

Reading: Learning for leisure

4.11 Vocabulary for reading

Shorter working week, longer life!

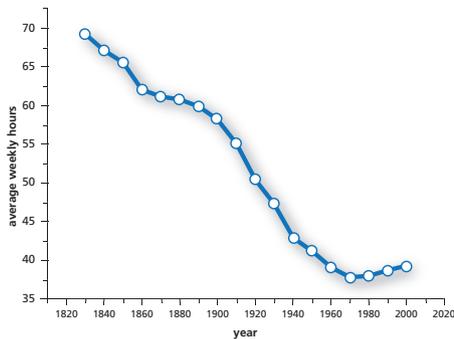


Figure 1: Average weekly hours (US) 1820–2000
Source: Vandembroucke, G. (2006) A Model of the Trends in Hours Retrieved on 13.06.2011 from http://dornsife.usc.edu/IEPRI/Publications/Working_Papers05.shtml#4

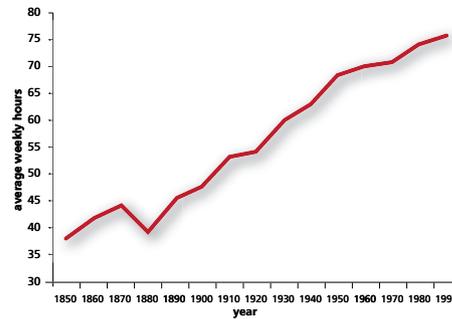


Figure 2: Life expectancy (US) 1850–1990
Source: Retrieved on 21.06.2011 from <http://perfecthealthdiet.com/?p=2308>

A Reading line graphs

1. What trend does each graph show?
2. Suggest reasons for each trend.
3. What will the figures be by 2050 if each trend continues?

B Understanding new vocabulary in context

1. Complete the paragraphs from a social studies article with a word from the mini-dictionary below for each space. Make any necessary changes.
2. What is the main point of each paragraph?

abolish (v)	remove, e.g., a law
campaign (v)	work strongly for
impetus (n)	force in a direction
longevity (n)	duration of a life
indication (n)	sign
radical (adj)	new, very unusual
reflect (v)	show
retire (v)	stop working
sedentary (adj)	sitting down
significant (adj)	important, e.g., in statistical terms
state (n)	government

C Developing critical thinking

1. What are the social and economic implications of the trends in the figures?
2. Do you have any *radical proposals* to deal with the issues around increased longevity?

Figures show that average working hours in developed countries have fallen steadily for the last 200 years (Figure 1). The for this change has mainly been the rise in power of the working class in these countries, throughout the period.

Many countries now have - controlled hours which provide considerable leisure time in a week. Most people in the developed world now work a maximum of 40 hours a week, largely in office jobs. However, there are that the trend may be changing. Research shows a slight increase in working hours in recent years.

... Many countries now provide for retirement after a particular age with state pensions, paid for by contributions from the current labour force. However, the official retirement age in many countries does not the recent rise in, particularly in the developed world (see Figure 2). In the 1950s, people only had two or three years of life expectancy after, so pensions were only paid for a short period. Nowadays, on average, a person will receive an old-age pension for about 20 years. This raises the question of how society will cope. Very few people suggest state pension payments, but proposals *are* needed to take into account the rise in life expectancy.

a good case
 abandon (v)
 abolish (v)
 abstract (adj) [= opp. of concrete]
 campaign
 citizen (n)
 citizenship (n)
 class (n) [= social division]
 concrete (adj) [= opp. of abstract]
 curriculum (n) [pl. = curricula]
 educationalist (n)
 educator (n)
 entrepreneur (n)
 flexible (adj)
 foster (v) [= encourage]
 furthermore
 humanities (n pl)
 impetus (n)
 labour force
 leisure (n)
 lifelong (adj)
 literacy (n)
 longevity (n)
 numeracy (n)
 personal education
 positive thinking
 proposal (n)
 provision (n)
 radical (n)
 raise the question
 reflect (v) [= be related to]
 retire (v)
 retirement (n)
 sedentary (n)
 self-starter (n)
 social education
 state (n) [= government]
 supposition (n)
 take into account
 working class(es)

4.12 Real-time reading

Learning for 21st-century life

A Preparing to read

Study the assignment.

