

The Crunch is Coming

In the late 1970s, the United States felt the effects of an energy shortage. We felt it in higher gas prices. Many people had to wait in long lines at gas stations. Natural gas, electricity, and home heating oil prices all went up, too. Plants and businesses were forced to shut down. People were out of work. During the winter months, some people were without fuel to heat their homes. The problems were relieved for a time. But the energy crunch is not gone for good.

This is a big problem that affects all of us. And the solutions do not come easily. Oil and gas are not like trees. Trees can be replanted. But once oil and gas have been taken from the earth, they are gone forever. Of course, there will always be some oil and gas in the earth. But not all of this can be removed cheaply. In the U.S. most of the easy-to-reach oil and gas has been found. The supply that is left will cost much more to take from the ground.

Using less energy can help. If we all try to save on gas and oil, we can keep the energy problem under control. But even this will not keep us from running out. It will just keep us from running out sooner.

There are several other sources of energy we can turn to. Some can be used right away. Others need time. One source of energy we can use right now is coal. Coal is the largest fuel source in the U.S. In fact, this country has about one-third of the world's known supply of coal. Also, coal can be turned into gas and oil. But there are problems with coal. Burning coal can pollute the air. Coal mining is dangerous. Coal can be costly to ship. Plus, it can take up to seven years to open a new mine.

The sun is another source of energy. The sun is clean and does not need to be mined or drilled. But we have just begun to learn how to use the sun's energy. Because of this, it is expensive. For years to come, probably less than one-half of one percent of our energy needs will come from solar power. Sunshine is free. But solar energy has a long way to go before it can be used widely.

Reading Time _____ Comprehension Scofe _____ Words per Minute _____

Recalling Facts

- Plants have been forced to close down because of a lack of
 a. gas. b. machinery. c. workers,
- In the past few winters, many people have run out of
 a. clothes. b. food. c. fuel.
- Oil and gas are not like trees because oil and gas cannot be
 a. removed. b. replaced. c. reused.
- One source of energy we can use right now is
 a. coal. b. gold. c. the sun.
- Air can be polluted by
 a. burning coal. b. drilling oil wells. c. using solar energy.

Understanding the Passage

6. What is this article mostly about?

- a. energy b. mining c. pollution

7. We can see from this article that

- a. fuel is becoming scarce. b. oil wells are dangerous. c. solar energy is harmful.

8. The United States is rich in

- a. coal. b. gas. c. oil.

9. We have not yet learned how to use

- a. electricity. b. natural gas. c. solar power.

10. This article hints that solar energy will not

- a. damage buildings. b. cause illness. c. pollute the air.

Technology: Some Interesting Effects on Our Lives

The twentieth century has been called the century of technology. No matter where we live or what we do, our lives are in some way affected by technology. Some of these effects are good. For example, new medicines and cures for terrible illness are discovered everyday. We don't have to work as hard because of labor-saving machines. It's much easier to travel and to send and receive information in this age of technology. In this unit, you will read about some unusual applications and unexpected effects of technology.

Before you begin reading, think about the following questions and discuss your answers.

1. Make a list of some of the ways that technology affects your daily life. Are these good or bad effects? Why?
2. What, in your opinion, is the most important technological development of this century? Why is this development important? How has it changed society? Has this change been good or bad – or a combination of both? Explain.
3. How do you think most people feel about technology? Do they think it is good or bad for themselves and society? Give examples. Are they afraid of technology? Explain and give examples.
4. Do you think television can have negative effects on people? If so, under what conditions? Do you think it is possible to watch too much television? Explain and give examples. Do you think a person could actually become addicted to television, much like one could become addicted to drugs or alcohol?
5. Did you ever have an experience where technology did not have the intended effect, for example, something did not work as it was intended and, therefore, the expected result was different? Explain and give examples.
6. In general, do you think our lives are better or worse because of technology? Do you think technology helps or hinders (hurts) our ability to survive on this planet? Why? Explain and give examples.

Technology for the People

Technology is a powerful tool, often controlled by and promoting the interest of huge multi-national corporations and governments. This article, however, is about how other people, ordinary people, around the world have recently been trying to advance their causes and change their lives through the use of sophisticated technology. The information for this article comes from *Discover the World of science*, *Newsweek*, *The New York Times*, the *Seattle Times*, and National Public Radio.

