

VIETNAMESE CULTURE ASSIMILATOR

BOOK I

PART I, II, III

The Thai Culture Assimilator developed by the University of Illinois under the direction of Fred E. Fiedler has been tentatively adapted for use for the Vietnamese Culture by the Asia Training Center of the University of Hawaii/AID Materials Development Department.

This first draft of the Vietnamese Culture Assimilator was developed by Mrs. Virginia Kemble with the cooperation and assistance of the following Vietnamese Language Instructors at the Center:

Mr. Nguyen Nhu Chau
Miss Bui Thi Cam Ha
Mr. Phan Dinh Hue
Miss Vo Thi Lang
Mrs. Renee Rifaud
Mrs. Kim Shirley
Mrs. Lan N Sullivan
Mr. Le Tuong
Mr. Tang The Tuong
Mr. Mai Thanh Tuyen
Miss Ly Yen Tuyet
Mr. Gilles Cao Van

Group Effectiveness Research Laboratory

Department of Psychology

University of Illinois

Urbana Illinois

Vietnamese Culture Assimilator

Book I

Spring, 1967

Uriel Foa
Terry Mitchell
Sutitha Santhai
Nuanpen Wichiarajote
Weerayudh Wichiarajote

Interpersonal Perception and the Psychological
Adjustment of Group Members, Contract DA-49-193-MD-2060

with the

Office of the Surgeon General

Fred E. Fiedler
Principal Investigator

Thai Culture Assimilator adapted for Vietnam
By Asia Training Center
Honolulu, Hawaii
February, 1968

VIETNAMESE CULTURE ASSIMILATOR

Part I

BOOK I

INTRODUCTORY FRAME

(IF)

You are about to read Part I of the Vietnamese Culture Assimilator. The first section of Book I is concerned with the social values and personality traits of the Vietnamese people. You will learn about these aspects of the people through their behaviors in interpersonal situations.

An American Public Administration advisor visited a small Vietnamese manufacturing firm. He thought it was important to understand how some of the workers felt about their jobs. He started a conversation with one of the workers. After introducing himself, he asked how long the man had been with the company. "Seven years," was his reply. "Are you a foreman?" asked the executive. "No," the Vietnamese replied. "I have had the same job for seven years." "Have you ever asked for a raise or a promotion?" asked the executive. "Oh, no. I am quite pleased with the job and my position." The American was rather surprised that neither ambition nor bitterness was apparent.

What does this story seem to indicate about Vietnamese people?

a. They are lazy.

Go to page 1-a

b. They accept their positions in life passively.

Go to page 1-b

c. They do not think of their jobs as an important part
of their life.

Go to page 1-c

d. They have a caste system similar to India.

Go to page 1-d

You selected a: They are lazy.

This is not the case.

The Vietnamese are not lazy people, but they do have different ideas about their jobs and their work habits than Americans do.

Go to page 1-1

You selected b: They accept their positions in life passively and do not think of their jobs as an important part of their life.

This is an excellent choice.

The passive acceptance of the natural order of things is an important part of the Vietnamese value system. The Vietnamese believe that men are predetermined to be superior or inferior, lucky or unlucky, a success or a failure, depending on their merits carried in the previous life. They also believe that their tortures are determined by their horoscopes -- based on the time of their birth. Therefore, the existing order of things and people is taken for granted. The philosophy of life is thus apt to be, "Whatever will be, will be." On the other hand, Americans believe that men are equal. They are different from Vietnamese in that they make an active effort; they work hard to cultivate a given talent or to achieve a goal.

Go to page 2-1

You selected c: They do not think of their jobs as an important part of their life.

This is partially correct, but not the best choice.

It is true that a job is not as important to a Vietnamese as it is to an American. However, the work situation does involve contacts with friends, prestige, and other aspects of the Vietnamese' life which are important.

Go to page 1-1

You selected d: They have a caste system similar to India.

This is not true.

There is not a caste system in Vietnam. There are some class distinctions but not the strict barriers like those existing in India.

Go to page 1-1

Frank Johnson was serving in Vietnam. One of the behaviors of the Vietnamese that he noticed wherever he went was the apparent courtesy of the people, particularly between an older person and younger person. A typical greeting between older and younger ran something like this:

Younger person: "Chào Ông" (Good day, sir) or "dài uy" (Captain-his title). With this greeting, he also salutes the older man by placing the hands palm to palm and raising them toward the face while slightly bowing. This salute is called "cúi đầu".

Older person: "Chào Cậu", (Good day), A.a.a....How are you" or "where are you going?" also returning the salute with "cúi đầu" but without raising the hands toward the face.

Younger person: "Yes, I am well" or "Home."

How would you most adequately explain to Frank Johnson the purpose served by this formal style of greeting?

- a. Vietnamese are rather status-conscious people, and this style of greeting helps re-affirm the status differences and shows proper respect and recognition of the individuals.

Go to page 2-a

- b. Vietnamese are quite insecure people psychologically, and are often ill-at-ease in an interpersonal situation; this style of greeting helps build up their feelings of adequacy.

Go to page 2-b

- c. The Vietnamese are naturally friendly, and like to show it.

Go to page 2-c

- d. This method of greeting really demonstrates the Vietnamese reliance on formality and tendency towards secrecy.

Go to page 2-d

You selected a: Vietnamese are rather status-conscious people, and this style of greeting helps to re-affirm the status differences and shows proper respect and recognition of the individuals.

This is the most adequate explanation of the Vietnamese's greeting.

You have already learned that the Vietnamese family power structure is graded and status is distributed according to the amount of power, age, and other socially desired traits. This graded structure of power, prestige, and status, cuts across the entire social system and appears openly in social transactions. When two Vietnamese first meet each other, they will immediately determine their status-appropriate behaviors, and usually a greeting would be a means to show one's location in the status hierarchy. Afterward, greetings help re-affirm the status differences and show proper respect and recognition of the individuals! A younger person does not question an older person first.

However, if they cannot determine each other's status, they will feel ill-at-ease and the meeting will eventually result in a very strained interpersonal interaction.

In Vietnam, one way of greeting is: "Where are you going?" or "Where have you been?". To Westerners this seems like an unwarranted prying into one's personal affairs and also may require lengthy explanations which are annoying when one is in a hurry. The question has no more significance than the standard American greeting, "How are you?" and the perfectly proper reply is "North" or "South" or "Home" or "Town." The expression serves the purpose of acknowledging the presence of someone with whom one has cordial relations.

Since there is a scarcity of pronouns in the Vietnamese language, people are usually referred to by their job titles.

Go to page 3-1

You selected b: Vietnamese are quite insecure people psychologically, and are often ill-at-ease in an interpersonal situation; this style of greeting helps build up their feelings of adequacy.

Not quite.

This alternative is partly correct. In comparison to Americans, Vietnamese are dependent people. They are not trained to make decisions for themselves until they reach adulthood which is after 20 years of age. They are not particularly trained to take care of themselves, to be independent, and to take charge of responsibility, except possibly the eldest son. Hence, they feel somewhat insecure around others.

They also tend to be ill-at-ease in an interpersonal situation, particularly when the status differences are not spelled out.

But there are more basic things than these traits which explain the Vietnamese greeting more adequately. Try again.

Go to page 2-1

You selected c: The Vietnamese people are naturally friendly and they like to show it.

This is close.

This is generally true, but not an appropriate explanation for the Vietnamese greeting. Recall the episodes dealing with the family structure and interpersonal relationships, and try again.

Go to page 2-1

You selected d: This method of greeting really demonstrates the Vietnamese's reliance on formality and tendency toward secrecy.

This choice is partially correct.

The Vietnamese rely more on formality to insure proper status-appropriate behaviors and expectations. Also, the use of such formal greetings helps avoid a show of hostility and disrespect.

But there is a better choice than this one.

Go to page 2-1

An American advisor in Vietnam was visiting in a Vietnamese home when the mail was brought in. She was very surprised when a letter addressed to a teen-age daughter in the family was opened by the father. When he finished reading the letter, he gave it to his daughter, Hoa.

If you were to witness this incident, how would you correctly explain why the father read the daughter's mail?

- a. Hoa was obviously in trouble for some reason and her father was checking all communications to and from her.

Go to page 3-a

- b. The father was probably trying to help her answer an important letter.

Go to page 3-b

- c. The father felt that any letters or notes which appeared to be questionable must be censored before the daughter got them.

Go to page 3-c

- d. The father had to read Hoa's mail because he was responsible for her, morally. Reading her mail was not considered out of place in a Vietnamese home.

Go to page 3-d

You selected a: Hoa . was obviously in trouble for some
reason and her father was checking all
communication to and from her.

We cannot be sure since there is no evidence in the
message pointing to this conclusion.

Make another choice.

Go to page 3-1

You selected b: The father was trying to help her answer
an important letter.

This is not correct.

Even though it is customary that daughters usually
consult their fathers over such matters and ask for advice
from knowledgeable persons, this is not the case in this
incident.

