CONVERSATION AND DISCUSSION

ENGLISH SCHOOLING **Topical Vocabulary**

1. **Types of schools:** maintained (state), county, voluntary, nurs­  
   ery, primary, infant, junior, secondary, grammar, secondary mod­  
   ern, technical, comprehensive, all-through, two-tier, first, middle,  
   upper, mixed (co-educational), single-sex, special, independent  
   (fee-paying, private), pre-preparatory, preparatory, public, sixth-  
   form college, tertiary college.
2. **Stages of education:** compulsory, pre-school, primary, sec­  
   ondary, further, higher.
3. **Education policy:** administration, schooling, full-time edu­  
   cation, part-time education, tripartite system, class-divided and  
   selective system of education, to sustain inequality of opportuni­  
   ty, to go comprehensive, the Department of Education and Sci­  
   ence, Local Education Authorities (LEAs), to be responsible for  
   national education policy, to run a school, to prescribe curricula  
   or textbooks, the provision of schools, to provide maintained  
   school education.
4. **Management:** Head Teacher (Master), Principal, Assistant  
   Principal, Acting Head Teacher, staff, governing body, to have re­  
   sponsibility, to employ teachers, provide and maintain buildings,  
   supply equipment, provide grants, appointment and dismissal of  
   staff.
5. **Admission:** to admit, to allocate, to apply for admission, se­  
   lective procedure, intelligence tests, substitute\_for\_the\_ abolished  
   11\_+ exams, to measure inborn abilities, to have a time limit, to  
   coach for, catchment area, without any reference to a child's abili­  
   ty or aptitude, to transfer (promote) from one class to another.
6. **Curriculum:** broad curriculum, academic course, non-aca­  
   demic course, vocational bias, foundation course, foundation sub­  
   jects, to meet special interests, common curriculum, simplified  
   curriculum, education with a practical slant for lower-attaining pu­  
   pils, to be encouraged to do smth., the three R's, subject teaching,  
   specialist teacher, to have set periods, remedial teaching.
7. **Examinations:** GCSE (exam); to sit for an exam; "A" level  
   exam; Common Entrance Exam; to be set and marked by ... ; to  
   hand the papers out; examining board; grades, "pass" grade; resits

and retakes; unsuccessful pupil; to repeat the year; to pass an exam, to keep up with the group; to fall behind.

8. **Punishment:** corporal punishment, detention (after school or during the dinner hour), lines, exclusion from normal routine, ex­clusion from privileges (loss of privilege), collection of litter, sus­pension from school, withdrawal from lessons, setting extra work, putting "on report", telling the parents.

1. Read the text for obtaining its information.

Education is compulsory from the age of five to sixteen, and there is usually a move from primary to secondary school at about the~age of eleven, but schools are organized in a number of differ­ent ways. There is no law which provides for education of the un-derfives. In England about 47 per cent of three- and four-year-olds receive education in nursery schools or classes. In addition many children attend informal pre-school play groups organized by par­ents and voluntary bodies.

For many years the education service has been characterized by change. The provision of maintained school education is the re­sponsibility of local education authorities (LEAs). They employ teachers and other staff, provide and maintain buildings, supply equipment and materials, provide grants to students proceeding to further and higher education. The Department of Education and Science maintains overall control although local education authori­ties and head teachers have considerable powers in planning and administration. Plans were introduced into Parliament in 1988 for more centralized control, including a national curriculum for all schools.

**Schools Maintained by the State.** No fees are charged to parents of the children at maintained schools, and books and equipment are free. Schools supported from public funds are of two main kinds in England and Wales: county schools and voluntary schools. County schools are provided and maintained by LEAs wholly out of public funds. Voluntary schools, mostly established by religious denomi­nations, are also wholly maintained from public funds but the gov­ernors of some types of voluntary schools contribute to capital costs. Nearly a third of primary and secondary maintained schools in England and Wales are voluntary schools, most of them Anglican or Roman Catholic. All children in county or voluntary schools re­ceive religious education by law and take part in a daily corporate act of worship unless their parents choose otherwise.

Education within the maintained school system usually com­prises two stages — primary education and secondary education.

**Primary Schooling.** Compulsory education begins at five when children in England and Wales go to infant schools or depart­ments; at seven many go on to junior schools or departments. The usual age of transfer from primary to secondary schools **is** 11, but a number of LEAs in England have established "first" schools for pupils aged 5 to 8, 9 or 10 and "middle" schools covering various age ranges between 8 and 14.

