

The Czech education system

TASK: Read the following article and try to fill in the gaps with the most appropriate words from the box below. (Solution on p.3)

age, art, business, ceremony, degree, entrance, grades/marks, graduates/students, handicapped/disabled, jobs, obligatory/compulsory, optional, primary/elementary, private, school-leaving, state, state, subjects, thesis, uniforms

In the Czech Republic all children go to school from the 1) of 6 to 15, because school attendance is compulsory. Six-year-olds enroll in the nine-year 2) school. Most children attend 3) schools where education is free of charge but there are also some 4) schools where parents have to participate in covering expenses of the education of their children, and church religious schools. Physically or mentally 5) children are educated in special schools.

Primary schools have 2 stages. Children in the first five grades are mostly taught by one class teacher. Older children (6 - 9 grade) have more teachers who specialize in various 6) Czech, math, physics, chemistry, history, geography, biology, etc.

Pupils in the CR do not wear 7) to school. The school year starts on 1st September, and ends on June 30th, when pupils get their school report with 8) from 1 to 5. In the 5th, 7th or 9th class, children try to pass 9) exams and continue their studies at a secondary school.

Students can enroll in secondary general school (grammar school) which prepares its students for university studies and lasts 4, 6 or 8 years. Students complete their studies with a 10) exam, which is required for all universities and colleges. The exam is taken in 4 subjects. Czech and a foreign language are 11) and math, history, biology, physics, chemistry, geography, music, art or civics are 12)

Secondary technical schools (SOŠ) train students for various branches: chemistry, glassmaking or agriculture. Economics can be studied at 13) colleges, culture, singing, dancing and drama at 14) schools. Most of the courses last 4 years and then the students can apply for university or go to work.

Secondary vocational schools (SOU) train apprentices - future bakers, bricklayers, hairdressers etc. for practical 15)

University education is provided from 3 to 6 years. Most secondary school 16) have to pass an entrance exam. Students can study at the School of Economics, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Journalism, Teacher's Training College, Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Science etc. The university is finished with a 17) exam. Students have to defend a 18) in order to receive a diploma at a graduation 19) After 3-year courses they receive a Bachelor's 20) after 4 and 5-year courses a Master's degree.

Jana Kubánková (teacher of English at the Gymnázium Budějovická in Prague 4)