Re read the passage and make another choice.

Go to page 3-1

You selected c: The father felt that any letters or notes which appeared to be questionable must be censored before the daughter got them.

This is not entirely correct.

The father would not necessarily censor her mail. He may just want to be informed of the contents.

Go to page 3-1

You selected d: The father had to read Hoa's mail because he was responsible for her, morally. Reading her mail was not considered out of place in a Vietnamese home.

This is the best choice.

This may seem to the American that the Vietnamese father does not respect the daughter's privacy. To the Vietnamese this is accepted behavior: The fathers believe that if they check all of the daughters' mail, the daughter's will not read any letters that will have a bad influence on them. This custom is generally approved by most parents. They insist that young girls' minds should be pure and innocent, and they must be protected against any corruption which may be caused by worldly ideas, particularly those about sex. Young Vietnamese parents believe that early dating will have a bad influence on the girls, and it may cause them to lose interest in doing their school work.

Go to page 4-1

One of the most important aspects of any culture is the existing frame of reference concerned with the passage of time. A typical incident occurring during an international meeting often goes as follows:

"Gentlemen, the time is 12:30, and it is time for lunch, so we will adjourn for an hour," says the chairman in accordance with his belief that having three meals a day at regular hours is the proper way for mankind to exist.

One delegate reacts negatively and says, "But why? We haven't finished what we were doing." In his country, people eat when they feel like it, and every family follows its own individual timetable.

"Why indeed?" inquired a third member. Where he was from, life and time were seen as flowing together as a continuous stream with no man being indispensable. Meetings, concerns, and other gatherings might go on for hours while individuals would come and go quietly without strain or stress.

In spite of the slight protests of the members, the group adjourned for lunch. However, when the group met at 2:00 that afternoon, the session was not fruitful, as the morning session was.

You selected a: American

No!

Are you that way? If so, you are certainly not typical.
Reread the passage and make sure that you understand the
question.

Go to page 4-1

You selected b: Eastern European

Incorrect.

Think carefully while you read the passage and try to match the characteristics with foreigners and their nationalities. Is an Eastern European, in general, more relaxed than impatient?

Try again.

Go to page 4-1

You selected c: African

This is not right.

Africans are more relaxed than Americans, but there is not the constant flow and exchange between time and action. Try again.

Go to page 4-1

You selected d: Far Eastern.

Correct.

It shows that you have the ability to differentiate and generalize, as well as being a perceptive observer. In Vietnam the concept of time is more Westernized than in some Asian countries, at least as far as lunch hours and rest time are concerned.

Proceed.

Go to page 5-1

An American professor was 20 minutes late for an appointment that he had made with two of his graduate students. The students were looking at their watches when the professor finally came into the room. The professor said, "I am terribly sorry I am late." The two graduate students jokingly replied, "Better late than never." The professor laughed and after a few more informal exchanges of conversation the group enthusiastically got down to the business that the appointment had been scheduled for.

Judging from the behavior exhibited in this incident, which one of the following do you see as the most accurate description of what that behavior mainly signifies?

a. The students do not have the proper respect for their professor.

Go to page 5-a

b. No Americans like to be kept waiting 20 minutes for an appointment, regardless of what the status of the person who is late may be.

Go to page 5-b

c. The professor is asserting his status and authority over the students by making them wait until it is convenient for him to meet with them.

Go to page 5-c

d. The professor felt that the students were rude in their manner and remarks.

Go to page 5-d

You selected a: They do not have the proper respect for
their professor.

This is incorrect.

Though, in general, American graduate students and
their professors are on informal terms with one another,
this is not the key point here. Does the incident indicate
that these graduate students do not have a proper degree of
respect for the professor? Is it the action or the man
that is important in this situation?

Go to page 5-1

You selected b: No Americans like to be kept waiting 20 minutes for an appointment, regardless of what the status of the person who is late may be.

Very good.

This is correct. There are times when everyone has to wait, even if he has an appointment, but no Americans like it. Otherwise, why would they arrange so many of their activities by appointments? If one has a busy day tightly scheduled, it does not make much difference what the status may be of the person who is late. The whole of the remaining schedule is likely to be disrupted, and hence, the day's tasks may not be accomplished. Some people call this expectation of punctuality a manifestation of democracy; others terms it a manifestation of rigidity and strict adherence to "the schedule."

Go to page 6-1

You selected c: The professor is asserting his authority over the students by making them wait until it is convenient for him to meet with them.

You have made an error, but do not dwell on the blunder.

Do the professor's actions and remarks in the situation provide support for this description of what his behavior signifies?

Go to page 5-1

You selected d: The professor thought the graduate students
were rude in their manner and remarks.

This is not a good choice.

Did the professor's reaction to the remarks on his
tardiness indicate what this answer describes? In this
situation, what is the implication of the actions and the
remarks of everyone involved and where it occurred?

Go to page 5-1

One day a Vietnamese administrator of middle rank kept two of his assistants waiting about an hour for an appointment. The assistants, although very angry, did not show it while they waited until the man finally arrived. When the administrator walked in at last, he acted as if he were not late. He made no apology or explanation. After he was settled in his office, he called his assistants in and they all began working on the business for which the administrator had set the meeting.

If you had happened to observe the incident exactly as it is reported in this passage, which one of the following would you say describes the chief significance of the behavior of the people involved?

a. The Vietnamese assistants were extremely skillful at concealing their true feelings.

Go to page 6-a

b. The Vietnamese administrator obviously was unaware of the fact that he was an hour late for the appointment.

Go to page 6-b

c. In Vietnam, subordinates are required to be polite to their superiors, no matter what happens, nor what their rank may be.

Go to page 6-c

d. Clearly, since no one commented on it, the behavior indicated nothing of any unusual significance to any of the Vietnamese.

Go to page 6-d

You selected a: The Vietnamese assistants were extremely skillful at concealing their true feelings.

This is not entirely correct.

It is quite characteristic of Vietnamese to try to appear reserved under any circumstances. If the assistants were extremely skillful at concealing their true feelings, would you know that you weren't seeing their true feelings? Also, does the reference to the chief significance of the behavior of "the people involved" limit it to the assistant.

Go to page 6-1

You selected b: The Vietnamese administrator obviously was unaware of the fact that he was an hour late for the appointment.

A very poor choice.

While the administrator acted as if he were unaware of his tardiness after observing the hour's wait, don't you suspect that perhaps he was acting?

Go to page 6-1

You selected c: In Vietnam, subordinates are required to be polite to their superiors, no matter what happens, nor what their rank may be.

Very good. You are utilizing the information in the episodes to its fullest extent. Continue. This is the correct response.

To some extent this "deference to the boss" may be observed almost anywhere in the world, but you are far more likely to find it carried to a higher degree in Vietnam than in the United States.

There are certain clues to help you select c: the assistants' concealed feelings, the administrator's failure to apologize, the fact that no one mentioned the tardiness, and the subsequent keeping of the appointment which the administrator had set.

Did you use them at all?

What you've already learned from earlier sections of the culture assimilator can help you. What did you learn about respect for older and higher status persons in Vietnam? And about the attitude of students toward a professor?

You selected d: Clearly, since no one commented on it, the behavior indicated nothing of any unusual significance to any of the Vietnamese.

This is completely wrong.

While the behavior reported in the passage does not seem so significant for the Vietnamese in this relationship as it might be to Americans, why was nothing said about the tardiness? And why were the assistants "very angry" although they "did not show it"?

Isn't there a more significant level of meaning for this behavior?

Go to page 6-1

Judy Landon, a IVS volunteer, was assigned to teach English in a high school in Vietnam. Up until then, Judy had had no teaching experience, since she came to Vietnam right after her graduation. During her first week there, she asked the principal if he could arrange for her to observe an English class. He called in Giáo Su (a respectable term to address all teachers), who had taught English for several years, and asked her, if she did not mind, to allow Judy to observe one of her English classes. Judy attended the class and watched quietly in the back of the class. At one time, Lân, a student in the class, asked Giáo Su to explain the difference between the present and the past perfect tense. After a pause, the teacher, who seemed uneasy, came up with a few words of explanation which did not seem to be very clear.

One bright-looking student, Thái, told the teacher that he knew the answer and volunteered to explain the concepts to Lân.

One week later, Judy was checking the students' answer sheets from the previous English exam, so that she could plan her lessons based on the students' knowledge of the language. She discovered that both Lân and Thái's papers had too many points taken off for their minor mistakes. And, as a result, these two papers were given the grade of C. Judy was wondering why the two best papers in the class were graded incorrectly.

Which one of the following is the most likely explanation for the problem in this episode?

- a. Giaó Su . . . had made a mistake unknowingly.

Go to page 7-a

- b. Giaó Su was punishing Thái for showing off in front of Judy.

Go to page 7-b

- c. Student participation is discouraged in Vietnam and Giaó Su was angry at the students for asking questions during class time.

