



The school system

What do you know about the British school system? When do students start at primary school? When do they go to secondary school? Look at the information and complete the table.

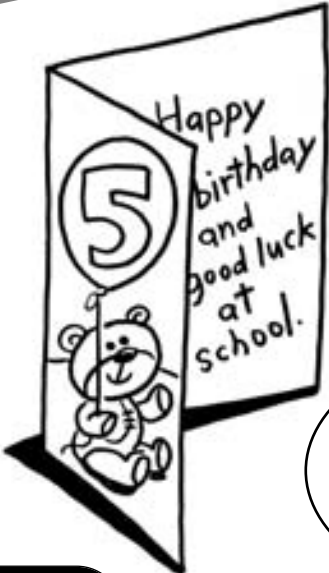
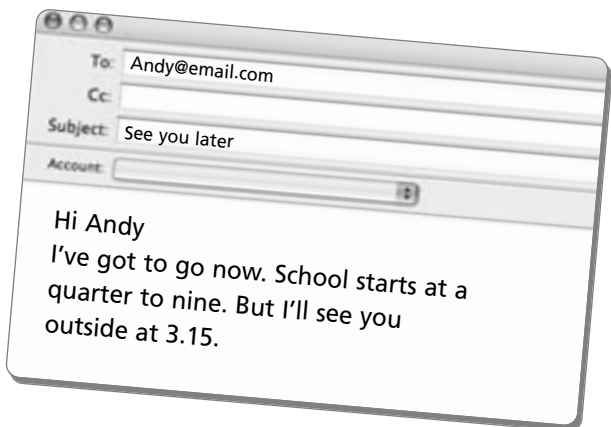
The majority* of students receive free education in state schools. However, 7% of students attend private schools.

You have to stay at school until you're sixteen. But about 70% of students stay on for another 2 years to take A' levels.

Loads of people take a gap year now. That's a year off between school and university. They go travelling or get some work experience. It's a good opportunity* to see the world!

Happy 14th birthday!
Sorry you've got maths and science exams this week!

An increasing number of students are now going on to study at university. Northern Ireland has the highest percentage with 45%, but there are 40% in Scotland and 35% in England and Wales



I've got quite good qualifications*. I took nine GCSEs when I was sixteen, and I passed all of them. And then, two years later, I got three A levels.

Education factfile

Compulsory education

- Full time education in the UK is compulsory* between the ages of and
- 93% of pupils receive
- 7% go to

Primary school

- For children between 5 and 11.

Secondary school

- For students of 11 years plus.
- School starts at about and finishes at about
- Students take national exams in and science at 14.

- Students takes GCSE exams at, AS level exams at 17, and A' levels or Advanced level exams at

University

- Many students take a between school and university.
- Approximately of young people in England and Wales, in Scotland and in Northern Ireland go to university.

Private schools

These are schools where parents pay for their children's education. There are some very famous old private schools (called Public schools) such as Eton and Harrow.

* What is it in your language? Find out!



My day at school

Read Jimmy's diary and number the pictures.

Monday

Today was a bit of a disaster*. I went to bed really late last night because I had to finish my homework. I know, I left it to the last moment. But who wants to do homework at the weekend? Anyway, I was so tired I didn't hear the alarm clock. So Jessica was already in the bathroom and she takes a long time. There wasn't time for breakfast so I said goodbye to Mum and I ran out of the house. But I didn't catch the bus. I missed it by seconds! So I had to walk to school and I got there at half past nine.

Mr Harrison, the science teacher, was horrible. Really horrible. There were three main reasons. One: I was late. Two: I wasn't wearing my tie. And three: I didn't have my homework. I left the house so quickly that I forgot my tie and all my books! I explained exactly what happened but he didn't believe me. Why are teachers so suspicious*?

The rest of the morning was OK. Maths was boring. History was boring. And then it was lunchtime. But I had a problem - I didn't have any lunch. Yes, that's right. I forgot my sandwiches, too. And I didn't have any money to buy a snack. I felt so hungry! My best mate Johnno gave me some chocolate. I ate it really quickly but it wasn't enough.

During the French class, Alison and her friends pointed at me and laughed. I like Alison. I mean, I REALLY like her. She's wonderful. But I don't like people laughing at me. Then the teacher said, 'James, go to the cloakroom and clean your face.' I left the room. When I looked in the cloakroom mirror there was chocolate all over me. I guess I ate the chocolate too quickly.

And then in my English class I fell asleep. I couldn't help it. I was so tired and hungry. So Ms Anderson woke me up and sent me to the headmaster. Mr Blake is a tall big man and he wasn't very happy. In fact, he gave me loads of extra homework.

I got a text message from Alison a few minutes ago. It said, 'Sorry for laughing'. That was nice of her. Did I mention that she's fantastically attractive?

It's ten o'clock now. It's getting late. I think it's time to start my homework.



Who is ...

Johnno? Ms Anderson? Alison? Mr Blake? Mr Harrison? Jessica?