

Today, most families live in cities. Parents do not expect their children to work for them. It is also becoming very expensive to raise and educate children. Many parents cannot afford to have a large family. Others think that there are already too many people in the world. If they have more than two children, it will increase the population.

Also, the types of families are changing. Statistics show that there are more single parents than ever before. More and more unmarried couples are having children, and a growing number of couples are choosing to have no children at all. Traditional families—a married couple with children—live in less than 25 percent of all US homes.

One reason for this trend is the greater number of working women. In the past, women depended on their husbands for money. Now, many women have jobs. They don't have to be married to have money. Another reason is divorce. This is when a husband and wife decide not to be married anymore. Almost half of all US marriages end in divorce. Many people decide not to get married at all. They prefer to be single and live without a husband or a wife.

Unit 24 Making Decisions

G: How does your family make important decisions? Do children have any say in making these decisions, or do parents simply tell them what to do? There are several different methods for making family decisions.

One method is to have a vote. Each family member writes his or her own choice on a piece of paper. With this method, each person gets equal say in the issue being decided. What if the vote is a tie? You should think of an idea to break a tie before you vote.

A second method is to give older children special privileges. If you're moving into a new home, for instance, the oldest child might get first choice of bedrooms.

A third method is to take turns making the decisions. Suppose a family goes on vacation together each year. One year they might let their daughter decide where they should go. The next year, the choice goes to the son.

A fourth method is to let the head of the household decide what is best. That is the way we do it in my family. The head of our household, my father, listens to all our opinions. Then he makes a decision. We agree to follow his decision, even if we don't like it.

Making family decisions is not always easy. The important thing is to choose a method that everyone agrees on. That could cause a problem, however. Which method should you use to decide which method to choose for making decisions?

Unit 25 My Favorite Teacher

M: The best teacher I've ever had was Mr. Lambert, my high school French teacher. He was short, with dark hair, a thick beard, and a big smile. His legs were short, too, so his arms always looked too long. He was a very good teacher because he always brought so much energy to the classroom. His classes were never boring because he was always active, trying to find new methods to communicate ideas. Because he taught French, English wasn't allowed in class, so he often had to demonstrate the meaning of new words through gestures and acting.

Once, he had to communicate the word "above" without saying it in English. First, he pulled a desk near the blackboard, and then put a wastebasket between the desk and the blackboard. Next, he put his feet on the edge of the blackboard and his hands on the desk so that he was above the wastebasket. I've never forgotten that demonstration. It was difficult not to enjoy the subject when he was so excited about teaching it.

The most important reason that Mr. Lambert is the best teacher I've ever had is that he loved all his students, even when we made him angry by speaking English in class. Whenever that happened, the students always felt guilty because they had so much respect for him. Now that I'm a teacher, I try my best to be like Mr. Lambert. He is my role model.

People and Work

Unit 26 Meet Debra

W: Hi! My name is Debra Garrel. I'm a 20-year-old communications major at New York University. I love being at university. I'm enjoying my courses and I meet many new people every day. It seems like a new adventure, and I love adventures!

I spent my childhood traveling all over the world and learning about different cultures. You see, my father works for the World Bank, so our family has always moved around a lot. I've lived in Mongolia, East Timor, Brazil, Nigeria, the Netherlands, and the United States. The hardest part of growing up was saying goodbye each time we had to move. But I would always remind myself that I would make new friends soon, and I always did. I've learned not to be shy!

After leaving one place, I would always email or call my old friends. I would tell them about the new adventures I was having, and ask them about new things in their lives. That is probably the reason I chose to major in communications. I like to keep in touch.

It's obvious that I love to travel, isn't it? But I also enjoy dancing, reading, going to the theater, and riding horses. If you share any of these interests and would like to learn more about me, please let me know. And if you have different interests, I'll remind you: I'm always looking for a new adventure!

Unit 27 What's in a Name?

W: Sy, do you have a local driver's license that we can rent the car with for our trip this weekend?

M: Sure, Jen, here you are.

W: It says here that your name is Sarang Patel, but I thought your first name was Sy!

M: Sy is my nickname, and Sarang is my given name. It means "navigator" in Hindi. At the time I was born, things were confusing and difficult for my family in India. My parents wanted a son who could lead and guide our family to success.

W: Well, I just hope you can lead and guide all of us to the beach this weekend.

M: Ha ha, very funny! So, your nickname is Jen, and your given name's Jennifer. Do you know how you got that name?

W: Actually, I was named after my father's grandmother, Guinevere.

M: Wasn't Guinevere the wife of King Arthur in that old story from England?

W: Yes she was, and her name means "pure."

M: It's interesting how people get their names. In India, we don't name children after their relatives like they do in America. To me, it's strange to see names like Jack Johnson Junior and George Bush Senior.

W: Usually it's a way to show respect for a person, but some people make it ridiculous. You've heard about George Foreman, the famous boxer, haven't you?

M: No.

W: Well, he had five boys, and he named each one of them George, after himself.

M: It must be confusing when the phone rings at his house!

Unit 28 The Right Career

B: People need to consider important factors when choosing a career. In my opinion, the most important factor is to choose a job that goes well with your personality. Are you an outgoing person who loves meeting new people and talking to them? Perhaps you should become a tour guide or a teacher. Are you shy? Maybe you should be an accountant or a scientist.

Remember, you will do your job almost every day. If you have to change your personality when you work, you probably won't be very happy. And neither will the people you work with. Nobody wants an unfriendly tour guide or an impatient teacher. Are you a moody person? In most jobs, you will be expected to control your emotions. That's hard to do if your mood changes often. In that case, you might want to work alone. Perhaps you could be a writer or an artist.

There are other factors to consider, such as salary and status. However, what good is a large