

Analysing a Reading Sequence from the "New Headway Book" for Pre-intermediate learners



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Date of submission: 10/01/2023 Date of acceptance: 14/04/2023 Date of publication: 14/05/2023



Abstract:

This paper aims at analysing a sequence from the "New Headway Book for pre-intermediate learners of English" to discover the extent to which the reading sequences play a significant role in addressing students' needs at different parts of the sequence. By following some categorization by researchers (Johns and Davies, 1983) on how the reading questions are structure, these "New Headway books" are designed in a way that helps both teachers and learners to achieve the same goals in the teaching and learning process.

key words: Pre-reading questions, Post-reading questions, Reading comprehension, Teaching reading, While-reading questions

1. Introduction

Reading, as one of the four language skills, is considered one of the most important aspects in teaching a foreign language. Nowadays, there is a significant amount of research that has been done on reading and more specifically on teaching reading in EFL classrooms. The majority of the new textbooks nowadays include tasks and activities to teach reading to EFL learners to help them develop their understanding of the course (Freeman, 2014).

2. Description of the Sequence

The sequence I have chosen is from the "New Headway" book of teaching English on pages 66-67 (see Appendix). It is addressed to a pre-

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intermediate level, and I am going to analyse it in detail in this paper. I am analysing it in accordance with the "New Headway" book for teachers addressing the same level, i.e. pre-intermediate. This sequence is in Unit 8, entitled "Girls and Boys". The purpose of this sequence is to raise students' knowledge about a specific topic, as it enables learners to distinguish between the words used to describe boys and those used to describe girls, and also develops the sense of group discussion. There are two texts in the "Reading and Speaking" sequence of the same unit, which are presented in the form of paragraphs. They are descriptions in which mothers in two families describe their life with their children; one is an all-boy family and the other is an all-girl family. The mothers, in two paragraphs, in both families described their family (all-boy family or all-girl family). In the two other paragraphs, they swapped the families; Marianne (the girl's mother) described the life with the four boys of the Cafearo family, while Karen (the boys' mother) described her experience of living in an all-girl family.

The selected sequence includes six tasks. The first task is a kind of introductory activity to the topic of the sequence in which learners are asked to describe their families. Are there boys who have no sisters in their families, and are there girls who have no brothers in their families? This comes first to give students an insight into the general topic of the next activities. The second task is a warm-up activity in which students can guess the topic of the sequence as they have to classify the adjectives into those words which describe girls and those that describe boys. They can also use dictionaries to check the meanings of words they do not know, as well as the pronunciation. This helps them acquire new vocabulary.

In the third task, students have to read the small introduction without reading the paragraphs and answer questions based on their understanding, which leads to a deeper understanding of the texts and prediction of what they are about. This task directs their attention to the topic discussed in the text and gives them a clear idea about the main topic (all-boy family and all-girl family). The fourth task has five direct questions which focus mainly on understanding the four paragraphs. It leads to finding out if the all-boy family is different from the all-girl family after the swapping. In this task, the teacher divides students into two groups (A and B). Each group reads about one family and then discusses the topic together. Group discussion may also include L1, which might reflect mutual scaffolding between group members, thus facilitating their understanding (Trunbull, 2017). "In addition to L1

reading ability and L2 language proficiency, there is another set of knowledge that is essential to the meaning making process of reading, namely background knowledge" (Kong, 2006).

It can be said that this task is an information gap task to help students collect their ideas on a particular topic. This will help the teacher to direct students' attention to the topic discussed in the unit in general and in the text in particular. In doing so, students can be divided into two groups, and at the level of each group, they need to discuss a set of questions and to find out answers to the questions as learners might have different understandings and certain information which will be shared with others during the discussion (Marashi and Mehdizadeh, 2018).

In the following task (5), the teacher has to regroup the students into pairs to discuss the questions together. In this task, they will exchange information about their families in pairs (five and six). In another task, the nature of the questions is related to the main topic of the sequence in which they describe their families and come up with different opinions regarding the task's questions. The sixth task is about listening. This also reflects the group discussion in which one of them listens to the others when describing their families. After that, s/he will answer the questions stated in this task by referring to what the others said.

This sequence includes different tasks with different aims. Each task addresses one theory or one concept in teaching reading comprehension, as Johns and Davies (1983) came up with three concepts to describe how learners interact with a text, including schema theory, TAVI (Text as Vehicle for Information), and TALO (Text as Linguistic Object).

