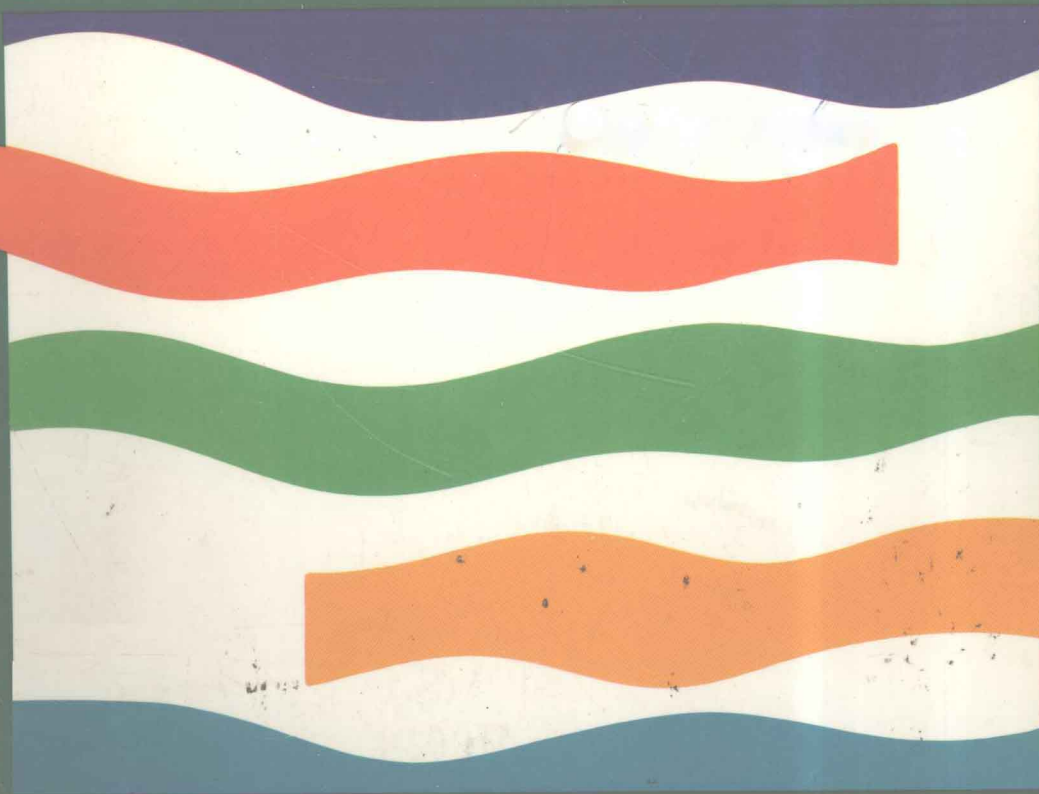


# FACE THE ISSUES

Intermediate Listening and  
Critical Thinking Skills



Carol Numrich

In Cooperation with

National Public Radio

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and  
Critical Thinking Skills

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**National Public Radio**



Longman  
New York & London

## Face the Issues: Intermediate Listening and Critical Thinking Skills

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# INTRODUCTION

***Face the Issues: Intermediate Listening and Critical Thinking Skills*** consists of twelve authentic radio interviews and reports from National Public Radio. The broadcasts were taken from “All Things Considered,” “Morning Edition,” and “Weekend Edition–Sunday.”

Designed for intermediate students of English as a Second Language, the text presents an integrated approach to developing listening comprehension and critical thinking skills. By using material produced for the native speaker, the listening selections provide content which is interesting, relevant, and educational. At the same time, they expose the non-native speaker to unedited language, including the hesitations, redundancies, and various dialectical patterns which occur in everyday speech.

Each unit presents either a dialog or discussion of an issue of international appeal. The students gain an understanding of American values and culture as they develop their listening skills. Throughout each unit, students are encouraged to use the language and concepts presented in the listening material and to reevaluate their point of view.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR USE

The exercises are designed to stimulate an interest in the material by drawing on students' previous knowledge and opinions and by aiding comprehension through vocabulary and guided listening exercises. In a variety of discussion activities, the students finally integrate new information with previously held opinions.

### 1 Predicting

In this exercise, students are asked to read the title of the interview or report and predict the content of the unit. This exercise should take a very short time—two or three minutes.

