

Basics of Education Statements and Answer Key

1. In the United States, girls are not expected to attend school after the age of 12.
(Practice statement)
Answer: False
2. School is required for students until they are at least ___ years old.
Answer: True
3. Schools have special services, such as counselors and low-cost lunches, for students who need them.
Answer: True
4. Schools expect parents to be involved in their children's education.
Answer: True
5. Public school is free, but there may be some costs related to your child's K-12 education.
Answer: True
6. Most children do not have homework.
Answer: False
7. After-school activities, such as student government or a sports team, teach children how to get along with people and other life skills.
Answer: True
8. When family income is low, working is more important than school for young adults as well as adults.
Answer: True
9. Most people in the United States consider education to be a lifelong experience.
Answer: True
10. If you are working, you cannot go to school or a training program.
Answer: False
11. If an adult does not have a high school diploma, s/he can get a special high school diploma, called a *GED*.
Answer: True
12. Education after high school is free for everyone.
Answer: False
13. Adults who want to continue their education may be eligible for financial aid.
Answer: True

Basic Information About the U.S. Education System

[This information is for trainers who need to become more familiar with the U.S. education system.]

Children and Youth

Elementary and secondary school education is available to everyone in the United States, regardless of ability, sex, age, race, religion, sexual orientation, or social class. Most Americans view education as a way to get better jobs and improve their standard of living.

Public education is free and mandatory for all children between 7 and 16 years of age. In some states, children under 7 and over 16 must also attend school. Throughout the United States, school is available to students 18 and younger, and in some states, students up to 21 years of age can attend public schools.

The United States does not have a national system of education controlled by the central government. There are no national education requirements or courses of study. States and local school districts decide what students will study, what books they will use, and what they have to do to pass from one grade to another.

Public schools are available throughout the country free of charge. By law, public schools cannot have any religious affiliation. Private schools are also available in most areas, and some have religious affiliations. Private schools charge tuition, which can be very expensive.

It is important that children are enrolled in school as soon as possible after they arrive in their new communities. Case workers/managers help with this process. Most schools require that parents give them a copy of their child's immunization records.

There are four levels of education for children in the United States. Children in the same grade may be different ages, although most children are usually within 1 to 2 years of each other in age.

- ▶ *Preschool.* This level is for children 3 to 5 years of age. It is not required by law, and it is usually not free.
- ▶ *Elementary school.* This level begins with kindergarten (age 5) and continues through fifth or sixth grade (age 12).
- ▶ *Middle or junior high school.* This level usually includes sixth or seventh through eighth or ninth grade, for children ages 12 to 14.
- ▶ *High school.* This level usually includes ninth or tenth grade through twelfth grade, for children ages 14 to 18. Students who complete school requirements at this level receive a high school diploma.

Many schools have special English language classes for children whose first language is not English. Other schools offer extra help to children who need it through a special teacher or a tutor.

There are schools or special classes for children with special needs, such as those with emotional or behavioral issues, learning disabilities, and other physical or mental disabilities. In some communities,

there are also special schools or classes for children with high academic ability in general or with talent in a certain subject area, such as math, sciences, or the arts.

The school year begins in August or September and ends in May or June. Most children attend classes about 6 hours a day, Monday through Friday. Students who need additional time to complete work for their classes may attend summer school in June and July.

Attending school is very important. When students miss school, parents must write a note that explains why the student was absent, and students have to make up the school work they missed.

Although public school is free, parents pay some expenses, such as the cost of school supplies and fees for special activities. Children can take lunch to school or buy low-cost, nutritious lunches in the school cafeteria. Many schools also offer breakfast. Schools may also offer breakfast and lunch for free or at a low cost for children from low-income families.

Some children live close enough to the school to walk there. If the school is too far from home for a child to walk, school buses may provide free transportation to school. The school system will decide the distance from school for free transportation.

The style of teaching and learning in U.S. schools may be different from the style in other countries. In the United States, teachers encourage children to learn by thinking and analyzing, asking questions, and joining in discussions and activities. Students may even disagree with their teachers, if they do so in a respectful way.

Common subjects include English, science, social studies (which often includes history and geography), mathematics, and foreign languages. Many schools also offer special subjects, such as physical education, art, or music. At the high school level (and in some cases at the middle school level), students can usually choose some of their courses.

