

## **ZODIAC SIGNS ONLINE**

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**Level:** Post-elementary / Pre-intermediate

**Time:** 2 x 45 minutes

**Aims:**

- To make students aware of the Internet learning facilities
- To present techniques of finding lexical items, their definitions, translations, and pronunciations
- To introduce new vocabulary (contextualised by visual vocabulary transparencies and lyrics)

**Technical requirements:** One computer per student or two students, with the Internet connection

**Other resources used:** Overhead projector, CD player, websites

**Knowledge:** Students should be skilled at typing the URLs and using search engines

**Possible problems:**

Some sites may take a long time to open. It may take especially long to access pronunciations. Teacher should control and facilitate searching. Pre-intermediate students are very likely to have difficulty in understanding technical instructions in English; thus Polish is preferable at some stages of the lesson.

**Procedure:**

**Pre-stage (offline)**

1. Teacher asks students to play a game of 'hangman' with the following lexical items, e.g.

A \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ s

S \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ s

Note! This vocabulary has been selected purposefully. For practical reasons, students are not supposed to be familiar with these words and so unable to guess the answers. It is intended to cause pronunciation problems too.

The rules of 'hangman' get somewhat distorted here. Namely, students are only allowed to give up to 3 letters which would fit the items. Then they are asked to have guesses. At this 'guessing stage' they are limited to the items of the kind, e.g.

A \_ ua \_ i \_ s

S \_ \_ i \_ \_ a \_ ius

Given these, students are assumed to be unable to decipher the items in question, which marks the starting point of the online stage.

### **While-stage (online)**

2. Teacher asks students to enter websites with vocabulary items search engines. He suggests URLs such as:

[www.itools.com](http://www.itools.com)    [www.onelook.com](http://www.onelook.com)    [www.wordsmyth.net](http://www.wordsmyth.net)    [www.nhd.heinle.com](http://www.nhd.heinle.com)

Students are asked to look for the lexical items they were not able to guess by typing the following in the search engines:

A?ua?i?s

S??i??a?ius

They receive the words "Aquarius" and "Sagittarius."

Note! Students at such a low level of the English language command are not expected to know the Polish equivalents of the two words.

3. Students are asked to look for the translations of "Aquarius" and "Sagittarius" at the following websites:

[www.translate.pl](http://www.translate.pl)    [www.slownik.angielski.edu.pl](http://www.slownik.angielski.edu.pl)

3. Teacher explains that a crucial advantage of the online dictionaries over traditional book dictionaries lies in learning pronunciation. Therefore, he demonstrates how the words "Aquarius" and "Sagittarius" are pronounced by asking students to enter the following URLs:

[www.bartleby.com/61](http://www.bartleby.com/61) (for American English)    [www.m-w.com](http://www.m-w.com) (for British English)

Students can listen to the pronunciations of "Aquarius" and "Sagittarius" by pressing the relevant icons and so they get pronunciation models

5. In order to give students more practice teacher displays a visual vocabulary transparency with the other zodiac signs. Students are expected to match the vocabulary box (zodiac signs) with the relevant symbols and dates. While checking the exercise pronunciation can be demonstrated.

Note! Teacher can point out to some other features of online dictionaries, such as illustrations, etymologies, tables, etc. To give students an example of what additional features they can find

with online dictionaries, teacher can print and distribute the zodiac signs table which can be found at:

<http://www.m-w.com/mw/table/zodiac.htm>

6. For more practice, teacher can write the following sentences on the blackboard and ask students to complete them individually:

My zodiac sign is .....

I think that people born under this sign of the zodiac are usually .....

However, they also tend to be.....

Students are expected to complete the sentences so as to make them true of themselves. They can be requested to read the sentences out loud after completion, or alternatively, exchange this information orally in pairs. If needed, students should be encouraged to search for unknown 'personality adjectives' with online dictionaries. Teacher must point out that positive as well as negative features ought to be taken into consideration. Students may also be prompted to take advantage of the following website:

[www.astrology-online.com/persn.htm](http://www.astrology-online.com/persn.htm); where traditional personality traits for particular zodiac signs are provided, alongside general profiles and the like.

