

Unit 11

Sam Keen

The Importance of Family

By the end of the unit, the students will be able to:

- analyze passages in the text to identify the theme/ general subject, key idea/ central thought (a statement about the general subject), and supporting details.
- analyze paragraphs to identify sentences that support the main idea through
 - definition
 - example/ illustration
 - cause and effect
 - comparison and contrast
 - facts, analogies, anecdotes and quotations.
- recognize that support can be in the form of a single word, a phrase, a sentence or a full paragraph.
- apply critical thinking to interact with text, use intensive reading strategies (while-reading) to:
 - scan to answer short questions.
 - make simple inferences using context of the text and prior knowledge.
 - distinguish between what is clearly stated and what is implied .

- distinguish between language used for persuasion and propaganda:
 - use persuasive language to enhance ideas.
- use special devices to support arguments e.g. appeal to logic through reasoning, appeal to emotion or ethical belief, relating a personal anecdote or analogy.
- anticipate and respond to opposing arguments by defending point of view with factual evidence, quotations, expert opinion, logical reasoning, and commonly held beliefs.
- demonstrate heightened awareness of conventions and dynamics of group discussion and interaction to:
 - present and explain one's point of view clearly.
 - support or modify one's opinions with reasons.
 - acknowledge others' contributions.
 - agree and disagree politely at appropriate times.
 - share information and ideas.
 - clarify, rephrase, explain, expand and restate information and ideas.
- use various reference sources to refine vocabulary for interpersonal academic workplace situation including figurative, idiomatic and technical vocabulary.
- illustrate use of infinitive and infinitive phrases.

The Importance of Family

To understand how crucial the existence of strong family is to the civilization of free spirits, we might meditate on the odd fact that the first of the targets of tyrants and Utopians of the political right and left is always the family. From Plato to Marx to Mao, all those thinkers who want society organised so that individual will fit into some overarching five year plan for the ideal Republic, the ideal socialist or religious state, inevitably try to replace the family and place the education of the young in the hands of state-run institutions. Under the banner of freeing women for productive work, or liberating the young from the prejudices of the old, or instilling the values necessary for an ideal Commonwealth, parents and children are separated or allowed minimal contact. The motive behind this antipathy toward the family is not difficult to find. So long as men's and women's prime loyalty is to family and kin, they cannot be controlled by the state or any other institution. But if they can be convinced to switch their loyalty to some "higher" cause or institution, they will obey the dictates of their leaders.

For better or worse, the family is the first line of defence against dehumanization and misplaced loyalty. Within the privacy of home, we may think, speak, and worship as we please. We may educate our children in the value we cherish and teach them respect for the tradition we uphold. Because it is easiest to love our own children unconditionally, the family is the natural school of love. Loving our kin, we may gradually learn to extend kindness to strangers. And because children incarnate our hopes, they are our visceral evidence of wisdom of investing our time and care in the lives of others.



Almost without noticing it we, are voluntarily eroding the freedom and surrendering the loyalties that no tyrant could take from us without a fight. By our increasingly slavish devotion to the the economic order, we are destroying the cradle of freedom. The iron law of profit is best served by those who are willing to depersonalize themselves by valuing efficiency above compassion, and devotion to the competitive goals of the corporation over loyalty to family.

History of the world "economics" contain a parable that illuminates our present dilemma and offer a challenge to the men and women. Originally "economics" meant " the art of managing a household" and it contained the notion of thrift and voluntary simplicity. Later, under the impact of industrial revolution, "economics" came to mean the system of production, distribution, and consumption of commodities. When factory, store, office, and bank usurped the loyalties of men and replaced the home as a centre of economic activity, women who chose to give serious attention to home making were given the condescending title of "home economists". And the final transformation, which is to say degradation, of the dignity of the home, is symbolised by recent change made at University of Iowa. What was once the College of Home Economics has now been renamed the College of Consumer Sciences.

The only revolution that will heal us is one in which men and women come together and place the creation of rich family life back in the center of horizon of our values. A letter I got recently from a woman makes the point : "Perhaps the real shift will come when men fully realize, in the gut and not just in the head, that they are equally responsible, with women for the creation, nurturing, and protection of children."

You may object, "All of this is well enough in theory, but unfortunately in fact, for many people the family was vicious trap and a cruel destiny. The place that should have been a sanctuary was often torture house. The arms that should have helped us often pushed us away. Many flee the family because it was the place of injury, captivity, disappointment, abuse. The children of alcoholics and abusive parents fear marriage and family and find their solace in becoming solitary. There are

so many bad marriages and dysfunctional families, it sometimes seems only reasonable to junk the institution or invent a replacement. True enough, but hopes of replacing the family with some more perfect institution, like hi-tech pipe dreams of creating space colonies into which we can escape when we have polluted the earth, have proven to be both dangerous and deluded. It is within the bonds of what is familial that we must live or perish.

