THE HOMESCHOOL OPTION

Words

Write the letter of each definition with the word it defines. If you don't know the definition, use the context of the reading passage to help you. Look for the words in bold as you read the passage.

PARAGRAPHS 1–2

Words	Definitions
1 ..... alternative	**A** adj., near the end
2 ..... novel	**B** n., a choice
3 ..... relatively	**C** adj., required
4 ..... latter	**D** adv., in comparison to something else
5 ..... compulsory	**E** adj., new and unusual

PARAGRAPH 2

Words	Definitions
6 ..... prior	**F** n., teaching
7 ..... widespread	**G** n., a private teacher
8 ..... tutor	**H** adj., before, previous
9 ..... instruction	**I** adj., common

PARAGRAPH 3

Words	Definitions
10 ..... vast	**J** adj., special, above average
11 ..... majority	**K** n., the larger part; most
12 ..... exceptional	**L** adj., not pleased
13 ..... dissatisfied	**M** adj., very big

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PARAGRAPHS 3–4

Words	Definitions
14 ..... philosophy	**N** adj., required
15 ..... concerned	**O** adj., worried
16 ..... adequately	**P** n., set of beliefs and values
17 ..... address	**Q** adv., well enough
18 ..... mandate	**R** v., to deal with a problem or issue
19 ..... periodic	**S** adj., repeated regularly
20 ..... obligatory	**T** v., to order officially; require

Reading

The Homeschool Option

(1) 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.

(2) 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**. **Prior** to 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.

[1]BrE: per cent

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(3) 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.

(4) 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 products 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.

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

Questions 1–3

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.

..... **5** Before the late 1800s, 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.

[1]BrE: practise

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Word Families

A

Complete each sentence with the correct word from the word family chart. Make nouns plural where necessary. Use the correct form of verbs.

noun	adjective	adverb
alternative	alternative	alternatively

1 Some homeschooling families follow an educational program similar to that found in formal schools, while others choose ..... methods.

2 Parents can choose to teach their children themselves; ....., they can join homeschooling groups and share teaching responsibilities with other families.

3 Some families choose private school as an ..... to public school.

noun	verb	adjective
concern	concern	concerned

4 Parents feel ..... when their children don't do well in school.

5 The quality of public schools ..... a growing number of families.

6 The safety of the school environment is a ..... for many modern parents.

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noun	noun	verb	adjective	adverb
instruction	instructor	instruct	instructional	instructionally

7 Some homeschooling parents ..... their children for a set number of hours everyday, while others follow a less structured schedule.

8 Materials used for homeschooling must be ..... sound.

9 Some parents aren't happy with the ..... their children get at school.

10 Some people feel that parents are the best ..... for their children.

11 Homeschooling parents try to provide their children with good ..... materials.

noun	verb	adjective
obligation	obligate	obligatory

12 Parents have the ..... to protect their children and provide for their needs.

13 School is ..... for young children in most parts of the world.

14 A teacher might ..... his students to spend several hours a day doing homework.

noun	adjective	adverb
period	periodic	periodically

15 Teachers give their students tests ..... .

16 In some places, homeschooling families are required to receive ..... visits from professional educators.

17 Children should be given several rest ..... during the school day.

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Word Families

B

Choose the correct word family member from the list below to complete each blank.

1	alternative	alternatives	alternatively
2	instructor	instruct	instruction
3	concern	concerns	concerned
4	period	periodic	periodically
5	obligation	obligate	obligatory

Many families are interested in **1**..... forms of education. Some send their children to private schools that follow certain educational methods, and others choose to **2**..... their children themselves at home. Providing children with a thorough education in all subject areas can be a **3**..... for homeschooling families. However, there are many places they can turn to for support. There are several homeschooling organizations[1] that can give them guidance with this. Communicating with other homeschooling families **4**..... to exchange ideas and discuss problems is an important source of support for many homeschoolers. Whether they choose formal schooling or homeschooling, parents have the **5**..... to make sure that their children get a good education.

[1]BrE: organisations

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Paraphrases

Read the sentence from the reading passage. Then, choose the sentence that has the same meaning.

1 *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.* (paragraph 2)

A Going to school became a requirement in the United States near the end of the 1800s.

B During the 1800s, free education in state-run schools became common throughout the United States.

C The United States government began making records of school attendance in the 1800s.

2 *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.* (paragraph 4)

A Some homeschoolers choose to follow government guidelines, while others prefer to design their own course of study.

B In some places, the government provides study materials to homeschoolers who want them.

C Requirements for homeschoolers are stricter in some places than in others.

Word Skill

PREFIX *DIS–*

The prefix *dis–* makes the meaning of the word negative.

Read the sentences. Write a definition for each underlined word.

1 Many families are satisfied with the results they get from homeschooling and would never send their children back to a traditional school.

satisfied: .....

2 Parents who are dissatisfied with traditional education look for alternative schools for their children.

dissatisfied: .....

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Listening

Track 26

*Listen to the talk. Choose **FOUR** letters, **A–G**.*

Which **FOUR** of the following are compulsory for parents who homeschool their children in the speaker's city?

A Informing the city of their plans to homeschool

B Hiring professional tutors

C Having prior experience teaching

D Addressing all subjects taught in the local school

E Using books provided by the city

F Giving periodic tests

G Submitting a yearly report

Writing (Task 2)

Interest in homeschooling is becoming more widespread around the world. In your opinion, should school be compulsory for all children, or should families be allowed the right to choose to educate their children at home?

Support your opinion with reasons and examples from your own knowledge and experience.

Write at least 250 words.

Speaking

Talk about the following topics.

For what ages should education be compulsory, in your opinion?

Which subjects do you think should be obligatory in high schools?

What concerns do you have about education in your country?

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