1. Think of good research questions.
2. What sources can help you research the assignment?
3. Make a spidergram of your ideas about state education.

B Understanding the text

1. Imagine you are researching the state education system in the UK. Read the article. What are the main points? Complete each sentence.
 - a. State education in Britain may have started because ...
the working class had poor literacy and numeracy.
 - b. Some people say that obedience, learnt at school, prepared people for ...
 - c. It could be argued that long, boring schooldays prepared people for ...
 - d. After 1944, state education followed in some ways Plato's ideas of ...
 - e. The national curriculum since 1988 has concentrated on ...
 - f. Gough thinks that state education based on the national curriculum ...
 - g. Gough thinks state education should produce ...
2. Which of the points above are useful to you for the assignment?

C Understanding vocabulary in context

Find an informal word or phrase in the box for each formal verb from the text.

get rid of give up on have money for make (force) not have push say give

1. state
2. abolish
3. lack
4. provide
5. promote
6. abandon
7. afford
8. require

D Developing critical thinking

What would Gough's ideal school be like, in terms of curriculum, timetable, teaching and buildings?

Social Studies Faculty

Around the world, some educationalists argue that state education should create obedient citizens, others believe it should produce useful workers, and a small number think it should make well-balanced people.

Assignment

How does compulsory education in your country prepare children for the 21st century?

State education in the UK: Preparing children for the 21st century ... or the 19th?

The vast majority of countries in the world have a compulsory education system, paid for by the state. But what is the purpose of education provided by a government? Life is very different now from 100 years ago, or even 20, but does compulsory education equip people for the modern world? In this article, we look at state education in Britain since 1870 and ask: What is it preparing children for?

In the UK, the Forsters Education Act (1870) was the first step towards state education in Britain. It stated that all parts of the country should provide schools (UK Parliament, 2011). However, there was

no requirement in the Act for the schools to be free. Therefore, the working classes could still not afford to send their children to school and, for the most part, children continued to work from an early age. However, in 1891, fees for state schools were abolished and therefore education became available to all (UK Parliament, 2011). Some argue that the government decided to provide free education for the working classes because Britain was falling behind other countries. They think that the government believed workers lacked obedience, literacy and numeracy skills (Lowe, 2007; Mitchell, 1996). Carr and Hartnett describe the 'historic role'

of education as ‘producing a labour force which had respect for ... authority’ (Carr and Hartnett, 1996; p. 124).

So it would seem that state schools were designed to be places to prepare working-class children for lives in factories and, if required, the army. The state school day involved exercises which promoted patriotism and obedience to authority (BBC, 2011). Children sat in rows, in silence, copying work from the board. In later life, they sat in rows, in silence, working in a factory. Furthermore, the learning did not involve thinking but simply following instructions, in the same way that factory work also involved little mental activity during long working days. Most factory workers were on a 5.5-day week (Mitchell, 1996).

Passed in 1944, the Education Act made *secondary school* education compulsory for all children. The previous acts had only introduced *primary* education. However, this Act went further, detailing the introduction of different types of schools which would reflect the types of work people would do in later life. The supposition, in the Spens Report and later the Norwood Report, was that there are three kinds of children. Some can deal with abstract concepts, some need more concrete explanations and the majority prefer to do practical activities (Board of Education, 1943). Tawney explains: ‘Secondary schools would be various in type, and not all children would pass to the same kind of school’ (Tawney, as cited in McCulloch, 1998; p. 49).

It is possible that the 1944 Act was strongly influenced by the ideas of Plato, 3,000 years before (McCulloch, 1998; Carr and Hartnett, 1996). Plato stated that people can be divided into three classes, gold, silver and copper. Each class was best suited to a particular job in society: ‘God as he was fashioning you, put gold in those of you who are capable of ruling ..., silver in the auxiliaries, and ... copper in the farmers and other craftsmen’ (Plato, 1995; p. 98). This, as McCulloch and others suggest, would appear to be very similar to the different types of school created by the 1944 Education Act. However, the system was abandoned in the 1970s, for several reasons, and Britain moved to a system of secondary schools called *comprehensives*, which take children of all levels of ability.

