

**"1,000 IDEAS & ACTIVITIES FOR LANGUAGE TEACHERS"**

**The Breaking News English.com Resource Book**

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## Parents face fines in new school rules

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## THE ARTICLE

British parents could soon face a fine and prison if their children misbehave at school. Britain's government wants to introduce tough new laws to improve discipline in schools. They want to make parents more responsible for their sons and daughters. Some of the new measures include making parents attend parenting courses, paying a \$1,700 fine or going to prison. The Schools Secretary Ed Balls said current policies on unruly behaviour are not strict enough. Many British schools suffer from high levels of bullying, truancy and low academic achievement. He wants parents to play their part in making sure their children achieve. "Every parent has a responsibility to back our teachers and make sure the rules are [followed]," he said.

The measures are part of a new focus on the relationship between schools and parents. Mr. Balls also has plans to help parents and students. He proposes to give pupils private tutors if they are doing badly in reading and maths. He also wants doctors, health workers and social workers in schools to provide better community services. Under Mr. Balls' plans, parents will have a bigger voice in how schools operate. They will complete satisfaction surveys on how their children's school performs. Critics say the plans are unlikely to be popular with parents. There are also fears about poorer parents not having enough money to pay the fines and whether they should go to prison for their children's actions.

# WARM-UPS

**1. SCHOOL RULES:** Walk around the class and talk to other students about school rules. Change partners often. Sit with your first partner(s) and share your findings.

**2. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

*parents / misbehaving children / parenting courses / being strict / bullying / truancy / relationships / private tutors / community services / satisfaction / surveys / prison*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

**3. PUNISHMENTS:** What punishments should schools give? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners and share your ideas. Change partners and share again.

	Your experiences	Proper punishment
Bullying		
Truancy		
Smoking		
Damaging property		
Punching teachers		
Using drugs		

**4. FINES:** Students A **strongly** believe parents should get a fine if their children misbehave; Students B **strongly** believe parents are not responsible for their children's actions at school. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

**5. SATISFACTION:** How satisfied are/were you with school rules? Rate these and share your ratings with your partner: 10 = excellent; 1 = really bad. Change partners and share your ratings again.

\_\_\_\_\_ attendance  
\_\_\_\_\_ uniforms  
\_\_\_\_\_ bullying  
\_\_\_\_\_ break times

\_\_\_\_\_ homework  
\_\_\_\_\_ sports  
\_\_\_\_\_ equipment  
\_\_\_\_\_ trips

**6. FINE:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'fine'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

# BEFORE READING / LISTENING

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| a. British parents may have to pay penalties if their children misbehave. | T / F |
| b. Some parents could go to prison if their children are unruly.          | T / F |
| c. There is very little bullying and truancy in British schools.          | T / F |
| d. The British Schools Secretary said teachers must follow the new rules. | T / F |
| e. The Secretary has plans for some students to have private lessons.     | T / F |
| f. The Secretary wants parents to speak more loudly.                      | T / F |
| g. The majority of parents are fully behind the new plans.                | T / F |
| h. There are concerns that some parents are too poor to pay fines.        | T / F |

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article:

- |               |                   |
|---------------|-------------------|
| 1. misbehave  | a. students       |
| 2. tough      | b. orderliness    |
| 3. discipline | c. behaviour      |
| 4. unruly     | d. perform        |
| 5. achieve    | e. suggests       |
| 6. measures   | f. (be) naughty   |
| 7. proposes   | g. input          |
| 8. pupils     | h. strict         |
| 9. voice      | i. actions        |
| 10. actions   | j. uncontrollable |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- |   |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. parents could soon face a            | a. behaviour                |
| 2. introduce tough new laws             | b. with parents             |
| 3. current policies on unruly           | c. back our teachers        |
| 4. He wants parents to play             | d. private tutors           |
| 5. Every parent has a responsibility to | e. fine and prison          |
| 6. the relationship between             | f. their children's actions |
| 7. He proposes to give pupils           | g. schools and parents      |
| 8. parents will have a bigger voice in  | h. to improve discipline    |
| 9. the plans are unlikely to be popular | i. their part               |
| 10. they should go to prison for        | j. how schools operate      |

# WHILE READING / LISTENING

**GAP FILL:** Put the words into the gaps in the text.

British parents could soon \_\_\_\_\_ a fine and prison if their children misbehave at school. Britain's government wants to introduce \_\_\_\_\_ new laws to improve discipline in schools. They want to make parents more \_\_\_\_\_ for their sons and daughters. Some of the new measures include making parents \_\_\_\_\_ parenting courses, paying a \$1,700 fine or going to prison. The Schools Secretary Ed Balls said current policies on \_\_\_\_\_ behaviour are not strict enough. Many British schools suffer from high \_\_\_\_\_ of bullying, truancy and low academic achievement. He wants parents to \_\_\_\_\_ their part in making sure their children achieve. "Every parent has a responsibility to \_\_\_\_\_ our teachers and make sure the rules are [followed]," he said.

