Showing agreement
- B** Showing disagreement
- C** Partial agreement/disagreement
- D** Giving clarification

- 3** **08** Now listen to the second part of the Part 3 task and choose True or False for each statement.



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| 1 Mario thinks it is easy to decide which factor to choose. | T | F |
| 2 Mario and Yuriko agree that location and cost are less important factors. | T | F |
| 3 Mario believes that the principal motivation for university students is finding employment. | T | F |
| 4 Yuriko does not think students really care much about reputation or facilities. | T | F |
| 5 In the end, they agree together on one factor as the most important. | T | F |
| 6 Yuriko believes that employers take the reputation of universities into account. | T | F |