

School Uniforms



Pre-Reading

A. Warm-Up Questions

1. What is a uniform?
2. Does anyone in your family wear a uniform?
3. What are some positive and negative things about school uniforms?

B. Vocabulary Preview

Match up as many words and meanings as you can.

Check this exercise again after seeing the words in context on page 2.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| _____ 1. uniform | a) the state of being the same in quality, size, or opportunity |
| _____ 2. public | b) the characteristics that make someone different from other people |
| _____ 3. encourage | c) to have difficulty doing or accomplishing something |
| _____ 4. equality | d) to help, to support |
| _____ 5. affect | e) a set outfit that a student or worker must wear |
| _____ 6. individuality | f) a negative aspect |
| _____ 7. downside | g) the opposite of private |
| _____ 8. struggle (<i>verb</i>) | h) to cause results or changes |

Reading

SCHOOL UNIFORMS

1. A school **uniform** is an outfit that students must wear at school. Not all schools require uniforms. In fact, in the United States and Canada, most **public** schools do not require students to wear uniforms. However, many private schools do.
2. Some people believe school uniforms solve many problems. They think that uniforms **encourage** students to take school more seriously. They also think uniforms give students a sense of **equality**. When students all wear the same outfit, their socioeconomic class is less noticeable.
3. Other people think school uniforms are a bad idea. Some students think uniforms negatively **affect** their sense of **individuality**. People of all ages use clothes as a way to express their identity.
4. Another **downside** to school uniforms is that they are often more expensive than regular clothes, and, as a result, families may **struggle** to pay for them. Furthermore, some uniforms include costly items such as blazers and dress shoes.
5. How would you feel about wearing the same outfit every day? What are other ways students can express their individuality?

The Suffix *-ity*

Most words that end with “-ity” relate to the state of being something. For example, *possibility* is the state of being possible. Here is a list of words ending in “-ity.” Can you guess their meanings?

- individuality
- equality
- humidity
- probability
- similarity
- spirituality
- necessity
- curiosity

Comprehension

A. Questions

Discuss these questions in pairs and write the answers in your notebook.

1. What does the first paragraph define?
2. Do public school students in the United States and Canada wear school uniforms?
3. What can school uniforms encourage students to do?
4. What do people of all ages use to express their identity?
5. Why might some families struggle to pay for school uniforms?

B. Sorting

Look at the topics. Which paragraph in the reading does each one belong to?

- _____ A. What is your opinion?
- _____ B. What is a school uniform?
- _____ C. How might uniforms affect a student's ability to express himself or herself?
- _____ D. What are some positive aspects of school uniforms?
- _____ E. What is a negative aspect of school uniforms?

Movement Break

Time for a uniform competition! Line up against the classroom wall with your classmates. Listen to your teacher read the following statements. If the statement is true for you, take one step forward.

- Statement 1: You are wearing a white shirt.
- Statement 2: You are wearing black pants or a black skirt.
- Statement 3: Your shoes do not have a company logo on them.
- Statement 4: You have no words on your clothes.
- Statement 5: Your hair is a natural color.

The person who travels the farthest distance is the uniform champion! Anyone who has not taken a step is the individuality champion!

Vocabulary Review

A. Complete the Sentences

Use words from page 1 to complete the sentences. You may need to change the word form.

1. Doha dyes her hair purple to express her _____ .
2. Until women are paid the same as men, they will not achieve _____ in the workplace.
3. The _____ of visiting my grandmother in the summer is that her house doesn't have A/C.
4. Learning another language is hard. Sometimes I _____ to remember all the grammar rules.
5. The restaurant owner didn't ask the staff to wear _____ , but she did want them to look professional.

B. Opposites

Circle the word or phrase that means the **opposite** of each word from the reading.

- | | | |
|------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| 1. public | 3. struggle | 5. affect |
| a) expensive | a) relax | a) surprise |
| b) crowded | b) fight | b) make no difference |
| c) private | c) question | c) identify |
| 2. individuality | 4. encourage | |
| a) conformity | a) approve | |
| b) bravery | b) discourage | |
| c) anonymity | c) agree with | |

Discussion

1. Do most elementary schools in your country require uniforms?
What about high schools?
2. Have you ever worn a uniform? Did you like it?
3. Do you think people feel different when they wear uniforms?
4. What is your favorite item of clothing that you own?
5. Do you care about fashion?

Group Activity

With your group, use the internet to find photos of high school students at public and private schools. Choose a few pictures to compare. Talk about the differences and similarities between their outfits. Look at private school uniforms in different countries. How do the private school students express their individualities?

Listening

Fill in the blanks as you listen to the recording.

SCHOOL UNIFORMS

1. A school _____ is an outfit that students must wear at school. Not all schools require uniforms. In fact, in the United States and Canada, most public schools do not _____ students to wear uniforms. However, many private schools do.
2. Some people believe school uniforms solve many problems. They think that uniforms _____ students to take school more seriously. They also think uniforms give students a sense of equality. When students all wear the same _____, their socioeconomic class is less noticeable.
3. Other people think school uniforms are a bad idea. Some students think uniforms negatively affect their sense of _____. People of all ages use clothes as a way to express their _____.
4. Another _____ to school uniforms is that they are often more expensive than regular clothes, and, as a result, families may _____ to pay for them. Furthermore, some uniforms include costly items such as blazers and dress shoes.
5. How would you _____ about wearing the same outfit every day? What are other ways students can _____ their individuality?

Answer Key

LESSON DESCRIPTION:

Students read about and discuss school uniforms and their positive and negative aspects. They review vocabulary and conduct research in groups.

TEACHING TIPS:

See our Discussion Starters Teaching Guide (<https://esllibrary.com/courses/72/lessons/>) for a variety of ways to use the reading.

LEVEL: Low Int

TIME: 1.5–2 hours

TAGS: discussion, school uniforms, clothes, fashion, education, suffixes

Pre-Reading

A. WARM-UP QUESTIONS

Have students work in small groups or as a class.

B. VOCABULARY PREVIEW

- | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|
| 1. e | 3. d | 5. h | 7. f |
| 2. g | 4. a | 6. b | 8. c |

Reading (and/or Listening)

Read individually, in small groups, or as a class. You can also play the listening as your students read along. A gap-fill version of the reading is available on page 6. Help your students with vocabulary and expressions that they are unfamiliar with. Discuss how the word *struggle* can be used as both a verb and a noun.

Comprehension

A. QUESTIONS

- The first paragraph explains what a school uniform is.
- In the United States and Canada, most public schools do not require students to wear uniforms.
- Some people believe school uniforms encourage students to take school more seriously.
- People of all ages use clothes as a way to express their identity.
- Some families might struggle to pay for school uniforms because they are more expensive than regular clothes.

B. SORTING

- A. 5 B. 1 C. 3 D. 2 E. 4

(continued on the next page...)

Answer Key cont.

Vocabulary Review

A. COMPLETE THE SENTENCES

1. individuality
2. equality
3. downside
4. struggle
5. uniforms

B. OPPOSITES

1. c
2. a
3. a
4. b
5. b

Discussion

Answers will vary.

Can be done individually or in small groups or pairs.

Group Activity

Put students in groups and make sure each group has a device with which to look up pictures of uniforms.

Listening

1. uniform, require
2. encourage, outfit
3. individuality, identity
4. downside, struggle
5. feel, express

SPELLING NOTE:

This lesson shows the American spelling of the words *Color* and *Favorite*. Most other English-speaking countries spell these words this way: *Colour* and *Favourite*. Make it a challenge for your students to find these words in the lesson and see if they know the alternate spellings.