Class 11 English Snapshots (Older Edition): Albert Einstein at School - Notes, Summary, NCERT Answers and MCQs

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These Class 11 English Albert Einstein at School notes explain the chapter simply. You get a summary, characters, themes and NCERT answers. You also get 10 MCQs, a mistakes table and a revision box.

> Syllabus check: Albert Einstein at School is not in the current NCERT Snapshots (Reprint 2026-27). That book has five chapters only. Use these notes if your school, state board or older book still includes it. Always confirm with your teacher.

What is Albert Einstein at School about?

> Albert Einstein at School is an extract from The Young Einstein by Patrick Pringle. It was Chapter 4 of the older Class 11 English Snapshots book. It shows young Einstein's unhappy last days at a school in Munich. He values ideas over facts. In the end, the head teacher asks him to leave.

The chapter is short and full of dialogue. It asks what real education means. Use this table for quick facts.

Fact	Detail (from the NCERT text)
Chapter	Chapter 4, Snapshots (older NCERT edition, Class 11 English)
Syllabus status	Not in the 2026-27 Snapshots reprint
Author	Patrick Pringle, a biographer
Source	An extract from his book The Young Einstein
Type	Biographical extract, told in the third person
Main characters	Albert, Mr Braun, Yuri, Elsa, Dr Ernst Weil, Mr Koch, the head teacher
Setting	A school and a poor lodging house in Munich, Germany
Central conflict	Albert's love of ideas versus a school built on memorising facts
Ending	The head teacher expels Albert; he leaves for Italy

The current Snapshots book is on the official NCERT textbook site. Older editions are not hosted there.

What happens in Albert Einstein at School? (Summary)

> This Class 11 English Snapshots chapter opens with an argument. Albert tells his history teacher that dates are pointless. He is unhappy at school and in his lodgings. A friend helps him get a medical certificate to leave. Before he can use it, the head teacher expels him. He walks out with his head high.

1. The Waterloo question

Mr Braun, the history teacher, asks Albert a date. Albert says he doesn't know. He sees no point in learning

He says ideas matter more than facts. He would rather know why soldiers fought. Mr Braun calls him a disgrace and gives him an extra period.

2. A miserable life in Munich

Albert lives alone in one of Munich's poorest areas. His father has little money. Albert can bear the dirt, but not the violence. His landlady beats her children, and her husband beats her.

3. Yuri and Elsa

His friend Yuri visits. He tells of a student killed in a duel. Albert is disgusted.

His cousin Elsa visits from Berlin. She says anyone can pass by learning like a parrot. Albert says he cannot learn things by heart. He reads geology just because he likes it.

4. The violin is silenced

Music is his only other comfort. But his landlady asks him to stop playing the violin. After six months alone, Albert decides he must leave.

5. The plan

Albert fears his father will send him back from Milan. So he plans to get a doctor's note. Yuri finds a young doctor, Ernst Weil.

6. Dr Weil helps

Yuri has already told Dr Weil everything. Albert fears he will be refused. But Dr Weil believes Albert really is close to a breakdown. He certifies six months away from school and charges nothing.

7. Mr Koch's reference

Albert asks his maths teacher, Mr Koch, for a reference. Mr Koch writes a glowing one. He says Albert is ready for higher mathematics. He also says he knew Albert would leave.

8. Expelled

Before Albert can show the certificate, the head teacher calls him in. He says Albert's work is terrible and he disturbs the class. He wants Albert to leave.

Albert says he was leaving anyway. He walks out without looking back.

9. Goodbye to Munich

He has spent five miserable years at the school. Only Yuri sees him off. Albert sets out for Italy, hoping to be happier.

Who are the characters in Albert Einstein at School?

> Albert Einstein at School, from the Class 11 English Snapshots book, has seven characters. Albert is the curious, honest student. Mr Braun is the harsh history teacher. Yuri is his loyal friend. Elsa is his cousin. Dr Ernst Weil is the kind young doctor. Mr Koch and the head teacher complete the cast.

Character	Who they are	Key traits (with proof)
Albert Einstein	The student	Honest, curious, independent. Prefers ideas to dates. Loves maths, geology and the violin.

