

5

Unit

Loving family



The Philippine poet Denn A. Meneses defines home as a magical place that “stays at the core of our being no matter where our life’s journeys take us.” Indeed, a home, or more exactly a strong and healthy family, is the harbor of our soul where we seek comfort, love, happiness and support. What makes a happy family? Apart from important qualities such as communication, appreciation and coping with crisis, spending time together is also a crucial quality. However, it seems normal today for kids to complain that their parents are fully occupied with work, and for adult children to make excuses that they are too busy to visit their elderly parents. Therefore, to remain in each other’s memories, should we be in their lives today? Is investment of time and energy vital to a loving family? The texts offer perspectives on this quality from a daughter, a mother, a father and a son. Read the texts to see what you can gain from their stories.

Scenario

Your college is holding the Annual English Drama Festival. The theme of this year is “Family love.” You are going to participate in this festival and work in groups to perform a play about your unforgettable experience with your parents. How will you describe your experience? How will you perform it on stage with emotion? You will be able to complete the task after studying this unit.

Learning objectives

Upon completion of this unit, you will be able to:

- talk about family and love using new vocabulary
- identify six basic elements in storytelling
- narrate your unforgettable experience with your parents
- clarify the significance of spending time together with the family
- perform a play about family love

Viewing

To some people, a traditional family reunion is no longer an important way to get connected with their family members thanks to modern technology. Is spending time with the family still necessary and rewarding? Watch a video clip to see the speakers' views on that.



1 Fill in the blanks with what you hear from the video clip.

Reasons to get together with the family

- Young man** The strongest, happiest moments that I've ever sought in my life are when I'm with my 1) _____ and when I'm with my 2) _____.
- Young woman** It's really good to 3) _____ together and reconnect. If we ever need anything, we are always there 4) _____.
- Old woman** If they are happy, if they have problems, we all 5) _____ it together. We all 6) _____ together.
- Old man** Successful marriages and families are established and maintained on principles of 7) _____, 8) _____, compassion, work and wholesome recreational activities.

2 Speakers in the video clip say that family members are always there for each other. If they have problems, they solve them together. Would you talk with your family and seek help from them when you run into trouble? Why or why not?

Reading

In our saddest moments, we are likely to seek help from someone else. Some turn to close friends, while others rely on those who are wiser. However, for the author of the text, nothing is quite as helpful as a lunchtime walk with her loving mother. On the walk, they talked a lot and afterward her mother gave her a precious gift. What were they talking about on the walk? What was her mother's gift? Read the text and you will find the answers.

- 1 I grew up in a small town where the elementary school was a ten-minute walk from my house and in an age when children could go home for lunch.
- 2 At the time, I did not consider this a luxury, although today it certainly would be. I took it for granted that mothers were the sandwich-makers and the homework monitors. I never questioned that this ambitious, intelligent woman, who had had a career before I was born, would spend almost every lunch hour throughout my elementary school years just with me.
- 3 I only know that when the noon bell rang, I would race breathlessly home. My mother would be standing at



My Mother's Gift

the top of the stairs, smiling down at me with a look that suggested I was the only important thing she had on her mind. For this, I am forever grateful.

- 4 One lunchtime when I was in the third grade will stay with me always. I had been picked to be the princess in the school play, and for weeks my mother had painstakingly rehearsed my lines with me. But no matter how easily I delivered them at home, as soon as I stepped onstage, every word disappeared from my head.
- 5 Finally, my teacher explained that she had written a narrator's part to the play, and asked me to switch roles. I didn't tell my mother what had happened when I went home for lunch that day. But she sensed my unease, and instead of suggesting we practice my lines, she asked if I wanted to walk in the yard.
- 6 It was a lovely spring day and the rose vine on the trellis was turning green. Under the huge elm trees, we could see yellow dandelions popping through the grass in bunches, as if a painter had touched our landscape with a little gold.
- 7 I watched my mother casually bend down by one of the clumps. "I think I'm going to dig up all these weeds," she said, pulling a blossom up by its roots. "From now on, we'll have only roses in this garden."



