# Early Childhood Education

1. Preschools – educational programs for children under the age of five – differ significantly from one country to another according to the views that different societies hold regarding the purpose of early childhood education. For instance, in a cross-country comparison of preschools in China, Japan, and the United States, researchers found that parents in the three countries view the purpose of preschools very differently. Whereas parents in China tend to see preschools primarily as a way of giving children a good start academically, Japanese parents view them primarily as a way of giving children the opportunity to be members of a group. In the United States, in comparison, parents regard the primary purpose of preschools as making children more independent and self-reliant, although obtaining a good academic start and having group experience are also important.
2. While many programs designed for preschoolers focus primarily on social and emotional factors, some are geared mainly toward promoting cognitive gains and preparing preschoolers for the formal instruction they will experience when they start kindergarten. In the United States, the best-known program designed to promote future academic success is Head Start. Established in the 1960s when the United States declared the War on Poverty, the program has served over 13 million children and their families. The program, which stresses parental involvement, was designed to serve the “whole child”, including children’s physical health, self-confidence, social responsibility, and social and emotional development.
3. Whether Head Start is seen as successful or not depends on the lens through which one is looking. If, for instance, the program is expected to provide long-term increases in IQ (intelligence quotient) scores, it is a disappointment. Although graduates of Head Start programs tend to show immediate IQ gains, these increases do not last. On the other hand, it is clear that Head Start is meeting its goal of getting preschoolers ready for school. Preschoolers who participate in Head Start are better prepared for future schooling than those who do not. Furthermore, graduates of Head Start programs have better future school grade. Finally, some research suggests that ultimately Head Start graduates show higher academic performance at the end of high school, although the gains are modest.
4. In addition, results from other types of preschool readiness programs indicate that those who participate and graduate are less likely to repeat grades, and they are more likely to complete school than readiness program, for every dollar spent on the program, taxpayers saved seven dollars by the time the graduates reached the age of 27.
5. The most recent comprehensive evaluation of early intervention programs suggests that, taken as a group, preschool programs can provide significant benefits, and that government funds invested early in life may ultimately lead to a reduction in future costs. For instance, compared with children who did not participate in early intervention programs, participants in various programs showed gains in emotional or cognitive development, better educational outcomes, increased economic self-sufficiency, reduced levels of criminal activity, and improved health-related behaviors. Of course, not every program produced all these benefits, and not every child benefited to the same extent. Furthermore, some researchers argue that less-expensive programs are just as good as relatively expensive ones, such as Head Start. Still, the results of the evaluation were promising, suggesting that the potential benefits of early intervention can be substantial.
6. Not everyone agrees that programs that seek to enhance academic skills during the preschool years are a good thing. In fact, according to developmental psychologist David Elkind, United States society tends to push children so rapidly that they begin to feel stress and pressure at a young age. Elkind argues that academic success is largely dependent upon factors out of parents’ control, such as inherited abilities and a child’s rate of maturation. Consequently, children of a particular age cannot be expected to master educational material without taking into account their current level of cognitive development. In short, children require development appropriate educational practice, which is education that is based on both typical development and the unique characteristics of a given child.
7. Preschools – educational programs for children under the age of five – differ significantly from one country to another according to the views that different societies hold regarding the purpose of early childhood education. For instance, in a cross-country comparison of preschools in China, Japan, and the United States, researchers found that parents in the three countries view the purpose of preschools very differently. Whereas parents in China tend to see preschools primarily as a way of giving children a good start academically, Japanese parents view them primarily as a way of giving children the opportunity to be members of a group. In the United States, in comparison, parents regard the primary purpose of preschools as making children more independent and self-reliant, although obtaining a good academic start and having group experience are also important.
8. While many programs designed for preschoolers focus primarily on social and emotional factors, some are geared mainly toward promoting cognitive gains and preparing preschoolers for the formal instruction they will experience when they start kindergarten. In the United States, the best-known program designed to promote future academic success is Head Start. Established in the 1960s when the United States declared the War on Poverty, the program has served over 13 million children and their families. The program, which stresses parental involvement, was designed to serve the “whole child”, including children’s physical health, self-confidence, social responsibility, and social and emotional development.
9. Whether Head Start is seen as successful or not depends on the lens through which one is looking. If, for instance, the program is expected to provide long-term increases in IQ (intelligence quotient) scores, it is a disappointment. Although graduates of Head Start programs tend to show immediate IQ gains, these increases do not last. On the other hand, it is clear that Head Start is meeting its goal of getting preschoolers ready for school. Preschoolers who participate in Head Start are better prepared for future schooling than those who do not. Furthermore, graduates of Head Start programs have better future school grade. Finally, some research suggests that ultimately Head Start graduates show higher academic performance at the end of high school, although the gains are modest.
10. In addition, results from other types of preschool readiness programs indicate that those who participate and graduate are less likely to repeat grades, and they are more likely to complete school than readiness program, for every dollar spent on the program, taxpayers saved seven dollars by the time the graduates reached the age of 27.
11. The most recent comprehensive evaluation of early intervention programs suggests that, taken as a group, preschool programs can provide significant benefits, and that government funds invested early in life may ultimately lead to a reduction in future costs. For instance, compared with children who did not participate in early intervention programs, participants in various programs showed gains in emotional or cognitive development, better educational outcomes, increased economic self-sufficiency, reduced levels of criminal activity, and improved health-related behaviors. Of course, not every program produced all these benefits, and not every child benefited to the same extent. Furthermore, some researchers argue that less-expensive programs are just as good as relatively expensive ones, such as Head Start. Still, the results of the evaluation were promising, suggesting that the potential benefits of early intervention can be substantial.
12. Not everyone agrees that programs that seek to enhance academic skills during the preschool years are a good thing. In fact, according to developmental psychologist David Elkind, United States society tends to push children so rapidly that they begin to feel stress and pressure at a young age. Elkind argues that academic success is largely dependent upon factors out of parents’ control, such as inherited abilities and a child’s rate of maturation. Consequently, children of a particular age cannot be expected to master educational material without taking into account their current level of cognitive development. In short, children require development appropriate educational practice, which is education that is based on both typical development and the unique characteristics of a given child.
13. Preschools – educational programs for children under the age of five – differ significantly from one country to another according to the views that different societies hold regarding the purpose of early childhood education. For instance, in a cross-country comparison of preschools in China, Japan, and the United States, researchers found that parents in the three countries view the purpose of preschools very differently. Whereas parents in China tend to see preschools primarily as a way of giving children a good start academically, Japanese parents view them primarily as a way of giving children the opportunity to be members of a group. In the United States, in comparison, parents regard the primary purpose of preschools as making children more independent and self-reliant, although obtaining a good academic start and having group experience are also important.
14. According to paragraph 1, parents in Japan tend to think of preschool primarily as a place where children can

