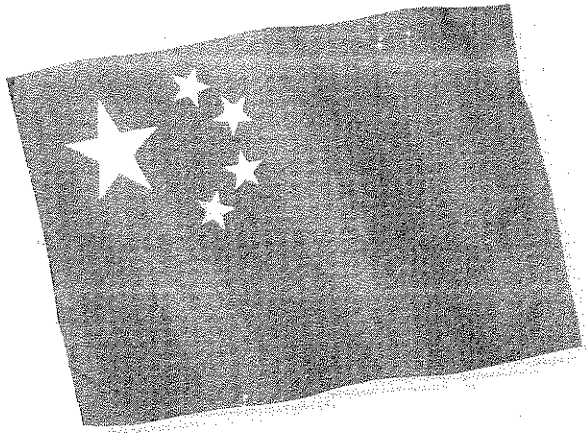


What's It Like to Live in CHINA?

by Michela Marfisi



Set Your Purpose

Have you ever wondered what life is like in other countries? Read this article to learn a little about life in China.

How would you like to live in the same building as your school? In China, some children do. Some apartment buildings include stores and a school. For these children, classes are only an elevator ride away. Many other children walk or bike to nearby schools.

Chinese students work hard in school. They work on homework until late at night. All that reading, writing, and studying can be hard on the eyes. Twice a day at school, everyone takes a break. For five minutes, students do eye exercises to rest and **strengthen** their eyes. They listen to music as they exercise their eyes. Students take a break to exercise their bodies, too. They do jump-ups and toe-touches together.

In China, apartments are very small. Families often eat, sleep, study, read, and watch TV in the same room. The room is **organized** carefully. Everything has its place. There is very little **privacy**. Most families do not have their own kitchen, bathroom, or telephone. These things are shared. You might meet your friends in the bathroom while brushing your teeth in the morning!

China's population is very large. There is a shortage of housing. People worry about a **shortage** of food. To deal with these problems, the government has a "one child only" rule. Almost every child in China today is an only child. It is rare to have a brother or a sister.

Chinese families have very close relationships. Grandparents and grandchildren often spend a great deal of time together. Parents and grandparents do their best to **advise** children about tough decisions. They want to help their children any way they can.

Like people everywhere, the Chinese love having pets. You won't see many St. Bernard dogs, though. Usually pets are pretty small. Song birds and crickets are two favorites. To keep their cricket warm during the winter, a family might use a hot-water bottle. They don't want their pet to catch a cold. Bird owners in the city often take their birds for morning outings. They carry the birds in cages with covers pulled down. When they get to the park, they meet other bird owners. The people hang the cages from branches and take off the covers. The birds hop around and sing together.

Think About It

How is school and family life in China different from your life? How is it similar?

Name _____

Date _____

Check Your Understanding

Fill in the letter with the best answer for each question.

- This selection gives information about life in China today. It includes information about
 - food, housing, and pets.
 - school, housing, and names.
 - school, housing, and pets.
 - families, names, and clothing.
- Which category would include information about apartment living?
 - housing
 - food
 - clothing
 - pets
- Most families in China have
 - many children.
 - large homes.
 - just one child.
 - pet dogs.
- Why does China have a "one child only" rule?
 - because the Chinese don't like children
 - because the country is very crowded
 - because they like to have tough rules
 - because school is very hard
- What do people often do with their pet birds?
 - They let them fly free in the park.
 - They give them hot-water bottles.
 - They take them in cages to the park.
 - They take them for walks on leashes.

Vocabulary

Find each vocabulary word in the selection. The words and sentences around it will help you figure out its meaning.

Fill in the letter with the best definition of the underlined word.

- Students do eye exercises to strengthen their eyes.
 - make stronger
 - make less strong
 - be strong
 - lose strength
- The small room is organized carefully.
 - messed up
 - decorated
 - cleaned
 - arranged
- Living together in a small space doesn't allow for a lot of privacy.
 - separateness
 - group activity
 - singing
 - Chinese building
- In China, there is a shortage of housing.
 - lot
 - lack
 - system
 - building
- Parents and grandparents do their best to advise children about life.
 - do homework
 - punish
 - try to sell something
 - offer help and suggestions

Name _____

Date _____

Word Work

Some words have more than one meaning. You can often figure out the meaning of a word by looking at how the word is used in a sentence. For example, the word *desert* has two different meanings:

- 1. desert (DES ert)** – a large dry area
We traveled across the *desert*.
- 2. desert (de SERT)** – to run away from
Why did he *desert* the army?

Read the sentences below. Decide if each underlined word has meaning A or B. Fill in the letter with the correct answer.

- We live in a small apartment.
 (A) live (*līv*) – the opposite of dead
 (B) live (*liv*) – to have your home somewhere
- Live birds are more interesting than stuffed birds.
 (A) live (*līv*) – the opposite of dead
 (B) live (*liv*) – to have your home somewhere
- Wind up the toy, then watch it move.
 (A) wind (*wīnd*) – to twist an object in one direction
 (B) wind (*wind*) – moving air, a strong breeze

- The children bow when they greet their teacher.

- (A) bow (*bō*) – a knot with loops
 (B) bow (*bou*) – to bend at the waist as a sign of respect

A **suffix** is a word part that comes at the end of a base word. The suffixes **-ment**, **-en**, and **-ship** can be added to base words to form new words.

govern + ment = government
strength + en = strengthen
relation + ship = relationship

Add the suffix **-ment**, **-en**, or **-ship** to each base word below to make a new word. Write the entire word.

5. arrange _____
6. friend _____
7. soft _____
8. enjoy _____
9. weak _____
10. apart _____

Write Now

In the article you learned about Chinese homes, schools, and family life. How would you describe your home, school, and family to a child in China?

Home	
School	
Family	

- Plan to write a letter to a Chinese pen pal. First, make a chart like the one shown. Jot down some interesting details about your home, school, and family.
- Write a letter to a pen pal in China. Use the notes from your chart to describe what your home, school, and family are like here in the United States.