

## Victorian schools

### Read the text

In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, poor children didn't go to school. By the late 1840s there were different types of schools for poor children. For example, Charity Schools provided free basic education for poor children. Factory Schools organised classes in the factories during working hours.

In 1881, it became compulsory (obbligatorio) for 5-10 year-olds to go to school, but children had to pay a fee. In 1891, primary schools became free of charge.

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century classes were crowded. There were often 70 or 80 children in a class. Other children helped teachers, who were very strict, by teaching younger children. Most teachers were not qualified.

The main lessons were the 3Rs: Reading, Writing and Arithmetic. The content of lessons was moral and religious. Once a week, the children learned History, Religion, Geography, Nature Study and Drawing. Children learned facts and figures by heart (imparare a memoria). For some lessons boys and girls were taught separately. School started at 9.00 a.m. and finished at 5.00 p.m. At 12.00 children went home for a meal and returned to school for afternoon classes.

Rich children went to private schools. Most private schools had high standards and qualified teachers. Most girls were usually taught at home by a governess. When she was a girl, Queen Victoria, for example, had a German governess who gave her lessons.

Boys received a good solid education and were encouraged to participate in sports. Girls, by contrast, learned the 3 Rs, how to play the piano and sing and how to sew and manage the household. They were encouraged to practise good social etiquette.

### Choose the correct option.

- 1) Charity Schools provided
  - A free basic education for rich children.
  - B free basic education for poor children.
  - C free basic education for children who worked in factories.
  
- 2) In 1881, it became compulsory for
  - A 5-10 year-olds to go to school, but they had to pay a fee.
  - B 5-10 year-olds to go to school. They didn't have to pay a fee.
  - C 5-10 year-olds to go to school and work in factories.
  
- 3) Primary schools became free of charge
  - A in 1881.
  - B in 1891.
  - C in 1840.
  
- 4) At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century,
  - A classes were not crowded.
  - B classes were empty.
  - C classes were crowded.
  
- 5) Most teachers were
  - A very strict and not qualified.
  - B very strict and qualified.

- C not very strict and qualified.
- 6) The main lessons were  
A Religion, History and English.  
B the 3Rs: Reading, Writing and Arithmetic.  
C Geography and Drawing.
- 7) Most private schools had  
A low standards but qualified teachers.  
B high standards and qualified teachers.  
C low standards and few qualified teachers.
- 8) Rich boys went to private schools.  
A They didn't receive a good education and weren't encouraged to participate in sports.  
B They received a good education but weren't encouraged to participate in sports.  
C They received a good solid education and were encouraged to participate in sports.
- 9) Rich girls, who were encouraged to practise good social etiquette, learned  
A how to play the piano and sing and how to sew and manage the household.  
B the 3 Rs, how to play the piano and sing and how to sew and manage the household.  
C the 3 Rs and how to play the piano and sing.