

# Unit 6

## Path to Higher Education

### Objectives

After the completion of this unit, you will–

- be familiar with Rabindronath Tagore’s idea of a university.
- understand the purpose of university education.
- get to know the Eastern concept of an ideal university.
- know who is an ideal teacher.
- identify the differences between the Eastern and Western concept of university.

### Overview

Lesson 1: æAn Eastern University" by Rabindranath Tagore

Lesson 2: Access to Higher Education in Bangladesh

Lesson 3: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Higher Education

### Answer Key

## Lesson 1: "An Eastern University" by Rabindranath Tagore



### Introduction

*Rabindranath Tagore was not only an outstanding poet but also a very committed educator. He has written extensively in both Bengali and English about his philosophy of education as well as his educational experiments and his desire to transform teaching and learning in Bengal. Here is an example of his thinking about education and desire to implement it in his institution.*

#### 1. Warm-up activities:

Rabindranath Tagore set up a university with the expectation that it would be truly eastern and reflect the ideals of education that he cherished and found in the system of education once practiced in the Indian subcontinent. Find out the name and other details of the university from the internet and make a note of three sentences about it.

#### Answer the following questions:

- Did Tagore go to any university?
- What is the name of the university founded by Rabindranath Tagore?
- Have you ever visited any university? If you have, now write a description of the university you visited.

#### 2. Read the following excerpt from Tagore's essay and answer the questions that follow:

Universities should never be made into mechanical organizations for collecting and distributing knowledge. Through them the people should offer their intellectual hospitality, their wealth of mind to others, and earn their proud right in return to receive gifts from the rest of the world. But in the whole length and breadth of India there is not a single University established in the modern time where a foreign or an Indian student can properly be acquainted with the best products of the Indian mind. For that we have to cross the sea, and knock at the doors of France and Germany. Educational institutions in our country are India's alms-bowl of knowledge; they

lower our intellectual self-respect; they encourage us to make a foolish display of decorations composed of borrowed feathers....

Man's intellect has a natural pride in its own aristocracy, which is the pride of its culture. Culture only acknowledges the excellence whose criticism is in its inner perfection, not in any external success. When this pride succumbs to some compulsion of necessity or lure of material advantage, it brings humiliation to the intellectual man. Modern India, through her very education, has been made to suffer this humiliation. Once she herself provided her children with a culture which was the product of her own ages of thought and creation. But it has been thrust aside, and we are made to tread the mill of passing examinations, not for learning anything, but for notifying that we are qualified for employments under organizations conducted in English. Our educated community is not a cultured community, but a community of qualified candidates. Meanwhile the proportion of possible employments to the number of claimants has gradually been growing narrower, and the consequent disaffection has been widespread. At last the very authorities who are responsible for this are blaming their victims. Such is the perversity of human nature. It bears its worst grudge against those it has injured....

In the Bengali language there is a modern maxim which can be translated, 'He who learns to read and write rides in a carriage and pair.' In English there is a similar proverb, 'Knowledge is power.' It is an offer of a prospective bribe to the student, a promise of an ulterior reward which is more important than knowledge itself. . . . Unfortunately, our very education has been successful in depriving us of our real initiative and our courage of thought. The training we get in our schools has the constant implication in it that it is not for us to produce but to borrow. And we are casting about to borrow our educational plans from European institutions. The trampled plants of Indian corn are dreaming of recouping their harvest from the neighbouring wheat fields. To change the figure, we forget that, for proficiency in walking, it is better to train the muscles of our own legs than to strut upon-wooden ones of foreign make, although they clatter and cause more surprise at our skill in using them than if they were living and real.

But when we go to borrow help from a foreign neighborhood we overlook the fact that among the Europeans the living spirit of the University is widely spread in their society, their parliament, their literature, and the numerous activities of their corporate life. In all these functions they are in perpetual touch with the great personality of the\* land which is creative and heroic in its constant acts of self-expression and self-sacrifice. They have their thoughts published in their books as well as through the medium of living men who think those thoughts, and who criticize, compare and disseminate them. Some at least of the drawbacks of their academic education are redeemed by the living energy of the intellectual personality pervading their social organism. It is like the stagnant reservoir of water which finds its purification in the showers of rain to which it keeps itself open. But, to our misfortune, we have in India all the furniture of the European University except the human teacher....