Go to page 7-c

- d. Giaó Su was just showing her authority over the students.

Go to page 7-d

You selected a: The teacher had made a mistake unknowingly.

This is not plausible.

Why would all of the other papers be graded correctly and only Thai's and Lan's papers graded incorrectly?

Try again.

Go to page 7-1

You selected b: Giaó Su was punishing Thái for showing off in front of Judy.

This is correct.

Showing off is frowned upon in Vietnam, especially when one volunteers. To have shown off in front of a visitor is more serious, especially when it makes the teacher look bad. Giaó Su was punishing Thái for making her look incompetent in front of Judy and also for showing off in front of the other class members.

Go to page 8-1

You selected c: Student participation is discouraged in Vietnam and Giao Su was angry at the students for asking questions during class time.

Incorrect.

This is not really true. To show off is frowned on but to ask questions or to participate in class is not discouraged, if done politely. Education is a very serious thing to most Vietnamese students, and the punishment which occurs in this story must be due to something more personal. Choose another alternative.

Go to page 7-1

You selected d: Giau Su was just showing her authority
over the students.

Close but not quite.

There is not a question as to Giau Su's authority
over the students. The question is why were those two
students picked out for punishment. The information is
in the story.

Go to page 7-1

Mr. and Mrs. Robinson received unexpected company at their home in Forrest Heights one Sunday afternoon. As time passed and the dinner hour approached, Mrs. Robinson asked her visitors if they would like to stay for dinner. The company politely thanked her but refused, saying that they really must be going. They got up and left almost immediately.

After they had gone, Mrs. Robinson said to her husband, "I am certainly glad they didn't stay for dinner. We don't have anything special and I just don't feel like having company. I only asked them to stay hoping they would get the hint and leave."

Which of the following statements do you think best describes Mrs. Robinson in light of the foregoing passage?

a. She was lazy and anti-social

Go to page 8-a

b. She was selfish and inconsiderate

Go to page 8-b

c. She was a typical middle-class housewife.

Go to page 8-c

d. She is two-faced and can't be trusted as a friend.

Go to page 8-d

You selected a: Mrs. Robinson was lazy and anti-social.

Wrong. Your answer is inconsistent with the given information.

While she did not want the visitors to stay for dinner, does this necessarily mean that she was lazy and anti-social? After all, she did invite them to stay even if she didn't mean it.

Go to page 8-1

You selected b: She was selfish and inconsiderate.

Incorrect. You have failed to correctly evaluate the other alternatives.

Would an inconsiderate person have invited her guests to stay for dinner? While she was hoping they would leave, is this necessarily a sign of inconsiderateness?

Go to page 8-1

You selected c: She was a typical middle-class housewife.

From the alternatives given, this is the best choice.

While there is some possibility that she is two-faced in that she offered an invitation she didn't want accepted, this is a common ruse applied by most of us at one time or another. The mention of dinner by Mrs. Robinson was a friendly hint that the visitors were overstaying their welcome and that the Robinsons wished to have their dinner.

Americans show their generosity and hospitality in a number of ways, some of which are connected with food. We often invite friends to a dinner or a party where food is served and we gladly accept food on occasions of this nature. However, we do not require that every individual who comes to visit us at any time for any purpose be fed. There are certain rites and rituals attached to almost everything we do that are to a large part determined by the culture in which we live. Cultures differ. This is one of the most important lessons you will learn as you proceed through this program. Try to be on the lookout for these unmentioned rules of behavior that we take so much for granted, yet may be looked upon in wonder and often amazement by people from a different culture. As you shall see in the next episode, Vietnamese have a different attitude toward being a host than Americans do.

While you are proceeding through this program, be on the lookout for clues that suggest the correct alternative.

You selected d: She is two-faced and can't be trusted
as a friend.

This alternative is incorrect. There is no evidence to
suggest this conclusion.

There is evidence for her being somewhat inconsistent.
She offered an invitation, which she didn't want to be
accepted, and then talked about the visitors after they
had left. But is this strange? This sort of activity is
a common part of our day-to-day existence. Does this hint
that it was time to leave mean that Mrs. Robinson could
not be trusted as a friend? Even good friends perform acts
like this quite often. It is an informal way of communicating
how we actually feel.

Go to page 8-1

M[^]_{an} is one of the few Vietnamese students in Honolulu who lives in an apartment and he frequently invites his Vietnamese friends over for Vietnamese-style meals. One day he had invited some close friends over, including some Americans, for a get-together to celebrate his on-coming graduation, and as everyone was sitting down at the table to eat, three uninvited guests arrived. The newcomers, seeing that the party was eating, excused themselves and began to leave. M[^]_{an} would not let them go and he insisted that they join them for the meal. He then went into the kitchen to bring out extra dishes..

Jerry, one of M[^]_{an}'s American friends at the party, went with him to the kitchen and said politely that he didn't see why M[^]_{an} had to invite these new people who just dropped in without any notice. M[^]_{an}, while going about his cooking, quietly said that he had to invite them. Jerry then shrugged his shoulders in silent disagreement.

Which of these explanations is considered most correct in describing Mãn's behavior.

a. Mãn did not want to appear stingy or rude.

Go to page 9-a

b. Mãn, as a foreign student, felt he had to make a special effort not to alienate anyone.

Go to page 9-b

c. Since Mãn was one of the few Vietnamese to have an apartment where he could entertain, he felt that he had to fulfill his obligation.

Go to page 9-c

d. Mãn would welcome all visitors at all times because this is a Vietnamese custom.

Go to page 9-d

You selected a: M[^]an[^] did not want to appear stingy or rude.

This is partially correct.

According to American standards, the three uninvited visitors are being rude by staying. M[^]an[^] would not have been considered rude if he had not offered extra food, but the other Vietnamese at the party would have been surprised.

Go to page 9-1

You selected b: Man, as a foreign student, felt he had to
make a special effort not to alienate
anyone.

This is an incorrect answer.

Certainly foreign students want to make a good impres-
sion on others, but in this case, it is Man that is being
imposed upon, and the other Americans like Jerry would have
seen the incident in this light.

Try again.

Go to page 9-1

You selected c: Since Man^{^v} was one of the few Vietnamese to have an apartment where he would entertain, he felt that he had to fulfill his obligation.

This is only partially correct.

There is an element of fulfilling an obligation here, but it is not because Man^{^v} owns an apartment. It is more basic than that. Reread the incident and make another choice.

Go to page 9-1

You selected d: M^{an} would welcome all visitors at all times because this is a Vietnamese custom.

Correct.

Following the Vietnamese custom, M^{an} extended his hospitality to all visitors at all times. As an old Vietnamese saying goes: He who comes to our house must be welcomed.

The way food is prepared (in small bite sized pieces to be eaten with chopsticks) lends itself to allowing the available food to be divided among more people.

Kindliness is a virtue which is emphasized among the Vietnamese people. Buddhism in Vietnam is, generally speaking, a creed of kindness and thus the people are highly affected by this concept. Charity to relatives and hospitality to strangers are considered important principles of Vietnamese Society.

The foundation of kindness and hospitality may have stemmed from the very nature of the traditional agricultural society. In this type of society, the individuals are characteristically interdependent.

The basis of the peoples' interpersonal relationships are founded on expectations of mutual benefits and obligations in which the people do favors for one another, thus creating obligations which may be called upon later if need be. Therefore, if some unexpected friends should call on M^{an}, they would certainly receive cordial hospitality, a thing which his friends may have to give him in return some day.

John Cannon is a research assistant in the anthropology department at a large university. Part of his job is being a participant in weekly conferences with his boss and several other research assistants and professors. The discussions which take place are usually centered around whatever project the anthropology department is involved in at the time. Usually, research design is a main topic. At one such meeting, John's boss presented an idea for a research design which seemed to John to be faulty in two particular areas. He listened carefully, then tactfully pointed out the two troublesome areas, offering suggestions for change. John's boss was very pleased with his comments and on his future projects he seemed more and more eager to hear John's questions.

If you were to analyze the professor's attitude toward John throughout the incident, you would choose which of the following descriptions?

- a. John's boss was pleased to find out that John was doing well in the field and that he felt confident enough to speak up.
Go to page 10-a
- b. John's boss was upset at John's rudeness in questioning his suggestions.
Go to page 10-b
- c. John's boss had at last found someone he could lean on for constant help.
Go to page 10-c
- d. John's boss disregarded whatever John said, but he attempted to cover it up by seeming to be attentive to his suggestions.
Go to page 10-d

You selected a: John's boss was pleased to find out that John was doing well in the field and felt confident enough to speak up.

This response is correct.

In our academic world in the United States, it is generally true that professors take an interest in the progress of their students. Further, it is significant that John's frankness in speaking up was considered a sign of confidence and was highly valued. Even when a person has achieved a high position in an academic (or any other) field, it is considered an asset if he carefully considers and accepts good or better proposals than his own, although they come from his subordinates.

