

Remote learning: Reading texts**TEXT A****Vietnam**

After our annual two-week *Tet* (Vietnamese New Year) holiday, I was really looking forward to returning to school. But late on Sunday evening (2 February), my mum told me that I wouldn't have to return to school the next day. For the next few weeks, we waited at home for news of when we could return. I live in the countryside, and we don't have great internet, but our teachers would make some short lessons and post them online for us to watch (I used my dad's smartphone to watch these, as I don't have a laptop). Also, our teachers would make some worksheets for us to do – my mum would collect them from my school and my dad returned them when I finished. I heard that in the big cities, children could watch lessons for all subjects on local TV and also had some live online lessons with their teachers. After three months, at the start of May, we could return to school. I was so pleased to see all my school friends again, as well as all my teachers.

Nguyen Viet Anh, Grade 8 student, central Vietnam

TEXT B**The Netherlands**

Here in the Netherlands, students had to get used to teachers moving their lessons 100 per cent online. Most students already need a laptop as part of their regular school routine, so we are quite lucky to have the facilities to move to online teaching quite easily. Teachers were given the freedom to do it in whichever way they preferred: recording a video of themselves explaining and then putting it on YouTube for students to watch when it suited them; planning a virtual Microsoft Teams session where all students had to be present; individual one-to-ones via telephone with students that needed the extra help ...

Right now, as the lockdown is slowly coming to an end, secondary school students go to school two days per week and receive online teaching the other three days. The two days at school are filled with rules: keeping their distance; instead of moving from classroom to classroom they stay in the same room with the same small group of students the whole day and the teachers are the ones that move around; all breaks take place in that same classroom.

TEXT C**Egypt**

Schools are closed until September – there is no online teaching taking place. I don't know if this is the case for university students. Most Egyptian people I spoke with are teaching their children at home.

Providing good education is a challenge in Egypt because government schools are severely 'underfunded', which means teachers don't have sufficient support from education officials nor the resources (e.g. photocopiers and papers) to carry out their work. It's left to the parents to teach their children at home in rural areas, which is difficult because most parents are not well educated, so as a last resort they send their children to private lessons offered by schoolteachers. Parents who live in cities like Cairo send their children to private schools if they can afford it.

TEXT D**Italy**

Schools closed nationwide on 9 March. Almost 12 million learners had to learn from home. The school year ended on 5 June, with most students not returning to the school building. Now students who are leaving school are doing their final exams with their teachers, using masks and social-distancing measures inside the school building.

Teachers in my son's secondary school were teaching online within a week of school closure here in Naples and did a brilliant job of keeping everyone in lessons and keeping things fairly 'normal' during the school day. One son was on the computer and the other was on his phone connecting to lessons, while my husband and I were both working from laptops and my other son was at home attending lectures online, broadcast from his university in England. It was difficult to find a quiet place for any of us to be and concentrate.

My son (aged 17) said the lessons were not as good because there were connection problems, he couldn't see well on the phone screen and it was more difficult to concentrate. He also missed the social side of meeting his friends. He liked the fact that he could stay in bed later and study for an exam at the same time as supposedly 'listening' in another lesson.

TEXT E**Peru**

There are three main channels to access classes here in Peru.

RADIO: In many inaccessible areas, children need to climb the highlands with their radio devices to areas where radio signal is possible. They are not necessarily accompanied by teachers, although there are stories of teachers actually walking students uphill to accompany them – or parents.

According to a recent study, radio is only used by around 20 per cent of users of the strategy, the lowest rate.

WEB: Internet access is an issue in the country and it still has low rates. Many people access the website through smartphones. Research has found out that only 22 per cent of families access the content online, which is still low; 81 per cent have only one device available and about 18 per cent have two devices available (e.g. computer and smartphone). The issue with the web is the support that parents feel they need to provide – many parents feel they need support with this. Primarily it is a female family member that supports education (67 per cent of cases). This leaves male members supporting learning in about 33 per cent of cases only, which sheds interesting light in terms of family roles and expectations.

TV. Probably the way most people follow classes is through TV (78 per cent). You might notice some students even wear their uniform to attend their lessons in front of the TV! Again here, the family feel they need to accompany their children in the process. TV programmes are delivered by a combination of TV anchors/professional communicators and guest teachers. The content is combined with printed materials that the Ministry has distributed and also the materials available in the Aprendo en Casa website.