Some of the titles require an understanding of vocabulary or idiomatic expressions which the teacher may want to explain to the students. The ideas generated by the students can be written on the blackboard. Once the students have listened to the interview or report, they can verify their predictions.

### 2 Think Ahead

Before listening to the tape, students are asked to discuss the issues to be presented in the interview or report. In groups of four or five, the students discuss their answers to general questions or react to statements which include ideas from the broadcast. The students draw on their own knowledge or experience for this activity. It is likely that students will have different opinions and the discussion, especially with a verbal class, could become quite lengthy. It is recommended that the teacher limit this discussion to ten or fifteen minutes, so as not to exhaust the subject prior to the listening activities.

### 3 Vocabulary

In this section, three types of exercises are presented to prepare the students for vocabulary and expressions used in the listening selection.

*Vocabulary in a reading text.* In these exercises, vocabulary is presented in a reading passage which also introduces some of the ideas from the broadcast. The students should read through the text once for global comprehension. Then, as they reread the text, they match the vocabulary items with synonyms or short definitions. The meaning of the new words may be derived from context clues, from general knowledge of the language, or from a dictionary.

*Vocabulary in sentences.* In these exercises, vocabulary is presented in sentences which relate to the ideas in the listening selection. Context clues are provided in each sentence. The students should first try to guess the meaning of these words by supplying their own definition or another word which they think has similar meaning. Although the students may not be sure of the exact meaning, they should be encouraged to guess. Research suggests that this will lead them to a better understanding of the new words. Once they have tried to determine the meaning of these words through context, they match the words with definitions or synonyms.

*Vocabulary in word groups.* These exercises focus on the relationship between specific vocabulary items from the listening selection and other words. A set of three words follows a given vocabulary item; in each set, two words have similar meaning to the vocabulary item. It is suggested that the students work together to discuss what they know about these words. Through these discussions, they will begin to recognize roots and prefixes, and how these words relate to each other. The students should be encouraged to use a dictionary for this exercise.

### 4 Task Listening

This exercise presents the students with a global comprehension task before asking them to focus on more specific information in the listening selection. The “task” is purposely simple to help students focus on an important point in the recorded material. Consequently, most of the students should be able to answer the questions after the first listening.

### 5 Listening for Main Ideas

The second time students hear the recorded material, they are given questions to guide them in comprehending the main ideas of the listening selection. Each interview or report has between three and five main ideas which have been used to divide the selection into Parts. Each Part is introduced by a beep on the tape. The students are asked to choose the answers which best express the main ideas. The teacher should stop the tape at the sound of the beep to make sure the students have chosen an answer. The students may then compare their answers to see whether they agree on the main ideas. Only one listening is usually required for this exercise; however, some classes may need to listen twice in order to agree on the main ideas.

## 6 Listening for Details

In the third listening, the students are asked to focus on detailed information. The students are first asked to read either true and false statements or multiple choice questions. The teacher should clarify any items which the students do not understand. Then each Part of the recording is played. The students choose the correct answers as they listen, thus evaluating their comprehension. Finally, in pairs, they compare answers. The teacher should encourage the students to defend their answers based on their comprehension. They should also be encouraged to use the language from the tape to convince the other students of the accuracy of their answers. There will certainly be disagreements over some of the answers; the discussions will help focus attention on the information needed to answer the questions correctly. By listening to each Part another time, the students generally recognize this information. Once again, they should be asked to agree on their answers. If there are still misunderstandings, the tape should be played a third time, with the teacher verifying the answers and pointing out where the information is heard on the tape. It is important to note that some of the questions require interpretation or inference.

## 7 Looking at Language

In this exercise, an interesting point of language from the recorded material is presented in isolation, as a further aid to comprehension. In each broadcast, the use of grammar, idioms, or language is highlighted. The students are asked to listen to a segment from the listening selection and to focus on this use of language in context. Then, through discussions and exercises, the students practice the language in a different context. These exercises are not meant to be exhaustive, but rather to point out an interesting use of language. The teacher may want to supplement this exercise.

## 8 Follow-up Activities

In this section, three activities are presented. The teacher may want to choose only one, or perhaps choose one oral and one writing activity. The students should be encouraged to incorporate in their writing and discussions the vocabulary and concepts that were presented in the interview or report. It is expected that the students will synthesize the information gathered from the broadcast with their own opinions.

