SCHOOL-LEAVING AGE SET TO RISE TO 18

The British government is soon to pass legislation that would raise the school-leaving **(23)** _____ to 18. The new plans will come into effect by 2013. **(24)** _____ will have the choice of staying in formal classroom education that covers academic lessons, or of receiving vocational training. It is the first major revision of the compulsory education age limit since 1972, when it went up to the present 16 years **(25)** _____. The government hopes the additional two years of schooling or training will **(26)** _____ the quality of young Britons and ensure more British youth to have qualifications or workplace skills. If successful, Britain may be able to boast the best **(27)** _____ and most highly trained school-leavers in the world, which is bound to have positive knock-on effects for industry and the economy.

Britain's Minister for Education Alan Johnson told *The Times* **(28)** _____ that it was «repellent that a youngster of 16 is not getting any training». He admitted his **(29)** _____ of the past, saying: «I regret not staying on in education... when I left school, there were loads of **(30)** _____ you could walk into without qualifications. That's not going to be the case in the future». The leader of **(31)** _____ teaching union Steve Sinnott agreed. He described the upcoming legislation as «inevitable». He warned: «We cannot afford to neglect those young people who currently **(32)** _____ school at 16 unprepared for the rigours and demands of life in the 21st century». Toby Ashford, a 16-year-old student from London, wasn't as enthusiastic. He complained that: «It is another example of politicians trying to be Big Brother with young people».

	A	B	C	D
23	certificate	curriculum	grades	age
24	Teachers	Headmasters	Pupils	Ministers
25	old	elder	young	age
26	improve	better	worsen	mend
27	intelligent	educated	learn	disciplined
28	show	news	newspaper	school
29	mistakes	success	merits	advantages
30	jobs	employees	trade	skills
31	Britain	Britain's	Britains	Britains'
32	go	pass	enter	leave

Once upon a time, a young man Lucian the Greek was filled with a desire to see strange countries, and especially to discover whether there was any opposite shore to the ocean by which he lived.

So having purchased a vessel, he strengthened it for a voyage that he knew without doubt **(33)** _____ long and stormy. Then he chose fifty stout young fellows having the same love of adventure as himself, and next he **(34)** _____ the best captain that could be got for money, and put a store of provisions and water on board.

All this being done, he set sail. **(35)** _____ many days he and his companions voyaged on deep waters and in strange seas. At times the wind was fair and gentle, and at others it blew so hard that the sea rose in a terrible manner.

One morning the wind began to blow violently, and they **(36)** _____ by storm for days. On the third day they fell in with the Pumpkin Pirates. For ships they had large pumpkins, each being not less than ninety feet in length. These pumpkins they **(37)** _____, and afterward dug out all the inner part of them till they were quite hollow. For masts they had reeds, and for sails, in the place of canvas, pumpkin leaves.

These pirates attacked **(38)** _____ vessel with two ships or rather two pumpkins' crews, and wounded many of his company.

Lucian's company fought for some time, **(39)** _____ gaining the advantage, when about noon they saw coming toward them, in the rear of the Pumpkin Pirates, the Nut-Shell Sailors. These two tribes were at war with each other.

As soon as the Pumpkin Pirates saw the others approaching, they left off fighting Lucian's crew, and prepared **(40)** _____ battle to the Nut-Shell Sailors. When Lucian saw this, he ordered the captain to set all sails; and they departed with speed. But **(41)** _____ he could see that the Nut-Shell Sailors had the best of the battle, being superior in numbers, having five crews against two of the Pumpkin Pirates, and also because their ships were stronger.

As soon as the Pumpkin Pirates and the Nut-Shell Sailors were out of sight, Lucian set himself to dressing the wounds of his injured companions. And from that time on **(42)** _____ Lucian and his crew wore their armour continually, not knowing when another strange enemy might come upon them.

	A	B	C	D
33	is	has been	will be	would be
34	hire	hires	hired	had hired
35	For	Since	From	To
36	driven	are driven	were driven	were being driven
37	dry	drying	dried	had dried
38	Lucian	Lucian's	Lucians	Lucians'
39	with	without	after	since
40	give	giving	to give	to have given
41	looking for	looking back	looking up	looking forward
42	both	and	neither	either