Read this article quickly for the main ideas. Pay attention to the title and headings and to similarities between the three groups of people discussed in this article. Do *not* stop to look up words in your dictionary.

1. What do the Kayapo Indians in the Amazon and the Runa Indians in the Ecuadorian Andes have in common with students in China? You can't guess? All of these groups have tried to use the latest, state-of-the-art technology to fight for their causes and to gain control over their lives in the last few years.

The Kayapo Indians and Technology

2. The leaders of the Kayapo Indian tribe were alarmed by the damage caused by the Tucuruí hydroelectric* dam on the Tocantins River in eastern Brazil. The dam flooded more than 800 square miles of a rain forest, once the home of Parakan and Gaviões Indians. The Kayapo chiefs were particularly concerned because Eletronorte, a regional power company, was planning to build several dams in the middle of Kayapo territory. One of these dams alone would flood more than 1600 miles of Kayapo land and destroy forever the rich rain forest on this land.

- 3 so what did the kayapo chiefs do? Wearing full ceremonial costume, enormous feathered headdresses, and black body paint, they paid a visit to the Tukurui dam. In boats, they set out on the new lake, and they saw the devastation, the dead trees, white and bare, rising ghostlike out of the water. They wanted their people to be able to see this great destruction of what had once been a beautiful and lush rain forest so that they would understand what terrible and irreversible damage a dam would do to their own land.
- 4 But how could they bring their Kayapo tribes' people to the Tukurui dam? They couldn't. The dam was too far away from kayapo territory. So they took the Tukurui dam to the people. They videotaped it.
- 5 That was in January, 1989. Within just a few short months, hundreds of Kayapo had seen the videotape played on a video cassette recorder powered by a gasoline generator. The dramatic film helped unite the Kayapo, who live in villages scattered across hundreds of miles of central Brazilian jungle, into a powerful political movement. They gathered together to demonstrate and protest against the dam construction at one of the largest proposed dam sites in their territory. They were successful, and for the time being at least, the Altamira dam project has been postponed, perhaps for good.
- 6 What is interesting in this case is that the kayapo realizing the power of modern technology, have not hesitated to use that technology to try to protect their traditional, unmodern life. They are fighting to protect their rain forests from the destruction and, in their case, a picture may indeed be worth many thousands of words.

The Runa Indians – Land management By Computer

- 7 In the the Ecuadorian Andes, the Runa Indians are learning land management on a 386 AT computer with a 60-megabyte hard drive. They started off with a smaller computer system bu soon outgrew it. They are identifying all the trees in their forests and compiling a forest-management inventory, and they also learning to make agricultural spreadsheets to help them predict which crops will be the most productive for their long-term agricultural purposes.
- 8 According to Dominique Irvine, a technical consultant who works with the Runa Indians, the Runa were not the least bit nervous about learning to use the latest computer technology. They appreciate Western technology and want to use it to advance their own purposes, to gain more control over their own lives, says Irvine. They see western technology as a useful tool that will help them make better use of their land and resources.

Revolution By Technology In China

- 9 Meanwhile, in another part of the world, students in china in 1989 tried to create and carry out a pro-democracy revolution by means of facsimile (fax), telephone, photocopier, shortwave radio, wall poster, computer, letter, etc. in other words, the students tried to use every technology available to them to let the outside world know of the bloody massacre carried out by the government troops at Tiananman square in Beijing and, even more importantly, to relay news about china from the outside world to their fellow Chinese at home.
- 10 The Chinese government had tried to impose a news blackout in China so that the Chinese people would not find out about the student massacre in Beijing. It did not allow any Chinese television or radio stations to broadcast news of the crisis and the almost 4,000 people who were killed in Tiananman square when the government cracked down on the students demonstrating for democracy and freedom.
- 11 But as the Chinese government quickly discovered, it is not so easy to control information now as it once was. For one thing, more that 40,000 Chinese students were attending American universities at that time. Many of them were in daily communication with family and friends in China via telephone, fax and computer. The students in the United States let people in China know what was going on in China from eyewitness reports on Western television and radio and newspaper, and they in turn received first-hand news reports from china. These news bulletins from the U.S., complete with the most convincing pictures, sent via fax over the telephone lines, were immediately photocopied and distributed throughout most major Chinese cities.

