

Talk Time Topic: Education

Let's get started...

Tell about your favorite class. Where was the class? How old were you? How many students were in the class? How often did the class meet? What were you learning? What kinds of materials did you use?

Background:

In America, children must go to school until they are 16 or 18 years old (it depends on the state.) There are many different kinds of schools: public schools, private schools, and home schools. In America, 85% of students go to public school, 10% of students go to private schools, and 2% of children are home schooled. In school, students typically study subjects like math, science, social studies, English, language, P.E., and other elective classes. Students have to take some specific classes, like math and English, but they can choose to take other elective classes, like computers or art.



In pairs for 5 minutes, ask and answer these questions:

Take a few minutes to think about your favorite teacher.

What was his/her name?

What did he/she teach?

How old were you when you were a student in his/her class?

Why did you like him/her?

How long did he/she teach?

Did other students like his/her class?

Share your partner's answers with the group.



Discussion Questions:

- In America, children must have updated medical immunization records before they can enter school. Are immunizations required in your native country?

In America parents are expected to communicate with their children's teachers. Parents go to school for teacher conferences and for school programs. Schools like to have parents volunteer. Is that true in your native country?

At what age do children begin going to school in your native country? Are children required to go to school? At what age do most children stop going to school?

How many students are in each class? What kinds of schools (public, private, home school) are there in your native country?

Does it cost money to go to school in your native country?

How many years of school do people need to get a good job?

What kinds of extra-curricular activities are offered in schools in your native country? Did you join any extra-curricular activities when you were a student?

Do you think that schools in your native country more difficult than American schools?

How do you feel about homework?

What do students in your native country eat for lunch? Do they buy it or bring lunch from home? Do they eat at school?

How do children travel to school in your native country? Do they go by bus, by car, by bicycle, on foot, or some other way?

In your native country, when does the school year begin and end? Are there long breaks and vacations for students? What time of year are these breaks and vacations? What do you think about American summer vacation?

If a child is sick and cannot go to school, what happens in America? (Do you know how to call your child's school to report an absence?) What happens in your native country?

How do you feel about home schooling? Is it popular or common in your native country?

In your country, do students buy their own supplies (paper, pencils, backpack, etc.)?

Do children often wear uniforms in your native country? How do you feel about uniforms? Discuss the good and bad things about uniforms.

New words and Idioms:

Public, private, home school, typically, subjects, science, social studies, P.E., elective, specific, medical immunization records, extra-curricular activity, homework, breaks, vacations, supplies, backpack, uniform