

Lesson plan: Our schooldays

Topic: Schooldays

Level: SfL E2/E3; SQA Access 3/Int 1; CEFR A2/B1

Time: 90 minutes

Aims

- To develop students' ability to listen and understand a short oral text
- To develop students' vocabulary of school subjects
- To develop students' awareness of use of adjectives plus prepositions
- To give practice of speaking and writing about the past using the verb to be.

Introduction

This lesson focuses on the use of the past tense of the verb *to be* with common adjectives and prepositions in the context of subjects at school. Students will practise using the language in speaking and writing tasks.

The lesson is designed for adult learners of English. If you wish to use it with students who are still at school, the tasks can easily be amended.

This lesson uses the video **School memories** from the ESOL Nexus Grammar Lessons section. The material provided can be used as self access, either in preparation for the lesson or as follow up work. It can be accessed here:

<http://esol.britishcouncil.org/grammar-lessons/grammar-lesson-school-memories>

Preparation and materials

Before delivering this lesson, take a look at the self-access material provided at:
<http://esol.britishcouncil.org/grammar-lessons/grammar-lesson-school-memories>

You may wish to set the work contained here as preparation material or as follow-up homework. If students have not used the ESOL Nexus site before, it is worthwhile showing them how to access and use the material.

- Make copies of the Student's Worksheet.
- Copy and cut up the **Task 5 dictation sentences**, which can be found at the end of the lesson plan. Place them on the walls around the classroom before the lesson.

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Procedure

Warmer – Subjects at school (10-15 mins)

- Distribute the worksheets, and ask the students to look at the photo. Elicit where the children are and check students understand *primary* and *secondary* school. Ask:
 - *What do you see in the picture?*
 - *Where are the children? What kind of school is it? How do you know?*
 - *What age do children go to primary school? And what about secondary school? Is this the same as in your country?*
- Ask the students whether they enjoyed secondary school. Ask what subjects they remember studying.
- Ask the students to work in pairs to complete the crossword. Do number one as an example.
- Check answers and spelling on the board, eliciting any other school subjects the students know.

Differentiation

- Allow access to dictionaries (e.g. on their phones) to check spelling.
- Pair a stronger student with a weaker student to provide support.
- Stronger students who finish quickly can be asked to write down other school subjects they know.

Crossword answers

Across

1. *physical education*
2. *maths*

Down

1. *music*
2. *history*
3. *science*
4. *biology*
5. *geography*
6. *art*
7. *computer studies*

Task 1 – Memories (10 mins)

- Ask the students which subjects they liked and disliked when they were at school. Ask them:
 - *Was maths interesting or boring? Why?*
 - *Was geography easy or difficult?*
 - *What did you learn in history?*
- Put the students into pairs or small groups. Tell them to discuss how they felt about secondary school using the questions on the worksheet and their own ideas.
- Take some whole class feedback on their discussions.

Task 2 – 1st video viewing (10 mins)

- Tell the students that they are going to watch a short video of Anne talking about her school days. Tell the students to look at the sentences in **Task 2**. While they watch they should decide if each sentence is true or false.

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- Tell the students to check their answers in pairs. Tell them to try to decide together why each sentence is true or false.
- Check the answers together as a class, asking students to justify their choices.

Answers:

1. *F* She didn't like her secondary school very much.
2. *F* She was good at some subjects.
3. *T* She was good at French and English.
4. *F* She was really interested in history.
5. *T* She was terrible at maths and science.
6. *F* She was rubbish at sport.

Task 3 - 2nd video viewing (10 mins)

- Ask students if they can remember what Anne said at the end of the clip about her overall feelings towards her school days. Ask them:
 - *What phrase did she use?*
- Elicit the phrase 'I wasn't keen on' and write on the board.
- Check that the students understand that this means she didn't like school. Provide another example in the positive form, e.g. 'I was really keen on art', eliciting that 'keen on' means to like something.
- Underline the adjective and preposition and tell the students that Anne uses some other two-word short phrases like this. Refer the students to **Task 3**. Tell them to watch the clip again and write the phrases they hear.
- Take some feedback from the class, putting the phrases in two columns on the board. Encourage the students to provide the preposition as well as the adjective.