12 People in China picked up news bulletins over shortwave radio also. About 60 million people usually listen to Voice of America in China. During the student pro-democracy uprising in Beijing, however, VOA began broadcasting more than 11 hours a day in Mandarin (the official language in China), and it has been estimated that VOA reached more than 400 million Chinese. In some cities, courageous people placed radios blasting out VOA news reports high in trees in public parks. When officials confiscated one radio, a new one would begin broadcasting in another area. There was no way the government could control the news in the cities. Former U.S. ambassador to China, Winston Lord, said that as long as there was a single non-government telephone line open between outside world and China, it would have been impossible for the government to impose a complete news blackout.

Information is Power

13 Information is power, and whoever controls information has power. Dictators throughout history have understood this concept, and they have usually remained in power as long as they could control information. Now people, ordinary people, want to have information power so that they can control their own destinies. The Kayapo and Runa Indians have both achieved some success in this regard.

Information is Power - In August of 1991, there was a right-wing, reactionary coup by old-line Communists in the Soviet Union. The coup lasted only three days, and one of the reasons that it was not successful was that the leaders did not take over and shut down the country's television, telephones, and other communications with the rest of the world. As John Koha reported from Moscow, "Tyranny does its best work in the dark, and information is often more powerful than guns." (*Time*, September 2, 1991)

14 Although information is power, information does not automatically bring freedom, at least not immediately. The Chinese student did not succeed in their revolution, perhaps because about 80 percent of the people in China still live in rural areas out of the reach of the students' news bulletins, and the government information blackout worked there.

15 But even though the student revolution did not succeed in 1989 in China, the Chinese students – and people throughout the entire world – learned a powerful lesson: Information technology is not only a powerful tool, it is a powerful weapon in our world today, more powerful in the long run, perhaps, than bombs and other conventional weapons of mass destruction. Ordinary people are beginning to realize these modern-day facts, and they want to control their own destinies by harness-ling this technology.

Reading Times	Reading Speed
1 st reading _____ minutes	8 minutes = 125 wpm
3 rd reading _____ minutes	7 minutes = 143 wpm
	6 minutes = 166 wpm
	5 minutes = 200 wpm

Sorry: Wrong Number!

Technology affects us – even when it does not work as intended. Jorge Miguel Aviles, a Venezuelan filmmaker, gives an account of how the telephone system shaped his life in unexpected ways in the first piece. The second selection is a personal reflection on the powerful effect on television on the life of a young girl. It was written by a young Latina actress/writer who calls herself “Dominica.” She is now living and working in New York City. Both reprinted by permission

First Reading

Read these two selections quickly for the main ideas. Think about similarities and differences between the two pieces. Do *not* stop to look up words in your dictionary

- 1 It was 1967. I was young, just 21, and I was trying to start a small business in Caracas. At that time in my life, I still believed that everything was possible. It was rough going in the beginning (and, as it turned out finally, in the middle and at the end), but I was hopeful that, against all odds, I would succeed and become a successful man at an early age.
- 2 My business, which shall go nameless (and could have been anything), depended heavily upon telephone contacts. I had to telephone offices all over Caracas and, by hook or by crook, convince people to let me get a foot in their door to talk to them about my services. As a rule, they remained singularly unimpressed by my overtures, and I had to resort to a variety of dramatic and highly-imaginative tactics to accomplish my mission: to get in the door so that I would have the opportunity to stage another dramatic performance. I believed I would be irresistible in person. I was 21 at the time ...
- 3 At any rate, it was essential, a *sine qua non**, that my telephone, my sole means of contact with my would-be clients, be in perfect working order. In the beginning, the telephone did my bidding, and my lack of initial success could not be attributed to the telephone company. However, one day, just when the first dark traces of desperation were beginning to emerge around the corners of my mind, I began to encounter unusual communication experiences. I began to enter a sort of twilight zone.
- 4 This is what happened. I was calling an office for the third time, one of the few offices where they had not outright rejected my overtures. I had detected the slightest hesitation on their part, a possible weakness in their defenses against me and my kind, in a previous call, and I was eager to press my luck. I placed my call and then I waited as it rang once, twice, three times.
- 5 A woman’s voice answered on the third ring (good luck, I thought to myself!) and before she could depend herself, I seized the moment and took the electronic stage to deliver my charming and persuasive speech. It was a monologue, carefully rehearsed dozens of times before the mirror in my aunt’s bathroom (I was already subconsciously thinking of video telephones, you see). I refused to allow my audience any openings. Finally, however, I passed for dramatic effect – to breathe, actually – and the voice said, “I am very sorry but you have the wrong number. This is not an office. It is a private residence.”
- 6 I apologized profusely and hung up. Recovering myself somewhat, I tried the number again, this time exercising the greatest care in placing my call. No matter! The same voice answered. I apologized again. She graciously accepted. The same thing happened a third time, a fourth time By then the lady, very charming, even greeted me by name.

