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Home education in Britain

For quite a number of children in Great Britain and in most other English speaking countries, September doesn't mean the beginning of a new school year. According to the 1996 Education Act, in Britain, it is parents who are responsible for providing their children's education "in school or otherwise", suitable for the age, ability and aptitude of each child. They can decide not to send them to school for different reasons: for learning difficulties or because their children have serious problems with school or because they find the local school unsatisfactory academically or religiously. These parents believe that learning should be something the child chooses to do for him or herself according to his or her own needs, not through worksheets handed by teachers in the classroom. Not all educators agree with home education. Even if the family is important because it is the first social group we belong to, they think it is not enough. We need larger groups. They think it's very important for children to learn to get on with other people and co-operate with them. On the contrary parents who choose home-based learning for their children, think that most people give too much importance to school as a socializing process. According to them the same process can take place at home and in wider society in a better way. But is it right to divide their child from the common experience of other children? The question is still open. However in some English speaking countries home education is a necessary solution, as in Australia, where children often live hundreds of kilometres from the nearest school.

Activities:

1. Answer the following questions:

1. Why for a number of children in most English speaking countries doesn't September mean the beginning of a new school year?
2. Why do parents decide not to send their children to school?
3. Do all educators agree with home education?
4. For what reason in Australia do many children choose home education?

What about you?

1. If you could, would you choose a school or a home education? Give reasons for your answer. Here are some suggestions:
 - ❖ Don't follow the same subjects every day.....
 - ❖ Spending more time on an interesting subject.....
 - ❖ Learning, exploring and experimenting by yourself....
 - ❖ Visiting websites about your favourite topics, instead of studying using textbooks..

❖ Having your father/mother or home tutor as teachers....

2. What would you do if you had to have a home education?
3. In your opinion, can home education limit a child's achievement? Look at the tips above for help.
4. In your opinion what would be the advantages and the disadvantages of a home education? You can also refer to the passage.
5. Make a survey: in your class how many students are con's (contrary to..) and how many are pro's (in favour of...) home education?