**Education**

*“Education is not the filling of a pail,*

*but the lighting of a fire.”*

*- William Butler Yeats*

*“The goal of education is the advancement of knowledge*

*and dissemination of truth.”*

*-John F. Kennedy*

**1. Overview**

* ‘Education’ is the process or act of imparting or acquiring knowledge, so as to develop powers of reasoning and judgment.
* It is the process of giving or receiving systematic instruction, particularly in institutions like schools.
* It is a systematic transfer of knowledge from one generation to another and a means for the enlightening of the individuals. The education process ensures the continuation of heritage and the survival of mankind.

**2. Aims of Education**

The aims of education can be seen from two aspects, namely, the individual and the society’s perspectives.

For the individual:

* **Cognitive / Mental Development** – develop strength to handle stress in life
* **Knowledge empowerment** – enrich their academic and general knowledge
* **Physical Development** – attain greater knowledge and skills to enhance the physical well-being of the individuals
* **Social and Emotional Development** – develop language and social protocol to enhance the well-beings of the individuals
* **Character and Moral Development** – instill moral values and nurture integrity which shape the civic individuals
* **Career Development** - pursue professional qualification to allow individuals to fulfill professional position like law degree for lawyers

For the nation or society:

* **Economic Aim** –Development of a productive labour force
* **Social Aim** – Cultivate civic and upright individuals in the society
* **Political Aim** –Empowers individual politically, inculcating the people a sense of political responsibility. Also it provides the nation the political leadership

**3. Agencies of Education**

* Social and religious institutions
* Peers
* Mass Media
* School
* Family
* Government laws and campaigns

**4. Strengths of education in Singapore**

* The emphasis of Bilingualism
* The adoption of technology
* Very structured and well facilitated
* Well-trained teachers from a very structured education institution
* Accommodate different pace of learning

**5. Limitations of education in Singapore**

* Too exam-orientated, result-oriented
* Elitism – the product of meritocracy
* Lack of focus on skill development and life skills
* Consider the importance of life skills
* Too many activities – over stretching
* Too conforming – undermining the individualism
* Lack of focus on cognitive and mental development
* Risk-averse

**6. Areas of Discussion**

* What are the possible problems that we will encounter in an elitist society?
* Why are the advantages of an elitist society?
* Explain the ways how our education system is creating a conformist society?

Acknowledgements

<http://scholasticadministrator.typepad.com/thisweekineducation/2012/08/cartoons-climb-that-tree.html>

Essay Question for Discussion

1. ‘Increasing access to education will lead to greater social equality.’ Do you agree?
2. A country is great when her people are well educated. How far do you agree?