

There are more than forty universities in Great Britain - nearly twice as many as in 1960. During the 60s eight completely new ones were founded and ten other new ones were created by converting old colleges of technology into universities. In the same period the number of students more than doubled, from 70,000 to more than 200,000. In 1970 about 10 % of men aged between 18 and 21 were in universities, the women university students making up only 4 % of the female population of the same age group»

All British universities are private institutions. Each has its own governing council, including some local businessmen and local politicians as well as a few academics. About a decade ago the state began to give money to the universities to cover the cost of buildings and their current expenditure, but students have to pay fees and living costs, that is food and lodgings».

Each university has its own syllabuses, and there are some quite important differences between one and another. In general the Bachelor's degree is given to students who pass examinations at the end of three or four years of study. Thus there are titles of Bachelor of Arts for history, philosophy, language and literature and sometimes some social studies or theology; Bachelor of Science or Commerce or Music, BA and B.Sc., respectively. The classifications are not the same in all universities, and students do not normally move from one university to another during their studies «Sometimes it may be that a student studying a foreign language goes abroad for a year, thus moving to a foreign university. Bachelor's degrees are at two levels: Honours and Pass. In some cases the Honours degree is given for intensive study and examination in one, two or perhaps three related subjects, while the Pass (or «General») degree may be somewhat broader. In other cases, there is no difference between Honours and Pass courses, and the Honours degree is given to those students who are more successful in their examination» «Honours degrees are classified according to the candidate's examination performance» . Typically about 5% are put in the first class, 30% upper second, 40% lower second, while the rest are distributed between third class, pass and fail. About 15% of students who start at universities leave without obtaining a degree, some of them after only one year.

The first post-graduate degree is that of Master, conferred for a thesis based on at least one-year's full-time work: the time actually taken is usually more than a year. In a few of the biggest universities there are some seminars for post-graduate students, but usually there are no regular courses for them. In most universities it is only in the science faculties that large numbers of students stay to do post-graduate work. Oxford and Cambridge are peculiar in that they give the Master of Arts degree automatically to any Bachelor who pays the necessary fees at any time after the seventh year from his first admission to the university. Everywhere the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) is given for a thesis which is an original contribution to knowledge. Oxford and Cambridge, the largest and the oldest of the universities of Britain, are both based on Colleges of widely varying sizes, though the average is about 300 students. Oxford and Cambridge, have about 10,000 students, making less than a tenth of the whole student population of Britain. The proportion of students whose parents are rich is larger in those two universities than anywhere

ales. It is more expensive to study at Oxbridge, as they are often referred to in the press, than in any other university.

Oxford has twenty-three ordinary colleges for men and five for women. All these are parallel and equal institutions and none of them is connected specifically with any particular field of study or with any particular stage in a student's career. No matter what subject a man decides to study, he may study it at one of the men's colleges. The university is a sort of federation of colleges. It prescribes syllabuses, arranges lectures, conducts examinations and awards degrees, but there is no single building which can be called "the University" and no definite area which could be called a "campus". «The colleges and university buildings are scattered about the town, mostly in its centre, though some scientific laboratories and women's colleges are quite a way out.

peculiar	характерный	female	женский
particular	особенный	expenditure	расход
award	награда	referred to	упоминаемый как
contribution	вклад	academics	ученые
confer	присваивать	governing	управляющий

Educational reform In the late 1980s the Conservative Government made important changes to the British educational system. One of the most fundamental changes was the introduction of a new "National Curriculum". The aim was to provide a more balanced education.



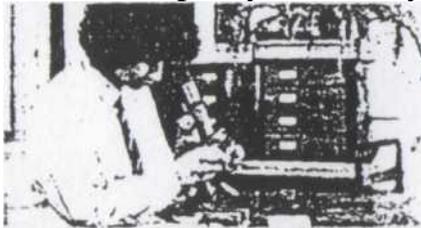
In secondary schools, for example, 80% of the timetable must be spent on the 'core curriculum'. This must include English, Mathematics, Science and a Modern Language for all pupils up to the age of 16. (Before 1989 pupils of 15 or 14 used to choose the subjects they wanted to continue studying.) At the same time, the new curriculum places greater emphasis on the more practical aspects of education. Skills are being taught which students will need for life and work, and 'work experience' - when pupils who are soon going to leave school spend some time in a business or industry - has become a standard part of the school programme.

Together with the 'National Curriculum', a programme of 'Records of Achievement' was introduced. This programme is known as 'REACH', and it attempts to set learning objectives for each term and year in primary school, and for each component of each subject at secondary school. This has introduced much more central control and standardization into what is taught. Many people think this will raise educational standards, but some teachers argue that they have lost the ability to respond to the needs and interests of their pupils, which may be different from pupils in other areas.

As part of the "REACH" programme, new tests have been introduced for pupils at the ages of 7, 11, 13 and 16. The aim of these tests is to discover any

schools or areas which are not teaching to high enough standards. But many parents and teachers are unhappy. They feel that it is a return to the days of the "11+" and that the system is unfair because it reflects differences in home background rather than in ability. Some teachers also fear that because of preparation for the tests, lessons will be more 'narrow', with a lot of time being spent on Mathematics and English, for example, while other interesting subjects which are not tested may be left out.

Educational reform is bringing other changes too. City Technology Colleges (CTCs) are new super-schools for scientifically gifted children, who - the Government hopes - will be the scientists and technological experts of the future. These schools are partly funded by industry.



In addition to the CTCs, since 1988 the Government has given ordinary schools the right to 'opt out of' (choose to leave) the LEA if a majority of parents want it. Previously all state schools were under the control of the LEA, which provided the schools in our area with money for books etc., paid the teachers, and controlled educational policy. Now schools which opt out will receive money direct from the Government and will be free to spend it as they like. They can even pay teachers more or less than in LEA schools if they want to, and they can accept any children - the pupils do not have to come from the neighbourhood. Many people fear that this will mean a return to selection, i.e. these schools will choose the brightest children. The Government says that the new schools will mean more choice for parents.