A most important truth, which we are apt to forget, is that a teacher can never truly teach unless he is still learning himself. A lamp can never light another lamp unless it continues to burn its own flame. The teacher who has come to the end of his subject, who has no living traffic with his knowledge, but merely repeats his lessons to his students, can only load their minds; he cannot quicken them- Truth not only must inform but inspire. If the inspiration dies out, and the information only accumulates, then truth loses its infinity. The greater part of our learning in the

schools has been waste because, for most of our teachers, their subjects are like dead specimens of once living things, with which they have a learned acquaintance, but no communication of life and love.

The educational institution, therefore, which I have in mind has primarily for its object the constant pursuit of truth, from which the imparting of truth naturally follows. It must not be a dead cage in which living minds are fed with food artificially prepared. It should be an open house, in which students and teachers are at one. They must live their complete life together, dominated by a common aspiration for truth and a need of sharing all the delights of culture. In former days the great master-craftsmen had students in their workshops where they co-operated in shaping things to perfection. That was the place where knowledge could become living - that knowledge which not only has its substance and law, but its atmosphere, subtly informed by a creative personality. For intellectual knowledge also has its aspect of creative art, in which the man who explores truth expresses something which is human in him - his enthusiasm, his courage, his sacrifice, his honesty, and his skill. In merely academic teaching we find subjects, but not the man who pursues the subjects; therefore the vital part of education remains incomplete.



**3. Answer the following questions:**

- a. Why does Tagore criticize the Indian universities of his time?
- b. What, according to Tagore, should a university do?
- c. Why, do you think, 'Modern India' (Tagore's phrase) abandoned its traditional system of education?
- d. What could be the equivalent of the maxim, 'He who learns to read and write, rides in a carriage and pair' in Bangla?
- e. Do you agree with Tagore when he says that the training we get in our schools makes us believe that we must borrow rather than produce?
- f. Who is Tagore's ideal teacher?
- g. What positive features of European universities does Tagore highlight in the essay?

**4. Explain the following ideas in your own words:**

- a. Knowledge is power.
- b. It is better to train the muscles of our own legs than to strut upon wooden ones of foreign make.
- c. A lamp can never light another lamp unless it continues to burn its own flame.
- d. Intellectual knowledge also has its aspect of creative art.
- e. Our educated community is not a cultured community, but a community of qualified candidates.

**5. What do the following words/terms mean:**

- a. hospitality
- b. borrowed feathers
- c. humiliation
- d. prospective
- e. initiative
- f. trampled

- g. recoup
- h. perpetual
- i. disseminate

**6. Which of the following statements are true and which are false in the context of the essay? Write T/F besides the statements.**

- a. Tagore believes that Indian universities only collect and distribute knowledge.
- b. Educational institutions in India teach their students to borrow and not produce. Culture is fashion which is external.
- c. Our educated community is a cultured community.
- d. European universities explore self-expression and self-sacrifice.
- e. A teacher should have an active contact with knowledge.
- f. Educational institutions should constantly teach the past events.

**7. Identify the parts of speech of these words and make a sentence with each one:**

Enthusiasm, pursues, acquaintance, disseminate, proficiency, unfortunately, meanwhile, excellence, properly, aristocracy, gradually, perversity, intellect

**Lesson 2 : Access to Higher Education in Bangladesh**



**1. Warm-up activity:**

- There are different kinds of higher educational institutions in Bangladesh.
- Can you mention some of the types of higher educational institutions in Bangladesh?
- What do you think about your higher education? Write briefly on your plan on getting higher education.
- Why is higher education necessary? Do you think that higher education in Bangladesh is good enough?



## 2. Read the following text and answer the questions that follow:

Tertiary education in Bangladesh comprises two categories of institutions: degree awarding universities and colleges affiliated with the National University (NU). There were only 4 universities in Bangladesh at the time of independence in 1971. All of those universities were publicly financed autonomous entities. At present, there are 35 such universities.

