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Many American school children and _____ start the day by running out the door to catch the bright yellow school _____. Others walk to school, some drive themselves and their friends if they are old _____, and others are _____ to school by their parents. In some _____ areas of the USA students have to travel up to two hours to get to school. In towns and cities, the school bus meets students at a bus _____, but in rural areas, where houses can be far from each other, the school bus stops in front of each _____ house.

The school year usually starts after _____ Day in early September, and continues until the middle of June, so summer vacation is about _____ weeks. Each school year has two _____, with the first semester from September to December, and the second from January to June. The school day is Monday to Friday, usually from 9 am to 3 pm. Almost every elementary school _____ children in penmanship (handwriting skills), science, mathematics, music, art, physical education, one foreign language (mainly Spanish or French), and social studies (a subject combining elements of geography, history, sociology, and political studies).

Most secondary schools _____ students to take English, mathematics, science, social studies, and physical education. In addition to this core _____, students choose 'elective courses' in their areas of _____ out of a wide range of possibilities. Computer programming, car design, stage management, or cross-country running, are all possible courses in an American public school. High school students at the same grade level do not take the same courses. Students who do not plan to go to college may be _____ in classes such as basic accounting, typing, or agricultural science,

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which prepares them for _____ or technical positions. Students aiming at college may be enrolled in college-preparatory courses such as chemistry, political science, or advanced writing, more academic subjects required for college work. _____ and ambitious students may take so-called 'honours classes' in history, English or science, which are more demanding and cover more material. The American high school is therefore best seen as if it were a combination of all the _____ types of schools which are usually separated and kept in separate buildings in other countries. To use a Hungarian parallel, an American high school is a Hungarian grammar school (gimnázium) and vocational or technical school (szakközépiskola, szakiskola) rolled _____ one. In most American high schools, the Hungarian idea of a 'class' is completely _____. In American English, a 'class' means (besides a school lesson) all the students belonging to the same _____; they often talk about 'the class of 1995', for example, meaning all those people who _____ from the school in that year. In an average high school, such a 'class' may include several _____ students.

At the start of the school day, middle and high school students go to their _____, the class where the teacher calls out each student's name. The school day always begins with students standing up, facing the American flag at the front of the classroom, putting their right hand over their hearts, and saying the _____ of _____, a promise to be a good citizen.

The hours in the school day are broken up into _____, usually 45 or 50 minutes long. When the school day ends, many students stay after school to join extra-curricular activities, which are usually sports and clubs. Most schools, for instance, publish their own student newspapers, and some have their own radio stations. Almost all have student _____, bands, and choirs, which give public performances. There are theatre and drama groups, chess and debating clubs, etc. Sports are especially important, because talented athletes (the word is used for all kind of sportspeople in American English, not just for people doing athletics) are offered full _____ by colleges and universities. The most popular American college sports are football, baseball, and basketball, but scholarships in soccer (which is a popular sport among women in the US!), volleyball, ice hockey, athletics, tennis, or swimming are also available. It is important for students to choose extra-curricular activities, and to put a lot of time and work into them, because colleges choose students not only for their _____, but also for their _____ outside the classroom.

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Another extra-curricular activity is working on the yearbook, which is a book of photos of every student and teacher, school life, and sport events from that year. Everyone can buy the yearbook at the end of the school year.
When students finish middle school and begin their high school education, they are called _____. In their second year, they are called _____, in the third-year _____, and in their fourth year they are _____.
Americans use the word “grade” not only for the _____ they are in at school, but also for the _____ they get for their schoolwork and exams. There is a scale of 5 grades. The best is A, followed by B, C, and D, which is the lowest pass grade, while F stands for ‘failure’. These grades are often modified by + and – signs, indicating _____ better or worse performances. Secondary education is not finished with any sort of _____ examination like the British GCSE, or the Hungarian érettségi. High school is concluded with a spectacular graduation _____, where the graduating class wears long gowns and special, flat-topped caps. A chosen student, usually one of the best in the class, makes a speech. Students _____ a high school diploma, which proves that they have completed their secondary education. Such a diploma, however, is not enough to gain _____ into higher education: they usually need to take standardized tests for that. About 95% of all people aged 25 to 29 complete high schools.

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