

H. The earliest independent or public schools were Winchester and Eton. These fee-paying boarding schools were set up for 'ruling-class boys'. All lessons were taught in Latin and the curriculum combined the methods of the grammar schools with an emphasis on the conduct, courtesy and etiquette (manners) necessary to produce gentlemen destined for careers at court.

I. At university, all degrees involved grammar, rhetoric (the art of developing arguments) and logic, with compulsory lectures in mathematics, music, theology, astronomy and geometry. Only after this could an undergraduate specialise. Most chose law, a traditional route into the professions for boys from non-noble classes. On completion of his education, a gentleman would be distinguishable from the lower classes because he could speak and write 'proper English' and had some knowledge of French and Latin. He would also have learned the correct social etiquette, particularly good table manners, and would know how to dance. The number of students entering the two universities of Oxford and Cambridge increased considerably under Elizabeth, as all classes realised the importance of higher education in getting to the top, or at least near it.

E. Education was mainly for well-off boys, but bright boys from the lower classes could go to grammar school, and even university if they had some financial support. Hardly any schooling was free – for coal, candles and educational materials. Even so, there is evidence of an expansion in education in Elizabeth's reign across all social classes. Approximately one-third of students who graduated from both Oxford and Cambridge came from the nobility and gentry, with the remainder coming from the lower classes: tradespeople, farmers and so on. Christopher Marlowe was the son of a cobbler, but he won a scholarship from his local school to go to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

F. Parish/Petty Schools were local schools where young children, from about ages four to seven, were taught to read and write as preparation for moving on to a grammar school. It was nearly always boys who attended, although there were a small number of girls from the upper classes. These schools could be attached to a grammar school, in which case the small boys would be taught by older pupils, or attached to a village church, or might even be in a local woman's house, the so-called dame schools.

J. Sons of the nobility were first educated at home by a private tutor. At age fifteen, they would go to university, although some might first attend one of the new public schools. Daughters would also be educated at home. Most wealthy and titled women were able to read and write, and some, like Elizabeth herself, received an exceptional education at home, from their tutors.

K. Some of the lower classes were taught to read and write by their masters at their place of work, and in the case of servants and apprentices, this would probably be where they lived as well.

EDUCATION IN ELIZABETHAN ENGLAND

1. What were the types of school available in Elizabethan England?
2. Describe two features of:
 - a) grammar schools
 - b) universities.
3. Who was taught at home?
4. Give three reasons why the Elizabethans valued education.

G. Sons of gentry, merchants and yeomen would most likely go to a grammar school, from the ages of seven to fifteen, although a small number might attend one of the new public schools. During Elizabeth's reign, 72 new grammar schools were founded. Demand for places increased throughout the reign, from all social classes. The subjects taught were mainly Latin and Greek, as this study of the classics was thought to encourage intellectual, personal and spiritual growth. A typical day might include:

- Latin-to-English translations
- studying the writings of classical authors like Virgil and Cicero
- learning some Greek, and even Hebrew, to help with translations of the Scriptures
- arithmetic
- tests and exams.