

# School shake-up: our proposal

**21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills**

Collaboration: making decisions

**Key Competences**

9 Linguistic communication, 9 Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, 9 Cultural awareness and expression

**Useful language from the units**

 1B and 1D present simple (affirmative, negative and interrogative), 1E singular and plural nouns, 2A daily routine, times, days of the week, school subjects, 2B *have to*, 2D adverbs of frequency, question words, 2E prepositions of time, 2G asking for and giving advice, *should / shouldn't*, 3F expressing opinions, 3H linking words

**STEP 1: UNDERSTAND THE TASK** Work in pairs. Read the task. What are you going to do?

**TASK**

Of course there are some subjects you have to study and your school designs your timetable. But what about you? For this project, the timetable for your class is YOUR job! The head teacher wants to hear what you think about your school week. You need to think about what you want to do on each day and when. Then present your proposal.

**STEP 2: PREPARE** Look at the example timetable for a student in a secondary school in the UK. Answer the questions with a partner.

- 1 Do students in the UK school study the same subjects as you?
- 2 Are the lessons in this school the same length as yours?
- 3 Do the students have the same amount of free time in their school day?
- 4 What are the other differences between your timetable and their timetable?
- 5 Thinking about questions 1–4, do you prefer your timetable or their timetable? Why?

## TIMETABLE



	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
08.25–08.35	registration				
<b>Lesson 1</b> 08.35–09.35	history	I.C.T.	design and technology	R.E.	drama
<b>Lesson 2</b> 09.35–10.35	English	maths	music	German	English
10.35–11.00	morning break				
11.00–11.20	tutor time	year group assembly	tutor time	tutor time	tutor time
<b>Lesson 3</b> 11.20–12.20	science	P.E.	maths	English	history
<b>Lesson 4</b> 12.20–13.20	French	English	I.C.T.	maths	geography
13.20–14.05	lunch break				
<b>Lesson 5</b> 14.05–15.05	maths	geography	art	P.E.	maths
<b>After-school clubs</b>	sport (various) chess	homework club	drama	sport (various)	computing

**STEP 3: ANALYSE** Look at the photos and read the information in the text messages, post-it note and dialogue (texts 1–3). Work in a small group. Use the key phrases to express your opinions.

**KEY PHRASES**

I really believe that ...      In my view, ...      To be honest, ...  
 Personally, I think ...      In my opinion, ...  
 You / all students / teachers have to / don't have to / should / shouldn't ...  
 The head teacher has to / doesn't have to / should / shouldn't ...

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Elementary 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills Project

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## Is it important?

1

Why can't school start at 9.30?  
I'm so tired! 😞

I know, but you should go to  
bed earlier.

2

Don't forget  
chess club at  
lunchtime today!

3

In my view,  
lessons should  
be 45 minutes.

I agree, but you can't do sport in 45  
minutes. You have to change your clothes  
before and after the lesson, so I think you  
need longer for P.E. – maybe two lessons.

No, I disagree. Personally, I think ten minutes to change  
your clothes at the start and get dressed at the end  
and just 40 minutes of sport is fine. That's 60 minutes,  
not 90. To be honest, I hate P.E. anyway. We could learn  
skateboarding. You don't need to change your clothes for  
that, and it's more fun.

Well, I think P.E. is important because  
some people don't do any exercise  
outside school, so it should be about  
an hour – and some students need  
more than ten minutes to change.

OK, then. Ninety  
minutes – now let's  
talk about my idea  
for skateboarding  
lessons ...

**STEP 4: CREATE** Work with your partner to create your school timetable. Use the key phrases again to discuss the questions. Then make notes to help you present your proposal to the class.

- 1 What do you like about your timetable?
- 2 What do you want to change about your school day / week? Think about:
  - start and end time
  - how long each lesson is
  - lunch and break times
  - registration time, tutor time and assemblies
  - subjects you study and how often you study them
  - other subjects you would like to study
  - activities or clubs after school or at lunchtime

**STEP 5: PRESENT AND DECIDE** Present your proposal to the class. Listen to the other proposals. Write down one idea you think is good and is different to your timetable proposal. Answer the questions.

- 1 Which timetable do you think the head teacher will like best? Why?
- 2 Should the school ask students for their ideas about the timetable? Why? / Why not?