- 8 "But I like dandelions," I protested. "All flowers are beautiful – even dandelions."
- 9 My mother looked at me seriously. "Yes, every flower gives pleasure in its own way, doesn't it?" she asked thoughtfully. I nodded, pleased that I had won her over. "And that is true of people too," she added. "Not everyone can be a princess, but there is no shame in that."
- 10 Relieved that she had guessed my pain, I started to cry as I told her what had happened. She listened and smiled reassuringly.
- 11 "But you will be a beautiful narrator," she said, reminding me of how much I loved to read stories aloud to her. "The narrator's part is every bit as important as the part of a princess." Over the next few weeks, with her constant encouragement, I learned to take pride in the role. Lunchtimes were spent reading over my lines and talking about what I would wear.
- 12 Backstage on the night of the performance, I felt nervous. A few minutes before the play, my teacher came over to me. "Your mother asked me to give this to you," she said, handing me a dandelion. Its edges were already beginning to curl and it flopped lazily from its stem. But just looking at it, knowing my mother was out there and thinking of our lunchtime talk, made me proud.
- 13 After the play, I took home the flower. My mother pressed it between two paper towels in a dictionary, laughing as she did it that we were perhaps the only people who would press such a sorry-looking weed.
- 14 I often look back on our lunchtimes together, tasting the happy moments bathed in the soft midday light. A few months ago, my mother, now retired, came to visit. I took off a day from work and treated her to lunch.
- 15 "Mom, you must have been terribly bored staying at home when I was a child," I said.
- 16 "Bored? Housework is boring. But you were never boring."
- 17 I didn't believe her, so I pressed. "Surely children are not as stimulating as a career."
- 18 "A career is stimulating," she said. "I'm glad I had one. But a career is like an open balloon. It remains inflated only as long as you keep pumping it. A child is a seed. You water it. You care for it the best you can. And then it grows all by itself into a beautiful flower."
- 19 Just then, looking at her, I could picture us sitting at her kitchen table once again, and I understood why I kept that flaky brown dandelion in our old family dictionary pressed between two crumpled paper towels.

Understanding the text

- 1** In the author's memories, the dandelion story is as vivid as yesterday. How did the story happen? Read Paras. 4-18 and rearrange the statements in the timeline. Then fill in the blanks and try to retell what happened on the lunchtime walk.

- 1 I had a lunchtime walk with my mother in the yard.
- 2 My mother told me a child is like a flower seed.
- 3 My mother pressed the dandelion between two paper towels in a dictionary.
- 4 I received a dandelion from my mother.
- 5 I treated my mother to lunch.
- 6 I was asked to take a narrator's part.
- 7 We discussed about what I would wear in the play.
- 8 My mother helped me rehearse my lines for the princess.



It was 1) _____. Under the huge elm trees, we could see 2) _____ in the grass. My mother 3) _____ dandelions by their roots and said that she was going to 4) _____. I 5) _____ and said that even dandelions are beautiful. My mother looked at me 6) _____, confirming that every flower 7) _____, and so do people. She added that not everyone can be a princess, but there is 8) _____ in that. 9) _____ that she had guessed my pain, I 10) _____ as I told her what had happened. She listened and smiled 11) _____. She told me that the narrator's part is as important as the part of a princess and 12) _____ me to be a beautiful narrator. I learned to 13) _____ the role.

- 2** Decide whether the statements are true (T) or false (F) according to the text.

- 1 My mother was content to be a full-time housewife before I was born.
- 2 I was asked to give up the role of the princess because I could not deliver the lines onstage.
- 3 In each spring, my mother would clear away weeds and dandelions from our rose garden.
- 4 I cried because my mother understood I had been hurt by the teacher's decision.
- 5 My mother asked the teacher to give me a dandelion to encourage me and relieve my nervousness.
- 6 My mother believes that, unlike a child, career demands constant attention to develop well.

- 3** Work in pairs and discuss the questions.

- 1 The author reveals her mother's gift by leading us to her childhood memory. What does the gift – a dandelion – symbolize? Illustrate your points in detail.
- 2 Have you ever received any precious gift from your parents? Could you share your story with your partner?

Sharpening your skills

Identify the six elements in the story "My mother's gift" by filling in the blanks.