3. Procedures of Analysing the Sequence

In my analysis, I am going to divide the questions and tasks of this sequence into three types by following the pre-, while-, and post-reading framework proposed by Tudor (1989, 1990) and Freeman (2014). I chose this reading sequence because it focuses both on activities designed to improve learners' linguistic competence and on tasks designed to develop high-level skills in learners (Rivas, 1999, p. 13). The first aim is to develop reading fluency, and the other is to learn new vocabulary through reading. I am going to analyse them in relation to the addressed level of this book and in comparison to teachers' books of the same level. Regarding the tasks of this sequence, we can categorize them into pre-, while-, and post-reading tasks.

3.1 Analysing the Pre-reading Questions of the Sequence

According to Johns and Davies (1983), "the primary principle for the selection of texts for TALO is that each should show the syntactic structures being taught at that point in the course, and that each should contain a certain proportion of new vocabulary to be learned" (as cited in Moulinou, 2014, p.4). This was the case in this sequence to some extent, so TALO and TAVI both do exist in this sequence. Since there are some questions that need a direct answer from the text, and others that need the comprehension of a question in order to construct an appropriate answer, Mira-Rivas (1999) states that some of the pre-reading activities include practising previous background knowledge.

According to Tudor (1989), pre-reading can be used to refer to the activities or tasks of the reading sequence prior to the reading of the central material that prepare students for tackling the material and lead them to activate their background knowledge related to the reading sequence. One of the aims of the pre-reading questions is to introduce the topic to the students to help them recall their background knowledge of the main theme (Sunggingwati & Mai Nguyen, 2013). The background knowledge activates the schemata based on the topic that we are dealing with. Understanding the role of the schema in the reading process provides insights into why students may fail to comprehend the text material (Al-Issa, 2006).

Given the fact that the tasks in this sequence aim to develop more than one skill, there are some questions to further develop understanding of the texts, as well as some others which require some background knowledge. The skills that can be developed through this sequence are: reading, speaking, and listening, as students have to read the texts multiple times to find the most relevant answers to the questions. Speaking and listening can be developed through group discussions, as these types of tasks help learners to guess the topic of the reading material. The pre-reading questions activate learners' background knowledge on the topic discussed, as Tudor (1990) stated.

The use of pre-reading is based on the assumption that if learners activate their existing text-relevant background knowledge in an appropriate manner prior to processing a given text, they will be able to relate the textual information more meaningfully to their existing knowledge structures and thus comprehend and assimilate text content more effectively (, p.96)

Following Tudor's (1989) categorization of pre-reading activities, the first category that this sequence starts with is content organizers, in

which the first task provides information about the actual topic of the sequence. The second task includes vocabulary priming by providing some vocabulary items, some of which are used later in the four texts, such as: sporty, gentle, and polite. The last task in pre-reading activities serves as an introduction to the material, and is also some kind of pre-reading question. Turnbull and Sweetnam Evans (2017) claim that "Readers actively connect textual information and background knowledge as they make predictions and develop expectations" (p.137).

The first three tasks are pre-reading activities in which students can discuss without reading the four texts. They are formulated to prepare students for the main topic of the sequence enabling them to guess what the overall topic discussed in the sequence will be. The first activity leads students to talk about their families with the purpose of engaging them in the actual theme of the whole sequence. The second activity is a kind of vocabulary check activity which encourages students to use dictionaries by checking the meaning of the words they are not familiar with. This activates both schemata and the background knowledge in this task, whether students already know these words or not. This also encourages them to activate their schemata about this vocabulary; for example, they can easily recognise that all the words are adjectives. The third activity shapes the topic, after students read the small introduction; they may then predict the topic of the four texts.

This depends on the purpose of the reading activity that learners have. Sometimes they need to skim, scan, or look for the gist for more understanding of the topic. The pre-reading activities activate the schemata of the learners (Moulinou, 2014). According to Tudor (1989), pre-reading materials which tackle information related to the main text play a big role in making students aware of the topic of the main text.

3.2 Analysing While- and Post-reading Questions

By following the description of the activities of Moulinou (2014), there are activities such as product-oriented, lower-level, and text-driven which involve bottom-up processing. The answers and the analysis of the while-reading activities involve reading and re-reading the texts. Task number 4 is an example of a while-reading activity; it has direct questions that require reading and re-reading to pick up the right answers when comparing the swapping of their families.