Exams

At the age of 14 or 15, in the third or fourth form of secondary school, pupils begin to choose their exam subjects. In 1988 a new public examination - the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) - was introduced for 16 year-olds. This examination assesses pupils on the work they do in the 4th and 5th year at secondary school, and is often internally assessed, although there may also be an exam at the end of the course.

Pupils who stay on into the sixth form or who go on to a Sixth Form College (17 year-olds in the Lower Sixth and 18 year-olds in the Upper Sixth) usually fall into two categories. Some pupils will be retaking GCSEs in order to get better grades. Others will study two or three subjects for an 'A' Level (Advanced Level) GCE exam (General Certificate of Education). This is a highly specialized exam and is necessary for University entrance. Since 1988 there has been a new level of exam: the 'AS' Level (Advanced Supplementary), which is worth half an 'A' Level. This means that if pupils wish to study more than two or three subjects in the sixth form they can take a combination of 'A' and 'AS' Levels. In Scotland the exam system is

slightly different.

Leaving school at sixteen

Many people decide to leave school at the age of 16 and go to a Further Education (FE) College. Here most of the courses are linked to some kind of practical vocational training, for example in engineering typing, cooking or hairdressing. Some young people are given 'day release' (their employer allows them time off work) so that they can follow a course to help them in their job.

For those 16 year-olds who leave school and who cannot find work but do not want to go to FE College, the Government has introduced the Youth Opportunities Scheme (YOPS). This scheme places young, unemployed people with a business or an industry for six months so that they can get experience of work, and pays them a small wage. They generally have a better chance of getting a job afterwards, and sometimes the company they are placed with offers them a permanent job.

PUZZLE

Find the eleven words in the puzzle. They all appear in the "Educational Reform section above, and the first letters are given.

Clues

1. The central pan. also the middle of an apple
2. & 3 Changes in schooling a good title?
3. Written information about past facts
4. An important school subject Greek knowledge?
5. Goal. Aim
6. What people speak if they're modern?
7. Practical science. another modern subject ?
8. What education is about, not the present or the past:
9. Something that has been successfully done
10. A programme of study

Secondary Education

There is usually a move from primary to secondary school at about the age of eleven, but schools are organized in a number of different ways.

Until the 1960-s there existed the tripartite system of secondary schools. Under it, most children took an examination at the end of primary school (the eleven Plus). The highest-scoring pupils (about twenty per cent) went to grammar schools which offered an academic five-year course leading to the General Certificate of Education at the ordinary level (the GCE O-level). On obtaining this certificate a pupil either left the school or continued his studies for another two years in what is called the "Sixth Form" to obtain the same certificate but at the advanced level (A-

level). The sixth form curriculum provided (and it still does) intense specialization.

The secondary technical school admitted five to two per cent of the pupils, and as the name implies, it offered a general education with a technical bias. It served those pupils who are more mechanically inclined. The pupils were given opportunities to try their hand at the machines in the work-shops. There was more science and mathematics taught on its curriculum. In other words, this school was to give a good foundation for careers in branches of industry or agriculture. However, for various reasons they were widely considered inferior to grammar schools.

The secondary modern school was attended by about seventy-five per cent of the pupils of the age-group eleven to sixteen and led to the Certificate of Secondary Education (the CSE) which was not accepted for entering a university. These schools were given the task of providing a general non-academic education for children of average ability. Many of these schools developed a bias in one of the following courses: secretarial, art and crafts, trade and commerce, agriculture, gardening, etc.

For years the tripartite system was under assault for separating children too early. And in early 70s the Labour government began its major reform the task of which was to escape from class patterns, to create new institutions, to mobilize the nation's talent. Under it, in 1965 the national 11+ examinations were abolished. And within the next decade about ninety per cent of all maintained secondary schools were reorganized on comprehensive lines.

Comprehensive schools admit children without reference to ability or aptitude. The children represent a total social cross-section. Their curricula attempt to satisfy two seemingly contrary requirements. On the one hand, they try to reflect the broad aims of education and offer demanding courses leading to public examinations. On the other hand, they allow for difference in the abilities and other characteristics of children, even of the same age. Accordingly, they provide courses that focus on practical life skills considered essential for the world we live in. Comprehensive schools in most places are all-through schools, that is, one school takes the whole age group 11-18. Some LEAs, however, have introduced new patterns.

One variation is comprehensive schools for children of 11 - 16 (the minimum school-leaving age) linked with sixth-form colleges for pupils who stay on after 16.

Other LEAs have middle schools for ages 8 — 12, 9 — 13 or 10 - 14, linked with upper schools (of high schools) for ages 12/13/14 - 18. Middle schools bridge the traditional division at 11 between primary and secondary education, and in areas with this system the first schools which children attend compulsorily (from 5 to 8/9/10) are called first schools. Thus children in these areas go to three schools instead of two as follows: first school-middle school-upper (high) school.

Comprehensive schools are usually much bigger than the schools of the tripartite system (at least 1,000 pupils). The area from which a comprehensive school takes its pupils is called a catchment area. Within each comprehensive school the children may be grouped according to their ability for specific subjects, and the divisions will be called "sets". In others, pupils are placed into A, B or C "streams"

according to their abilities and aptitudes.

A few schools offer mixed-ability organization for the whole curriculum withdrawing sometimes individual pupils with serious learning difficulties.

In a few areas pupils are still selected according to levels of academic attainment and receive secondary education in secondary modern or grammar schools (these being remnants of the old tripartite school system).

School Reform in the Eighties

A few years after the reform of the sixties the comprehensive schools which had been the object of so many hopes and turned into national symbols, of the new opportunities became the butt of increasingly bitter complaints. It turned out that the huge schools with big classes easily got out of control.

The new schools needed stability and time to build up their standards, but the hectic changes particularly in big cities constantly demoralized them. They came to be blamed for a fall-off in academic standards. Responding to criticism from many quarters the Conservative Government carried out their plan for a number of radical changes throughout the education system.

In 1988 GCE O-levels and CSEs were, phased out and replaced with GCSEs (General Certificate of Secondary Education), taken at 16.

These are more practical with less emphasis on retaining facts and more on the application of them. Assessment is continuous, with at least 20 per cent of coursework counting towards the final grade.

