

THE PURPOSE OF EDUCATION

Watch the [video](#) titled “What are Universities for?” by The School of Life.

1 WARM UP

Task 1: What do you remember from school? Answer the questions below

1. In what year did World War 1 start?
2. What is the highest mountain in the world?
3. What is the human body’s largest organ?
4. Where was Frida Kahlo born?
5. Who wrote Pride and Prejudice?
6. In degrees, what is the total sum of all triangles?

Task 2: Match the question to the correct topics.

- a) Literature
- b) Maths
- c) History
- d) Geography
- e) Art
- f) Biology



Task 3: Discuss your favourite and least favourite subjects at school. Explain.

2 SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

Work in pairs. Interview each other about your school experiences.

1. Did you go to public or private school?
2. Did you like school? Explain.
3. Did you get a lot of homework? Were you punished for not completing it?
4. How many pupils were in your class? Do you think this number is too high / low?
5. Did you wear a uniform to school?
6. Were the teachers strict or not strict enough?
7. Did you have a long commute to school?
8. Were you a member of any teams or clubs?

3 WHAT IS UNIVERSITY FOR?

Study the question from the [video](#), then decide which statement you agree with (1 or 2).

“What are universities really for?”

1. The main thing is to teach people how to make a living. Educating the young to be engineers, biochemists or economists.
2. Universities teach us how to live, these might be places to go and study in order to work out what really matters. Who we are, where our societies should be headed, and how we can be happier and more fulfilled.



4 UNIVERSITY AS RELIGION

Task 1: Read the quote.

“many universities were founded in the mid 19th century. At exactly the time when belief in religion was undergoing a severe, alarming decline. At that time, a lot of questions were asked about where people were going to go and find **meaning, consolation, wisdom** and a **sense of community**”

Task 2: Match the words on the left to the correct definitions.

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|-----------------------|--|
| 1. Meaning | a. the comfort received by a person after a loss. |
| 2. Consolation | b. the significance / purpose of something. |
| 3. Wisdom | c. a feeling of belonging, shared belief. |
| 4. Sense of community | d. the quality of experience, knowledge and judgement. |

Task 3: Discuss the following questions as a class.

- How can studying at university give **meaning** to a person's life?
- How can people find **consolation** through studying?
- Can people gain **wisdom** through their studies? Explain.
- Does university offer a **sense of community** to its students? Explain.
- How can an uneducated person find meaning and wisdom?
- Can online groups and platforms give people the same sense of community?



5 UNIVERSITY AS CULTURE

Task 1: Read the quote. Match the words to their definitions.

“What people had once found in churches, they would now be able to discover in things like the dialogues of Plato, the plays of Shakespeare, the novels of Jane Austen, the paintings of Botticelli or Titian. In other words, in a **secular** age, **culture** would replace **scripture**.”

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|--------------|---|
| 1. Secular | a. texts related to a religious tradition. |
| 2. Culture | b. society, community which doesn't believe or follow religion |
| 3. Scripture | c. the customs, arts, social institutions, of a particular nation |

- Do you live in a secular country? Do you believe this is positive? Explain.
- How does culture influence people's understanding of the world?
- Give an example of how literature or philosophy has shaped your life.

Task 2: Complete the sentences, using the names mentioned in the quote.

Jane Austen	Shakespeare	Botticelli	Plato
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- _____ was a renowned English poet, playwright, and actor born in 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon. Famous plays include; Macbeth, Othello and Hamlet.
- The great philosopher Socrates was his teacher. Then, _____ was the teacher of another great philosopher named Aristotle.
- _____ novels often explore the dependence of women on marriage in the pursuit of favourable social standing and economic security.
- A painting called "Madonna and Child with Young Saint John the Baptist" by _____ sold for \$10,442,500.

Task 3: Discuss the following questions as a class.

- Do you agree that philosophy should be taught at school? Explain.
- Did you read classic literature such as Jane Austen at school? How did it affect you?
- Do you believe art should be taught at school? Explain.
- Do you believe universities and schools should teach modern culture, or should they teach the classics?

6 THE IDEAL UNIVERSITY

Task 1: Read the quote from the video about the ideal university.

“In the ideal university of the future... departments would be reorganised to reflect the actual priorities of our lives. So, for example, there might be a department for relationships, and another for death. A centre for anxiety, and an academy for career self-knowledge. You wouldn't study 18th century history or the picaresque novel. You'd study how to be less anxious, or how to be more compassionate.”

Task 2: Discuss the following questions as a class.

- a. What would be the positive impacts of adding the new departments mentioned in the quote to universities?
- b. Would there be any negative impacts of adding those new departments?
- c. Do you believe all universities should continue to teach core subjects such as; maths, philosophy and science? Explain.
- d. How might studying topics like anxiety, compassion, or self-knowledge contribute to personal growth?
- e. What departments do you think should be added to all universities?
- f. Describe your ideal university.
- g. Do you think everybody should go to university?
- h. Describe the pros and cons of going to university.
- i. Describe how you think the internet and AI will impact universities.



7 EDUCATION DEBATE

Study the arguments then choose which side you agree with, explaining why. Use the language from the table below to help structure your arguments.

All students should wear a uniform because it creates a sense of unity.	or	Students should be allowed to express themselves by wearing their own clothes.
Private schools should be banned as they give children an unfair advantage.	or	Parents should be able to buy a better education for their children.
School meals should be free because schools should provide all essential care to their pupils.	or	It is not the responsibility of the school to provide food. Parents should give their children money or food.
Boys and girls should go to separate schools.	or	Same sex schools are great for social development.
Schools should teach life skills such as cooking, banking, and tax.	or	It is the parents responsibility to teach life skills; school's should concentrate on teaching theory.

Express an opinion It seems to me that... I feel that... I'm absolutely convinced that... In my opinion,... I believe / suppose / feel (that)...	Express disagreement I don't agree with you about... I can't accept your view that... I'm of a different opinion... I'm not sure if... I'm not convinced that...
Express pro's and con's There are two sides to this point... On the one hand...,on the other hand... An argument for / against is... Some people think that...,others say that... The advantages / disadvantages are...	Summarise So, in conclusion... To summarise.. Overall, it is clear that... As a result.. The bottom line is...

HOMework

1 EDUCATION IDIOMS

Task 1: Research the idioms, then match them to their definitions (a-g).

1. Flying colours
2. Teach someone a lesson
3. Teacher's pet
4. Teach an old dog new tricks
5. Learn something by heart
6. Bookworm



- a. It is difficult to teach an older person something new.
- b. To learn something in such a way that you can say it from memory.
- c. To do something very successfully.
- d. Someone who reads a lot.
- e. To do something to someone, usually punish them.
- f. To be the favourite person of someone in authority e.g. a teacher's favourite pupil.

Task 2: On a separate piece of paper, write detailed answers to the questions.

1. Describe the last test you passed with **flying colours**.
2. Describe a time when you **taught someone a lesson**.
3. Were you the **teacher's pet** in school? Explain.
4. In terms of language, can you **teach an old dog new tricks**?
5. Do you learn new vocabulary **by heart**?
6. Are you a **bookworm**? What is your favourite book? Explain.





“Private schools should be banned because they give an unfair advantage to wealthy families. Each child should receive the same level of education regardless of wealth.”

[illegible]