

Conversation lesson – School

Task 1 - Running Dictation

It seems people have very different experiences of school. Some find it good preparation for life, others find the exams difficult and the subjects irrelevant.

Maths and English are the main subjects but it is also important to study practical subjects like science and information technology.

There can be a lot of homework and many pupils dislike the discipline and the uniform.

But with a good teacher, lessons can be interesting and educational. It all depends on the people in the classroom.

Task 7 – Choosing a school

Jethro Tull High School

This is a positive school which believes in student independence. There aren't a lot of rules and students enjoy a lot more freedom than in other school, within reason. For example, lessons are optional if you have already studied that topic in a previous course. You don't have to come to school in the morning if you have no lessons, and you don't have to go to assembly if you prefer to do private study in the library.

But there are some responsibilities too. Students have to wear uniforms and they must wear a tie (even for sport).

Students don't have to study 12 subjects if they don't want to but they must study at least 9 and have to do lots of homework for each subject every week. They must show that they are learning or they have to go back and repeat the year. Consequently, some weaker students are approaching their forties.

Derek Clive School

This school has a reputation for having the toughest students on the planet! They're as hard as nails.

We can see why.

Every morning, the students have to get out of bed at 7:00 and run ten miles. Then they go for breakfast, which is porridge and fruit.

After breakfast they must do their homework for two hours, and then they have to go to class, where the teachers shout at them instead of teaching them. The students mustn't answer back or ask questions.

Then, they have to play rugby for two hours, and at 8:00, after their dinner, they must go to bed and they can't read or talk to each other.

It's a tough school, but they don't have to wear a uniform.

Safe Mode Secondary School

This school is where Bill Gates went. The school is very proud of this, so they are now an IT school, where students have to do all their work over the internet. So, students don't have to go to school. They must be online from 8:00 until 12:00, and from 1:00 to 4:00 with a Skype connection with their robot teacher. They don't have to go to the school building, but if their computer has a virus, they have to buy a new computer or their education suffers.

They only have to study three subjects, Information Technology, Computer Science and Computers in Society. In reality, this is the same subject, but because of this, students don't have to do more than one lot of homework every night.

The big rule, students **MUST NOT** download Cliff Richard music from the internet.

Institute Dario Gradi

This school is a very fair and happy school. All the students want to stay in the school when they are 18 and don't want to go to university, because they love this school so much.

Why is it so popular? Well, it's simple. Students have to come to school, OK, but when they are there they don't have to study grammar, they don't have to read boring stories by old writers who are famous but terrible, and they don't have to listen to the teacher talking and talking all day. They learn because the teachers understand that people learn when they want to learn and when they are interested. So they are given challenging and realistic tasks, stimulating information and encouraging feedback.

But they have to keep quiet when the teacher is talking.

Task 9 - Role cards for discussion**A**

You are the president of a new school in a middle-income area of the city. Your school is very modern and is set to offer a high standard of education to 500 hundred pupils. You will have state of the art computer labs, science labs, language laboratories. You will employ qualified teachers from all over the world, specialists in their field, all having graduated from faculties in top universities.

But some local people are angry with you because your school is not a free school. Students must pay a lot of money to study there, and this is seen as unfair to other local families who don't have the money.

You must meet local families and defend your school and the governing body's decision to ask families to pay for education there.

Think of some things you can say to support your case:

B

I take your point, but listen to me!

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