A-levels continue unchanged, but the "AS" Level (Advanced Supplementary) exam, which is worth half an "A" level was introduced. This means that if pupils wish to study more than two or three subjects in the sixth form they can take a combination of "A" and "AS" Levels.

Another major step was the introduction of the National curriculum. Maths, English and science form the core of the curriculum. Between 30 - 40 per cent of curriculum time is given to them. They and other foundation subjects are to be followed by all pupils during compulsory schooling.

Other foundation subjects comprise a modern foreign language, technology, history, geography, art, music and physical education. The foundation subjects commonly take up about 80 per cent of the curriculum. Attainment targets are set for the three core subjects as well as other foundation subjects. They establish what children should normally be expected to know at around the ages of 7, 11, 14 and 16.

The national curriculum also allows for flexibility. Schools are encouraged to organize their teaching in a variety of ways. The flexibility enables schools while meeting the requirements of the national curriculum to give special emphasis to particular subjects and provide courses beyond foundation subjects, such as home economics, a second modern foreign language, business studies, health education, etc.

Together with the National curriculum a programme of "Records of Achievement" was introduced (REACH for short). It attempts to set learning ob-

jectives for each term and year in primary school, and for each component of each subject at secondary school. Schools in Britain have three terms a year, each with a short half-term break in the middle and longer holidays at Christmas and Easter and in the summer.

Independent Schools

Most parents choose to send their children to free state schools financed from public funds, but an increasing number of pupils attend fee-paying independent schools outside the state system. These are still a small separate but highly significant group that are financially self-supporting.

In Britain there are about 2,500 independent schools catering for children of all ages. The most important are the "public schools" which accept pupils at about 12 or 13 usually on the basis of a fairly demanding examination called the Common Examination for Entrance to Public Schools (generally known as Common Entrance).

There are about 500 public schools in England and Wales. Some of them, notably Eton, Harrow, Winchester and Rugby have long maintained a distinguished reputation. These schools for centuries have prepared students academically for higher education, typically at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge and ultimately for leadership in British life. Preserving many of their old traditions, they have also undergone important changes. Today, they are less preoccupied with classics, more interested in science and engineering. Consequently, many more public school leavers now take engineering degrees. Although a controversial element in British education and frequently accused of reinforcing social distinctions, these institutions remain popular.

There are also junior independent schools known as preparatory schools catering for boys and girls from 8 to 13. Many of them like public schools are boarding schools. The abbreviation *prep, school* is widely used.

READING COMPREHENSION CHECK

1. What institutions provide nursery education in England and Wales?
2. What are the two stages in primary education? What is the difference between them?
3. What was the underlying idea of the tripartite system of secondary education in England and Wales?
4. What do you know about the tasks of grammar, secondary modern and technical schools?
5. What are the guiding ideals of the comprehensive school?
6. What public examinations do British school-leavers have to take (sit)?
7. What is the difference between state and independent schools in the U.K.?
8. What are "public" schools famous for?

ASSIGNMENTS

Go through the list of educational terms. Be able to explain the notions they describe.

nursery education	first school
nursery school	middle school
day nursery	secondary education/school
play group	compulsory schooling/attendance
free (of charge) schools/education	grammar school
to charge tuition/fees	secondary modern school
fee-paying school	technical school
primary education/school	comprehensive school
infant school/department	upper/high school
junior school/department	independent school
public school	grade <i>v</i>
preparatory (prep.) school	core subject
co-educational/mixed school	assess <i>v</i>
single-sex school	continuous assessment
boarding school	eleven-plus (11+)
sixth form/sixth-form college	common entrance
school-leaving age	the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE)
school-leaver	Advanced level exams (A-levels)
head teacher (master, mistress)	catchment area
curriculum (<i>pi</i> -la)	stream <i>n</i> , <i>v</i> /streaming
the National curriculum	set <i>n</i> /setting
an academic/general/practical course	mixed-ability class
grade <i>n</i>	

Questions for Discussion

1. Do you think education should be free? Are there any advantages in a fee-paying system?
2. What do you think is the best age to begin compulsory schooling?
3. What are your views of boarding schools? Would you like to have attended one yourself?
4. What are the advantages and disadvantages of selecting pupils by ability? Of providing tuition in mixed-ability classes?

Role-play

A group of Belarusian teachers discusses the educational tradition in their country with their British colleagues. The discussion includes comparison of the underlying ideas of their two systems, as well as the latest reforms.

TEXT 2. SCHOOL EDUCATION IN THE USA

Education in the USA. Purpose and Scope

Americans believe that every citizen has both the right and the obligation to become educated.

In order to develop an educated population, all states have compulsory school attendance laws. These laws vary somewhat from one state to another, but generally they require that formal schooling begin by age 6 and continue until at least age 16. However, most Americans attend school at least until high school graduation, when they are 17 or 18 years old. About 75% of all American adults and about 85% of younger American adults are high school graduates.

The size of the nation's basic educational enterprise is astonishing. From kindergarten through high school, about 46 million students are enrolled in school. To educate this vast number of students, Americans employ about 2.7 million teachers, by far the largest professional group in the country.

Public and Private Schools

About 88% of American children receive their elementary and high school education in the nation's public schools. These schools have the following important characteristics in common.

They are supported by taxes and, therefore, do not charge tuition.

In general, they are neighbourhood schools, open to all students who live within the district.

They are co-educational, which means that boys and girls attend the same schools and have nearly all of their classes together.. By providing girls with equal educational opportunity, American public schools have helped to create today's self-sufficient American woman.

Public schools are required to follow some state guidelines regarding, for example, curriculum and teacher qualifications. But, in most matters, schools are locally controlled. Each school district is run by an elected Board of Education and the school administrators that Board hires. This system creates strong ties between the district's schools and its community.

Public schools are non-sectarian (secular), which means that they are free from the influence of any religion. As a result, children of many different religions feel comfortable attending the public schools, and the public school system has been able to help a diverse population build a common culture.

Private schools can be divided into two categories: parochial (supported by a particular religious group) and secular (non-religious). Private schools charge tuition and are not under direct public control, although many states set educational standards for them. In order to attend a private school, a student must apply and be accepted. Parochial schools make up the largest group of private schools, and most of these are operated by the Roman Catholic Church. Private secular schools are mainly high schools and colleges.

