

It's never too late to learn

● Points of view

1. Let's talk! Work in pairs and answer these questions.

1. How important is education for you own future?
2. Are you happy with your achievements so far?
3. What do you think school should do to help students improve their performance?

● Reading

2. Read the text and list the factors which contributed to the author's failure at school.

“At school, I found that little was memorable in the classroom. If you worked hard at Rutlish you were encouraged. If you did not, you were ignored, unless you were disruptive; so I retreated to the shadows and stayed there, inconspicuous. Only once was there a price to be paid for not working. At about the age of thirteen or fourteen an opportunity arose for me to sit an entrance examination for Charterhouse. I was keen, but my school was not — only their top academic pupils would sit; they wanted no failures. Nor were my parents happy with the idea: what was wrong with Rutlish? And probably — though they never said so — they were worried about the extra cost a place at a leading public school would entail. I understood this, and the opportunity drifted away.

The years passed forgettably, and I have only sketchy recollections of them. GCE “O” levels in 1959 approached without drama. My parents' struggle to hide their bad health and poor finances absorbed all their strength, and they did not push me at all. They assumed I would pass my exams as easily as my academic sister had passed her school certificate, a decade before. But I had not worked, and I passed only three “O” levels — History, English language and English Literature.

Although this was self-inflicted failure, there was little reproach from my sick parents. They were, as ever, stoical, but I knew they were hurt and disappointed. They had hoped for so much, and I had achieved so little. I had let them down. And in their hurt I saw with sudden clarity the pleasure it would have brought them if I had produced the results for which they had hoped. It was a moment of deep shame.

I knew I would now have to work harder, but I saw no likelihood of doing this at Rutlish, and went to the headmaster to tell him I was leaving school. He seemed to bear my impending departure with



SIR JOHN MAJOR, born on March 29 1943, is a British politician who served as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom from 1990 until 1997. He was also a member of the Cabinets of Margaret Thatcher as Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Foreign Secretary and Chancellor of the Exchequer.

VOCABULARY

to entail = to make it necessary to do something

to drift away = to move or go somewhere slowly

to let down = to make someone disappointed by not doing something they are expecting you to do

to take stock (of something) = to think carefully about the things that have happened in a situation in order to decide what to do next

Past Tense and Past Perfect

Narratives are normally set in the past and therefore we must use:

1) Past Tense Simple (the 2nd form of the verb): At school I *found* ... I *retreated* ...

2) Past Perfect (had + the 3rd form of the verb) to describe an event that happened before another past event: By the time I got to the station, the train *had left*.

3) Future in the Past (would + short Infinitive) to express a future action after a verb in the past: They assumed I *would pass* my exams.



Public and private schools

In the UK there is a split between the state and the private education sector. Private education includes “public schools” (called public because when they were established they were not linked to the church) as well as numerous private or independent schools. What they all have in common is that they charge fees whereas state education is free. Private schools receive no funding or very little funding from the government but still have to follow national educational standards.

fortitude, and did not object. Nor did he ask whether my parents approved — which was fortunate, since I had not informed them. When I told them later that the headmaster was content for me to leave they did not protest. They had too much else to worry them.

And so Rutlish and I parted around my sixteenth birthday, and I took stock. I had wasted my time at school, and had rarely been happy there. I left with no ambitions, other than a vague wish to go into politics. This had been heightened when I met our local Labour Member of Parliament, Colonel Marcus Lipton, at a church fête.

(adapted from *The Autobiography*, by John Major)

3. Answer the following questions.

1. What attitude did the author adopt as a student?
2. Why didn't his parents push him to do more?
3. How did he feel about his failure?
4. Did he take any decision for his future?

• Words in action

4. Use these words from the text to complete the following sentences:

disruptive inconspicuous sketchy
self-inflicting impending

1. It cannot be a gunshot wound, so it must be murder.
2. There must be a quick reaction against this ecological crisis.
3. He didn't have enough time to enter into details and gave us only a very account of his expedition.
4. They cannot easily identify her as she looks as as possible.
5. I found it hard to work with such noisy, students.

5. Re-read the last paragraph of the text. Identify two examples of Past Perfect.

6. Complete the sentences with Past Tense Simple or Past Perfect of the verbs in brackets.

1. He (not work) enough and he only (pass) three exams.
2. When I (see) how much damage the fire (cause) I (realise) that ten years' work (be) destroyed.
3. I (think) that he (go) home because I couldn't see him anywhere.
4. After they (eat) all the food, they (pick) up their bags and left.

