

reading

Student name _____

Group/Class _____

Date _____ Score _____

READING AND USE OF ENGLISH

Part 8 Multiple matching

- 1 You are going to read an article about how teenagers feel about their parents. For questions 1–10, choose from the sections (A, B, C or D). The sections may be chosen more than once.

In which section are the following mentioned?

- 1 the way that teenagers prefer to be like their friends and people of a similar age
- 2 some teenagers don't want their girlfriends or boyfriends to meet their parents
- 3 there are different levels of teenage embarrassment in relation to their parents
- 4 parents' appearance is often a major cause of embarrassment
- 5 it isn't the case that teenagers are not fond of their parents
- 6 when we are teenagers, we want to create our own identities
- 7 some teenagers get upset when they can't control their own lives as much as they want
- 8 a small number of teenagers might not wish to see their parents ever again
- 9 a lot of teenagers don't like their parents showing their love for each other
- 10 the relationship we have with our parents changes from a very positive one to a somewhat negative one

Why are parents so embarrassing?

A

One of life's constants is that when we get to a certain age – that age being our teenage years – we start to find our parents embarrassing. Of course, the extent to which this happens to every teenager varies, but there is a growing tendency for us to switch from viewing our parents as founts of wisdom and protection to people who get on our nerves, and we'd rather not be too closely associated with them. It's not as if the relationship we have with our parents sours exactly. However, some teenagers do sadly fall out with their parents, and a few may even wish to turn their backs on them completely. But on the whole, the average adolescent – even relatively happy ones – would rather keep some kind of distance between themselves and the people who have worked so hard to bring them up.

B

This embarrassment typically manifests itself in a variety of ways. Some adolescents may jokingly refer to their parents as being a bit unfashionable or slightly pathetic. This is where such phrases as 'dad jokes' or 'dad dancing' come into play. Few self-respecting teenagers would look up to their parents as custodians of all that's cutting-edge or cool. At the other end of the scale, some teenagers might feel so embarrassed about their parents that they don't want their friends to meet them. And the last thing they'd want to do is introduce them to a potential romantic interest. Worse, some teenagers might feel so embarrassed about their mums and dads that they would prefer not to be seen in public with them at all. Again, it should be stressed that this isn't necessarily to do with a lack of love. Instead, it seems to be a process that many teens seem to find necessary to go through.

C

As to the reasons for this phenomenon, it's worth looking to the teenagers themselves. According to teens, some of the most cringe-worthy parental features were their clothes and the way they looked. They might be seen to have an inability to dress properly, or just seem too 'old'. Then, there are the parents' tastes in music and humour, which many teens cite as being annoying or weird. Worst, perhaps, are those parents who consider themselves to still be quite young and 'with it', much to their children's dismay. And of course, parents who dare to still be affectionate with each other – going so far as to hold hands or even kiss in public – can be extremely embarrassing to be around.

D

Of course, our teenage years is the period of our lives when we're undergoing the process of finding our true selves and creating the person we want to be. So, it's no surprise that many of us see separating ourselves from our parents as an important part of this. For most of us, fitting in with our peers is far more important than trying to mirror people from an earlier generation. And if this means rejecting our parents' styles and attitudes for being unseemly or obsolete, so be it. Above all else, most teenagers are trying to build up a sense of their own independence. This is perfectly natural, although it does unfortunately mean drawing a line between themselves and their parents. The thing is though that most teenagers – especially the younger ones – are still quite dependent on mum and dad and will be for a number of years. After all, younger teenagers don't have their own finances, can't drive, and can't own property, among many things. This awkward tension between wanting to seem independent, but not really managing to do so, is perhaps another way in which feelings of annoyance – and perhaps resentment – can bubble up inside teenagers in relation to their poor old mums and dads.