

China's crackdown on tutoring leaves parents with new problems

Level 3: Advanced – Teacher's notes

Article summary: The article describes the pressures on Chinese families to give their children a good education in a competitive environment.

Time: 60 minutes

Skills: Reading, Speaking, Writing

Language focus: Vocabulary

Materials needed: One copy of the worksheet per student

1. Warmer

- a. The purpose of this activity is to introduce the topic of education and, in particular, university education. The oldest university in the world is Bologna in Italy, where formal teaching started in 1180 and had continued ever since. Oxford is generally regarded as being approximately ten years older than Cambridge (1200 as opposed to 1209), while the biggest university in the world in terms of the number of students is the Gandhi National Open University in India. India also has the most universities. The most remote university is on the Arctic island of Svalbard (formerly known as Spitzbergen), which is part of Norway.

Key:

1. Italy
2. Oxford
3. India
4. India
5. Norway

- b. Students discuss the questions in pairs.

2. Key words

- a. Ask students to do the exercise individually and then compare their answers in pairs or small groups. Point out that the phrasal verb *stave off* also means delay the onset of something bad, as 'This treatment will stave off this disease.' The word *knell* is only

used in the phrase *death knell* and usually collocates with the verb *sound*, as in 'This defeat will almost certainly sound the death knell for their hopes of winning the league championship.' The verb *cater* is more commonly followed by the preposition *for*, as in 'This school caters for students of all abilities.'

Key:

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Fees | 9. <i>blindsided</i> |
| 2. <i>eye-watering</i> | 10. <i>comply</i> |
| 3. <i>death knell</i> | 11. <i>stave off</i> |
| 4. <i>outfit</i> | 12. <i>looming</i> |
| 5. <i>prestigious</i> | 13. <i>plunging</i> |
| 6. <i>cater</i> | 14. <i>poll</i> |
| 7. <i>accumulate</i> | 15. <i>exacerbate</i> |
| 8. <i>crackdown</i> | |

3. Comprehension check

- a. The answers given are only suggested answers and students may correctly answer the questions in different ways, e.g., in #2 they may say 'between 65% and 92%'.

Key:

1. *a third*
2. *as many as 92%*
3. *more than \$150bn*
4. *tutoring in core curriculum subjects by for-profit companies and foreign investment in such companies*
5. *register as non-profit companies*
6. *education and health*
7. *It fell by up to 60%.*
8. *the high cost of living, low wages, long hours and low upward mobility*
9. *almost 70%*
10. *private individual tutoring*

4. Key language

- a. Students could be asked to do this exercise individually and then compare their answers in pairs. 'Issue a statement' is also possible but there is only one solution that uses all the words. Ask students to refer back to the text to check their answers.

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Key:

- | | |
|------|------|
| 1. e | 5. d |
| 2. g | 6. b |
| 3. h | 7. c |
| 4. a | 8. f |

- b. Students choose phrases and write sentences.

5. Discussion

- a. Allow students time to note down their ideas about each statement and encourage them to say why they agree or disagree with each one.

6. In your own words

- a. Ask students to form small groups. Before students read the role cards and think of the relevant argument, as a class hold a quick brainstorming session on useful language for debate. Ask students to come up with phrases to introduce argument, acknowledge, and disagree and agree politely, for example:

I see what you mean but ...

I understand your point; however, ...

I'm afraid I disagree because ...

We believe that ...

Our first argument for this is ...

There are many examples of this, like ...

You are right that ...

I have to agree that ...

Put these phrases on the board. Then, assign half of the groups with Role Card A and the other half with B. Let students read their cards and give them ten minutes to work in their group to hold a debate. Finally, pair groups A with B and ask them to debate the topic. At the end, hold an open class discussion with feedback. You can ask students if they personally agree with the position they had to defend and why.