Course Content and Teaching Methods

In educating students for adult work and adult life, American schools try, above all, to be practical. American education has been greatly influenced by the writings of a famous 20th-century philosopher named John Dewey. Dewey believed that the only worthwhile knowledge was knowledge that could be used. He convinced educators that it was pointless to make students memorize useless facts that they would quickly forget. Rather, schools should teach thinking processes and skills that affect how people live and work.

Dewey also influenced teaching techniques. Education must be meaningful, and children learn best by doing - these are the basic ideas of progressive education. Thus, science is taught largely through student experimentation; the study of music involves making music; democratic principles are put into practice in the student council; group projects encourage creativity, individual initiative, leadership, and teamwork.

What do American schools see as their educational responsibility to students? The scope is very broad indeed. Today's schools teach skills and information once left for the parents to teach at home. For example, it is common for the public school curriculum to include a campaign against cigarette smoking and drug abuse, a course in driver's education, cooking and sewing classes, consumer education, and sex education. Most American grammar schools have also added computer skills to their curriculum. As human knowledge has expanded and life has become increasingly complex, the schools have had to go far beyond the original three Rs ("reading, writing, and arithmetic") that they were created to teach.

American high schools have a dual commitment: (a) to offer a general college preparatory program for those who are interested in higher education; and (b) to provide opportunities for vocational training for students who plan to enter the work force immediately after high school graduation. For the college-bound, high schools offer advanced classes in math, sciences, social sciences, English/ and foreign languages. They also have Advanced Placement (AP) courses, which enable good students to earn college credit while still in high school. But in the same building other students take vocational courses such as shorthand and mechanical drawing, and some participate in work/study programs which enable them to get high school credit for on-the-job training in various occupations.

Today, more than ever before, American schools are committed to helping foreign-born students adjust to life in an American class-room. The Bilingual Education Act of 1968 provided federal funds for bilingual instruction, which allows students to study academic subjects totally or partially in their native language while they are learning English. Bilingual education is offered in about 70 languages including Chinese, Spanish, Vietnamese, and several American Indian languages. Of course, this type of instruction is available only where a number of students speak the same foreign language. In addition, immigrant students have benefited from the 1974 Supreme Court ruling requiring public schools to provide special programs for students who speak little or no English. Today, English as a

second language of instruction is common in American elementary and high schools.

Early Childhood Education

By the age of five, about 87% of American children are attending school, most of them in pre-academic classes called kindergarten.

However, many American youngsters are introduced to their first school setting even before the age of five, through nursery school or day care attendance. In fact, about 29% of three-year-olds and 49% of four-year-olds are enrolled in one or the other.

Nursery schools accept children from three to five years of age for half-day sessions ranging from twice a week to five days a week. The typical nursery school is equipped with toys, building blocks, books, puzzles, art supplies, and an outdoor play-ground. These pre-school programs usually charge tuition, although some are subsidized, and some offer scholarships. Day care programs have similar facilities that offer all-day care for the children of working parents.

Elementary School and High school

In most areas, free public education begins with kindergarten classes for five-year-olds. These are usually half-day classes two or three hours long, although some communities run all-day kindergarten programs. The primary purpose of kindergarten is socialization, but the young students also gain information and skills. For example, they learn to identify colors, count to ten, print their names, work with art supplies, listen to stories, and enjoy books. After kindergarten, American children begin their academic studies. Their schooling is divided into 12 academic levels called grades. One school year (from late August or early September to mid-June) is required to complete each grade. Academic work - learning to read, write, and do arithmetic - begins when children enter 1st grade, at about age 6.

The first academic institution that a student attends is called elementary school or grammar school. In some school systems, elementary school includes kindergarten through 8th grade, and the next four years (taught in a different school building) are called high school. In other school systems, there is a third division called junior high school (or middle school) which usually includes grades 6 through 8, but in some communities includes grades 4 or 5 through 8 and in others includes grades 7 through 9.

The typical school day is about seven hours long and ends about 3 P.M. Classes are in session Monday through Friday. Traditional vacation periods include a two-week winter vacation (including the Christmas and New Year's holidays), a one-week spring vacation (often coinciding with Easter), and a two-month summer vacation. In addition, there are several one-day holidays giving students a day off to celebrate.

Children going to public elementary schools usually attend a school in their neighbourhood. In big cities, many children live close enough to walk to and from

school and come home for lunch. However, most elementary schools provide a place where students can eat if it is inconvenient for them to go home at lunchtime. American high schools are larger than elementary schools and serve a larger community. As a result, most high school students take public transportation or a school bus to and from school and eat lunch in the school cafeteria.

Grammar schools teach language arts (reading, writing, spelling, and penmanship), social studies (stressing history and geography), mathematics (up to and sometimes including algebra), science, physical education, and health. In addition, elementary school programs often include music, art, and home economics.

High school subjects are more specialized. English classes emphasize writing, grammar, and literature. Social studies is split into separate courses such as American history, European history, and psychology. Year-long courses in algebra and geometry are followed by more advanced math work in trigonometry and pre-calculus. There are also specialized science courses in biology, chemistry, and physics. Many high school students study a foreign language, usually Spanish, French, or German. Courses in music, art, home economics, and consumer education are also available, along with various vocational courses. As in elementary school, health and physical education classes are generally required.

During the elementary school years, students are grouped into classes, and each group stays together for the entire school day and the entire school year. Generally, the class has the same teacher for most subjects, although art, music, and physical education are usually taught by teachers who specialize in these areas. Also, in the upper elementary grades, students in some school systems have different teachers (but the same classmates) for their major academic subjects.

In high school, students move from one classroom to another and study each subject with a different teacher and a different group of classmates'. Many high schools have what is commonly called a tracking system, which groups students according to academic ability and motivation. Thus, more capable and hard-working students take more difficult courses. Depending on the subject, classes may be offered at two, three, or even four different ability levels.

High school students have a very busy day. Many take five or six academic subjects as well as physical education. During other periods, students may be doing homework in a study hall, researching in the school library, or participating in activities such as the school orchestra, student government, school newspaper, or math club. Many extracurricular activities also meet after the school day ends. Students involved in time-consuming activities such as athletics, dramatics, or music may be at school from very early in the morning until dinnertime. However, these school activities are well worth the time because they help students find friends with similar interests, develop their talents, gain greater self-confidence, and sometimes even discover their career goals.

