

Education and Schooling

by Sophia Tutorial



WHAT'S COVERED

This tutorial will cover the topics of education and schooling, through the definition and discussion of:

1. Education and Schooling
2. Benefits of the American School System
 - a. Mandatory Education Laws
 - b. Equal Opportunity
 - c. Progressive Education

1. EDUCATION AND SCHOOLING

Education is the institution through which skills, knowledge, cultural norms and mores, and the basic facts that are important in society are transmitted to individual members. Education is quite broad, and there are many ways to become educated.



THINK ABOUT IT

Think about all the ways that you have become educated. What are all of the things that have contributed to your learning? The mass media--TV, the internet, newspapers, magazines—along with pop culture, family and extended family, interactions with your peer group, school, and even your job, have likely contributed to your overall education.

Education happens all of the time and in many different ways—it's multifaceted and ongoing throughout the lifecourse. In high income countries, **schooling** is perhaps the most important form of education, schooling referring to the institutionalized system of formal educational instruction.



TERMS TO KNOW

Education

A social institution that transmits skills, knowledge, cultural norms, and the basic facts important to a society.

Schooling

A system of formal educational instruction.

2. BENEFITS OF THE AMERICAN SCHOOL

SYSTEM

The U.S. has a fairly good school system, relative to some other countries. Some benefits of the American school system include:

- Mandatory education laws
- Equal opportunity
- Progressive education

2a. Mandatory Education Laws

In the U.S., there are **mandatory education laws**, which require children to go to school up to a certain point. These mandatory education laws dictate that you must stay in school until you're at least 16 or have finished eighth grade.

This is not the case all over the world. Poorer nations do not have as formal schooling systems that are as structured as the U.S., and they're not equipped with mandatory education requirements.

IN CONTEXT

Economic development and education go hand in hand--economic development produces the leisure time to engage in protracted, or extended, and sustained schooling. Leisure time enables children to not have to work or contribute to the family, but instead allows them to essentially spend 18 years of their lives not doing anything besides going to school. That schooling, in turn, begets more productivity and more economic development.

It is tough for poor countries to start this cycle if they're so poor that children have to work and contribute to the family rather than have the leisure time necessary to go to school and become innovators and productive members of the economy.



TERM TO KNOW

Mandatory Education Laws

American education laws requiring that children attend school until the age of sixteen or through the eighth grade.

2b. Equal Opportunity

In addition to mandatory education laws, another benefit of American education and American educational institutions is **equal opportunity**, which is one of the hallmark American values. Everyone should be able to get an education, regardless of race, ethnicity, class, or gender.

IN CONTEXT

You could argue, however, that perhaps the American education system is not as 'equal opportunity' as people would like. You could say that equal opportunity does not apply to college, although some

are pushing for equal opportunity in college. Not everyone can afford to go to college, because it is very expensive. It continues to get more expensive as individual states are cutting funding for college, whereas they used to pay more than half of the cost of a student to go to college. College, for some poor people, is prohibitively expensive, such that they cannot attend.

If you need a certain amount of money in order to go to college, then how can you say that everyone has the equal opportunity to go to college, if some people are excluded by virtue of money? Certainly, they can take out student loans, but in society today, there is a problem of student loan debt--a student loan debt bubble in the making. Students owe upwards of \$100,000, in some cases, in student loan debt, yet they're having difficulty finding jobs. Therefore, it's a problem, and you could say that perhaps the American college system isn't founded on equal opportunity.



TERM TO KNOW

Equal Opportunity

A principle advocating for the equality of life chances.

2c. Progressive Education

A third benefit of the American education system is **progressive education**. The U.S. has a progressive education system, an idea developed by **John Dewey**, an American philosopher and scholar. John Dewey advocated for progressive education, which is the notion that schools should make an effort to make education relevant to the learner and the learner's life. Progressive education makes the education relevant to the world and what is happening in it. Ideally, students will learn the right skills that will facilitate success in the real world. This implies that education and what is taught in school changes and adapts with the times.



THINK ABOUT IT

In the last few years, students learned computer skills in school--keyboarding, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, etc. Are there even more advanced computer skills taught today? What are you or your children learning in school today? It's important to recognize that the evolving skills taught in school are the legacy of progressive education, of adapting what is taught so it's relevant for the learner.



TERMS TO KNOW

Progressive Education

The idea that schools should make an effort to make education relevant to people's lives.



PEOPLE TO KNOW

John Dewey

American philosopher whose ideas were influential in education reform.



SUMMARY

Today you learned about an overview of **education** and **schooling**--the institution through which skills,

knowledge, cultural norms and mores, and the basic facts that are important in society are transmitted to individual members. You also learned about some **benefits of the American school system**.

Source: This work is adapted from Sophia author Zach Lamb.



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