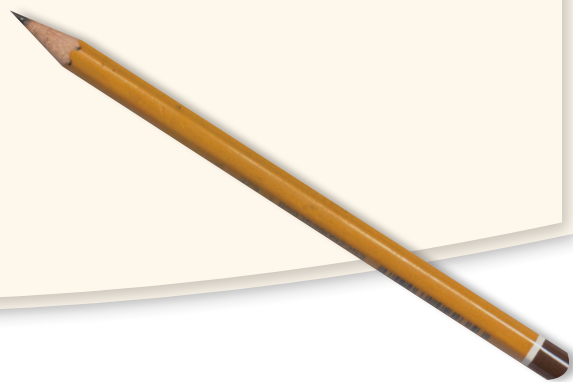
READING SKILLS

The five Ws and one H in telling a story

When a story is told, it usually contains six elements: the five Ws (who, what, when, where and why) and the H (how). These elements provide important details of the story and make the story informative and complete.



- 1 Who are the main characters?
_____ and _____.
Who else is involved?
_____.
- 2 What happened?
Mom and I had a _____ and she gave me
_____ before my performance in the school play.
- 3 When did it take place?
When I was _____.
- 4 Where did it take place?
In the _____ of my home and _____
on the night of the performance.
- 5 Why did that happen?
I was _____ because I had to
_____ from a princess to a narrator.
- 6 How was the problem solved?
My mother encouraged me by pointing out that
even a dandelion can _____ in its
own way. I learned to _____ the role.



Collocations

- 1 Complete the sentences by choosing suitable words below to collocate with the italicized words.

protest **relieved** **care** **switch**
deliver **take** **remind** **treat**

- Most people would prefer to be _____ *for* at home rather than in a hospital.
- I can well remember how proud I was when my mother was asked to _____ *a speech* at a parent-teacher conference.
- My parents are now so accustomed to Android (安卓操作系统) that they don't want to _____ *to* iPhone.
- Excited at his success, I told my cousin that I would _____ him *to* dinner and he could name the restaurant.
- My mother is quite forgetful. I have to _____ her *of* her promise.
- Parents _____ *against* the school's decision to cut down music lessons.
- My parents _____ *pride in* my accomplishments, which are stepping stones to my dreams.
- As he grew up, his parents were gradually _____ *of* the burden of planning for his future.



Verbs which often go before:

school attend leave skip
pleasure give bring take

Adjectives which often go before:

light soft dim bright
encouragement constant
 positive slight

- 2 Complete the sentences with suitable expressions from the collocation box. Make changes where necessary. Sometimes more than one collocation is possible.

- Whenever my mother caught me reading in _____, she would warn me that it would ruin my eyesight.
- He used to get addicted to gaming and sometimes he would _____.
- Words of _____, rather than punishment, have great power and kids will carry them for years.
- The curtain suddenly drawn, _____ shone in and I had to close my eyes.
- My brother is a musician. I am so proud that he _____ to a lot of people through his creativity.
- At the end of the book the author expresses his thanks to his family for their _____ and unselfish devotion.

Vocabulary learning strategies

We often use two nouns together (noun + noun) forming a compound noun to refer to a thing, a person, an idea, etc. The first noun is like an adjective – it tells us what kind of thing, person or idea it is. For example, the word “lunchtime” (Para. 4) means the time when lunch is served. You can scan the QR code to learn more about compound nouns.



Language focus

In the text, the expression “tasting the happy moments bathed in the soft midday light” (Para. 14) functions as an adverbial of attendant circumstance (伴随状语). You can scan the QR code to learn more about the *-ing* participles (分词) functioning as the adverbial.



Banked cloze

Complete the passage with suitable words from the word bank. You may not use any of the words more than once.

encouragement	plant	reminds	remembers	mean
casual	questioned	pleasure	play	stimulating
switch	seed	wonder	quit	show

When the author treats her mother to a lunch, she 1) _____ again her childhood lunchtimes with her mother. After her birth, her mother 2) _____ her job and stayed home, taking care of her. Her mother would spend almost every lunch hour with her throughout her elementary school years. She had never 3) _____ that and took everything for granted. When she grew up, she thought she mattered less than a(n) 4) _____ career to her mother, but she was wrong. In fact, her mother enjoyed their time together because a child is like a(n) 5) _____ which grows all by itself into a beautiful flower as long as one cares for it.

