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**Lesson 5**

In Vietnam, education is compulsory from grade 1 to grade 9, covering primary and lower secondary school. Students must attend classes regularly, and skipping school without valid reasons is taken seriously. In contrast, the U.S. mandates education for students up to 16-18 years old, depending on the state, and the system includes elementary, middle, and high school.

Vietnamese public schools charge minimal fees, but students may still face additional costs for extracurricular activities and materials. In contrast, U.S. public schools are free of tuition, funded by taxes, though private schools in both countries charge significantly higher fees. The financial burden on families is generally lighter in the U.S. public system.

In Vietnam, students often use motorbikes, bicycles, or public transport to commute to school, with parents frequently accompanying younger children. In the U.S., school buses are a common sight, providing free or low-cost transportation for most students. This difference reflects the infrastructure and cultural priorities of each country.

Vietnam focuses heavily on core subjects like math, literature, and sciences, with limited emphasis on electives and creative fields. In the U.S., students enjoy a wider selection of subjects, allowing them to explore diverse interests such as music, arts, and technical courses. This flexibility makes the American curriculum more adaptable to individual preferences.

Vietnamese students wear strict uniforms, varying slightly by school but generally formal, such as white shirts and blue trousers or skirts. In the U.S., most public schools do not require uniforms, promoting individual expression, though dress codes are enforced. Uniform policies in Vietnam aim to foster discipline and equality among students.

Vietnam uses a 10-point grading system, with scores above 5 considered passing, emphasizing precision. The U.S. adopts a letter-based grading scale (A-F), often accompanied by GPA, which provides a broader evaluation of a student's performance over time. Both systems prioritize different aspects of assessment.

Vietnamese schools emphasize academics, with limited extracurricular options, mostly focusing on traditional activities like sports or cultural events. In contrast, U.S. schools offer diverse extracurricular programs, including robotics, debate teams, and community service, fostering holistic student development. The U.S. system encourages a more balanced approach to education.

Vietnamese students generally show strong respect for teachers and authority, adhering to strict discipline. Meanwhile, U.S. students often enjoy a more casual teacher-student relationship, reflecting a focus on mutual understanding and open dialogue. These differences mirror cultural norms and values.

Teachers in Vietnam are respected as authority figures and must adhere to structured curriculums with little flexibility. In the U.S., teachers act more as facilitators, often personalizing lessons to suit students’ needs. While both systems have dedicated educators, the American approach tends to value creativity and adaptability in teaching methods.

In conclusion, While Vietnam and the U.S. share a commitment to education, their systems reflect distinct cultural, economic, and social values. Vietnam prioritizes discipline and academic rigor, whereas the U.S. emphasizes flexibility and individuality. Both systems have their strengths and areas for improvement, catering to different societal needs.