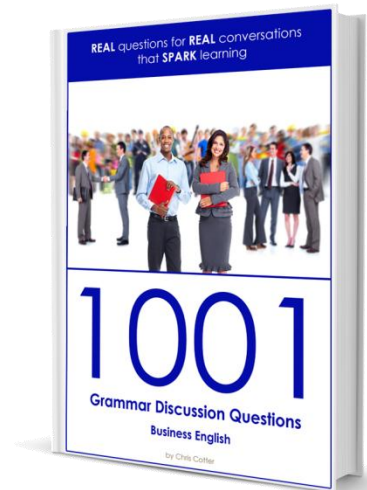
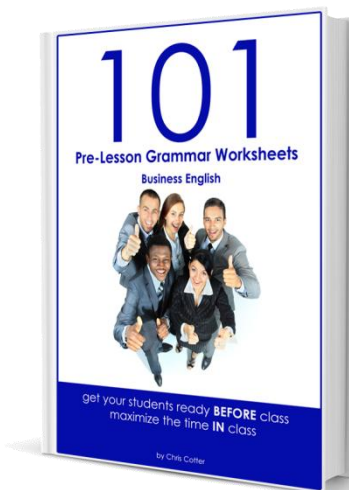


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the ARTICLE (for teachers)

Education Woes

More than 10% of high schools in the US are "dropout factories." This insulting nickname applies to schools where less than 60% of students graduate.

Most of these schools are in large urban centers which also have a lot of poverty. The neighborhoods may have high rates of crime, drugs, and violence. However, some dropout factories are also located in areas with numerous blue-collar jobs. These neighborhoods and towns often haven't traditionally emphasized the importance of high school graduation.

Many of the students at these dropout factories enter with poor reading, writing, and math skills. For example, some kids may enter ninth grade with a fifth grade reading ability. Because of these difficulties, so many of these children don't have opportunities as adults.

Japan faces a different problem. Private high schools are available to many kids who don't have academic or social skills for traditional schools. These private high schools are expensive, but very easy to enter. Students can fail tests, skip homework, text friends, and even sleep in class, yet they will still graduate. These schools have been called "degree mills."

Additional education woes come out of England. Although the government has supported a massive program to raise reading rates, there hasn't been much change. The reading rates are the same as the rates in the 1950s.

Teacher's Notes:

* Underlined words in **red typeface** may be vocabulary unfamiliar to the students.

the Article (for students)

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Notes:

STEP ONE

Brainstorm: Brainstorm with a partner words and ideas for "dropout factory" for two minutes. Next, talk about the words and ideas for five minutes.

STEP TWO

Discuss: Do you agree or disagree? Why?

- | | |
|----|---|
| a. | School is important for success in life. |
| b. | I love(d) school! |
| c. | Not everyone is suited for high school, so it's okay to dropout. |
| d. | Not everyone is suited for elementary school, so it's okay to dropout. |
| e. | We learn a lot of useless subjects at school, which will have no use later in life. |

STEP THREE

The Article: Read the article and work with a partner to understand it. Then summarize the article in your own words.

STEP FOUR

Discuss: Talk about the following questions in pairs/groups. Remember to support your answers and ask more questions with your partner.

- | | |
|----|---|
| a. | Did you like this article? Why/not? |
| b. | How important is education for success? Why do you think so? |
| c. | What can be done to improve education and graduation rates? |
| d. | Are there similar problems in your country? Are there different problems? |
| e. | Will children receive a better or worse education in the future? Why? |

STEP FIVE

Discuss: What can be done to improve education? Discuss the following points with a partner, and decide if it will help, harm, or have no effect on high school students.

more nationalized tests	teachers salaries depend on the grades of their students:
teaching only useful subjects	???: