

Reading, Listening and Vocabulary

I began **primary school** when I was 4 years old. I went to Maynooth Boys National School, a **single-sex** catholic **run** school. I stayed there till I was 11 years old, when I had to transfer schools because of my father's work. From here I went to two schools, before eventually returning to Maynooth to finish off primary school. The first school I attended was Castlegregory Primary School, a school with two rooms only, no heating and teachers who believed in **corporal punishment**. The second school I attended was Lucan Boys School, a city school. I was **beaten up** on the first day by the senior students (a bunch of **bullies**). Not a fun memory. After my father re-transferred back to Maynooth I once again attended the primary school there, with my teacher Mr. Mc Bride. He was an **inspirational** teacher, who would read the newspaper to us every morning before studies commenced. When I was 11 I finished primary school and took the **enrollment** exam for **secondary school**.

There was only one secondary school in my town, Maynooth Post Primary, a **mixed** school. I wasn't exactly a **model student**, but I usually **kept my head down** and **got on with** my studies. The typical school day here started at 9:15am and finished at 4:15 pm, with a small break around 11am and a one hour lunch break at 12pm. It was in this school where I met my closest friends, and discovered what I wanted to do with my life. The exam system consisted of 2 major exams, one in 3rd year, **The Junior Certificate** (in the UK it is known as **O Levels**), the other in 6th year, the final year, which was called **The Leaving Certificate Exam** (in the UK it is known as **A Levels**). I had to study 11 **subjects** for the 3rd year exam and 7 subjects for my finals. Our teachers were **strict** but fair, and showed great enthusiasm for their subject area and for the developing minds of their students. It was later after university that I would return to this school and teach. My main interest in secondary school was art, and I was very close to my art teacher who was extremely important to me in my school life. She **instilled** in me the love and interest in art which I still hold today. I therefore dedicated a lot of my time to art, creating a portfolio of work and applying to the best art college in Ireland. Fortunately I was accepted and was the only student in my final year to enter university before graduation.

We had a graduation ceremony from secondary school, which was in two parts, one a public speech to teachers and parents, and the other a **debs** (a school dinner and dance). We had two **valedictorians** in our final year speech, one was me and the other a good friend, who is now teaching at Stanford in the US. It was a **nerve wracking** experience for both of us, but fun too. My **debs** was held at a lovely country hotel, with fine wine, food and dancing. It was a lovely way to say farewell to teachers and schoolmates and to start our new lives. Looking back on my school life, I realize that they were great years, "the best years of my life", my father would always say. I was not always perfect but I studied hard and succeeded in what I had planned to do. After university, I returned to teach art in that school, teaching alongside my former teachers, which was strange. I remember my first class, I was 21, some of my students were 18, and I was **thrown in at the deep end**. I loved that feeling. To this day, school life has always been part of my life and still is, and it's great^^.

Phrases

The most commonly used Education Phrasal Verbs

Verb	Collocation	Example
act out	roles	Small children will enjoy acting out adult roles.
add up		As children we are all taught how to read, write, and add up .
be out		The examination results are out today.
be up		The student response has been very positive and classroom attendance is up over previous years.
blunder through	exam	Cramming a million facts with little coherence into your head, and then blundering through the exam while hardly remembering a thing afterward, is a lot of work that will only waste your time.
boil down to		A lot of this boils down to lack of education.
breeze through	test	In the dream, I was in a classroom, taking some sort of test, and I just breezed through it, like it was nothing.
bring back	books	Please bring back the books that you borrow when you have finished so that others can enjoy them.
bring together	elements	The different elements of the lesson are brought together in the final activity, where students identify famous actors.
brush up	English	I want to brush up my English because, although I learnt it when I was at school, I haven't studied it for 5 years.
build up	course	Understanding what is expected of you and how the course is built up will make learning easier.
bunk off	school	Years ago, we used to bunk off school sometimes and go down the canal for a day's fishing.
catch on		He's not the brightest student in the class - it takes him rather a long time to catch on .
cloud over		He knew his students were bored because their eyes had clouded over and some of them were beginning to doodle in their notebooks.
come along		How is your English coming along ?
come away		What do you feel students come away with after completing the program?
come out	understanding	At the end of the book you should come out with a greater understanding of the English grammar.
come up		You'd better make sure you know these verbs because they always come up in the exam.
cook up	plan	The high ranking officials of our district have been cooking up this plan for years without paying much regard to what teachers or even some administrators have been saying against the plan.
die out	language	Gradually, the native language of the people began to die out .
draw on	experience	In essays, you can draw on personal experience as well as research to support your points.
drop off		For the past couple of years attendance has dropped off dramatically.
drop out	school	A Romanian project to help children who have dropped out of school due to social or economic reasons is reporting its second successful year.
dumb down	test	Officials at the state Department of Education are continuing efforts to dumb down the test.
enroll at	university	After graduation from high school, he enrolled at Keimyung University.