Private universities are a relatively new phenomenon in this country. In the early 1990s, the private sector came forward to establish universities. Since then the country has experienced a spectacular growth in private universities—mostly in and around Dhaka and couple of other large cities. At present, there are 79 private universities. The number of colleges providing tertiary level education is around 1,400. Most of them offer BA (pass) education of three year duration; only one-third of them offer B.A. (Honors) courses and some offer MA degrees as well. All of these colleges are affiliated with the National University.



### Accessibility to higher education

Accessibility to higher education implies that students get the opportunity to get university education and sufficient support from educational institutions. Increasing enrolment at the secondary and higher secondary levels puts pressure on higher educational institutions. But due to limited capacity, only a small number of students may be enrolled in universities. Thus, each year a large number of students are denied access to higher education. Also, due to poverty and increase in educational expenses, students of the lower middle class do not get easy access to higher education. Moreover, those who get places in the universities have limited access to avail all kinds of diversified educational facilities relating to their study fields.

Only about 12 percent of graduates enter higher educational institutions. More than 80 percent of these students are admitted to NU affiliated colleges. Others are absorbed by the public and private universities. In the last two decades, there has been a substantial rise in the number of students in private universities. According to the UGC Annual Report 2010, the number rose from 88,669 in 2005 to 2,00,752 in 2010.



### Public universities in Bangladesh

Public Universities are the first choices of most students. The public universities offer a wide range of subjects in Science, Commerce, Liberal Arts, Humanities, Engineering and Technology, Law, Education and Medicine. Public universities attract the best minds to teaching although monetary compensation for teachers is anything but attractive. Library, laboratory, Internet and research facilities are much better there than anywhere else in the country. Seminars, symposiums, lectures, workshops, debates, and exhibitions are often held in these institutions and there is ample scope for national and international exposure for promising young knowledge seekers. Moreover, public universities offer residential and boarding facilities at low cost/subsidized rates.



#### Annual total intake and total number of students in selected public universities:

Name of the university	Annual Total Intake	Total students	Male students	Female students
University of Dhaka	5219	28772	19119	9653
University of Chittagong	3773	19301	14192	5109
University of Rajshahi	4305	26909	19133	7776
Khulna University	642	4423	3440	983
Comilla University	350	591	417	174
Jahangirnagar University	1361	10417	7082	3335
Islamic University	1210	10109	7913	2196
Bangladesh Agriculture University	757	4621	3211	1410
Jagannath University	2415	25896	21774	4122
Bangladesh University of Engineering & Technology	885	7218	5865	1353
Shahjalal University of Science and Technology	1160	7930	6156	1774
Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University	Na	1116	695	421

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3. Answer the following questions:

- a. How many public and private universities are there in Bangladesh?
- b. What percentage of students gets opportunities for admission into tertiary education?
- c. Why don't the students of the lower middle class get easy access to higher education?
- d. Why do the students choose public universities?
- e. What kinds of academic activities are regularly held at universities?

**3. Identify the meanings of the following words:**

- a. Comprise
- b. Phenomenon
- c. Spectacular
- d. Tertiary
- e. Affiliated
- f. Support
- g. Enroll
- h. Compensation
- i. Symposium
- j. Subsidy

**4. Make sentences with the following phrases:**

- i. at present
- ii. due to
- iii. access to
- iv. as well as
- v. in and around

**5. Write a paragraph within 150 words on "Higher Education in Bangladesh".**



## Lesson 3 : 21<sup>st</sup> Century Higher Education

### 1. Warm-up activity:

- What do you think should be the focus of 21<sup>st</sup> century education? Do you think that your country's higher education fulfill the demand of the 21<sup>st</sup> century? If not, then why?

