

Structure of Schools in the United States

Materials: Schools in the United States, How Are Schools Structured in Your Country?, Practicing Ordinal Numbers

Objectives: Students will understand that the law says that children in Massachusetts must be in school between the ages of 6 and 16. Students will learn how schools are structured by grade levels in the United States. Students will learn how to say and write ordinal numbers.

Vocabulary: *compulsory* (*adj.*) – something that must be done, *truant* (*adj.*) – staying away from school without permission, *drop-out* (*n.*) – someone who leaves school before they have graduated,

1. Tell the students that you are going to talk about the structure of the school system in the United States. First you would like them to write down what the structure of the school system was like in their home country. Give each student the handout How Are Schools Structured in Your Country? When they have completed the chart and answered the questions ask for volunteers to share their information. If you have students from the same country, but from different regions, their answers may be different.
2. Ask the students if they know what the law says about the ages children in Massachusetts must attend school. (Compulsory between the ages of 6-16). Did their school systems have laws about truancy? What did people think of students who dropped out of school? Did their school systems encourage parent involvement? If they have children in school ask how they are involved in school activities. Do they know how they can be involved in their children's schools?
3. Give the students the handout Schools in the United States. Ask if they see any differences between the school structures in the U.S. and their home country. If there are differences you can ask them why they think each country set up the system the way they did. If they have children in the school system, do they think their children are getting a good education?
4. Give the students the handout Practicing Ordinal Numbers. When they have finished filling out the answers they can share their answers with the group.
5. If you have time for further discussion you can ask the following questions for students to discuss in pairs or as a group: Did you enjoy going to school? What was your favorite grade? What was your favorite subject? Were your parents involved in your school activities? What is one life lesson you learned in your years at school?

Schools in the United States

PRESCHOOL

<u>Age</u>	<u>Grade</u>
3	
4	PreK

Prekindergarten

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

<u>Age</u>	<u>Grade</u>
5	K
6	1 st grade
7	2 nd grade
8	3 rd grade
9	4 th grade
10	5 th grade

Kindergarten
First Grade
Second Grade
Third Grade
Fourth Grade
Fifth Grade

MIDDLE SCHOOL

<u>Age</u>	<u>Grade</u>
11	6 th grade
12	7 th grade
13	8 th grade

Sixth Grade
Seventh Grade
Eighth Grade

HIGH SCHOOL

<u>Age</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Year</u>
14	9 th grade	Ninth Grade
15	10 th grade	Tenth Grade
16	11 th grade	Eleventh Grade
17	12 th grade	Twelfth Grade Senior

COMMUNITY COLLEGE (two years)

COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY (four years)

¹ From the Fairfax County Family Literacy Curriculum
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How Are Schools Structured in Your Country?

What country are you from? _____

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Age	Grade

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Age	Grade

HIGH SCHOOL

Age	Grade

In your country, is there a law which says children must go to school? Circle YES or NO.

If YES, until what age or grade must children be in school? _____

If NO, do you think there should be compulsory education laws? _____

Practicing Ordinal Numbers

Directions: Fill out the chart below with either the word or the abbreviation.

second	
	1st
fourth	
	3rd
eighth	
	10th
twelfth	
	5th
seventh	
	6th
tenth	
	9th
eleventh	

Directions: Fill in the blanks in the following sentences. Use words, not abbreviations.

1. My son/daughter is in _____ grade.
2. Where I live now is my _____ apartment in Massachusetts.
3. English is the _____ language I have learned.
4. I went through _____ grade in school in my country.
5. Elementary school is kindergarten through _____ grade.
6. Middle school is _____ grade through _____ grade.
7. I want my children to finish _____ grade and go to college.