

Look at the chart on the left of the West German school system.

- At what age do students start elementary school?
- At what age do they begin secondary school?
- At what age are they allowed to leave school?

The **Gesamtschulen** (high schools) are not as widespread as in the United States. Most **Länder** still prefer to split their students according to ability for their secondary education. What are the arguments for and against the U.S. secondary school system?

Children don't start school until they are six, and then they attend school only part of the day.

Most schools begin at about eight o'clock and end at lunchtime, though sometimes there are afternoon classes for older students. There are classes on Saturday morning too. Schools do not provide lunch. However, most **Gesamtschulen** are **Ganztagsschulen** (all-day schools) and have a **Mensa** (cafeteria) where you can get lunch.



Students often carry a **Schultasche** (satchel).

Das Klassenbuch



But how do they know who's absent if there's no class roster?

Each class has a large, hard-back book called a **Klassenbuch**. After every class the teacher enters in what s/he has done with the class, and whether anyone was absent or misbehaved.

Read the excerpt from a **Klassenbuch** below. What subjects did the class have in the morning? And why was one student allowed to go home after period 4? In period 5, a **Klassenarbeit** (class test), was

returned. These tests are marked in most schools on a 1-6 scale:

- 1 sehr gut
- 2 gut
- 3 befriedigend
- 4 ausreichend
- 5 mangelhaft
- 6 ungenügend

Your average **Note** (mark) in class tests is the grade on your **Zeugnis** (report card). If you get two fives or a six on your report, you will often have to **sitzenbleiben** (repeat a year).

Von Montag, dem 7. 4.					
Nr.	Fach	Aufgabe	Thema der Stunde	a) Versäumnisse b) Verstöße	Bemerkungen
1	Engl.	/	Charaktere aus merkmale fiktionalen Welt (Hundert Jahre)	Montag	
2	Mat.	/	Schreibübung	2. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12.	
3	Geo.		Monotypie:		
4	Geo.		Erarbeitung einer Druckreihe		
5	Geo.		Bewertung der Klassen- arbeit		
6	Rel.		Freizeit in eine unformale Welt		

Schau dich um

If you get a chance to visit a German school, look around:

- What are the buildings like?
- What are the students wearing?
- How do most come to school?
- What subjects do the students study?
- How many classes do they have during the day?
- How long are the classes?
- What kinds of punishment are used?
- What sports do they participate in?
- Does the school have a **Raucherecke** (smokers' corner) in the playground for those over 16 who wish to smoke?

Extra++ extra++

To find out more about a school, ask a student these questions:

- Was für eine Schule ist das?
- Wie viele Schüler gehen zu deiner Schule?
- Was ist dein Lieblingsfach?
- Was machst du in der Pause?
- Wie viele Hausaufgaben bekommst du?