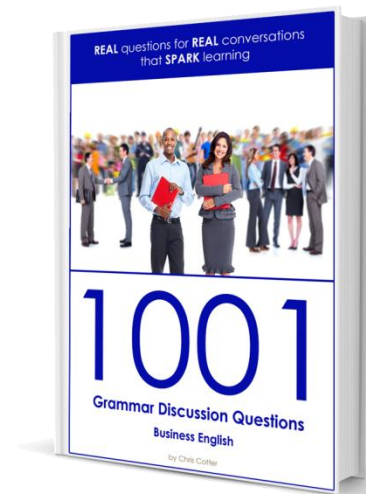
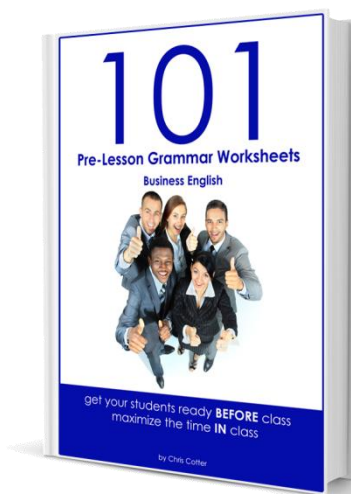
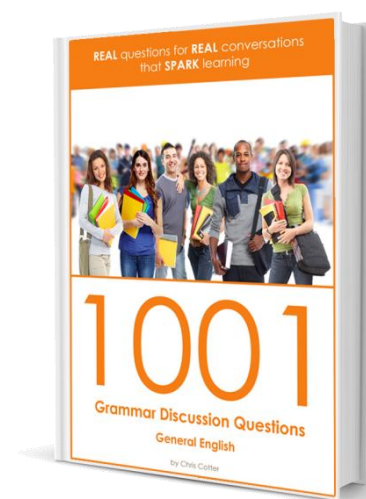
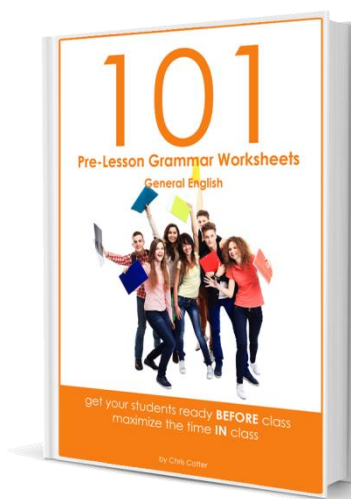
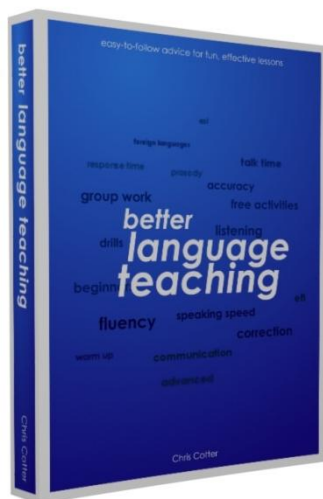


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the ARTICLE (for teachers)

Education Woes

More than one in ten high schools in the US has been labeled a "dropout factory." The distinction is far from flattering, as the nickname applies to schools in which 40% or more of the children don't graduate.

The greatest concentration of these dubious schools lies in large urban centers and areas with high poverty. The surrounding neighborhoods may experience high crime rates, drugs, and violence, and students may need additional help from social services. But officials also point out that some neighborhoods and towns just don't possess a strong tradition underscoring the importance of high school graduation. In the past, there were enough blue-collar jobs to go around.

Many of the students who attend dropout factories enter with poor literacy and math skills, which only exacerbate the search for a solution. The kids enter ninth grade with fifth grade reading skills, for example. Faced with these seemingly insurmountable obstacles, it's no small wonder that so many schools fail to give these children opportunities in the land of opportunity.

Conversely, in Japan, private high schools cater to children without the academic and social skills for traditional school. Expensive, yet easy to enroll, these institutions are degree mills. Principals and administrative staff pressure teachers to administer grades based largely on attendance. If students fail the final test or don't do homework, but attend 100% of the lessons, they can walk out with a B average. What's worse, kids can sleep, text messages, or chat with friends rather than participate in the lesson. Teachers readily admit they're in a quandary, and simply wait to be transferred elsewhere.

Additional woes on the state of education come out of England. Despite a massive program to raise reading rates, reports indicate there has been almost zero impact. Rates remain unchanged since the 1950s.

Teacher's Notes:

* Underlined words in red typeface may be vocabulary unfamiliar to the students.

the Article (for students)

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Notes:

STEP ONE

Do you agree or disagree? Why?

a.	School is important for success in life.
b.	I love(d) school!
c.	Not everyone is suited for high school, so it's okay to dropout.
d.	Not everyone is suited for elementary school, so it's okay to dropout.
e.	We learn a lot of useless subjects at school, which will have no use later in life.

STEP TWO

Rank It!: Which subject is the most important for life? Rank them in order and support your decisions!

a.	World History
b.	Advanced Algebra
c.	Chemistry
d.	English
e.	Business

STEP THREE

The Article: Read the article, and work with a partner to understand it. Lastly, summarize in your own words.

STEP FOUR

Discuss: Talk about the following questions in pairs/groups. Remember to support your answers!

a.	Did you like this article?
b.	How important is education for success? Why do you think so?
c.	How important is education to you personally? Why?
d.	What can be done to improve education and graduation rates?
e.	Are there similar problems in your country? Are there different problems? Please explain.
f.	What will the consequences be in the future for society if children don't graduate? Why?

STEP FIVE

Discuss: What can be done to improve education? Discuss the following points with a partner, and decide if it will help, harm, or have no effect on high school students. Remember to support your answers!

more nationalized tests	teachers salaries depend on the grades of their students:
teaching only useful subjects	???: