

## Activity Type

Reading Exercises:  
matching, true, false or  
not given, multiple choice

## Focus

Academic reading  
comprehension

## Aim

To practice a variety of  
reading skills that include  
recognising main ideas,  
and scanning to locate  
and identify information.

## Preparation

Make one copy of the  
two-page worksheet for  
each student.

## Level

Advanced (C1)

## Time

30 minutes

## Introduction

In this reading comprehension practice worksheet, students read a brief article on the topic of going to university and practice a variety of reading skills that include recognising main ideas, and scanning to locate and identify information.

## Procedure

Give each student a copy of the two-page worksheet.

To begin, students discuss three questions related to the topic of university education in pairs.

Students continue by matching difficult words from the article to their correct definitions.

### Exercise B - Answer key

1. g	2. j	3. f	4. a	5. i
6. b	7. h	8. c	9. d	10. e

Next, students read the article and match headings with the paragraphs.

### Exercise D - Answer key

1. c	2. e	3. b	4. a	5. d
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After that, students categorise statements as either true, false, or not given, according to the information in the text.

### Exercise E - Answer key

1. NG	2. F	3. T	4. NG
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In the final exercise, students answer comprehension questions by choosing the best answer from three options.

### Exercise F - Answer key

1. b	2. c	3. c
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As an extension, you could have students discuss or debate questions related to the topic of university education. An example question could be - Are STEM degrees a better choice than liberal arts degrees?

## A. With a partner, discuss the questions below.

1. Why do more people go to university today than in the past?
2. Why did you choose your current course of study?
3. Is it essential to have a university degree in your home country to have a rewarding career?

## B. Match the words below to their correct definition.

- |                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| 1. merit .....          | a. clear and certain, or real and existing in a form that can be seen |
| 2. dropout .....        | b. an advantage over other people                                     |
| 3. credential .....     | c. confidence   |
| 4. concrete terms ..... | d. an important skill that is needed to do a job                      |
| 5. wellness .....       | e. little to no risk of negative consequences                         |
| 6. edge .....           | f. proof of someone's ability and experience                          |
| 7. workforce .....      | g. to describe something having good quality or value                 |
| 8. assurance .....      | h. a group of people who work in a company, industry, country, etc.   |
| 9. competency .....     | i. the state of being healthy   |
| 10. low-stakes .....    | j. a student who quits university before they have finished           |



## C. Read the article: What Are the Rewards and Value of a University Degree?

a. There is some merit in examining the value of a university degree. Many of us are familiar with those who have succeeded in a career without going to university. Famous examples of university dropouts include Microsoft's Bill Gates and Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg. These are two well-known, smart, talented people who have had tremendous success on a global scale. They are also not typical of a student who doesn't finish a degree. For many students, especially those who are first-generation university students, a university degree helps them follow a career path and create a life that would not have been possible without the credential. Even in this time of rapid change in all kinds of fields, including technology and education, a university degree is still worth it.

b. The more education you receive, the greater the increase in your average lifetime earnings. Even though a degree costs a considerable amount of money, if you think about it as an investment in your future, you can see that university graduates receive a substantial return on their investment. To put it into more concrete terms, if you spend \$100,000 for a four-year degree, the return on investment (ROI) over a lifetime, according to some research is 1,500%. Obviously, this is an extremely positive return.

c. Making more money over time is not the only benefit you can earn from completing a university degree. Firstly, university graduates experience greater job satisfaction. They are more likely to get a job that they like or to find that their job is more enjoyable than not. A university degree also means better job stability. Employees with university degrees are more likely to find and keep a job. Graduates generally have better health and wellness as they are less likely to smoke and more likely to exercise and maintain a healthy weight. Moreover, the children of people with a higher education also benefit as they can exert positive influences on their immediate family and the next generations.

d. There is some debate as to whether a university degree is needed to land a job, and there are certainly jobs that you can get without a university degree. However, there are many reasons that a university degree can give you an edge in the job market. More and more entry-level jobs will require a university degree. According to Georgetown University's Centre on Education and the Workforce, in 2020, 35% of jobs will require a university degree. A credential from a university still provides assurance that a student has mastered the material. Would you trust a doctor who never went to medical school to do open-heart surgery on a close relative? University provides an opportunity to develop much-needed soft skills in demand by employers. These include critical thinking/problem solving, oral/written communication, and professionalism/work ethic, to name just a few.

e. There are few occasions that will provide you the opportunity to develop all of these skills in a low-stakes environment. You will learn all of this and more in university. If you find yourself asking the question "What does this course have to do with my major?" or "Why do I have to take that?" challenge yourself to learn more about the course and look for connections between the content and your larger educational, career, and life goals.

*Adapted from: Download for free at <https://openstax.org>.*

### **D. Match the paragraph headings 1-5 with the paragraphs a-e.**

1. Added bonuses .....
2. Make the connection .....
3. You can bank on it .....
4. Unchanged opportunity .....
5. Market appeal .....

### **E. Label the statements as either T (true), F (false), or NG (not given), according to the information given in the text.**

1. Bill Gates and Mark Zuckerberg do not recommend people go to university. ....
2. Typically, university degrees are not really that expensive. ....
3. Some people doubt the value of a university degree. ....
4. Many students question the relevance of content in their courses. ....

### **F. Answer the questions below by choosing the correct option a-c.**

1. Bill Gates and Mark Zuckerberg are mentioned in the article to...
  - a. show that having a university degree is not a guarantee of success.
  - b. show that your chances of career success are quite limited without a degree.
  - c. show that if you are rich, a university education is not so important.
2. According to the article, people with a four-year degree...
  - a. will normally pay \$100,000 in tuition fees.
  - b. will earn approximately 15 times the cost of their tuition in salary.
  - c. may earn over \$1 million over the course of their career.
3. Which of the following is not a benefit of a university education mentioned in the article?
  - a. fewer health related problems.
  - b. better financial security.
  - c. better interpersonal relationships.