Problems and Solutions

When an immigrant family moves to the USA, one of the first questions that parents ask is, "Will my children get a good education here?" The answer depends

on two major factors: where the children attend school and how hard they are willing to work.

In some schools where the community is stable, the funding good, and the school environment orderly, a hardworking student can get an excellent education. But in other schools - especially those in poor neighborhoods in the nation's large cities - *It* is very difficult to become educated. The flight of middle-class families to the suburbs left big city public schools with mostly lower-income students. Many are deprived children from impoverished homes with only one parent. Many come to school ill-prepared and poorly motivated to learn. A large number need help in learning English. Many change residences and schools often, and a changing classroom population is difficult to teach. In some poor neighborhoods, the students do not attend school regularly because they are frightened by violent gangs. In some class-rooms, teachers have difficulty keeping the students' attention because disrespectful, uncooperative students disturb the class. Because the quality of education varies so much from one school district to another, parents who are planning to move to a new neighborhood often inquire about the schools - and even visit them - before deciding which community to move to.

Researchers are always studying the schools and evaluating the kind of education being provided. Experts ask: "Are today's students learning as much as their older siblings or their parents did? Are they learning as much as students in other countries?" In the 1980s, many studies revealed weaknesses in the American educational system. For example, of the 158 members of the United Nations, the USA ranked 49th in its level of literacy. It has been claimed that as many as 25 million American adults cannot read the front page of a newspaper. Another study focused on students' knowledge of history and literature. The results were published in a book entitled "What Do Our 17-Year-Olds Know?".

And the answer is, "not much". For example 75% of American high school seniors did not know when Abraham Lincoln was President, and 89% could not identify Dickens, Dostoyevsky, and Ibsen as famous authors. In a 1988 study comparing students' knowledge of geography, American young adults came in last of nine countries. In fact, 18% of the American students couldn't even find the USA on a world map! Still other studies indicate that today's students are weak in mathematical problem-solving and writing skills.

What's wrong with American education? To find the answer and to fix the problem, one must look at all of the elements: the students themselves, their parents, their teachers, the school curriculum, the textbooks, and the community. Many students simply do not study enough. Two-thirds of high school seniors do an hour or less of homework per night. American teenagers are often distracted by part-time jobs, sports and other school activities, TV, and socializing. Some do not keep up with their schoolwork because of emotional problems, use of illegal drugs, or simply lack of motivation. Clearly, if Americans are to become better educated, students must spend more time studying, and parents must insist that they do so.

Criticism of American education stimulated a reform movement. As a result, 45 of the 50 states raised high-school graduation requirements. One government study recommended a longer school year. (Now, the average American student at-

tends school about 180 days a year, compared to 210 for a Japanese student.) Efforts have also been underway to increase parental involvement in schools and to improve teaching. College programs that educate teachers are trying to encourage more academically talented students to choose teaching as a career. Schools of education are also, improving their curriculum so that American teachers of the future will be better prepared. School administrators are working on curriculum revisions. Publishers are being urged to create text-books that are more challenging, interesting, and objective. Finally, concerned citizens are urging communities and the federal government to provide more tax dollars for education.

What can one say about basic education in the USA today? It has many strengths, but there's plenty of room for improvement. Since the school reform movement began, test scores have risen somewhat, and Americans are optimistic that reform and improvement will continue. Americans deeply believe in education as the best vehicle for individual and social advancement. Improving the basic school system is one of the nation's top priorities. But meanwhile, it is a consolation to remember that, for most young Americans, formal education does not end with high school graduation.

READING COMPREHENSION CHECK

1. What have you gathered about the underlying ideas of American school education (in course content and teaching methods)?
2. What are the major academic divisions of the American school system?
3. What are the main tasks of early childhood education in the USA?
4. How does instruction in high schools differ from that in elementary schools?
5. What kinds of private schools exist in the USA?
6. What problems do American schools face?

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Go through the list of educational terms. Be able to explain the notions they describe.

nursery school	non-sectarian, <i>syn.</i> secular
day-care attendance	parochial
all-day care	grade II, V
kindergarten classes	bilingual instruction
pre-academic classes	college-bound <i>a</i>
the three Rs	Advanced Placement (A.P.) course
public school	vocational skills
elementary school, <i>syn.</i> grammar school	language arts
middle school <i>syn.</i> junior high school	penmanship
high school	literary level
	sibling <i>n</i>
	tracking system

to graduate from
curriculum

extracurricular activities
vacation
recess *n*

2. Study the word and phase list you will need to discuss the text.

to have a dual commitment
to enter the work force
to offer advanced classes/scholarships
to be committed to
to run all-day programs
to be in session
a half-day session

to identify colours
parental involvement
compulsory school attendance laws
to be introduced to the first school
setting
drug abuse
to earn college credit
social advancement

3. Here are a few British words and expressions to describe the British school. Say what terms in American English render similar notions.

primary school
secondary school
class, form

pupil
headteacher
vacation
to admit to school

4. Here are a few words which describe educational realia in both British and American English. Explain the difference of usage.

TEXT 3. HIGHER AND FURTHER EDUCATION IN GREAT BRITAIN

About one-third of British school-leavers receive post-school education. About twenty per cent of 18- and 19-year-olds enter full-time course (degree or other advanced courses higher than A level). These courses are provided in universities, polytechnics, Scottish central institutions, colleges of higher (HE) and further (FE) education, and technical, art and agricultural colleges.

Full-time courses normally also include "sandwich" courses in which the period of full-time study in college is broken by a period, or periods, of industrial training, thus, a four-year course might consist of the first two years in college, followed by a year in industry and a final year in college.

In addition, there is a great number of part-time students (3.2 million in 1996) of whom half a million were released from work with pay by their employers, normally for one full day a week or the equivalent in half-days.

Higher education in Britain is provided by universities, polytechnics and colleges of higher education which offer courses leading to a degree.