- 7 I contacted the telephone service company and pleaded my desperate case before them. They assured me that it was only a minor problem (how they ascertained this, I have no idea, but at that time, even major corporations were extremely optimistic) and that it would be taken care of immediately.
- 8 Just after I had finished this call, my telephone rang. My first return call from a potential client! All of my boldness and suave composure vanished. My nerves were suddenly a-jangle. I had my first case of stage fright. I thought of not answering and simply bolting from my office (a bedroom in my aunt's house). But somehow I marshaled up all my courage and managed to answer on the third ring (for luck) in my deepest, most professional voice. Unfortunately, my voice cracked ever so slightly as I announced the impressive name of my enterprise.
- 9 It was the lady's voice again. This time it was her turn to apologize, and my turn to graciously and charmingly accept. We laughed together over our crossed wire relationship. A few minutes later, she telephoned back. Again apologies, this time a few jokes. She had a lovely voice, the sort of voice that a singer or an actress might have....
- 10 By the time the telephone company finally repaired my line, I had sent a huge bouquet of flowers to the lady with my card. She had called to thank me, very easy with our telephone lines joined. One thing led to another Six months later, the gracious lady and I eloped. We pooled all of our resources and flew off to Mexico City to start a new life together, leaving family and friends – and my strange and pathetic little business – far, far behind.
- 11 Unfortunately, it was not an entirely happy ending. Yes, we were madly in love with each other. That was never the question. But after a few years the realities of our life together could not match our powerful dreams and so, with great reluctance and sadness, we separated. We were brought together by illusions and separated by realities.
- 12 Years later, I was back in Caracas making a political documentary film, and I was invited to the opening of a new art gallery. Just as I was turning away from a conversation with one of the artists whose work was on display, I heard again the voice, that unmistakable voice. And yes, there she was, beautiful and charming as ever. She introduced me to her husband, a well known and prosperous Argentinean industrialist whom I immediately recognized from pictures in the media.
- 13 “Whenever you are in Caracas,” her husband said, “you must call us.” We all laughed and then she went back to her life, and I went back to mine.

Now go on to the second piece by Domenica, the young Latina actress/writer.

Television Lights Up My Life

- 1 We each have a photograph album in our minds with snapshots of special moments in our lives – moments of delight, of happiness, of joy – and even if we are sitting in a dark room, we can call up these precious images from the past whenever we want, and we will see that scene again with the same sharp clarity. The face of special friend or lover, the moment of joy when we learned we received a special prize or award, the family gathered together, little ones grinning in front, older ones more serious and somber in the back. Yes, these are the special moments, captured forever in our minds that we can call up at will.
- 2 But, wait, there are other moments that stand out with the same clarity, the sharp lines and colors never fading through the years. These are painful moments, moments when we confronted a terrible truth, a truth that would change our lives forever whether we wanted it to or not. And they too are carefully tucked away and preserved in photograph album.

