



School in Britain

1. Facts about the British school system

Here are some facts about the British school system. Read the text carefully, then answer the questions:

In England, school starts for children at the age of five. They first go to Primary schools. There are two so called Key Stages, Key Stage 1 for Year 1 and 2 and Key Stage 2 for Year 3 to 6. At the end of year 6 the pupils are tested in English, Mathematics and Science. Nearly all pupils in Britain wear school uniforms. From Year 7, at the age of 11, pupils go to Comprehensive schools or Grammar schools. The Comprehensive schools are similar to the German "Gesamtschule", the Grammar schools to the "Gymnasium".

Comprehensive schools in city areas are usually very big schools with over 1000 pupils. All pupils do the same subjects till Year 9, then they can drop some and begin new ones. The pupils don't learn all subjects together in one class, but in different study groups. When you are very good in one subject, you learn in the top group, when you aren't very good, you are in a group of a lower level. School begins at 9 o'clock, and it lasts till 4 o'clock in the afternoon. There's always a lunch break, when pupils can go to the cafeteria to buy lunch or drinks. Although the school day is very long, pupils get homework. They also can go to school clubs after lesson. There are a lot of sports activities and hobby clubs. In Britain, pupils don't do a lot of tests during the school term. In winter and summer they take their exams in all subjects within one or two weeks. At the end of Year eleven pupils can take their GCSE exams (General Certificate of Secondary Education). These exams are set centrally. The papers are marked by professional examiners and all pupils get their results by post on the same day. After the GCSE pupils have the possibility to visit the 6th form (the German "Oberstufe") and to take the GCE-A-Level.

For joining a Grammar school pupils have to sit a test after the Primary school at the age of 11. So Grammar schools are selective while Comprehensive schools are open to all children. At a Grammar school pupils between 11 and 18 are prepared to their later academic education at a University.

Questions:

- | | | | |
|----|--|---|---|
| 1) | Right or wrong? Read the text and correct the wrong sentences: | R | W |
| | Pupils don't have to go to school in the afternoons. | 0 | 0 |
| | Pupils don't have to do homework after school. | 0 | 0 |
| | Pupils have to eat lunch at school. | 0 | 0 |
| | Pupils have to do a lot of tests during the school term. | 0 | 0 |
| | School starts at 9 o'clock. | 0 | 0 |
| | A grammar school is a selective school. | 0 | 0 |

- 2) What about your school? First fill in the table, so that you don't forget anything important. Then write about your own school.

Name of my school	
How many pupils?	
How old?	
How many teachers?	
How many classrooms?	
Big or small school?	
Is the building old or modern?	
Are there special rooms like laboratories?	
Is there a library?	
When do the lessons begin?	
When do we have breaks?	
Do we get or buy food at school?	



Do we have special events at our school? If yes, which?	
Is the school in the center of a city/town?	
What about a playground?	
From which countries pupils come from?	

- 3) Now write about the differences between the German and the British schoolsystem. Remember the text above and try to compare the two systems. (not more than 150 words)

2. Talking about school

Pete and Sara are talking about school:



Bring the dialogues in the correct order!

- a) Pete: Yes, I do.
- b) Pete: Because I like painting.
- c) Sara: What is your favourite subject?
- d) Sara: Do you like going to school?
- e) Sara: Why?
- f) Pete: Art.

Start with d) and write the dialogue down.

Try it again!

- a) Pete: Because I like playing football.
- b) Sara: Why?
- c) Sara: Why?
- d) Sara: What is your favourite subject?
- e) Pete: Music.
- f) Pete: PE.
- g) Sara: And what subject don't you like?
- h) Pete: Because I don't like singing.
- i) Sara: Why?
- j) Pete: No, I don't.
- k) Pete: I don't like the teachers.
- l) Sara: Do you like going to school?



3. The examination system in England

First read the following e-mail:

Date: 5 August 2007
From: Sara Smith
To: Andreas Schulz

Hi Andy,

Here are my latest news. As I told you I had my first GCSE on Friday. We were all so scared! One of my friends was sick because she was so nervous. It all began at 9:30 am and lasted till 11.00 am. Before the beginning we had to wait in alphabetical order in line in front of the Assembly Hall. When we entered the Hall we noticed that it was full of special examination tables, all set far apart, so that no one could cheat. It was a bit of a shock! We weren't also allowed to take our bags in, only our pencil-cases and sandwiches. When everyone was sitting in the right place, the envelopes were opened by the teachers and were handed out. I tried to get some concentration, but it was really difficult! Once you've started, it's not too bad. The waiting was the worst! Next week I've got four more exams, I'll tell you about it in my next mail. I'm so glad when holiday starts in 2 weeks!
Write and tell me about your exams!