**STEP 6: SELF-EVALUATION** Copy the statements into your notebook and score yourself from 1–4.

- a I can read a school timetable and compare it to my own.
- b I can discuss in a group and express my opinion on a familiar topic.
- c I can write a proposal and present it to the class.
- d I can give positive feedback to others.

4 very well

3 well

2 needs practice

1 not very well

# School shake-up: our proposal

## PROJECT SUMMARY

- **21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills:** Collaboration: making decisions
- **Key Competences:** 🗣️ Linguistic communication, 🧠 Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, 🌍 Cultural awareness and expression
- **Useful language from the units:** 1B and 1D present simple (affirmative, negative and interrogative), 1E singular and plural nouns, 2A daily routine, times, days of the week, school subjects, 2B *have to*, 2D adverbs of frequency, question words, 2E prepositions of time, 2G asking for and giving advice, *should / shouldn't*, 3F expressing opinions, 3H linking words

## WARM-UP EXERCISE

To help students engage with the topic, put them in pairs to talk about which subjects they have at school today and which one they prefer.

## STEP 1 UNDERSTAND THE TASK

- Ask students to read the task. Check their understanding of the vocabulary used, especially in the project title. You might need to pre-teach the meaning of *shake-up* (making changes to a system or organisation to improve the way it works).
- Put students in pairs to discuss what they are going to do. Check understanding carefully by asking some questions, e.g. *What do you need to make? Who is it for? Why do you need to do it?*

### ANSWER

We have to say what we want to do each day and when at school. We need to present our proposal to the head teacher.

## STEP 2 PREPARE

- This preparation step involves students analysing a school timetable from a school in the UK and comparing it with their own, using the questions as guidance. If students are interested in learning more about schools in the UK, you could read the information below.
  - In the UK, students have to be at school for 190 days of the year. There are two-week holidays at Easter and Christmas, a longer six-week holiday in the summer and one-week holidays in October, February and May. The school day starts around 8.30 and finishes around 3–3.30 depending on the school. There are breaks, including a lunch break which can be up to 60 minutes, but may be shorter. Students usually have lunch at school.
  - Each student at secondary school has a tutor. The tutor is responsible for a group of 25–30 students throughout their years at school. Registration time is when the tutor checks each student's name at the start of the school day. Tutors also have time in the school day to deal with personal and academic matters, behaviour problems, practical issues such as timetables, letters from school to

home and other activities. This is also often when students have compulsory personal, social and health education and instruction in citizenship. They also receive careers advice. In most secondary schools, there is also a weekly assembly which is when the students come together in year groups or as a whole school to listen to a talk, hear important announcements or information and sometimes join in religious worship or prayer.

- During their third year of secondary school, called year 9, students choose subjects for their final two years of study, which lead to qualifications called G.C.S.E.s. Maths, English, R.E. and science are compulsory subjects for all, but others such as modern languages, history, geography, I.C.T., design, art, drama and music are optional. Most students study around ten different subjects.
- Design and technology is a subject which involves creative thinking, making plans, learning about and using different materials, machines and techniques. In the UK, food technology is included, i.e. cooking. Other aspects of this subject may include working with wood, metal and textiles, designing on computers, solving design problems and evaluating designs.
- Make sure that you and they have access to their own timetables to make it easy to compare visually. Give them time to read, compare and think before they answer the questions orally in pairs.
- Monitor as they are discussing. Encourage them to give reasons for their answers to question 5. Elicit answers as a whole class feedback session.

### ANSWER

Students' own answers.

## STEP 3 ANALYSE

- The aim of this step is to stimulate students' thinking around the idea of what is possible in their school day.
- They are encouraged to give their opinions using key phrases. It's a good idea to focus students' attention on these key phrases first and drill them to ensure natural pronunciation.
- Draw their attention to the different kinds of information they need to look at: photos, text messages, a post-it note and a face-to-face dialogue between three students. Put students in small groups to give their opinions, using a strong group and the first photo prompt to demonstrate the task. You could start by saying 'Personally, I don't think art is very important. I think we can do drawing and painting at home if we want to, and it isn't a problem if we don't do it. But it's a fun subject. What do you think?'
- Monitor their discussions and prompt them if they seem to get 'stuck'. There are no specific answers, but the material should prompt discussions such as:
  - Photos: *Which subjects are fun / important / not needed and why?*