- 3 I remember such a moment now. I was nine years old and I tiptoed quietly into our neighbors' yard one evening with my sisters to sneak a look at their television through the open window. I had never seen this wonderful, magical box before – it was the first and only television in our tiny village at that time – and I stared in awe (and some fright) at a beautiful lady inside the box who was speaking a strange language (English, it turned out to be) and cooking an egg. I could see that she was very rich, maybe a queen or princess. And then a gentleman came in. he said, “Hi” (one of the few English words I understood). He was also very rich. Maybe he was king. They were laughing together, and he kissed her, right there in the Santiago’s house! We gasped in delicious shock.
- 4 Suddenly the Santiagos’ maid, an ax-faced young girl of 14 from the mountains, appeared like an evil spirit at the window and saw un standing there with her beady little eyes.
- 5 “What is it, Rosita? Is something out there?” called Mrs. Santiago from inside the darkened room.
- 6 “No, it’s nothing,” said Rosita, “Only some dirty little pigs and chickens” and she spit at us as she slowly closed the shutters in our faces.
- 7 In that moment, in those few seconds as Rosita closed us out, I saw myself illuminated in the ghostly light of the television, flickering from within. I saw my faded and torn pink dress, a cast-off from an older sister, until then my favorite sister and my favorite dress. I saw my scratched, dirt-stained legs my bare feet. I saw my long, tangled hair. I saw big, frightened black eyes burning in a dark, little face.
- 8 My sister were laughing and giggling hysterically as we scrambled, truly like wild pigs and chicken, out of the Santiagos’ yard. “Hurry!” they called to me, “ Before they throw cold water on us!”
- 9 They were laughing. But I was crying. Why? Because, in the flickering light of the television, I had seen a truth, a painful truth – that I was poor, that was not as good as others, that I was condemned in some horrible way. And, for the first time, I knew shame. I was ashamed of myself and of my life. – I never forgot that moment of painful, burning truth. When I was just 15 years old, I ran away from my family, from my village, even from my country, and I never went back again.
- 10 Yes, television changed my life completely in just a single flash. Television destroyed me, my life – and from the broken pieces, I make a new life. This is one of the painful pictures in the photograph album of my mind.

Reading Times	Reading Speed
1 st reading _____ minutes wpm	10 minutes = 154
3 rd reading _____ minutes wpm	9 minutes = 171
_____ minutes wpm	8 minutes = 192
_____ minutes wpm	7 minutes = 220

Education in the United States

Before you Begin

DISCUSS THESE QUESTIONS WITH YOUR CLASSMATES:

1. Where did you go to school when you were child?
2. How old were you when you started school?
3. Does everyone in your country have the opportunity to go to school?
4. How many years do most people in your country go to school?
5. Who pays for schools in your country?



Education in the United States

In unit 1, Anne Haddad and Joseph Lee met at a party. They are now talking about where they grew up and where they went to school. **Read this dialogue with a partner.**

Anne: Did you go to high school in Los Angeles, Joseph?

Joseph: Yeah, as a matter of fact, I went to Central High'. How about you?

Anne: Oh, my family is from Lebanon, and I went to a French school in Beirut when I was in elementary school, and then I went to school in France for three years. And after that, I came to the United States, and I went to high school in New York for a couple of years. And then we moved to California when I was ready for college.

Joseph: Your English is really good. Does your family speak English at home?

Anne: Sometimes. They speak Arabic and French most of the time at home though. I speak English most of the time now, I guess, except at home. How about you? Were you born here? You sound like a native Californian

Joseph: No, I came when I was nine. I started in fourth grade. That was a terrible year for me because I didn't understand any English. I had a hard time until I was in junior high school when I was about 12. And then things got easier. You know, one day I just started thinking in English.

Anne: Your English is perfect now. You don't have any accent at all, I guess it's because you came here when you were so young. How's your Korean?

Joseph: Not so good. I sound like an American speaking Korean, my mother says. My grandmother came from Korea to live with us last year. She couldn't understand me at first. She asked my mother what was wrong with me! Now I'm teaching her English, and she's teaching me Korean. She's learning faster than I am, I think.

First Reading: Getting the Main Idea

Read through the following passage. Try to understand the meaning, and don't stop to look up new words. Take as much time as you need to complete your first reading.

Education and Values

People all around the world think education is important because a good education usually means a better life. Everyone agrees with that. However, schools are not the same in every country. This is because people in different countries want their schools to teach different things. Each culture has its own values, and people want their schools to teach the values of their culture.

What do we mean by values? Values are people's ideas of the best and most important ideas and beliefs in their culture. For example, your culture may value hard work. That means that people in your culture may respect hard work more than many other qualities. Maybe religion is the most important value, or perhaps art and creativity, or money and **material possessions**.