Go to page 11-1

You selected b: John's boss was upset at John's rudeness in questioning his suggestions.

What happened? That was not a difficult choice. This is incorrect.

Did John's boss act upset or treat John's suggestions as rudeness? Think over the passage carefully with your own experience in the academic world.

Go to page 10-1

You selected c: John's boss had at last found someone he could lean on for constant help.

That is incorrect.

This is an incorrect interpretation of the incident. Being eager to hear someone's opinions and leaning on them for constant help do not mean the same thing. Carefully think over the interaction reported here.

Go to page 10-1

You selected d: John's boss disregarded whatever John said, but he attempted to cover it up by seeming to be attentive to his suggestions.

No. This choice is incorrect.

Does the passage indicate that John's boss disregarded his (John's) suggestions?

Go to page 10-1

Tuyet, a young Vietnamese woman, was studying in a highly competitive department in an American university. It was customary for the members of one of the research laboratories to meet and discuss various problems they were working on.

Tuyet felt most uncomfortable at these meetings, since everyone attended, including the directors of the various projects. She never participated in the discussions or gave any critical evaluations of work being done. It was only after the meetings, in the presence of her own co-workers, that she would critically discuss their work.

Why did Tuyet not participate?

- a. She felt that she was not fluent enough in English to express her ideas well.

Go to page 11-a

- b. She always wished to reflect on her ideas before making any statements.

Go to page 11-b

- c. Tuyet was afraid that she too would be criticized for her remarks.

Go to page 11-c

- d. She did not want to criticize the work of a friend or person who was the director of one of the projects.

Go to page 11-d

11-a

You selected a: She felt that she was not fluent enough in English to express her ideas well.

This is a bad choice. Apparently you missed a key point.

We have no reason to believe that this is the case.

There is a more important problem here. Try again.

Go to page 11-1

You selected b: She always wished to reflect on her ideas before making any statement.

No, this is not right.

It is true that Vietnamese usually do not like to make any remarks immediately in these types of situations. But, this does not explain why she felt uncomfortable, and did not participate in the discussions.

Go to page 11-1

You selected c: Tuyet was afraid that she too would be criticized for her remarks.

This is close.

The fear of being criticized publicly is much greater for the Vietnamese than for the American. But, in this case, it is Tuyet who would have been criticizing others, and it is unlikely that she would have been reprimanded for giving constructive criticism. It also states in the story that she offered her criticisms in the presence of her own co-workers, so there must be something about the group situation which is causing her silence.

Go to page 11-1

You selected d: She did not want to criticize publicly the work of a friend or person who was the director of one of the projects.

You are coming along very well. Keep it up.

There are two important things here. First, for the Vietnamese to criticize their superiors and friends publicly is unlikely. This type of behavior is regarded as a personal criticism as well as a professional criticism, and would not easily be forgotten. Secondly, a Vietnamese almost never points out mistakes made by his superiors. This would be regarded as showing off and being out of place, the consequences of which might be drastic, such as losing out on a promotion. When the subordinate disagrees with the boss's suggestions, he will pretend that he is in agreement with him. Later, when the subordinate carries out the task, he might still do it the way he thinks is correct, even though he knows the boss disagrees. This happens very often where Americans are involved, because the Vietnamese feel that if a mistake is discovered later, the problem could be related to the failure to communicate properly.

An American military officer serving in the Delta in Vietnam, feels that he owes his success to the fact that his Vietnamese counterpart helped him by explaining that the people of his country did not always say what they meant, especially to the people in superior positions. Often the Vietnamese officer explained certain things to the American, and helped him to understand what the Vietnamese people really meant and what they were thinking, even though they did not speak those thoughts aloud.

Which of the following do you think is the most important lesson for you to learn from this passage?

- a. Military officers in Vietnam often tell their foreign counterparts how they should behave.

Go to page 12-a

- b. Vietnamese are likely to hide their disagreement with their superiors.

Go to page 12-b

- c. Officers in Vietnam like to show the foreigner that there are many things he does not know.

Go to page 12-c

- d. It is impossible not to speak ambiguously in languages like Vietnamese.

Go to page 12-d

You selected a: Military officers in Vietnam often tell their foreign counterparts how they should behave.

That is entirely incorrect. You did not think about your answer thoroughly.

What have you read about the sense of hospitality in this part of the world? About the importance of "face"? The Vietnamese would not try to tell an American how he should behave. They might give suggestions or hints about behavior.

Go to page 12-1

You selected b: Vietnamese are likely to hide their disagreement with their superiors.

Good. You are obviously employing the logic needed to correctly choose the alternatives.

This correct response states a very important lesson that must be learned and remembered. Generally, Americans are quite likely to speak frankly, both in their personal conversations and in those related to their work. They do not usually include double meanings in their remarks nor do they look for them in the remarks that other people make to them. In fact, when the situation calls for an American to answer an awkward question, if he manages to do it successfully, what word is used to describe his answer? Possibly "tactful"? This word, of course, implies that anyone who can make a reply without offending has been trained in the skills of diplomacy. And such training is not a part of most peoples' lives. Is it usually a sincere compliment for an American to call a person a "smooth talker" or to say that he "talks a good line"? In our culture, both designations imply deception. Americans, then, are trained to express their thought directly. As a result of this, they tend to regard anything other than direct speech as somewhat dishonest.

In some countries, however, to speak directly is to speak rudely. Thus, Americans and many Eastern countries have a basically opposite set of values in this matter. Therefore,

it is essential that Americans be aware of this fundamental difference when they are working in Vietnam.

If the officer described in this incident did not already know this, he was most fortunate to have a local counterpart who was "westernized" enough to explain the situation to him directly.

Go to page 13-1

You selected c: Officers in Vietnam like to show foreigners that there are many things they don't know.

No. Do not fall asleep on the job.

This statement is incorrect. Although some officers must feel like this, are they found only in Vietnam?

How do people in Vietnam regard people of higher status? What do they see as the proper behavior toward them?

Go to page 12-1

You selected d: It is impossible not to speak ambiguously in languages like Vietnamese.

A very poor answer. You are wrong.

Although languages vary in the degree of precision with which various thoughts and feelings can be expressed, if the Vietnamese felt that they could not adequately express the ideas and opinions that they wanted to, wouldn't they modify their language? Aren't all languages undergoing change constantly?

Go to page 12-1

At a staff meeting in a school in Vietnam, the principal was soliciting suggestions from staff members for improvements in the school curriculum. Tuong, one of the new teachers, stood up and proposed a plan. At the conclusion of his proposal he suggested that the low academic standard of the school was possibly due to the lack of cooperation between the new and the old teachers. He also suggested that this might be helped by more communication among the teachers. At the end of this proposal, the principal asked the rest of the teachers if they had any comments or if they had other proposals to make. There was no response. The principal then asked for hands to support the proposal that had just been made. The support was unanimous. A few days later, the principal found that the other teachers tried to avoid meeting Tuong, and no one paid any attention to Tuong's proposal.

Why was the proposal not implemented?

- a. The Vietnamese had to think about the idea some more and gradually introduce it into the system.

Go to page 13-a

- b. The idea of a staff meeting was not liked by most of the teachers and they agreed to the proposal so that the meeting could be closed quickly.

Go to page 13-b

- c. The other teachers did not really agree with the proposal, but they did not want to show their disapproval in the meeting. Instead, they just failed to implement it.

Go to page 13-c

- d. The reason the proposal was not implemented was because Tuong was a new young teacher, and he was suggesting that the older teachers were somewhat at fault for the low academic standard.

Go to page 13-d

You selected a: The Vietnamese had to think about the idea some more and gradually introduce it into the system.

This is not right.

The problem here is more complex than this. Introducing change gradually is the proper way to get things done, but it is doubtful that this proposal would ever be carried out due to other reasons aside from the idea itself. Try again.

Go to page 13-1

You selected b: The idea of a staff meeting was not liked by most of the teachers and they agreed to the proposal so that the meeting could be closed quickly.

You are incorrect.

Public discussion and criticism are not readily accepted in Vietnam as a way to get things done, but this does not explain why the idea was not utilized. There is something that you have missed that concerns the proposal and its rejection.

Go to page 13-1

You selected c: The other teachers did not really agree with the proposal but they did not want to show their disapproval in the meeting. Instead, they just failed to implement it.

This is very close.

The Vietnamese might very well have agreed with the idea publicly and actually have disapproved. The key problem is why Tung was later avoided, along with the failure to utilize his ideas.

Go to page 13-1

You selected d: The reason the proposal was not implemented was because Tuong was a new young teacher and he was suggesting that the older teachers were somewhat at fault for the low academic standard.

An excellent choice. It shows that you are thinking.

The other teachers would resent the public criticism by a new young teacher. Even though they might agree with his ideas publicly, they would show their displeasure later by actually avoiding Tuong and failing to go along with the proposal. A new young teacher who behaved the way Tuong did would be regarded as a show-off and would be rejected by the rest of the school community for not showing the proper respect for his superiors and their seniority.

