



LANGUAGE LEVEL: **BASIC**

# AMERICAN EDUCATION

## ADVANCING BY NUMBERS

El sistema educativo de Estados Unidos funciona diferente al británico. Los niños empiezan la escuela a los seis años, y 'grado' se refiere al año académico.

In the other language article we looked at the British education system: now let's look at its American counterpart<sup>1</sup>.

### MAKING THE GRADE

The first word you need to understand is grade, which can be confusing. In Britain a grade refers to an exam result, such as A (very good), B (good), C (OK), D (not that good) and E (pretty bad).

In America, a grade refers to an academic year. Very small children begin school in the 1st grade at the age of 6. When they are 7, they move up into the 2nd grade. They will change grade every year: this con-

tinues until the 12th grade, which is completed at the age of 18.

### ELEMENTARY

Students in North America study at a series of schools. They enter the 1st grade at elementary school. The system in the United States can vary from state to state, but generally students will enter middle school, or junior high school<sup>2</sup>, in the 6th grade. As with secondary schools in other countries, this is at the age of 11.

### HIGH SCHOOL DAYS

Students move on to high school in the 9th grade, at the age of 14. The first year is called the Freshman<sup>3</sup> Year.



This is followed by the Sophomore Year<sup>4</sup> (10th grade), the Junior Year (11th grade) and Senior Year (12th grade).

On completing<sup>5</sup> their Senior Year, students, who are now aged 18, receive their high school diploma.

This is also known as high school graduation. They are now ready to go to university or college. Academic standards<sup>6</sup> at colleges vary immensely and so students are selected on a series of tests known as SATs. SAT stands for Scholastic Aptitude Test or Scholastic Assessment Test.

### GLOSSARY

- 1 **COUNTERPART**: equivalente
- 2 **HIGH SCHOOL**: instituto
- 3 **FRESHMAN**: estudiante de primer año
- 4 **SOPHOMORE**: estudiante de segundo año
- 5 **ON COMPLETING**: al acabar
- 6 **ACADEMIC STANDARDS**: nivel académico