

**Florence Nightingale** (1820–1910) was the founder of modern nursing. She dramatically improved conditions for soldiers in field hospitals, and educated people about the importance of hygiene. She saved thousands of lives and became very famous. She later started her own training college for nurses, and wrote many books on nursing.



## Reading

**1** Read the article and decide if these sentences are true (T) or false (F).

- 1 The more responsibility you have, the higher your grade. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Nursing officers are the same as auxiliary nurses. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 Students are paid less than auxiliary nurses. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 A charge nurse is a man. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 There are not many opportunities for British nurses to specialize. \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 Many nurses say that the job is rewarding, but the pay is low. \_\_\_\_\_

**2** Number these jobs from the highest grade (1) to the lowest (4). Two of them are equal.

- a charge nurse \_\_\_\_\_
- b nursing officer \_\_\_\_\_
- c auxiliary nurse \_\_\_\_\_
- d sister \_\_\_\_\_
- e staff nurse \_\_\_\_\_

# THE NURSING PROFESSION



One hundred and fifty years ago, nurses were unpaid, untrained, and unpopular, but then Florence Nightingale made nursing into a profession. The methods she introduced in the 1850s were copied all over the world, and now nursing is a career with a three- or four-year training, qualifications, grades, unions, and pensions.

In Britain, every nurse is on a grade. The grade depends on experience and skills, and each grade has different responsibilities and pay. On the bottom grades are unqualified auxiliary nurses who do the routine work on hospital

wards. On the top grades are nursing officers, who are usually administrators.

Auxiliary nurses are on the bottom grades, but student nurses get the lowest pay. However, students don't stay at the bottom of the pay scale forever. When they qualify, they start working on a middle grade. As they get experience, they can get promotion and move up the ranks to become staff nurse, then sister (charge nurse if a man), and perhaps eventually nursing officer.

Many nurses work shifts, and often they work overtime to earn more money. After basic training, many nurses choose to do

further study and become specialists.

Nurses can specialize in many different fields – there are triage nurses working in Casualty, and psychiatric nurses who treat the mentally ill. There are health visitors who visit patients in their own homes, practice nurses working in GPs' surgeries, and midwives who deliver babies.

Many of them say they do not get enough pay and respect for the work they do. They say that the work is physically and mentally hard, that they work long hours and get very tired. But they also say that there are many great rewards which have nothing to do with money.

Taken from:

Grice, Tony (2007) *Oxford English for Careers – Nursing 1*. Oxford: OUP.