Answers:

Positive: good at, interested in

Negative: terrible at, rubbish at, scared of, not keen on

- Highlight the use of the adjective+preposition. Elicit some other phrases students know like this, e.g. *great at, bored with, fond of, bad at, pleased with*.

Differentiation

- With a strong group, you may also want to introduce and highlight the use of adverbs of degree such as *quite, very, pretty, really*.

Task 4 – Jumbled sentences (10-15 mins)

- Put a jumbled sentence on the board.
 - *at rubbish school geography was He at.*
- Elicit the correct version of the sentence, drawing attention to the use of the verb 'to be' and the adjective+preposition combination.
 - *He was rubbish at geography at school.*
- Tell the students to unscramble the words in **Task 4** to make correct sentences about Anne. Tell them to work alone and then check with a partner. Monitor and help as required.
- Take feedback and write/display answers on board. Use colour and arrows to help show how the adjective+preposition acts as a fixed phrase. Also, provide examples to illustrate that the preposition is followed by a noun but can also be followed by the -ing form (gerund):
 - *He was rubbish at sports.*
 - *He was rubbish at doing sports.*
- Be prepared for some flexibility in the answers.



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Answers

1. *Anne didn't like her secondary school very much.*
2. *She was really interested in history.*
3. *She was good at English and French.*
4. *She was terrible at maths and science.*
5. *She didn't like hockey because she was scared of the ball.*
6. *She wasn't very keen on secondary school.*

Differentiation

- Ask students who finish quickly to write some true sentences about themselves at school.
- The task can be simplified for weaker students, e.g. by providing them with a gapped exercise.

Task 5 – Dictation (15-20 mins)

- Put the students into pairs. Tell the students to look at Task 5 in their worksheet. Tell them they are going to do a 'running dictation'. Provide an explanation and instructions of what to do. You can give them instructions such as:
 - *On the walls are six sentences. They are numbered 1- 6.*
 - *One person from each pair must get up to read a sentence. You cannot write anything down or shout out the sentence. You then go back to your seat and tell your partner the sentence. Your partner has to write the sentence down.*
 - *If you forget part of the sentence, you can go back and read it again. You can also go back if your partner needs help with the spelling of a word.*
 - *When your partner has written the sentence down, it is your turn to sit down while your partner finds another sentence, reads it and then tells you what to write.*
- Check understanding of the instructions. If the students have not done a task like this before, a short demonstration will be useful.
- When the students have completed the task, take feedback. Display the answers on the board for the students to check/correct their grammar, spelling and punctuation.

Differentiation

- The task can be adapted to a paired dictation if the room is not appropriate for a lot of moving around, or if you have less time.

Cooler (10-15 mins)

- Draw a 3x3 grid on the board, putting a preposition in each box. It will look something like this:

in	on	at
with	at	of
at	on	at

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- Divide the class into two teams, A and B. Tell the students that a member of each team has to take a turn to create a sentence about their own school days which include an adjective+preposition. When they create a correct sentence, they win the box. The team who gets 3 boxes in a row first is the winner. The row can be across, down or diagonal.
- Play the game on the board. As each team uses one of the prepositions put either A or B in the box.
- Tell the students to use the grid in their worksheets to play the game in pairs or groups of four with two in each team.
- Monitor and make notes of errors for final feedback.

Homework

Students do the activities in the original video to consolidate learning of the lesson. Ask the students to post a comment on the ESOL Nexus website once they have completed the tasks.

Extension activities (follow up)

Extension activities can be used in the next lesson or, if you have a break, in the second part of the lesson.

Here are some potential extension activities:

- Students write some sentences about their own school days and then post to the ESOL Nexus website. They can use the video transcript for ideas.
- Students discuss which were the most and least useful subjects at school.
- Students are given an error correction activity focusing on the language area.
- Provide the students with a copy of the transcript with spelling errors in it. Students rewrite the text correcting the spelling.

Task 5 – Dictation sentences (cut up and display on walls)

1. He fell asleep because he was bored with the English lesson.

2. The teacher was very fond of all her students.

3. My mother was always very pleased with my exam results.

4. The little girl was really scared of her maths teacher.

5. My mother was proud of me when I got an A for biology.

6. I was never very interested in geography.

