

Stop Education Cuts. Level 2 – Adult Literacy Practice Text

EDUCATION – A Sorry Story

Today education is under attack. Our government, the same government that rode into power 13 years ago on the slogan: education, education, education, is now slashing the education budget by over a quarter. Colleges across the country faces cuts of over £200 million, and universities of more than £900 million. Never before have we seen an attack on education of this scale.

The Labour Party says it can't continue funding further and higher education in the same way. But we say that's rubbish. We say its the hypocrisy that's got to stop, not the funding. When labour was voted in 13 years ago, they said they wanted to improve education and narrow the gap between rich and poor. But what we've seen instead is the opposite! Seven million adults in Britain don't have basic literacy yet there are now 1.5 million fewer at college than there were 10 years ago. With 3 million people out of work, now is the time to expand education, not destroy it. And what has the government done to get us out of this recession? It was the banks that caused it, and it's the banks that should get us out. But instead Gordon Brown bailed out the banks to the tune of £800 billion of public money. Money which should have gone to education but which instead has gone to the very people who got us into this mess. And guess _____ is paying the price? Us of course, the normal people.

So what does this assault on education mean for us? If Brown carries out his threats, there'll be 25% less money in the system. Not only does this mean fewer college or uni places for you, but it also means bigger classes fewer course options and a massive hike in course fees. We're also facing widespread and devastating job losses for your teachers and support staff. And last, but not least the government are scrapping the EMA bonus and reducing the adult learner grant.

So, what about for the wider society? Education is the only way out of poverty. These plans will widen social inequality in Britain, at a time when the gap between rich and poor is already greater than ever. It's no coincidence that most of the cuts will hit the poorest sections of society. For unemployed adults seeking to retrain, immigrants wishing to learn English or school leavers looking forward to higher education - the cuts will make all these aspirations a distant dream. It's the most vulnerable in society that will be the hardest hit.

And the money is there. So what can we do? We must unite and fight these cuts. We call on you to join us in a campaign against these visious attacks on our education. Work with us to demonstrate against the government to show them that we're not going to take these cuts lying down.

We all have the right to an education. Now it's time to fight to defend that right.

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Questions 1 – 12 are based on the text: “Education – A sorry story”

1. There is a **spelling mistake** on:
 - A Line 1
 - B Line 14
 - C Line 23
 - D Line 34

2. What **punctuation** is missing on Line 21:
 - A Full-stop
 - B Apostrophe
 - C Comma
 - D Speech marks

3. The word **coincidence** on Line 28 means:
 - A Two things that resemble each other
 - B Two or more chance things happening at once
 - C Something that is absurd but actually true
 - D The opposite to what you might expect

4. There is a **grammatical error** on:
 - A Line 4
 - B Line 6
 - C Line 13
 - D Line 19

5. The **main purpose** of this text is to:
 - A Explain to the reader about the government's proposed education cuts
 - B Persuade the reader to resist the education cuts
 - C Describe the details of the planned cuts
 - D Criticise the banks

6. The tone of this text could **best** be described as:
 - A Formal
 - B Angry
 - C Mocking
 - D Patronising

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7. The text states that the cuts will lead to:
- A £200 billion less for colleges
 - B £800 million less for universities
 - C 3 million people out of work
 - D £200 million less for colleges
8. The **main point** of paragraph 4 (beginning on Line 26) is to:
- A Argue that the cuts will increase differences between social groups
 - B Argue that education will become more expensive
 - C Explain how these cuts will effect immigrants wishing to learn English
 - D Describe wider society
9. An **apostrophe** is missing on:
- A Line 3
 - B Line 7
 - C Line 20
 - D Line 27
10. The text suggests that the education cuts are:
- A Inevitable and annoying
 - B Unnecessary and divisive
 - C Hypocritical and minor
 - D Silly and coincidental
11. The text is **most likely** to come from:
- A A technical manual
 - B The transcript of an interview with a government minister
 - C A student union flyer
 - D A college prospectus
12. The **best word** to fill the gap on Line 18 is:
- A Whom
 - B Which
 - C What
 - D Who

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Now complete these exercises:

- 1 **Summarise** the text in 4 sentences (try to include all the important points)
- 2 Do you find the text **persuasive**? What **techniques** has the author used to try to persuade you?
- 3 What is **your opinion** about the issues raised in the text? Use quotations from the text in your answer.
- 4 Write a **persuasive letter** to your MP giving your opinion on this subject.
- 5 What do these words from the text mean? Look them up in your dictionary and then put each one into a sentence which shows what it means:

Hypocrisy

Recession

Bailed out

Devastating

Inequality