12 What's in a Name?



Pre-Reading

Think about the following questions.

1. Does your name have any meaning? If so, what does it mean?
2. How did your parents choose your name?
3. What are some unusual names you've heard?

Vocabulary Preview

Write the letter of the word or phrase with the same meaning as the underlined word.

a. normally; usually	d. opposite
b. affects	e. the basic things people used to think made all things
c. shows	f. relatives from long ago

1. ___ The <u>elements</u> of fire and water are opposites.
2. ___ My family <u>influences</u> how I act.
3. ___ <u>Typically</u>, Canadian families have two children.
4. ___ Even though I am from America, my <u>ancestors</u> were from Europe.
5. ___ In <u>contrast</u> to Thailand, Norway is almost always cold.
6. ___ Her way of dressing <u>reflects</u> her outgoing character.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

What's in a Name?

Track 23

When naming a child, some parents seem to choose a name based simply on their personal **preference**. In other families, grandparents or professional name-makers come up with a child's name. And in some cases, the time of a child's birth influences how the child's name is determined.

In many European cultures, names are typically chosen by parents. Parents' choice for their child's name may be based on names of **relatives** or ancestors within their particular family. For example, in Italy, children are traditionally named after their grandparents. The parents generally use the father's parents' names first. If they have more children, then they will use the mother's parents' names. Similarly, some people in Eastern Europe name their children after relatives who have died. This tradition is seen as a means to protect the child from the **Angel of Death**.

Traditionally in some Asian countries, a child's grandfather or a fortune-teller chooses the child's name. In contrast to the tradition of naming children after relatives, the child's name is chosen to influence the child's character. For example, names may be based on a connection to certain elements such as fire, water, earth, wood, or metal. Or the name might include a written character meaning beauty, strength, or kindness.

In certain African cultures, when a child is born plays a large part in determining the child's name. In Ghana's Akan culture, the day a child is born determines the child's name. But each day has different names for boys and girls. For instance, a boy born on Friday is named Kofi, whereas a girl born on the same day is named Afua. Both Kofi and Afua are names meaning "wanderer" or "explorer." Children with these names are seen as travelers.

No matter where the name comes from, a child's name is the first gift in life. Whether it is chosen according to preference or **dictated** by tradition, the name reflects something about a child's culture. For that reason, all names should be **treasured** and respected.



Reading Time _____ minutes _____ seconds 337 words

2 *preference*: the selecting of something over another thing

6 *relative*: a member of the family

11 *Angel of Death*: death; the being responsible for taking people away from life

26 *dictate*: to order; to determine

28 *treasure*: to keep or regard as precious

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Reading Comprehension

Choose the best answer.

1. What is the main idea of this reading?

a. How names reflect a person's culture
b. How Asian people name their children
c. Choosing traditional names
d. Choosing names in Italian culture

2. In which culture are children most likely named after their grandparents?

a. Italian
b. Japanese
c. Mexican
d. Akan

3. In which culture do grandparents most likely choose the child's name?

a. Italian
b. Eastern European
c. American
d. Chinese

4. In China, what should names relate to?

a. A child's ancestors
b. A child's birth date
c. A child's birth element
d. A child's personality

5. Which is true in Akan culture if a twin brother and sister are born on a Friday?

a. They will have different names.
b. They will have to travel to a different city.
c. They will both be named Afua.
d. They will both be named Kofi.

Idiomatic Expressions

Find these idioms in the reading.

- **be named after** [to have the same name as]
  Her cat is named after her favorite singer.
- **as a means** [as a way]
  In English classes, my teacher uses music as a means of practicing listening.
- **play a large part** [to be a reason for; to organize something]
  He played a large part in the success of the conference.

Fill in the blank with one of the above idioms. Change its form if necessary.

1. Cultural traditions _____ in how we act.

2. John _____ his uncle.

3. Some people use the Internet _____ to meet new people.

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Summary

Read the sentences from the reading passage. Paraphrase the sentences to create a summary of the passage.

a. A parent's choice for a name may be based on names of relatives or ancestors within their particular family.
b. For example, in Italy, children are traditionally named after their grandparents.

1. a + b: In Italy, relatives' or ancestors' names can determine a child's name, _____ _____.

c. Traditionally in some Asian countries. . .the child's name is chosen to influence the child's character.
d. For example, names may be based on a connection to certain elements. . .or the name might include a written character meaning beauty, strength, or kindness.

2. c + d: In some Asian cultures, _____ _____.

e. In Ghana, the day a child is born determines the child's name in the Akan culture.
f. For instance, a boy born on Friday is named Kofi, whereas a girl born on the same day is named Afua.

3. e + f: In the Akan culture of Ghana, the _____ _____.



Listening

What's Your Name?

Track 24 **Listen to the dialog. Check True or False for each sentence.**

	True	False
1. The name they are talking about is Jack MacKay.	☐	☐
2. The family name means "son of fire."	☐	☐
3. A possible meaning of the person's whole name is "young daughter of Scotland."	☐	☐

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Discussion

Discuss the following questions.

1. Which method of naming do you like best? Why?
2. Do you know any other cultural traditions in naming? What are they?
3. How will you choose your children's names?

Grammar

Concessive Clause

No matter where or *whether* can be used to introduce a concessive clause.

(No matter where / Where) the name comes from, a child's name is the first gift in life. (Whether / If) it is chosen according to preference or dictated by tradition, the name reflects something about a child's culture.

Writing

Write your own short paragraph by answering the questions below.

My Name

(1) What is your first name? **(2)** What does it mean? **(3)** Who gave you your name? **(4)** Why did that person give you this name? **(5)** How do you feel about your name?

Example

My first name is Andrea. It means "womanly." My mother gave me my name. She gave me this name because it was similar to my father's name, Andrew. I am glad to have this name.

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Vocabulary and Idiom Review

A. Choose the best word or phrase to fill in the blank.

1. She likes only one _____ flavor of ice cream.

a. particular b. typical c. general d. mobile

2. The head researcher must _____ the idea before we go ahead with the experiment.

a. dictate b. approve c. base d. contrast

3. I always visit _____ at Christmas.

a. ancestors b. cultures c. traditions d. relatives

4. Cultural traditions often _____ how we act during special holidays.

a. base b. dictate c. allow d. approve

5. _____ to traditional methods, many Asian families are now choosing names according to their personal preference.

a. As a means b. Typically c. In contrast d. Similarly

6. My _____ moved from Germany to Britain about 100 years ago.

a. friends b. ancestors c. children d. locations

7. What is your _____, to eat in or go out for dinner?

a. preference b. culture c. tradition d. type

B. Choose the correct form of the word to fill in the blank.

8. He always looks at his _____ in the mirror.

a. reflect b. reflection c. reflected

9. The young man was _____ by a group of bad students.

a. influence b. influential c. influenced

10. He _____ sleeps late on Saturdays.

a. typically b. typical c. atypical

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