

A Special Tradition in My Family

Reading Passage, Comprehension & Practice Questions

A Special Tradition in My Family

Does your family have a special tradition that you look forward to every year? Many families around the world have their own unique customs that bring them together. As you read, think about these two questions: **What tradition does the writer's family celebrate, and why is it so important to them?**

Reading Passage: The Sunday Soup

Every winter, when the temperature drops and the streets get cold and quiet, something wonderful happens in our kitchen. My grandmother, Mirela, starts cooking her famous bean soup. The smell fills the whole house — thick, warm, and a little smoky — and everyone knows that our family's winter tradition is beginning.

This tradition started about forty years ago, when Mirela was a young woman living in a small village in Croatia. She cooked the soup every Sunday for her children because it was cheap, filling, and easy to make in large amounts. When our family moved to Germany, she brought the recipe with her. Now, on the first cold Sunday of November, we all travel to her apartment in Hamburg. My aunts, uncles, cousins, and parents arrive with bread, desserts, and loud voices. The kitchen gets crowded and noisy, but nobody minds.

While Mirela stirs the soup slowly, the younger cousins play cards and the older ones help chop vegetables. My father always tells the same funny stories from his childhood, and everyone laughs even though we have heard them many times before. Last year, my cousin Petra wrote down the recipe for the first time because she is going to make the soup herself when she moves to her own flat next spring. Mirela was very proud. For our family, this soup is not just food — it is a connection between the past and the present.

Key Vocabulary in Context

Word / Phrase	Part of Speech	Definition	Example Sentence
tradition	noun	something that a group of people do regularly, often for many years, because it is part of their culture or family life	Eating together on Sundays is an important tradition in our family.
recipe	noun	a set of instructions that tells you how to cook a particular dish	My mother taught me her recipe for tomato soup.
filling	adjective	describes food that makes you feel full and satisfied after eating it	Rice and beans is a very filling meal.

crowded	adjective	full of people, with little space to move	The bus was very crowded during the morning rush hour.
stir	verb	to move a liquid or mixture around slowly using a spoon	She stirred the sauce carefully so it did not burn.
chop	verb	to cut something into small pieces using a knife	Can you chop the onions for me, please?
connection	noun	a relationship or link between two things or people	There is a strong connection between language and culture.
proud	adjective	feeling happy and satisfied because someone you care about has done something good	Her parents were very proud when she passed her exam.

Reading Strategies & Comprehension Tips

Skimming for the Main Idea

Before you read every word, skim the passage quickly. Look at the title "*The Sunday Soup*" and the first sentence of each paragraph. This tells you the text is about a family food tradition that has been passed down through generations. You do not need to understand every word to get the general idea.

Scanning for Specific Information

If a question asks you about a specific detail — for example, *where the tradition started* or *who wrote down the recipe* — scan the passage quickly for key words like names, places, or numbers. Look for "*Croatia*", "*Hamburg*", "*Petra*", or "*forty years ago*" to find the answer quickly without re-reading everything.

Using Context to Understand New Words

If you see a word you do not know, look at the words around it for clues. For example, if you are not sure what "*filling*" means, the sentence says the soup was "*cheap, filling, and easy to make*." The context suggests it is a positive quality of food — something that satisfies hunger.

Following the Sequence of Events

This passage describes events in time order. Look for time words like "*forty years ago*," "*when our family moved*," "*now*," and "*last year*." These words help you understand the order of events and how the tradition changed over time.

Common Reading Pitfalls & Traps

Confusing Locations

The passage mentions two places: **Croatia** and **Germany (Hamburg)**. Be careful — the tradition *started* in Croatia, but the family *now lives* in Hamburg. A common mistake is to say the tradition started in Germany. Always check the exact detail in the text.

Who Does What in the Kitchen?

The passage describes several family members doing different things. **Mirela stirs the soup, the younger cousins play cards, and the older cousins help chop vegetables.** Students sometimes mix up who does which activity. Read carefully and match the person to their action.

Petra's Plan — Future or Past?

The sentence "*she is going to make the soup herself when she moves to her own flat next spring*" describes a **future plan**, not something that has already happened. Do not confuse this with the past event of Mirela teaching the recipe. Petra has *written down* the recipe (past simple), but she *has not cooked it yet*.

Watch Out for "Nobody Minds"

The phrase "*nobody minds*" means *nobody is upset or bothered by it*. Some students may think it means people do not pay attention or do not care in a negative way. In this context, it is positive — the family is happy, even though the kitchen is noisy and crowded.

