

## The Transcript

*Task 1. You will hear the interview about the problem of truancy. For questions 1-6 choose the best answer (A, B, C or D), for questions 7-11 choose the best option (A or B). You will hear the text twice.*

*Now you have 30 seconds to look through the items.*

*[pause 30 seconds]*

*Now we begin.*

P: Good evening and welcome to the programme. This evening's guest is headmaster of East Crompton Comprehensive Dr. Charles Greenway, and we're going to be talking about truancy. Dr. Greenway, thanks for joining me this evening.

CG: Good evening, I'm pleased to be here.

P: Let's begin by defining the word truancy. What do we actually mean – a couple of missed lessons, a week's holiday during term time, or repeated absences from school with no explanation?

CG: It's a good question to begin with, Paul. Any absence that has not been authorized by the school is truancy. It doesn't matter if a child is being taken to Disneyland in Florida because it's cheaper in term time, going Christmas shopping with a parent, or just roaming around the neighbourhood with other children causing problems for the local residents. It's truancy.

P: How widespread is the problem in the United Kingdom?

CG: Very, I'm afraid. As many as four million school days are lost every year through truancy, and about 1.7 million of those are lost because of children being taken on family holidays and excursions. Travel agents have special offers during term time, so it's a lot cheaper for a family to go away. This government wants to raise educational standards, but we can't do that if children miss school. Full attendance is a precondition for effective learning.

P: Did I hear correctly just then – almost half the days lost because of truancy are because of parents taking their children on holiday?

CG: Yes, exactly. It is quite shocking, isn't it? Imagine how incredibly difficult it is for us to convince children that missing school for no good reason is a bad thing when their own parents behave in such an irresponsible manner.

P: It must be. What is the government doing in view of this situation?

CG: Well, after years of campaigning by teachers all over the country, the government is finally beginning to understand that something has to be done. They are currently holding talks with the travel industry to encourage travel agents to give discounts to families who book their trips in the school holidays, and the police are now involved in picking up children on the streets. Social workers are also being recruited to work with the families of children who play truant. And, for our part, we're setting up behaviour improvement projects in the school to teach children discipline and respect for learning. But let me stress again that most of the responsibility for ensuring that child is at school lies with the parents. Neglecting this responsibility is a criminal offence.

P: Do you mean parents could be prosecuted in a court of law if their children do not attend lessons?

CG: That's exactly what I mean, although this law is poorly enforced. It should, in my opinion, be better enforced. The future of our children matters. We owe it to them to give them the best education possible, and we can only do this if they are in school.

P: I agree with what you're saying, but don't you think it's a little harsh to prosecute parents of truant children?

CG: It may seem so to the average person, yes, but I would like to stress again that the future of this country is the schoolchildren of today. It is impossible for the schools to prepare them for life if the children are not at school, and parents simply must be on our side when it comes to stopping children playing truant.

P: I see your point. I think it's about the right time to take a few calls from our listeners. We've got William Peterson on the line. Good morning, Mr. Peterson?

*Now you have 20 seconds to check your answers.*

*[pause 20 seconds]*

*Now listen to the text again*

*[The text is repeated]*

*Task 2. For questions 12-15 choose the view each speaker expresses about education. You will hear the text twice. There are 3 extra letters you do not need to use.*

*Now you have 30 seconds to look through the items.*

*[pause 30 seconds]*

*Now we begin.*

*Speaker 1:* What is education? A formal learning process dispensed by schools, colleges and universities, or the sum of the information we glean from our contact with the world around us? In today's discussion, a student, a university professor and a politician will all share their thoughts on the subject. If I may, I would like to begin by talking about students and their educational needs. A criticism that is levelled at my school is that highly intelligent, gifted children are given a raw deal. Are schools mostly concerned with helping less academically able children to achieve? Perhaps it is so. After all, it is true that the brightest children need little support and can cope easily. They are able to learn independently.

*Speaker 2:* I do believe school is helping intelligent students to fulfil their potential, and I don't just mean academic potential. School does more for me than just that, and so it should. We spend so much time there. From five to sixteen years old we have no choice, school is compulsory, and most of us stay on after that because we know that education is good for us, it expands the mind. School offers children knowledge, and direction. It was in school that I had my first contact with computers. An experience that has been of enormous benefit to me. I don't believe that I have been given a raw deal because I am of above average intelligence. On the contrary, I believe that my academic and social experience at school will serve to steer me into the future, a future in which computer knowledge will be essential.

*Speaker 3:* I believe that teachers are very good at delivering a range of skills and a body of knowledge to their students, this is clear from the results we get from across the board. All students are equally important and all students need to develop creative thinking. The research I did for my university department shows that three types of learning exist: shallow, when students are not engaged, deep, when they are, but the deepest learning of all takes place when students are engaged and working together. An example of this profound learning is when information technology is used to prompt students through immersive experiences to explore and collect information. I think it will be the future of learning.

*Speaker 4:* We want learning to be deep and meaningful for our young people and if computers engage children, so much the better. I am a strong believer in developing

children's interest in the learning process, wherever it may be. The important thing is for children to be involved. In fact I strongly approve of a development which forces students to think about the quality of the education they receive. This is necessary if your schools are to be the best the country can provide. Students must see themselves as participants in an educational process, to have a voice and to use it. Education should have two objectives: to supply the skills needed by the employment market and to enable each and every child; average or gifted, to develop his or her potential to the maximum.

*Now you have 20 seconds to check your answers.*

*[pause 20 seconds]*

*Now listen to the text again*

*[The text is repeated]*

*Now you have 20 seconds to complete the task.*

*[pause 20 seconds]*

*This is the end of the listening task.*