

Intermediate A, Round 2

"That we regret the idea that the primary goal of education should be employment"

1. Type of Topic

This is a regret, or counterfactual topic. The best interpretation of these topics is *"That the world would have been better if people did not believe that the primary goal of education should be employment"*. This is unlike a normative (model) topic, in which both teams can propose a model describing exactly what a world where people don't believe that the primary goal of education should be employment looks like. Instead, both teams should use a reasoned argument to illustrate what the world would most likely look like if the public didn't hold the view that the primary goal of education is employment, and compare this to the world we currently live in.

A counterfactual argument requires reasoning that shows why a particular outcome is likely; for instance, the affirmative team's "counterfactual" might be that in a world where people didn't believe that education is the primary goal of employment, people would be more motivated to invest their time at school in interests and pursuits which give them true happiness or satisfaction. However, to prove this, it is important for them to provide a clear logical mechanism that explains why people not holding this belief would lead to such an outcome.

2. Background / Context

There are different philosophies about the purpose of education and its role in society.

One perspective is that the primary goal of education should be employment, taking into account the need for individuals to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to enter the workforce and contribute to the economy. In this case, the goal of education is to focus on practical, job-related skills that prepare students for specific careers, to increase a student's employability and economic prospects.

Alternatively, you could consider the perspective that education serves a broader purpose beyond simply preparing individuals for the workforce. In this case, the goal of an educational system is to nurture critical thinking, creativity, and personal development, in addition to providing vocational training.

Consider which system is capable of empowering individuals to become well-rounded citizens who can contribute to society in various ways, not just through employment.

The debate also touches on issues such as social mobility, economic inequality, and the changing nature of work in an increasingly globalized and technologically advanced world.

3. Questions for Consideration

- What are the essential skills and knowledge that individuals need to thrive in the modern workforce, and how should education systems prioritize teaching these skills?
- How do societal and economic factors influence the perceived importance of employment as the primary goal of education?
- What is the role of education in fostering personal growth, critical thinking, and lifelong learning, beyond immediate job prospects?
- To what extent should education be tailored to meet the needs of specific industries or sectors, versus providing a broad, general education that promotes versatility and adaptability?
- How can education systems address the challenge of technological advancement and automation, which may disrupt traditional employment models and require new skills?
- What measures can be taken to ensure that education promotes equal opportunities for all individuals, regardless of socioeconomic background, and reduces disparities in access to employment?
- How does the concept of "employability" intersect with broader societal goals such as social cohesion, civic engagement, and cultural enrichment?
- What role should policymakers, employers, educators, and other stakeholders play in shaping the goals and priorities of the education system in relation to employment?

- How can education systems balance the demands of preparing students for immediate employment with the need to cultivate skills and attributes that are valuable in a rapidly changing, uncertain future job market?

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