It happens in Asia



● Points of view

1. **Let's talk! Work in pairs. The box below contains the most important sections in a newspaper. Which do you always read? Why?**

leader or editorial world news business
 health/science fashion sports education culture
 announcements obituaries

- a. classified ads
- b. a feature
- c. agony aunt
- d. a supplement

niche = 1. (C) a job or activity that is perfect for someone: She's found a niche for herself in the book trade. 2. (C) a hollow place in a wall, often made to hold a statue. 3. (singular, technical) all the people who buy a particular product or use a particular service. (C stands for a countable noun.)

VOCABULARY

to tailor something to/for = to make or change something especially for a particular person or purpose

pool = a group of people who are available to work

intake = the number of people who are allowed to enter a school, college, profession during a particular period.

to spring = to appear or come somewhere suddenly or unexpectedly

2. **Match the words on the left with their correct meaning.**

1. a person you write to at a magazine to discuss emotional problems
2. a separate magazine that comes free with a newspaper
3. an article or set of articles devoted to a particular topic
4. pages of advertisements in different categories

3. **Read quickly the following newspaper article. Look at the dictionary entry for *niche* and tick the right meaning.**

In Asia, niche programs meet specific needs

The choice of destination for MBA studies in Asia is growing ever wider as courses proliferate. Tougher competition to attract aspiring MBA's has led some Asian business schools to introduce tailored courses designed to fit the needs of specific groups such as wealth managers, budding entrepreneurs and those working for not-for-profit organisations.

At Singapore Management University (SMU) new niche courses are being developed to meet changing market needs. The prosperous island state, with its reputation for stability and a sophisticated infrastructure, is attracting large amounts of private money from Europe and elsewhere. An increasing number of locals, too, have significant personal wealth. The result is that Singapore is now positioning itself as a rival to Switzerland as the world's most important private banking center. However, it faces a challenge. In order to look after this growing influx of money, Singapore needs more highly trained financial advisers. SMU has created a Master of Science in Wealth Management, a specialized postgraduate program to deepen Singapore's talent pool of wealth-management professionals. As the program director of the MLS program explains: "There is no other course like this anywhere in the region. Wealth management today is a transnational business and our program has been designed to attract

A news report

It is a relatively short piece of writing for publication in a magazine or newspaper, giving information concerning a current event. This piece of writing is formal in style and the information is presented objectively.

Structure

A headline – short, eye-catching and stimulating the readers’ curiosity;

An introductory paragraph which includes brief information about the event, people involved, the place etc.;

Main body containing details, explanations of the causes and results of the event;

A conclusion which restates the importance of the event, reactions or comments of witness or spokesperson.

Points to consider in writing a news report

As it is written for a newspaper, the register must be consistently formal.

The final comments of the police, witness or spokesperson may be written in Direct or Reported Speech.

Passive Voice and a variety of reporting verbs are used in News Reports.

students from abroad. For the last two intakes, around 40% of the students have come from outside Singapore. We hope to continue to make it a truly pan-Asia program.”

Innovative niche courses are springing up elsewhere in the region to meet demand. Professor Ricky Lim, associate dean of the Asian Institute of Management based in the Philippines, declared: “In the face of tougher competition, most entrepreneurs today do not have time to take their hands off their businesses. We had this firmly in mind when designing our ME and have concentrated on providing what entrepreneurs need for sustaining and growing a profitable enterprise.”

(adapted from *The International Herald Tribune*, 2005)

• **Words in action**

4. A collocation is a pair or group of words that are often used together. There are some in the article you have read: to meet/fit the needs; to face a challenge. Cross out the word which does not normally belong to the collocations.

stiff/tough/heavy competition; tailor/create/design a course; run/work/go a successful business; have/develop/build management skills; carry out/make/conduct market research

5. Complete the blanks with words and expressions from the text.

1. Have you heard about the computer software that is specially for schools.
2. Unfortunately, the . . . in some universities is down by 10%.
3. There is now a large . . . of software engineers.
4. With the coming of the warm season there is a massive . . . of tourists into the region.
5. He has just started to become successful. Yes, he is just a . . . entrepreneur.

