

## THE OPEN UNIVERSITY

*In 1963 the leader of the Labour Party made a speech explaining plans for a "University on the air" -an educational system which would make use of television, radio and correspondence courses. Many people laughed at the idea, but it became part of the Labour Party's Programme, to give educational opportunity to those people who, for one reason or another, had not had a chance to receive further education. The Open University has been a great success in one respect. About 6000 students of all ages get degrees every year. It is disappointing, however, that the great majority of students are from middleclass, educated backgrounds. There have, however, been a number of men and women, serving long sentences in prison, who have taken courses successfully, and obtained degrees.*

*Students of the Open University receive their lessons and lectures in their homes, by means of special TV and radio programmes. More than 40.000 people applied, but only 25.000 people could be accepted, for the first courses in 1971. By 1980 there were about 60.000 undergraduates.*

*Written work is corrected by part-time tutors who meet **their** students once a month to discuss their work with them and to set them on the right course. Science students are given mini-laboratories which can be set up in their own homes.*

## QUESTIONS

- Answer the following questions in your own words:
  - What kind of students was the Open University designed for?
  - Was the idea of an Open University accepted easily?
  - How often do students see their tutors?
  - Where are practical science experiments done?
- Are the following statements True or False? Support your answers with evidence from the text.
  - By 1963 the Open University had already started.
  - The Government wanted most of the students to be middleclass.
  - Open University students regularly attend classes.
  - In 1980, 60.000 students graduated from the Open University.
- Fill in the gaps or complete the following sentences:
  - The Open University \_\_\_\_\_ a success since it started.
  - Those people \_\_\_\_\_ are serving long sentences in prison are also able \_\_\_\_\_ use of the educational facilities.
  - Mass media are \_\_\_\_\_ importance in education.
  - A speech \_\_\_\_\_ by the Leader of the Labour Party.
- Who or What do the following words refer to?
  - it (line 3)
  - their (line 14)
- Match the words on the left with one of the words on the right.
 

a) sentence	1) conference
b) further	2) higher
c) chance	3) word
d) speech	4) occasional
	5) opportunity
	6) shout
	7) a talk
	8) conviction
- Write about 50/60 words on the following topic: *Give arguments for and against both traditional universities and the Open University.*