7. Teacher hands out copies of the following lyrics:

**RIGHTEOUS BROTHERS**

(Unchained melody)

1	Whoa, my love, my <i>d _ rl _ _ _</i>	1	<i>darling</i>
2	I <i>h _ ng _ _</i> for your touch	2	<i>hunger</i>
3	Alone, lonely time		
4	And time goes by so <i>s _ ow _ y</i>	4	<i>slowly</i>
5	And time can do so much		
6	Are you <i>s _ i _ l</i> mine?	6	<i>still</i>
7	I need your love, I need your love		
8	God <i>s _ e _ d</i> your love to me	8	<i>speed</i>
9	<i>L _ n _ _ y</i> rivers flow to the sea, to the sea	9	<i>lonely</i>
10	To the open arms of the sea		
11	Lonely rivers <i>s _ _ h</i> , wait for me, wait for me	11	<i>sigh</i>
12	I'll be <i>c _ m _ n _</i> home, wait for me	12	<i>coming</i>
	(lines repeated)		

Students are supposed to complete the missing words. They can use online dictionaries search engines (the same that they used to decode "Sagittarius" and "Aquarius") for help. Then the song is played for students to listen and check their answers.

7. The teacher can pick out several words (such as "darling," "flow," "sigh," "hunger for something") and ask students to find out what they mean.

Then, students may be asked to do the following exercise, the copies of which teacher distributes among students or displays by means of an overhead projector:

Replace the underlined phrases with synonymous expressions:

1. You're looking absolutely beautiful, my love.  
You're looking absolutely beautiful, my **d**\_\_\_\_\_ .
2. She breathed deeply with emotion when he touched her.  
She **s**\_\_\_\_\_ with emotion when he touched her.
3. "I have a great appetite for icecream", he said.  
"I **h**\_\_\_\_\_ for icecream", he said.
4. The tears were running down his cheeks.  
The tears were **f**\_\_\_\_\_ down his cheeks.

**Post-stage (offline)**

8. Teacher asks students to translate the lyrics.

***THE SYSTEM OF EDUCATION  
IN GREAT BRITAIN, UNITED STATES AND POLAND***

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**LEVEL:** intermediate and above

**TIME:** 180 minutes (four lessons: a session of two lessons with a computer and two lessons for presentations)

**AIMS:**

- to learn basic facts about the systems of education in Great Britain, United States
- to be able to compare the two systems with the Polish system of education
- to learn and practice vocabulary connected with education
- to practice searching for information on the Web

**TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS:** one computer per student or a group of 2-3 students, with the Internet connection and a Web browser

**PREPARATION**

- Prepare a list of websites on education in Britain, USA and Poland.

<http://elt.britcoun.org.pl>

<http://www.ed.gov/NLE/USNEI/us/structure-us.html>

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/uk\\_systems](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/uk_systems)

<http://www.vidaamericana.com/english/education.html>

[http://www.oecth.com/usa/american\\_education\\_system.htm](http://www.oecth.com/usa/american_education_system.htm)

- Check the websites (how informative they are, what is the level of the language used, etc.)
- Prepare some exercises (crossword, vocabulary exercises) checking the students' knowledge of some basic vocabulary connected with education, schools, students, exams and give them to students as their homework before the lesson on education.
- Prepare a worksheet for the lesson and copy it for each student.

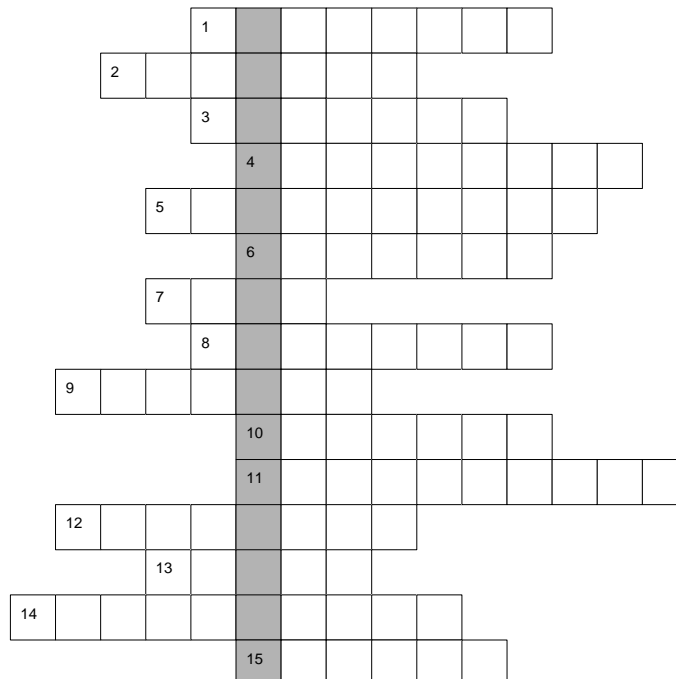
## PROCEDURE

Devote the first two lessons to vocabulary work and searching the Web and do the presentation session on the next lesson available. Students should then go through their notes before the lesson. After presenting the English and American systems, ask your students to fill in the third column of the chart about the Polish system at home. The fourth lesson should be focused on comparing the three systems.