Fortunately, the profusion of dysfunctional families does not necessarily predict a grim future for the family. One of the standard themes in mythology is the promise of the wounded healer. In our hurt lies the source of our healing. The bird with the broken and mended wings soar the highest. Where you stumble and fall, there you find the treasure.

One of man's greatest resources for change is our wound and our longing for the missing father. We can heal ourselves by becoming the kind of fathers we wanted but did not have. Create out of the void, out of the absence. Our best map for parenting is outlined like a photographic negative in the shadow side of our psyches. Get in touch with your disappointment, your rage, your grief, your loneliness for the father, the intimate touching family you did not have, and you will find a blueprint for parenting. Become the father you longed for. We heal ourselves by learning to give to our children what we did not receive.

If you are not married, do not have children, find a friend's child who needs nurturing and become a part-time substitute parent. To be involved in creating a wholesome future, men and women need an active caring relationship to children. A man who takes no care of and is not involved in the process of caring for and initiating the young remains a boy no matter what his achievements. This generation of men know by its longing for fathers who were absent that nothing fills the void that is created when men abandon their families, whether out of selfishness, dedication to work, or devotion to "important" causes. When anything becomes more important to a society than the welfare of its children, it is a sure sign of spiritual disintegration.

About the author:

Sam Keen (born 1931) is an American author, professor, and philosopher who is best known for his exploration of questions regarding love, life, wonder, religion, and being a male in contemporary society. Some of his books are *Sightings: Extraordinary Encounters with Ordinary Birds* (Chronicle Books, 2007), *Faces of the Enemy, Reflections of the Hostile Imagination*. (Harper and Row, San Francisco 2004), *Learning to Fly: Reflections on Fear, Trust, and the Joy of Letting Go* (1999), *To Love and Be Loved* (Bantam, 1997), *Inward Bound: Exploring the Geography of Your Emotions* (Bantam, 1992), *Fire in the Belly: On Being a Man* (Bantam, 1991), *Your Mythic Journey* (Tarcher, 1990), etc.

Glossary

Words	Meaning
antipathy (n)	a deep-seated feeling of aversion.
blueprint (n)	a design plan or other technical drawing.
condescending (adj)	having or showing an attitude of patronizing superiority.
crucial	decisive or critical, especially in the success or failure of something.
dictates (v)	state or order authoritatively.
eroding (v)	(of wind, water, or other natural agents) gradually wear away (soil, rock, or land).
familial (adj)	relating to or occurring in a family or its members.
gut (n)	the inner parts or essence of something.
incarnate (v)	(of a person) be the living embodiment of (a quality).
instilling (v)	gradually but firmly establish (an idea or attitude) in a person's mind.
junk (n)	old or discarded articles that are considered useless or of little value.
minimal (adj)	of a minimum amount, quantity, or degree; negligible.
motive (n)	a reason for doing something.
mythology (n)	a collection of myths, especially one belonging to a particular religious or cultural tradition.

nurturing (v)	care for and protect (someone or something) while they are growing.
overarching	comprehensive or all-embracing.
parable (n)	a simple story used to illustrate a moral or spiritual lesson, as told by Jesus in the Gospels.
profusion (n)	an abundance or large quantity of something.
psyche (n)	the human soul, mind, or spirit.
stumble (v)	trip or momentarily lose one's balance; almost fall.
thrift (n)	the quality of using money and other resources carefully and not wastefully.
tyrants (n)	a cruel and oppressive ruler.
utopians (n)	an idealistic reformer.
vicious (adj)	deliberately cruel or violent.
visceral (adj)	relating to deep inward feelings rather than to the intellect.
void (adj)	a completely empty space.

Reading Comprehension

Answer the following questions.

1. What is the central idea of Keen's essay and how is it related to the title?
2. Analyze any two paragraphs of the essay 'The Importance of Family' and classify the sentences that support the main idea under the headings of definition, example, cause and effect, facts and opinion.
3. What according to Keen is the 'only revolution' that will heal the ills of our society?
4. Is the thesis of the essay 'The Importance of Family' implied or stated? Explain.
5. What is the point of the 4th paragraph? What does its contents have to do with thesis of the essay?
6. Keen says, "We heal ourselves by learning to give to our children what we did not receive." What does he mean? Do you agree?

