



Is this a good place for people to spend their time? Why or why not?

What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

**Do you think students nowadays have enough time to play?
Why or why not?**

Note: The above may not be the exact phrasing of the questions as they are shared by our students based on what they can remember from the exam.

Is this a good place for people to spend their time? Why or why not?

Here is how you could answer the first question.

Yes, I definitely think a playground is a good place for people to spend their time, especially children and families. Besides being a place for entertainment, a playground gives children opportunities to exercise, interact with others and spend meaningful time with their families. (Remember to make references to the playground setting, the things the children are playing with and the children themselves)

Reason 1: It encourages children to exercise

Firstly, playgrounds encourage children to be physically active. When children are at a playground, they can run, climb, swing, jump and play games such as catching or hide-and-seek. They are exercising without even realising it because they are enjoying themselves at the same time.

I think this is especially important nowadays because many children spend long hours sitting down. We sit in classrooms during school, sit at our desks while doing homework and may spend even more time sitting in front of televisions, computers or mobile devices. If this becomes a habit, children may become less active.

Going to a playground provides a simple way for children to move their bodies and get some fresh air. They do not need expensive equipment or special lessons to exercise. Even spending half an hour running around with friends can be beneficial.

Therefore, I feel that playgrounds can encourage children to develop a healthier and more active lifestyle from a young age.

Reason 2: It develops children's social skills

Secondly, playgrounds give children opportunities to interact with people outside their immediate family.

For example, a child may arrive at a playground without knowing anyone but eventually start playing with another child. They may decide to play catching together or take turns using the swings. Through these simple interactions, children learn how to introduce themselves, communicate and cooperate with others.

There may also be disagreements. Two children might want to use the same piece of equipment at the same time. Instead of immediately asking an adult to solve the problem, they can learn to negotiate, take turns and consider another person's feelings.

I believe these experiences are valuable because social skills cannot always be learnt from textbooks. Children need opportunities to practise them in real situations.

As a result, playgrounds are not merely places for entertainment. They can also help children become more confident, considerate and cooperative.



Reason 3: It strengthens family relationships

Thirdly, playgrounds provide families with an opportunity to spend quality time together.

Nowadays, both parents and children can have very busy schedules. Parents may spend most of the day working, while children have school, homework, tuition and other activities. Even when everyone is at home, they may be occupied with their own electronic devices.

A trip to the playground gives family members a chance to step away from these distractions. Parents can push their younger children on the swings, play games with them or simply sit nearby and have a conversation.

The activity itself does not have to be expensive or elaborate. Sometimes, simple moments such as laughing together or watching a child master the monkey bars can become precious family memories.

Therefore, I think playgrounds can provide families with valuable opportunities to bond and enjoy one another's company.



Sharing a Personal Experience



I remember an incident at a playground near my home when I was about nine years old. One evening after dinner, my family decided to go for a walk, and my younger cousin and I immediately rushed towards the playground when we saw it.

At first, we played happily on the slides and climbing equipment. After a while, we became bored and decided to play catching. My cousin became extremely excited and started sprinting around the playground.

I noticed that he was running close to the equipment, so I shouted at him to slow down. However, he simply laughed and continued chasing me.

Suddenly, **I heard a loud cry behind me.**

I spun around and saw my cousin lying on the ground, clutching his knee. There was blood trickling down his leg, and for a few seconds, I froze because I did not know what to do.

Without hesitation, I quickly called my parents for help.

Thankfully, the injury was only a scrape. My mother cleaned his wound while my father comforted him. After resting for a while, he stopped crying and felt much better.

Apply the Experience

That incident taught me that although playgrounds are wonderful places to exercise and have fun, safety should never be taken for granted.

Before that incident, I thought playground rules were simply adults being overly cautious. However, after seeing my cousin get hurt, I understood how quickly an enjoyable activity could turn into an accident.

Since then, I have been much more careful when using playground equipment. If I am with younger children, I also remind them not to run recklessly near swings, slides or climbing structures.

Suggestions

I think parents should encourage their children to spend more time outdoors instead of allowing them to spend all their free time on electronic devices.

At the same time, children should be taught to use playground equipment responsibly. Parents should supervise younger children, while older children should be considerate of smaller children around them.

Everyone should also play a part in keeping playgrounds clean. We should dispose of rubbish properly and report damaged equipment if we notice it.

In this way, playgrounds can remain safe, clean and enjoyable spaces for everyone.

What do you enjoy doing in your free time?



Answer:

One activity I particularly enjoy doing in my free time is cycling. Whenever possible, I cycle with my family, especially during the weekends or school holidays. I enjoy cycling because it keeps me physically active, helps me relieve stress and allows me to spend quality time with my family.

Reason 1: It keeps me physically healthy

Firstly, cycling is an excellent form of exercise.

