

Read the blog quickly. Is this school the same as your school or is it different?



Brooklyn Free School has one part for students aged 11–18 and one for students aged 4–11. Students in both parts choose the subjects they take, never do homework and don't have to take exams or tests. And if they're not enjoying a chemistry lesson, for example, they can walk out, or go to the students' room and read a book. Three younger kids were doing this when I went in there on my visit. Other examples of subjects on the timetable are writing films and building design – a very popular subject.

Some people think this kind of school is a bad idea. They don't think it teaches students the things they'll need when they grow up. They also think the school's only for people who have lots of money. But actually, only 20% of the students pay the whole cost of being at the school.

So what do the students think? One student, Marlon, says in his favourite class he watched a TV show about city life. It taught him a lot. In another, students discussed how people decide about things or vote. They then ate at local restaurants and decided which one they liked the best. Marlon also enjoyed making models of other students in a design class.

But Marlon found it hard when he started at the school. It took more than a year for him to feel comfortable there. He played computer games in the students' room for most of that first year. Now he enjoys classes and says he wouldn't like to go to school anywhere else.

For each question, choose the correct answer.

- What does the first paragraph tell us about Brooklyn Free School?
 - Only students aged 11–18 can decide to go to a class or not.
 - Both older and younger students can choose their subjects.
 - The older students have lessons with the younger students.
- The writer saw some children at the school
 - leaving a chemistry lesson.
 - reading books instead of going to lessons.
 - enjoying a building design lesson.
- The writer explains why it is not true to say that
 - there are too few students at the school.
 - the school doesn't teach students useful things.
 - only rich students can go to the school.
- What did Marlon enjoy doing the most?
 - learning about city life
 - going to restaurants
 - making models of people
- How does Marlon feel about the school?
 - He is happier there now than he was.
 - He likes it because he can play computer games there.
 - He wants to try another type of school.

LISTENING

Listen to three people talking about school and learning. Write *Mrs Black, Lorna or Ben*.

- 1 _____ is describing a school.
- 2 _____ is describing a way of learning.
- 3 _____ is explaining what is going to happen.

Listen again and write one word or number for each answer.

A

- 1 What subject will Mrs Black teach Class 8A?
- 2 What subject will Mr Hill teach Class 8A?

B

- 3 Where does Lorna live?
on a _____
- 4 Who is homeschooled with Lorna?
her _____
- 5 What subject does their mum teach the best?

C

- 6 Where is the best school for Ben's son?
in _____ Street
- 7 How many students are there at the school?
- 8 What can't students wear to the school?
- 9 How often do students at the school take tests?
every _____

WRITING

A description of your perfect school

- 1 Read the text about someone's perfect school. Then match the parts of the text A-G to the questions below.

- | | |
|--|-------|
| 0 What homework do you have? | E |
| 1 How long are the holidays? | _____ |
| 2 What lessons do you have? | _____ |
| 3 Who are the teachers? | _____ |
| 4 Where is the school? | _____ |
| 5 What do you wear to school? | _____ |
| 6 How many students are there at the school? | _____ |

My PERFECT school

(A) I love animals so my perfect school is in a zoo. (B) There are only three students at the school: me and my two best friends, Carla and Monica. They love animals, too. (C) Our teachers are the zoo keepers*. They teach us everything they know about their animals. (D) We don't have subjects like maths or history at my perfect school. The only subjects we take are geography and biology. We learn about different kinds of animals from different countries, and we learn about animal biology and medicine. (E) We have homework, but it's not reading or writing. It is doing things with the animals, like taking baby animals home and giving them food during the night, for example. (F) We have a uniform. It is green trousers and shirts, and boots. (G) We don't need holidays because we love going to our school.

* zoo keepers are people that work in a zoo and look after the animals

Write about your perfect school. Answer the questions in Exercise 1 and add anything else you want to say.