Writing Suggestions

- A. Keen believes that "the family is the first line of defence against dehumanization and misplaced loyalty." Do you agree or disagree with this statement. Write about your reaction.
- B. An extended family, consisting of parents like father, mother, and their children, aunts, uncles, grandparents, and cousins, all living in the same household, is on decline. The extended families are gradually shrinking into a nuclear family system, consisting of parents and their children. Write a letter to the editor of a newspaper on the causes of decline of extended family and its effects on the social, cultural and moral of our young generation.

Oral Communication

Some parents are so busy building careers and making money, that they totally neglect and ignore their children. This parenting behavior goes a long way to negatively affect the children later in life. Discuss this problem in the class and invite students to suggest solutions for it, keeping in view the following dynamics of group discussion:

- Present one point of view clearly.
- Support or modify one's opinion with reasons.
- Agree or disagree politely at appropriate time.
- Share information and ideas.
- Clarify, rephrase, explain, expand and restate information and idea.
- Modify, elaborate and extend a statement made by peer or others.

Vocabulary and Grammar

Vocabulary

Use authentic dictionary to find meaning of the following words. Identify part of speech of the words through abbreviations used. Also find their pronunciation through pronunciation key.

be mad about

especially

trekking

award

ordinary

jogging

waste

leisure

save

indoorkid

remember

Now fill in the blanks with words given in the box above. (Change the form if needed).

1. If you don't like outdoor sports you can do _____ sports and enjoy yourself.
2. The youngsters _____ cricket idols and they like putting up their posters on the walls of their rooms.
3. My little brother is keen on _____ his pocket money. When I ask him for it, he never lends me.
4. If you spend lots of hours in front of TV, that means you just _____ your precious time.
5. When an actor receives an _____, his fame becomes double.
6. You mustn't watch TV shows when you have got a lot of homework. _____ when you have an exam the next day, you had better turn it off entirely.
7. When you _____ me in front of my friends, I feel embarrassed.
8. My father and I go _____ every morning. That's why we feel healthy and fit.
9. I don't _____ the meaning of it now. I need to look it up in the dictionary.
10. _____ is a long difficult journey.
11. _____ activities have the same meaning as the free time activities.
12. Maybe an _____ person in the street does not know this but you, as an educated person, must certainly know this.

GRAMMAR

Infinitives

A. An infinitive is a verbal—usually preceded by **to**—that can function in a sentence as a noun, an adjective, or an adverb.

Each sentence below contains at least one infinitive. Identify the infinitive in each sentence and tell what function it serves.

1. More than anything else, I wanted some time alone to read.
2. My grandmother told me that we have been put on Earth to share, to care, to give, and to receive.
3. While the train was stopped at the station, Baber attempted to climb to the top of one of the freight cars.

4. In the book, "Mama Day," "Mama Day tells the citizens of the island to listen to the crows instead of the news bulletins."
5. During the Great Depression, audiences wanted to laugh when they went to the movies.
6. Every Wednesday, six women from the nearby village came to the hostel to do the weekly wash.
7. On the last night of the retreat, we wanted to sing a song to end an evening that had been particularly touching to us all.
8. The duke left the duchess at the Red Roof Inn and proceeded to drive to the country to see his mother.
9. At the end of their long adventure, Anum and Nizam are told that they are too old to return to Kalam.

B. The following sentences have a verb + object + to + infinitive structure. Complete each sentence by putting the words in parenthesis into the correct form.

1. My boss told (I/do) _____ the reports before Friday.
2. My colleague asked (I/send) _____ a fax to the customer.
3. Ali wanted (I/help) _____ him prepare his presentation.
4. I warned (he/not/drive) _____ too quickly because of the bad weather.
5. Please remind (I/call) _____ Mr. Zain tomorrow morning.
6. Please tell (he/not/smoke) _____ here — it's not allowed.
7. Faiza didn't feel too good but we persuaded (she/come) _____ to the party.
8. Nobody wanted to go to the conference but our boss forced (we/go) _____ to it.
9. I asked (she/not/call) _____ so late in the evening. I go to bed early.
10. We showed (they/how/use) _____ the new equipment.

C. Write the entire infinitive phrase and its function used in the sentences below.

1. The best plumber to call is Nizam. _____
2. Each year Shakeel tried to find more deductions for his tax return.

3. To patch the hole in the tyre, the mechanic inserted a plug. _____
4. She learned to read and write English in London. _____
5. Saleem's desire to do everything perfectly will eventually frustrate him. _____
6. To pay that much money for a television is foolish. _____
7. Yesterday Waheed exercised all day to lose some weight before the wedding. _____
8. His only ambition was to succeed at his job. _____
9. To attempt an explanation for this phenomenon would do little good. _____
10. Nawab bought for his father a prayer rug to show his respect. _____

Teacher's Guideline:

Explain and revise with the students the use of infinitive and infinitive phrases.