



Reading Task 353

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Natasha Thomas Takumi

1. explains that their behaviour can affect their family's reputation?
2. say that people have high regard for the older generation in their countries?
3. doesn't have any siblings?
4. won't choose their own husband/wife?
5. don't live with both parents?
6. wishes they could see a member of their family more?



What makes a family in Moscow different from a family in Beijing? And what makes it the same? No matter where you come from, family is the cradle of life and love, the place where you feel special, secure and accepted. Let's take an inside look at the lives of six teens from around the world as we see how special events, **cultural traditions** and family bonds all play a part in shaping the unique structure and lifestyle of each of their families!

'I am an only child because, in 1979, the government in my country introduced a one-child-per-family policy to control China's population explosion. In the countryside, several generations often live under one roof! In urban areas, however, housing is small and can only accommodate a nuclear family, so I live with just my parents. All my relations live close by. We care for and help each other and spend a lot of time together. Family honour is very important in Chinese society, as is respect for your elders.'

Cheung, 16

Russia

'I am an only child and I live with my parents and my grandma, or 'babushka' as we say here in Russia. My grandpa passed away last year so Babushka left her house in the country to come and live with us here in the city. When I was young I lived with my grandparents at their dacha and in many ways they were like parents to me. I don't see my parents as much as I would like, as they work long hours. Still, we've learnt to make the most of our time together, so there's never a dull moment in our house!'

Natasha, 15

Italy

'My parents both come from large families, but in ours there's just my brother and I. Although the birth rate has **dropped** a lot here in recent years, family still **takes priority**. My parents make us feel special. We can express ourselves openly and have our opinions listened to. We have lots of family celebrations and we often share Sunday lunch with my grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. Meal times are really important to us, as they are to most Italians. After dinner, we often dress up and go out for a *passeggiata*, or evening stroll.'

Sylvia, 19

England

'My parents are separated, so my sister and I live with our mum. We spend most weekends at our father's place though, as our parents think it is important that they both remain a big part of our lives. I don't see much of either of my grandparents as they live in different cities. I am very close to my maternal grandmother though, and I speak to her on the phone a lot.'

Thomas, 17

jordan

'My family is the centre of my life. Family hierarchy is very important in Jordan and the young show respect to the old at all times. Getting married and having a family is a top priority for me. My marriage will probably be arranged by my father, which is quite common here. I have a large family and my house is often full of relatives visiting us. Indeed, the concept of privacy is alien to us Jordanians!

Aalia, 17

Japan

'The Japanese believe that the strength and support of the family is essential for reaching your full potential in life. Like all Japanese children, I was taught to obey authority and to be very polite, as poor behaviour would reflect badly on my family. Being a parent is considered a very important role. My sister and brother-in-law have just had their first child, so they have started calling each other 'Otoosan' and 'Okaasan' (Father and Mother) instead of their first names. This is very common here!'

Takumi, 18