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## PRACTICE DICTATION

Young people see themselves as responsible citizens. They want to be more involved in community life. They want their views to be heard on a wide/ variety of subjects. Thus, young people must be given room for participation at various levels. It must be active and represent-

ative. It must not exclude any type of commitment. Moreover, young people have to be involved in the decision-making process. Partici/pation must be encouraged, without exception. This means making it easier for those who have the greatest difficulties and providing greater access

### 1. min 148 syll/min

to existing structures for young people who are not members of organizations. Young people would like to see the public authorities recog/nize that education and training are not restricted to the traditional and formal education types. In their opinion, their learning ex-

perience would benefit from being viewed holistically, taking into account the non-formal aspects of education. For young people,/ autonomy is an essential demand. Young people are affected not only by policies on employment and social protection but al-

### 2. min 148 syll/min

so by housing and transport policies. These are all important in enabling young people to become autonomous sooner.

### 2. min 11 seconds 32 syll/min

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## COMPETITION TEXT

### SECTION C

Young people largely share the same values and the same ambitions, but also the same difficulties. Nowadays they enter the job market and start/ a family later in life. They are switching backwards and forwards between work and learning. School and university as well as work and the so-

cial environment no longer play the same integrating role that they used to. Young people are acquiring autonomous status later and lat/er in life. Young people have lost confidence in the existing decision-making systems. They feel a degree of disaffection in terms of the

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traditional forms of participation in public life and in youth organizations. Some of them do not always find their own concerns reflected in poli/cies conceived by and for their elders. The majority, though, want to influence policies, but have not found the appropriate ways of doing so. Nonetheless, young

people have a lot to say because, after all, these are precisely the people who are primarily affected by economic change, demographic imbal/ance and globalization. We are expecting them to create new forms of social relations, and to cope with differences and to find enrichment in them. De-

#### 2. min 164 syll/min

spite the more complex social and economic context, young people are well equipped to adapt. It is up to the policy-makers to facilitate this process of change by/ making young people full members in our societies. Young people have a clear message that they want their voice to be heard and want to be regarded as legally competent stake-

holders. They want to play their part in building society and to influence the debate on the way it develops. It is time now to regard youth as a positive force ra/ther than as a problem. In other words, we have to give young people the wherewithal to express their ideas and to test them against similar ideas from other players

#### 3. min 180 syll/min

in civil society. It goes without saying that young people are not all identical. Social, economic, cultural and regional differences can be seen both collectively/ and individually. National public authorities must be attentive to this. We suggest changes in many areas. The proposals confirm to a large extent the analy-

sis of the challenges facing us in the field of youth and the need for renewed political action. Below there is a summary of the proposals addressed to public authorities by/ young people and all other related parties. Participation of young people is a recurring topic on which many texts have been written worldwide. There is need for political will to

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prioritize participation of young people in various forms. The proposals have themselves been a practical example of participation. The strongest message given by young people is that they/ want to play an active part in the society in which they live. After all, if they are excluded from society, democracy is not being allowed to function properly. The view that they are dis-

interested or uncommitted is groundless and unjust. They feel that they are given neither the resources nor the information and training that would enable them to play a more active role. Youth organ/izations also believe the right to participate is fundamental and must apply to all without discrimination. Many organizations strive to help young people to put this right into practice.

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## SECTION B

The number of young people who participate in local or national elections is generally quite low. However, there are plenty of indications that they take a keen interest in public life. Researchers view/ this gap between expectations and practice as explaining the wish and the need for greater participation. This demand is not surprising, nor is it new, but the way it is expressed has changed. Levels of involvement in elec-

tions also vary greatly from one individual to another. Young people want the right to give their opinion on all aspects of their daily lives, such as family, school, work or their local area. However, in do/ing so, they are also involved in broader economic, social and political issues. Their interest is not limited to local issues, but it also concerns their region, country and the world. In other words, the right

**6. min 231 syll/min**

to participate should not be limited and they must be allowed to do so without restriction. The approach taken by civil society organizations is similar, although they are required, in practice, to put the emphasis on/ more targeted objectives or groups. They advocate a more integrated and long-term approach, which means that they encourage all forms of participation and all activities based on young people's individual commitment and voluntary ser-

vice. Participation requires young people to acquire knowledge and skills or improve existing ones. It involves a gradual learning process. The first stage starts generally in their own environment of young people in school and local districts./ It has turned out to be crucial. It gives young people the opportunity to gain the experience needed to reach the subsequent stages of the learning process. Moreover, in the local community in particular, participation

**7. min 250 syll/min**

can bring about changes which are tangible and visible. At this level, young people also have the chance not only to give their opinion but also to be involved in decision-making processes. In the second phase, young people become aware that a whole/ series of decisions affecting the local area are taken at higher levels of decision-making. Action therefore needs to be taken to move from one to the other by creating links and networks. Moreover, participation allows young people

to acquire knowledge and skills which they must try to substantiate. The division between formal and non-formal education related to this is, however, perceived as counter-productive. So, while school remains an excellent forum for learning participat/ory practices insociety, it still has the disadvantage, in young people's opinion, of not taking them into account as active citizens. Young people regard existing participation mechanisms as unsatisfactory. They are wary of some

**8. min 269 syll/min**

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forms of representative democracy but do not have the same reservations when it comes to involvement at the local level, which is more direct and immediate. Opinions on youth organizations are divided. Some regard them as the most appropriate structures for participation. Others fail to see their attraction and prefer groups which are active at the local level, youth parliaments and other similar bodies. Some believe that belonging to some organization is one of the conditions of participation. Others feel that

existing organizations no longer fulfil the expectations of some young people and call for innovative approaches to make them more accessible. Like young people, the youth organizations want an increase in public funds for non-governmental organizations, in keeping with their social function. Organizations have been seen as moving further and further away from young people's aspirations, given their social basis and their practices. In addition to their traditional members, they have to find ways of involving young people who do