The pressed dandelion in the family dictionary 6) _____ her of the most unforgettable lunchtime with her mother. Being told that she had to 7) _____ roles in a school play, she felt quite uneasy. During the walk in the yard, her mother made her realize everybody has their own existence value just as all flowers give 8) _____ in their own ways. With her mother's constant 9) _____, she learned to take pride in the role and spent the lunchtimes reading over her lines and talking about what she would wear. Her mother's company during lunchtimes and the dandelion her mother gave her on the night of the performance 10) _____ much to her.

Viewing

Like the girl in the iExplore 1 text, people have colorful childhood memories, such as a little pressed dandelion in an old family dictionary. These memories can also exist in the room in which one grew up. Watch a video clip to know about the speaker's childhood room.



1 Check (✓) the things which are in the speaker's childhood room.

- 1 Soft animals
- 2 Books
- 3 A *Harry Potter* poster
- 4 A pure black wall
- 5 A CD rack

2 The speaker's childhood room is filled with memories of the past. If possible, what would you like to store in your childhood room?

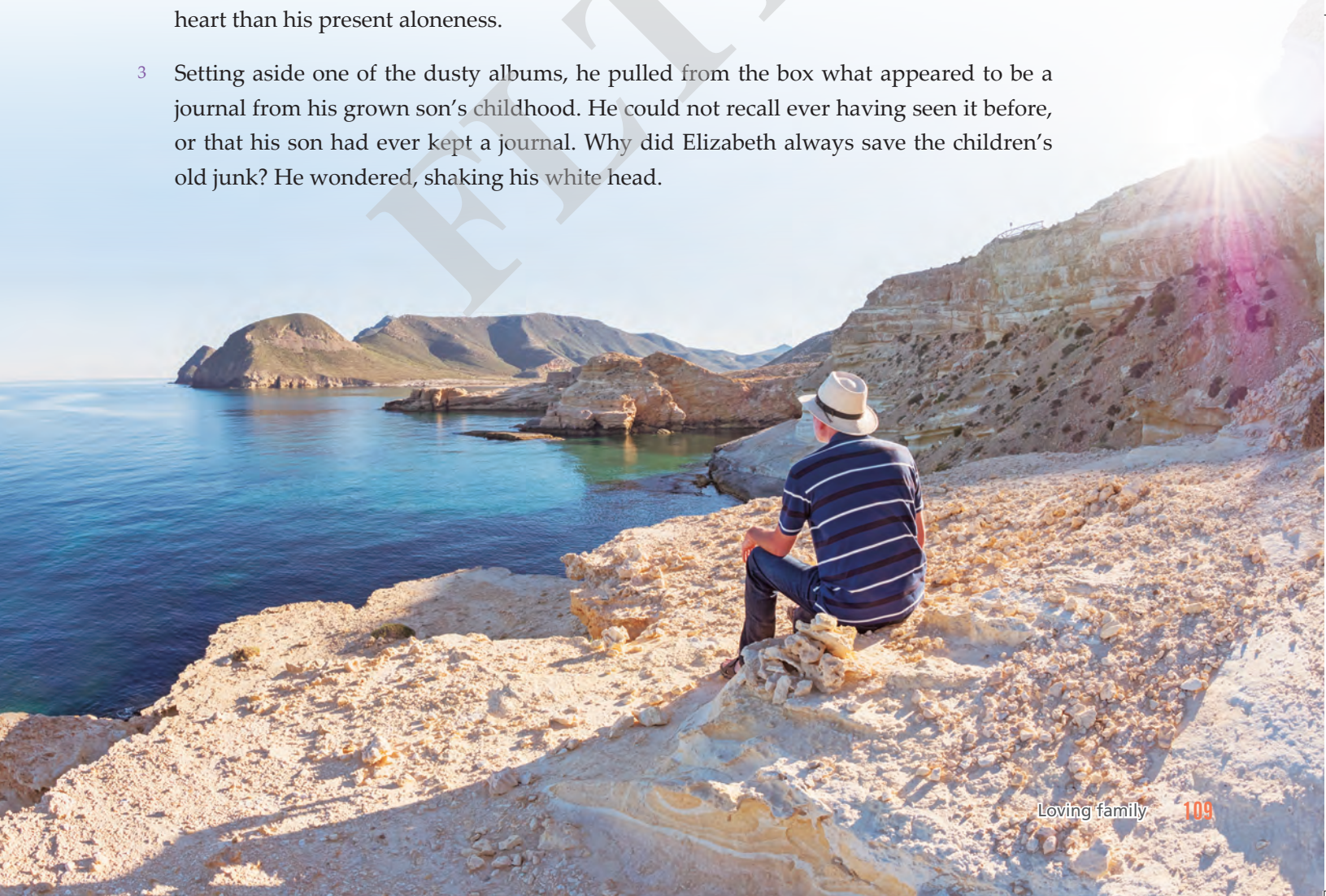


Reading

To most people, it's never too much to say how precious things from their childhood can be. These things not only witness the children's growth, but also bear the memories of the family. In the text, an old father happened to find out about his son's best day of his life in a yellowed journal, which made him lost in thought. What happened on that day? What memories did the journal bring back to the old father? Read on to figure out the answers.

BEST DAY *of* MY LIFE

- 1 In the faint light of the attic, an old man, tall and stooped, bent his great frame and made his way to a stack of boxes that sat near one of the little half-windows. Brushing aside a bit of a spider's web, he pointed the top box toward the light and began to carefully lift out one old photograph album after another. Eyes once bright but now dim searched longingly for the source that had drawn him here.
- 2 It began with the fond memory of the love of his life, long gone, and somewhere in these albums was a photo of her he hoped to rediscover. Silent as a mouse, he patiently opened the long buried treasures and soon was lost in a sea of memories. Although his world had not stopped spinning when his wife left it, the past was more alive in his heart than his present aloneness.