6. Re-read the article. Identify the component parts and state the main idea of each paragraph.

7. Find the passive constructions in the article.

8. Talk to your partner and decide what might the following headlines report about:

- Security scanners for train passengers
- “Spy in the sky” keeps watch on speeding drivers

OVER TO YOU!

9. Using some of these expressions, write about a memorable interesting/ embarrassing/ frightening/ funny event you have witnessed.

catch one’s breath; get the shock of one’s life; see the funny side of things; burst out laughing

It isn't fair

• Words in action

1. library
2. official form
3. university entrance regulations
4. timetable
5. application form



VOCABULARY

bias = a tendency to support or oppose a particular person or thing in an unfair way by allowing personal opinion to influence your judgment

articulacy = an ability to express your thoughts and feelings easily and clearly

to hold true = to be true or remain true

fee = money that you pay to a professional person or an institution for their work

1. Work in pairs. Read these notices and extracts from rules. Where can you find them? Use the prompts in the box on the left.

- a. It should be noted that possession of the minimum requirements does not guarantee admission.
- b. Subject to alteration.
- c. Affix recent photograph here.
- d. No dictionaries or magazines may be removed.
- e. Delete where applicable.

2. Complete the following sentences with the suitable word.

1. *pass/ take*

- a. I hope she'll be successful in the exam. When does she it?
- b. If I the exam, my parents will be so happy.

2. *fail/ lose*

- a. He the exam and now he has to resit it.
- b. You'll the deposit if you cancel the order.

3. *revision/ rehearsal*

- a. She did no but she still got a very high mark.
- b. He is a producer with three plays in

3. Choose the correct collocation.

1. A few students have recently decided to *go/ leave/ withdraw* the course this year.

2. You know that you don't have to *assist/ frequent/ attend* all the lectures at this university.

3. If you want to study abroad you must apply for *a fee/ a salary/ a scholarship*.

4. Does the government *agree/ recognise/ accept* the school-leaving exams of other countries?

• Tape activities

4. A. You will hear a talk about university admissions. Tick the correct options.

1. How does the speaker feel about the admissions system?
A. confused; B. angry; C. surprised
2. At the interview state school children perform
A. better than children educated in private schools;
B. as well as private school children

In the UK higher education is provided by three main types of institutions: universities, colleges and institutions of higher education and art and music colleges. All universities are autonomous institutions, particularly in matters relating to courses. In 1992 polytechnics were given university status (i.e. the right to award their own degrees) and took university titles. The Department of Education and Skills is responsible for all universities.



Trinity College, Cambridge

Saying you do not approve

- I'm not in favour of . . .
- I'm really not pleased with . . .
- I can't approve of . . .
- Is it really necessary?
- How dreadful/appalling!

OVER TO YOU!

7. How do students in our country get access to universities? Write three paragraphs to be included in an article on this topic.

- C. worse than children educated in private schools
- 3. By *manners* the speaker means
 - A. Confidence and charm; B. Hypocrisy;
 - C. Experience in carrying out a conversation
- 4. The speaker says that private school pupils
 - A. are very intelligent;
 - B. appear to be more intelligent than they are;
 - C. are a great deal less intelligent
- 5. Oxbridge and Cambridge Colleges
 - A. admit all Eton or Westminster pupils;
 - B. reject all Eton or Westminster pupils;
 - C. reject even bright Eton or Westminster pupils

B. Complete the blanks in the second part of the talk.

That's why I think that the entire university admissions system in this country is (1)..... . It is a national disgrace. Recently, at an evening at my (2)..... school I listened with horror to a man from UCAS who warned us that the system was now little better than (3)..... . "It is inefficient and (4)....." he said; "there is no guarantee that the right child will end up on the right (5)..... at the right university."

But I think that there is a solution to this. It is the American system of Scholastic Aptitude (6)..... known as SATs, which universities there use (7)..... part of their admissions procedures.

In the past, I was rather (8)..... them; I thought that they amounted to a rather crude teenage (9)..... test, and felt convinced that would be unable to make the fine personal distinctions that the old Oxbridge (10)..... examinations were designed for. Maybe SATs can't make those distinctions, but what they can do, and do (11)..... in the United States, is offer some objective, (12)..... of teenagers' academic abilities.