**Secondary Schooling.** The publicly maintained system of educa­tion aims to give all children an education suited to their particular abilities. Until the 1960s most children took an examination at the end of primary school (the Eleven Plus): those who passed it suc­cessfully went to grammar schools while those who did not went to secondary modern schools. A few areas especially in the south of England still have selective exams at the age of eleven, but about 90 per cent of secondary schools in Britain are now comprehensive.

They take pupils without reference to ability or aptitude and pro­vide a wide range of secondary education for all or most of the chil­dren from their local area.

Special schools cater for a wide variety of handicap.

**The Curriculum.** The content of the secular curriculum in main­tained schools in England and Wales is the responsibility of the LEA and of the schools' governors. In practice, responsibility is largely devolved on head teachers and their staff. The government has issued guidance on the curriculum for both primary and sec­ondary school pupils. It considers that secondary pupils up to the age of 16 should follow a broad curriculum including English, Mathematics and Science, some study of the humanities including History, Religion and Physical education, and opportunities for both practical and aesthetic activities. Most pupils should also study a foreign language. A programme of development projects has been introduced to provide a more effective education with a practical slant for lower-attaining pupils who do not benefit fully from existing courses.

**Independent Schools.** Most parents choose to send their chil­dren to free state schools financed from public funds but an in­creasing number of secondary pupils attend fee-paying indepen­dent schools outside the school system. Many of these are boarding schools, which provide accommodation for pupils during term time. There are about 2,500 independent schools educating more than 500,000 pupils of all ages. They charge fees, varying from about £ 100 a term for day pupils at nursery age to £ 2,000 a term for senior boarding pupils.

Independent schools for older pupils— from 11, 12 or 13 to 18/19— include nearly 500. They are sometimes confusingly re­ferred to as "public schools" ' in England and Wales. Today the term is becoming less frequently used but refers to the mainly boys' schools (which are increasingly admitting girls).

Preparatory schools prepare children for the Common En­trance Examination to senior schools. The normal age range is from seven plus to 11, 12 or 13, but many of the schools now have pre-preparatory departments for younger children.

1 The most notable public schools are Eton fi:tn], Harrow ['haenu], Winchester ['wintfista], Rugby ['глдЫ], Oundle ['aundl], Uppingham ['Apinsm], Charterhouse ['tfaitshaus]. These schools are exclusive boarding schools, which train their pupils for leading positions in society. Examinations. Since 1988, most sixteen-year-olds have taken the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) in five, ten or even fifteen subjects.

Pupils going on to higher education or professional training usually take 'A' level examinations in two or three subjects. These require two more years of study after GCSE, either in the sixth form of a secondary school, or in a separate sixth-form college. Other pupils may choose vocational subjects such as catering, tourism, secretarial or building skills. Subsidized courses in these subjects are run at colleges of further education.

School-leavers with jobs sometimes take part-time vocational courses, on day-release from work. School-leavers without jobs get no money from the government unless they join a youth train­ing scheme, which provides a living allowance during two years of work experience.

2. Study the text of Ex. 1 and the School System Scheme (p. 93) and get ready  
to answer these questions:

1. What stages of education are there in England and Wales? Which of them are compulsory? 2. In what institutions can chil­dren get pre-school education? 3. Do all primary and secondary schools in England and Wales belong to the state system? Don't you think that independent schools sustain inequality in the field of education? 4. In what schools within the maintained system can children get primary education? 5. At what age are pupils usually transferred to secondary schools? How is it done in Russia? 6. What secondary schools maintained by the state do you know? Are all of them mixed? 7. What kind of education do grammar schools offer? 8. What does the term "comprehensive" imply? When did comprehensive education become a national policy? What are the proclaimed advantages of comprehensive schools? 9. What does the term "independent school" imply? What types of independent schools do you know? Which are the most notable public schools? What do they train their pupils for? 10. What are the principal examinations taken by secondary school pupils in England? What exams are taken at the age of 18?

3. Find in the text of Ex. 1 arguments to illustrate the following:

1. The system of education in England and Wales is complex and bewildering. 2. Administration of publicly provided schools is rather decentralized. 3. Comprehensive schools are the most pro­gressive secondary schools in England. 4. Sixth-form pupils get rather narrow specialist education.