Quick Summary

This passage tells the personal story of a family tradition centred around a simple but meaningful recipe: Mirela's winter bean soup. The tradition began in Croatia forty years ago and continues today in Hamburg. It is a story about food, family, memory, and how traditions can travel across countries and generations. The vocabulary is mostly high-frequency and everyday, but a few words — like *tradition*, *recipe*, and *connection* — are important for you to understand and remember.

Now read the passage carefully and complete Exercise 1 (Multiple Choice) and Exercise 2 (Fill-in-the-gap dropdown) below.

A Special Tradition in My Family – Practice Test

A2 | Reading Comprehension Exercises: Multiple Choice & Fill-in-the-Gap Dropdown (20 Questions)

Part 1: Multiple Choice (Questions 1–10)

1 What is the main topic of this passage?

- A** A grandmother's life in Croatia
- B** A family winter tradition of making bean soup
- C** How to cook a traditional German meal
- D** A young woman moving to a new country

2 Where did the tradition of making bean soup begin?

- A** In a small village in Germany
- B** In a large city in Croatia
- C** In a small village in Croatia
- D** In an apartment in Hamburg

3 Why did Mirela cook bean soup every Sunday for her children in Croatia?

- A** Because it was her children's favourite food
- B** Because it was cheap, filling, and easy to make in large amounts
- C** Because she learned the recipe from her own mother
- D** Because there were no other ingredients available

4 On which day and month does the family gather in Hamburg?

- A** The first cold Sunday of December
- B** Every Sunday in January
- C** The first cold Sunday of November
- D** The last Sunday of October

5 Where does the family meet for the winter tradition?

- A** At the writer's parents' house
- B** At Mirela's apartment in Hamburg
- C** At a restaurant in Croatia
- D** At a cousin's flat in Germany

6 What do the younger cousins do while Mirela stirs the soup?

- A** They help chop vegetables
- B** They listen to their father's stories
- C** They play cards
- D** They set the table

7 How does the family feel about the father's stories, even though they have heard them before?

- A** They feel bored and stop listening
- B** They feel sad because the stories are about the past
- C** They laugh and enjoy the stories
- D** They ask him to tell different stories

8 What did Petra do last year that was special?

- A** She cooked the soup for the family for the first time
- B** She moved to her own flat in Hamburg
- C** She wrote down Mirela's recipe for the first time
- D** She travelled to Croatia to learn the recipe

9 Why is Petra going to make the soup herself next spring?

- A** Because Mirela is too old to cook anymore
- B** Because she is going to move to her own flat
- C** Because she wants to teach the recipe to others
- D** Because her family is moving back to Croatia

10 According to the passage, what does the bean soup represent for the family?

- A** A way to save money during the winter
- B** A connection between the past and the present
- C** A reminder of life in a big city
- D** A recipe that is popular all over Germany

Part 2: Fill in the Gap Dropdown (Questions 11–20)

11 My grandmother starts cooking her famous bean ____ every winter.

- A** soup
- B** cake
- C** bread

12 The smell fills the whole house — thick, warm, and a little ____.

- A** smoky
- B** sweet
- C** spicy

13 This tradition started about forty years ago, when Mirela was a young woman living in a small ____ in Croatia.

- A** village
- B** city
- C** country

14 She cooked the soup every Sunday because it was cheap, filling, and easy to make in large ____.

- A** amounts
- B** bowls
- C** pieces

15 When the family moved to Germany, Mirela brought the ____ with her.

- A** recipe
- B** tradition
- C** kitchen

16 My aunts, uncles, cousins, and parents arrive with bread, desserts, and loud ____.

- A** voices
- B** music
- C** stories

17 The kitchen gets crowded and noisy, but nobody ____.

- A** minds
- B** leaves
- C** stops

18 While Mirela stirs the soup slowly, the younger cousins play ____ and the older ones help chop vegetables.

- A** cards
- B** games
- C** music

19 My father always tells the same funny stories from his ____, and everyone laughs.

- A** childhood
- B** village
- C** travels

20 My cousin Petra wrote down the recipe because she is going to make the soup herself when she moves to her own ____ next spring.