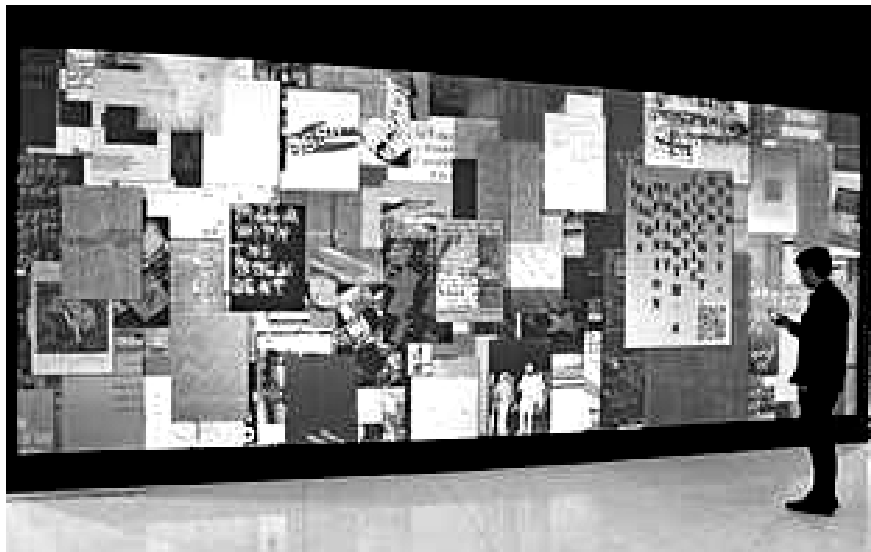


### 2. Now read the following text and answer the

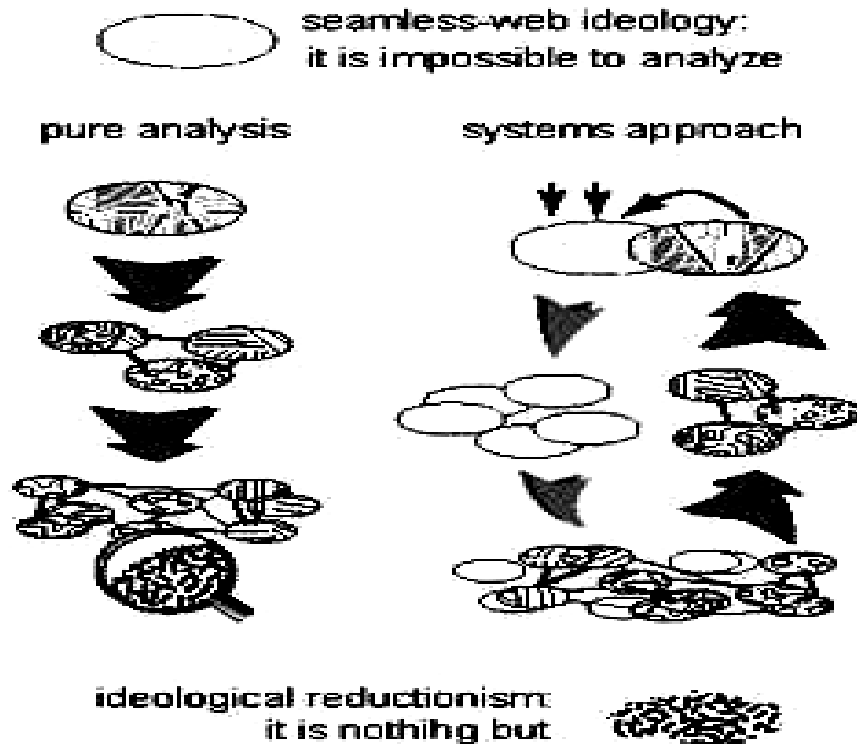
#### questions that follow:

Many educators believe that one of the functions of education today should be to impart 21<sup>st</sup> century skills that are indispensable for participation, achievement and competitiveness in the global economy. Beyond the assessment of reading, mathematics and science, it is now necessary to train other essential skills that are in demand in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. All people, not just an elite few, need 21<sup>st</sup> century skills that will increase their ability, employability and readiness for citizenship. Such skills include:

- **Thinking critically and making the best use of the barrage of information** that comes their way every day on the Web, in the media, in homes, workplaces and everywhere else. Critical thinking empowers people to assess the credibility, accuracy and value of information, analyze and evaluate information, make reasoned decisions and take purposeful action.



- **Solving complex, multi-disciplinary problems** that all workers in every kind of workplace encounter routinely. The challenges workers face don't come in a multiple-choice format and typically don't have a single right answer. Nor can they be neatly categorized as 'math problems,' for example, or passed off to someone at a higher pay grade.



Businesses expect employees at all levels to identify problems, think through solutions and alternatives, and explore new options if their approaches don't work. Often, this work involves groups of people with different knowledge and skills who, collectively, add value to their organizations.

