Out of the Classroom

"Homeschooling" is a term for the education of children who do not go to school. It is done in many different ways in many countries. It is illegal in some, such as Germany and Sweden, and most popular by far in the United States, where today there are two million children schooled at home. The most common reasons that parents give for homeschooling are concerns about the negative or even dangerous environment in schools, the lack of religious or moral instruction and the poor quality of teaching. So far it has proven effective for all sorts of children, from the abnormally intelligent to those with learning disabilities.

Many people believe that homeschooling parents simply use normal school books to teach their children at home. Some do this and others buy a learning plan from a company that specialises in homeschooling programmes. But, in fact, parents and their children can do what they want, provided they follow the regulations of the state where they live.

Homeschooling children usually must complete a specific number of hours in specific subjects. There is no homeschooling diploma, but some children choose to take an equivalency exam or other common tests that prove they are ready for university-level studies. And universities eagerly accept homeschoolers, knowing them to be highly motivated, independent and competent learners.

Critics say that homeschooling can lead to a very limited education and a one-sided world view. Certainly, the quality of this education depends to a large extent on the intelligence, skills and dedication of the parents or the tutors they hire for their children.

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QUESTIONS

1.- Are the following statements TRUE or FALSE? Copy the evidence from the text. No marks are given for only TRUE or FALSE. (Puntuación máxima: 2 puntos)

a) Homeschooling is not recommended for children with special learning needs.

b) Some people believe that one of the disadvantages of homeschooling is that children may become narrow-minded.

2.- In your own words and based on the ideas in the text, answer the following questions. Do not copy from the text. (Puntuación máxima: 2 puntos)

a) Give two reasons why some parents choose home education for their children.

b) How do universities feel about students with this kind of education?

3.- Find the words in the text that mean:

a) actually (paragraph 2)
b) as long as (paragraph 2)
c) certify (paragraph 3)
d) degree (paragraph 4)

(Puntuación máxima: 1 punto)

4.- Complete the following sentences. Use the appropriate form of the word in brackets when given.

a) _____ being very strict, he has always been famous at school _____ his kindness.
b) When he _____ (become) an adult, he will ask his parents _____ he never attended a conventional school.
c) Homeschool graduates _____ (involve) in civic affairs and usually vote in much higher percentage _____ their peers.
d) I remember _____ (have) fun with my schoolmates in the school _____ I spent the happiest days of my life.

(Puntuación máxima: 2 puntos)

5.- Write about 150 to 200 words on the following topic.
Do you think home education is a good choice? Give your opinion.
(Puntuación máxima: 3 puntos)

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