Education

British education has many different faces but one goal. Its aim is to realize the potential of all, for the good of the individual and society as a whole.

The five Ages of Education:

Nursery – up to 5 years; 2. Primary – 4-12 years; 3. Secondary – 11-18 years;

Higher – 18 + years; 5. Further – 16 + years.

Building the future

In Britain most children of compulsory secondary school age (11 to 16) receive free education financed from public funds. A small proportion attend private, or "independent" schools, not financed by the state. The years at secondary school may lead to General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) qualifications.

Those who choose to stay on at school after GCSE usually study for two further years for A (Advanced) level exams in two or three subjects.

They can broaden their range by taking AS levels, which demand the same standard of work as A levels but cover only half the content, or by taking courses leading to vocational qualifications.

On a higher level

The British government aims to widen access to the point where one in three young people go into higher education.

All Britain's universities enjoy complete academic freedom. They appoint their own staff and decide what and how to teach. First degree courses usually last three or four years.

England and Wales' 34 polytechnics tend to be more vocationally-orientated than universities, providing degree and sub degree vocational courses as well as traditional academic degree courses. Many polytechnics have close links with business and many students have jobs attend part-time. For those without standard entry qualifications, access and foundation courses can provide a way in to higher education. Non-graduates normally take a four-year Bachelor of Education (BEd) degree, while those who are already graduates undertake a one year Postgraduate Certificate of Education (PGCE).

Learning for life

Education doesn't stop with leaving school. Further education in particular is learning with its strong ties with commerce and industry.

Over 500 colleges of further education run courses on everything from catering to business studies. Most further education courses are vocational, but many colleges offer GCSEs and A levels.

There are 46 universities in Britain. Good "A" Level results in at least two subjects are necessary to get a place at one. However, good exam passes alone are not enough. Universities choose their students after interviews, and competition for places at university is fierce.

For all British citizens a place at university brings with it a grant from their Local Education authority. The grants cover tuition fees and some of the living expenses. The amount depends on the parents' income.

First year university students are called 'freshers'. Freshers learn a new way of studying. As well as lectures, there are regular seminars, at which one of a small group of students (not more than ten) reads a paper he or she has written. The paper is then discussed by the tutor and the rest of the group. Once or twice a term, students will have a tutorial. This means that they see a tutor alone to discuss their work and their progress. In Oxford and Cambridge, and some other universities, the study system is based entirely around such tutorials which take place once a week. Attending lectures is optional for "Oxbridge students".

After three or four years (depending on the type of course and the university) these students will take their finals. Most of them (over 90 percent) will get a first, second or third class degree and be able to put BA (Bachelor of Arts) or BSC (Bachelor of Science) after their name. It will have been well earned.

From 'Spotlight on Britain'

**Find the English equivalents of the following in the text:**

образование, финансируемое из государственного фонда; профессиональная подготовка; аттестат о среднем образовании; расширять диапазон знаний; охватывать содержание; один из трех; пользоваться академической свободой; назначать штат; надежные связи с торговлей; данные, необходимые для поступления в высшее образовательное учреждение; платить за обучение и проживание; сдавать выпускные экзамены.

***Find factual information to prove that:***

1. British education has many different faces.

2. All Britain’s universities enjoy complete academic freedom.

3. Education doesn’t stop with leaving school.

4. Freshers learn a new way of studying.

***Answer the following questions (in a written form):***

1. What is the aim of British education?

2. What are the five ages of education?

3. Where does secondary school age receive education?

4. What is GCSE?

5. How long does it take to study for level exams (after GCSE)?

6. What do access and foundation courses provide?

7. Who takes a four-year Bachelor of Education degree?

8. What results are necessary to get a place at a university?

9. What does a place at a university bring with it for British citizens?

10. What is the university study system based around?

11. When do students take their finals?