

ISE II

Sample Independent listening task – Home education

Examiner rubric

You're going to hear a talk about education. You will hear the talk twice. The first time, just listen. Then I'll ask you to tell me generally what the speaker is talking about. Are you ready?

The task will play once.

Can you tell me in one or two sentences what the speaker was talking about?

Give the candidate some blank notepaper.

Now listen to the task again. This time make some notes as you listen, if you want to. Then I'll ask you to tell me what the speaker says are the possible advantages and disadvantages of home education. Are you ready?

The task will play once.

Now tell me what the speaker says are the possible advantages and disadvantages of home education. I'll stop you after one minute.

Audio script

In most countries, education is compulsory for children of school age. However, even when education is compulsory, children do not always have to go to school. In some countries, such as the UK and the USA, it is legal for parents to educate their children at home if they want to.

Parents who choose this path say there are many benefits and I must say I'm inclined to agree with them. One of the most popular reasons they give is that home schooling allows children to follow their own interests. So for example if a child loves animals, they can develop their reading with books about animals, and they can focus on animals in their science lessons. People who prefer home education say children make more progress this way and are more likely to enjoy their lessons.

Another way that home-schooling helps learning is that children can learn at their own speed. This is beneficial because fast learners do not get bored in lessons. And of equal importance, slow learners do not lose their self-confidence. Another advantage is that every child can have a lot of one-to-one attention, which is just not possible in a busy classroom.

In addition, it is not necessary to have a fixed timetable. Parents can arrange lessons at different times. Also, many parents who educate their children at home can easily take them outside when the weather's good. This allows them to get exercise and learn from the natural world. They can catch up on more formal lessons when the weather's bad!

However, home education is a big commitment and there are some potential problems. It can be an expensive choice, as one parent always needs to be at home instead of working, and the family also has to pay for books, paper, pens and other items that are provided free in schools. Many parents find it tiring to be with their children all day long.

There is also the issue of the children's social lives. Some people worry that children who are home educated do not get enough opportunities to make friends outside the home. However, I don't think this is necessarily true. Parents can overcome the problem by meeting up with other home-schooling families.

Home education has been increasing in popularity recently and it's easy to see why. However, it will always be important for parents to think very carefully before deciding not to send their children to school.

Answers

Main point/gist: The speaker is talking about the advantages and disadvantages of home education (any broadly similar formulation is acceptable).

Advantages of home education

- ▶ Follow the child's interests (this may help them learn more quickly)
- ▶ Learn at their own pace: fast learners don't get bored and slow learners don't lose confidence
- ▶ Have a lot of 1-1 attention
- ▶ Enjoy a flexible timetable
- ▶ Able to go outside (for lessons)

Disadvantages of home education

- ▶ It can be expensive: parent has to stay at home/ book costs
- ▶ It can be tiring for parents
- ▶ It may have a negative effect on children's social lives