4. Summarize the text of Ex. 1 specifying the following items:

1. The system of education in England and Wales. General prin­  
   ciples.
2. Pre-school education. Primary education.
3. Comprehensive system of secondary education vs selective  
   system.
4. The sixth-form curricullum. Specialist study aimed at univer­  
   sity entrance.
5. Use the Topical Vocabulary in answering the following questions:

1. Do many children in England and Wales attend pre-school institutions? Why? 2. Have all maintained schools equal opportu­nities to provide the same level of education? Prove your point of view. 3. How can you prove that in spite of all changes and alter­ations made during the recent years the system of education in England and Wales is still class-divided and selective? 4. What are the British government's education policies? What do you think of the main aim of the publicly maintained system of educa­tion which is officially stated as follows: "...to give all children an education suited to their particular abilities." Do you think En­glish educationists have objective criteria to measure these abili­ties? 5. What's your opinion of the fact that administration of pub­licly provided schools is not centralized? What do you think of schools' freedom to choose textbooks, include various subjects into the curriculum, specify the material for learning, appoint and dismiss teachers? 6. What subjects are usually included in a pri­mary school curriculum? What is the aim of primary education? What methods are used in primary schools? 7. What types of sec­ondary schools are there in Britain? 8. Why do you think most children in grammar schools are from rich families? 9. How can you account for the fact that the percentage of those attending comprehensive schools is becoming a bit lower nowadays? 10. How can you account for the fact that independent schools (especially public schools) which are not very numerous are the most significant? 11. What is your opinion of the specialist preparation in the sixth form?

1. Give a brief talk on the main features of schooling in England and Wales.  
   Use the Topical Vocabulary.
2. You are supposed to give a description of an imaginary primary or second­  
   ary school which is organized according to the English pattern. Don't forget to  
   give your imaginary school a name, as English schools have names not num­  
   bers. The names are often geographical (taken from the name of the town, dis­  
   trict, village or street in which the school is situated). Sometimes schools are  
   named after a well-known person, e. g. Cedar Grove School, Mary Hampden  
   Junior School.

The following questions can be helpful:

1. What kind of school is it? What system of educational provi­  
   sion is in use locally for children aged 5 — 18?
2. What is the size of the school? (number of children of either  
   sex, number of staff of either sex, age range of children, social  
   background of the school's catchment area if this is clear-cut)
3. What buildings and amenities does the school possess? (How  
   many classrooms are there? Is there a hall, a library, specialist  
   rooms or areas, a staff room, playing fields? Are the buildings mod­  
   em? Are there accommodation problems?)
4. How is teaching organized? (Streaming? Mixed ability  
   grouping? Are classes generally taught as a single unit or is group  
   work or individual work the norm? What about the physical orga­  
   nization of the classroom — do the children sit at desks, in groups  
   at tables, randomly? Is the timetable fixed or flexible?)
5. What subjects are included into the curriculum? What is  
   taught at the various age levels within the school? (Are specific  
   subjects taught, or is teaching arranged in more general areas like,  
   for example, Aesthetics, Physical skills, Communication?)
6. What forms of reward and punishment are normally used?
7. What testing is done in the school and what forms of records  
   are kept? (Are staff meetings held to discuss children's progress  
   or is this done informally? How are children and parents informed  
   of progress?)
8. What system of examinations is used in the school?
9. In what way are parents involved with the school? (parents'  
   meetings, parent-teacher association, parental help in or out of  
   school)

10. What do the school's general aims appear to be?

8. Say how any of the schools described by your fellow-students (Ex. 7) com­pares with the school you yourself attended.

9. Team up with your fellow-student to discuss one of the following prob­  
lems:

1. Pre-school and primary education in Russia and England.
2. Secondary education in Russia and England.
3. Examinations in Russia and England.

One of the students is supposed to play the role of an Englishman, who knows very little about schools in Russia. The other will represent a future teacher of English displaying much interest about pre-school institutions, primary and secondary education in England. Try and interrupt each other with questions to get some more information. Compare the two systems. Find their merits and disadvantages. Agree or disagree with your partner's statements if you feel like it (see Appendix). Use the Topical Vocabulary.

