

2 Family Connections

“All of you have famous people and historical figures in your tree, because we are all connected ...”


A. J. Jacobs
Writer, TED speaker

UNIT GOALS

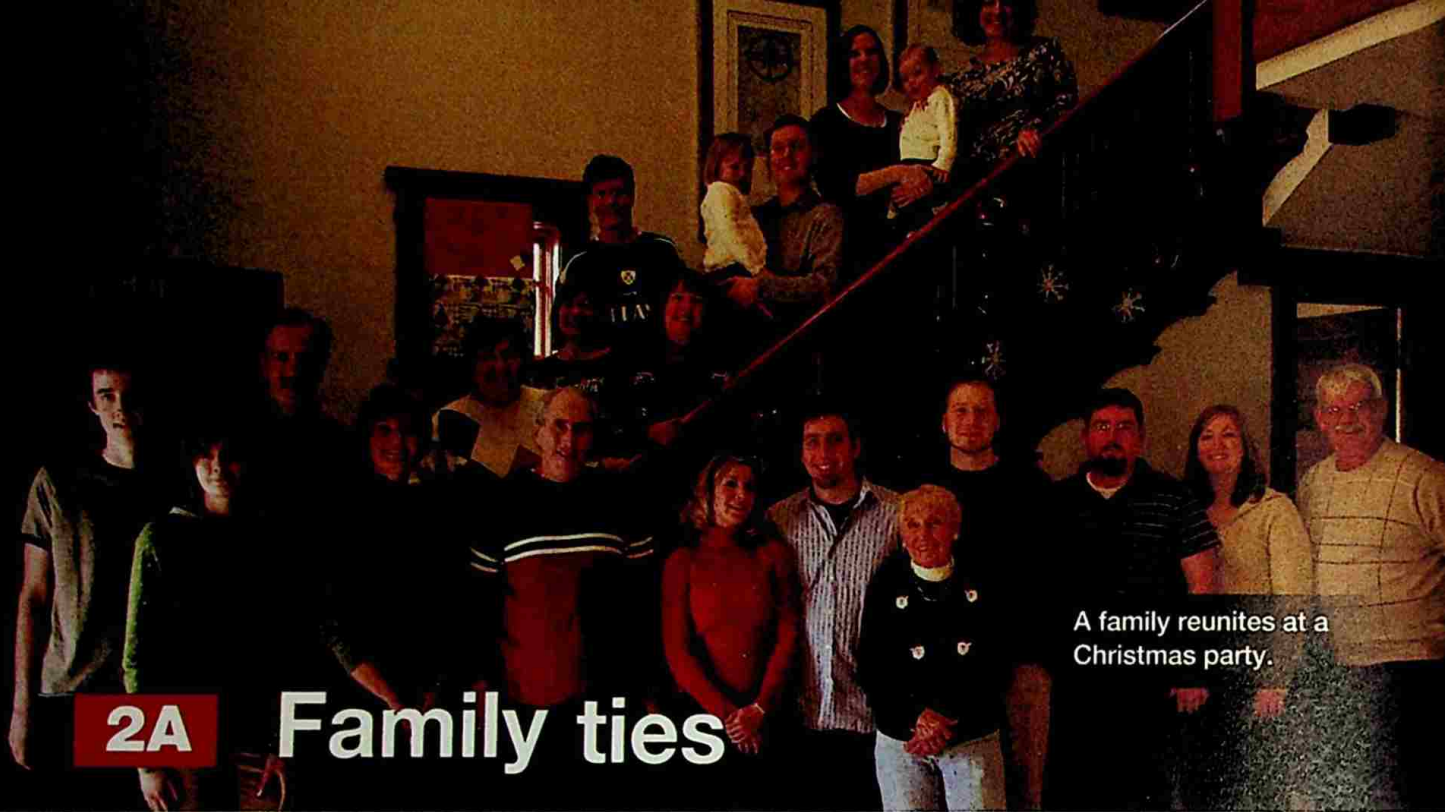
In this unit, you will ...

- talk about your immediate and extended family.
- read about researching family trees.
- watch a TED Talk about how we are all connected.

WARM UP

 **2.1** Watch part of A. J. Jacobs's TED Talk. Answer the questions with a partner.

- 1 What does Jacobs mean when he says, “we are all connected”?
- 2 What do you think is the importance of a world family tree?