The activities in post-reading are kinds of group discussions that play a role in developing learners' comprehension, such as tasks 4, 5, and 6. Therefore, there are different purposes of the reading activities, as categorized by Grabe and Stoller (2011, p. 6) as follows:

1. Reading to search for simple information
2. Reading to skim quickly
3. Reading to learn from texts
4. Reading to integrate information
5. Reading to write (or search for information needed for writing)
6. Reading to critique texts
7. Reading for general comprehension.

Linking this categorization to the activities of the sequence of the New Headway book shows the purpose of reading when dealing with a specific topic that students might be familiar with or it could be new to them. The first category (reading to search for information) is formulated in Task 3, in which there is a simple question that needs an answer. Skimming quickly can also be used in Task 4, in which some questions require skimming the texts to get the answers more efficiently than reading and re-reading the whole text. Question 8 in Task 4 can be classified under the category of while-reading questions to learn from the text and so on.

This depends on the purpose of the reading activity that learners have. Sometimes they need to skim, scan, and sometimes they need to look for the gist for more understanding of the topic. The pre-reading activities activated the schemas of the learners (Moulinou, 2014).

Following Freeman's (2014) classification of questions, those are considered comprehension questions, which are categorized into three types: content, language, and affect questions. In this sequence, activities 4, 5, and 6 include these types of questions. For the first category, 'content questions', questions 3 and 4 in task 4 reflect textually explicit content questions, which are used to find answers that are stated directly in the texts. Another category is textually implicit content questions, which can be found in task 4 in questions 2, 6, 7, and 8. The answers to these questions cannot be found very explicitly in the texts; therefore, students need to read and reread the texts to pick up the right answers. Task 2 can be classified under language questions (lexical) due to the question type, which requires a focus on vocabulary rather than looking for information. Another category of questions in this sequence is affect questions, as in task "what do you think," because students need to express their ideas regarding the topic of the texts.

3.3 Vocabulary Comprehension

Comprehension is also important when talking about reading in a second language (L2). According to Koda (2004), "Comprehension occurs when the reader extracts and integrates various information from

the text and combines it with what they already know" (p.4). One of the most important issues in examining the role of vocabulary knowledge for reading is the amount of vocabulary needed for successful reading (Pellicer-Sánchez, 2013). The more vocabulary students know, the more they understand and comprehend the text.

As Prichard (2008) focuses on the use of dictionaries and its role in developing comprehension, it is not always beneficial to use a dictionary in reading comprehension as it encourages learners to rely on dictionaries. On the contrary, it is beneficial to discover our own strategies for comprehension and vocabulary development that vary from individual to individual.

"Another instructional implication of interactive models is the need for a large recognition vocabulary to achieve fluency in reading" (Mira-Rivas, 1999, p.15). The aim of designing effective courses to develop reading comprehension skills has taken up a large part of the discussion for researchers (Grabe, 2004). When reading, students can improve their reading strategies. "Mastery of strategies was another positive predictor of L2 incidental vocabulary acquisition through reading" (Zhao et al., 2016, p. 236).

4. Reading Strategies

The first strategy students rely on during their reading is their background information, which leads to the activation of the existing information they have and linking it to the piece of reading they are dealing with. Teachers should raise students' awareness of the reading strategies and not rely on dictionaries. While using dictionaries is useful for students, they should also be able to show their way of comprehension, e.g. understanding the meaning of a new word from the context. "The reading text is treated as TAVI overall. Reader autonomy is targeted as the teacher's role is to guide the students through exploring the different ideas in the different stages rather than give the "right" answers to the students" (Moulinou, 2014, p.9). Therefore, predicting and inferring the meaning from the piece of reading is essential. Another way to reflect students' understandings of the reading strategies is through negotiation and discussion with others. According to Al Salmi (2011), a bottom-up process should first be employed "as a base for comprehending a text" and then a top-down process can be followed for high-level interpretation of the text content (As cited in Moulinou, 2014, p.9).

5. Evaluation

In the pre-reading activities, there are vocabulary provided, some of which are already mentioned in the four texts that students will read in this sequence. These tasks activate the students' mental processing when dealing with a reading material. I think these tasks are appropriate to help students infer the nature of the texts they are going to read.