*Discussion questions.* In groups, the students discuss their answers to one or more of the questions. Students will most likely have different points of view, and it is during this discussion that they are given the opportunity to present their views to each other.

*Essay topics.* These topics give the students the opportunity to react in writing to the interview or report.

*Interactive processing activities.* These final activities consist of surveys, debates, design activities, role-plays, and values clarification exercises, in which the students must solve problems or develop ideas that recycle the language and concepts in the interviews and reports. During these activities, the students will have an opportunity to creatively examine their beliefs about the issues presented.

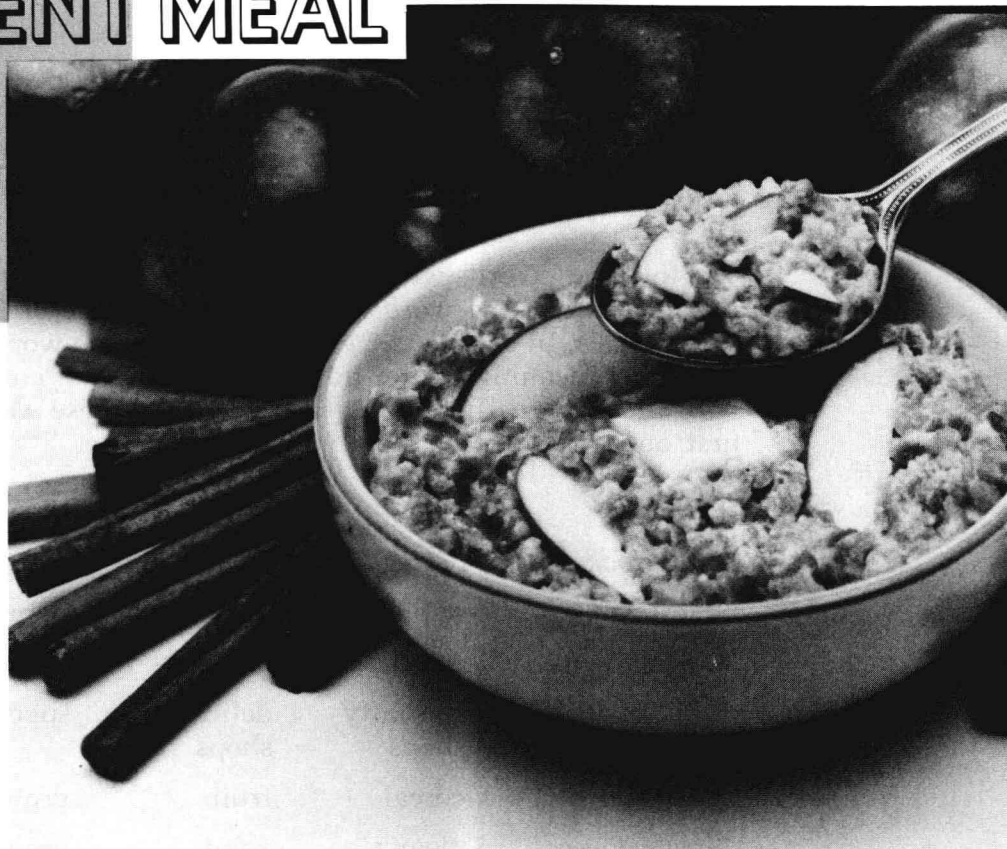
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# THE LAST INNOCENT MEAL



1

## PREDICTING

From the title, discuss what you think the interview is about.



## 2

## THINK AHEAD

In groups, discuss your answers to the following questions.

1. Do you eat breakfast every day? What is a typical breakfast in your country?
2. Do people in your country ever combine breakfast and lunch into a Sunday brunch? Which do you prefer, to have brunch, or to eat two separate meals? Why?
3. Who cooks your meals? Do you like to cook? If so, what do you cook best?

## 3

## VOCABULARY

The following words will help you understand the interview. Try to guess the meaning of the words. Use your knowledge of English, or use your dictionaries. In each set of words, cross out the word that does not have a similar meaning to the italicized word. Then compare your answers with those of another student. Discuss why these words are similar. The first one has been done for you.