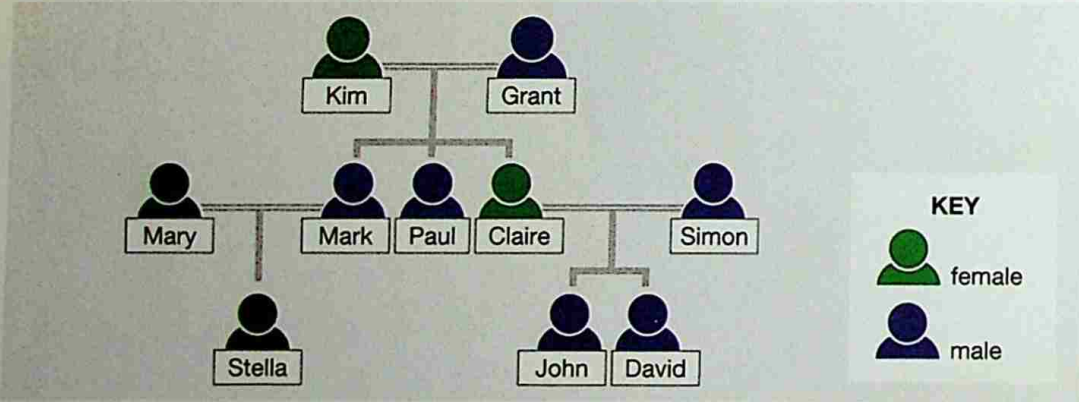


A family reunites at a Christmas party.

2A Family ties

VOCABULARY Extended family

A **2.2** Look at the family tree. Complete the sentences using the words in the box. Listen and check your answers.



KEY

female

male

- | | | | |
|----------------|--------|------------|-------------|
| brother-in-law | cousin | grandchild | grandfather |
| mother-in-law | nephew | niece | son-in-law |

- 1 Kim is Mary's _____.
- 2 Stella is John's _____.
- 3 Grant is John's _____.
- 4 Simon is Kim's _____.
- 5 John is Grant's _____.
- 6 Simon is Paul's _____.
- 7 Stella is Claire's _____.
- 8 David is Mark's _____.

B Work with a partner. Describe a connection to someone in your family. Your partner must name the relationship.

Joanna is my mother's father's mother.

Is she your great-grandmother?


LISTENING My family history

Listening for contractions versus possessives

When we hear "s" after a noun of a person's name, it might be a contraction of *is* or a possessive form. Listen carefully to be sure you catch the right meaning.

Contraction of *is*: *John's 21 years old.*

Possessive form: *John's cousin is 21 years old.*


A  **2.3** Watch Ken Lejtenyi talking about his family history. Circle the countries that he mentions.

Canada
Italy

England
Romania

France
Scotland

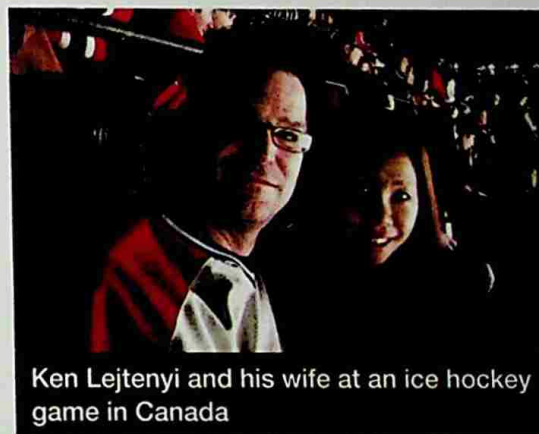
Hungary
Singapore

B  **2.3** Watch again. Complete the sentences with a country from A.

- Lejtenyi's mother's parents moved to Canada from _____.
- His mother was born in _____.
- His father's parents met in _____.
- His father grew up in _____.


C CRITICAL THINKING

Reflecting Do you think many Canadians have an international family history like Lejtenyi? Discuss with a partner.



Ken Lejtenyi and his wife at an ice hockey game in Canada

SPEAKING Talking about family

A  **2.4** Where are they going to hold the family reunion? Why?

A: What are you doing for the Lunar New Year?