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- Text messages: *What is a good start time for the school day? How long should it be? What kinds of breaks should there be?*
- Post-it note: *Are clubs a good idea? When should they take place? Is lunch time a good time for clubs?*
- Dialogue: *Which subjects are important or not? How long should students spend on each subject in one week? How long should lessons be? What new subjects can you think of and why?*
- When they have finished discussing, elicit some of the students' reflections from the class.
- As an optional extra activity, you could ask whether they know students from other countries and have any information about the school day or subjects they study. They could also include ideas they've taken from TV programmes set in schools. This is just to stimulate their interest and knowledge and promote further real-world sharing on the topic in English. At this stage, if the topics of school meals or school uniforms come up, you could include them in the project parameters. UK schools very often have compulsory uniforms for secondary school students. In terms of food, it is common for students to take a packed sandwich lunch from home or to eat in the school cafeteria. These may be quite different from the school setting of your students and could prompt discussion about these aspects of the school day.

**STEP 4 CREATE**

- Put students in pairs to work through questions 1 and 2. Make sure they understand all the vocabulary in these questions and explain about registration and assembly if necessary, using the background information in the notes for Step 2. Students will probably need to refer to their own timetables again.
- Draw their attention again to the key phrases, and remind them to use them in their discussions and to make notes about their ideas. Monitor and encourage them to be as specific as possible during this brainstorming phase to make the basis of a realistic proposal. At this point, fast finishers can also be encouraged to include proposals about school meals and appropriate clothing for school if you wish.
- Students need to produce a proposal which includes a timetable for their head teacher to see.



Ideally these timetables should be produced using computers (and, if the technology is available, they could be beamed up onto a screen or an interactive whiteboard in Step 5).

- In addition to the timetable, students should work together to write the script of how they are going to explain their proposals.

- To keep the class on track, monitor and give time limits as they work. Make sure fast finishers check for accuracy and that they have used language in an appropriate register.
- All pairs will need to decide how to divide their explanations between them, and you should make sure they have time to practise what they are going to say.

**STEP 5 PRESENT AND DECIDE**

- Pairs present their proposals to the class, (or if your class is very large, you may need to separate them into smaller groups). They will either need to print out their timetables for others to see or project them onto a screen. Remind them to speak slowly and clearly.
- As they listen to each other's proposals, they should pay attention to things that are different from their own proposal and write down one thing they like about each one in order to give feedback afterwards.
- Conduct whole class feedback and encourage students to give positive evaluations to each other, based on the points they noted. Stronger students can be encouraged to explain why they think they are good ideas.
- Finally, elicit opinions relating to questions 1 and 2.

**STEP 6 SELF-EVALUATION**

- Ask students to copy statements a–d. Then they decide individually how well they can do each thing. Point out that number 4 is very positive and number 1 is the least positive.
- You can also use the key competences evaluation rubric to evaluate how well students have done in the key competences associated with this project.
- You could then conduct a class discussion on what the students found easy and difficult about doing the project, and what they might do differently if they did the project again.



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## Key Competences Evaluation Rubric

Student's name: ..... Class: .....

KEY COMPETENCE	4 EXCELLENT	3 GOOD	2 ADEQUATE	1 NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
<b>Linguistic communication</b> In step 1, the student reads the task and demonstrates a clear understanding of what is required. In step 3, the student uses the key phrases appropriately to express his/her opinions. In steps 4 and 5, the student uses the key phrases and new language effectively to discuss, create and present the new timetable. Throughout the project, the student demonstrates competent understanding and use of the language involved.				
<b>Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship</b> In step 2, the student shows initiative and volunteers opinions when contrasting the timetables. In step 3, the student is forthcoming in expressing opinions and participating in the discussion. In step 4, the student demonstrates an ability to work well in pairs, in making decisions and in the selection of ideas for the proposal.				
<b>Cultural awareness and expression</b> In the timetable analysis in step 2, the student reflects on the cultural differences between his/her country and the UK and makes comparisons, which shows awareness of the culture of another country. In step 3, the student demonstrates a curiosity about / interest in the differences between school life in the UK and in his/her own country and the cultural similarities and differences involved.				