

E» Title

Discuss some of the changes which have taken place in the school system in the UK in the last 200 years.

C» Introduction (background)

In the UK, school attendance is now compulsory for children between the ages of 5 and 16. Children attend primary school from 5 to 11 years of age, and then secondary school until they are at least 16 years old. The modern state school system aims to treat all children in the same way and to give them all equal opportunities. However, the school system has not always been like this.

G » Introduction (thesis statement)

This essay will discuss the key developments over the last 200 years, which have ensured that a school education is available to all children and is an enjoyable and interesting experience.

I» P1-paragraph leader

The school system has changed so all children have the right to an education.

H» P1-paragraph body

At the beginning of the 19th century, only boys from rich families went to school. Girls from rich backgrounds were taught at home. Boys were taught Physical Education, English, Philosophy, Maths, Latin and Greek, whereas girls' education focused on reading, writing, sewing, singing, dancing and French. This was because girls' education involved preparation for marriage, running a home and entertaining whereas boys' education aimed at preparing them for work: the army, perhaps, or a political life. Gradually, free state schools began to be provided for all children, and at the end of the 19th century, school became compulsory for all until the age of 13. This meant that all boys and girls, from rich or poor backgrounds, had the opportunity to learn to read and write. During the 20th century, the school leaving age was raised again. Girls and boys began to be treated more fairly; they could study the same subjects within the same classroom, and all children had the right to take the same exams.

D» P2-paragraph leader

Approaches to teaching have developed so that children participate more in their learning.

A» P2-paragraph body

Until the second half of the 20th century, schools were traditional and strict in their approach to learning. Pupils sat in rows, they were not allowed to talk to each other during lessons, and corporal punishment was allowed; children were hit with slippers, rulers or canes by the teachers for not knowing the answers to questions, and they were encouraged to learn facts, stories and poems by memorizing and by copying from the board or from dictation. Gradually, teachers began to change the way they taught. Modern teaching methods are likely to include pair and group work, and children are encouraged to learn by discovering answers for themselves rather than constantly relying on the teacher. Modern technology is widely used in classrooms. Computers are available for children to use even in primary schools, and most schools now have fast access to the internet and use interactive resources and whiteboards in the classrooms.

F » Conclusion (summary)

The school system has clearly improved in many ways since the 19th century. Most importantly, children's right to education no longer depends on gender or parental income, and greater educational opportunities are offered more widely to all.

B» Conclusion (future suggestion: a prediction, recommendation or solution)

It is important that education continues to develop as society changes throughout the twenty-first century.