**9. min 288 syll/min**

not want to belong to an organization. Thanks to new communication technologies and in particular the Internet there exists new opportunities which promote access to information. They seem better suited to increase participation that is now gradually moving away from collective participation and towards more individual forms. Young people object to purely symbolic forms of participation. Consultation with young people is felt to be a good approach provided it results in their opinions and recommendations being taken in-

to account. The researchers speak very strongly in favor of involving young people even in the decision-making processes. Young people take the view that a legal framework is one of the necessary requirements for real participation. Youth organizations also call for both existing and innovative forms of participation to be encouraged. This presupposes recognition of, and support for, existing or new structures. Greater resources are needed, in terms of both time and money. Young people's opinions and contributions should be included in the decisions.

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## SECTION A

Prerequisite for the participation of young people is access to appropriate information. For several years various bodies have been trying to improve the quality of information provided for young people, but they seem not to have succeeded. In general, they object not to the lack of in/formation but to the fact that it is not very useful. Young people need specific information that meets their current needs but is also devoid of prejudice or remarks which are offensive to young people or minorities. Youth organizations also highlight the need for information that is more targeted

and less centralized. Researchers feel that the creation of a legal framework, education for citizenship and attempts to establish a dialogue with young people are prerequisites for participation. But we must go beyond that and open up a new joint undertaking together with young people and oth/er involved parties. Young people spend an increasing amount of time in education. Formal learning in schools, universities and through vocational training centers and non-formal and informal learning outside of these settings are essential in developing the skills that young people need today. Education and

**11. min 328 syll/min**

training systems are strongly criticized by both young people and experts. Some countries have carried out fundamental reforms of their school systems. Nevertheless, the quality and effectiveness of school education today has to be improved in order to ensure that young people acquire appropriate skills which enable them to become/ active and responsible citizens. This ensures their integration into society and readiness for working life. It is frequently stated that schools and education structures are insufficiently democratic and do not encourage participation or provide sufficient learning opportunities. They should be open and

take into account society's economic and social realities and demands. To achieve sustainable social and economic development, we need citizens with knowledge in science and technology. For instance, to increase the number of young people who pursue a career in science or technology, educa/tion systems have to be adapted in order to get more young people interested in science. Many young people leave school and training before acquiring formal qualifications. The rate is still, on average, high. However, attempting to motivate young people to remain in formal education and training is not the only so-

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lution which can be envisioned. Combining study, work and leisure activities with informal, non-formal and formal learning experiences, could enhance the quality and effectiveness of education and training and make them more appealing to young people. The shortcomings in today's schools are not primarily seen as being the fault of teachers/ or of schools as such, but of the education system as a whole, which relies on cooperation between three actors, that is families, society and schools. Teachers are only one part of the school system and their role must be perceived in the wider social and political context. Nevertheless, teachers need better training and working conditions. Young peo-

ple point out that there are too many social and economic obstacles facing education. Improving the quality of education and training means guaranteeing open and ongoing access to lifelong learning in all fields. Support for integrating disadvantaged young people into the education system must be intensified, for instance, by guaranteeing free education from primary school to university. A change in approach of learning and teaching is needed. The approach should be more learner-centered. Besides the participation of young people in education should be developed. Schools should facilitate also pupils' involvement in shaping their own education. In many

**13. min 370 syll/min**

countries, the performance of education structures is severely criticized by young people. Schools are unable to provide enough content relevant to young people's needs and interests. Education should not be limited to the skills on which the labor market is focused. Education contributes, from an early age, to the integration into society. It can/ also help to enhance the employability of young people. Young people demand foreign language teaching and educational exchange programs. They are interested in many other fields. They ask for a stronger emphasis on practical subjects. Education about health issues is also essential. Young people should also be encouraged to take an interest in sci-

entific research, mathematics and technologies. Setting out to develop balanced, all-encompassing curricula which are not overloaded is a challenge. They should be designed to provide the necessary knowledge and skills and also to reflect the multicultural nature of our societies. Joint strategies on the part of the various organizations providing education would seem to be appropriate if we are to improve our understanding of what the new basic skills are and how they can be taught and learned. The recognition of qualifications and skills is a key element in developing mobility. Effective ways must be found for recognizing skills acquired through formal and non-formal learning methods. The role of

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non-formal learning and the need for a better understanding and recognition of skills that have been acquired through youth work should be emphasized. Furthermore, the mutual recognition of education and vocational training as part of the education system has to be improved. The need for lifelong learning has revealed over the past few years that the necessary skills can be acquired through learn/ing in formal, informal and non-formal contexts. Non-formal learning is typically undervalued as not being real learning. Formal learning is typically provided by an education or training institution and leads to certification. It is structured and is intentional from the learner's perspective. Non-formal learning on the other hand is not provided by an ed-

ucation or training institution and typically does not lead to certification. It is, however, both structured and intentional. It is the result of daily activities related to work, family and leisure. What we learn in formal settings is only one part of acquiring skills. We learn also in sports associations, within the family and in political life. Young/ people see non-formal learning often as the most positive and efficient counterpart to a largely inefficient and unattractive system of formal education. Its advantage lies mainly in the fact that it is voluntary and flexible and enables participation. It allows also the right to make mistakes and is a closer link to young people's interests and aspirations.

**15. min 412 syll/min**