

Topics: Family by Adrian Tennant

LEVEL: Pre-intermediate
AGE: Teenagers / Adults
TIME NEEDED: 90 minutes + project
LANGUAGE FOCUS: Modal verbs, understanding vocabulary in context, topic words

LEAD-IN

Ask students to look at the word-snake and try to find the ten words connected to family. Encourage students to work in pairs. Check the answers together.

Key _____



FIRST SENTENCES

Explain to the students that they are going to read four sentences that are the first lines of four different letters to an *agony aunt* (someone in a magazine or newspaper who tries to help people with their problems). First, check to see if your students know what an agony aunt is, then get them to read the sentences. They should then discuss in pairs what they think the problem is in each situation. Elicit ideas from students as a whole class discussion. Don't confirm whether their ideas are correct yet.

READING: LETTERS

Ask students to read through the letters and see if their ideas were correct. While they are doing this, they should also try to complete each letter with the correct first line (if you want, you can give a short time limit, i.e. two minutes). Tell them they don't need to understand every word in the letters. Get students to check their answers in pairs before checking as a class. Remember to discuss their predictions from the previous stage.

Key a _____

1. b; 2. d; 3. a; 4. c

Next, ask students to read the four sentences and decide if each one is true (T) or false (F). Again, get pairs to check their answers together before checking as a class.

Key b _____

1. F (*Aaron doesn't like his stepbrother.*); 2. T; 3. T; 4. F (*Barbara was 25 when she had her daughter.*)

After this, ask the students to read through the two replies and match each one to the correct letter. Get them to check their answers together in pairs, then check as a class.

Key c _____

A. Letter 4; B. Letter 1

WORKING WITH THE LANGUAGE

Ask students to look at the five sentences and the underlined modal verbs. Check that everyone knows what modal verbs are. Explain that they have different functions and point to the five words in the box. Then ask them to match the functions in the box to the correct sentence. Monitor and help where necessary. Get students to check their answers in pairs before checking as a class.

Key _____

1. *necessity*; 2. *obligation*; 3. *advice*; 4. *certainty*; 5. *possibility*

WORKING WITH VOCABULARY

Focus 1: Meaning

Ask students to look back at the letters and replies and find words that match the definitions. Encourage them to work in pairs and discuss their ideas as they look at the texts. Monitor and help where necessary. Check the answers as a class.

Key _____

1. *share*; 2. *raise*; 3. *adopted*; 4. *bumped into*; 5. *identical*; 6. *blame*; 7. *tough*

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Focus 2: Topic-related words

Ask students to look back at the letters and replies and circle all the words connected to family members. Then, ask students to work in pairs and complete the table. Encourage students to add any other family words they know. Check the answers as a class.

Key _____

male	female	either / both
father / dad	mother / mum	parent(s)
son	daughter	child(ren) / kid / baby
brother	sister	sibling(s) / only child
twin brother	twin sister	twin(s)
stepbrother	stepsister	
husband	wife	spouse
father-in-law	mother-in-law	in-laws
grandfather	grandmother	grandparent(s)

LISTENING

Ask students to listen to a short extract from a radio show and decide which of the letters from the Reading: Letters exercise it is most closely related to.

Transcript:

Host: OK, so let's go to our next caller ...
 Trudy: Hi, my name's Trudy and I'm 35 years old.
 Host: And what's your story, Trudy?
 Trudy: I always thought I was an only child but now I've discovered I have a brother.
 Host: Wow! I guess that was a surprise.
 Trudy: Yes, it was.
 Host: So what actually happened?
 Trudy: I got a phone call from a man who said he was my brother. Of course, I didn't believe him, but then he seemed to know a lot about my parents.
 Host: So what did you do?
 Trudy: Well, I met him and he told me his name was Kieran and he was my older brother. He was adopted before I was born and my mother didn't tell me about him.
 Host: Wow! And what are you going to do now?
 Trudy: I don't know. I'm a bit worried that we won't like each other. That's why I'm phoning you. Can you give me some advice?
 Host: Mmm. Trudy – I think you should call ...

Key _____

letter 3

Ask students to read letter 3 and circle any differences between that and the radio show. Put students in pairs and ask them to discuss their answers together. Play the recording again, if necessary. Check the answers as a class.

Key _____

brother / sister; he phoned her / she bumped into her; he is older than her; they are the same age (twins); he / she was adopted; his name is Kieran / her name is Karen

SPEAKING

Put students in small groups and ask them to discuss the advice that they would give to the other two letters that Betty didn't reply to. Monitor and help where necessary. Afterwards, ask a few groups to report back on their suggestions.

PROJECT

Ask students to carry out the project for homework and follow it up in the next lesson.