Character	Who they are	Key traits (with proof)
Mr Braun	History teacher	Strict and sarcastic. Calls Albert a disgrace. Has "cold and cruel" eyes.
Yuri	Albert's friend	Loyal and practical. Finds Dr Weil. Warns Albert to be frank.
Elsa	Albert's cousin, lives in Berlin	Caring but conventional. Urges him to learn "like a parrot" to pass.
Dr Ernst Weil	Newly qualified doctor	Kind and understanding. Gives a six-month certificate free.
Mr Koch	Maths teacher	Fair and perceptive. Writes a glowing reference. Knew Albert would leave.
The head teacher	School head	Rigid and dismissive. Expels Albert for "constant rebellion."

Character sketch of Albert

Albert is honest to the point of trouble. He admits he never tried to learn dates. He cannot pretend.

He is curious and loves to think. He reads geology for pleasure and is brilliant at maths. He hates violence, cruelty and rote learning. He is also proud. He leaves the school with his head held high.

Character sketch of Yuri

Yuri is Albert's true friend in Munich. He listens and helps. He finds a doctor even though he is unsure of the plan.

He is also honest. He warns Albert not to fool the doctor. He is the only one who sees Albert off.

Character sketch of Mr Braun

Mr Braun stands for the old school system. He values dates and facts. He cannot accept a pupil who questions him. He uses sarcasm and punishment instead of understanding.

Character sketch of Dr Weil

Dr Weil has just qualified as a doctor. He remembers how it feels to be a student. He sees that Albert really is under strain. He helps him kindly and asks only that Albert treat Yuri to a meal.

What are the main themes of Albert Einstein at School?

> Albert Einstein at School, a Class 11 English Snapshots chapter, has four main themes. They are rote learning versus understanding, rigid schools, friendship and honesty. The chapter suggests that a narrow system can crush a brilliant mind. It also shows how a few kind people can help.

Theme	Where you see it in the chapter
Facts vs ideas	Albert says it is not facts but ideas that matter.
Rigid school system	Albert is punished and expelled for questioning methods.
Rote learning	Elsa says you can pass just by repeating what you are taught.
Friendship	Yuri finds a doctor and is the only one to say goodbye.
Honesty	Albert admits he never tried to learn dates. Yuri calls him the world's worst liar.
Hatred of violence	Albert wants to know why soldiers fought. He is disgusted by the duel.

Is the title Albert Einstein at School suitable?

Yes. The whole extract shows Albert's experience at school. It covers his teachers, his struggles and his expulsion. The title also invites a surprise. The world's most famous scientist was a failure at school.

How do the three teachers in Albert Einstein at School differ?

In this Class 11 Snapshots chapter, three teachers react to Albert differently. Mr Braun mocks him. Mr Koch praises him. The head teacher throws him out. Comparing them is the easiest way to answer NCERT Question 1. It shows how one boy looked to three different minds.

Teacher	How he treats Albert	What it shows about Albert
Mr Braun (history)	Sarcasm, punishment, calls him a disgrace	Albert is honest and values ideas over facts
Mr Koch (maths)	Glowing reference; says he can't teach him more	Albert is gifted and modest
Head teacher	Expels him for rebellion and bad work	Albert is proud and self-respecting

What do the difficult words in Albert Einstein at School mean?

Hard words in this Class 11 Snapshots chapter describe school, poverty and feelings. Expulsion means being forced to leave. Squalor means dirt and misery. A duel is a fight between two people. Learning about twenty such words makes this extract much easier to follow.

Word	Simple meaning
Biographer	A person who writes someone's life story
Expulsion	Being forced to leave a school
Sarcasm	Saying the opposite of what you mean, to mock
Flushed	Went red in the face
Disgrace	A cause of shame
Diploma	A certificate for finishing a course
Lodgings	A rented room
Squalor	Dirty and miserable conditions
Duel	A formal fight between two people
Glumly	Sadly, gloomily
Geology	The study of rocks and the earth
Wailing	A long, sad cry; here, the violin's sound
Absurd	Silly, making no sense
Nervous breakdown	A period of severe mental stress
Reluctantly	Unwillingly
Pull the wool over his eyes	Cheat or deceive him (NCERT footnote)
Certify	Confirm officially in writing
Reference	A letter praising someone's work

Word	Simple meaning
Summoned	Called officially
Mincing words	Speaking softly to avoid hurting
Stalked out	Walked out stiffly and proudly

What are the NCERT answers for Albert Einstein at School?

> The NCERT exercise for Albert Einstein at School, Class 11 English Snapshots, has three questions. The first asks what Einstein's talks with three teachers reveal about him. The second asks how schools curb talent. The third asks how information gathering differs from insight. Our own model answers follow below.

Questions are from the NCERT text. Answers are written by Nextoper.