As far as reading comprehension is concerned, this sequence aims at developing the learners' reading skills since the reading tasks require the students to engage in the reading process, which leads to better understanding and comprehension. "The task role significantly affects ratings of difficulty, though task sequencing does not. Sequencing does affect the accuracy and fluency of speaker production" (Robinson, 2001, p. 27), and teachers must provide students with a clear explanation to gain a clear understanding of the topic discussed in the sequence.

6. Conclusion

This paper is an attempt to analyze a sequence from the "New Headway Book for Pre-intermediate Learners of English" to discover the extent to which the reading sequences play a significant role in addressing students' needs at different parts of the sequence. By following some categorization by researchers on how the reading questions are structured, these "New Headway books" are designed in a way that helps both teachers and learners to achieve the same goals in the teaching and learning process, which is to guide learners to learn English step by step. In addition, the "New Headway books" facilitate the teaching process by addressing various language skills that students need to improve during the learning process.

Meanwhile, the L2 proficiency measures in the study were somewhat similar, affecting the way students interact with the written text (Jeong-Wo & Lemonnier Schallert, 2019). Thus, one of the ways to enhance comprehension in reading is to make students cognizant of the various levels of comprehension that can be reached at different levels (Paran, 2002).

Definitely, there is a way to improve the reading tasks more and more based on students' background knowledge and their individual differences that should be taken into consideration in the learning process. The analysis of the behaviour in relation to learners' differences in language backgrounds, experiences regarding literacy can be explained in relation to learners' cultural backgrounds and different strategies that can be used in the understanding process (Parry, 1996).

Corrêa Kader (2009) claims that we have to focus on the use of the various genres by taking into account the background knowledge of the learners to develop their reading skills. Lastly, we can say that this sequence addresses the reading strategies that students can improve through different types of questions to help pre-intermediate students develop their way of understanding the reading material they are dealing with. From the organization of the questions in this sequence, we can see that the course designers tend to shed light on more than one type of questions in one sequence (i.e., Pre-, While-, and Post-reading questions).

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Appendices

- (I) 1st and 2nd appendices are from the “New Headway Book for Pre-intermediate students”, Student’s book
- (II) 3rd and 4th appendices are from the “New Headway Book for Pre-intermediate students”, Teacher’s book

READING AND SPEAKING

Families with all boys or all girls

- 1 Do a class survey. Which girls have sisters and no brothers? Which boys have brothers and no sisters? How does this affect their family?
- 2 Look at the adjectives in the box. Which do you think usually describe boys, and which girls? Use your dictionary if necessary.

sporty	gentle	boisterous	loud	quiet
chatty	untidy	competitive	sensitive	polite

- 3 Read the introduction to *Sons and Daughters*. What was the aim of the TV programme? Who were the two families? What did they have to do? *Swap roles*
- 4 Work in two groups. Answer the questions.
Group A Read about the Cafearo family and the swap.
Group B Read about the Tibbett family and the swap.

THE FAMILY

- 1 What jobs do the parents do?
- 2 How long have they been married?
- 3 Why did they want a big family?
- 4 Why are the husbands happy with their families?
- 5 How do the children behave? Do they get on well?

THE SWAP

- 6 What were the parents' first impressions when they swapped families?
 - 7 What differences did they find?
 - 8 Do they think boys or girls are harder to bring up?
- 5 Find a partner from the other group. Go through the questions together and compare your families.

What do you think?

- What are the pros and cons of all-girl or all-boy families?
- What is the ideal family? How many children is the ideal? Why?
- Are/Were there many house rules in your family? What do/did you have to do? Write a list of house rules for the ideal family.

Listening – Brothers and sisters

- 6 **T8.7** Listen to three people talking about their families. After each one answer these questions. Who do you think is the happiest?
- 1 How many brothers and sisters do they have?
- 2 Where do they come in the family? First? Second? etc.
- 3 What do they like about their situation?
- 4 What don't they like?
- 5 Do they think their parents have a favourite child?
- 6 How many children do they want?



