

Level: Elementary (A1-A2)

Time: Approximately 90 minutes

Business topics: gender equality, parents at work

Business language: useful business vocabulary, language for talking about change, modals, simple past

Activities: discussion, understanding the text, vocabulary, grammar, communicating change, email writing

Groups: Whole class, one-to-one, small groups

Overview: This article discusses recent positive changes to family leave policies in the UK. New policies allow parents to share 52 weeks after having a baby.

1. Warmer

- a. Students discuss the questions about parenting leave policies for men and women where they live. Elicit some ideas and examples to discuss as a class. If students are having trouble understanding the questions, refer them to the glossary at the end of the article.

2. Reading comprehension

- a. Encourage students to first read the article for gist and then to read each statement and scan the text to look for the answers.

Key:

1. *False, now parents can share their family leave to take care of a child.*
2. *True*
3. *True*
4. *False, many men stay home after they have a baby.*
5. *True*
6. *False, men often get paid less than women when they take leave.*

7. *False, 50,000+ women lose their jobs every year after they have a baby.*

8. *True*

3. Vocabulary practice

- a. Ask students to complete the activity in pairs and then compare their answers with others. Go over the answers with students and ask them to re-word each one to check for understanding. Help them out with additional meanings or explanations when necessary.

Key:

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. <i>allow</i> | 5. <i>research</i> |
| 2. <i>opportunity</i> | 6. <i>flexible</i> |
| 3. <i>equal</i> | 7. <i>laws</i> |
| 4. <i>improve</i> | 8. <i>take care of</i> |

- b. Ask students to choose five words from the task and use them in personalised sentences, preferably, words they didn't know before. Walk around and monitor, helping out when necessary.

Ask for one or two examples of each word to check general understanding.

4. Grammar practice

- a. Ask students to first try to choose the correct form of each verb in small groups before finding the answers in the article. Go over the different modal auxiliaries and modal verbs when they should be used. Then have students do the activity individually. Point out what form of the verb is being used after each modal (simple form).

- need to / have to: to talk about obligations and necessities

- can: to talk about abilities and opportunities

- may / might: to talk about a possibility of something happening

Key:

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1. <i>need to</i> | 5. <i>may</i> |
| 2. <i>have to</i> | 6. <i>can</i> |
| 3. <i>can</i> | 7. <i>might</i> |
| 4. <i>can</i> | |

- b. Ask students to do the activity individually. Check the answers with the whole class.

Key:

1. *needs/has to*
2. *can*
3. *may/might*
4. *need/have to*
5. *may/might*

5. Communicative practice

- a. Ask students to work in pairs and discuss their current situation and how they would like to change it.
- b. Once students have defined the changes they want to make, they should write and email to management and suggest these changes. Students can use the template in the worksheets. Have students share their emails with the rest of the class and discuss what the most feasible ideas are.