



Education

Task: Should Education Be Free

Activity 1: Listening

Welcome to a practice listening task for the GESE 7.

You are going to hear a talk about **if education should be free**. 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?

Audio Script

Should education be free? Many people would feel that it would be a good idea, but there are also reasons to caution against it. So, let's consider both sides.

If we look at the upside of free education, everybody would have equal opportunity to receive an education, which would benefit society as a whole. Another added benefit is that neither the students, nor the family of the student, would have to worry about paying for the education and would just be able to concentrate on the education in itself. It also must be considered that getting an education would improve the future and quality of life of the students. In addition, if education were to be free, then there would be more opportunities for employment by having a proper education. One other aspect to this is that it ought to be contemplated that free education promotes fairness in school and society, since all are given the same opportunity in education.

Now, looking at the downside of free education, the obvious concern would be that someone has to pay for the education. This would likely mean an increase in taxes. Also, if all education is free, then the quality of the education could go down, since there is no needed reason for educational centres to have to sell their good education. What might also happen is that too many people could get a university degree, which could cause competition when looking for employment. This would bring the next possible problem of having educational centres and universities that may be overcrowded. Considering that, we finally come to the drawback that this overcrowding could cause strain on limited resources.

On the whole, people used to think that education being free was a good thing, and not to say it isn't, but there are obvious concerns why it shouldn't be free. So, the question is, are we devaluing education by making it all free or advancing an entire society by making education available to everybody?

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

Now listen to the talk again. This time make some notes as you listen, if you want to. Then I'll ask you to tell me **what are the reasons for and against education being free**.



Now tell me what are the reasons for and against education being free. You have one minute to talk.

This is the end of the listening task.

Answers:

Advantages of a free education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• everyone has equal opportunity to education• students and families could worry more on their education than how to pay for it• able to improve future and quality of life• more opportunities for employment with a good education• promotes fairness in school and society
Disadvantages of a free education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• someone has to pay for it, increase taxes• the quality of education could go down• competition when looking for employment• education centres and universities may be overcrowded• cause strain on limited resources

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