

Homeschooling

“Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.”

—William Butler Yeats



Pre-Reading

A. Warm-Up Questions

1. What is homeschooling?
2. What are some reasons parents have for homeschooling their children?
3. How does a homeschool differ from a traditional public school?
4. Is homeschooling common in the area where you live? Do you know anyone who was homeschooled?

B. Vocabulary Preview

Match the words on the left with the correct meanings on the right.

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| ___ 1. alternative | a) related to or available to the whole population |
| ___ 2. public | b) another choice (not traditional) |
| ___ 3. allergy | c) the giving up of something important in exchange for something else |
| ___ 4. bullying | d) every day |
| ___ 5. benefit | e) a strong relationship |
| ___ 6. bond | f) to receive disapproval from others |
| ___ 7. drawback | g) a physical reaction to a substance |
| ___ 8. sacrifice | h) a positive result, a pro |
| ___ 9. face criticism | i) ongoing physical or mental abuse (usually from a peer) |
| ___ 10. on a daily basis | j) a negative result, a con |

Reading

HOMESCHOOLING

Weighing the pros and cons

1. Homeschooling is an **alternative** to private and **public** education. A homeschooled student does not attend classes at a school. In most cases, parents homeschool their own children at their own homes as well as in their community.
2. Parents have different reasons for homeschooling their kids. Some parents are concerned about food **allergies** at school. Others are worried about **bullying**. Many don't approve of the quality of public education in their region. Some don't want their kids to take long bus rides.
3. Homeschooling has many **benefits**. Families can set their own schedules. Students can focus on the topics that interest them most. Some kids learn things hands-on better than from textbooks. Homeschooled families also develop close **bonds**.
4. There are some **drawbacks** to homeschooling. Firstly, homeschooling is a financial **sacrifice** for most families. One parent becomes an unpaid teacher and may have to leave his or her job. Homeschooled kids also have to make a special effort to socialize by joining teams and clubs. Many homeschool families **face criticism** from family and friends. They have to answer questions about their homeschooling decision **on a daily basis**.
5. Every family homeschools differently. Some parents create a daily schedule. Others let the children take the lead. Volunteering, religious studies, project work, and play may all be part of the day.

Challenge

The word *homeschool* can be a *noun*, *verb*, or *adjective*.

Identify the part of speech for each mention of this word in the reading.

Comprehension

Discuss these questions in pairs, and write the answers in your notebook.

1. What is homeschooling?
2. Why do some parents choose to homeschool their kids?
3. What benefits of homeschooling are mentioned in the reading?
4. What drawbacks of homeschooling are mentioned in the reading?
5. What do many homeschool families have to face every day?

Vocabulary Review

A. Complete the Sentences

Complete each sentence with the correct word from the vocabulary list on page 1. Some of the word forms may need changing.

1. Yes, there are many benefits to homeschooling, but there are also a few _____ .
2. We chose a public school. The _____ was a private Catholic school, but it was too expensive.
3. Our son suffers from many life-threatening food _____. Homeschooling was our doctor's suggestion.
4. One of the _____ of homeschooling is taking off-season vacations. It's cheaper to travel during the school year.
5. Homeschooling is a _____. I can only have a part-time job, but I get more time with my kids.

B. Word Placement

Where does the word *in italics* belong in the sentence?
Circle the correct letter.

1. *bullying*
Unfortunately, a has become a problem b in c many public d schools.
2. *face*
Your a family will b a lot of c criticism if you decide to homeschool d your son.
3. *public*
How is the quality a of b education in your local c community d ?
4. *basis*
Homeschooled a kids b need c physical activity on a daily d .
5. *bonds*
The father a developed strong b with his kids c by d homeschooling them.

Discussion

1. Is homeschooling a good alternative for a learner like you? Why or why not?
2. What is another benefit of homeschooling that is not mentioned in the reading?
3. What is another drawback to homeschooling that is not mentioned in the reading?
4. Why do parents judge each other for personal decisions?
5. Why are some families more suited to homeschooling than others?

FAQ

Homeschool families face a lot of questions on a daily basis. What questions would you ask a homeschool student? Work in small groups and make a list of questions that you would like to ask.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Answer Key

LESSON DESCRIPTION:

Students read about the pros and cons of homeschooling and discuss whether this type of education would have been suitable for their own learning styles and families.

LEVEL: Low-Intermediate – Intermediate

TIME: 1–1.5 hours

TAGS: homeschooling, homeschool, education, classroom, family, schooling, teaching

Pre-Reading

A. WARM-UP QUESTIONS

Individual answers. Discuss the quote.

B. VOCABULARY PREVIEW

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. b | 3. g | 5. h | 7. j | 9. f |
| 2. a | 4. i | 6. e | 8. c | 10. d |

Comprehension

- Homeschooling is an alternative form of schooling, in which the parents typically teach their students at home and in the community.
- Parents have different reasons for homeschooling. They may be worried about bullying, allergies, or the quality of education in their region. Distance to the nearest school may also be a reason.
- Some benefits include being able to make one’s own schedule and being able to focus on specific interests. Homeschooled families also create strong bonds.
- Some drawbacks include financial challenges and social challenges. Homeschooled kids have to make a special effort to make friends and join extracurricular activities.
- Many homeschool families face criticism for their decision. They get questions every day about why they chose an alternative form of schooling.

Vocabulary Review

A. COMPLETE THE SENTENCES

- | | | |
|----------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1. drawbacks | 3. allergies | 5. sacrifice |
| 2. alternative | 4. benefits | |

B. WORD PLACEMENT

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1. a | 2. b | 3. b | 4. d | 5. b |
|------|------|------|------|------|

Discussion

Answers will vary.

FAQ

(Frequently Asked Questions) Put your students in groups to practice writing questions. As an optional task, you could invite a homeschool parent or student into your class to answer your students’ questions.