*attend*  
*play*  
*tough*  
*back*  
*unruly*  
*face*  
*responsible*  
*levels*

The measures are part of a new \_\_\_\_\_ on the relationship between schools and parents. Mr. Balls also has plans to help parents and students. He proposes to give pupils private \_\_\_\_\_ if they are doing badly in reading and maths. He also wants doctors, health workers and social workers in schools to \_\_\_\_\_ better community services. Under Mr. Balls' plans, parents will have a bigger \_\_\_\_\_ in how schools operate. They will complete satisfaction \_\_\_\_\_ on how their children's school performs. Critics say the plans are unlikely to be \_\_\_\_\_ with parents. There are also \_\_\_\_\_ about poorer parents not having enough money to pay the fines and whether they should go to prison for their children's \_\_\_\_\_.

*voice*  
*provide*  
*actions*  
*popular*  
*focus*  
*tutors*  
*surveys*  
*fears*

## **LISTENING:** Listen and fill in the gaps.

British parents \_\_\_\_\_ fine and prison if their children misbehave at school. Britain's government wants \_\_\_\_\_ new laws to improve discipline in schools. They want to make parents more responsible for their sons and daughters. Some of the \_\_\_\_\_ making parents attend parenting courses, paying a \$1,700 fine or going to prison. The Schools Secretary Ed Balls said current \_\_\_\_\_ behaviour are not strict enough. Many British schools suffer from high levels of bullying, truancy and low academic achievement. He wants parents to \_\_\_\_\_ in making sure their children achieve. "Every parent has a responsibility \_\_\_\_\_ teachers and make sure the rules are [followed]," he said.

The measures are part \_\_\_\_\_ the relationship between schools and parents. Mr. Balls also has plans to help parents and students. He proposes to \_\_\_\_\_ tutors if they are \_\_\_\_\_ reading and maths. He also wants doctors, health workers and social workers in schools to provide better community services. Under Mr. Balls' plans, parents will have a \_\_\_\_\_ how schools operate. They will complete satisfaction surveys on how their children's school performs. Critics say the plans \_\_\_\_\_ be popular with parents. There are also fears about poorer parents not having enough money \_\_\_\_\_ and whether they should go to prison for their children's actions.

# AFTER READING / LISTENING

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'school' and 'rule'.

<b>school</b>	<b>rule</b>
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- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. GAP FILL:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• face</li><li>• tough</li><li>• attend</li><li>• strict</li><li>• low</li><li>• back</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• focus</li><li>• help</li><li>• badly</li><li>• voice</li><li>• critics</li><li>• actions</li></ul>
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# STUDENT SCHOOL RULES SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about school rules in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.



# SCHOOL RULES DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the term 'school rules'?
- c) Are you concerned about the condition and future of schools?
- d) Do you think it's a good idea to make parents pay fines if their children misbehave?
- e) How is discipline at schools in your country?
- f) Do you think parents need parenting courses?
- g) What would you want to happen to bullies or students who are truant?
- h) Were there (are there) any school rules you hate(d)?
- i) What part did / do your parents play in your school?
- j) Did you always follow the rules in your school?

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# SCHOOL RULES DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) What kind of relationship should there be between schools and parents?
- c) Do you think the idea of private tutors for poorly performing students is a good one?
- d) What do you think of the idea of having doctors and social workers being in schools?
- e) Do you think school rules should be stricter?
- f) Would fining parents work?
- g) What would you do to improve discipline in schools?
- h) What do you think of the idea of all learning being online, at home?
- i) Were / Are you a well-behaved student?
- j) What questions would you like to ask Schools Secretary Ed Balls?

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# LANGUAGE

British parents could soon (1) \_\_\_\_ a fine and prison if their children misbehave at school. Britain's government wants to introduce (2) \_\_\_\_ new laws to improve discipline in schools. They want to make parents more responsible for their sons and daughters. Some of the new (3) \_\_\_\_ include making parents attend parenting courses, paying a \$1,700 fine or going to prison. The Schools Secretary Ed Balls said current policies on (4) \_\_\_\_ behaviour are not strict enough. Many British schools (5) \_\_\_\_ from high levels of bullying, truancy and low academic achievement. He wants parents to play their part in making sure their children achieve. "Every parent has a responsibility to (6) \_\_\_\_ our teachers and make sure the rules are [followed]," he said.

