

## Every year spent in school or university improves life expectancy, study says

### Level 1: Elementary

#### 1 Warmer

- a. Read the title of the article. Make a list of possible reasons why going to school and university can help people live longer. Then, discuss with a partner.

#### 2 Key words

- a. Complete the sentences using these key words from the text.

deadly

declines

equivalent

mortality

- \_\_\_\_\_ means the state of being a person who is alive and will not live forever.
- If something is \_\_\_\_\_ to something else, they have the same value or effect.
- If something is \_\_\_\_\_, it can cause death.
- When something \_\_\_\_\_, it becomes less.

beyond

earnings

fortunate

regardless of

- \_\_\_\_\_ means without paying attention to something.
- Your \_\_\_\_\_ are the money you receive as payment for your work.
- \_\_\_\_\_ means outside or after a certain limit.
- If you are \_\_\_\_\_, you are lucky.

- b. Use the words from task a to complete the following sentences.

- We need to finish this project, \_\_\_\_\_ its cost.
- Her \_\_\_\_\_ have increased because of her hard work.
- I feel \_\_\_\_\_ to have so many good friends.
- The number of visitors started to \_\_\_\_\_ last year.
- Breathing polluted air is \_\_\_\_\_ to smoking.

## Every year spent in school or university improves life expectancy, study says

### Level 1: Elementary

**Richard Adams**

**23 January, 2024**

- 1 Every year you spend in school or university improves your chances of living longer, and not going to school is as deadly as smoking or heavy drinking, according to a recent study that links education to a longer life.
- 2 Using evidence from industrialised countries such as the UK and US and from developing countries such as China and Brazil, the study found that an adult's risk of mortality went down by 2% for every year in full-time education. Completing primary, secondary and tertiary education is the equivalent of a lifetime of eating a healthy diet, lowering the risk of death by 34% compared with those with no formal education. At the opposite extreme, not going to school at any point was as bad for adult health as having five or more alcoholic drinks every day or smoking 10 cigarettes each day for ten years.
- 3 It is not the first time the link between education and a longer life has been recognised. However, the study by the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) and the University of Washington in Seattle is the first to calculate the number of years of education and its connections to reducing mortality. Neil Davies, Professor of Medical Statistics at University College London, described it as "an impressive piece of work". But Davies warned that links may change because of the UK's recent expansion in higher education and other factors such as the decline in smoking, so numbers are now similar for graduates and non-graduates.
- 4 Davies also noted that not going to school has consequences beyond health. There is a clear connection between time spent in education and earnings. This is also likely to be worse for less fortunate students. For Davies, the links between education and mortality are not as worrying as the consequences in the job market.
- 5 Researchers said investing in education can help to reduce differences in global death rates. The analysis also found results are similar in rich and poor countries, and regardless of sex or social class.
- 6 David Finch, who has studied life expectancy, said a greater level of education improved life expectancy in different ways, including through non-financial benefits. "It helps you to build better social connections. It makes you better at accessing and understanding information that can help you make better decisions. It can help you feel confident and valued."

© Guardian News and Media 2023

First published in *The Guardian*, 23/1/2024

## Every year spent in school or university improves life expectancy, study says

### Level 1: Elementary

#### 3 Comprehension check

a. Are these sentences true (T) or false (F) according to the article? Correct the false sentences, underlining the corresponding evidence in the text.

1. The study included countries from different regions.
2. Not having a formal education can be compared to an unhealthy lifestyle.
3. This is the first study that connects education and life expectancy.
4. Davies explained there are other factors that can affect results.
5. Davies thinks the effects on the job market are serious.
6. The impact of education depends on the region and some individual factors.

#### 4 Key language

a. Complete the sentences from the article using only one word in each gap.

1. Davies warned that links \_\_\_\_\_ change because of the UK's recent expansion in higher education.
2. This is also \_\_\_\_\_ to be worse for less fortunate students.
3. Researchers said investing in education \_\_\_\_\_ help to reduce differences in global death rates.

b. Look at the sentences you completed and answer the questions:

1. Which two words/phrases are used to talk about a possibility?
2. Which word/phrase is used to show a high probability of something happening?

c. Work in pairs. Tell your partner about the future of education in your country.

Remember to use *can*, *may* and *be likely to*.

#### 5 Discussion

a. Discuss these statements.

- "Not going to school has consequences beyond health."
- "Education 'helps you to build better social connections.'"
- "Education 'makes you better at accessing and understanding information that can help you make better decisions.'"

Every year spent in school or university improves life expectancy, study says

Level 1: Elementary

## 6 In your own words

- a. In pairs or small groups, do some online research and collect information about the situation in your own country and prepare a presentation about what could be done for people to spend more years in school or university.