B: Not much. How about you? Do you have any plans? What are you doing? / What are your plans?

A: I'm going to spend it with my family. Every year, we have a family reunion. get-together / gathering

B: That sounds fun. Do you have a big family?

A: Yeah. My mother has seven siblings, so I have more than twenty cousins.

B: Wow! Are they all coming to your place? house / apartment

A: Oh, no. We're going to a restaurant. Our house is way too small. much / far

B: Well, have a good time.

B Practice the conversation with a partner. Practice again using the words on the right.

C How many people are in your immediate family? How many are in your extended family? Tell a partner.

There are five people in my immediate family—my parents, my two sisters, and me.

LANGUAGE FOCUS Discussing plans and arrangements

A ▶ 2.5 Read the information. Which record do you find the most amazing?

FAMILY RECORDS



The most generations alive in a single family has been seven. At 109, Augusta Bunge from the United States was the youngest living great-great-great-great-grandparent.

The highest number of children born to one mother is 69. The wife of Feodor Vassilyev from Russia (whose name is unknown) had 16 pairs of twins, seven sets of triplets, and four sets of quadruplets.



There is only one example of a family having five single children with the same birthday. Catherine (1952), Carol (1953), Charles (1956), Claudia (1961), and Cecilia Cummins (1966) were all born on 20th February.

B ▶ 2.6 Listen to someone telling his friend about some people he's going to meet this weekend. Circle the relationships.

a Chris is his (first / second) cousin.

b Emily is Chris's (niece / daughter).

C ▶ 2.7 Watch and study the language in the chart.

Talking about future plans

I'm leaving for the reunion on Thursday.

I'm not leaving on Friday.

Are you going alone?

When are you coming back?

Yes, I am. / No, I'm not.

I'm coming back on Sunday.

I'm going to see my nephew this weekend.

I'm not going to stay for very long.

Are you going to meet your aunt and uncle?

What are you going to do afterwards?

Yes, I am. / No, I'm not.

I'm going to visit a few old friends.

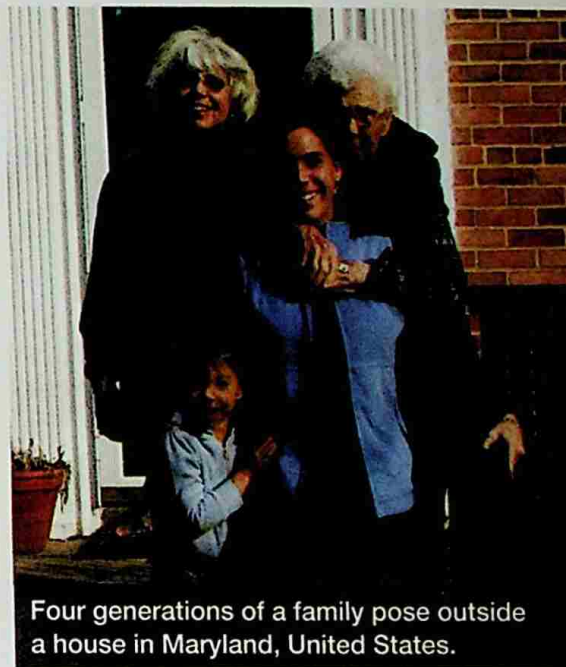
For more information on **future forms**, see Grammar Summary 2 on page 155.

D  **2.6** Circle the correct words to complete the sentences from the conversation in **B**. Listen again to check your answers.


- 1 "Are you (**do/doing**) anything interesting this weekend?"
- 2 "I'm going to (**meet/meeting**) my second cousin."
- 3 "He's (**bring/bringing**) his daughter."
- 4 "I'm going to (**ask/asking**) Chris to help me find out more."
- 5 "Where are you (**meet/meeting**) them?"

E Unscramble the questions. Then ask and answer them with a partner.

- 1 this weekend / seeing / are / your grandparents / you _____ ?
- 2 is going / which family member / to visit you / next _____ ?
- 3 with your family / spending / you / are / your next vacation _____ ?
- 4 you / anyone in your family / speaking with / are / this evening _____ ?



Four generations of a family pose outside a house in Maryland, United States.

F  **2.8** Read the paragraph. Find and correct four mistakes. Listen and check your answers.