Unit 9 • Girls and boys

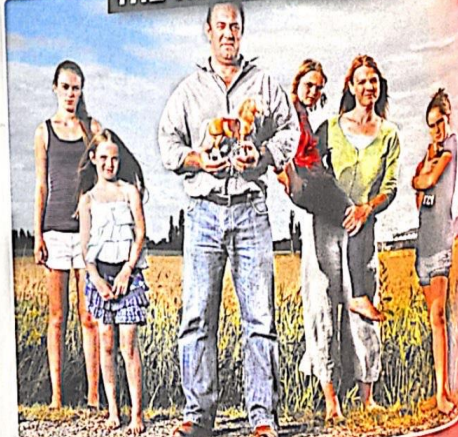


SONS

THE CAFEARO FAMILY



THE TIBBETT FAMILY



AND DAUGHTERS

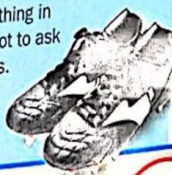
Is an all-boy family very different from having an all-girl family? What is it like to be totally outnumbered by the opposite sex in your own home? To find the answer, TV's Channel 4 asked **Marianne and Jon Tibbett**, the parents of four daughters to swap homes with **Karen and Steve Cafearo**, who have four sons.



Karen talks about her family

Karen Cafearo, 43, lives with husband, Steve, 49, a manager at Jaguar Cars, and their sons Francis (17), Alex (15), Joseph (11), and Samuel (9). Karen is an accountant. She says:

'I married Steve when I was 21. I'm the oldest of four children and I always wanted a big family. Also, I wanted a son for Steve, he's very sporty, loves his football, so he's delighted to have four sons. The boys love kicking balls and racing around on their bikes. They don't see danger. Steve says I mustn't worry. He says boys will be boys. Sometimes I feel left out of all their sport, but I'm pleased that I don't have to watch football in the pouring rain. The boys see everything in black and white. I should learn not to ask them about their lives and feelings. 'Dunno' is their usual answer. I have often wondered what a family of girls would be like.'



THE SWAP

Karen and Steve Cafearo go to the TIBBETT HOME

When Karen and Steve arrived at the Tibbett family home, she had to laugh. There were piles of pink ballet shoes and riding boots all over the floor. Karen says:

'The four girls are as passionate about dancing and horse-riding as my boys are about football and rugby, but I was shocked by the mess. I have strict rules for my boys. They can't wear their shoes upstairs and they have to tidy their rooms. The girls were so excited to see us, they wanted to chat and ask us questions. It was fantastic, but us, they wanted to chat and ask us questions. They didn't want to play in the garden. I think girls need more attention than boys. Another shock for me was how nice the girls were to each other. The boys love each other but they fight and fall out endlessly.'

The thing I loved most was shopping with the girls. We had great fun. I miss that with boys. Poor Steve had to carry the bags. I saw a big change in him. With girls he was so sensitive and gentle.

I loved the chats with the girls, but I also like my own space. I think girls are harder work.'



Marianne talks about her family

Marianne Tibbett, 38, lives with husband, Jon, 45, and their daughters Annabelle (14), Francesca (11), Genevieve (9), and Catherine (8). They run a haulage business together. Marianne says:

'Jon and I met and married within sixteen months. He was 29. People often ask us if we have so many children because we were trying for a boy. But this isn't true. I'm an only child and it was my dream to have a big family. We were delighted when Annabelle arrived and equally delighted when Francesca arrived three years later, followed by Genevieve and Catherine. Jon loves having four girls, he is their superhero dad! Our daughters are fabulous. Most of the time they get on really well together. They're a chatty group! But we were fascinated to try living with boys.'



THE SWAP

Marianne and Jon Tibbett go to the CAFAARO HOME

Marianne expected the Cafearo boys to be loud and boisterous. In fact on the first day they were very quiet and polite. Marianne says:

'They even took their shoes off before going upstairs. I soon realised why Karen and Steve had to have such strict house rules. The boys were constantly on the go and wildly competitive. They raced around the garden and dived into the pool. There was a fight between one of the little boys and his big brother. I tried to make them apologize, which is what I do with my girls, but it just made them more angry. The little one went away by himself, cried, then forgot all about it.'

But the biggest shock for me was the change in my gentle husband. He became more and more competitive. We all went go-karting. We've never done this with our family. Jon joined in with the boys and it was clear he wanted to win as much as they did. He had great fun and I loved seeing him so happy. I know he would love to have had a son to continue the business. But now we've seen the reality of having boys! They're exhausting. I honestly think they are much harder work than girls.'

I'm sorry to have to tell you that ... - I regret to inform you that ...
I'm sending you a copy of ... - Please find enclosed a photocopy of ...
If you need any more help, ... - If you require further assistance, ...

- 6 Tell students that Gianna has also emailed her friend Steve. Give students time to read the email. Ask *Why has she emailed Steve?* (to tell him about her plans to visit England).

Focus attention on the highlighted lines in the email.
Elicit the more formal wording for the first example.