Q1. What do you understand of Einstein's nature from his conversations with his history teacher, his mathematics teacher and the head teacher?

With Mr Braun, Albert is honest to a fault. He admits he never tried to learn dates. He boldly says ideas matter more than facts.

With Mr Koch, he is modest. He says the teacher's praise goes too far. He also shows a sense of humour.

With the head teacher, he is proud and controlled. He asks what crime he has committed. He holds back his anger and walks out with dignity.

Together, these show a thinker who is honest, gifted and self-respecting.

Q2. The school system often curbs individual talents. Discuss.

Albert's school rewards memory, not thinking. Elsa admits students pass by repeating what they are taught. Albert, who loves ideas, is called a disgrace.

His real gifts in maths and science get no space. There is hardly any science at school. Instead of guiding him, the school punishes and finally expels him.

The same is true for many students today. Fixed syllabuses and exam pressure can ignore curiosity. Good schools must make room for questions and different strengths.

Q3. How do you distinguish between information gathering and insight formation?

Information gathering means collecting facts, like dates of battles. You can memorise them or look them up in books.

Insight formation means understanding why things happen. Albert wants to know why soldiers fought, not just when.

Information answers "what" and "when." Insight answers "why" and "how." Albert suggests that real education needs insight.

What MCQs come from Albert Einstein at School?

> Here are 10 practice MCQs on Albert Einstein at School, Class 11 English Snapshots. Nextoper wrote them. Each answer has a one-line reason from the NCERT text. They test facts, characters and meaning. Cover the answers, try each question yourself, and then check how you did.

1. Who is the author of Albert Einstein at School?
(a) Patrick Pringle (b) Albert Einstein (c) Marga Minco (d) J.B. Priestley
Answer: (a) Patrick Pringle, from The Young Einstein.

2. Which battle did Mr Braun ask about?
(a) Plassey (b) Waterloo (c) Trafalgar (d) Hastings
Answer: (b) Waterloo. Albert did not know the year.

3. In which city was Albert's school?
(a) Berlin (b) Milan (c) Munich (d) Zurich
Answer: (c) Munich. He lodged in a poor quarter there.

4. Where did Elsa normally live?
(a) Munich (b) Berlin (c) Milan (d) Vienna
Answer: (b) Berlin, where her father had a business.

5. What book was Albert reading for pleasure?
(a) History (b) Poetry (c) Geology (d) Music
Answer: (c) Geology. He studied it because he liked it.

6. Why did Albert stop playing the violin?
(a) It broke (b) The landlady asked him to stop (c) He lost interest (d) Yuri disliked it
Answer: (b) The landlady said its "wailing" annoyed her.

7. Who was Dr Ernst Weil?
(a) A nerve specialist (b) A newly qualified doctor (c) Albert's uncle (d) The school doctor
Answer: (b) He had qualified only the week before.

8. How long did the medical certificate say Albert should stay away?
(a) One month (b) Three months (c) Six months (d) One year
Answer: (c) Six months, as Dr Weil suggested.

9. Who gave Albert a glowing reference?
(a) Mr Braun (b) Mr Koch (c) The head teacher (d) Dr Weil
Answer: (b) Mr Koch, his mathematics teacher.

10. Where were Albert's parents living?
(a) Berlin (b) Munich (c) Milan (d) Vienna
Answer: (c) Milan, in Italy.

What should you revise the night before the exam?

> To revise Albert Einstein at School fast, learn one name trick and four numbers. Then remember one big idea. The big idea is simple. A school that values memory over thinking failed a genius. Albert did not lack talent. The system simply had no place for it.

Name trick: "BYE, Will Kindly Help"

- Braun - history teacher, sarcastic

- Yuri - loyal friend
- Elsa - cousin from Berlin
- Weil - newly qualified doctor
- Koch - maths teacher, glowing reference
- Head teacher - expels Albert

Number trail: 6 - 6 - 5 - 1

- 6 - months alone in Munich before he decides to leave
- 6 - months away from school on the certificate
- 5 - miserable years at the school
- 1 - week since Dr Weil qualified

One big idea: Ideas matter more than dates.

Self-check: can you answer these in one line?

Question	Tick when you can answer
Why did Albert refuse to learn dates?	[ ]
What did Albert hate about his lodgings?	[ ]
What advice did Elsa give him?	[ ]
Why did Albert want a medical certificate?	[ ]
Why did Dr Weil agree to help?	[ ]
How did Mr Koch know Albert was leaving?	[ ]
Did Albert ever use the certificate?	[ ]

What practice questions can you try on Albert Einstein at School?