After I finish university, I going to take a year out. I think I need a break before I start working. I'm going to travel around South America with my best friend Maki. We're meet this weekend to work out our plans. We're definitely going to start in Argentina, but we haven't decided where we're go after that. We don't have so much money so we're mainly going stay in hostels. I can't wait. It's going to be a great adventure.

SPEAKING My family

A Walk around the room and find a different person who answers yes to each question. For each yes answer, ask a follow-up question. Take notes.

Find someone who ...	Name	Extra information
is going to call a family member later today.		
is meeting a family member this weekend.		
is going on a family vacation soon.		
has both a niece and a nephew.		
is going to a wedding soon.		
has three or more siblings.		

Are you going to call a family member later today?

Yes, I am. I'm going to call my parents.

B Share the most interesting information with the class.



2C

Genealogy

A woman looks through some old family photos.

PRE-READING Scanning

Work with a partner. Think of some reasons why people might search for information on their family history. Discuss your ideas. Then scan the passage to see if your ideas are mentioned.

▶ 2.9

¹ **G**enealogy, the study of family history, is certainly nothing new. Family trees have been used for thousands of years to demonstrate claims to **wealth** and power. But the rise of the Internet has given the pursuit an explosion of new life.

² According to some sources, genealogy is now one of the most popular topics on the Internet. Modern genealogists have a huge amount of information available online, and are able to connect with people from all around the world **with ease**. One popular ancestry website provides access to approximately 16 billion historical records. Its two million subscribers¹ have added 200 million photographs, documents, and stories to connect with 70 million family trees.

³ But what's behind our motivation to find out about our **ancestors**? Some people may have specific reasons. **Tracing** your family tree may help you reconnect with lost relatives. **Adopted** children

can find out more about their birth parents. Others may want to discover a connection to a historical figure. Perhaps the most common motivation, though, is simply curiosity—a desire to better understand our place in the world. Genealogy can show our connections with people from entirely different backgrounds. As Helen Keller² once said, "There is no king who has not had a slave³ among his ancestors, and no slave who has not had a king among his."

⁴ A. J. Jacobs's interest in genealogy started when he received an email from his twelfth cousin. Since then, Jacobs has joined one of the world's biggest family trees on Geni.com, which includes more than 75 million people. Jacobs believes that if we all realized that we're connected in this way, a lot of the problems in the world could be solved. As Jacobs says, "We're not just part of the same species. We're part of the same family."

¹ **subscriber**: *n.* someone who pays to get access to a website or to receive copies of a newspaper or magazine

² **Helen Keller**: *n.* an American writer, educator, and activist who was both blind and deaf

³ **slave**: *n.* a person who is the legal property of another person

UNDERSTANDING PURPOSE

Read the passage. What is the main purpose?

- a to explain the history of genealogy
- b to teach the reader how to research their family tree
- c to explain why people are interested in genealogy

UNDERSTANDING MAIN IDEAS

Match each paragraph to its main idea.

- 1 Paragraph 1 People search for their ancestors for a variety of reasons.
- 2 Paragraph 2 Genealogy could help solve problems in the world.
- 3 Paragraph 3 Genealogy is very popular on the Internet.
- 4 Paragraph 4 Genealogy is not new, but the Internet is changing it.

UNDERSTANDING DETAILS

Answer the questions. Circle the correct option.

- 1 What proof is given that genealogy is popular on the Internet?
 - a the number of Internet searches
 - b statistics from an ancestry website
- 2 Which of these is given as a reason for an interest in genealogy?
 - a to see if an ancestor had a medical condition
 - b to find lost family members
- 3 What does Helen Keller's quote mean?
 - a Everyone is connected to people from different backgrounds.
 - b People often use genealogy to show a connection to rich people.
- 4 Why did A. J. Jacobs become interested in genealogy?
 - a He found out he was related to a famous person.
 - b A distant relative contacted him.

BUILDING VOCABULARY

A Match each word in **blue** from the passage to its definition.

- 1 **wealth** possession of a large amount of valuable things
- 2 **with ease** to find or discover
- 3 **ancestors** legally raised as your own child
- 4 **trace** people in your family from past times
- 5 **adopted** without difficulty

B CRITICAL THINKING

Applying To find out more about your family history, who would you talk to first? What questions would you ask? Discuss with a partner.

