***Прочитайте и переведите текст* «Education in the USA»**

Education in the United States of America is compulsory for children from the age of 6 till 16 (or 18). It involves 12 years of schooling. A school year starts at the end of August or at the beginning of September and ends in late June or early July. The whole school year is divided into three terms/trimesters or four quarters. American students have winter, spring and summer holidays which last 2 or 3 weeks and 6 or 8 weeks, respectively. The length of the school year varies among the states as well as the day length. Students go to school 5 days a week.

The American education system consists of 3 basic components: elementary, secondary and higher education. There is also such a notion as preschool education. At the age of 4 or 5 children just get acquainted with the formal education in a nursery school. The preschool education programme aims to prepare children for elementary school through playing and help them to acquire the experience of association. It lasts for one year. Then they go to the first grade (or grade 1).

Elementary education starts when pupils are 6 years old. The programme of studies in the elementary school includes the following subjects: English, Arithmetic, Geography, History of the USA, Natural sciences, Physical Training, Singing, Drawing, wood or metal work. The education is mostly concentrated on the basic skills (speaking, reading, writing and arithmetic). Sometimes children also learn some foreign languages, general history and such new subjects as drug and sex education. The main goal of elementary education is the general intellectual, social and physical development of a pupil from 5 to 12 or 15 years old.

Secondary education begins when children move on to high or secondary school in the ninth grade, where they continue their studies until the twelfth grade. The secondary school curriculum is built around specific subjects rather than general skills. Although there are always a number of basic subjects in the curriculum: English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and Physical Education, the students have an opportunity to teach some elective subjects, which are not necessary for everybody. After the first two years of education they can select subjects according to their professional interests. The electives are to be connected with the students' future work or further education at university or college. Every high school has a special teacher — a guidance counsellor who helps the students to choose these elective subjects. Moreover, he helps them with some social problems, too. The elective courses are different in various schools.

Members of each grade in high school have special names: students in the ninth grade are called freshmen, tenth graders are called sophomores, eleventh graders are juniors and as for twelfth graders, they are seniors.

After graduating from high schools the majority of the Americans go on studying at higher education establishments. In universities they have to study for four years to get a bachelor's degree. In order to get a master's degree they must study two years more and, besides, be engaged in a research work.

The most famous American universities are Harvard, Princeton, Stanford, Yale, and Columbia Universities.

**Vocabulary:**compulsory — обязательный  
to involve — включать  
schooling — обучение в школе  
to be divided into — делиться на  
trimester — триместр  
quarter — четверть  
respectively — соответственно  
to vary — варьироваться  
to consist of — состоять из  
elementary education — начальное образование  
secondary education — среднее образование  
higher education — высшее образование  
notion — понятие  
preschool education — дошкольное образование  
to get acquainted with — знакомиться с  
nursery school — детский сад  
to aim — быть нацеленным  
to acquire the experience of association — получить опыт общения  
grade — класс  
General History — всеобщая история  
sex and drug education — сексуальное образование и уроки, посвященные изучению социальной роли наркотиков  
skill — навык  
goal — цель  
curriculum — расписание, учебный план  
specific — конкретный, определённый  
Social Studies — обществознание  
opportunity — возможность  
elective subject — предметы по выбору  
according to — в соответствии с  
guidance counselor — советник по профессиональной ориентации  
various — разнообразный  
freshman — новичок  
sophomore — студент второго курса колледжа или ученик 10-го класса средней школы  
junior — студент предпоследнего курса колледжа или ученик 11-го класса средней школы  
senior — студент последнего класса колледжа или ученик 12-го класса средней школы  
majority — большинство  
bachelor's degree — степень бакалавра  
master's degree — степень магистра  
to be engaged in — заниматься чем-либо  
research work — научно-исследовательская работа

**Questions:**

1. At what age do American students start and finish their compulsory education?

2. How are the school years called in the United States?

3. The length of the school year varies among the states, doesn't it?

4. What are the basic components of American education?

5. Do all children have to attend a nursery school?

6. When does elementary education start?

7. What is the main aim of elementary education?

8. The secondary school curriculum doesn't imply a number of basic subjects, does it?

9. What are elective subjects?

10. Who is a guidance counselor?