Education in the UK

10 Skim the text *The UK education system*. Which paragraph …

1 describes the school year?
2 gives an overview of education in the UK?
3 describes secondary education from 11 to 16?
4 describes primary education?
5 describes secondary education from 16 to 18?

11 **Read Study Skill** Underline the content words in sentences 1–3 from the text.

STUDY SKILL Effective reading (3)

You will have a large amount to read for your studies, so you need to be able to read quickly.

The first time you read a text intensively:

- Focus on content words (usually nouns, verbs, adjectives).

*It is **easy** to **read** this by **looking** at the **content words**.*

- Think about which parts of the text are relevant.

For further readings of the same text:

- Concentrate on parts of the text which are relevant.
- Read in sense groups of two or more words. Sense groups can be:
  subject + verb + object

*At the age of 16/**most students take exams**/in about ten different subjects.*

phrases with a preposition

***At the age of 16**/most students take exams/**in about ten different subjects**.*

1 The school year runs from September to July and is usually divided into three terms of approximately 13 weeks each.
2 These schools are largely co-educational, that is, boys and girls attend together.
3 Most students go to large comprehensive schools which teach children of varying abilities.

12 Use the content words to answer the questions on education.

1 Are the education systems in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland similar?
education system/Republic of Ireland/different/Northern Ireland
2 What schools do some 9-year-olds go to?
parts/England/children/leave/primary school/aged nine/go/middle school
3 How many young people go on to further education?
40%/young people/go/further education

13 Divide the first paragraph from the text into sense groups. Read the paragraph aloud to a partner. Compare your paragraphs.

By law in the UK / all children between 5 and 16 years of age / must receive a full-time education. / The vast majority, over 90%, of these children attend state schools. The education systems in Wales, Northern Ireland, and England are similar, whereas the education system in Scotland differs in a number of ways. This description will generally refer to the English state system.

14 Which paragraphs in the text are relevant if you are only interested in …

1 primary education? 2 secondary education? 3 education in Scotland?

The UK education system

A By law in the UK, all children between 5 and 16 years of age must receive a full-time education. The vast majority, over 90%, of these children attend state schools. The education systems in Wales, Northern Ireland, and England are similar, whereas the education system in Scotland differs in a number of ways. This description will generally refer to the English state system.

B The school year runs from September to July and is usually divided into three terms of approximately 13 weeks each. Students attend school from about 9.00 am to 3.30 pm, Monday to Friday, with a morning break and a break for lunch. Some students eat lunch in the school cafeteria, but many bring food from home.

C Most children in England go to primary school from the age of 5 to 11. These schools are largely co-educational, that is, boys and girls attend together. All schools follow the National Curriculum. The core, or main subjects, are English, mathematics, and science. Other subjects include history, geography, physical education, music, and art. In Wales, the Welsh language is a subject in Welsh-speaking schools. In the same way, in Northern Ireland, the curriculum includes the Irish language in Irish-speaking schools.

D At the age of 11 students move to a secondary school. Most students go to large comprehensive schools which teach children of varying abilities. At the age of 16, most students take exams (GCSEs) in about ten different subjects. At this point, just under 50% leave school and start other training or work.

E Students who remain in education can choose to continue at their school for up to two years, or go to a special college. Wherever they study, students specialize in three or four subjects, and there are further exams at the age of 17 (AS Levels) and again at 18 (A Levels). Good results in these are required to go to university.

(315 words)