As a student, I spend a large part of my day sitting down. I sit during lessons in school, sit while completing my homework and sometimes spend my free time watching videos or using a computer.

Cycling gives me an opportunity to break away from this sedentary routine. When I cycle, I exercise my legs, improve my stamina and get my heart pumping. If I cycle regularly, I notice that I do not become tired as easily when taking part in other physical activities.

I also prefer cycling outdoors because I can enjoy the fresh air and scenery instead of exercising indoors.

Therefore, cycling is enjoyable to me because I can have fun while taking care of my health at the same time.



Reason 2: It helps me cope with stress

Secondly, cycling helps me relax when I feel stressed or overwhelmed.

There are times when I have several pieces of homework to complete or an examination approaching. If I study continuously for many hours, I sometimes realise that I am reading the same sentence repeatedly without absorbing anything.

When that happens, taking a break can be more productive than forcing myself to continue.

When I cycle, I stop thinking about schoolwork temporarily. Instead, I focus on the path ahead, the scenery around me and the feeling of the breeze against my face.

By the time I return home, my mind usually feels clearer. I am calmer and often able to concentrate better on my work.

Therefore, I see cycling not only as physical exercise but also as a healthy way of managing stress.

Reason 3: It gives me quality time with my family

Another reason I enjoy cycling is that it gives me an opportunity to bond with my family.

During weekdays, everyone has different responsibilities. My parents may be busy with work while I have school and homework, so we may not have much uninterrupted time together.

When we go cycling, however, we are all participating in the same activity. We can talk while cycling, encourage one another when someone becomes tired and sometimes stop somewhere for a snack or drink.

I particularly enjoy these small moments because everyone is away from their usual routines and electronic devices.

I believe experiences like these help strengthen family relationships. Years later, I may not remember an ordinary afternoon spent looking at my phone, but I will probably remember an enjoyable cycling adventure with my family.



Sharing a Personal Experience



One of my most memorable experiences happened during the school holidays when my family decided to go on a long cycling trip.

I was extremely excited because I had never cycled such a long distance before. At the beginning, everything went smoothly. The weather was pleasant, and we chatted and laughed as we cycled.

In fact, I was so confident that I told my parents the journey was much easier than I had expected.

However, after some time, my legs began to ache. My breathing became heavier, and I started falling behind my family.

Soon, we reached a steep slope.

I tried desperately to continue cycling because I did not want to admit that I was tired. As I pedalled upwards, my legs felt as heavy as lead.

Halfway up the slope, my bicycle suddenly wobbled from side to side. I almost lost my balance and fell.

My heart was pounding. I immediately stopped and told my father, "I can't do this anymore."

Instead of telling me to quit, my father asked me to rest. He reminded me that there was no need to reach the top quickly.

After catching my breath and drinking some water, I got back onto my bicycle.

I concentrated on moving forward one pedal at a time. Eventually, I reached the top.

When I looked back at the steep slope below me, I could hardly believe that I had managed to conquer it. I was exhausted, but I also felt an enormous sense of achievement.

That experience taught me an important lesson about perseverance.

I realised that perseverance does not mean that I must complete everything immediately or without difficulty. Sometimes, I need to pause, recover and then continue.

I now try to apply this lesson to my studies. For example, if I encounter a difficult Mathematics problem, I try not to become frustrated and give up immediately.

I may take a short break, look at the question from another perspective and attempt it again.

Whenever I feel like giving up, I sometimes remember that steep hill and remind myself that difficult challenges can become manageable when I tackle them one step at a time.

Suggestion

I think students should find at least one healthy activity that they genuinely enjoy during their free time.

It does not necessarily have to be cycling. Some students may prefer swimming, badminton, football, dancing or simply going for a walk.

Parents can also participate in these activities occasionally so that exercise becomes an opportunity for family bonding.

Most importantly, students should try to achieve a healthy balance between studies, exercise, screen time and relaxation.



Do you think students nowadays have enough time to play?



Answer:

In my opinion, many students nowadays **do not have enough time to play**, especially during the school term. I think this is mainly because of academic pressure, packed schedules and, surprisingly, the amount of time some students spend on electronic devices.

Reason 1: Heavy academic workload

Firstly, students can have demanding academic schedules.

A typical student's responsibilities do not necessarily end when the school bell rings. After returning home, there may still be homework to complete, spelling to learn, tests to prepare for and topics to revise.

During examination periods, this workload can become even heavier. Some students may feel that every spare moment should be spent studying because they are worried about falling behind.

As a result, play is often treated as something unimportant and is the first thing removed from the schedule.

However, I do not think studying continuously is necessarily productive. When students are mentally exhausted, they may take twice as long to complete a simple task because they cannot concentrate.

Therefore, I believe students need reasonable periods of rest and play so that they can return to their studies feeling refreshed.