10. Read the following dialogue. The expressions in bold type show the ways  
of INSTRUCTING PEOPLE HOW TO DO THINGS. Note them down. Be ready to  
act out the dialogue in class.

*Experienced Teacher:* Jenny, I'm sorry to have kept you waiting. What was it you wanted to talk to me about?

*Beginner:* Oh! I just don't know what to do.

*E. Т.:* What's the matter?

*В.:* Well, you know, it's again the problem of discipline in my class. When the lunch bell rings everything becomes so awful, and the pupils so noisy.

*E. Т.:* Oh, come on! **First of all** pull yourself together. Try and look on the brighter side. It can't be as bad as that.

*B.* Oh, honestly it is. The children slam their books shut, shuffle their feet, splash their paint-water and rush toward food and freedom, I'm at my wits' end. What should I do?

*E. Т.:* **The first and most important thing I have to tell you** is that you should have fixed rules for your pupils. And **by the way, don't forget to** rehearse them at the beginning of each school year.

*В.:* То rehearse the rules at the beginning of the year? But how?

*E. Т.:* **I really do recommend** that you state them calmly and dis­passionately. When an electric buzzer shrills, your children should sit quietly in their places. While in the classroom they are not at the beck or call of mechanical noises.

*В.:* Oh yes, yes certainly.

*E. Т.:* **After** you've done **that** you should show them the way the books are closed not slammed in the respectful manner due to books.

*В.:* Yes, of course.

*E. Т.:* **The next thing** you **do** is to get them used to the following commands: "Attention please. The class will rise. The class is dismissed." **Make sure you remember** to avoid familiarity. **Be careful not to** have moods. You should always be a certainty, be predictable.

*В.:* I think I understand what you mean. I should be today what I was yesterday and will be tomorrow.

*E. Т.:* Right. And then within limits their behaviour will be also pre­dictable.

11. Learn the cliches, instructing people how to do things:

First of all you ...

The first thing you have to do is ...

After you've done that you ...

The next thing you do is ...

Oh; and by the way, don't forget to ...

Make sure you remember to ...

Oh, and be careful not to ...

12. Use the cliches of Ex. 11 in the following situations:

1. The Home Economics teacher explains to the girls how to  
make a cup of tea.

*The following expressions may be useful:*

to fill the kettle, to boil the water, to warm the teapot, to put the tea in the teapot, to fill the pot with boiling water, to stir the tea, to leave the tea to brew for five minutes.

2. In the course of professional studies a lecturer helps a student  
teacher to arouse the class' interest in the subject.

*The word combinations to be used:*

*^~lb* have informal classes, to express one's willingness to help, to apply oneself enthusiastically to some subject, to encourage smb. to express his views against the general background of textbook information, to stimulate smb.'s interest in school work, to use eve­ry device^ one can think of.

all — following his departure and greeting his return with her per­fectly expressionless gaze and the whole class would sit idle and motionless, until he was back in the fold again. It was easier — even if one had eaten salt fish for breakfast — to remain and suffer.

14. Discuss the text of Ex. 13 and the problem of punishment in pairs. One of the pair will insist that punishment should be abolished and never used in class, the other will defend the opposite point of view. Be sure to provide sound argu­ments for whatever you say. Consider the following and expand on the items where possible.

Should Punishment Be Used in Class?

3. An experienced teacher gives a piece of advice to a probation  
teacher who finds some difficulty in teaching East London children  
the English language.

*The word combinations to be used:*

to feel at ease with smb., to blend informality with a correctness of expression, never to speak down to smb., to make the meaning sufficiently clear in context, to encourage smb., to ask for an expla­nation any time one feels unsure.

4. The primary school principal who also trains teachers gives  
advice, a "bag of tools" which will enable the students to have con­  
trol over unfortunate classes (difficult, badly-behaved classes).

*The word combinations to be used:*

to enter into the class as you wish, to start on time, to know in full the alibis of any late arrival, to allow no movement of furniture, to forbid squabbling over who sits where, to learn who is who, to use in­dividual names as much as possible, not to talk for long periods, to require pupils to do a piece of work within their capability, to keep a note of those who are consistently without what they should have, to be strict but consistent, to finish in an orderly fashion.

13: Read the following text. Consider the penalties which are described in the extract. Do you think they will have a positive effect? Which of them would you use in class if any at all? Do you know any others? Do you think punishment in general should be used in teaching?