

EVERYDAY LIFE

WHAT KIND OF PARENT ...?

TEACHER'S NOTES

Age: Teenager/Adult

Level: Intermediate (B1)

Time: 45 minutes +

Activity: In this lesson, students will do a questionnaire to find out what kind of parent they are or would be.

Language focus: *have to/can/be allowed to, make/let*

Materials: one copy of the worksheet per student

PROCEDURE

Ask students: *which sorts of situations cause disagreements between parents and children?* Make a list of these.

Ask students the following discussion questions:

- Are these the same conflicts that cause problems between their parents and grandparents?
- Are parents today generally stricter or more liberal than in previous generations?
- Do they think they are/would be stricter, more liberal or the same as their parents?

Tell students to imagine they are parents of 15-year-old twins, a boy and a girl. Dictate the first question in the questionnaire and ask students in pairs to discuss what they would do. Get some ideas from the class, and then tell them the three options for the first question and ask them to choose the one which is nearest to their answer.

Hand out copies of the worksheet. Students continue with the questionnaire in pairs, discussing their answers. When they have finished, they should calculate their score to find out if they are/would be strict parents, liberal parents or somewhere in-between. Do they agree with the results?

Refer back to the situation in question 1 and elicit what exactly one of Maria's parents might say to her. With the class, develop a possible conversation on the board, and then ask students to practise the conversation in pairs.

As an extension, students could write dialogues for any of the other scenarios in the questionnaire and then perform them for their classmates.

EVERYDAY LIFE

WHAT KIND OF PARENT ...?

WORKSHEET

Questionnaire: What kind of parent ...?

In this questionnaire we want you to imagine that you are the mother or father of 15-year-old twins Mark and Maria. Read the situations below and decide which of the alternatives is closest to what you would do as a parent. Circle your choices (a, b or c), and then calculate your score to find out what kind of parent you would make.



1. You are driving home from work and you see Maria and her friends smoking in the street. What do you do?
 - a. Tell her that if you see her again you will stop her pocket money.
 - b. Talk to her about the dangers of smoking and try to persuade her to stop.
 - c. Ignore it. It's her decision whether to smoke or not.
2. You are putting clothes in the washing machine and you find a pill in the pocket of Mark's jeans. What do you do?
 - a. Say nothing. Young people need to experiment and find out what's good and bad for them.
 - b. Take it to the police to be analysed.
 - c. Tell him you'll take it to the police if he doesn't tell you what it is and where he got it.
3. Maria tells you she is going to get a tattoo done with pocket money she has saved. What do you do?
 - a. Tell her she can't because it's illegal at her age but that she can wear transfer tattoos if she wants.
 - b. Ask her what tattoo she intends to have.
 - c. Tell her she cannot go out again until she promises not to do it.
4. Maria tells you Mark has been to some meetings organised by a group that has a reputation for being violent. What do you do?
 - a. Tell him that he will not be allowed to go out at all and will lose all his pocket money if he goes to more meetings.
 - b. Nothing. He has to form his own opinions.
 - c. Tell him that you find the group's actions totally unacceptable. As a consequence, you cannot allow him to attend any more meetings.
5. Mark and Maria want to have a party in the house to celebrate their 16th birthday but don't want you to be there. How do you react?
 - a. Tell them that you will leave them alone until midnight, but will tell the neighbours to phone you if there are any problems.
 - b. Tell them they can have a party only if you are there.
 - c. Tell them that you will stay the whole night at their grandparents' house.
6. If Maria doesn't do more studying she won't be able to go to university. However, she has decided that she wants to leave school when she's 16. How do you react?
 - a. Tell her she cannot go out or have any pocket money until she studies more and that she will go to university whether she wants to or not.
 - b. Nothing. It's her future and she has to decide what she wants to do with it.
 - c. Tell her she can choose to go to university or not but that you want her to study enough to have the option of going if she wants to in the future.
7. Maria is normally home before midnight on a Saturday. One Saturday she arrives home at five am. What do you do?
 - a. Tell her you think five am is too late at her age, but negotiate an extension until one am, on condition that she has her mobile on so you can contact her.
 - b. Tell her that she woke you up when she came home and ask her to make less noise next time.
 - c. Tell her she cannot go out again until you say she can.

EVERYDAY LIFE

WHAT KIND OF PARENT ...?

WORKSHEET

8. You discover that Mark is illegally downloading music from the internet. What do you do?
 - a. Ignore it. After all, everyone else is doing it too.
 - b. Explain that because of illegal downloads many musicians cannot make a living, and tell him to stop.
 - c. Change the internet connection password so that he can't use the internet.
9. Recently, Maria has been eating a lot less. She never finishes what's on her plate at mealtimes. What do you do?
 - a. Tell her she can't leave the table till she's eaten everything on her plate.
 - b. Tell her what anorexia is and why her eating habits are worrying you.
 - c. Nothing. It's probably just a phase that will pass in time.
10. Someone has stolen some money from your bag. Only Mark or Maria could have taken it. What do you do?
 - a. Ask them if they took the money, and insist that they ask you for money if they need some.
 - b. Tell them that neither of them will get any more pocket money until the stolen money has been returned.
 - c. Forget it. After all, money is there to be spent.

Analysis

0-6

You would probably be a liberal parent. You believe that people learn from their mistakes and that young people have to learn to make their own decisions and take complete responsibility for them.

7-13

You would probably be neither strict nor liberal as a parent. You believe that children need rules when they are growing up so that they learn what is right and wrong, but you also think that persuasion is better than force and that it is important for young people to understand why there are limits on what they can and cannot do.

14-20

You would probably be a strict parent. You believe that parents know what is best for their children and that discipline is the best way for children to learn the difference between right and wrong. You also believe that punishment is the best way to respond to bad behaviour.

Now calculate your score. Then read the analysis for your score to find out what kind of parent you would make.

	a.	b.	c.
1.	2	1	0
2.	0	2	1
3.	1	0	2
4.	2	0	1
5.	1	2	0
6.	2	0	1
7.	1	0	2
8.	0	1	2
9.	2	1	0
10.	1	2	0