In the year of 2000 there were seventy-two universities in Britain. They fall into four broad categories: the ancient English foundations, the ancient Scottish ones, the "redbrick" universities, and the "plate-glass" ones. They are all private

institutions, receiving direct grants from central government.

Oxford and Cambridge, founded in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries respectively, are easily the "most famous of Britain's universities. Today "Oxbridge", as the two together are known, educate less than one tenth of Britain's total university student population. But they continue to attract many of the best brains, and to mesmerise a greater number, partly on account of their prestige but also on account of the seductive beauty of many of their buildings and surroundings.

Both universities grew gradually, as federations of independent colleges most of which were founded in the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In both universities, however, new colleges have been established, for example Green College, Oxford (1979) and Robinson College, Cambridge (1977).

Today the population of Oxford, the older of the two, is about 115,000, of whom approximately 14,400 are university students (about 72% of them undergraduates). The University has no campus *per se*, but consists of a federation of 36 independent colleges and five "halls". For its part, the University provides central libraries, laboratories and services; meets a major part of the total bill for academic salaries; establishes the staffs of the various faculties and through them prescribes the curricula, conducts examinations and awards degrees. It also publishes the schedule of lectures to be given each term by professors, tutors and eminent visiting academics. The colleges, on the other hand, choose their own students and provide them with tutors (known as "dons" from the Latin *dominus*), pay for the upkeep of their own buildings and maintain their own libraries, sports teams, traditions and specialities, and their own, sometimes very considerable, financial resources. Colleges are relatively small - St Anne's for example, has the most undergraduates and Corpus Christi the fewest.

Attendance at lectures in Oxford and Cambridge is not obligatory. The basis of tuition is the tutorial, for which students are required to meet with their tutor once or twice a week, individually, or perhaps with one or two other students for every tutorial, a student in the arts or social sciences will prepare a written essay in which a case must be argued. The system, which builds on strong motivation and encourages independent thought and work, is the hallmark of Oxbridge education. Although traditionally renowned for the study of the arts, Oxbridge are now also two of the world's great scientific universities (over 40% of their students pursue degrees in science). Tutorials for the sciences may involve essays or working through problems with one's tutor, but students must also spend long hours on practical work in the laboratories.

Oxford and Cambridge demand outstanding talents in their students, yet they are no longer an exclusive preserve of the social elite. Today over forty per cent of their students arrive from state-funded schools. The ratio of applicants to available places is about 3:1. Nevertheless, although now open to all according to intellectual ability, Oxbridge retains its exclusive, narrow and spell-binding culture. Together with the public school system, it creates a narrow social and intellectual channel from which the nation's leaders are almost exclusively drawn.

The problem is not the quality of education offered either in the independent schools or Oxbridge. The problem is cultural. Can the products of such exclusive

establishments remain closely in touch with the remaining 95 per cent of the population? If the expectation is that Oxbridge, particularly, will dominate the controlling positions in the state and economy, is the country ignoring equal talent which does not have the Oxbridge label?

Scotland boasts four ancient universities: Glasgow, Edinburgh, St. Andrews and Aberdeen, all founded in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In the Scottish lowlands greater value was placed on education during the sixteenth and later centuries than in much of England. These universities were created with strong links with the ancient universities of continental Europe, and followed their longer and broader course of studies. Even today, Scottish universities provide four-year undergraduate courses, compared with the usual three-year courses in England and Wales.

In the nineteenth century many "civic", or "redbrick" universities were established to respond to the greatly increased demand for educated people as a result of the Industrial Revolution and the expansion of Britain's overseas empire. Many of these were sited in the industrial centres, for example Birmingham, Manchester, Nottingham, Newcastle, Liverpool and Bristol.

. They were based more on the mass lecture system than were Oxford and Cambridge. Today apart from lecture courses the teaching in most British universities is done in laboratories or in tutorial groups for three or four students, or seminars for about ten.

Out of this group London University became especially renowned. It was established in 1836 by the union of two colleges: University College and King's College. Later many other colleges, schools and institutes were added, and London University is now the largest in Britain. It is the only University which awards external degrees.

With the expansion of higher education in the 1960s many more "plate-glass" universities were established, some named after counties or regions rather than old cities, for example Sussex, Kent, East Anglia and Strathclyde. After some initial enthusiasm for them, they had become less popular by the 1980s than the older institutions.

There is also a highly successful Open University, which provides every person in Britain with the opportunity to study for a degree, without leaving their home. It is particularly designed for adults who regret missed opportunities earlier. It conducts learning through correspondence, radio and television, and also through local study centres.

Nearly a quarter of all adult part-time students follow its degree courses on radio and television. Most course work is run by part-time tutors (many of whom are lecturers at other universities); these are scattered around the country, and meet students to discuss their work at regular intervals. There are short residential summer courses. The students are of all ages, some of them retired. They may spread their studies over several years, and choose their courses to suit their individual needs and preferences.

Polytechnics in England and Wales provide a range of higher education courses, up to doctoral studies. (In Scotland there are similar institutions.) But their

real purpose was to fill the gap between university and further education work, providing an environment in which equal value was placed on academic and practical work, particularly in order to improve Britain's technical and technological ability. The polytechnics produce excellent quality, but by aspiring to provide the same kind of courses as universities, they have not entirely succeeded in their purpose.

Polytechnics are funded in a similar way to universities Polys' hope this will give them an opportunity to enjoy equality and equal standing with universities. In recent years many of them were upgraded to university level.

Each university course has a quota of new students which ought not to be exceeded, so entry to each course is in effect competitive. Good "A"-level results in at least two subjects are necessary to get a place at a University. However, good exam passes alone are not enough. Universities choose their students after interviews, and competition for entry to the best institutions is really fierce.

A central clearing house for admissions, the Universities Central Council on Admissions (commonly known as UCCA), helps to cope with the excessively complex problem of multiple applications. Anyone wanting to enter a university gets an application form from UCCA, on which an applicant may enter applications for up to five courses in different universities. All universities issue prospectuses describing their courses. Polytechnics have much the same entry system.

Undergraduate courses normally take three years of full-time study, although a number of subjects take longer, including medicine, architecture and foreign languages (where courses include a year abroad). The academic year is divided into three eight or ten-week terms and at the end of each term most undergraduates "go down" for the vacation. On completing the course of three or four years the undergraduates sit their "finals" or degree examinations and are awarded their "first" degree that of Bachelor of Arts or of Science (BA or BS).

