Read the text and list the characteristics of the education system in Great Britain. In what way does it differ from the education system in Moldova?

In the past education was a privilege that only the elite could afford. It is true that in the UK some parishes would run something similar to schools, yet the education one would receive was primarily religious. It was in 1870 that the parliament adopted the Education Act meant to provide free compulsory non-religious education for all children. This Act was also a milestone in stopping child labour, a serious issue in the Victorian society. By 1900 truancy was a major problem, as a considerable number of children still had to work to help their families survive the harsh conditions of the time. Another interesting fact is that the school leaving age was 12 at the time. The 1944 Education Act raised the school leaving age to 15. In 1972 it was raised to 16.

At present the education system in the UK is divided into five main parts: early childhood education (3-4 years old), primary education (5-11 years old), secondary education (12-16 years old), further education (17-18 years old) and higher education. Three- and four-year-old children are entitled to 570 hours of free early education. The starting age of compulsory education in the UK is 5, whereas the leaving age is 16. Thus, children have to be legally provided with primary and secondary education.

Upon completing secondary education, students generally take their General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) exams. Apart from the core subjects such as Maths, English and Science, the students have the right to choose the number of subjects they would like to take. However, they should pass a minimum of 5 exams and have grades between 4 and 9.

Depending on the results they get, students decide whether to continue their education or to enter the world of work. If they aspire to receive a university degree in the future, they must complete further education over the course of two years. At this stage they have to get the necessary academic qualifications that will help them attend the desired college or university. Traditionally, they get ready to take their A Levels. This time, learners have the possibility to choose the advanced level subjects they wish to take. Typically, their choice is determined by what they are good at as well as the degree they wish to do at university. Although the minimum number of A Level subjects is three, some students prefer to take four to keep their options open. Admission to higher education is based on merit; this is why students thoroughly study for their A Levels to get the highest marks.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Exercise 1 – Find the words in the text
Read the text carefully and find the words that mean:

1. Only for a small, powerful group → _____
2. Required by law → _____
3. An important moment in history → _____
4. To stop attending school without permission → _____
5. The age at which students must leave school → _____
6. Tests taken at the end of secondary school → _____
7. Subjects that are essential for all students → _____
8. To continue studying after secondary school → _____

Exercise 2 – Match the words with their definitions
Match the words from column A with the correct definitions in column B.

A	B
1. privilege	a. education after secondary school
2. compulsory	b. the act of missing school illegally
3. milestone	c. something not everyone can have
4. truancy	d. required by law
5. further education	e. an important achievement or stage

✨ Exercise 3 – Synonyms
Find a synonym in the text for each word below:

1. important → _____
2. free (of charge) → _____
3. pupils → _____
4. choose → _____
5. finish → _____

✨ Exercise 4 – Antonyms
Find an antonym (opposite meaning) in the text:

1. optional _____
2. private _____
3. religious _____
4. start _____
5. failure _____

✨ Exercise 5 – Complete the sentences
Use words from the text to complete the sentences correctly.

1. In the past, education was a _____ only the elite could afford.
2. The 1870 Education Act introduced free and _____ education.
3. The minimum school _____ age in the UK is 16.
4. Students take _____ exams at the end of secondary school.

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5. Admission to university is based on _____.

✨ Exercise 6 – Vocabulary in context

Choose the correct word to complete each sentence:

1. Children aged 3–4 are entitled to free _____ education.
   a) higher b) early c) further
2. Students must pass at least five _____ to continue their studies.
   a) lessons b) subjects c) exams
3. A Levels help students gain access to _____ education.
   a) compulsory b) higher c) primary

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