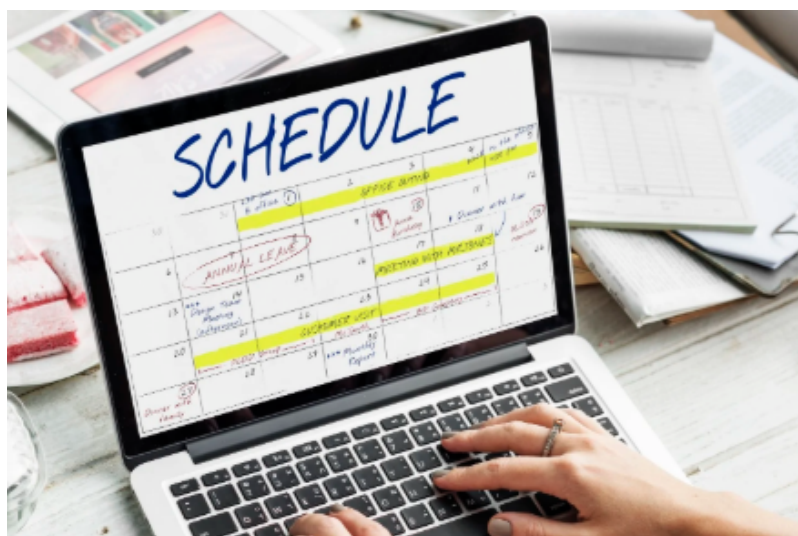
Reason 2: Too many scheduled activities

Secondly, some students have extremely packed schedules outside school.

Besides regular lessons, they may attend tuition, enrichment programmes, music lessons, sports training or other classes. Some students even have several activities scheduled during the weekend.

Of course, these activities can be beneficial. Tuition may help a student academically, while music and sports can develop useful skills.

However, problems arise when almost every hour of a child's day is planned by adults. Children also need some unstructured time when they can decide what they would like to do. They might want to play with friends, read a book, build something or simply relax.



I believe having some control over their own free time can help children become more independent and creative.

Reason 3: Excessive screen time

Thirdly, students themselves sometimes contribute to the problem through excessive screen time.

A student might say that he has no time to exercise or play, yet spend two hours scrolling through short videos, gaming or chatting online.



The problem with electronic devices is that it is easy to lose track of time. Someone may intend to watch a video for ten minutes but suddenly realise that an hour has passed. Therefore, I do not think parents or schools should receive all the blame. Students also have a responsibility to manage their time wisely.

If students reduce unnecessary screen time, they may discover that they actually have more free time than they previously thought.

Sharing a Personal Experience



I remember one particularly stressful week before my examinations.

I had several pieces of homework to complete, chapters to revise and a test to prepare for. At the same time, my friends had invited me to play badminton with them on Saturday.

I desperately wanted to join them, so I told myself that I would finish all my work first.

On Saturday morning, I sat at my desk and began working. However, my list of tasks seemed endless. Every time I completed one assignment, I remembered another chapter I needed to revise.

Hours passed.

By the afternoon, I could hear my friends laughing and playing badminton downstairs. I kept telling myself, "Just one more piece of work."

However, I became increasingly frustrated. I was staring at my notes, but hardly anything was going into my head.

Then I looked at the clock and realised that my friends would be going home soon.

I felt extremely disappointed. I had spent almost the entire day studying, yet I was not even sure whether my revision had been productive.

My mother noticed my frustration and told me to put my books aside. She encouraged me to go downstairs and play for half an hour.

At first, I was reluctant because I thought I would be wasting valuable revision time. Eventually, I agreed.

I ran downstairs and managed to join my friends for a short game of badminton.

When I returned home, something surprising happened.

I sat down at my desk and completed my remaining work much faster than before. My mind felt refreshed, and I could finally concentrate properly.

Apply the Experience

That experience completely changed the way I viewed play and rest.

Previously, I thought that the longer I sat at my desk, the more productive I was being. However, I realised that there is a difference between **spending time studying and studying effectively**.

Taking a reasonable break does not mean that a student is lazy. Exercise and play can reduce stress, improve our mood and allow our brains to rest.

Since then, when I have a long revision session, I try to include short breaks instead of forcing myself to work continuously.

I have found that when I return to my work after a proper break, I am usually more focused and productive.



Suggestions

I believe **parents, schools and students all have a role to play.**

Parents should ensure that their children have sufficient time for academics, but they should also avoid filling every available hour with tuition and enrichment classes.

Schools can educate students about the importance of balancing academic achievement with physical and mental well-being.

Students themselves should learn to plan their time. For example, they could create a simple schedule that includes homework, revision, exercise and leisure. They should also set sensible limits on recreational screen time.

Ultimately, I do not think the solution is to choose between **studying and playing.** The goal should be to achieve a healthy balance between the two.