The bachelor degree is normally classed, with about 5 per cent normally gaining a First, about 30 per cent gaining an Upper Second, perhaps 40 per cent gaining a Lower Second, and the balance getting either a Third, a Pass or failing.

There are various post-graduate degrees. On completion of post-graduate work, usually a one- or two-year course involving some original research students may obtain Master of Arts or of Science (MA or MSc) degree. Some students continue to complete a three-year period of original research for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). Depending on the degree they are studying for the students are called undergraduates, graduates and postgraduates.

Over ninety per cent of full-time students receive grants from their Local Education Authorities to assist with their tuition. In 1990 the government, while still providing tuition fees, froze the grant for cost of living expenses and set up a new system whereby students were to take out loans to help meet their living costs. The loans are designed to supplement the grant and are available to UK students attending undergraduate and diploma level courses of at least one year's duration.

It is very unusual for university students to live at home, and parents usually approve of the move, and see it as a necessary part of becoming an adult. Most

freshmen (or freshers) live in a Hall of Residence on or near the college campus, although they may move out into a rented room in their second or third year, or share a house with friends (they may say that they live in "lodgings" or "digs" then).

Full-time and part-time students in universities, polytechnics and colleges are members of Students' Union, which is part of the National Union of Students. The Students' Union (S.U.) is a welfare organization which provides help, information and advice on aspects of University and student life. It holds guides, leaflets, magazines and maps, it provides information on travel and insurance, sells books, provides refreshments, organizes entertainment and other recreational activities and lends help and advice on any matter it can. The Students Union normally funds clubs and societies of all kind which are typical of undergraduate life at a university. There may be social clubs and a host of religious, philosophical, political, historical, artistic, musical and literary clubs.

Further education is education in technical colleges, further education colleges, colleges of art and various other institutions which do not award degrees. The term describes a widely differing set of institutions.

The majority of the lower level courses, relating mainly to apprenticeship schemes and qualifications are provided in Colleges of Further Education or Technical Colleges. Middle level courses are also offered in Technical Colleges with those having a good share of more advanced work being called "Colleges of Technology". Polytechnics may have both degree and non-degree courses. But there are a number of specialized colleges such as the London College of Printing and the National College of Agricultural Engineering. Very few of the broad divisions here are clear cut, there is much overlapping.

One of the major areas of "overlap" that has occurred during the past ten years or so has been between the school system and Further Education. There has been a growing provision of "Sixth Form" level studies in Colleges of Further Education and Technical Colleges during this period and almost all of the "non-advanced" technical colleges now offer a broad spread of subjects for the GCE Advanced Level ("A" level) examinations. Many sixth form students seem to prefer the more adult atmosphere of the Technical College to that of the school. A few Local Education Authorities have decided, partly because of this existing trend and partly for reasons of economy, that all the post-sixteen education in certain areas - both technical and academic - should be amalgamated in one establishment; such amalgamated institutions are called "Tertiary Colleges".

Whatever the type of establishment and its range of educational provision, most of the local inhabitants will probably refer to it as "the Tech". The Tech has played an important part in British educational history and its role will be no less important in the future.

READING COMPREHENSION CHECK

1. What is the difference between higher and further education?
2. What can you say about the role of Oxford and Cambridge in modern Britain?
3. What degrees are awarded in British higher education?
4. How are British school leavers admitted to universities and colleges?
5. What are the tasks of the Open University?
6. What kinds of financial aid are available to British students?
7. What is Students' Union?

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Go through the list of educational terms and realia. Be able to explain the notions they describe.

education <i>n</i>	a plate-glass university
training <i>n</i>	campus <i>n</i>
applicant <i>n</i>	hall of residence (hall)
the Universities Central Council on Admissions (UCCA)	lodgings (coll. digs)
prospectus	finals <i>n</i>
a full-time course/student	degree examinations
a part-time course/student	Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)
a sandwich course	Master of Arts (M.A.)
a residential course	Master of Science (M.S.)
a degree/non-degree course	Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)
freshman <i>n</i> (fresher)	external degree
undergraduate <i>n</i>	grant <i>n</i>
graduate <i>n</i>	scholarship <i>n</i>
post-graduate <i>n</i>	loan <i>n</i>
non-graduate <i>n</i>	Students' Union
lecturer <i>n</i>	the National Union of Students
professor <i>n</i>	apprenticeship <i>n</i>
tutor <i>n</i>	polytechnics (polys)
tutorial <i>n</i>	optional subject
don <i>n</i>	compulsory subject
the sciences	the Open University
the arts	further education college
a civic university	technical college
a red-brick university	college of technology
	tertiary college (the Tech)

2. Study the phrase list you will need to discuss the text.

to award degrees	to overlap
mass lecture system	to provide a course

to study/read for a degree
to enjoy equal standing
to upgrade to a ... level
to enter a course
to go down for a vacation
to take out loans

to release from work
to fall into categories
the ancient foundations
to prescribe the curricula
to issue a prospectus
to study by correspondence
distance learning

TEXT 4. HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE USA

"The more you learn, the more you earn", said the pop singer Cyndi Lauper as she accepted her high school diploma - at the age of 35! Although Cyndi made it without a high school degree, most people don't. In the USA today, about 75% of jobs require some education or technical training beyond high school. The lowest wage earners in the USA are those without high school degrees; college graduates out earn those without a college education; people with master's degrees out earn those with only a bachelor's: and the highest incomes of all are earned by people with advanced professional or academic degrees. These generalizations explain why the majority of young Americans go to college. However, despite the average, more diplomas don't always mean more money. Many skilled blue-collar workers, salespeople, business executives, and entrepreneurs out earn college professors and scientific researchers. And great athletes and entertainers out earn everyone else!

But college education is not only preparation for a career; it is also (or should be) preparation for life. In addition to courses in their major field of study, most students have time to take elective courses. They may take classes that help to understand more about human nature, government, the arts, sciences, or whatever else may interest them.

