LESSONS 3 AND 4

15. Read the letter and reply on an intercultural exchange website.

Ask Allen

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Advice for International Travelers

InterculturalExchange.com

What's in a first name? In many countries, it's the last.

Dear Allen,

I have a problem. My name is Chinese. It's Zhang Yin. Zhang is my last name and Yin is my first name. In China, family names are first and given names are last. I'm a salesman and I often travel to English-speaking countries for business. When I fill out a personal information form in English, I write Yin in the box for first name and Zhang in the box for last name. Then people call me Yin Zhang. When I introduce myself as Zhang Yin, they call me Mr. Yin. So sometimes I say that my name is Yin Zhang. But I don't feel comfortable with that because that isn't my real name. What should I do?

Zhang Yin
Shanghai, China

Dear Yin,

In English-speaking countries, when you ask, "What's your name?" you always get the person's given name first and the family name last. In China, and in many Asian countries, including Japan and Korea, the family name is first and given name is second. To avoid confusion, try introducing yourself like this: "Hi. I'm Zhang Yin. My first name is Yin and my family name is Zhang. Please call me Mr. Zhang."

Allen

Now read the sentences. Mark with an (x) true false or no information.

	true	false	no information
1. Zhang Yin's family name is Yin.	☐	☐	☐
2. Zhang Yin is a pilot.	☐	☐	☐
3. In China, you say a person's family name first and given name last.	☐	☐	☐
4. Zhang Yin is from China.	☐	☐	☐
5. Zhang Yin is married.	☐	☐	☐