- |                         |                 |                |                          |
|-------------------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| 1. <i>trendy</i>        | chic            | stylish        | <del>old-fashioned</del> |
| 2. <i>overlooked</i>    | disregarded     | neglected      | focused                  |
| 3. <i>festive</i>       | happy           | gay            | depressing               |
| 4. <i>ingredients</i>   | mixtures        | elements       | parts                    |
| 5. <i>gourmet shops</i> | specialty shops | delicacy shops | supermarkets             |
| 6. <i>oatmeal</i>       | cereal          | fruit          | grain                    |
| 7. <i>translucent</i>   | clear           | solid          | see-through              |
| 8. <i>transform</i>     | remain          | change         | alter                    |
| 9. <i>accustomed to</i> | used to         | attracted to   | familiar with            |
| 10. <i>lumpy</i>        | with pieces     | smooth         | rough                    |
| 11. <i>soupy</i>        | thick           | watery         | thin                     |

## 4

## TASK LISTENING

Listen to the interview. Find the answer to the following question.

What is the example of good breakfast food?

## 5

## LISTENING FOR MAIN IDEAS

Listen to the interview again. The interview has been divided into three parts. You will hear a beep at the end of each part. As you listen, circle the answer that best expresses the main idea in that part. Compare your answers with those of another student.

**PART 1** Why has Marian Cunningham written *The Breakfast Book*?

- a. She thinks people have stopped eating breakfast.  
 b. She thinks breakfast has been overlooked.  
 c. She wanted to share her gourmet recipes.

**PART 2** How would you describe her recipe for oatmeal?

- a. It's very complicated.  
 b. You need a lot of ingredients.  
 c. It's simple and basic.

**PART 3** What's the best kind of oatmeal?

- a. Oatmeal which is lumpy and soupy  
 b. Oatmeal made with rolled oats  
 c. Oatmeal cake

## 6

## LISTENING FOR DETAILS

Read the statements for Part 1. Then listen to Part 1 again and decide whether the statements are true or false. As you listen, write a *T* or *F* next to each statement. Compare your answers with those of another student. If you disagree, listen to Part 1 again.

**PART 1**

- 1. Marian Cunningham is a newspaper columnist.
- 2. Her book, *The Breakfast Book*, was published last year.
- 3. She believes that breakfast is trendy and chic.
- 4. She thinks that breakfast and brunch are similar.
- 5. People often drink wine with brunch.
- 6. In her opinion, breakfast food uses basic ingredients.
- 7. To find good breakfast food ingredients, Marian Cunningham suggests going to gourmet shops.

Repeat the same procedure for Parts 2 and 3.

**PART 2**

- 8. Marian Cunningham uses rolled oats in her recipe.
- 9. You must use one cup of oats for the recipe.
- 10. You have to add cold water and salt to the oats.
- 11. The oatmeal stands overnight in the oven.
- 12. In the morning, you reheat the oatmeal.
- 13. The oatmeal is very translucent in the morning.
- 14. With this recipe, the oatmeal doesn't taste like oats.
- 15. You must cook the oatmeal the night before in a very hot oven.

**PART 3**

16. At summer camp, people laughed at the oatmeal.
17. The interviewer thinks oatmeal looks awful.
18. If oatmeal is lumpy, it's because it's too soupy.
19. Rolled oats are lump-proof.
20. Marian Cunningham likes oatmeal with sugar and heavy cream.
21. She likes to eat oatmeal with pound cake.

**7****LOOKING AT LANGUAGE** Verbs Used in Cooking**Exercise 1**

In this interview, Marian Cunningham describes a recipe for “good, simple breakfast food.” Listen to her description again and fill in the missing verbs.

*Interviewer:*

Give us an example of just plain, simple, good breakfast food.

*Cunningham:*

Well, I think that this would be a wonderful surprise to lots of people . . . the use of rolled oats. And this comes really from Scotland and Ireland. It's called “Irish oatmeal” sometimes, although it is, these are rolled oats and not the steel-cut oats. But simply taking, let's say, a cup or maybe only  $\frac{2}{3}$  cup of oats

and \_\_\_\_\_<sub>1</sub> 1½ cups of boiling water over it, with

a little salt in the water. \_\_\_\_\_<sub>2</sub> it,

\_\_\_\_\_<sub>3</sub> it, and \_\_\_\_\_<sub>4</sub> it \_\_\_\_\_<sub>4</sub>

overnight, preferably in a very low oven, 200 degrees,

all night long. In the morning, I simply \_\_\_\_\_<sub>5</sub>

it as hot as I wish, and \_\_\_\_\_<sub>6</sub> and \_\_\_\_\_<sub>7</sub>.