School, state, and national testing is common and often mandatory for all students.

Most public schools do not have uniforms, but most do have dress codes that students must obey.

Behavior in U.S. schools is informal, compared to schools in other countries. However, students are expected to learn and obey the rules. Students who break the rules are punished in different ways, depending on the school. They may have to talk to the principal, do extra school work, or stay after school. If they do something really serious, they might have to leave the school. Physical punishment is illegal in U.S. schools.

Adults

For adults, most communities offer many different kinds of educational opportunities. Here are some that you may find in your community:

- ▶ English language and literacy classes
- ▶ Training courses in areas such as computer technology, foreign languages, and secretarial skills

- ▶ General Education Development (GED) diploma classes for adults who do not have a high school diploma
- ▶ Vocational and technical schools
- ▶ Community colleges
- ▶ Colleges or universities (usually 4-year programs), offering a Bachelor of Arts degree
- ▶ Graduate schools offering advanced degrees in many fields.

The cost of these classes, schools, and colleges varies a great deal. For example, a 4-year college can be very expensive. Vocational and technical schools can also be expensive. In general, community college classes are less expensive than 4-year colleges. Most schools and colleges offer some financial aid to students who need it.

Continuing education for adults is very common in the United States, and Americans of all ages, including older adults, take courses that interest them or will help them in some way. "You are never too old to learn" is a popular American saying.

Basics of Education Statements

Directions: Read the statement. Decide if it is true or false, and circle your answer. The first one is done for you.

1. In the United States, girls are not expected to attend school after the age of 12.	True	False
2. School is required for students until they are at least __ years old.	True	False
3. Schools have special services, such as counselors and low-cost lunches, for students who need them.	True	False
4. Schools expect parents to be involved in their children's education.	True	False
5. Public school education is free, but there may be some costs related to your child's K-12 education.	True	False
6. Most children do not have homework.	True	False
7. After-school activities, such as student government or a sports team, teach children how to get along with people and other life skills.	True	False
8. When family income is low, working is more important than school for young adults as well as adults.	True	False
9. Most people in the United States consider education to be a lifelong experience.	True	False
10. If you are working, you cannot go to school or a training program.	True	False
11. If an adult does not have a high school diploma, s/he can get a special high school diploma, called a <i>GED</i> .	True	False
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13. Adults who want to continue their education may be eligible for financial aid.	True	False

School Involvement Cards



Ask your child what s/he learned about in school that day.



Ask your child what they have for homework or check their assignment book or homework folder.



Ask your child's teacher what the homework assignments are.



Attend ESL classes if offered at your child's school.



Attend "Parent Night" or "Back-to-School Night" at school.



Attend parent-teacher conferences.



Attend school board meetings.



Attend special events or activities, such as a school science fair, a concert, or an "International Day" festival.



Chaperone a field trip for your child.



Give a talk about your home country to your child's class.



Find out if the school offers school tours or an orientation in the summer before school begins.



Have your child read to you.



Have your child's school records from your home country translated.



Help with an extracurricular activity such as a school sports team or an art club.



Interpret or translate documents for other parents in need.



Join the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA).



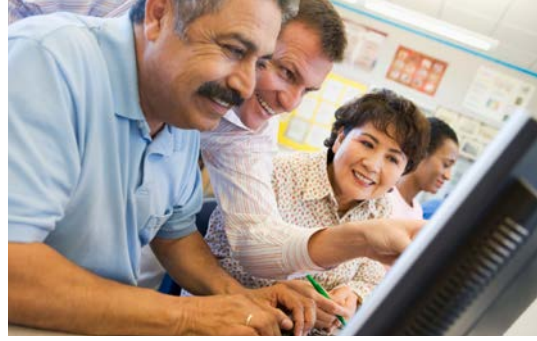
Mentor or tutor students in an area you are skilled at.



Participate in school fundraisers.



Read your child's classroom blog for news.



Set up an email account if your child's teacher uses email to send messages and updates about what is happening at school.



Talk to a teacher or an administrator at school about any concerns or questions you have.



Volunteer in a special class, such as music or physical education, or at the school library.



Volunteer in your child's classroom.



Volunteer to help at lunch or recess.



Walk your child to the bus or school.