Go to page 14-1

Cô Dung was a young Vietnamese teacher who had just graduated from Teacher Training College. She was hired to teach English at a high school in central Vietnam. When she arrived at her school she was very disappointed to learn that the English program was quite poor and that most of her students did not like to study English. She decided to form an English club and teach the subject by making it as much fun as possible. She taught American songs and helped the students organize an English newspaper. Cô Dung became popular with her students but the other teachers avoided her.

Why was Cô Dung avoided?

- a. The other teachers did not agree with her methods of teaching, and rather than tell her openly, they just avoided her.

Go to page 14-a

- b. Most Vietnamese considered school a serious endeavor, and to make the subject "fun" was frowned upon.

Go to page 14-b

- c. The Vietnamese do not like to emphasize English because of the problems they are afraid might arise due to change and westernization.

Go to page 14-c

- d. The other teachers were jealous of the new teacher's success and were mad at her for the way she went about her work.

Go to page 14-d

You selected a: The other teachers did not agree with her methods of teaching, and rather than tell her openly, they just avoided her.

This is not the best choice.

The other teachers probably did ridicule the new methods introduced by CÔ Dung, but this is not the real reason that they avoided her. She has made a greater mistake than just introducing a new method of teaching. Choose again.

Go to page 14-1

You selected b: Most Vietnamese consider school a serious endeavor, and to make the subject "fun" was frowned upon.

It is evident that you have missed the point.

To have fun while doing work of any kind is the Vietnamese way of life. Education is certainly very important, but this does not transcend one of the most basic outlooks of these people. The students liked her methods very much. It was only the teachers who seemed to avoid her, and this was not due to any specific criticism of her teaching method. Make another choice.

Go to page 14-1

You selected c: The Vietnamese do not like to emphasize English because of the problems they are afraid might arise due to change and westernization.

This is wrong.

All Vietnamese students are required to take English all through high school. It is emphasized, not de-emphasized. It is quite true that change and westernization have met with some resistance due to many of the traditional Vietnamese values, but this is the same everywhere. Change is not always a matter of good or bad.

Go to page 14-1

You selected d: The other teachers were jealous of the new teacher's success, and were mad at her for the way she went about her work.

A good choice.

The emphasis here is how new ideas are carried out and performed, not the ideas themselves. Co Dung, as a young new teacher, was not showing the proper respect for the older, more senior teachers by introducing her new methods without their approval. Secondly, because she was such a success with the students, this made other teachers inferior. By avoiding Co [^]Dung, the other teachers showed her that she had acted out of place.

Go to page 15-1

Long is an eight year old boy who lives in a Vietnamese village. After returning from a hard day at school, he noticed that work needed to be done in the barn. His father asked Long to store away all of the grain, and then to clean out the barn. Long did the work to the best of his ability. When he finished, his father nodded his head but said nothing more about it.

What do you think is the reason for this reaction of the father toward his son's performance, though the father was satisfied with his work?

- a. There was nothing special about Long's performance that day because he did such work every day.

Go to page 15-a

- b. Long's father was a man of few words.

Go to page 15-b

- c. The father considered it a duty on the part of Long to do what he was asked to do.

Go to page 15-c

- d. The father looked unconcerned about his son's performance because the Vietnamese villagers do not praise their children "to their faces."

Go to page 15-d

You selected a: There was nothing special about Long's performance that day because he did such work every day.

This is only partially correct.

Among villagers, a boy starts assisting his father early in his childhood. Often they do routine jobs, like going to a shop to buy something or carrying fodder for the cattle. In that sense, there is nothing special in Long's performance because he must have done the same job many times. What is strange here is his father's reaction to his work. Is his reaction as routine as Long's work? Or is there some other reason which is the basis of his reactions? Read the passage again and choose a better alternative.

Go to page 15-1

You selected b: Long's father was a man of few words.

This alternative is not correct. There is no evidence to suggest this conclusion.

We cannot say from this single incident that Long's father was a man of few words. Read the passage again and make another selection.

Go to page 15-1

You selected c: The father considered it a duty on the part of Long to do what he was asked to do.

Incorrect. While your choice may be a plausible explanation, there is a better one.

Of course, any father expects his son to carry out his instructions. In village homes, it is usual that the boys are asked to do odd jobs in the field or in the farm by their parents, and the boys learn to treat these jobs as their duties. We are interested here in the reason for the father's casual reaction. We know that he is satisfied with Long's work. Why then, does he not express his satisfaction? Is there any special reason for this? Read the passage again and make another selection.

Go to page 15-1

You selected d: The father looked unconcerned about his son's performance because the Vietnamese villagers do not praise their children "to their faces."

This is the correct choice. This is the most appropriate alternative.

It is not customary among villagers to praise their children lest they might get spoiled. The father was happy with Long for the work he did, but he would not say so because he did not want to spoil him.

Go to page 16-1

Dr. Đê, a Vietnamese professor who was a highly capable administrative coordinator between a college and the Ministry of Education in Saigon, announced the grade-point averages of a group of ten graduate students who received their master's degrees. One student, Lân, had the top grade average, as had been expected by the other students. The students exclaimed their praise and offered congratulations to Lân.

Dr. Đê said that the difference between the top and the second to the top grade was .02, and that the difference did not mean much.

Why didn't Dr. Đệ praise and congratulate Lân?

- a. Dr. Đệ did not really like Lân and showed this clearly in his behavior.

Go to page 16-a

- b. Since Lân was first, he was already fully satisfied with his own achievement. Dr. Đệ thought that there was no need for him to praise Lân. He also did not want to hurt the feelings of the other students.

Go to page 16-b

- c. This was a way of congratulating all of the students for getting their degree.

Go to page 16-c

- d. Dr. Đệ wanted to be sure that the other students knew that they had done well also.

Go to page 16-d

You selected a: Dr. Đê did not really like Lân and showed this clearly in his behavior.

This is not the correct choice.

The episode did not indicate that Dr. Đê knew the graduate students personally. Certainly this is an assumption of your own based on the story. Making assumptions is necessary when you do not have all or adequate information to make a good conclusion. However, this is quite risky when dealing with people from another culture since you tend to interpret the foreigner's behavior according to your own past experiences and that of your own culture. On the other hand, if you try to utilize what you have learned so far about the Vietnamese culture in making a choice, you would be more successful.

Go to page 16-1

You selected b: Since Lân was first, he was already fully satisfied with his own achievement. Dr. Đệ thought that there was no need for him to praise Lân. He also did not want to hurt the feelings of the other students.

This is the most correct alternative. Very well done.

Dr. Đệ did not want to make Lân the center of attention because he did not want to create jealousy or hostility among the other students. The Vietnamese believes that too much praise is not healthy for the individual's attitude; he might be spoiled by it. So, it is usually thought that an outstanding person has already been amply rewarded by his own achievement. He would receive too much reward if he was enthusiastically praised by his superiors.

The Vietnamese learns that praising one is also an indirect way of criticizing another. A mother might praise a neighbor's child for a behavior she would like her own child to imitate. The child would see this praise as a criticism of him, and he would, to a certain extent, be angry with both his mother and his friend. Being in Dr. Đệ's position, one of authority, he could not praise Lân for the above reason, and also because his praise would mean a lot. It was also pointed out in the passage that Dr. Đệ was a highly capable administrator. This characteristic is mentioned to indicate that a highly capable administrator must be tactful on matters of saving face and matters of praise.

You selected c: This was a way of congratulating all of the students for getting their degree.

This is not entirely correct.

You are in a way correct if you chose this alternative on the basis that the Vietnamese do not tend to emphasize individual success in a group situation.

Go to page 16-1

You selected d: Dr. Đệ wanted to be sure that the other students knew that they had done well also.

This alternative is partly correct, but not essential.

It is true that Dr. Đệ would not want the other students to feel that they had done poorly. But we cannot be sure that all the students did in fact do well. It is also pointed out in the incident that the other students had already expected Lân to get the highest average. The question is why was Lân not praised more?

Go to page 16-1

The news about the coming of the new educational supervisor reached a big public school in a province in Vietnam. The school principal told all the teachers in the school to prepare some exhibition to make it appear that the school had been trying hard to use visual aids to teach pupils.

A nice model of village life was set up, labeled with English words and proverbs. Three-dimensional maps and charts were made about facts around the world.

The new educational supervisor came. He saw that some of the English words were spelled incorrectly and some proverbs did not convey the meaning which was intended. Many of the facts about the world were useless in terms of educational purposes. They were facts to be memorized and forgotten, not facts that could help clarify or build concepts which would be useful tools in an academic pursuit or for practical everyday life.

The educational supervisor signed the guest book, praising the effort which was put forth in establishing the exhibition, without any criticism. When he left the school building and was alone with his assistant who had come to Saigon with him, he asked, "Did you see all those incorrect things?" "Yes," answered his assistant.