- **Creativity and entrepreneurial thinking skills** are always associated with job creation.

Many of the fastest-growing jobs and emerging industries rely on workers' creative capacity—the ability to think unconventionally and produce astonishing work. Students should develop the ability to recognize and act on opportunities and the willingness to embrace risks, for example.



- **Communicating and collaborating** with teams of people across cultural, geographic and language boundaries is a necessity in diverse and multinational workplaces and communities. Mutually beneficial relationships are important in achieving goals everywhere, not just in business.

- **Making innovative use of knowledge, information and opportunities** which create new services, processes and products. The global marketplace rewards organizations that rapidly and

routinely find better ways of doing things. Companies want workers who can contribute to this environment.

These skills will prepare everyone to prepare for the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and contribute meaningfully to the country's development.



**3. Read the text and try to give meanings to the following words:**

- a. Indispensable
- b. Empower
- c. Credibility
- d. Unconventional
- e. Dynamic
- f. Beneficial
- g. Emerging
- h. Typically
- i. Category
- j. Evaluate

**4. Write answers to the following questions:**

- a. What does education mean in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?
- b. What skills should be acquired by all people of the 21<sup>st</sup> century?
- c. How does critical thinking help people?
- d. What kinds of problems employees have to face in their work places?
- e. Apart from the skills mentioned in the passage, is there any other skills that you think important?

**5. Write a summary of the passage.**

**6. Suppose you have a pen friend in Australia. You want to share your views of education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with him/her. Now write a letter to him/her exchanging your views of the 21<sup>st</sup> century education.**



**Answer Key:**

**Lesson 1**

3.

- a. Tagore criticizes the Indian universities of his time because none of them give the chance to a foreign or an Indian student can properly be acquainted with the best products of the Indian mind.
- b. According to Rabindranath, a university should give the students chance to offer intellectual hospitality, their wealth of mind to others, and earn their proud right in return to receive gifts from the rest of the world.
- c. 'Modern India,' (Tagore's phrase) abandoned its traditional system of education because she wanted to make qualified candidates than intellects.
- d. The person who is educated can prosper in life.
- e. Yes I agree with Tagore when he says that the training we get in our schools makes us believe that we must borrow rather than produce.

- f. Tagore's ideal teacher is he who is also learning himself.
- g. The European universities provide a life related education, they are always connected with the great men and they have good scholars.
- 4.
- a. Knowledge is power – It is a proverb that says that knowledge can overcome every obstacle. A man who knows a lot has his own value. He has a force which other men lack.
- b. It is better to train the muscles of our own legs than to strut upon wooden ones of foreign make – It's better to get self educated than to follow the footsteps of another. Because man can learn through his follies and mistakes.
- c. A lamp can never light another lamp unless it continues to burn its own flame – A teacher who himself is learning can teach his students well. Because his teaching is close to life.
- d. Intellectual knowledge also has its aspect of creative art – Knowledge is not only bookish. It can be implied in art. To recreate a piece of art is an intellect's greater success.
- e. Our educated community is not a cultured community, but a community of qualified candidates- - Education should be the medium of knowing new things. It should not be the process of getting a better job.
- 5.
- a. hospitality- আতিথেয়তা
- b. borrowed feathers- ধার করা পালক
- c. humiliating-অপমানজনক
- d. prospective- প্রত্যাশিত
- e. initiative- উদ্যোগ
- f. trampled- পদদলিত
- g. recoup- ক্ষতিপূরণ করা
- h. perpetual- চিরস্থায়ী
- i. disseminate- প্রচার করা
- 6.
- a. T
- b. T
- c. F
- d. T
- e. T
- f. F
- 7.
- Enthusiasm (noun) – I have a great enthusiasm for cricket.
- Pursue (verb) – we should not pursue developed countries.
- Acquaintance (noun) – He is one of my close acquaintances.
- Disseminate (verb) – We should always disseminate knowledge.
- Proficiency (noun) – He has a great proficiency in English.
- Unfortunately (adverb) – Unfortunately he fell down from a tree.
- Meanwhile
- Excellence (noun) – Rafiq is showing his excellence in Mathematics.
- Properly (adverb) – I haven't done the work properly.
- Aristocracy (noun) - He is not shy of showing his aristocracy.
- Gradually (adverb) – His making progress gradually.
- Perversity (noun) – We should always avoid perversity.