5. Answer these questions.

- 1. What does the speaker think about the admission system in the UK?
- 2. What adjectives does he use to characterize the system?
- 3. Does the speaker suggest any solution?

6. What do you think about the admission procedure at Oxford? Use expressions in the language box if you disagree with their system.

Is it all in the past?

● Reading



New College, Oxford

VOCABULARY

don = a member of the teaching staff of a university or college, especially at Oxford Balliol — one of the earliest colleges of Oxford University — or Cambridge University

alumnus, pl. alumni = a former student of a school, college, or university

masque = a theatrical play often performed in the 16th and 17th centuries written in poetry and including music, dancing and songs

tutor = a teacher in a British university or college

quintessential = being a perfect example of a particular type of person or thing

1. Read these literary excerpts. What are they all about? Tick the most obvious common topic:

- a. Science b. History c. Punctuation d. Education
e. Government policy on education

A. *Dons English!* Nobody more proudly or quintessentially English than Jowett of Balliol, who wished to “inoculate England” with his college alumni, and of whom a contemporary undergraduate wrote, as part of the libretto for a college masque:

*Here come I, my name is Jowett;
There's no knowledge but I know it.
I am the master of this College.
What I know not isn't knowledge.*

Jowett was the greatest Oxford tutor of his time, with a gift of inspiration that his pupils powerfully felt. He was one of the supreme influences of Victorian England dedicated as he was to the production of a ruling elite.

B. (...) the progress of Oxford University has been dominated by science – ever more students, ever more laboratories, a whole new class and kind of Oxford academic. All around the Museum, in direct descent to its botanical columns, now stand the scientific departments, served by their own computer laboratory.

Physical chemistry and biochemistry have become Oxford specialities: the chemistry school is the largest and most distinguished in Britain.

(adapted from *Oxford*, by Jan Morris)

C. Everyone knows the basics of punctuation, surely? Aren't we all taught at school how to use full stops, commas and question marks?

And yet we see ignorance and indifference everywhere. “Its Summer!” says a sign that cries out for an apostrophe. “ANTIQUE,S,” says another, bizarrely.

D. Isn't this sad? People who have been taught nothing about their own language are (contrary to educational expectations) spending all their leisure hours attempting to string sentences together for the edification of others. And there is no editing on the Internet! Meanwhile, in the world of text messages, ignorance of grammar and punctuation obviously doesn't affect a person's ability to communicate



Students at Clare College, Cambridge

Tips for a good debate

- the aim of a debate is to convince the people, using logical arguments, that a state of affairs exists, it is necessary, important etc.;
- the Chairperson introduces the topic of the debate and the speakers;
- the speakers should take turns: the first speaker describes the basis of the debate and states their point of view; the opposition speaker brings arguments against the first speaker;
- the speakers present their arguments speaking clearly; they can only interrupt the opposition speaker in a polite way; they should address the Chairperson who controls the debate;
- in the end the participants vote and the Chairperson announces the conclusion.

messages such as “CU later.” But if you try anything longer, it always seems to turn out much like the writing of the infant Pip in *Great Expectations*:

MI DEER JO I OPE U R KRWITE WELL I OPE I SHAL SON B HABELL 4 2 TEEDGE U JO . . . PIP

(adapted from *Eats, Shoots & Leaves — The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation*, by Lynne Truss)

2. Mark the statements as T (true) or F (false) according to the texts.

1. Jowett was a student at Balliol.
2. Jowett had the reputation of knowing everything.
3. Jowett was an inspiration to his students.
4. The author’s attitude to that tutor and that time was mostly negative.
5. Students interested in science should choose Oxford University.
6. Nowadays everybody masters the art of writing accurately.
7. The expression “to string sentences together” in excerpt D shows the author’s approval of this activity.
8. The author shows great interest and respect for the way some people communicate nowadays.

3. These are controversial issues: everywhere you look now there are signs of ignorance; students should pay for their education. **Work in pairs and make a list of issues you consider controversial.**

4. Read the *Tips for a good debate* on the left and answer the question: are the participants allowed to read their speeches or to interrupt the speaker in a rude way?