Going to college, either full-time or part-time, is becoming the automatic next step after high school. Today, more than half of American high school graduates enroll in college. But recent high school graduates no longer dominate the college campuses. Today it is quite common for adults of all ages to come back to college either for career advancement or personal growth.

American faith in the value of education is exemplified by the rising number of Americans who have at least a bachelor's degree. About 20% of Americans are college graduates. However, among younger adults and working people, the percentage is at least 25%, much higher than in most other major nations. In the USA, a college education is not viewed as a privilege reserved for the wealthy or the academically talented. Virtually everyone who wants to attend college can do so.

Undergraduate Education

American colleges and universities vary a great deal in size. Some colleges have student bodies of just a few hundred, while some state universities serve more than 100,000 students on several different campuses. At smaller schools, students generally get to know their classmates and professors better and are less likely to feel lonely and confused. Larger schools offer a greater selection of courses and

more activities to attend and participate in. When selecting a college, the student must consider which type of environment best suits his or her needs.

There are two main categories of institutions of higher learning: public and private. All schools get money from tuition and from private contributors. However, public schools are supported primarily by the state they're located in. On the other hand, private schools do not receive state funding. As a result, tuition is generally lower at public schools, especially for permanent residents of that state.

Schools can also be grouped by the types of programs and degrees they offer. The three major groups are community colleges, four-year colleges, and universities. Community colleges offer only the first two years of undergraduate studies (the freshman and sophomore years). The number of these schools has grown very rapidly in the past 40 years. In 1950, there were about 600 in the USA. Today, there are about 1,300, and they serve about five million students (about 55% of all college freshmen). Most community colleges are public schools, supported by local and/or state funds. They serve two general types of students: (a) those taking the first two years of college before transferring to a four-year school for their third and fourth (junior and senior) years; and (b) those enrolled in one- or two-year job training programs. Community colleges offer technical training in many areas of study, such as health services, office skills, computer science, drafting, police work, and automotive repair.

Newcomers to the USA often ask, "Exactly what is the difference between a college and a university?" Some assume that the difference is merely one of size, but it is much more than that. A university is bigger than a college because the scope of its programs is much greater. A university offers a wider range of undergraduate programs and also offers graduate studies. Part of the responsibility of a university is to encourage its faculty and its graduate students to do research that will advance human knowledge. Colleges, on the other hand, are primarily undergraduate schools with no commitment to train students for research.

Many excellent colleges are liberal arts schools, which means that they offer studies in the humanities, languages, mathematics, social sciences, and sciences. Liberal arts colleges generally do not offer degrees in engineering, business, journalism, education, and many other specific vocations that a student can train for at a university. However, students at a liberal art colleges (like college students elsewhere) still major in a specific area of knowledge.

Some colleges specialize in training students for one particular occupation (as agricultural colleges and teacher's colleges do). Many specialized undergraduate institutions that are not called colleges also provide higher education in one specific occupation - for example, conservatories for music students, seminaries for students of religion, and fine arts schools for artists. For those wishing to prepare for military careers, the United States government maintains four special academies.

At the college level, the academic year is about nine months long (usually from September until early June or from late August until May). After completing four academic years with acceptable grades in an approved course of study, the student earns a bachelor's degree. Some students complete college in less than four years by attending summer sessions. At most colleges, the academic year is di-

vided into either two or three terms, excluding the summer session. College grades, from highest to lowest, run A, B, C, D, and F. An F is a failing grade; if a student receives an F in a particular course, he or she does not get credit for having taken the course. College students must maintain at least a low C average in order to remain in school.

Graduate Education

American universities "offer three main categories of graduate degrees. In most fields of specialization, a master's degree can be earned by one or two academic years of study beyond the bachelor's degree. A Ph.D. degree (Doctor of Philosophy) usually takes at least three years beyond the master's. To earn a Ph.D. in almost any field, generally the student must pass oral and written examinations in his or her speciality, produce a long research paper which makes an original contribution to his or her field of study, and pass reading examinations in one or two foreign languages. There are also graduate professional degrees in medicine, dentistry, and law, among other fields.

In recent years, the graduate student population has become much more diversified than even before. It now includes more women, foreign students, minority group members, older students, and part-time students. Also, the variety of degree programs offered has expanded greatly. Today's graduate students can choose from about 1,000 types of master's degrees and about 60 types of doctorates.

Life on an American Campus

A college community is an interesting and lively place, students become involved in many different activities - extracurricular, religious, social, and athletic. Among the extracurricular activities are college newspapers, musical organizations, dramatic clubs, and political groups. Many religious groups have their own meeting places, where services and social activities can be held. Most colleges have a student union, where students can get together for lunch, study sessions, club meetings, and socializing.

At many schools, campus life revolves around fraternities (social and, in some cases, residential clubs for men) and sororities (similar clubs for women). These organizations exist on more than 500 campuses. The best known are national groups with chapters at schools throughout the country. Their names are Greek letters, such as Alpha Delta Phi.

Athletics is an important part of life on most campuses. Most coeducational and men's schools belong to an athletic league. The teams within the league play against each other, aiming for the league championship. Football is the college sport which arouses the most national interest. Games, complete with student marching bands and entertainment, are major productions. Other sports - particularly basketball, swimming, and track - are also pursued with enthusiasm. Some schools have competitive tennis, skiing, sailing, wrestling, soccer, baseball, and golf.

Is it fun to be a college student in the United States? For most students, the

college years are exciting and rewarding, but they are certainly not easy or care-free. Just about all college students face the pressure of making important career decisions and some anxiety about examinations and grades. Many students have additional problems - too little money, not enough time for sleep, and a feeling of loneliness because they're living far from home. Still, many Americans look back on their college years as the happiest time of their lives. When students live on campus in college dormitories, they make very close friendships. Sometimes a student is fortunate enough to find a member of the school's faculty that takes a personal interest in his or her academic career. Some students, when returning to their college campus in the fall, feel that they are coming back to their second home. Many graduates feel great loyalty to their former schools and, throughout their lives, they cheer for their school's athletic teams and donate money to help the institution expand and modernize. American graduates refer to the school they attended as their alma mater (a Latin expression meaning fostering mother). This expression indicates how much the college experience means to students, and how much they feel their school contributed to their lives.