- A** flat
- B** house
- C** village

Answer Key & Explanations

A Special Tradition in My Family | A2

Part 1: Multiple Choice

1. **B** **Correct Answer: A family winter tradition of making bean soup**
✓ **Explanation:** The passage is mainly about a **family tradition** — every winter, the grandmother **Mirela** makes her famous bean soup and the whole family comes together. *"This tradition started about forty years ago."*
2. **C** **Correct Answer: In a small village in Croatia**
✓ **Explanation:** The passage says Mirela started making the soup when she was a **young woman living in a small village in Croatia**. *"This tradition started about forty years ago, when Mirela was a young woman living in a small village in Croatia."*
3. **B** **Correct Answer: Because it was cheap, filling, and easy to make in large amounts**
✓ **Explanation:** The text clearly states Mirela cooked the soup **because it was cheap, filling, and easy to make in large amounts**. These are the three reasons given in the passage. *"She cooked the soup every Sunday for her children because it was cheap, filling, and easy to make in large amounts."*
4. **C** **Correct Answer: The first cold Sunday of November**
✓ **Explanation:** The passage says the family travels to Mirela's apartment **on the first cold Sunday of November**. *"Now, on the first cold Sunday of November, we all travel to her apartment in Hamburg."*
5. **B** **Correct Answer: At Mirela's apartment in Hamburg**
✓ **Explanation:** The text says **"we all travel to her apartment in Hamburg"**, meaning the family meets at Mirela's home. *"My aunts, uncles, cousins, and parents arrive with bread, desserts, and loud voices."*
6. **C** **Correct Answer: They play cards**
✓ **Explanation:** The passage says **"the younger cousins play cards"** while Mirela stirs the soup. It is the **older cousins** who help chop vegetables. *"While Mirela stirs the soup slowly, the younger cousins play cards and the older ones help chop vegetables."*
7. **C** **Correct Answer: They laugh and enjoy the stories**
✓ **Explanation:** The text says **"everyone laughs even though we have heard them many times before"**. This shows the family enjoys the stories and finds them **funny**. *"My father always tells the same funny stories from his childhood."*
8. **C** **Correct Answer: She wrote down Mirela's recipe for the first time**
✓ **Explanation:** The passage says **"my cousin Petra wrote down the recipe for the first time"**. This was special because nobody had written the recipe before. *"Last year, my cousin Petra wrote down the recipe for the first time."*

9. **B** **Correct Answer: Because she is going to move to her own flat**
✓ **Explanation:** The text says Petra wrote down the recipe **because she is going to make the soup herself when she moves to her own flat next spring**. *"She is going to make the soup herself when she moves to her own flat next spring."*
10. **B** **Correct Answer: A connection between the past and the present**
✓ **Explanation:** At the end of the passage, the writer says the soup is **"a connection between the past and the present"**. This means the soup is more than food — it keeps the family's **history and memories** alive. *"For our family, this soup is not just food — it is a connection between the past and the present."*

Part 2: Fill in the Gap

11. **A** **Correct Answer: soup**
✓ **Explanation:** The text says Mirela cooks her **famous bean soup** every winter. This is the dish that begins the family tradition. *The bean soup fills the whole house with a warm smell.*
12. **A** **Correct Answer: smoky**
✓ **Explanation:** The passage describes the smell of the soup as **thick, warm, and a little smoky**. This tells us about the special character of the soup's smell. *The smoky smell filled every room in the house.*
13. **A** **Correct Answer: village**
✓ **Explanation:** The text says Mirela lived in a **small village** in Croatia when she started the tradition. A village is a small place in the countryside. *She grew up in a quiet village far from the big cities.*
14. **A** **Correct Answer: amounts**
✓ **Explanation:** The passage says the soup was easy to make in **large amounts**, meaning she could cook a lot of it at one time. *She always cooked food in large amounts to feed the whole family.*
15. **A** **Correct Answer: recipe**
✓ **Explanation:** The text says Mirela **brought the recipe with her** when the family moved to Germany. A recipe is the instructions for how to cook a dish. *Without the recipe, nobody could make the soup the same way.*
16. **A** **Correct Answer: voices**
✓ **Explanation:** The passage says the family arrives with **loud voices**, which shows they are happy, energetic, and excited to be together. *The room was full of loud voices and laughter.*
17. **A** **Correct Answer: minds**
✓ **Explanation:** The text says **nobody minds** that the kitchen is crowded, meaning everyone is happy and comfortable in the situation. *It was noisy, but nobody minded because they were all having fun.*
18. **A** **Correct Answer: cards**
✓ **Explanation:** The passage says the younger cousins **play cards** while Mirela stirs the soup. This shows how different family members spend their time during the tradition. *Playing cards is a popular activity when families get together.*

19. **A** Correct Answer: **childhood**

✓ **Explanation:** The text says the father tells stories from his **childhood**, meaning when he was a young boy. This connects the present gathering to family memories from the past. *He loves sharing funny childhood memories with the whole family.*

20. **A** Correct Answer: **flat**

✓ **Explanation:** The passage says Petra will make the soup when she moves to her own **flat**, which is another word for an apartment. *She is excited to cook in her new flat for the first time.*

Score Guide

18–20 Correct	Excellent! You have mastered this topic.
15–17 Correct	Very good! Review the rules you missed.
12–14 Correct	Good start. Re-read the lesson and examples.
0–11 Correct	Study the lesson again before retaking the test.