Intellect (noun) – We should make proper use of our intellect.

## Lesson 2

3

- a. There are 35 public and 79 private universities in the country.
- b. Only 12 percent students get access to tertiary education.
- c. Due to poverty and increase in educational expenses, students of the lower middle class get easy access to higher education.
- d. The students choose public universities because of the wide range subjects, educational and boarding facilities.
- e. Seminars, symposiums, lectures, workshops, debates, and exhibitions are regularly held at universities.

4.

- a. Comprise- গঠন করা
- b. Phenomenon- বিস্ময়কর ঘটনা
- c. Spectacular- দর্শনীয়
- d. Tertiary- তৃতীয় শ্রেণীর, চূড়ান্ত
- e. Affiliated-সম্বন্ধীয়, অঙ্ক ভক্তি
- f. Support- সমর্থন
- g. Enroll- ভর্তি করা
- h. Compensation- ক্ষতিপূরণ
- i. Symposium- সভা
- j. Subsidy- ভর্তুকি

5.

- I. at present – there are 60 students in our class at present.
- II. due to – Our school is closed due to strike.
- III. access to – You don't have access to my private life.
- IV. as well as – He as well as his brothers is naïve.
- V. in and around – We should get there in and around 4 pm.

## 6. Higher Education in Bangladesh

Bangladesh is a country where facilities of education are limited. There aren't sufficient educational institutions for students in Bangladesh. A great many students pass the higher secondary examination every year but there are only a handful of universities in our country. The number of state-run universities is limited, such as Dhaka University, Rajshahi University, Chittagong University, Jahangirnagar University, Shah Jalal University, Khulna University, Agricultural University Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), National University, Open University etc. there are also a number of private number of private universities. So the universities in our country are divided into state-run universities and private universities. They offer courses in a wide range of subjects. The tuition fees of the state-run universities are within the means of the common man. But the tuition fees in the private universities are very high. Only the rich can afford to study there. The system of education in Bangladesh was quite different from the British system of education but now the educational system has been changed in line with educational systems in the modern world.

### Lesson 3

3.

- a. Indispensable- অপরিহার্য
- b. Empower- ক্ষমতা প্রদান করা
- c. Credibility- বিশ্বাস যোগ্যতা
- d. Unconventional- রীতি বিরুদ্ধ
- e. Dynamic- প্রগতিশীল
- f. Beneficial- উপকারি
- g. Emerging- উদীয়মান
- h. Typically- সাধারণত
- i. Category- শ্রেণী
- j. Evaluate- মূল্য নির্ণয় করা

4.

- a. Education in the 21st century means to achieve skills that are indispensable for participation, achievement and competitiveness in the global economy.
- b. Thinking critically and making the best use of the barrage of information, solving complex, multi-disciplinary problems, relativity and entrepreneurial thinking skills, communicating and collaborating, making innovative use of knowledge, information and opportunities ; these skills should be acquired by all people of the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- c. Critical thinking empowers people to assess the credibility, accuracy and value of information, analyze and evaluate information, make reasoned decisions and take purposeful action.
- d. The employees have to face complex, multi-disciplinary problems in their workplaces.
- e. Apart from the skills mentioned in the passage, A man should have a good command over information technology in the modern time.

5. Education should not be only bookish in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. People should learn to think critically to assess the value of information. They should also learn to solve complex problems. He should also acquire entrepreneur skills. He should be well adept in communicating and making innovative use of knowledge.

6.

23/11/2009

Savar, Dhaka

Dear James,

I have received your letter yesterday. I am glad that you are all well in your family. I am so so. In your letter you wrote about your view on the education of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and wanted to know about my view. So today, I am going to write about it.

Education should not be only bookish in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. People should learn to think critically to assess the value of information. They should also learn to solve complex problems. He should also acquire entrepreneur skills. He should be well adept in communicating and making innovative use of knowledge. Critical thinking empowers people to assess the credibility, accuracy and value of information, analyze and evaluate information, make reasoned decisions and take purposeful action.

No more today. Convey my best regards to your parents and love to all.

Yours ever,  
Fuad