Why didn't the educational supervisor tell the school principal about the mistakes?

- a. Since the school principal was an official administrator, the educational supervisor had no right to point out his mistakes.

Go to page 17-a

- b. The educational supervisor was afraid of the school principal because he had been warned that the principal was quite an influential person in the community.

Go to page 17-b

- c. The educational supervisor did not want to point out the mistakes to the school principal because it would hurt his feelings and make him "lose face."

Go to page 17-c

- d. There was no use in telling him because it was already too late to do anything about it.

Go to page 17-d

You selected a: Since the school principal was an official administrator, the educational supervisor had no right to point out his mistake.

This answer is incorrect.

There is no such prohibition in the Vietnamese administration or in the Vietnamese bureaucratic tradition. Furthermore, the duty of the educational supervisor is to supervise all teachers, including the principal. Reread the passage carefully evaluate the alternative, ~~and~~ make another choice.

Go to page 17-1

You selected b: The educational supervisor was afraid of the school principal because he had been warned that the principal was quite an influential person in the community.

Wrong.

While it is true that a school principal is quite influential in the community, it is only an educational and administrative influence. The educational supervisor does not have to bear this sort of influence, since in Vietnam he has a higher status than the school principal. Besides, the episode does not indicate that the school principal was a "big shot" in the community.

Reread the passage and make another choice.

Go to page 17-1

You selected c: The educational supervisor did not want to point out the mistakes to the principal because it would hurt his feelings and make him lose face.

Correct.

You have grasped the central factor of this situation. The attitude "not to hurt anybody's feelings" is quite strong in the Vietnamese culture. Criticism or pointing out mistakes in public is a terrible thing for a polite Vietnamese to do to another Vietnamese who is in the same or higher position. They often try to save each other's face at all costs. The conditions he found would probably go in his official report.

You are doing well.

Go to page 18-1

You selected d: There was no use in telling him because it was already too late to do anything about it.

This alternative is incorrect.

You have not carefully analyzed the situation. A school activity like this has a tremendous impact on the students' learning. Mistakes should be corrected. But why didn't the supervisor take any action?

Reread the passage, and choose again, carefully.

Go to page 17-1

SUMMARY FRAME

(SF)

Listed below are the main concepts to which you have just been exposed.

Values:

The Vietnamese take the natural order of things and people for granted. This attitude results in a somewhat fatalistic feeling about life. Americans, on the other hand, believe that men are equal in the eyes of God and that everyone can achieve success through hard work. This attitude prompts people to try and change their situation.

The Vietnamese also conceive time in a different manner than Americans. Time is a flowing entity which is not divided up into compartments for types of action. For the American, there is a time and place for everything.

Personality:

The Vietnamese do not distinguish between certain things to the same degree as Americans. For instance, they do not make marked distinctions between work and pleasure, friends and business associates, and the home and the job. A result of these feelings is that behavior of others is always taken personally. The Vietnamese have developed indirect approaches to social problems and criticism to avoid insulting others. Therefore, maintenance of good supervisor-subordinate relations, avoidance of face-to-face conflicts and disagreements, and non-committal remarks often characterize these interpersonal contacts. These behaviors appear as personality traits such as politeness, submissiveness, and friendliness.

PART II

INTRODUCTORY FRAME

II

The following episodes attempt to convey the idea that the family system is the fundamental social system of the Vietnamese society. Understanding the structure of the Vietnamese family will help you to understand the structure of many other aspects of the society.







Which of the following would be the most important aspect of a typical rural Vietnamese family unit?

- a. The father has the absolute authority in the family.

Go to page 18-a

- b. Sons and daughters have a tendency to migrate to the richer part of the country.

Go to page 18-b

- c. Several generations could be found living in the same house or one group of houses.

Go to page 18-c

- d. The older children in the family take care of the younger ones.

Go to page 18-d

You selected a: The father has the absolute authority in the family.

In some instances this answer would be correct.

This is partly correct. One of the important aspects of the rural Vietnamese family unit is that the father has the authority, but he respects the wishes of the grandparents in the family. But, usually the typical Vietnamese family will have the grandparents living with them to help the parents take care of their children. The mother in the Vietnamese family has more responsibility concerning financial problems with the concurrence of her husband.

Go to page 18-1

You selected b: Sons and daughters have a tendency
to migrate to the richer part of
the country.

This answer is incorrect.

This may be true in the area closer to the big
cities like Saigon, where the younger generations are
excited by the urban culture, but this is not the best
choice.

Go to page 18-1

You selected c: Several generations could be found
living in the same house or one group
of houses.

Good. You are on the right track.

This is the most correct and comprehensive statement about the rural Vietnamese family unit. The basic social and economic unit in rural Vietnam is the simple nuclear family. It consists of a mother and a father, their children, and perhaps one or more grandparents living together in the same house or compound. At times the rural household may become a small extended family, including a son or daughter with his or her spouse and children, or a widowed mother and her children. Since the war in Vietnam, the families tend to become separated.

Go to page 19-1

You selected d: The older children in the family
take care of the younger ones.

This is only partially correct.

Even though this is not the best choice, it is more or less one of the very important characteristics of the rural Vietnamese family that the older children take care of the younger ones. This practice is due to the ranking of authority based upon seniority. But this can also be found to a smaller degree in the United States.

Go to page 18-1

This is an essay written in school by a ten year old Vietnamese boy about his family:

My grandmother and aunts help my mother take care of me and my younger brothers and sisters. When I go back home from school, I can play with my cousins who are older than I am. My grandfather is the owner of the farm and house. My grandmother is old, but she is very kind. Some of my young uncles are not married yet. I like my family because there are many people with different ages.

This is a simple but clear description of the type of Vietnamese family in an agricultural area. Which one of the following statements best characterizes this large family?

- a. The father of the boy is head of the family in which he has to support many dependents both old and young.

Go to page 19-a

- b. This is a family gathering for some religious ceremony which is the tradition of the Vietnamese people.

Go to page 19-b

- c. The housewife cannot take care of her five children by herself so the family asks the grandmother and unmarried aunts to come and stay with them.

Go to page 19-c

- d. This is the typical Vietnamese extended family in a farming village where the father is head of the household.

Go to page 19-d

You selected a: The father of the boy is the head of the family in which he has to support many dependents both old and young.

This is not the best choice.

While this type of family may be found in a more materially advanced city where the younger men work to support their retired older relatives, is it the family pattern in this farm village? The father in Vietnam takes a more active decision-making role even though the grandfather still owns the land.

Go to page 19-1

You selected b: This is a family gathering for
some religious ceremony which is the
tradition of the Vietnamese people.

No, that is not it.

Since the Vietnamese villagers usually find their
spouses in the same or nearby villages, they do not need
religious incentives to bring them together. Read the
question a little more closely.

Go to page 19-1

You selected b: This is a family gathering for
some religious ceremony which is the
tradition of the Vietnamese people.

No, that is not it.

Since the Vietnamese villagers usually find their
spouses in the same or nearby villages, they do not need
religious incentives to bring them together. Read the
question a little more closely.

Go to page 19-1

You selected c: The housewife cannot take care of her five children by herself so the family asks the grandmother and unmarried aunts to come stay with them.

There is nothing in the episode to make you believe that this is the correct alternative.

Had the mother of the boy complained about her hardships in childraising? Perhaps she has always had help from other female relatives ever since her first child was born. Also, there are some other couples with children staying with the family.

Go to page 19-1

You selected d: This is the typical Vietnamese extended family in a farming village where the grandfather is head of the household.

Correct. Your choosing this answer shows that you are understanding and retaining the materials presented in this situation.

In a farm village, a Vietnamese man can own no land while his father lives, so he remains part of his father's household. The grandfather remains the head of his family, but allows his eldest son to take over more responsibility for the other children, even though the children are grown up and have their own family. The brothers work together on the land of their father until he dies. The eldest son receives the inherited family lands to be able to conduct religious ceremonies for the ancestors. Any lands a man acquires in addition to the inherited land may be divided among all the children.

Go to page 20-1

Among Vietnamese villagers a young widow continues to live in her late husband's house as a permanent member of the household. Her husband's kinsmen look after her and her children. Widows are usually treated with consideration by the husband's relatives. Widows rarely return to their parents' homes permanently except for brief visits.

What do you think is the reason for the widow staying in her husband's home even after the death of her husband?

a. A widow's own family would not accept her if she goes back permanently.

Go to page 20-a

b. Villagers believe that the wife's first loyalty is to her husband's family, and that this should be life-long.

Go to page 20-b

c. A widow stays in her late husband's house so that she may constantly remember her husband.

Go to page 20-c

d. A widow will not get any financial help if she leaves her husband's home.

Go to page 20-d

You selected a: A widow's own family would not accept her if she goes back permanently.

This is the wrong choice.

A widow's own family would have no objection if she returns because it is her parent's family. Though by custom, a girl becomes a part of her husband's family after marriage, she still retains a right in her parents' family by virtue of her blood relationship. Hence, this is not the reason widows stay in their husband's home even after the death of the husband.