### Exercise 2

Work with another student. Look at the chart below. The verbs from Exercise 1 have been put into categories on the chart. Discuss the meaning of these verbs.

Combining Ingredients	Changing the Consistency of Food	Preparing to Cook	Cooking Food	Getting Ready to Eat
<i>pour</i> <i>stir</i>	<i>let stand</i>	<i>cover</i>	<i>heat</i>	<i>serve</i>

Now read the following recipe for pound cake. Discuss the meaning of the italicized verbs. Use your dictionaries to help you. Then write them on the chart in the appropriate category. Some words may be used in more than one category.

### Pound Cake

*Preparation time: 30 minutes*

*Cooking time: 1 hour*

#### Ingredients

4 cups flour	3 cups sugar
1 tsp. salt	8 eggs
4 tsp. baking powder	1 cup milk
1 1/2 cups butter	2 tsp. vanilla

#### Directions

*Preheat* oven to 325°. *Sift* the flour before measuring. *Measure* 4 cups of flour and sift again with salt and baking powder.

*Cream* the butter until soft. *Add* the sugar and continue creaming. *Beat* the eggs in a separate bowl. *Combine* the eggs and sugar mixture. *Combine* the flour mixture with the milk and vanilla. *Mix* all the ingredients. *Blend* thoroughly.

*Grease* two 4 1/2 x 8-inch loaf pans. *Bake* for 1 hour.

### Exercise 3

Recipes are generally written very simply. The directions are clear and to the point. A well-designed recipe usually gives:

1. The ingredients, in the order you need to use them;
2. The exact measurements for each ingredient;
3. The time for preparation and cooking;
4. The steps for preparing the ingredients and instructions on how to cook them.

Using some of the vocabulary from the chart and the design of the pound cake recipe, write one of your favorite recipes.

## 8

### FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

#### Discussion Questions

In groups, discuss your answers to the following questions.

1. In your opinion, which is the most important meal of the day? Why?
2. How does your life-style influence the way you eat? Is it possible to eat simple, healthy food in today's busy world?

#### Essay Topics

Choose one of the following topics.

1. Do you agree with Marian Cunningham that breakfast is "the last innocent meal"? Write an essay in which you express your opinion.
2. Does eating have a festive/celebratory role in your life? Or, do you think people focus too much on eating when they are in social situations? Write an essay in which you express your opinion.

#### Design A Breakfast Menu

In this interview, Marian Cunningham spoke about oatmeal, a simple breakfast food. She wrote a book about breakfast because she felt it was a meal that was overlooked.

Work in groups. Read the following situation and design a breakfast menu.

**THE SITUATION**


You own a restaurant which specializes in Sunday brunches. When it first opened, your restaurant was very successful. However, over the past few years, many new restaurants have opened up in your neighborhood. They also specialize in brunch.

Last month you did a market survey. You asked people in the area about their eating habits. You discovered that more and more people are interested in eating good, simple breakfast food. Many of the people said they didn't always take the time to eat breakfast at home, but they would eat out if there were a restaurant that served breakfast on their way to work. Based on your survey, you have decided to change your brunch menu to a breakfast menu.

Look at the menu below. Redesign it so that you offer good, simple breakfast food. In planning, decide on the following:

- which foods and drinks you will continue to serve
- which foods and drinks you will no longer serve
- which foods and drinks you will add to the menu
- which prices you will change