Since 1988, all state schools have been required to follow a national curriculum. Many theorists have argued that this curriculum is strikingly similar to the curricula of state schools in the early 19th century (Chitty, 2008). Lawton says that ‘a national curriculum was produced which was based simply on the list of subjects that education ministers ... had

presumably studied at school’ (Lawton, 1992; p. 49). The subjects are history, the sciences, the arts, languages, and morality. Chitty argues that there is ‘no mention of integrated subjects like humanities or environmental studies, or of ... personal and social education, or of “newer” subjects like psychology, sociology, politics and economics’ (Chitty, 1989; p. 209). Furthermore, the curriculum is based on ideas about education that could be said to suit Victorian factory-worker life, with little leisure time or thinking for yourself. Gough argues that:

A compulsory education, to a rigidly prescribed curriculum, in a classroom of 30 in a school of hundreds, at set hours, Monday to Friday, is splendid preparation for life as a 19th-century factory hand. But it is precisely, almost brilliantly, wrong for creating self-starters, entrepreneurs, free thinkers, risk-takers, leaders, visionaries, inventors, innovators, flexible employees, creative artists or anyone Britain actually needs. We no longer force adults to work in Victorian workhouses. So why do we force children to learn in Victorian schools?

(Gough, 2011)

Seemingly, then, the education system in Britain has continually tried to prepare children for later life. There is a good argument that the Victorian ‘factory-preparing’ and ‘soldier-building’ system was highly effective. However, it would appear that the current UK national curriculum does little to prepare the nation’s young people for 21st-century life.

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4.13 Learning new reading skills

Highlighting key points and sources

A Reviewing vocabulary

Complete the final word in each sentence.

1. Some people say that a major role for schools is to teach children ob.....
2. We should continually review the subjects on the cu.....
3. Some children can do abstract subjects and some cannot. This was the su.....
4. After some years, this idea of different types of school was ab.....
5. UK state education is not suited to the needs of the modern world, according to some ed.....
6. Many theorists believe that it is the 21st-century world that school subjects should re.....
7. The first aim of any education system should be li.....
8. The second aim should be nu.....
9. There is a sensible argument that schools should try to produce good ci.....
10. Many people now work less and have far more le.....
11. Medical advances are responsible for the huge increase in lo.....
12. Every country in the world is going to have to look again at the official age of re.....

B Identifying and practising a new skill (1)

1. Read Skills Check 1.
2. Look again at the text in 4.12. What, in your opinion, are the key words or sentences in each paragraph?

C Identifying and practising a new skill (2)

1. Read Skills Check 2.
2. Look at the key words and sentences you have highlighted from Exercise B2. Which of these words and sentences will help you to complete the assignment in 4.12? Underline the items. Then find the source of the ideas or information in each case. **Highlight** each source in a different colour. Highlight it also in the list of references at the end.

Twenty-three per cent of children leave school unable to read or write

Why don't children know maths anymore? asks industry leader

Politician calls for return of army service for 18-year-olds

Children don't know about their own country, says government minister

Skills Check 1

Recognizing the key points

You must recognize the key point(s) of each paragraph. **Highlight** key words/sentence(s). The topic sentence will guide you.

Examples:

topic =
national
curriculum

Since 1988, all state schools have been required to follow a national curriculum.

key point =
similar to
early C19

Many theorists have argued that this **curriculum** is strikingly **similar to** the curricula of state schools in the **early 19th century** (Chitty, 2008).

Skills Check 2

Recording sources (2)

You must record sources that you want to cite (see 3.13). Highlight the sources of key information in a different colour.

Example:

... **similar to** the curricula of state schools in the **early 19th century** (Chitty, 2008).

In many cases, key points come from the writer of the text. In this case, put the name and date of publication in the margin.

Example:

Phillips, 2011

the education system in Britain has continually **tried to prepare children for later life**.

4.14 Grammar for reading

Statements vs statements with hedging

Academic texts often state **facts**. It is usually clear when a writer is stating a fact. Be careful, though! Sometimes 'facts' are only facts according to the writer. Which fact below is in this category? 18

S	V	other information
The Education Act	stated	that all parts of the country should provide schools.
There	was	no requirement for the schools to be free.
All state schools	have been required	to follow a national curriculum since 1988.
The subjects	are	history, the sciences, the arts, languages, etc.
The system	does not prepare	children for life in the 21 st century.

However, many sentences in academic texts tell you that the statement is an idea, a theory or a piece of research. These are *possibilities*, so the writer **hedges** the statement in some way.

