

Are Exams a Waste of Time?

EnglishClub.com copyright Liz Regan 2003

Activity 1

Use the correct form of the following words to fill the gaps below. Then make questions from the statements and use them to begin a conversation with your partner.

**retake take fail cheat pass revise results
scrape through do (very) well/badly pass with flying colours**

1. I hate I find it very boring trying to memorise things.
2. Unfortunately, I my driving test the first time so I had to it.
3. I know someone who..... in the last English test. S/he got 98%!
4. I only ever maths exams with 51 or 52%.
5. In every English test I because I'm really good at English.
6. I know someone who in all his/her exams. S/he copies the answers from the person sitting next to him/her.
7. I every exam I since I was a child.
8. I can't stand waiting for the after taking exams.

Activity 2

Use the following questions to begin a conversation with your partner.

1. Do you think language exams should always contain a speaking component (an oral exam)? Why/not?
2. Two popular ways of examining students are the 'continuous assessment' method (students are assessed on their work throughout the course) and the 'final 'exam' method (students are assessed on their performance in an exam at the end of the course). Which do you prefer? Why? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each method?
3. In many exams, if the candidates cheat they are disqualified. Do you think this is right? Is it OK to cheat a little? Have you ever cheated? Would you go to a dentist who had cheated in his/her dental exams?
4. Do you enjoy taking exams? Do you feel nervous before them? Do you revise regularly throughout the course or do you leave all your revision until the last minute?
5. Which do you find more difficult: written exams (e.g. History, Literature etc) or practical exams (e.g. Chemistry, Driving etc.) Why?
6. Do you think that exams which are taken in one country should be valid all over the world (e.g. English exams, driving tests etc)? Why/not?
7. Do you think that your exam results are an accurate reflection of your ability? Why/not? Are exams a waste of time?

Are Exams a Waste of Time?

EnglishClub.com copyright Liz Regan 2003

Activity 3

*Are exams a waste of time? You are going to take part in a discussion about this question on an Internet Forum at **EnglishClub.com**.*

Task 1

1. *Did most people agree or disagree that exams are a waste of time?*
2. *What was the most common reason given for agreeing or disagreeing?*

Task 2

1. *Read the post your teacher has put on the board at: <http://forum.englishclub.com/projects/> and summarize the main points.*
2. *Choose one point from your teacher's post which you strongly agree or disagree with and post a short paragraph in reply, stating your reasons and giving examples from your own experience where possible.*

Task 3

1. *Read the responses other students post to your teacher. Choose one you strongly agree with and one you strongly disagree with and post responses, explaining your opinion.*
2. *Make notes of the new words and phrases you have learned from participating in this Forum discussion activity that will help you to communicate your point of view on this subject in a classroom discussion.*

N.B. Netiquette!

**PLEASE CHANGE THE DEFAULT SUBJECT LINE
TO INDICATE THE OPINION/S IN YOUR POST BECAUSE IN A BUSY
THREAD IT HELPS PEOPLE TO DECIDE WHICH POSTS TO READ!**

Activity 4

Two films which raise the question of whether exams are accurate reflections of a person's ability in a subject and whether or not they are a waste of time are Good Will Hunting (starring Matt Damon and Robin Williams) and Patch Adams (starring Robin Williams). Why not try to see them in the original language?

EnglishClub.com