### Lesson 1-2

#### I. Pre-stage (15 minutes)

1. Check the homework, explain any difficult words.
2. Try this crossword.



Across:

1. a teacher's notebook with a list of students and their names

2. if you go to school you are a .....
3. e.g. maths, physics, biology
4. a room where students have lessons
5. the "boss" in a school
6. our geography ..... is very demanding.
7. equivalent of mark "1" in America
8. a ..... school is where you live and study
9. the name given to such subjects as maths, physics, etc.
10. you learn ..... languages at school
11. all children must go to a primary school - it is o.....
12. to learn by heart
13. your duty as a student is to .....
14. synonym of *11 Across*
15. every day you have a few ..... at school

Down:

The slogan in almost every country which says that all people have the same access to education

3. Match the following types of educational organisations to the sort of person who might attend them:

- |                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| a co-educational school | a 20-year old who wants to be a lawyer                |
| a primary school        | a 3-year-old  |
| a nursery school        | a 15-year-old whose parents pay for his/her education |
| a university            | a 17-year-old who hopes to go on to higher education  |
| a public school         | boys and girls  |
| a sixth-form college    | a 9-year-old  |

4. Match the words to the definitions:

- |                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| play truant                        | study really hard                                    |
| take an exam                       | finish university with a great success               |
| cram for end-of-term exams         | get money from the government                        |
| do homework                        | have a one-to-one talk with your lecturer every week |
| attend a lecture                   | listen carefully to a teacher                        |
| take a degree                      | not go to school and you are not ill                 |
| pay attention                      | write an exam or be tested orally                    |
| call the register                  | do exercises at home assigned by your teacher        |
| get a grant                        | get MA or MSc  |
| graduate with honours in Chemistry | check who is present at school                       |
| have a weekly tutorial             | listen to a talk by a professor on a given subject   |

5. Elicit from the students what they know about education in England or USA. Ask also to mention

a few famous schools or universities in Great Britain and the States. You may want to ask questions like:

- Is the British educational system similar to the Polish one? How different do you think it is?
- What levels of education are there?
- What is the school-starting age in England and America?
- What subjects do you think are taught in English and American schools?

## II. While-stage (75 minutes):

1. Divide the students into two groups and assign the tasks to them. Send the students to the sites <http://elt.britcoun.org.pl> (Great Britain) and <http://www.ed.gov/NLE/USNEI/us/structure-us.html> (USA) to find answers to the questions on their worksheets. Remind them to make some notes.

**The system of education in Great Britain, United States and Poland**

	Great Britain	United States	Poland
1. Is the education system the same in the whole country?			
2. Are the schools fee-paying?			
3. At what age is education compulsory?			
4. What are the levels of education?			
5. Is there any national curriculum?			
6. At what age must students take exams and what are they called?			
7. How many universities are there? Which are the most famous ones?			
8. How long are the degree courses?			
9. How is a school year organised? (terms, holidays etc.)			

**Lesson 3**

1. Encourage everybody to share with others what they have found about the two systems: first the group working on the British system, then the American one. Ask the following questions:

1. Is the education system the same in the whole country?
2. Do people have to pay for education?
3. When do children start and leave school?
4. What are the levels of education? Can you draw the diagram on the blackboard?
5. Is there any national curriculum? What subjects are taught at every school?
6. At what age must students take exams and what are they called?
7. How many universities are there? Which are the most famous ones? What do they specialise in?
8. How long are the degree courses?
9. How is a school year organised? (terms, holidays etc.)

Clarify any doubts, explain difficulties etc.

2. Set the homework: Find out about the Polish system of education and complete the third column of the chart. You can send your students to <http://elt.britcoun.org.pl> where they can find some information about it.

#### **Lesson 4**

1. Ask questions about the Polish system of education.
2. Lead the discussion comparing the three systems. You may want to ask questions like:
  - Which of these systems do you find most effective? Why?
  - What is the best age to start school?
  - What would you borrow from British and American systems? Why?
  - How is the curriculum different in these three countries?
  - Which of these systems would you like to be a student in? Why?
3. As a follow-up, ask volunteer students to design and make a poster showing the three systems of education to be put on the wall in your classroom.