

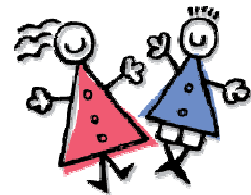
EPISODE 29

LEVEL B2

READING COMPREHENSION



CHILDHOOD MEMORIES



When I **look back on** (= think about a time/event in the past) my school days, there are mainly good and happy memories that remain. I guess it's because after many years you usually forget what was unpleasant and you can laugh about things which weren't that funny years ago.

Strangely enough, I remember the first day at primary school quite well. Maybe it's because on that day I met a girl I **made friends with** and she is still my best friend. She invited me to sit at one desk with her and that's how it started. Towards the end of elementary school I **fell in love** for the first time in my life. He was much older than me and not at all interested in me, so I was really miserable. Anita, my best friend, helped me to get over him.

Fortunately, we soon went to high school and I forgot all about the boy. Another person I remember from primary school was that terrible **bully**, who used to **tease** all the girls and weaker boys. His name was Henry - I'll never forget his face!

Secondary school was the time when we used to **play** a lot of **jokes on** our teachers. We were roaring with laughter but the teachers were not very pleased most of the time, and we even got some **punishment**, like a ban on school discos.

My most terrible school memories are connected with my least favourite subject, which was literature. To be honest, I was **hopeless** at the subject, but another thing was the teacher - Miss Scott. Nobody was as **vicious** (= extremely unkind or unpleasant) as her! She would criticize you in such a way that everyone else was laughing at you. But now, when we meet with my old school friends at **school reunions**, we have so much fun remembering **the good old days!**

More contexts for the new words:

- This is **hopeless**. I'll never learn how to play the piano. (= a situation which seems unlikely to succeed or improve)
- Trying to solve this problem is like trying to get out of **a vicious circle**. We always seem to be coming back to the starting point.
(= a process in which the existence of a problem causes other problems and it makes the original problem worse)



EXERCISE 1

Complete each gap with one word.

1. It is always nice to remember the good old
2. I find it easy to make friends other people.
3. Women tend to fall love very quickly.
4. Frank was a real, punching younger students and teasing weaker children.
5. It's fun to play a joke your teacher sometimes.
6. Twenty years after our 'matura' exam, the school organized a so that everyone could meet again.



EXERCISE 2

Match the question halves, then answer them.

1. At primary school, did you find it easy to make friends
 2. Which school subjects were you
 3. What jokes did you play
- a. on your teachers?
b. hopeless at?
c. with other children? Why/ why not?

ENGLISH IN USE



Today we are going to take a closer look at two confusing words, 'like' and 'as'. They are confusing because they mean more or less the same, but you have to know when to use each of them.

We even got some punishment, like a ban on school discos.

Here 'like' is used in the meaning of 'for example' or - more formally - 'such as'. It's also used before nouns when it means 'similar to', e.g.

Your brother looks like you. or She always dresses like a model.

And here is a sentence from the lesson illustrating the use of 'as':

Nobody was as vicious as her!

'As' in this sentence is used in a comparative structure (*He is as good as you.*)

You use 'as' and not 'like' when you mean a job or function:

She has been working as a secretary for three months.

You can try and use this jar as a glass.

Remember about fixed expressions when 'as' is used:

As you know ...

As I was saying / said ...

As we expected ...

He was late for the meeting, as usual.

In some cases, both 'as' and 'like' can be used before a clause, but 'like' is more informal:

They played very well, as/like they did last month.

The prices of food are going up in our city, as/like they are in the rest of the country.

IDIOM CLOSE-UP



A/ What is your worst school memory?

*B/ I particularly hated having to **LEARN POEMS BY HEART** and reciting them in front of the whole class. That was a nightmare!*

When you **learn something by heart**, you memorize it.

PHRASAL VERBS CLOSE-UP



1. When you **FALL BEHIND WITH** something, you fail to do something or pay something at the time that you should.

*He was ill, and **fell behind with** his schoolwork.*

*They started to **fall behind with** the rent.*

2. When you **BRUSH UP (ON)** something, you practise and improve your skills or knowledge of something.

*I took a short course to **brush up** my German before the trip.*

*He took the opportunity to **brush up on** various techniques.*



EXERCISE 3

Complete the mini-story. Use the pictures to help you.



Paula was ill and started to _____ behind with her schoolwork. She phoned her friend



and asked what they had done at school, hoping to _____ up on her Polish classes.



She was really surprised to find out that she had to learn a huge poem by _____ !

NEWS



MIXED ABILITY CLASSES

Together with the government's latest attempt at yet another reform of the Polish education system, the question returns of whether the very foundations of schools are **sound**. To be more precise, voices are heard that the **prevalence** of mixed ability classes is precisely what **hinders** any educational progress. When a single class **accommodates** students who are very bright and those who are much slower, it is impossible to provide effective education for anyone. Critics of the current system advocate streaming, i.e. putting students into different groups according to their intelligence and abilities. This way, the geniuses can develop freely and rapidly, while the less **endowed** can learn at a more leisurely pace. The advantages are obvious – but wouldn't it constitute a form of segregation?

GLOSSARY

- **sound** – adequate
- **prevalence** – domination
- **to hinder sth** – to prevent sth, or to slow it down significantly
- **to accommodate** – to be a place for
- **endowed** - gifted

KEY TO EXERCISES

Ex.1

1. days
2. with
3. in
4. bully
5. on
6. reunion

Ex.2

1. c
2. b
3. a

Ex.3

fall, brush, heart