Ask students in pairs to continue the task. Then get students to underline other examples of informal language in the email.

Check the answers.

Answers

I'm thinking of coming = I am interested in coming
use English a lot in my new job = use English frequently in my job
I want (need) some extra lessons = I now feel that it is necessary to study further
especially for my pronunciation = I would especially like to improve my pronunciation
an ad = an advertisement
I'd love to = I would also like to
Can't wait to hear from you = I look forward to hearing from you
Other examples of informal language:
Direct personal references: *You know I have to use English...* - as you are always telling me ..., *Isn't that quite near you?*
Contractions, e.g. *I'm, isn't*, etc.
Exclamations, e.g. *need!*, *I should try to improve this!*
Missing subject pronoun, e.g. *Can't wait to hear from you.*
Ideas linked by a dash, e.g. *especially for my pronunciation - as you are always telling me ...*

- 7 Read the task as a class and refer students back to headings and structure of the formal letter shown on SB p112. Give them time to plan their letter and think about:

- how to position their address and date
- their own language learning history and reasons for wanting to learn more English.

Refer students to Gianna's email for length and remind students of the key points of informal style. Give students time to write their letter and email in class or set one of them for homework.

When the students have finished, you could ask them to exchange their work with a partner and mark up mistakes in the letter and email with the correction symbols from Unit 1 SB p104.

SUGGESTION

If you have access to computers, students can write and send the emails to each other electronically.

If you check the students' work, point out errors but allow students to correct them themselves. Try to limit correction to major problems to avoid demoralizing the students.

READING AND SPEAKING (SB p66)

Families with all boys or all girls

ABOUT THE TEXT

The theme of gender and expectations about boys' and girls' behaviour is explored in this skills section with a jigsaw reading task on two families - one with all sons and the other with all daughters. This gives students an opportunity for not only reading practice, but also some freer speaking.

The two families in the texts are the Tibbetts and the Cafearos. Marianne and Jon Tibbett have four daughters, aged from eight to fourteen years old, while Karen and Steve Cafearo have four boys, aged from nine to seventeen. Steve works for Jaguar /'dʒæɡjuə/ Cars, a British luxury car manufacturer.

The families first featured in a programme on British TV. The aim of the programme was to ask what it is like to be a 'minority parent' in your own home, i.e. a mother surrounded by boys and men, or a father in a house of girls and women. The two families agreed to swap homes for a long weekend to experience the differences at first hand. During the swap the parents of the girls went to live with the boys of the other family, and vice versa. The outcome of the experiment was that both couples thought they had the better life with their original family, but they also learned a lot about themselves.

Encourage students to use the context to help them with new vocabulary, or use a dictionary when necessary. With weaker classes, or if you are short of time, you could pre-teach/check some of following vocabulary: *accountant, delighted, to kick balls, to race around, to feel left out, dunno* (informal = I don't know), *to wonder, to laugh, ballet shoes, passionate about, mess, exhausting, attention, haulage* /'hɔ:lɪdʒ/, *dream* (n), *superhero, fabulous, fascinated, to be not on the go* (to be very active/busy), *to dive, to apologize, to cry, to go go-karting, to join in, reality.*

- 1 Lead in to the topic by giving a brief description of your own family profile. Get students to ask the questions across the class and identify the all-girl families and the all-boy families. Elicit examples of how their profile affects their family. With larger classes, you could set up the survey in groups and then get students to report back.
- 2 If possible, let students use a dictionary to help them with this task. Read through the adjectives and check pronunciation of *gentle* /'dʒentl/, *boisterous* /'bɔɪstərəs/, and *loud* /laʊd/. If students, don't have access to dictionaries, deal with any comprehension queries. Put students in pairs/groups of three to discuss the questions. Monitor and help as necessary. Elicit a range of opinions from the class. Establish which adjectives most students think describe boys and which describe girls.
- 3 Focus attention on the photos and ask *What's special about the families?* (one family has all sons, and the other all daughters). *What do they like doing?* (the girls like horse-riding and the boys like football and riding bikes).

Pre-teach/check *outnumbered*, *the opposite sex*, and *to swap*. Give students time to read the introduction to the article and find answers to the questions.
Let students compare their answers in pairs before discussing as a class.

Answers

The aim was to find out if an all-boy family is different from an all-girl family and what it is like to be outnumbered by the opposite sex in your own home.
The two families are Marianne and Jon Tibbett and their four daughters, and Karen and Steve Cafearo and their four sons. They had to swap homes.