- 3 Setting aside one of the dusty albums, he pulled from the box what appeared to be a journal from his grown son's childhood. He could not recall ever having seen it before, or that his son had ever kept a journal. Why did Elizabeth always save the children's old junk? He wondered, shaking his white head.



- 4 Opening the yellowed pages, he glanced over a short reading, and his lips curved in an unconscious smile. Even his eyes brightened as he read the words that spoke clear and sweet to his soul. It was the voice of the little boy who had grown up far too fast in this very house, and whose voice had grown fainter and fainter over the years. In the utter silence of the attic, the words of an innocent six-year-old worked their magic and carried the old man back to a time almost totally forgotten.
- 5 Entry after entry stirred an emotional hunger in his heart like the longing a gardener feels in the winter for the fragrance of spring flowers. But it was accompanied by the fact that his son's simple memories of those days were far different from his own. But how different?
- 6 Reminded that he had kept a daily journal of his business activities over the years, he closed his son's journal and turned to leave, having forgotten the cherished photo that originally triggered his search. Trying to avoid bumping his head, the old man stepped to the wooden stairs that led to the study.
- 7 Opening a glass cabinet door, he reached in and pulled out an old business journal. Turning, he sat down at his desk and placed the two journals beside each other. His was leather-bound with his name printed neatly in gold, while his son's had not been well kept and the name Jimmy had been nearly erased from its surface. He ran a long skinny finger over the letters, as though he could restore what had been worn away with time and use.
- 8 As he opened his journal, the old man's eyes fell upon a passage that stood out because it was so brief in comparison to other days'. In his own neat handwriting were these words: **Wasted the whole day fishing with Jimmy. Didn't catch a thing.**
- 9 With a deep sigh and a shaking hand, he took Jimmy's journal and found the boy's entry for the same day, June 4. Large letters, pressed deeply into the paper, read: **Went fishing with my dad. Best day of my life.**



Understanding the text

- 1 The search in the attic arouses mixed feelings of the father. How are his emotions shown through his facial expressions and actions? Fill in the blanks and then match the descriptive sentences with the emotions.

