

Intermediate English Reading & Speaking Handout

Four-Day School Week and Student Life

中級英文 B1 閱讀與口說講義 | Topic: school schedule, learning time, family needs

Teacher Notes 教學重點

- Level: Intermediate / B1
- Class time: 60-90 minutes
- Skills: reading longer paragraphs, explaining pros and cons, comparing schedules, giving balanced opinions
- Current topic: four-day school week, student life, childcare, learning time and community needs
- Design preset: compact_reference_guide with fixed-width vocabulary and dialog tables.

Warm-up Questions 暖身口說

- Would you like to go to school four days a week? Why or why not?
- What would you do on a free Friday?
- Do you learn better with shorter days or longer days?
- What problems might parents have with a four-day school week?

A. Vocabulary 單字解析

Word	Part	中文	Easy meaning	Example
schedule	n.	時間表	a plan that shows when things happen	Our school schedule changed this year.
weekday	n.	平日	a day from Monday to Friday	Friday is a weekday, but we do not have class.
rural	adj.	鄉村的	in or connected with the countryside	Some rural students travel far to school.
district	n.	學區	an area with its own schools	The district is discussing a new school calendar.
shorten	v.	縮短	to make something shorter	The school may shorten the school week.
lengthen	v.	延長	to make something longer	Each school day may be lengthened by one hour.
optional	adj.	可選擇的	not required	Friday tutoring is optional.
childcare	n.	兒童照顧	care for children while parents work	Some families need childcare on Fridays.
transportation	n.	交通接送	a way of moving people from one place to another	Transportation costs are high in some areas.
attendance	n.	出席	being present at school or an event	Good attendance helps students learn.
achievement	n.	學習成果	success or progress in learning	Schools should check student achievement.
trade-off	n.	取捨	a situation where you gain one thing but lose another	A four-day week can be a trade-off.

B. Reading 1 | Why Some Schools Try Four Days 閱讀

In some places, schools are trying a four-day school week. Students go to school from Monday to Thursday, and Friday becomes a day without regular classes. To keep enough class time, the school day usually starts earlier, ends later, or both.

School leaders may choose this schedule for different reasons. Some rural districts have long bus routes, so transportation is expensive. Some schools also hope a shorter week will make teaching jobs more attractive. For teachers, one extra day can be useful for planning lessons, grading work, or spending time with family.

However, a four-day school week is not simply a long weekend. It changes the whole rhythm of school life. Students may feel tired after longer days. Parents may need to find childcare on Fridays. Clubs, sports, meals, and tutoring also need new plans.

For this reason, many communities discuss the idea carefully before making a decision. The question is not only, 'Do people like it?' A better question is, 'Can students still learn well, stay safe, and get the support they need?'

Reading Check

What usually happens to each school day in a four-day school week?

Answer: _____

Why may rural districts care about transportation?

Answer: _____

What question should communities ask before changing the schedule?

Answer: _____

C. Reading 2 | Friday at Home 閱讀

Mia is a ninth-grade student in a town with a four-day school week. From Monday to Thursday, she leaves home at 6:50 a.m. and returns after 5:00 p.m. Her school days are long, so she often feels tired after dinner. She usually does only light homework at night.

On Fridays, Mia does not have regular classes. In the morning, she helps her younger brother with breakfast because her parents are at work. After that, she reviews vocabulary, finishes math homework, and joins an optional online tutoring class. If she has basketball practice, she goes to school in the afternoon.

Mia enjoys having Friday free, but her mother has mixed feelings. The extra day helps Mia rest and manage homework. At the same time, it is not easy for the family when both parents work. If Mia were younger, childcare would be a bigger problem.

Mia says the schedule works for her because she is old enough to study by herself. Still, she thinks schools should offer quiet study rooms, meals, or activity programs on Fridays for students who need them.

Reading Check

Why does Mia often feel tired after dinner?

Answer: _____

What does Mia do on Fridays?

Answer: _____

What does Mia think schools should offer on Fridays?

Answer: _____

D. Reading 3 | Is It Better for Learning? 閱讀

Researchers do not all give the same answer about four-day school weeks. Some reports find that students, parents, and teachers like the schedule. People may enjoy more family time, lower stress, or more flexible Fridays. Some schools also say the schedule helps them keep teachers.

At the same time, research warns that learning time matters. If schools lose too many hours, students may make slower progress in reading or math. Longer school days do not always replace the value of seeing teachers five times a week. Younger students may also find long days difficult.

The most useful lesson is that details matter. A four-day school week may work better when schools protect learning time, plan lessons carefully, and support students on the day off. It may be risky when the fifth day becomes only an empty day without study, food, or safe activities.

A schedule is a tool, not a magic answer. Before choosing four days or five days, each community should look at its students, teachers, families, and local needs. After making a change, the school should check attendance, achievement, student health, and family stress over time.

Reading Check

Why do some people like a four-day school week?

Answer: _____

What risk does the reading mention?

Answer: _____

What should schools check after changing the schedule?

Answer: _____

E. Dialog Practice 口說對話

Dialog 1 | Asking About the New Schedule

Student	Are we really going to have school only four days a week?
Teacher	The district is discussing it, but nothing is final yet.
Student	Would Friday be a holiday?
Teacher	Not exactly. Some students may have tutoring, clubs, or study time.
Student	So the other days would be longer?
Teacher	Yes. That is one important trade-off.

Dialog 2 | A Parent's Concern

Parent	I worry about Fridays because I work all day.
Principal	That is a serious concern. We are planning optional school programs.
Parent	Would students get lunch if they come on Friday?
Principal	We are discussing meals and quiet study rooms.
Parent	That would help families like mine.
Principal	We need to hear from parents before we decide.