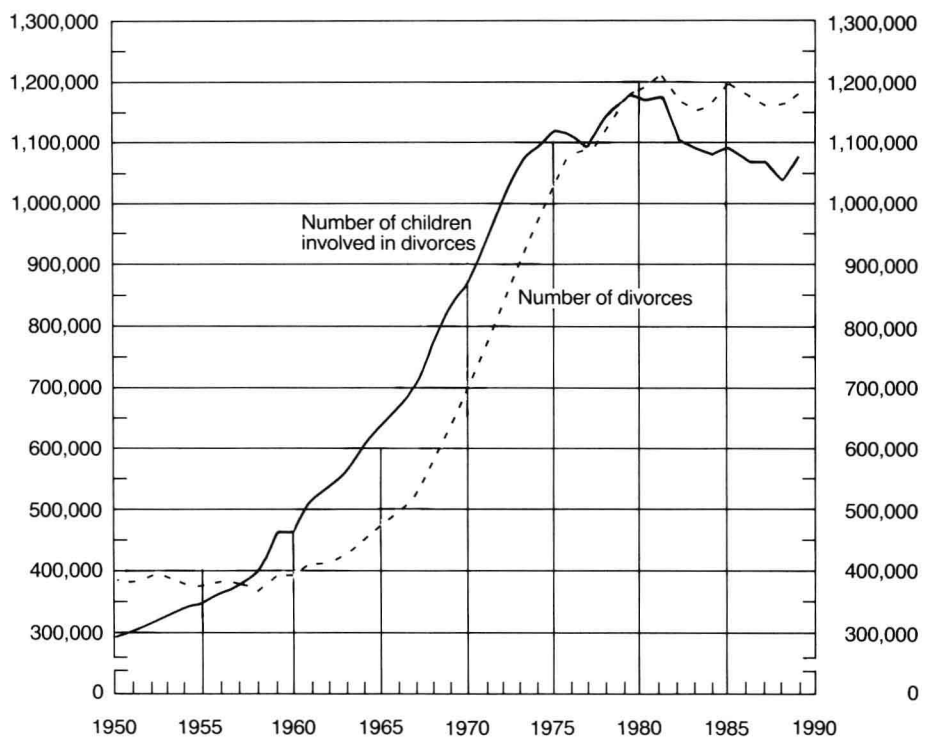
Compare your menu with those of other groups.

<div style="text-align: center;">  <p><b>Sherwin's Place</b></p> </div> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>SUNDAY BRUNCH</b> Served 11:30 P.M.–2:30 P.M.</p> <p><b>EYE OPENERS</b> <i>(Your choice of Bloody Mary, Mimosa, or a glass of champagne) . . . . . \$3.75</i></p> <p><b>STARTERS</b> <i>Soup of the Day . . . . . \$3.25</i> <i>Fresh Fruit in Season . . . . . \$2.75</i></p> <p><b>ENTREES</b> • Eggs Benedict <i>English muffin, Canadian bacon, and poached eggs topped with Hollandaise sauce . . . . . \$6.95</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eggs Florentine <i>English muffin, freshly cooked spinach, and poached eggs topped with Hollandaise sauce . . . . . \$6.95</i></li> <li>• French Toast <i>French bread dipped in egg batter, lightly browned, and sprinkled with cinnamon &amp; powdered sugar . . \$5.25</i> <i>with fresh strawberries . . . \$ .75</i></li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">ALL ITEMS ARE SERVED WITH ASSORTED BREADS &amp; MUFFINS, COFFEE OR TEA.</p> <p><b>EXTRAS</b> Bacon . . . . . \$1.75 Sausage . . . . . \$1.75 Croissant . . . . . \$1.45</p>
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"The Last Innocent Meal" was first broadcast on *Morning Edition*, October 4, 1987. The interviewer is Susan Stamberg.



# LIVING THROUGH DIVORCE



Divorces and children involved: United States, 1950-1989

1

## PREDICTING

From the title, discuss what you think the interview is about.

---

## 2 THINK AHEAD

---

In groups, discuss your answers to the following questions.

1. Look at the graph on page 9. How has the number of children involved in divorces in the U.S. changed since 1950?
2. Who suffers more in a divorce, parents or children?
3. Should parents who get divorced explain the reasons to their children?

---

## 3 VOCABULARY

---

The words in italics will help you understand the interview. Read the following sentences. Try to guess the meaning of these words from the context of the sentences. Then write a synonym or your own definition of the words.

1. Children often feel alone and don't know who they can *turn to* when their parents get divorced.  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. It is difficult for children to *get used to* living with only one parent after their parents are divorced.  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. People often find it difficult to explain their reasons for divorce. Is it the parents' responsibility to *share* these reasons with their children?  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. When parents divorce they often have a difficult time *reassuring* their children and making them feel that everything will be all right.  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. A child's first dance or music *recital* is a big event. Children feel it is important for their parents to attend.  
\_\_\_\_\_