> These are Nextoper practice questions for Albert Einstein at School, Class 11 English Snapshots. They are not previous-year board questions. They follow the usual short-answer, long-answer and extract formats. Write full answers first. Then compare them with the summary, characters and themes on this page.

Practice question These questions are written by Nextoper for practice.

Short answer (about 40-50 words)

1. Why did Albert dislike the students who fought duels?
2. What did Yuri warn Albert about Dr Weil?
3. What fee did Dr Weil ask for?
4. What reasons did the head teacher give for expelling Albert?
5. Why did Albert feel the certificate "burning a hole" in his pocket?

Long answer (about 120-150 words)

1. Yuri was Albert's only true friend in Munich. Discuss.
2. Albert left school with his head held high. Was he a failure? Give reasons.
3. Write a diary entry by Albert on the night he was expelled.

Extract-based practice

Read: "I think it's not facts that matter, but ideas."

a) Who says this, and to whom?
b) How does the listener react?
c) What does this line show about the speaker?

What mistakes do students make in Albert Einstein at School?

> Many notes on Albert Einstein at School, Class 11 English Snapshots, contain errors. Students copy them and lose marks. Common slips include saying Albert used the certificate and calling Dr Weil a specialist. Others send Albert back to Berlin. Check each fact below against the NCERT text before you write.

We found each of these errors in notes that currently rank online. Every correction is checked against the NCERT chapter.

Common mistake	What the NCERT text actually says
"Albert left using his medical certificate"	He never showed it. The head teacher expelled him first.
"Dr Weil was a nerve specialist"	He had only qualified as a doctor the week before.
"Albert returned to Berlin"	He planned to go to Milan, Italy, where his parents lived.
"He said goodbye to Yuri and Elsa"	Elsa was back in Berlin. Only Yuri saw him off.
Calling Mr Braun "Professor"	He is "Mr Braun," the history teacher.
"The doctor thought Albert's reason was bad"	Dr Weil believed Albert was close to a real breakdown.
Calling the chapter an essay	It is an extract from the biography The Young Einstein.
"The chapter is in the 2026-27 Snapshots"	The 2026-27 Snapshots reprint has five chapters, without this one.

What is the short answer on Albert Einstein at School?

> Short answer: Albert Einstein at School comes from Patrick Pringle's biography, The Young Einstein. It was Chapter 4 of the older Class 11 Snapshots book. Albert hates memorising dates at his Munich school. A friend helps him get a six-month medical certificate. Before he can use it, the head teacher expels him. Albert leaves proudly for Italy.

What do students ask about Albert Einstein at School?

> Students most often ask who wrote Albert Einstein at School and why Einstein left. They also ask about Yuri and the medical certificate. One more common question is about the chapter's syllabus status. Short, exam-ready answers to all five follow. Each is based on the NCERT text.

Who wrote Albert Einstein at School?

Patrick Pringle wrote it. The chapter is an extract from his biography, The Young Einstein. It appeared in older editions of NCERT Snapshots for Class 11.

Why was Einstein expelled from school?

Who was Yuri in Albert Einstein at School?

Yuri was Albert's close friend in Munich. He found Dr Weil for Albert. He was the only person Albert wanted to see before leaving.

What was the medical certificate for?

Dr Weil certified that Albert had a nervous breakdown. It allowed him six months away from school. Albert never used it, because he was expelled first.

Is Albert Einstein at School in the 2026-27 syllabus?

No. The current NCERT Snapshots reprint for 2026-27 does not include it. It has five chapters only. Check with your school if your book still lists it.

What is the key takeaway from Albert Einstein at School?

> Albert Einstein at School, from the Class 11 English Snapshots book, has one key lesson. Real education builds understanding, not just memory. A rigid school saw Albert as a failure. Yet his curiosity and honesty were his true strengths. The chapter asks you to value why, not only when.

Revise the "BYE, Will Kindly Help" trick and the three teachers table. With those, you can answer almost any question on this chapter. Next, try the practice questions without looking back.

Related notes

- Class 11 English Snapshots (older edition): Ranga's Marriage notes
- Class 11 English Snapshots Chapter 3: Mother's Day notes
- All Class 11 English Hornbill and Snapshots notes

Sources

1. NCERT, Snapshots (older edition), Chapter 4, "Albert Einstein at School" by Patrick Pringle. ncert.nic.in
2. CBSE Academic, Class 11 English Core (Code 301) curriculum. cbseacademic.nic.in

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