Facial expressions and actions	Emotions
1 In the _____ of the attic, an old man, _____, bent his great frame and made his way ...	a. Cherishing
2 _____ as a mouse, he _____ opened the long buried treasures ...	b. Lonely
3 ... his lips curved in _____.	c. Sweet
4 Even his eyes _____ as he read the words ...	d. Mixed: regretful, excited and eager
5 He _____ a long skinny finger _____ the letters ...	
6 With a _____ sigh and a _____ hand ...	

- 2 Decide whether the statements are true (T) or false (F) according to the text.

- 1 The old man often climbed into the attic to enjoy the photograph albums.
- 2 The old man was excited to find his son's journal as he helped his son form the habit of keeping a journal.
- 3 The old man had no idea why his wife liked to keep their children's old stuff.
- 4 The more the old man read his son's journal, the more he would like to discover what happened when his son was young.
- 5 The old man put his journal and his son's beside each other, comparing the details.
- 6 Both the son and the father enjoyed the fishing day although they caught nothing.

- 3 Work in pairs. Read the sentences from the text and discuss the questions.

- 1 *It began with the fond memory of the love of his life, long gone, and somewhere in these albums was a photo of her he hoped to rediscover. (Para. 2)*
How do you keep photos of your life? Do you often go through these pictures?
- 2 *Why did Elizabeth always save the children's old junk? He wondered, shaking his white head. (Para. 3)*
Why did Elizabeth save the children's old junk? Do you save anything from your childhood?
- 3 *Reminded that he had kept a daily journal of his business activities over the years, he closed his son's journal and turned to leave ... (Para. 6)*
Do you think it a good habit to keep a journal? Why?
- 4 *Large letters, pressed deeply into the paper, read: **Went fishing with my dad. Best day of my life.** (Para. 9)*
Which day is the best day of your life so far? Share that day with your classmates.

Building your language

Words and expressions

1 Complete the sentences with the words below. Change the form where necessary.

emotional

faint

innocent

cherish

trigger

skinny

- 1 Her grandmother was always insisting that she was too _____ and was never tired of trying to force more food on her.
- 2 They switched off all lights and waited for their little sister in the _____ light of candles, hoping to give her a birthday surprise.
- 3 When they were talking about the education of children, his remarks on strict discipline _____ heated debate.
- 4 Thanks to the _____ support from my family, I finally went through the tough time in my freshman year.
- 5 Show your care to people you _____ most and let them feel they are important in your life.
- 6 He seemed so young and _____ that no one expected he'd have done things like that.

2 Replace the underlined words with the correct form of the expressions below. You may need to make other changes.

set aside

wear away

one after another

in comparison to

make your way

be accompanied by

- 1 Though upsetting events happened to the family one by one, the family became closer than ever.
- 2 Water, if it drops continually, will make a stone disappear; this is true of our mind and efforts in front of difficulties.
- 3 The boy walked slowly to the door to go out, trying not to be noticed by his mother.
- 4 Feeling tired, he put his pen to one side and read over what he had written.
- 5 The children went together with their parents and teachers on their field trip on the Children's Day.
- 6 She looks very short compared with other children of the same age.

Collocations

1 Choose suitable words in brackets to collocate with the measure words.

- 1 a sea of (information / news)
- 2 a mountain of (people / debts)
- 3 a stack of (buildings / textbooks)
- 4 an album of (stamps / notes)
- 5 a bunch of (flowers / fruits)
- 6 a clump of (stairs / trees)

2 Complete the sentences with suitable collocations from above.

- 1 I had to bury myself in _____ before the final exams, while my mother would always get me a glass of milk when I was tired.
- 2 We parked beneath _____ a hundred meters away from the entrance of the museum.
- 3 He always brought with him _____ for his mother when he came home.
- 4 In fact, without a clear searching target, you might be drown in _____ when surfing online.
- 5 The couple have _____ from all over the world which make them remember their traveling in their early years.
- 6 Start budgeting and saving to repay student loans so you won't face _____ for years.

Measure words

Measure words usually collocate with uncountable nouns to make expressions, such as "a bottle of water" and "a piece of advice." Sometimes they can also be used with countable nouns, for example "a stack of boxes" and "a sea of memories," as used in the text in iExplore 2.