* Get a good academic start
* Expand their emotional development
* Become more independent
* Experience being part of a group

1. The word “whereas” in the passage is closest in meaning to

* Although
* Because
* Moreover
* already

1. While many programs designed for preschoolers focus primarily on social and emotional factors, some are geared mainly toward promoting cognitive gains and preparing preschoolers for the formal instruction they will experience when they start kindergarten. In the United States, the best-known program designed to promote future academic success is Head Start. Established in the 1960s when the United States declared the War on Poverty, the program has served over 13 million children and their families. The program, which stresses parental involvement, was designed to serve the “whole child”, including children’s physical health, self-confidence, social responsibility, and social and emotional development.
2. The word “focus” in the passage is closest in meaning to

* Consider
* Respect
* Concentrate
* Advise

1. It can be inferred from paragraph 2 that the Head Start program was designed to serve children who

* Come from families that do not have a lot of money
* Are not doing very well in kindergarten
* Were born in the 1950s
* Need programs that focus primarily on social and emotional factors

1. Whether Head Start is seen as successful or not depends on the lens through which one is looking. If, for instance, the program is expected to provide long-term increases in IQ (intelligence quotient) scores, it is a disappointment. Although graduates of Head Start programs tend to show immediate IQ gains, these increases do not last. On the other hand, it is clear that Head Start is meeting its goal of getting preschoolers ready for school. Preschoolers who participate in Head Start are better prepared for future schooling than those who do not. Furthermore, graduates of Head Start programs have better future school grade. Finally, some research suggests that ultimately Head Start graduates show higher academic performance at the end of high school, although the gains are modest.
2. According to paragraph 3, the Head Start program had NOT been successful at which of the following?

