

Finland has world's best education system

29th November, 2012



A new report into world education shows Finland has the best system. The global study is called "The Learning Curve" and is from the British magazine "The Economist". It aims to help governments provide a better education to students.

The 52-page report looked at the education system in 50 countries. Researchers analysed millions of statistics on exam grades, literacy rates, attendance, and university graduation rates. Asia did well in the report, with South Korea, Hong Kong, Japan and Singapore finishing second, third, fourth and fifth. The United States came 17th in the study, while Mexico, Brazil and Indonesia filled the bottom three positions in the top 50.

The Learning Curve reported on five things that education leaders should remember. The first is that spending lots of money on schools and teachers does not always mean students will learn. Second is that "good teachers are essential to high-quality education". The report said teachers should be "treated as the valuable professionals they are, not as technicians in a huge, educational machine". Numbers three and four are that a country's culture must have a strong focus on the importance of education, and parents have a key part to play. Finally, countries need to "educate for the future, not just the present." The report said: "Many of today's job titles...simply did not exist 20 years ago."

Sources: timeshighereducation.co.uk / thelearningcurve.pearson.com

Writing

Schools are no longer necessary. Teachers should teach using iPads and computers with students sitting at home. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

report / world education / learning curve / statistics / literacy rates / attendance / leaders / spending lots of money / good teachers / technicians / the future / job titles

True / False

- The article says Finland's kindergarten education is the best worldwide. T / F
- A 50-page report looked at the education system of 52 countries. T / F
- Researchers looked at attendance figures during their research. T / F
- Mexico and Brazil were in the top 50 countries. T / F
- The report made five suggestions for decision-makers in education. T / F
- The report says spending more money will mean a better education. T / F
- The report states parents should keep away from schools and teachers. T / F
- It suggests we don't know what kind of jobs there will be in the future. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|--------------|--------------------|
| 1. report | a. reading/writing |
| 2. system | b. necessary |
| 3. provide | c. method |
| 4. analysed | d. important |
| 5. literacy | e. examined |
| 6. essential | f. study |
| 7. valuable | g. giant |
| 8. huge | h. give |
| 9. key | i. names |
| 10. titles | j. precious |

Discussion – Student A

- What were (are) you happy and unhappy with about your education?
- What do you think of your teachers?
- What three things can teachers do better?
- Should teachers get paid the same as lawyers, doctors and bankers?
- What is easy and difficult about a teacher's job?
- How important is using technology in lessons?
- What does "educate for the future, not just the present" mean?
- What questions would you like to ask the author of the report?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. A new report | a. education to students |
| 2. help governments provide a better | b. machine |
| 3. millions of | c. three positions |
| 4. literacy | d. are essential |
| 5. filled the bottom | e. not just the present |
| 6. good teachers | f. rates |
| 7. valuable | g. exist 20 years ago |
| 8. a huge, educational | h. into world education |
| 9. educate for the future, | i. statistics |
| 10. job titles simply did not | j. professionals |

Discussion – Student B

- Why do you think Finland's education system is so good?
- What do you think of the education system in your country?
- What were (are) you happy and unhappy with about your education?
- How can schools provide a better education to students?
- How were (are) your exam grades and attendance?
- How different do you think education is in Finland from Asian countries?
- Are you proud of your school? Why?
- How important is education?

Spelling

- The global study is called "The Learning veruC"
- rpeiodv a better education to students
- Researchers analysed millions of tissittca
- ltryieca rates
- teatncaed, and university graduation rates
- filled the bottom three pooisntis
- education leaders should mmbceerr
- good teachers are stlnaseie
- treated as the abvlluae professionals
- focus on the cmroitnape of education
- countries need to educate for the utuerf
- simply did not xseit 20 years ago

Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. c	3. h	4. e	5. a
6. b	7. j	8. g	9. d	10. i

Role Play

Student - You are unhappy with your education. Tell the others three reasons why. You want to learn things important for the future. You want more technology. Your teachers are great and you learn a lot from them. You are fed up with the bad students in your class who make a lot of noise.

Teacher - You are unhappy with your job. Tell the others three reasons why. Your salary is very low compared with doctors, lawyers, etc. Your school has no technology – this is very important in today's education. You think parents should keep noisy students at home and let other students learn.

Education leader - You know what's best for schools, teachers and students - Tell the others three reasons why. Schools were better 50 years ago. Students do not learn with technology – they just check their Facebook. Good teachers keep students quiet. Bad teachers don't. Teachers are very well paid.

Parent - You are worried about your child's education. The school has not changed its teaching style for 50 years. Your children need to learn with technology - Tell the others three reasons why. Your son is very noisy in class – it is the teacher's job to teach him to behave. Education needs better leaders.

Speaking – School subjects

What's the best thing for today's students to study? Rank these and share your rankings with different partners. Put the best at the top.

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| • environmentalism | • community relations |
| • English | • single-family farming |
| • health and sports | • religious education |
| • maths | • software programming |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	T	e	T	f	F	g	F	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.