Vocabulary learning strategies

If you look up an unfamiliar word in a dictionary, you may find there are often several meanings offered. It is important to identify the right meaning for the context you are dealing with. You can scan the QR code to learn more about the strategy - identifying the right meaning of a word for a specific context.



Translation

1 Translate the sentences into Chinese.

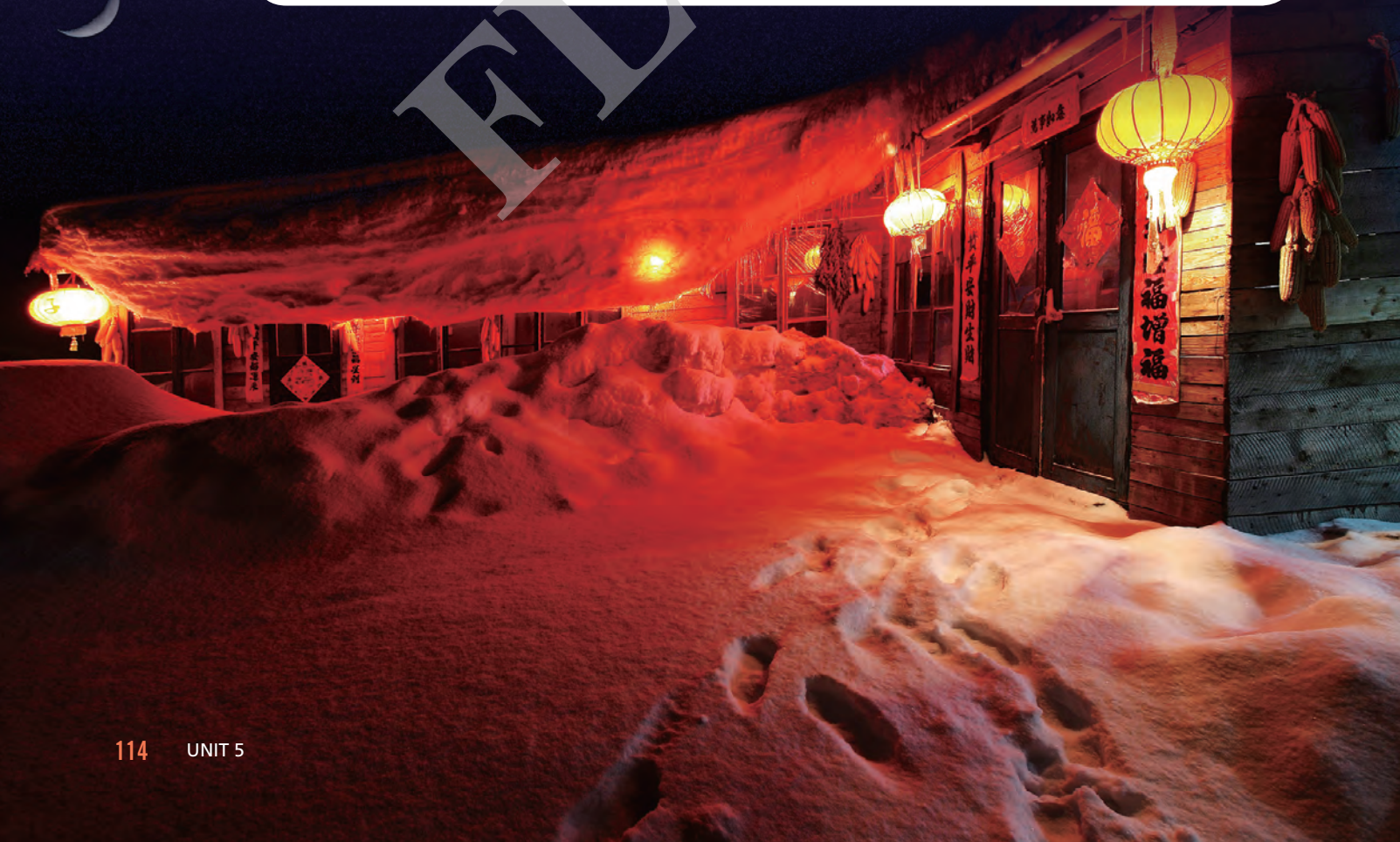
- 1 I grew up in a small town where the elementary school was a ten-minute walk from my house and in an age when children could go home for lunch.
- 2 It was the voice of the little boy who had grown up far too fast in this very house, and whose voice had grown fainter and fainter over the years.
- 3 Although the 5- and 6-year-old children remembered a higher percentage of the events, their narratives (叙述) of these events were less complete. The older children remembered fewer events, but the ones they remembered had more details.
- 4 In the developed world, people are scarcely happier than they were in the 1960s. The evidence for this claim consists of surveys in which people rate their happiness on a scale.