Notes:

- Each sentence below contains **two parts** – a **hedging device** and a **statement**.
- The **hedging device** is usually in the **present** while the **statement** can be in **any tense**.

hedging device	statement		
	S	V	extra information
It seems that	the curriculum	does not prepare	children for 21 st century life.
It is possible that	the 1944 Act	was influenced	by the ideas of Plato.
Seemingly,	the state system	has tried to prepare	children for later life.
There is a good argument that	the Victorian system	was	highly effective.

A Distinguishing between facts and possibilities

Find each statement below in the text in 4.12. Does the writer state it as a fact, or hedge it in some way? If it is stated as a fact, do you think it is actually the writer's opinion?

1. The working classes could still not afford to send their children to school.
2. In 1891, fees for state schools were abolished.
3. State schools were designed to prepare children for lives in factories.
4. The state school day promoted patriotism and obedience.
5. Leisure time was very limited.
6. There are some children who can deal with abstract concepts.
7. The national curriculum was a list of subjects that education ministers had studied at school.

B Recognizing hedging devices

Which words from the box can replace each **bold** word to complete the hedging devices?

arguably	argue	belief	likely	maintain	probable
seem	seemingly	suggested	supposition	think	

1. Some theorists **believe** / that ...
2. Many educationalists have **argued** / that ...
3. The **assumption** / is that ...
4. It would **appear** / that ...
5. It is **possible** / that ...
6. **Presumably,** / this is the reason for ...

4.15 Applying new reading skills

Happiness on the curriculum?

A Preparing to read

Read the assignment. What's your reaction to the question?

B Understanding a text

Read the essay. Highlight the key points in each paragraph. Record the sources of information you want to quote.

C Checking understanding

Which of these statements does the writer believe strongly? Which are hedged in the article? Decide, then look again at the text to check your memory.

1. We should continue to teach world knowledge at school.
2. People should learn key skills like literacy, numeracy and IT.
3. Children should be taught to deal with money.
4. Children should be taught to be creative.
5. If you do not look after your body, you will suffer in later life.
6. Healthy living should be part of the school curriculum.
7. Schools should teach children positive thinking.
8. School curricula should contain all the subjects, 'old' and 'new'.
9. Education should happen throughout life.
10. Governments should provide opportunities for lifelong learning.
11. Teachers should educate children in the need to continue learning.
12. Demand for lifelong learning will result in state provision.

D Developing critical thinking

Which points from Exercise C do you agree with? Which should schools do? Which should be left to universities or later learning opportunities?

Faculty of Social Studies

'Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at 20 or 80. Anyone who keeps learning stays young.'

Henry Ford

Assignment

How can state education help people to live with the extra free time of the 21st century?

How can state education help people live with more free time?

As some educationalists see it, the 'historic role of education' is 'producing a labour force' (Carr and Hartnett, 1996; p. 124).

However, this role may be changing, with a significant increase in free time during a lifetime. In this essay, I consider how governments can deal with this issue while continuing to meet the basic needs of state education.

There was a good argument for educating for work in the 19th century, when people spent the vast majority of their lives working. In 1900, for example, the average person in the UK and the US

worked a 60-hour week, usually involving hard physical labour on low pay. When they were not at work, people had neither the energy nor the money to spend on leisure (Vandenbroucke, 2006).

However, nowadays, the average adult in the UK works just over 41 hours a week (BBC, 2008), leaving nearly 127 hours per week for other activities. Removing time spent sleeping – seven hours a night on average (BBC, 2007) – leaves us with nearly 80 hours' free time. In other words, the average person has twice as much free time as work time during a working week.

This issue becomes even more important when we take into account the average retirement age in the developed countries of around 64.5 for men and 62 for women (Age UK, 2011), compared with the current life expectancy of around 85 (ONS, 2010). Not only will people spend most of their 'working life' actually at leisure but they will also have, roughly, 20 years after they retire to do as they wish. These changes in the structure of the work:leisure ratio raise the question of how governments can prepare people for 21st-century lives.