Some of the same values are important in different cultures. However, there are many differences among cultural groups. Within each culture, schools usually teach the values of that culture, and children learn the values of their culture in school, as well as at home.

The United States is a **democracy**, and democratic values are very important. Everyone in the United States has the opportunity to have free education. Local, state, and **federal** governments pay for the public schools, and everyone, rich or poor, can go to school. There are also many private schools. People in private schools have to pay their own educational costs because the state does not pay for private education.

Some people say that American schools try to do too much for too many people. They say it is impossible to give a good education to everyone. They think the American educational system should try to educate only the most intelligent people in the society instead of trying to educate everyone.

However, in a democracy, it is important for everyone to have an education because citizens in a democracy have to choose their government's leaders. They have to be able to understand ideas and issues clearly to make these choices, so they need a good education to be good citizens.

The Educational System in the United States

Elementary school: Most children in the United States start school when they are five years old. They go to kindergarten for a year and then start first grade when they are six. The first school is called elementary school, or grade school. American children learn to read and write when they are in first and second grade. They also begin to study simple arithmetic, science, and history, and in most schools, they have music and art lessons. In many schools now, even elementary school children learn how to use computers. They may play arithmetic games and write stories on the computer, or they may do a group project, such as producing a class newspaper once a week.

Junior high school or middle school: After elementary school, American children go to junior high school or middle school. In most school systems, junior high school includes seventh, eighth, and ninth grades, but sometimes it is only the seventh and eighth grades. Junior high school students are usually 12 to 14 years old. The main difference between a junior high school and a middle school is that middle school usually begins in fifth or sixth grade and goes through eighth grade. More and more schools are changing from the junior high school model to the middle school model.

High school: High school comes after junior high school or middle school. In the past, most high schools were composed of grades ten through twelve. In **recent** years, however, more and more high schools are composed of grades nine through twelve. Students usually graduate from high school when they are 17 or 18. There are different kinds of high schools to meet the special needs and interests of the students. Some high schools prepare students to go to college, and they are known as college preparatory high schools. Other high schools prepare students for various kinds of work, and they are known as vocational high schools. Many high schools have both college-preparatory courses and vocational courses.



Some states are experimenting with theme high schools—for example, environmental studies, performing and visual arts (music, drama, dance, art), computer science, mathematics and science, and law. Theme schools allow students to explore their special interests and possibly decide on a career or profession to study in the future. For example, a student interested in law might go to a theme high school specializing in law. She would take a full **range** of courses, but part of the content of the courses would **relate to** law and **law enforcement** in society in some way. She would also probably work part-time in a law firm, in a court, or in a police station as part of her high school program. In this way, she could find out about the many different career opportunities in law, something about the **requirements** for these careers, and she could decide if she would enjoy going on to study more in a particular area after high school. On the other hand, if she discovered that she did not want to pursue a career in this area, she could change and study a different field in college.

More and more American high schools are trying to give students both academic courses and practical work experience at the same time. Many schools require students to do some sort of community service—for example, tutoring of younger children or, working in a library or a senior citizen center'. They usually do not get paid for this service, but they get some work experience and they make a contribution to their communities.

Higher education: When students graduate from high school, they may go on to a vocational school, college, or university. There are more than 3,000 colleges and universities in the United States. Some private colleges and universities are very expensive, but most state universities cost less. Financial aid (money from the government) and scholarships are often available to help students pay at least part of their tuition. Some form of higher education is **available** to every high school graduate.

Issues in American Education

Bilingual education: The United States is a country of immigrants who come from all over the world and speak many different languages. In the past, new immigrants had a hard time in American schools, and many of them became **discouraged and dropped out** of school because they could not understand their schoolwork in English. They were then not able to get good jobs because they didn't have a good education.

To help these new immigrants, many schools in the United States developed bilingual programs. (Bi means "two," and lingual means "language.") If a school had a lot of Spanish-speaking students, it might have a bilingual program where the Spanishspeaking students would study their subjects in both English and Spanish. A school with a large Chinese population might have an English-Chinese bilingual program. Students in bilingual programs are able to continue their general education and learn English at the same time. After a **period** of time when they have learned enough English, they can take all their classes in English with other students.