Dialog 3 | Planning Friday

Mia	What are you doing this Friday?
Leo	I have no plan yet. Maybe I will sleep late.
Mia	I want to finish homework in the morning.
Leo	That is smart. Then you can relax later.
Mia	Do you want to study together online?
Leo	Sure. Let's meet at ten.

Dialog 4 | Giving an Opinion

Teacher	Do you support a four-day school week?
Jay	I partly support it because students can rest more.
Teacher	Can you give a concern?
Jay	Longer days may be hard for younger students.
Teacher	Good. A balanced answer is stronger.
Jay	So I think schools need a clear Friday plan.

Dialog 5 | Comparing Two Schedules

Ava	I prefer five school days. It feels more normal.
Ben	I prefer four days because Friday can be used for projects.
Ava	But some students may waste the day.
Ben	True. Schools should offer optional activities.
Ava	Maybe the best answer depends on the community.
Ben	I agree. One schedule may not fit every school.

F. Speaking Practice 口說練習

Useful Speaking Frames

- In my opinion, a four-day school week is _____ because _____.
- One possible benefit is _____.
- One possible problem is _____.
- Compared with a five-day schedule, a four-day schedule _____.
- This schedule may work well for _____, but it may be hard for _____.
- Schools should provide _____ on Fridays.
- I partly agree because _____. However, _____.
- The most important thing to check is _____.

1. Pair Interview

- Do you prefer a four-day school week or a five-day school week?
- What would be the best use of Friday?
- Who may benefit from this schedule?
- Who may have problems with this schedule?
- What support should schools provide on the day off?

2. Role-play: Community Meeting

Student A: You are a student. Explain why you like the four-day schedule.

Student B: You are a parent. Explain one concern about Friday.

Student C: You are a teacher. Suggest one support plan.

3. Mini Debate

Topic: Our school should try a four-day school week for one semester.

Group A: Agree. Give two benefits and one support plan.

Group B: Disagree. Give two concerns and one different solution.

4. Short Talk

Talk for 60 seconds: A four-day school week may be good for _____, but schools must _____.

Note: _____

Note: _____

Note: _____

Note: _____

G. Quiz 練習題

1. Vocabulary: A plan that shows when things happen is a _____.

Answer: _____

2. Vocabulary: A school area with its own schools is a _____.

Answer: _____

3. Vocabulary: Care for children while parents work is _____.

Answer: _____

4. Vocabulary: A situation where you gain one thing but lose another is a _____.

Answer: _____

5. Reading 1: In many four-day schools, Friday has no regular _____.

Answer: _____

6. Reading 1: Some rural districts have long bus _____.

Answer: _____

7. Reading 2: Mia joins an optional online _____ class.

Answer: _____

8. Reading 2: Mia thinks schools should offer quiet study rooms, meals, or activity _____.

Answer: _____

9. Reading 3: If schools lose too many hours, students may make slower progress in reading or _____.

Answer: _____

10. Speaking: Give one opinion sentence about a four-day school week.

Answer: _____

H. Answer Key 答案

Reading Check

What usually happens to each school day in a four-day school week? - It usually starts earlier, ends later, or both.

Why may rural districts care about transportation? - Because students may have long bus routes and transportation can be expensive.

What question should communities ask before changing the schedule? - They should ask whether students can still learn well, stay safe, and get support.

Why does Mia often feel tired after dinner? - Her school days from Monday to Thursday are long.

What does Mia do on Fridays? - She helps her brother, studies, finishes homework, joins optional tutoring, and sometimes has basketball practice.

What does Mia think schools should offer on Fridays? - Quiet study rooms, meals, or activity programs for students who need them.

Why do some people like a four-day school week? - They may enjoy more family time, lower stress, or flexible Fridays.

What risk does the reading mention? - Students may make slower progress if schools lose too much learning time.

What should schools check after changing the schedule? - Attendance, achievement, student health, and family stress.

Quiz

1. Vocabulary: A plan that shows when things happen is a _____. - schedule

2. Vocabulary: A school area with its own schools is a _____. - district

3. Vocabulary: Care for children while parents work is _____. - childcare

4. Vocabulary: A situation where you gain one thing but lose another is a _____. - trade-off

5. Reading 1: In many four-day schools, Friday has no regular _____. - classes

6. Reading 1: Some rural districts have long bus _____. - routes

7. Reading 2: Mia joins an optional online _____ class. - tutoring

8. Reading 2: Mia thinks schools should offer quiet study rooms, meals, or activity _____. - programs
9. Reading 3: If schools lose too many hours, students may make slower progress in reading or _____. - math
10. Speaking: Give one opinion sentence about a four-day school week. - Answers will vary. Example: I partly support it because students can rest more.

I. Source Notes 教材參考來源

This handout is original classroom material rewritten for Intermediate / CEFR B1 learners.

The source pages were used only as background for the education policy, school schedule, family support and learning-time themes.

- NCSL was used for general background on how some school districts use four-day school weeks and discuss pros and cons.
- RAND was used for research context showing mixed findings, community satisfaction, teacher recruitment concerns and learning outcomes.
- NWEA was used for recent education-research discussion about implementation details, instructional time and academic risks.
- NCSL Four-Day School Week Overview: <https://www.ncsl.org/education/four-day-school-week-overview>
- RAND Does Four Equal Five? Implementation and Outcomes of the Four-Day School Week: https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA373-1.html
- NWEA What the research tells us about four-day school weeks: <https://www.nwea.org/blog/2026/what-the-research-tells-us-about-four-day-school-weeks/>