

Top of the class 成绩位居榜首

Vocabulary: education 词汇: 教育

Whenever anyone measures educational success, East Asian countries are always **top scorers**. But in a recent **league table**, a European country, Finland, was **top of the class**. South Korea was still in second place, though. Britain was at number 6. What is the secret of Finland and South Korea's success? Time to do some homework.



In Korea the school day is long - typically 7 or 8 hours, followed by hours of **private tutoring** in the evenings. All this **hothousing** leaves Korean students so tired, they sometimes fall asleep in class next day. Worries about the effects of late night **cramming** led the government to force cramming schools to close by 10pm.

Finnish children spend the least time in class in the developed world, often finishing just after lunch, with about one hour of homework a day. **Private tuition** is uncommon. The British school day is quite long in comparison, around 6 hours, and secondary school pupils do 2 or 3 hours of **self-study** a night.

The Korean education system, like many in Asia, is **intensely competitive**, with students even competing to get into the best cramming schools, to help them **get ahead**. Finnish education is far less **cut-throat**. Classes are all **mixed ability**, and there are no league tables. British schools again **occupy the middle ground**, with quite high levels of competition for places at university, and schools and universities **battling** to come top of league tables for everything from exam results to **student satisfaction**.

Korea and Finland both do well, yet their education systems are so different. So what lessons can Britain learn from these two **swots**?

Well, there are some similarities in Asia and Finland. In those countries, teachers have **high status** in society, and education is very highly valued. Those **attitudes** can't change quickly. But it can be done. They might be the **star pupil** now, but until the 1970s, Finland's educational system was poor. Their **radically different approach to schooling** has taken them to the top in just a **generation**.

词汇表请参看答案与词汇部分

Quiz 测验

阅读短文并回答问题。

1. According to the article, who spends more time studying, Korean or Finnish children?
2. Do British schools and universities care about league tables?
3. Is the following statement true, false or not given? *Finnish education was excellent in the 1970s.*
4. According to this article, why do Korean children fall asleep in class?
5. Which rather negative word for private tutoring or tuition is used in the article?

Exercise 练习

请你在不参考课文的情况下完成下列练习。从每个表格中选择一个意思合适的单词填入句子的空格处。

1. My little sister is really excited, she's done so well at school, she's _____ scorer this week.

| | | | |
|-------|------|------|-----|
| first | best | over | top |
|-------|------|------|-----|

2. You need to work hard to _____ ahead in life.

| | | | |
|----|-----|-------|---------|
| go | get | reach | achieve |
|----|-----|-------|---------|

3. Our university came top _____ the league table for exam results this year!

| | | | |
|----|----|-----|----|
| of | to | off | on |
|----|----|-----|----|

4. You always do extra homework and reading. You're such a _____!

| | | | |
|------|------|------|------|
| swot | swap | swat | swop |
|------|------|------|------|

5. You're thinking about this in the wrong way. You need to change your _____.

| | | | |
|---------|---------|-----|----------|
| ability | thought | way | attitude |
|---------|---------|-----|----------|

Answers and Glossary 答案与词汇

Quiz 小测验

1. According to the article, who spends more time studying, Korean or Finnish children? Korean children.
2. Do British schools and universities care about league tables? Yes, they battle to come top of league tables.
3. Is the following statement true, false or not given? *Finnish education was excellent in the 1970s.* False. Education was poor in the 1970s.
4. According to this article, why do Korean children fall asleep in class? Because they are tired, after hours of private tuition in the evenings.
5. Which rather negative word for private tutoring or tuition is used in the article? Cramming.

Exercise 练习

1. My little sister is really excited, she's done so well at school, she's top scorer this week.
2. You need to work hard to get ahead in life.
3. Our university came top of the league table for exam results this year!
4. You always do extra homework and reading. You're such a swot!
5. You're thinking about this in the wrong way. You need to change your attitude.

Glossary 词汇表

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| top scorers | 最高的分数 |
| league table | (学校) 排名榜 |
| top of the class | 位居榜首 |
| private tutoring | 私人课外辅导 |
| hothousing | 温室强化式的拔苗助长, 超前的 |
| cramming | 填鸭式(教育) |
| private tuition | 私人补习 |
| self-study | 自学 |
| intensely competitive | 竞争激烈的 |
| get ahead | 取得进步 |
| cut-throat | 残酷的 |
| mixed ability | (学生) 水平参差不齐的 |
| occupy the middle ground | 取中 |
| battling | 挣扎 |
| student satisfaction | 学生满意度 |
| swots | 勤奋刻苦的人(国家) |
| high status | 高(社会)地位 |
| attitudes | 态度 |
| star pupil | 优秀生 |
| radically different approach | 截然不同的方法 |
| schooling | 学校教育 |
| generation | 一代人 |