Sara

Now pick out any information you get about the exams in England. Then compare it to the German examinations and write an answer to Sara.

4. School subjects

A school timetable:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:00 – 9:30	ASSEMBLY	ASSEMBLY	ASSEMBLY	ASSEMBLY	ASSEMBLY
9:30 – 10:15	maths	maths	Religious education	english	german
10:15 – 11:00	history	english	history	maths	maths
11:00 – 11:15	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK
11:15 – 12:00	P.E.	art	science	german	french
12:00 – 12:45	P.E.	art	science	french	english
12:45 – 1:45	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH
1:45 – 2:30	english	science	german	history	information technology
2:30 – 3:15	home economics	french	english	science	P.E.
3:15 – 4:00	home economics	geography	information technology	geography	P.E.

Questions:

Describe the timetable by giving answers to these questions:



1. When does school begin and finish?
2. How long are the lessons?
3. How long is the morning break?
4. What languages are learnt?
5. How many sports lessons do the pupils have?

Write down your own timetable. What are the differences? Which is your favourite day?

What are your favourite subjects and which ones don't you like?

5. Useful Vocabulary

Deutsch

Abschlussprüfung
Bibliothek
Biologie
Bleistift
Chemie
Deutsch
Englisch
Erdkunde
Fach
Fremdsprachen
Gemeinschaftskunde
Gesamtschule
Grundschule
Gymnasium
Hauptschule
Hausaufgaben
Internat
Klassenzimmer
Kreide
Labor
Lehrerzimmer
Mathematik
Mündliche Prüfung
Naturwissenschaft
Note
Oberstufe
Pause
Pflichtfach
Philosophie
Physik
Prüfung
Radiergummi
Realschule
Religion
Schriftliche Prüfung
Schulheft
Schulhof
Sport
Sprachlabor

Englisch

final
library
biology
pencil
chemistry
German
English
geography
subject
foreign languages
social studies
comprehensive school
primary school; infant school
grammar school
secondary school
homework
boarding school
classroom
chalk
laboratory
staff room; teacher's room
maths
oral exam(ination)
science(s)
mark, grade
sixth form
break
compulsory subject
philosophy
physics
exam(ination)
rubber; eraser
secondary modern school
religious education
written exam(ination)
exercise book
school playground; schoolyard
physical education (PE)
language laboratory



Stundenplan	timetable
Tafel	blackboard
Turnen	gymnastics
Turnhalle	gym
Unterstufe	lower school; lower grade
Wahlfach	optional subject
Werkunterricht	crafts, design and technology (CDT)
Zeichnen	art
Zeugnis	report

6. Translation

Try to translate the following text into English:

- Lehrerin: „Peter, wo sind deine Mathe-Hausaufgaben?“
 Peter: „In meiner Tasche, Frau Maier.“
 Lehrerin: „Dann zeig sie mir bitte mal! Aha. Rechne mal bitte an der Tafel vor, wie du zu diesen Ergebnissen gekommen bist.“
 Peter: „Nicht gerade jetzt. Die Pause fängt doch an.“
 Lehrerin: „Das macht nichts. Wir haben später angefangen. Also arbeiten wir die Pause durch, bis dass eure Sportstunde anfängt! Pause habt ihr erst morgen wieder!“
 Peter: „Schade, dass Mathe Pflichtfach ist!“

7. Mindmap

Complete the following mindmap with the words below:

- 1) Your headline is "school".
- 2) Your main words are: rooms – timetable – classroom – schoolbag – people – homework
- 3) And here are the words you have to complete to the main words:

lesson – gym – music – parents – teachers – maths – reading – English – ruler – sandwich – arts – youth club – sports – pen – geography – dictionary – pupils – boring – pencil case – desk – break – exercise books – board – subjects – German – afternoon – library – bell – lunch break – books – assembly hall – swimming pool – prayer – history – head teacher – biro – cafeteria - too much