There is a good case for continuing to teach at school the world knowledge involved in traditional subjects like history, geography and science. People presumably need to know about the world they live in. There must also remain considerable focus on key skills which are related to work, such as literacy and numeracy. New skills for work, such as using IT, are also evidently of value. However, there are other subjects which may be valuable during free time or in retirement. One of these is dealing with money. It could be argued that state education should teach people to understand personal finance in general, and saving for retirement in particular, in order to ensure that they can enjoy their free time. Furthermore, it is arguable that creativity should be fostered in schools, in order for people to find things to spend their free time on.

Some theorists also believe that, in this age of sedentary occupations in offices, we need to teach people the value of exercise, or perhaps more importantly, the harmful effects of not exercising, particularly with increased longevity (NHS, 2011). The dangers of ill-treating your body may catch up with you if you live until your 80s, whereas they may not have appeared if you had died earlier. Although government campaigns such as *Change 4 Life* (NHS, *ibid.*) have reflected concerns about teaching healthy living, it could be argued that the topic needs to be an integral part of a 21st-century curriculum. It is not enough simply to make children exercise for an hour a week at school. We must also teach them why they are doing it and why they should continue to do it after leaving school.

Perhaps the most radical proposal at the moment is that schools should teach children to be happy throughout their lives. According to Professor Martin Seligman, studies have shown that psychological training 'could save the state millions of pounds dealing with problems later in life' (Woolf, 2011). Seligman, who is a former president

of the American Psychological Association, reports studies in British schools which found that 'kids who ... did positive thinking had more social skills and more zest for learning' (*ibid.*).

The supposition behind the arguments above is that the school curriculum needs to accommodate traditional subjects *plus* all the additional ones. But there is another solution. I believe that we should stop looking at education as something which largely or wholly happens between the ages of 5 and 18 (or 21 if you go on to university). Clearly, education is now something which should continue throughout a person's life, with additional input as it is required at every stage.

It is true that many local authorities and other bodies provide night-school classes in craft skills such as woodworking, or aerobics, or modern languages and so on. But all of these have to be paid for by the participants, so uptake is small. It is now time for Ministries of Education around the world to fund lifelong learning. Modern society must ensure that people can benefit from the huge amount of additional leisure which they enjoy, from better working practices and increased longevity.

Some theorists believe, however, that the impetus for change should come, not from the suppliers of lifelong learning, but from the consumers. Christopher Day, Emeritus Professor in the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Nottingham, believes that one of the main tasks of teachers is to get students interested in the idea of lifelong learning (Day, 1999). If teachers at schools can achieve this, it is likely that people will demand state provision throughout their lives. Perhaps this demand will ensure that the state provides what is required free of charge.

Tanmay Mukherjee, 2011, Edinburgh University

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Knowledge quiz
What? Where? Which? How? When?

1 Cover the final column. Try to answer each question.

1. What is a <i>tissue</i> , in biology?		a teacher, a sports coach or a manager
2. What can <i>muscle tissue</i> do?		about 85
3. What does the <i>digestive system</i> do?		being able to read and write
4. Which system does the <i>spine</i> belong to?		contract but not expand
5. Which system is <i>asthma</i> a problem of?		converts food into nutrients
6. What did the English physician, <i>William Harvey</i> , discover in the 17 th century?	1	a group of cells with the same function
7. How does the <i>nervous system</i> send messages around the body?		high temperature, severe aches and pains in joints and muscles, headache, fatigue
8. Where is the <i>Achilles tendon</i> ?		in a school or university
9. What are some of the <i>symptoms</i> of flu?		in the heel
10. What is the difference between a bruise and a <i>contusion</i> ?		it has more than doubled
11. When do you take <i>medication</i> ?		it uses electricity
12. How do you behave if you are <i>neurotic</i> ?		people in offices or professional drivers
13. What is the average <i>life expectancy</i> nowadays in the developed world?		something you think is true
14. What has happened to <i>longevity</i> in the last 150 years?		the circulation of the blood
15. What kinds of workers have <i>sedentary</i> jobs?		the respiratory system
16. What is a <i>supposition</i> ?		the skeletal system
17. What is <i>literacy</i> ?		there is none – one is the common term, the other is the medical term
18. If you provide the <i>impetus</i> for something, what do you do?		when you have an illness or a disease
19. Where do you find a <i>curriculum</i> ?		you push people in a particular direction
20. What sort of person gives <i>feedback</i> ?		you worry about everything

2 Uncover the final column. Match the questions and answers above.

3 Cover the first column. Make a good question for each answer.