* Helping children adjust to school
* Providing long-term increase in IQ scores
* Improving school performance throughout high school
* Preventing children from being placed in special-education classes

1. In addition, results from other types of preschool readiness programs indicate that those who participate and graduate are less likely to repeat grades, and they are more likely to complete school than readiness program, for every dollar spent on the program, taxpayers saved seven dollars by the time the graduates reached the age of 27.
2. In paragraph 4, the author mentions the “results from other types of readiness programs” to

* Provide support for the idea that preschool readiness programs have been somewhat successful
* Question the idea that Head Start is more effective than other preschool readiness programs
* Indicate school completion is usually the most reliable indicator of success in most readiness programs
* Emphasize that participating in readiness programs can be increased if costs are reduced

1. According to paragraph 4, a cost-benefit analysis of one preschool readiness program revealed that

* Only one dollar’s worth of benefit was gained for every seven dollars spent on the program
* The benefits of the program lasted only until the participants reached age 27
* Taxpayers saved seven dollars for every dollar spent on the program
* To be successful, the program would need to receive about seven times as much money as it currently receives

1. The most recent comprehensive evaluation of early intervention programs suggests that, taken as a group, preschool programs can provide significant benefits, and that government funds invested early in life may ultimately lead to a reduction in future costs. For instance, compared with children who did not participate in early intervention programs, participants in various programs showed gains in emotional or cognitive development, better educational outcomes, increased economic self-sufficiency, reduced levels of criminal activity, and improved health-related behaviors. Of course, not every program produced all these benefits, and not every child benefited to the same extent. Furthermore, some researchers argue that less-expensive programs are just as good as relatively expensive ones, such as Head Start. Still, the results of the evaluation were promising, suggesting that the potential benefits of early intervention can be substantial.
2. The word “comprehensive” in the passage is closest in meaning to

* Easily understood
* Thorough
* Respectable
* Objective

1. Paragraph 5 mentions that participants in early intervention programs have been shown to do all of the following better than nonparticipants EXCEPT

* Take care of their health
* Support themselves financially
* Take care of their own children
* Have increased emotional development

1. According to paragraph 5, which of the following is true about the benefits of early intervention programs?

* These programs produce good short-term benefits but few long-term benefits.
* Only the most expensive programs provide substantial benefits.
* The Head Start program provides a range of benefits that no other program can provide.
* Some children benefit more than others do from these programs.

1. Not everyone agrees that programs that seek to enhance academic skills during the preschool years are a good thing. 【1】In fact, according to developmental psychologist David Elkind, United States society tends to push children so rapidly that they begin to feel stress and pressure at a young age. 【2】Elkind argues that academic success is largely dependent upon factors out of parents’ control, such as inherited abilities and a child’s rate of maturation. 【3】Consequently, children of a particular age cannot be expected to master educational material without taking into account their current level of cognitive development. 【4】In short, children require development appropriate educational practice, which is education that is based on both typical development and the unique characteristics of a given child.
2. The word “seek” in the passage is closest in meaning to

* Claim
* Manage
* Fail
* Attempt

1. The passage mentions “developmental psychologist David Elkind” in order to

* Give an example of an expert who has designed an effective early childhood education program
* Introduce an alternative view about the value of early childhood education
* Explain why early childhood education programs are less effective in the United States than in other countries
* Refute the claim that academic success is dependent on factors outside parents’ control.

**According to Elkind, not only does this cause the child emotional distress, it also fails to bring the intended cognitive gains.**

Where would the sentence best fit?

1. Prose Summary

**Preschool programs provide opportunities for young children to develop socially, emotionally, and cognitively.**

Answer Choices

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| --- | --- |
| 1. In addition to stressing academic development, preschools should be enjoyable, since studies show that children benefit from programs they find fun. | D. The primary purpose of preschool programs varies by country, with some stressing the importance of group experience, and others self-reliance or getting a good academic start. |
| 1. Preschool programs such as Head Start have been shown to help prepare children for school and may also have long-term benefits in helping children become effective adults. | E. Critics of preschool programs argue that these programs put undue pressure on children and may not be effective if children are not developmentally ready for academic work. |
| 1. Studies have shown that preschool programs are most effective when they focus on only one area of development rather than trying to serve the “whole child”. | F. David Elkind is a critic of publicly funded preschool programs, arguing that the parent cannot control their children’s emotional development. |