Bilingual education is **controversial**, meaning some people like it and are in favor of it, and other people are against it. The

people in favor of bilingual education say, "It helps students to understand their schoolwork in history, mathematics, and science while they are learning English at the same time." These people say bilingual education helps students succeed in school, and the students can then get better jobs and be better citizens after graduation. Also, they argue that in the world today, it is a great **advantage** for people to know more than one language because they will have more professional and social opportunities. They say that all people should try to learn at least one other language in addition to their first language, and that in most countries around the world, people try to learn two or more languages well.

On the other hand, the people against bilingual education believe it is a **waste** of time and government money. They say that English is the main language in the United States and that everyone living in the United States should learn English as quickly as possible. They believe that bilingual education is too expensive and that the government should put bilingual education money into more programs to teach new immigrants English. Also, they **point out** that the government cannot afford to provide bilingual education for all immigrants because there are too many different languages, and it would be impossible to have a bilingual program for every language. Therefore, they say it is not fair to provide bilingual education for some immigrants and not for others.

The issue of bilingual education usually gets more attention when the economy is slow or not growing and the government does not have enough money to pay for all the programs that people want. Then people disagree about how the **limited** money should be spent. In conclusion, everyone has an opinion about bilingual education, but no one knows the best answer for sure because it is a very **complicated issue** with many sides to it.

National educational standards: In many countries around the world, all students at a certain level take a national exam in every course. They can then see how they compare with other students throughout the country at their grade level. Teachers can also look at their students' **results** and see how they are doing compared to other students. Although there are some problems with national exams, they help make the **standards** clear and fair for everyone.

In the United States, education is controlled by each state, instead of by the national or federal government. This means that **education varies a great** deal from state to state and even from school to school within a state. It is sometimes difficult to know

how students from one school compare to students from another school because the standards may be completely different in the two schools. I

People in the United States are talking about the need for national exams to help set standards. However, at the same time, states want to be able to control education within their state and to develop programs that meet the special needs of the people in their state. They do not want to be controlled by the federal government because they believe that educational policy that is good for one state may not be good for another state. Is it possible to have national exams and continue to have state control of education? This is a question that many people are discussing now because they want to make the American educational system better.
(1,825 words)

Filling in the Gaps

Read the passage a second time to help you understand it better. After you finish the second reading, work with another student in your class and try to guess the meanings of new words.

Putting the Information Together

Read the passage a third time as quickly as you can. Try to understand the meaning of the new words in their context as you read. Reading the passage a third time will help you understand the ideas and learn new vocabulary at the same time.

1. Understanding Ideas and Vocabulary

Choose or supply the correct answers. Talk about your answers with your classmates.

1. Most Americans believe that
 - a. only the most intelligent people should have the opportunity to go to school.
 - b. only the richest people should have the opportunity to go to school.
 - c. everyone, rich or poor, intelligent or not so intelligent, should have the opportunity to go to school.
2. What is a theme high school?

3. Why do many schools require community service?

4. Match these words. Draw a line from the word(s) on the left to the words on the right that mean almost the same thing.

1. kindergarten	a. the years between kindergarten and middle school or junior high school
2. elementary school	b. the years after junior high or middle school
3. middle or junior high school	c. the year before elementary school
4. high school	d. the years between elementary and high school
5. college or university	e. after high school

5. Some of these statements are true, and some of them are not true. Read each statement carefully. Write **true or false** in each blank.

- ___ a. All public and private schools in the United States are free.
- ___ b. Elementary school is the same thing as grade school.
- ___ c. Middle school is the same thing as high school.
- ___ d. The national or federal government controls education in the **United States and tells** each state what to do.
- ___ e. There are more than 3,000 colleges and universities in the United States.

B. Let's Talk!

These/ questions ask you about the educational system in your country. Talk about these questions with two or three of your classmates. After you finish talking, write your answers on the blank lines.

1 . When do children start school in your country?

2. How many years are children in elementary school?

Does your country have middle schools or junior high schools?

How many years do students go to this school?

How many years is high school in your country?

3. What subjects do children study in elementary school?

How many hours do they go to school each day?

What time does the school day begin, and what time does it end?

How many days do children go to school each week?

Which days do they go to school?

4. What are some interesting and unusual things about schools in your country?
