LIFE IN TUDOR ENGLAND

What were Tudor schools like?

MISSION OBJECTIVES

• To remember at least five facts about education in Tudor England.
• To understand how today’s classrooms are different from those long ago.

What have you ever had an adult tell you how tough school was in ‘their day’? Bet you have! They would probably have told you about the scary teachers, how long detentions were and the horrible food. In fact, some of you sitting in a classroom today probably think your school life is really tough – so it’s a good job you didn’t go to school in Tudor times.

A Tudor child’s education often depended on how wealthy their father was. It wasn’t free to attend school, so poor families couldn’t afford the school fees. As a result, poor children would probably start work when they were five or six years old. Richer families might send their children to a grammar school, so called because they taught mainly Latin and Greek grammar. Latin was the language used by businessmen and merchants throughout Europe – so any ambitious father would make sure their child was taught at one of Britain’s best grammar schools, like Rugby or Harrow.

The following scene is based on a classroom at a school near Chester called Rugby or Harrow.

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Schools closed for two weeks at Christmas and two weeks at Easter. A school week was often Monday to Saturday too – and there were no summer holidays.

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