The System of Education in Great Britain

Education in Great Britain is both compulsory and free for all children between the ages of 5 and 16. The education system is divided into three main stages: primary education, secondary education, and further or higher education.

Primary Education

Primary education is for children aged 5 to 11. It is divided into three parts: nursery school (for ages 3 to 5), infant school (ages 5 to 7), and junior school (ages 7 to 11). At the primary level, children learn to read and write, do basic arithmetic. In the higher classes of Primary School children learn geography, history, and sometimes a foreign language.

Secondary Education

Secondary education covers ages 11 to 16 and includes different types of state schools: grammar schools, modern schools, and comprehensive schools.

Grammar schools require entrance exams, usually at 11, and provide a high level of academic education. Grammar schools are single sexed schools.

Modern schools focus on practical education but do not prepare students for university.

Comprehensive schools accept students of all abilities from the age of 11 without entrance exams and offer a general secondary education.

Private Schools in Great Britain

Private schools in Great Britain are commonly referred to as independent schools. Some prestigious private schools, particularly older and well-established ones, are also known as public schools. Despite the name, "public schools" in Britain are private institutions and are not part of the state-funded education system.

Private schools play a significant role in the education system of Great Britain. Unlike state schools, private schools are funded through tuition fees paid by parents rather than government funding. They often provide smaller class sizes, extensive extracurricular activities, and access to advanced facilities. Many private schools also have a strong focus on academic excellence and prepare students for prestigious universities.

These schools are diverse, ranging from co-educational institutions to single-sex schools and from day schools to boarding schools. Some of the most renowned private schools in Britain, such as Eton College, Harrow School, Rugby School and Winchester College, have a long history and are known for producing influential alumni, including political leaders, artists, and scientists.

The cost of attending a private school can be quite high, making them accessible to families with significant financial resources. However, many private schools offer scholarships and grants to talented students who may not otherwise afford the fees.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Further and Higher Education

After completing compulsory education at 16, students can continue their studies at school, start working, or go to a Further Education College. At the age of 16, students in secondary school take "O-level" (General Certificate of Secondary Education) exams. Those who stay in school for two more years take "A-level" (Advanced Level) exams, which are necessary for university entrance.

Other 16-year-olds choose to go to a college of further education to study for more practical (vocational) diplomas relating to the world of work. Further Education Colleges offer vocational diplomas related to specific jobs, such as those in art, economy, law, agriculture, or design.

Higher Education

Higher education institutions, including universities, accept students from 18 based on their "A-level" results. Generally, universities award three kinds of degrees: a Bachelor's degree, a Master's degree and a Doctor's Degree. Students typically study for three years to earn a Bachelor's degree, and some go on to pursue a Master's or Doctoral degree. Notable universities in Britain include Oxford and Cambridge (collectively called "Oxbridge"), the London School of Economics, and London Imperial College. The Open University also offers remote learning, where students study at home and send their work to tutors.

1. **Fill in the table "Stages of the Educational System in Great Britain":**

Stage	**Educational Institution**	**Age of Children**
Preschool Education	Nursery School	
Primary Education	Infant School Junior School	
Secondary Education	Modern School Comprehensive School (+/- Sixth Form) Grammar School	
Further Education	College	
Higher Education	University	

11-16 years 16-18 years 3-5 years 11-18 years 5-7 years 18+ years

7-11 years 11-16/18 years

LIVEWORKSHEETS

2. Match the Types of Schools in Great Britain with Their Definitions:

Types of Schools	Definitions
1. Nursery Schools 2. Grammar Schools 3. Modern Schools 4. Comprehensive Schools 5. Private (Public) Schools 6. Further Education Colleges 7. Primary Schools 8. Secondary Schools 9. Universities 10. State Schools	**A.** Schools providing general and vocational education to students after age 16, often for practical diplomas related to specific careers. **B**. Independent and often boarding schools attended by children from high-class families; known for their high fees. **C**. Schools offering education from ages 5 to 11, where children learn reading, writing, basic arithmetic, and sometimes geography and history. **D**. Schools providing higher education and degrees such as Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral, typically requiring "A-level" results for entry. **E**. Secondary schools for ages 11 to 16, where entrance is based on an ability test, and which offer a high standard of academic education. **F**. Secondary schools that are accessible to all students aged 11 and above, regardless of ability, and do not require entrance exams. **G**. Schools that provide secondary education but do not typically prepare students for university, focusing more on practical skills. **H**. Schools covering education for ages 11 to 16, usually including grammar, modern, and comprehensive schools. **I.** Schools for young children, typically aged 3 to 5 years, that provides early childhood education and care. **J**. Schools which receive money from the government and provides free education for children from the age of 5 to the age of 16 or 18.

3. Read the text and decide if the statements are true or false based on the text. Tick the true sentences.

1. Education in Great Britain is compulsory and free for all children between the ages of 5 and 16.
2. Primary education is for children aged 3 to 9.
3. Grammar schools require entrance exams and provide a high level of academic education.
4. Modern schools prepare students for university.
5. Comprehensive schools accept students of all abilities without entrance exams.
6. Public schools in Britain are part of the state-funded education system.
7. Private schools in Great Britain are also called independent schools.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

8. Private schools offer smaller class sizes and extracurricular activities.
9. The cost of attending private schools is affordable for all families.
10. At the age of 16, students in secondary school take "A-level" exams.
11. Further Education Colleges offer practical diplomas related to specific jobs.
12. Universities in Britain only offer Bachelor's degrees.
13. Oxford and Cambridge are often referred to collectively as "Oxbridge."
14. The Open University allows students to study remotely.
15. Scholarships are available at some private schools in Great Britain.

4. Choose the correct answer to the question. Circle the correct letter.

1. What is the purpose of "public schools" in Britain?
   a) To provide state-funded education
   b) To prepare students for university and leadership roles
   c) To teach students practical job skills
   d) To offer free education to all students
2. Primary education consists of which stages?
   a) Nursery, junior, senior
   b) Nursery, infant, junior
   c) Grammar, modern, comprehensive
   d) O-level, A-level, Bachelor's degree
3. What is the focus of Further Education Colleges?
   a) Teaching academic subjects
   b) Preparing students for university
   c) Offering vocational diplomas
   d) Providing free education
4. Private schools in Great Britain are also called:
   a) State schools
   b) Comprehensive schools
   c) Independent schools
   d) Grammar schools
5. What is the purpose of the "A-level" exams?
   a) To test basic arithmetic
   b) To prepare for vocational training
   c) To provide university entrance qualifications
   d) To assess foreign language proficiency
6. The Open University:
   a) Offers only Bachelor's degrees
   b) Provides remote learning opportunities
   c) Requires entrance exams for admission
   d) Only accepts students under 18

LIVEWORKSHEETS

7. Which type of school requires entrance exams at the age of 11?
   a) Modern schools
   b) Grammar schools
   c) Comprehensive schools
   d) Private schools
8. What is the primary difference between state schools and private schools in Great Britain?
   a) State schools are free, while private schools are funded by tuition fees
   b) Private schools do not accept students over 16
   c) State schools have smaller class sizes
   d) Private schools do not offer extracurricular activities
9. What type of school is Eton College?
   a) Modern school
   b) Grammar school
   c) Comprehensive school
   d) Private school
10. What is the primary focus of modern schools in Britain?
   a) University preparation
   b) Practical education
   c) Teaching foreign languages
   d) Academic excellence

LIVEWORKSHEETS