Work with your child on her/his homework.

School Issue Scenarios



You receive a call from the school telling you that your child has been involved in a fight.



You receive a call from the school telling you that your child has not been attending classes.



Your child brings a report card home that shows s/he is not doing well at school.



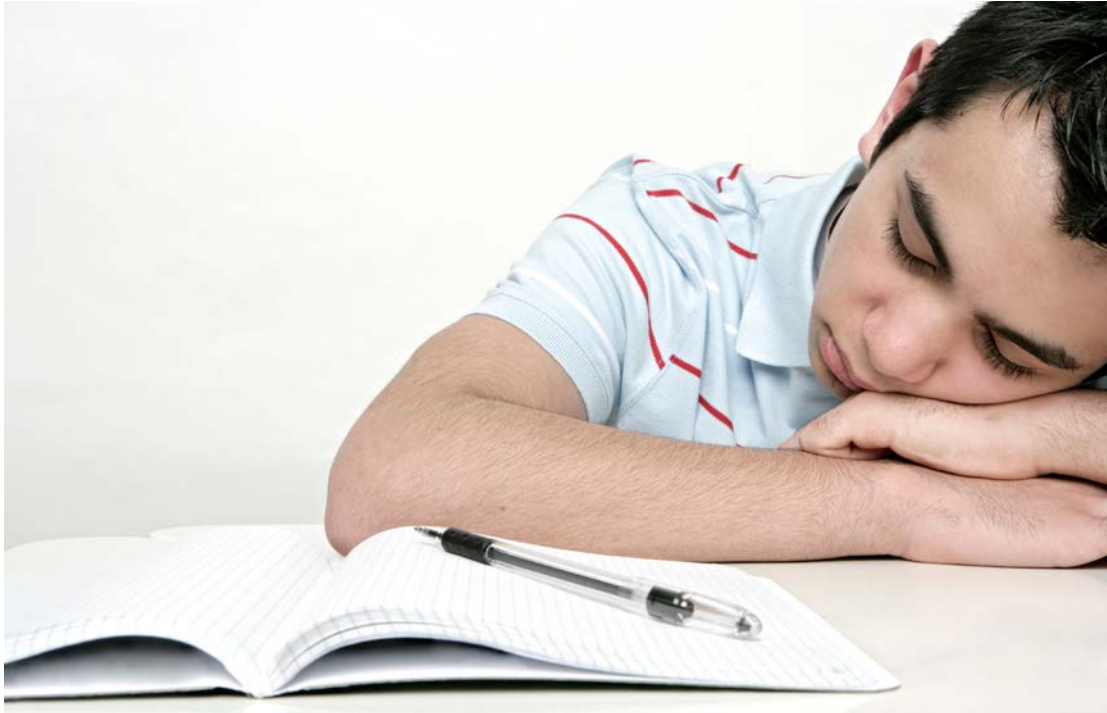
Your child does not want to get involved in extracurricular (after-school) activities at school.



Your child is interested in an extracurricular (after-school) activity offered by the school.



Your child is sent home from school because he brought a toy gun to school.



Your child refuses to complete her/his homework.



Your child tells you that other children at school have been teasing her/him.



Your child tells you that s/he does not like school.



Your child tells you that s/he does not understand the material being discussed at school.



Your child tells you that s/he is not as smart as her/his classmates.



Your child tells you that s/he is not learning anything new at school.

Education Unit Vocabulary Worksheet 1

Directions: Match each word with the picture that shows the meaning of the word. The first one is done for you.

Word

Picture

diploma



certificate



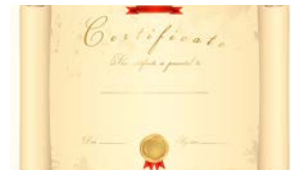
classroom



meeting



parent



report card



homework



Education Unit Vocabulary Worksheet 2

Directions: Use the word bank to fill in the word that completes the sentences below. The first one is done for you.

Word Bank		
assignment	benefits	choice
education	tease	

- Teaching students how to read in English is an important part of **e d u c a t i o n** in the United States.
- Mi Mi Khaing must make a **h** about what time to take class.
- Children might **a** other children at school.
- Ibrahim finishes his **i g n** on American history.
- Having a certificate can give you a lot of **b** **f** **s**.