The measures are (7) \_\_\_\_ of a new focus on the relationship between schools and parents. Mr. Balls also has plans to help parents and students. He (8) \_\_\_\_ to give pupils private tutors if they are (9) \_\_\_\_ badly in reading and maths. He also wants doctors, health workers and social workers in schools to provide better community services. Under Mr. Balls' plans, parents will have a bigger (10) \_\_\_\_ in how schools operate. They will complete satisfaction surveys on how their children's school performs. (11) \_\_\_\_ say the plans are unlikely to be popular with parents. There are also fears about (12) \_\_\_\_ parents not having enough money to pay the fines and whether they should go to prison for their children's actions.

## Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- |     |               |               |                 |                 |
|-----|---------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1.  | (a) pace      | (b) race      | (c) face        | (d) lace        |
| 2.  | (a) rough     | (b) tough     | (c) bough       | (d) cough       |
| 3.  | (a) measures  | (b) measured  | (c) measuring   | (d) measurement |
| 4.  | (a) really    | (b) unripe    | (c) rally       | (d) unruly      |
| 5.  | (a) suffers   | (b) suffering | (c) suffer      | (d) sufferer    |
| 6.  | (a) front     | (b) side      | (c) back        | (d) top         |
| 7.  | (a) partly    | (b) part      | (c) partner     | (d) parts       |
| 8.  | (a) proposes  | (b) proposal  | (c) proposition | (d) proposing   |
| 9.  | (a) does      | (b) doing     | (c) do          | (d) did         |
| 10. | (a) voice     | (b) speech    | (c) tongue      | (d) sound       |
| 11. | (a) Creatures | (b) Critters  | (c) Croutons    | (d) Critics     |
| 12. | (a) poverty   | (b) poorly    | (c) poorest     | (d) poorer      |



# HOMework

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find out more about school rules. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

**3. SCHOOL RULES:** Make a poster about the perfect school rules in the perfect school. Include the punishments for breaking these rules. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

**4. FOLLOW THE RULES:** Write a magazine article about school rules. Include imaginary interviews with a student who loves rules and wants to study, and another student who hates rules and school.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

**5. LETTER:** Write a letter to Britain's Schools Secretary Ed Balls. Ask him three questions about his plans for Britain's schools. Give him three ideas on how he can improve discipline. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

# ANSWERS

## TRUE / FALSE:

- a. T      b. T      c. F      d. F      e. T      f. F      g. F      h. T

## SYNONYM MATCH:

- |               |                   |
|---------------|-------------------|
| 1. misbehave  | a. (be) naughty   |
| 2. tough      | b. strict         |
| 3. discipline | c. orderliness    |
| 4. unruly     | d. uncontrollable |
| 5. achieve    | e. perform        |
| 6. measures   | f. actions        |
| 7. proposes   | g. suggests       |
| 8. pupils     | h. students       |
| 9. voice      | i. input          |
| 10. actions   | j. behaviour      |

## PHRASE MATCH:

- |   |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. parents could soon face a            | a. fine and prison          |
| 2. introduce tough new laws             | b. to improve discipline    |
| 3. current policies on unruly           | c. behaviour                |
| 4. He wants parents to play             | d. their part               |
| 5. Every parent has a responsibility to | e. back our teachers        |
| 6. the relationship between             | f. schools and parents      |
| 7. He proposes to give pupils           | g. private tutors           |
| 8. parents will have a bigger voice in  | h. how schools operate      |
| 9. the plans are unlikely to be popular | i. with parents             |
| 10. they should go to prison for        | j. their children's actions |

## GAP FILL:

### Parents face fines in new school rules

British parents could soon **face** a fine and prison if their children misbehave at school. Britain's government wants to introduce **tough** new laws to improve discipline in schools. They want to make parents more **responsible** for their sons and daughters. Some of the new measures include making parents **attend** parenting courses, paying a \$1,700 fine or going to prison. The Schools Secretary Ed Balls said current policies on **unruly** behaviour are not strict enough. Many British schools suffer from high **levels** of bullying, truancy and low academic achievement. He wants parents to **play** their part in making sure their children achieve. "Every parent has a responsibility to **back** our teachers and make sure the rules are [followed]," he said.

The measures are part of a new **focus** on the relationship between schools and parents. Mr. Balls also has plans to help parents and students. He proposes to give pupils private **tutors** if they are doing badly in reading and maths. He also wants doctors, health workers and social workers in schools to **provide** better community services. Under Mr. Balls' plans, parents will have a bigger **voice** in how schools operate. They will complete satisfaction **surveys** on how their children's school performs. Critics say the plans are unlikely to be **popular** with parents. There are also **fears** about poorer parents not having enough money to pay the fines and whether they should go to prison for their children's **actions**.

## LANGUAGE WORK

- 1 - c    2 - b    3 - a    4 - d    5 - c    6 - c    7 - b    8 - a    9 - b    10 - a    11 - d    12 - d