

## Unit 12 – Lisa (England)

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I started school ... um ... when I was four— I had just turned four ... um ... and I attended my primary school until I was ten and then I went to high school. Um, I didn't go to the high school next to my primary school, I went to another school ... um ... that's quite unusual for schools in England and Wales. Um, it's a state school, so funded by the government, but it's an all girls school. In a way it's a convent school - there were nuns there, our head teacher was a nun and there were some teaching staff who were nuns. Um, and next door to my school there was a boys' school that had some, very few ... um ... monks. Um, and although we were next to each other and one was a boys' school, one was a girls' school, there wasn't a huge amount of— you know, we didn't really work in partnership. We were separate schools ... um ... and kept quite separate.

Lots of schools ... um... in England and Wales provide extra-curricular activities ... um ... so that the children can stay at school longer and do, for example, sports. They can be in a netball club, a hockey club, a tennis club. There's also classes - well, like— like my mum runs a reading club. So ... um ... there's often a reading club or a writing club or a music class that you can attend after school. Um, and this is to encourage kids to get involved with sports and music and other activities but also so that their parents can stay at work ... um ... as long as they need to and thei— obviously their parents don't finish work at half-past three or four o'clock when their children finish school. Um, so it's really good for their parents, who can then pick them up at five o'clock ... um ... when they finish work. But I think after-school clubs are more and more popular, because more and more parents are working. Maybe in the past the mum stayed at home and she was a housewife and now she might have a job so after-school clubs are really— you know, they're a really important part of a school community. Um, and I think it's great to be involved in, like, a sports team. Um, it prepares you for going to university if you're going to be involved in a sports team there ... um ... and obviously it's great to learn to play an instrument.

When I was at school— I play the piano, so I often had to play the piano in assemblies or we had Mass on a Friday morning. Um, so it wasn't really a club but often I had to stay at school and practice with the music teacher if we had an important assembly ... um ... or an important Mass or something coming up— or the end-of-year, you know, presentation awards or something. Um, I was also in the hockey team ... um ... and so we used to play matches on a Saturday and we would practice after school on a Tuesday. Um, but I really enjoyed it. It's a great, you know belonging to a team at school, it's really fun. Um, and as well you get to know the teachers better if you see them, like not just in class, in an after-school situation. They're a lot more relaxed and they know that you want to learn and want to be there so it's often— you have a better relationship with them.

When I was at school I studied French ... um ... from the beginning of high school and I started studying Spanish when I was in year ten. So, I studied French from when I was eleven years old and I picked up studying Spanish when I was fourteen ... um ... and I studied them both ... um ... after that at school. When I was deciding what to study at university I decided that I wanted to carry on studying Spanish and pick up a new language ... um ... which was Portuguese. Um, so when I went to university I studied Spanish and Portuguese ... um ... with Linguistics. And I started Portuguese— so ... um ... I started studying Portuguese from scratch ... um ... I knew no Portuguese before I started university. Um, and although it's quite similar to Spanish in lots of ways it was quite difficult to pick up and as well when I was studying both languages often we had a Spanish lecture and then a

Portuguese lecture straight after that and that can cause lots of confusion. Um, yeah often it's difficult to separate the languages ... um ... in your head and not get mixed up.