32 School education

A The school system

This is the **system** for **state education** in most parts of England and Wales. State schools are free and operated by the country. Parents pay to send their children to **private** schools.

age	education
3	Almost all children **attend** [go to; *fml*] **nursery school** for up to 15 hours a week.
5	Everyone starts **primary school**.
11	**Pupils** [students at school] go to **secondary school**.
16	Pupils **take/do** GCSE **exams**, in up to ten subjects. Then they can go to a college for **vocational** [job] **training**, e.g. hotel management or travel and tourism courses, or they can **stay at school** for two more years.
18	Pupils take 'A' level exams in three or four subjects, and then they can **leave school** and **get a job** or **go on to** university [continue their education at university], or go to a college for further education/training, e.g. teaching or business studies.

B The school timetable

The school day is **divided into** about 5–7 lessons, and over the course of a week, most pupils **do/study** about ten **subjects**, including English, maths, history, science, etc. There's usually a one-hour lunch **break** [period of rest between work], and a break in the morning and afternoon as well.

Language help

In American English the subject is **math**, but in British English it is **maths**.

The school year is usually divided into three **terms** [periods of study], with each term being about 13 weeks, although some schools are now having shorter terms and more frequent holidays. At the end of the school year, pupils usually **take/do** exams before they **break up** [end classes for the term]. After the summer holidays, they **go back** [return] for the new school year.

C School rules*

"**In the past** schools generally had more rules, and if you **broke the rules**[1], you were **punished**. At my school, for example, pupils sometimes had to **stay behind**[2] and write an essay. I used to **get into trouble**[3] for wearing **lipstick**.

I remember we had to **call** the **male** teachers 'sir' and **female** teachers 'miss', and we had to **wear** a horrible **uniform**[4]. Nowadays, the **atmosphere**[5] is more **relaxed**[6]: older pupils can often **dress**[7] the way they want – as long as they're reasonably **smart**[8] – and the teachers are not as **strict**[9]."

* instructions telling you what you must or must not do

[1] did something wrong
[2] stay in a place when others leave
[3] do something wrong and be punished
[4] special clothes
[5] the feeling in a place or situation
[6] comfortable and informal
[7] wear clothes
[8] well dressed and not too casual
[9] A strict teacher punishes pupils who do something wrong.



lipstick

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Exercises

32.1 Match the words on the left with the words on the right.

1 go	[e]	a the rules
2 leave	[ ]	b a uniform
3 take	[ ]	c into trouble
4 wear	[ ]	d at school
5 study	[ ]	e to school
6 stay	[ ]	f school
7 get	[ ]	g an exam
8 break	[ ]	h a subject

32.2 Complete the sentences about state schools in England.

1 When they're three, children can go to *nursery* school.
2 At the age of five they go to ..... school.
3 At the age of eleven they go to ..... school.
4 When they're sixteen they ..... exams, and afterwards they can go to a college for ..... if they want.
5 Many pupils ..... at school for another two years and do 'A' levels.
6 Nowadays, a lot of pupils ..... to university after they leave school.

32.3 Choose the correct word to complete the sentences. Sometimes both are correct.

1 We *take / do* exams in the summer. *Both are correct.*
2 The school *timetable / schedule* is more or less the same every day.
3 The day is divided *into / out of* seven lessons.
4 The pupils *do / study* about ten subjects.
5 There is usually a *rest / break* three times a day.
6 Schools often *break out / break up* after they finish exams.
7 After pupils leave school, many of them *take / get* a job.
8 Pupils can *wear / dress* the way they want.

32.4 Complete the sentences.

1 There were three *terms* in the school year.
2 I had to ..... a uniform.
3 I had to call the ..... teachers 'sir' and ..... teachers 'miss'.
4 I occasionally got into ..... at school for doing things I shouldn't do.
5 The teachers at my school were strict, and they ..... pupils who broke the rules.
6 My school had a really nice, relaxed ..... .

32.5 Over to you

Answer the questions about the education system in your country. If possible, compare your answers with someone else.

1 Do you have state schools and private schools?

2 Do all children have nursery education?

3 When do children go to primary school and secondary school?

4 Do all schools have the same terms?

5 When can children leave school?

6 Do pupils normally have to wear a uniform, or can they wear what they want?

7 Are teachers usually quite strict?

8 Is the atmosphere quite relaxed in most schools?

LIVEWORKSHEETS