The world's largest family reunion



TED TALKS

Writer **A. J. JACOBS** finds genealogy **fascinating**. After receiving an email from a man who claimed to be his twelfth cousin, Jacobs began planning a huge **family reunion** to meet his extended family. His idea worth spreading is that studying the world's "family tree" helps scientific progress, highlights our equality, and connects us to our **shared history** and to one another.

PREVIEWING

Read the paragraph above. Circle the correct option for each sentence below. You will hear these words in the TED Talk.

- 1 Something that is **fascinating** is extremely (**interesting** / **well-known**).
- 2 A **family reunion** is a (**gathering** / **written list**) of family members.
- 3 If you have **shared history** with someone, you have (**a common background** / **famous ancestors**).

VIEWING

A ▶ **2.10** Watch Part 1 of the TED Talk. Check [✓] the points Jacobs makes.

- Genealogy is undergoing a revolution partly because of genetics and the Internet.
- People can add their own information online to create and combine huge family trees.
- Putting our personal family information online can be a dangerous thing to do.
- Most people have famous people and historical figures in their family trees.

B ▶ **2.11** Watch Part 2 of the TED Talk. Jacobs gives four reasons why a world family tree is a good idea. Match each idea to a supporting detail.

Main ideas

Supporting details

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|---|--|
| 1 It has scientific value. | ○ | ○ | We all come from the same ancestor. |
| 2 It brings history alive. | ○ | ○ | We treat family better than we treat strangers. |
| 3 It shows we are all connected. | ○ | ○ | Jacobs found out he was related to a famous person. |
| 4 It creates a kinder world. | ○ | ○ | It provides a better understanding of human migration. |

C ▶ **2.12** Watch Part 3 of the TED Talk. Complete the notes.

Event The biggest _____ in history

Activities Exhibits, _____, _____, a day of _____

Who's invited? _____

D CRITICAL THINKING

Evaluating Look back at **C**. Why do you think Jacobs wants to hold this event? Would you like to attend? Discuss with a partner.

VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT

▶ **2.13** Watch the excerpts from the TED Talk. Choose the correct meaning of the words.

PRESENTATION SKILLS Personalizing a presentation

Some speakers choose to include personal information in their presentations. Including stories about yourself, or your family members, can help engage your audience and make your presentation more “real.”

A ▶ **2.14** Watch the excerpt. What does Jacobs do to personalize the presentation?

- a He talks about his uncle.
- b He shows a photo of a family member.
- c He tells a personal story.

B Jacobs personalizes his presentation in other ways. Match the phrases below.

▶ **2.15** Watch the excerpts to check your answer.

- | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|
| 1 “[Genealogy] brings history alive.” | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | “I have three sons, so I see how they fight.” |
| 2 “Now, I know there are family feuds.” | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | “Here’s my cousin Gwyneth Paltrow. She has no idea I exist, but we are officially cousins.” |
| 3 “So that’s 75 million people connected by blood or marriage.” | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | “I found out I’m connected to Albert Einstein, so I told my seven-year-old son that, and he was totally engaged.” |

C Work with a partner. Imagine you are giving a talk on the topics below. How could you use personalization?

the cost of living climate change an endangered animal

A. J. Jacobs at the Global Family Reunion



One big happy family

COMMUNICATE Family tree

A Work in a group of four. You are going to work together to draw a family tree.

Student A: Turn to page 141. **Student B:** Turn to page 142.

Student C: Turn to page 144. **Student D:** Turn to page 146.

B Read out pieces of information and ask each other questions to find how everyone is related to each other. Complete the family tree on page 147.

Alice is Steve's wife.



OK. Do they have any children?

Yes, they have a daughter called ...

Checking information

John is ..., isn't he?

Are you saying that they're?

So you said that ... ?

Let me just check something, did you say ...?

WRITING An invitation

You are organizing a reunion for your family. Decide when, where, and how long it's going to be. Write a group email to your family members telling them the details.

Hi everyone!

I have great news! I am currently organizing a family reunion, and you're all invited! It's going to take place next July 22–23 during the summer break. It's only going to be two days, but you can stay longer if you like. It's going to be at ...

A family portrait,
Idaho, United States