

EPREUVE LEA 11D CIVILISATION BRITANNIQUE

Durée: 1h30

A) DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

“Pupils to set their own timetables as Britain adopts Swedish-style academies, *Times Online*, April 5, 2008

I- GENERAL COMPREHENSION

Make a structured concise summary of the article: the issue, the content of the reform, the points of view of the different parties involved (politicians etc), the journalist's point of view, and your point of view in conclusion.

220 words; DO NOT COPY THE TEXT.

B- DETAILED COMPREHENSION: Explain the following words and expressions underlined in the text of the article:

- 1- academies (l.5)
- 2- the Conservative shadow schools secretary (l.8)
- 3-[traditionalists] may see the schools as a throwback to 1970s "trendy teaching" (l.15)
- 4- pupils sometimes look like they are "just hanging out" (l.37-38)
- 5- the traditional council-run comprehensives (l.44-45)
- 6: they will be expected to provide their services at cost although they are a commercial company (l.48-49)

C- QUESTION IN ENGLISH-

Make a structured presentation of the evolution of the secondary schools system in Great Britain since the 1940s (200 words)

Use the formal exam sheet.

RESPECT THE NUMBER OF WORDS

WRITE EVERY OTHER LINE ON THE EXAM SHEET

From Times Online

April 5, 2008

Pupils to set their own timetables as Britain adopts Swedish-style academies

Jack Grimston

1 THE government is to set up a network of Swedish-style city academies in which pupils help design their own timetables, the length of their classes and even their own targets for grades.

Lord Adonis, the schools minister, has given preliminary approval for Kunskapsskolan, the largest private education company in Sweden, to set up its first two British outlets in Richmond, southwest London.

5 The academies, which would replace existing comprehensives, could open as early as next year and could expand into a network of up to 30 schools.

Adonis and Michael Gove, the Conservative shadow schools secretary, have been competing to embrace the "Swedish model" of education, in which parents' groups, churches and other organisations are allowed to set up independent schools for which the state pays the fees. The system has been credited with bringing sharp improvements in results.

10 "This brings the successful Swedish independent school model to Britain," said Adonis, who claimed it was "a seminal moment for English education".

However, Kunskapsskolan's informal Scandinavian style of education is unlikely to please traditionalists, who may see the schools as a throwback to 1970s "trendy teaching".

15 Kunskapsskolan pupils learn in a series of brightly coloured rooms with no rows of desks — classrooms include a cafe, a lecture hall and an office for informal discussions.

Some rooms hold only two to four pupils plus a teacher, while others contain 100 or more. While the academies would be required to teach the national curriculum in maths, English and information technology, Adonis said beyond that they would have "all the freedom they need to introduce their personalised curriculum".

Anders Hultin, the managing director of Kunskapsskolan, said he recognised the company was entering "a virgin land" and there was an opportunity for innovative teaching to take hold in Britain.

25 Hultin and Adonis met at a lunch in 2005 while the schools minister was still a Downing Street education adviser. Hultin said the subject of whether or not children should wear uniforms at British Kunskapsskolan schools could be particularly contentious.

At the company's schools in Sweden, most individual subjects are taught not in separate lessons, but in themed courses. One for 12-year-olds, called From the Big Bang to Modern

30 Times, teaches scientific theories about the origins of the universe together with what different religions believe about creation. Subjects such as geography and sociology appear in the same course.

Pupils plan their education in private sessions with a personal tutor. Some, for example, may decide they learn some subjects better in small groups, while others do better in large ones.

35 They may also express a preference for short, 15-minute sessions.

Each pupil's daily timetable is designed individually, along with yearly and weekly goals for what they will achieve. According to one visitor, pupils sometimes look like they are "just hanging out", but the schools' results are about 10% better than the Swedish national average. "If students are responsible for their own learning, they achieve better results," said Hultin.

40 The schools will contrast with other city academies. Some of the most successful, such as Mossbourne, in Hackney, east London, are highly structured, teach traditional subjects and require children to recite the school motto.

The academy system has been championed by Adonis, who largely designed it while he was working for Tony Blair. The schools are intended as a move away from the traditional council-

45 run comprehensives into a system of quasi-independent schooling, although local authorities have been given an increasing role since Gordon Brown became prime minister.

Kunskapsskolan, which means "knowledge schools" in English, will not have to pay the £2m sponsorship required of many private-sector academy sponsors and, in return, they will be expected to provide their services at cost, although they are a commercial company.

50 Balls said yesterday: "I'm delighted Kunskapsskolan are interested in sponsoring Richmond's academies...The success of academies is based on their ability to try innovative methods working closely in conjunction with local authorities".