Online Distance Learning

Online distance learning is an instructional system which connects learners with educational resources. Students work on their own at home, at work, or at school and communicate with faculty and other students via e-mail, electronic forums, videoconferencing, chat rooms, bulletin boards, instant messaging and other forms of computer-based communication. There are both advantages and disadvantages to online distance learning.

There are many benefits to using online distance learning environments. Online education is available all the time and anywhere. However there are drawbacks for some learners. The online learner only has the written text and no other face to face cues. This may confuse the learner and cause misunderstanding. While distance learning allows for openness, it is also cumbersome because it is done by e-mail messages and writing and therefore may take more time than face-to-face learning. The sheer bulk of messages can sometimes be overwhelming for many online students.

Universities, Colleges and Schools use virtual online distance learning environments. These are important for students who may be unable to attend classes for various reasons like illnesses or busy everyday schedules. Some learners just want to further their studies at home. They enjoy the convenience of home learning as they take regular programs or enrichment classes.

Online courses keep learners very occupied at all hours. There is a great deal of messages and other online resources to read and respond to. Most learners have regular jobs or attend regular school classes on ground as well. However, the benefits are clear. Online distance learning is becoming very popular. Some virtual online classes have become a profitable business as they replace regular traditional means of learning.

Reference (APA format)
1. Summarize in your own words what online distance learning is. (10 pts.)

2. What is one good thing about distance learning? (5 pts.)

3. Is this article organized one-side-at-a-time or point-by-point? Justify. (8 pts.)

4. Why can online distance learning be a problem? (5 pts.)

5. Write down the main idea. (10 pts)

6. Why, in your opinion, is online distance learning becoming popular? (8 pts.)

7. Write down the meaning of these words by using context clues. The number in parentheses refers to the paragraph where the word is: (14 pts.)

1. Drawbacks (2):
2. Cumbersome (2):
3. Sheer bulk (2):
4. Overwhelming (2):
5. Enrichment classes (3):

6. Virtual (4):

7. Occupied (4):

8. Do you think virtual online classes are more effective than traditional learning methods? Justify in a well-developed essay. (40 pts.)