2 Translate the sentences into English.

- 1 家庭对中国人来说极其重要；随着时代的发展，中国人的家庭观念也在发生着变化。
- 2 在中国，一个人孝顺自己的父母长辈，不仅仅是个人的道德行为，也是对社会承担的一份责任。(filial piety; commitment)
- 3 中国人在情感表达方面比较含蓄，但这并不代表我们不真挚，不热烈。(implicit; sincere; enthusiastic)
- 4 年夜饭是中国人重要的情感寄托，吸引着世界各地的中国人回家庆祝春节。(reunion dinner; bear; from all corners)



Translation
skills



Unit project

Performing a play

My unforgettable experience with my parents

From different perspectives, the two texts tell of some precious memories between kids and parents. Do you have a special experience with your parents?

Your college is holding the Annual English Drama Festival. The theme of this year is "Family love." You are going to participate in this festival and work in groups to perform a play about your unforgettable experience with your parents. The following steps may help you with the project.



Step 1

Develop your story

An attractive story is the basic element of a good play. Work in groups and share with each other your own unforgettable experience with your parents.

When you tell your story, use the questions in the following table to help develop it. For the six key elements of telling an informative and complete story, you can refer to Sharpening your skills in iExplore 1 for help.

The five Ws and one H in telling a story
Who were involved in the story? _____
What happened between you and your parents? _____
When did the story take place? _____
Where did the story take place? _____
Why did it happen? _____
How was the problem solved? _____

Decide on the story that you would like to act out as a group.

Step 2 Work on dialogues for the play

Dialogues play an important part in a play. Dialogues between the characters can make the play interesting and lively. For example, the conversation between the author and her mother in the text in iExplore 1 presents a vivid scene of their lunchtime walk in the yard.

Decide the role each of you will take and discuss what you will say. When you create the dialogues, think about the following aspects.

- How to develop the plot through the dialogues
- How to express your feelings through the dialogues

Step 3 Add stage directions

Stage directions remind you of the emotional states and give you directions on how to act and how to say your lines. For example:

- Emotional states: [Anxiously], [Nervously], [as though disgusted by ...]
- Actions: [The son stands up and paces], [The daughter chews her nails], [Picks up the dirty shirt]
- Conversation cues: [long, awkward silence]

Now think about the characters' feelings and actions and add stage directions to your script. You can use italics (斜体字) or brackets to set your stage directions apart from the lines. For the description of emotions and actions, you can refer to the text and Understanding the text in iExplore 2 for help.

Step 4 Design the narration

Sometimes a narration is needed in a play. The narration is usually used to give the audience information they can hardly get from the dialogues and actions. It generally appears:

- at the beginning of a play to give background information about characters, events, or settings
- in the middle of a play when the set changes

Write the narration part for your script from a third-person perspective, if it is needed.

Step 5 Rehearse and perform your play

Practice your script in your group until you feel comfortable with your lines. Then perform your play to the class. After the performance, invite the audience to give suggestions. You may use the following checklist to improve your performance.

Checklist

OK Need
 improvement

- 1 The opening scene of our play is interesting.
- 2 The body of our play is logically developed.
- 3 The dialogues of our play are vivid.
- 4 Our play ends with a clear message.
- 5 Our facial expressions are natural.



YOU CAN
UPLOAD YOUR
PLAY TO
THE ONLINE
COURSE AFTER
FINISHING IT.

ELTRP