Reread the passage again and make another choice.

Go to page 20-1

You selected b: Villagers believe that a wife's first loyalty is to her husband's family, and that this should be life-long.

Very good. You have been paying attention and reading carefully.

Once a girl is married, her loyalty is to her husband's family. Though she may go to her parents' house, such visits are like vacations for her. A widow, too, has the same status. Normally, she does not go to her parents. If she goes back to her parents permanently, it would be interpreted as if her husband's family were too poor to support her and her children, or negligent about her welfare. Another reason for staying with her husband's kinsmen is that the children do not feel the loss of the father to the same extent because her husband's kinsmen usually are considerate to them.

Go to page 21-1

You selected c: A widow stays in her late husband's house so that she may constantly remember her husband.

This is a bad choice. Apparently you missed a key point.

It is not correct to say that a widow stays in her late husband's house to remember him. A loving and loyal wife would remember her husband wherever she is. It is not to keep her memory fresh that she stays in her late husband's home. There must be some other reason to explain a widow's continued stay in her late husband's house.

Reread the passage and make another selection.

Go to page 20-1

You selected d: A widow will not get any financial help if she leaves her husband's home.

Incorrect. While your choice may be a plausible explanation, there is a much better one.

Usually, a widow stays in her husband's home. If she leaves her husband's home permanently, it may be because she is not treated well in her husband's home. Even if she leaves, she has her rights to her husband's property. As such, she cannot be denied her legitimate rights of maintenance. So, it is not because she would not get any financial help from her husband's family that she stays in her late husband's house. There must be other reasons for this.

In Vietnam widows may remarry. However, when a widow remarries, she loses the property rights from her previous husband. Her children may go with her or may stay with the first husband's family.

Go to page 20-1

An American AID Officer newly arrived in Vietnam was puzzled by the fact that the majority of teachers in the ministry to which he was assigned as an advisor seemed to be related. They were calling each other "Anh" (elder brother or sister), "Chi" (younger brother or sister), and "Bà" (aunt).

Which of the following best explains the Vietnamese behavior in this case?

a. In a rural community, most of the people are related to one another and they call each other by their family names. Go to page 21-a

b. There is a large degree of nepotism (hiring family members) in Vietnam. Go to page 21-b

c. When the Vietnamese become acquainted, they follow the unwritten rule that, in order to show respect, everyone should address one another in kinship terms according to the graduation of seniority and status. Go to page 21-c

d. Family ties are much stronger in Vietnam than in the West and addressing each other by kinship terms is one way to strengthen the importance of the family. Go to page 21-d

You selected a: In a rural community, most of the people are related to one another and they call each other by their family names.

This is not right.

It is quite possible that in rural villages, a large number of the people would be related in one form or another. But there is nothing to the episode which says that this school was located in a rural community. But even if it had been situated in a rural village, it is unlikely that these Vietnamese were all related because teacher training in Vietnam cannot be done by everyone in the family. It is the Ministry of Education that handles the task of training.

It is incorrect that Vietnamese people call each other by their family names. Vietnamese almost never address one another by their family names if they can avoid it. They would rather use nicknames, if they are well acquainted, or first names with a polite word "Ông" in front of the first name. To address officials in a high position, they use the terms that indicate his positions: Your Lordship, the Governor, the Director, the Judge, etc., and leave out first and last names.

Reread the passage and make another choice.

You selected b: There is a large degree of nepotism
(hiring family members) in Vietnam.

This choice is quite a reasonable one. However, it is not the most accurate of the interpretations listed.

It is true that there is some nepotism in Vietnam. But could the practice of nepotism be so widespread that it would take over a public school? Usually nepotism is practiced on a small scale and in an inconspicuous way. If it is too openly done, other people would resent it.

Reread the passage and make another choice.

Go to page 21-1

You selected c: When the Vietnamese become acquainted, they follow the unwritten rule that, in order to show respect, everyone should address one another in kinship terms according to the gradation of seniority and status.

This is the most correct choice.

The Vietnamese teachers at the school addressed each other by using kinship terms such as Sister or Aunt, not because they were really related but because it was their custom. Whenever the Vietnamese come into social contact with one another, they attempt to form their relationships based on the family model. In every Vietnamese family, the older siblings should be addressed as "Anh" which means "older". The younger siblings are referred to as "Nong", although they may be addressed by nicknames.

Using this pattern of addressing people according to seniority, one can determine who should receive respect and deference. This respect for older generations is learned during childhood and is practiced throughout life with both family and non-family members. The terms indicate, therefore, the fondness, respect, politeness, and obligations which the Vietnamese feel for one another.

You selected d: Family ties are much stronger in Vietnam than in the West and addressing each other by kinship terms is one way to strengthen the importance of the family.

This alternative is partially correct, but it does not completely fit the situation.

Family ties exist in every society where there are family units, but it can be said that they are very strong in Vietnam. The strong family ties reflect the nature of the traditional extended family where several generations and relatives share the same household or living compound.

The importance of family and family ties in Vietnam are based on a sense of love, respect, and obligation or mutual benefits, as well as economic considerations. The family relationship is best explained by this attitude of a Vietnamese child saying, "My parents went to the trouble of bringing me up so that they would have a person take care of them when they are old and to make merit for them when they die." This concept, however, is not the key point in this incident.

Try again.

A Vietnamese student was a dinner guest of an American family. There were three children in the family ranging from 3½ to 10 years old. The father asked the children to do something for him. They talked back to their father, "Oh, come on," and "What a guy," and so on. The father laughed at the children and wrestled with them. The oldest boy, after a mock battle with his father, finally decided to go do the errand saying, "Well, I guess Dad just can't make it around these days."

The next day at school the Vietnamese student related the incident to his American roommate, and he asked if the family situation was typical of most American families. He was quite surprised when his roommate told him that it was true.

What made the Vietnamese student surprised at this situation?

a. Vietnamese parents do not have any physical roughhousing with their children.

Go to page 22-a

b. The Vietnamese student was surprised that the oldest boy should have run the errand.

Go to page 22-b

c. The Vietnamese was surprised at the informality of the American children and their supposed lack of respect for their father.

Go to page 22-c

d. The children in Vietnam are not to be seen or heard when a guest is present and to wrestle in front of a guest would be considered an insult.

Go to page 22-d

You selected a: Vietnamese parents do not have any physical roughhousing with their children.

Incorrect. You have failed to correctly evaluate the other alternatives.

Physical play is not a prohibited custom and in fact is increasing in Vietnam. It is not extremely popular among the traditional Vietnamese families because Vietnamese people respect highly certain parts of the body. For example, the head, a zone which is held in great reverence, is not supposed to be touched except by a worthy person. For this reason Vietnamese still show respect for a person above them in age or prestige by symbolically or actually lowering their head below the head of the respected person. But this aspect of the situation was not stressed in the incident. Make another choice.

Go to page 22-1

You selected b: The Vietnamese student was surprised that the oldest boy should have run the errand.

No. You are not thinking.

For the oldest child to run errands for the family is not surprising among Vietnamese people. In fact, when Vietnamese children are old enough to take responsibility, say about the age of 8 or 9, they are trained to help around the house, running errands, taking care of younger siblings as well as helping with household chores. Sometimes the oldest child will allocate the running of errands to his younger siblings, depending on the nature of the job to be done.

Since this information is not really evident in the above incident, there must be something else that was more surprising.

Choose again.

Go to page 22-1

You selected c: The Vietnamese was surprised at the informality of the American children and their supposed lack of respect for their father.

Very good. Well answered.

The Vietnamese student felt that the American was not bringing up his children properly and the relationships between the father and his children were too lax. In Vietnam, the children are brought up to show respect to their parents, to their elders and to those higher in the social hierarchy. Early in life children learn to respect, obey, and defer to their father and mother. Children are told that talking back to their parents means a lack of respect. This attitude of deference is maintained all through life. It is true that very young Vietnamese children are pampered and receive a lot of affection from the members of the family, but when a child is older he is taught to pay respect to those older than himself -- his parents, older siblings, and all relatives as well.

As one observer puts it: The groundwork of all Vietnamese institutions and habits is a reverence of authority.

Go to page 23-1

You selected d: The children in Vietnam are not to be seen or heard when a guest is present and to wrestle in front of a guest would be considered an insult.

Your answer is plausible but another choice is available.

It is true that Vietnamese children are expected to behave very formally in front of guests. But younger children are often hard to control no matter where they are raised. There is something more important here that would be very surprising to a Vietnamese. Make another choice.

Go to page 22-1

In many of the Vietnamese families in villages, it is customary that the parents instruct the eldest son to help his parents when they get old. They also tell the younger siblings to obey the eldest boy. As soon as the eldest son is old enough to run the fields and finances, the father gives him more responsibility.

Which of the following do you think is the reason for this specific treatment of children?

a. Usually the eldest son is loved more than the younger ones.