- 4 Pre-teach/check *to behave*, *first impressions*, and *to bring up*. Put students into two groups, A and B. (With larger classes, you may need to have multiple sets of the two groups.) Assign a text to each group and remind students to read only their text:

Group A – the Cafearo family

Group B – the Tibbett family

Get students to read their text quite quickly. Monitor and help with any vocabulary queries.

Get students to discuss questions 1–8, working in their A or B groups and noting down the answers to each one. The answers for each group are provided below for reference, but don't check the answers with the whole class at this stage.

Answers

Group A – the Cafearo family

- 1 Steve is a manager for Jaguar Cars and Karen is an accountant.
- 2 They've been married 22 years.
- 3 Karen is the oldest of four children and she always wanted a big family.
- 4 Steve is very sporty and loves football, so he enjoys having sons who like the same things.
- 5 The boys are very active. They kick balls and race around on their bikes. They don't see danger and they see everything in black and white. They don't like being asked about their lives and feelings. They love each other but they fight and fall out a lot. Karen has strict rules for the boys. They can't wear their shoes upstairs and they have to tidy their rooms.
- 6 Karen laughed because there were ballet shoes and riding boots everywhere. The girls are as passionate about dancing and horse-riding as her boys are about football and rugby. Karen was shocked by the mess.
- 7 The girls wanted to chat and ask questions. They helped in the kitchen, but they didn't want to play in the garden. Karen was surprised how nice the girls were to each other. She had fun shopping with them – she misses doing this with her boys. There was a big change in Steve – he was more sensitive and gentle.
- 8 Karen says that girls need more attention and that they are harder to bring up.

Group B – the Tibbett family

- 1 The Tibbetts run a haulage business.
- 2 They've been married 16 years.
- 3 Marianne is an only child and it was her dream to have a big family.
- 4 Jon loves having four daughters. The girls think he is a superhero dad.
- 5 The girls are very chatty. Most of the time they get on very well.
- 6 Marianne expected the boys to be loud and boisterous but they were quiet and polite on the first day. They followed the house rules from their own home, e.g. taking off their shoes before going upstairs.

- 7 The boys were constantly on the go and very competitive. They raced around the garden and dived into the pool. When two of them fell out, Marianne tried to make them apologize, as she does with her girls, but this made things worse. The little one went away, cried, and then forgot all about it. There was a big change in Jon – he became much more competitive. They went go-karting for the first time and Jon wanted to win as much as the boys did.
- 8 Marianne says that boys are exhausting and that they are harder to bring up.

- 5 Re-group the students into A/B pairs. Demonstrate the activity by getting a pair of students to answer the first question. Students continue exchanging the information about their family in closed pairs. Remind them to refer to their notes and answer the questions in their own words, rather than reading out sections of the reading text. Monitor and note down any common errors to feed back on at a later stage.

During the feedback stage, get one student, different pairs in turn, to summarize the answers for each question. Elicit general reactions from the class about the family swap and the parents' opinions about boys and girls.

What do you think?

Read the questions as a class. Check comprehension of *pros and cons* and *ideal*. Elicit a few responses to the first questions. With weaker students, you could list categories for house rules to help set up the final discussion point, e.g. family time, time children/teenagers spend on computers or watching TV, cooking, housework/chores, keeping the house tidy, family activities, etc. If necessary, remind students to use *had to* to talk about their family rules in the past.

Put students in small groups to discuss their opinions. Ask one student to lead the discussion by asking the questions and making sure everybody speaks. Ask another student to be prepared to summarize what the group said for the class at the end. Elicit examples of house rules students experienced and build up a list of rules for the ideal family on the board.

SUGGESTION

You could put students in groups to draft a list of class rules. Elicit examples from each group and get students to decide on a definitive set that they are all happy with. Students then make a poster showing the rules for display on the classroom wall.

Listening – Brothers and sisters

ABOUT THE LISTENING

The recording for this final task consists of three short monologues in which people talk about their brothers and sisters and their expectations for their future family. The second speaker has the girl's equivalent of the boy's name Peter. The pronunciation is the same, but the spelling is P - E - T - A.

Students shouldn't have many problems with the vocabulary, but you could check the following items: *elder* (brother/sister)/*the eldest*, *the baby* (= the youngest child), *kids*, *step-dad*.

Author Biodata

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