

The lefties who need a hand

adapted from an article by Sara Harris



- 1 UP UNTIL the end of World War II, all children were forced to use their right hand to write. Teachers would tie their left hand behind their back and even cane them if they picked up a pen with their left hand. Thankfully, such barbaric punishments are now illegal, but some experts argue that left-handed children remain disadvantaged in the classrooms. They claim that children who are left-handed can find writing more difficult than their right-handed friends and can quickly fall behind.
- 2 A study published in 2008 showed that children who are left-handed perform worse at school than right-handers. Antony Clark, head of Malvern College, recently re-ignited the debate on the subject by claiming that pupils should be given spoken as well as written exams to prevent left-handed children falling behind. He told how he had observed left-handed pupils having greater difficulty producing legible script. "When I see students writing – and many left-handers have difficulty with script – one imagines that they write less and perhaps achieve lower grades than those who write more," he said.
- 3 Critics, however, point out that being left-handed is not a barrier to success. Five of the last seven U.S. presidents have been left-handed and conservative Prime Minister Winston Churchill was also 'a leftie', as is Prime Minister David Cameron.
- 4 Cary Cooper, professor of psychology and health at Lancaster University, believes special dispensation should only be given to left-handers if they have other learning difficulties, such as dyslexia. "Left-handed people are no longer forced to write right-handed, which did cause problems in the past," he says. "Being left-handed is not a learning difficulty in itself. We are all using new technologies such as computers and texting, and left and right-handed people are losing the ability to write. We must maintain the ability to write one way or another."

Daily Mail, 2010

Tekst 4 The lefties who need a hand

- 1p 8 Which of the following becomes clear about left-handed children from paragraphs 1 and 2?
- A It is harder for them to succeed in the present education system.
 - B Their teachers find it difficult to find educational materials adjusted to their needs.
 - C The latest changes in legislation have failed to improve their treatment in schools.
 - D They need more time to transform their thoughts into written text.
 - E They score significantly better when given tests that contain audio material.
- 1p 9 What is the function of paragraph 3?
- A to counterbalance the idea that left-handed people are unambitious
 - B to emphasise the fact that support for left-handed children is required
 - C to make clear that left-handed persons can have flourishing careers
 - D to make fun of the idea that being left-handed is a serious handicap
- 1p 10 What does Cary Cooper (paragraph 4) claim?
- A Adapting to the present digital era is easier for right-handed people than for left-handed people.
 - B Children who find reading difficult often tend to have trouble mastering other subjects as well.
 - C Giving certain groups educational privileges withheld from other groups causes considerable inequalities.
 - D Regardless of handedness, the use of electronic devices has an adverse effect on preserving an essential skill.

Bronvermelding

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