Asking for clarification	Let me put it another way.
Do you mean . . .	In other words . . .
Is what you’re saying . . .	Disagreeing
Sorry, I’m not quite with you.	No, I don’t think that’s right.
I didn’t quite understand what you meant by . . . (refusing them treatment.)	That’s not the way I see . . .
Giving clarification	Do you really think . . . ?
What I mean is . . .	Changing the subject
	We’ll come back to that later.
	Shall we leave that issue for the moment?

OVER TO YOU!

5. Study the expressions in the box above. Work in groups. Choose one of the issues on your list and organise a debate competition.

Review and consolidation



Charles Dickens



VOCABULARY

banter = conversation that has a lot of jokes and teasing remarks

incessant = (activity) which continues without stopping in an annoying way

to condone = to accept or forgive behaviour that most people think is morally wrong

1. These are generally considered golden rules to studying. Do you use them? Which do you find most useful? Which is *your* golden rule to study? Talk to your partner.

- Preview the material to help yourself focus on the most important information.
- Read the chapter carefully. Look for key words and ideas.
- When you come to a paragraph/ excerpt you don't understand, stop and reread it.
- Review the material.
- Set aside solid blocks of time for studying with short breaks in between.
- If you work according to a schedule, be sure it is realistic.
- Devote more time to subjects you find more difficult.

2. Match the verbs in bold to the correct descriptions.

- Farmers **lived** very simple lives in those times.
- He **was revising** a difficult chapter when his friend called.
- The old man was in hospital because he **had had** a heart attack.
- She **had been working** in the garden all morning, so she was tired.
- I **was reading** a story when my sister **was listening** to her favourite music.
- He **had been studying** in a college for two years before he decided to take a part-time job.
- Charles Dickens **wrote** about the life of the poor.
- At 9 o'clock yesterday I **was writing** a letter.
- My mother **had booked** the tickets before she told us about this short holiday.
- First they **got** together to brainstorm. Then they **wrote** the first draft of the project.

- to talk about actions of people who died.
- action which happened before another past action or before a certain time in the past.
- actions which happened one after the other in the past.
- to lay emphasis on the duration of an action which started and finished in the past before another past action.
- action which was taking place at a stated time in the past
- two actions taking place at the same time.
- action taking place in the past when another action interrupted it.
- action which lasted for some time in the past and whose result could be seen in the past.
- past state which is now finished.
- action which finished in the past and whose result could be seen in the past.



Graduates at the International School in Bogotá, 2002

- a. to make someone have a particular feeling or belief
- b. child who stays away from school without permission
- c. to do someone's work
- d. to be so used to something that you do not recognize their value and do not show that you are grateful.



3. Fill in the blanks with suitable words and expressions you learned in this unit.

1. All train times are ... change in bad weather conditions.
2. Employers must interview all candidates without any ...
3. Does the bank charge any ... for setting up the account?
4. Changing the computer system would ... long periods or re-training.
5. After two years spent teaching abroad, she returned home for a month to ... of her life.
6. All the new courses are ... to meet the needs of our students.
7. Our college has increased its ... of students by 20% this year.
8. His ... encouraged him to read widely in philosophy.

4. Read the text and list the reasons why this teacher was dissatisfied with her activity in the UK. Match the underlined words and expressions to their definitions in the box on the left.

So I, too, have become one of the increasing number of British teachers choosing to work abroad. After five years of teaching in inner and outer London secondary schools, I decided to work in an international school in Bogotá, Colombia.

The students I was teaching were challenging, but I had always enjoyed their lively banter and the staff camaraderie. So it was not the pupils who prompted me to leave but the education system itself and the incessant Government directives. Teachers are supposed to educate, in other words to instill a love of learning and encourage children to think independently.

Yet teachers spend little of their energy on teaching. Instead, they become professional envelope stuffers and report collators. I spent hours chasing up truants and parents who condoned their child's absences.

Contrast that with the situation I found in Colombia. Private schools look after their staff, and I was paid for covering lessons and organising school trips. When I enter a classroom, I can be confident that my students have done their homework, and have brought along a pen and the correct books.

There are also cultural differences which make teaching more enjoyable in Colombia. Teachers are respected and enjoy a higher social status. Education is valued and is considered a privilege. In Britain education is taken for granted. It is an unquestioning right that society abuses. And so long as such attitudes remain, few teachers will be able to resist offers from overseas schools.

(adapted from *Daily Mail*, July 2003)

5. An important event has taken place in your school. Write about it in a news report (200-250 words).