



VOLUNTEERISM IN THE UNITED STATES



Warm-up Activity

You have 10 minutes to find classmates who fit these descriptions. You must talk to them, ask follow-up questions, and write their name in the box.

Example questions:

“Have you ever volunteered before?”

“What kind of volunteer work did you do?”

“Do you know any volunteer groups in America?”

Students walk around and talk to as many classmates as possible, aiming to complete a row, column, or the entire sheet.

Encourage conversation in English only and full-sentence exchanges.

When time's up, students return to their seats.



Group Work – Volunteerism Topics

Each group gets one of these:

- History of volunteerism (1700s–1800s)
- Religion's influence on volunteer work
- Volunteerism during major events (wars, 9/11, COVID-19)
- Why Americans volunteer today
- Technology & modern volunteer trends

Instructions: Summarize your section in your own words

Discuss: Why is this aspect important in American life?



Sharing Time (Group Presentations)

Each group has 1 minute to:

- Summarize their assigned topic
- Share one reason why this topic matters



Complete the Quiz on the readings for this week

At the bottom of the quiz sheet, write a brief paragraph (4 to 5 sentences) on the following topic:

What do you think motivates people to volunteer their time and energy for others? Why?

"GUESS THE FAMILY"

Work in Pairs

- Each student imagines or remembers a type of family structure.
- Without saying the specific name of the family type describe it in 2–3 English sentences. For example:

“There are two adults and three children. The adults are not married but live together.”
- Partners try to guess what type of family is being described.
- After guessing, switch roles.



TRADITION & CHANGE: UNDERSTANDING AMERICAN FAMILIES

In your team, explore how **American family structures** are changing—but also think about what **traditional values** still remain important or are being **adapted** in new ways. Try to understand both the cultural reasons behind these **changes** and the values that remain central in many families.



TRADITION & CHANGE: UNDERSTANDING AMERICAN FAMILIES

As you discuss, keep in mind that while **American families** may look different today, many still hold on to **traditional values** like **love, support, and responsibility**. Understanding how these values **adapt in different family** types helps us better appreciate both **tradition** and **change**.



TRADITION & CHANGE: UNDERSTANDING AMERICAN FAMILIES

TEAM DISCUSSION

Choose 1 as a team and prepare to share:

1. What values do traditional American families often emphasize (e.g. stability, responsibility, commitment)? Are these values still important in nontraditional families too? How?
2. Why are some Americans choosing nontraditional family structures today (e.g. cohabitation, single parenting, blended families)? What challenges might they face—and what values do they still share with traditional families?
3. Do you think traditional family structures will remain important in the U.S. in the future? Why or why not?
4. Compare traditional Chinese family values with traditional American ones. Are there shared ideas (such as filial piety, respect for elders, or marriage before children)?
5. Imagine you're designing a new TV show for American audiences that features a family. Would you choose a traditional or nontraditional structure—and what values would you want to show?

HOMEWORK: FAMILY TREE AND INTERVIEW PROJECT

STEP 1:
Draw or Design Your
Family Tree

STEP 2:
Interview One Older
Family Member

STEP 3:
Write a Short
Reflection Paper



STEP 1: CREATE YOUR FAMILY TREE

- Draw or design a simple three- to four-generation family tree (in English):

You → Your parents → Your grandparents →
Your great grandparents

- For each person, include:

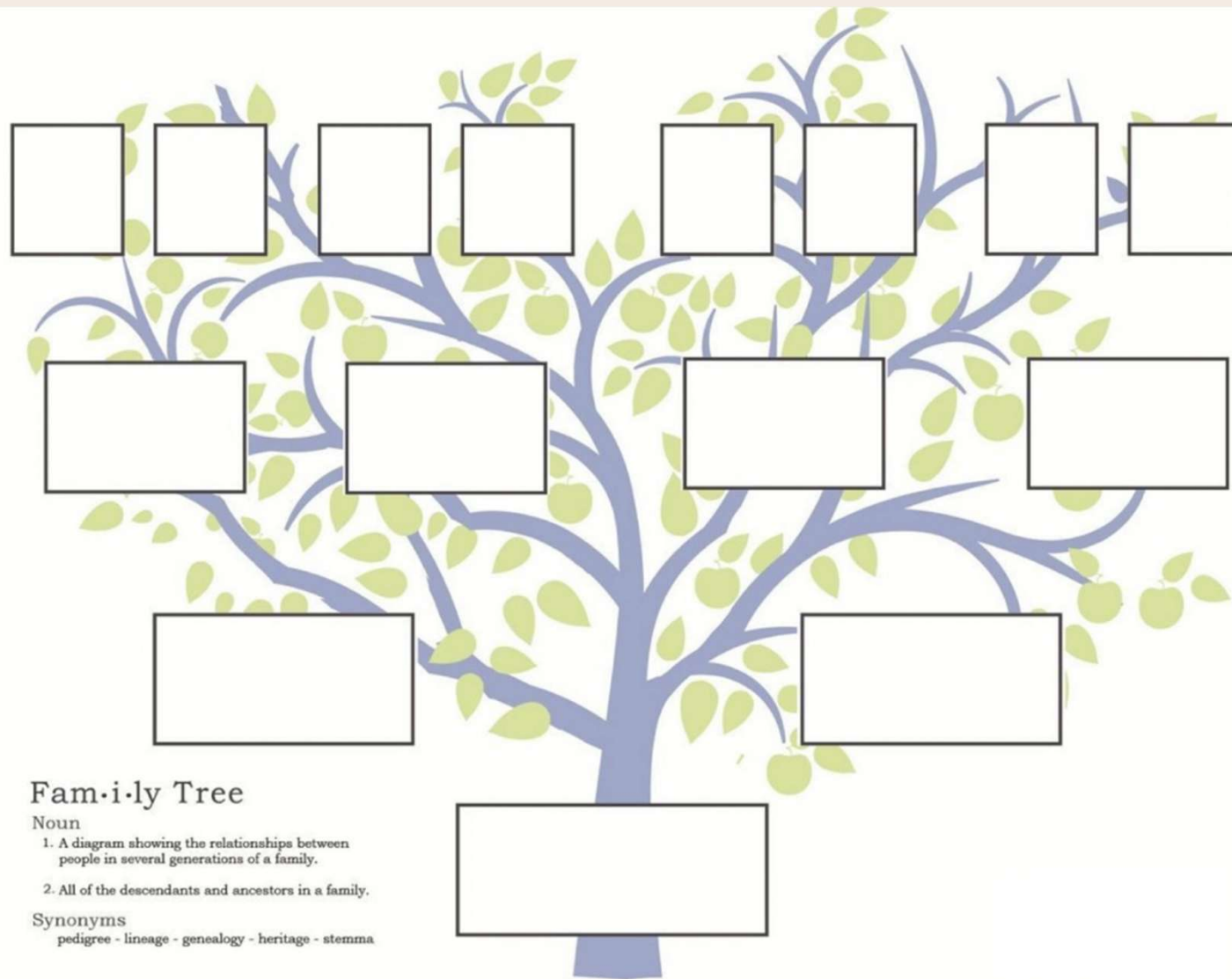
Their first name

Their birthplace (city/province)

One fun fact or memory (e.g., job, talent, hobby, family role)

- You may use the printable chart provided or create your own layout..





STEP 2: INTERVIEW ONE OLDER FAMILY MEMBER

- Choose someone from an older generation (a parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, etc.).
- Part A: Prepare 4–5 Main Questions (ask in English if possible): Here are some good examples:

What was your childhood like?

What were your parents like?

What were important values or traditions in your family?

How did you meet your spouse?

What advice would you give to your younger self?



POSSIBLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is your full name? Is there a story behind your name? Why did your parents give you that name?
2. Describe your home or neighborhood where you grew up?
3. What was your favorite and least favorite subject in primary school?
4. Who was your best friend and what did you love to do together?
5. Share a happy time from your childhood.
6. What are 3 words that describe you?
7. What is an important event in your life and why?
8. Can you share your best advice for going away to college?

STEP 2: INTERVIEW ONE OLDER FAMILY MEMBER

- Part B: Learn How to Probe/Ask Follow-up Questions for More Information
- To make your interview deeper and more meaningful, don't stop at short answers. Try these follow-up techniques:

If they say...

"My childhood was happy."

"I worked on the farm."

"My parents were strict."

"We celebrated Spring Festival."

"I met my spouse at work."

You can ask...

"What made it happy? Can you give an example?"

"What was a typical day like? Did you enjoy it?"

"How were they strict? Can you tell me a story?"

"What special things did your family do?"

"What kind of job did you have? What was your first impression?"

- Be curious. Show interest. Ask "why" or "how" questions.
- Take notes or record the conversation (with their permission) so you can write about it later.





STEP 3: Write a Short Reflection

In English, write a reflection about your interview.

You may include:

- What did you learn that surprised or impressed you?
- What family values or traditions are important in your family?
- How do you think your family history has influenced who you are?
- Can you connect any part of your family story to family types we studied?

Your reflection paper should be 500 to 750 words.

NEXT WEEK'S HOMEWORK

- **READ:** Education in the United States
- **DISCUSSION POST:** Post will be available later this evening
- **Work on your Family Tree and Interview Project**
- **(Due in 2 weeks)**

