

Interest Times

R e a d L e a r n C r e a t e

Spring Bank Holiday in United Kingdom

The spring bank holiday, also known as the late May bank holiday, is a time for people in the United Kingdom to have a day off work or school. It falls on the last Monday of May .

Some people choose to take a short trip or vacation. Others use the time to walk in the country, catch up with family and friends, visit garden centers or do home maintenance. However, in some parts of the United Kingdom, there are some customs associated with this day.

On Cooper's Hill in Brockworth, Gloucester-

shire, people race down a steep hill following a large round cheese. The hill is concave and has an incline of 1:1 in some places. The first person to cross the finishing line wins a Double Gloucester cheese weighing about 8lbs (around 3.5kg).

In Endon in Staffordshire, the villagers dress their well, hold a fayre (village celebration) and crown a girl as the Well Dressing Queen. Local men hold a competition, known as 'Tossing the Sheaf', in

which they compete to see who can toss a bale of straw the highest.

In many other places, local festivals are held.



Fun Facts about United Kingdom

- England is 74 times smaller than the USA, 59 times smaller than Australia and 3 times smaller than Japan. England is however 2.5 times *more* populous than Australia, and 1.5 times more populous than California.
- Windsor Castle is *the oldest and largest royal residence* in the world still in use. It was originally constructed in 1070 and rebuilt in stone in 1170.

UK Education System

There are four basic features of the British educational system :

- 1) education is compulsory from 5 to 16;*
- 2) the academic year usually begins in September and runs to early July; it has 3 terms, divided by the Christmas and Easter holidays. In addition, all schools have a 'half-term holiday', lasting a few days or a week, in the middle of each term;*
- 3) compulsory education is free of charge, but parents may spend money on educating their children if they want to;*
- 4) there are three stages of education. Children move from the first stage (primary) to the second stage (secondary) at around the age of eleven or twelve. The third stage is 'further' education at university or college.*



In 1988, for the first time in British history, a National Curriculum was introduced. The National Curriculum tells pupils which subjects they have to study, what they must learn and when they have to take assessment tests.

At the age of 5 children go to infant school which is the first stage of primary education. From 7 to 11 they attend junior schools, the second stage of primary education. In primary school children are taught the so-called 3R's: reading, writing and arithmetic.

At the age of 11 children enter the secondary school. There are three types of state secondary schools in Britain. They are: grammar schools (for the most intelligent children), modern schools (for the less intelligent children) and comprehensive schools (for children of all abilities). Grammar schools lead towards higher education, and the others give general or vocational education to prepare students for employment or for further technical education. The regular secondary schools offer 7 years of schooling, with students from 11 to 18 years of age. The last two years (16–18) maybe spent in a separate sixth form college, which concentrates on career training.



Between the ages of 14 and 16, pupils study for their GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education) exams. Pupils must take English Language, Maths, and Science for GCSE, as well as half GCSE in a foreign language and Technology. In addition, they must also be taught Physical Education, Religious Education and Sex Education, although they do not take exams in these subjects.



Those who get good GCSE grades can stay at their school for another two years, if it has a sixth form and teaches the desired subjects, and then take 'A' level (Advanced Level) exams. Otherwise they have to leave their school and go to a sixth-form college or college of further education. Further education colleges

have strong ties with commerce and industry and offer courses in engineering, cooking or hairdressing.

The General Certificate of Education Advanced (A) level is normally taken after a further two years of study. Good A' level results in at least 2 subjects are necessary to get a place at a university. Universities choose their students after interviews. There are about 100 universities in Britain. The most famous of them are Oxford and Cambridge Universities.

About seven per cent of students go to private schools, where parents have to pay for their children. The most expensive private schools are called public schools. Most of these are single-sex boarding schools and students can live there during term-time.

Dear reader!

We invite you to take part in the creation of our school newspaper in English! Welcome!



BE ACTIVE!

Gymnasium 16

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J u n i o r I n t e r e s t

RACHEL'S HOLIDAYS



Say whether these statements are **true or false**:

Rachel is sitting near the seaside. _____

She is sitting on a bench. _____

She's reading a book. _____

She's using a pair of sneakers. _____

She's got a sand basket next to her. _____

There are three bottles in the basket. _____

She's wearing a T-shirt. _____

There is a house on her left. _____

She is wearing a pair of sunglasses. _____