Go to page 23-a

b. The eldest son is more competent than the younger ones.

Go to page 23-b

c. Structurally, the Vietnamese family unit is ranked according to age; hence, naturally the eldest son is next to the parents in terms of authority and responsibility.

Go to page 23-c

d. The eldest son is more obedient than the younger sons, particularly the youngest one who tends to be spoiled.

Go to page 23-d

You selected a: Usually the eldest son is loved
more than the younger ones.

This alternative is incorrect. There is no evidence
to suggest this conclusion.

It is not usually correct to say that the eldest son is
loved more than the younger ones. In fact, the youngest
one tends to get the most attention and affection in the
Vietnamese family. In certain parts of Vietnam, the eldest
son, indeed, gets a little more pampering and attention
during childhood since he is the first child of the parents,
but this diminishes soon after the arrival of his siblings.

Go to page 23-1

You selected b: The eldest son is more competent than the younger ones.

This is not the correct choice.

Just because one happens to be the eldest in the family, it does not necessarily mean that he or she is more competent than the others. Seniority in itself does not make one more able. Often, it might happen that the second or third child turns out to be more capable than the eldest. There must be some other reason for the parents' attitude toward the eldest child.

Go to page 23-1

You selected c: Structurally the Vietnamese family unit is ranked according to age; hence, naturally the eldest son is next to the parents in terms of authority and responsibility.

An excellent choice. It shows you are thinking.

Due to the structure of the Vietnamese society, usually the eldest son is singled out for more training and responsibility so that he can assume his position of power easily. He is given special status even as a child. The younger children are encouraged to obey him and he in turn is taught that he has the responsibility for the management of the household in place of his parents when they are either old or absent. Generally the younger children do not receive much responsibility.

Go to page 24- 1

You selected d: The eldest son is more obedient than the younger sons, particularly the youngest one who tends to be spoiled by his parents.

This is not the correct choice.

We cannot say with certainty that the eldest child in every family is more obedient than the other children. It is quite possible that the parents may have been indulgent with the eldest in disciplinary matters, but this rarely leads to greater obedience. In fact, this attitude of the parents may make the son indifferent to their wishes.

Go to page 23-1

S^on, a young and intelligent boy and the oldest son of the family, had high grades in school. He was very interested in science and decided that he would like to be an engineer. One day his headmaster called him in and said that he would help Son find a scholarship so that he could continue his studies at a university in Saigon. S^on was very excited and happy, but when he told his parents about the chance of getting a scholarship and studying engineering at a university away from their small village, they were not so happy about the news. His father said that he needed him to help his other brothers and sisters at the family store in the market square. His mother said that S^on should be a merchant like his father and that she did not want him to leave home. The next day S^on told the headmaster he would not try for the scholarship.

How would you explain Sòn's behavior and personality in terms of the Vietnamese culture?

a. Sòn is a nice and well-behaved boy; even if he wanted to go to study, he would refuse the scholarship if his parents wanted him to stay home.

Go to page 24-a

b. Sòn is a submissive and dependent boy; he would not be able to help himself in the wide world without his parents' help and protection.

Go to page 24-b

c. Sòn could not make the decision himself. He knew that his parents had to make the decision for him.

Go to page 24-c

d. Sòn was stupid to refuse the scholarship and missed a fine opportunity and possibly a bright future.

Go to page 24-d

You selected a: Són is a nice and well-behaved boy; he did the right thing to refuse the scholarship and decide to help his parents.

You are correct.

This is the most typical explanation of Són's behavior and personality in terms of the Vietnamese culture. From what you have learned about the traditional Vietnamese family, the son, particularly the eldest, has been trained to have a strong responsibility for his family and would eventually be in charge of managing the whole family when his parents get very old. Even though a chance to get a scholarship to go to study in Saigon was quite tempting, for Són his first responsibility is to his family. However, in Vietnam, if a child won a scholarship, his family would very likely encourage him to take it.

In general, it is also true that Vietnamese children tend to be submissive to and dependent upon their parents. This is the image of a nice and well-behaved son in the eyes of his parents.

Go to page 25-1

You selected b: Sòn is a submissive and dependent boy;
he would not be able to help himself in
the wide world without his parents'
help and protection.

This answer is wrong, but it is not hard to see how you
arrived at this conclusion.

In comparison to American children, Vietnamese boys and
girls tend to be submissive to and dependent upon their
parents. It is possibly due to different methods of child-
rearing practices used by American and Vietnamese parents.

But, for this particular episode, there is a better
explanation of Sòn's behavior and personality. Keep in mind
that Sòn is an intelligent boy and the oldest son of the
family. What would his parents expect of him? Try again.

Go to page 24-1

You selected c: Son could not make the decision himself.

He knew that his parents had to make
the decision for him.

This choice is somewhat correct, but certainly not the
most correct one.

It is quite customary for Vietnamese children, sometimes
up to the adult age, not to "dare" make decisions for them
selves. They have to ask their parents to decide the matter
for them. The practice is possibly based on the notion that
children (and this is a relative term; as long as they stay
with their parents they are regarded as children, up to the
age of about 20) are not supposed to make decisions of their
own since they are not wise enough and still economically
dependent on their parents.

But there is a better choice for this episode. Try
again.

Go to page 24-1

You selected d: Son was stupid to refuse the scholarship and missed a fine opportunity and possibly a bright future.

Your answer is not correct. A better answer would require only giving a little more thought to your answer.

This is characteristic of the more progressive and transitional families. A large percentage of Vietnamese parents, particularly farmers, wish to have a white collar occupation. Usually they achieve their aspirations through their sons and daughters by giving the latter more education if they can afford it. But still some traditional families would not trade the educational opportunity for their son's first responsibility to the family (particularly the oldest son).

In this episode, the family is located in a rural community outside of Saigon. The family is therefore apt to be traditional. Try again.

Go to page 24-1

SUMMARY FRAME
(SF)

We have seen that the Vietnamese social system, political system, and economic system are seen as similar situations for the Vietnamese. This similarity in structure is not based on the individual but on the family. Almost all interpersonal relationships and the behavior expected in that relationship can be traced to a family relationship. These relationships stem from the Confucian influence in the culture. For example, boss to employee or prime minister to people are similar to the father to son relationship. The relationships between older and younger brother or husband and wife have behaviors which are similar to those found in many friendship or peer relationships outside the family. These relationships based upon behavior in the family provide a sense of solidarity and security to the individual, but at the same time, may lead to nepotism or a lack of independence.

Today, in the urban areas of Vietnam, changes are occurring in the influence of the family on the individual and the social system. These changes are due partly to Western influence and the war.

PART III

III
INTRODUCTORY FRAME

(IF)

The third section of Book I is concerned with the changes now occurring in the Vietnamese society. These changes are taking place in the spheres of agriculture, health, education, light and heavy industry, and politics. There are also changes in the traditional social structure as a whole.

In an agricultural society such as Vietnam, industrialization demands changes in both the social structure and the social values of the people. These demands and the reactions of the people are important as to whether the changes introduced will be successfully accepted.

You selected a: Phu wished to be very sure of the reliability of his workers, so he chose people whom he knew well.

You are correct.

Personal relationships are more important than credentials. He would choose a relative over another candidate because a relative could be trusted. Also his relatives would expect him to help them and they would feel offended if he should choose others not related to him. There would be considerable family pressure to choose relatives. This practice is still prevalent among both the traditional outlying areas as well as in more urban areas.

Go to page 26- 1

Phú is a competent man who worked in a sugar refinery for some years. Because of his ability, his boss appointed him manager of a small branch to be constructed in his home town. Phú is instructed to select the supervisory and production personnel from among the local people. A great many of the individuals whom he chooses are his relatives, both near and distant.

You selected b: Family ties are more important to Phu than the productive efficiency of his factory.

This episode was fairly difficult. The selection of this alternative is indicative of good judgment but it is not the most conclusive answer.

The kinship ties are very strong in Vietnamese culture, and Phu felt obligated to hire his relatives, regardless of the effects this might have on efficiency in the factory. Efficiency is not a major concern.

Go to page 25-1

You selected c: Vietnamese are very distrustful of one another and Phu wished to hire only his relatives, whom he trusted.

No, do not make unwarranted assumptions.

Although Vietnamese maintain a certain aloofness from strangers, this is Phu's home village. Relatives would not be the only individuals in his village whom Phu could trust to work in the factory.

Go to page 25-1

You selected d: Phu owes many favors to his relatives, and this is his chance to repay them.

This choice is partially wrong.

Does the passage indicate the existence of obligations?

There is something more important here.

Go to page 25-1

Thu is a young man living in a small farming village. His family receives a letter from his cousin, Toai, who lives in a large city, telling of his success and recent promotion in a large textile company. Thu, with encouragement from his family, decides to journey to the city and take a job with the company in which his cousin is employed as a middle-level manager.

When he speaks with Toai after his arrival, Thu is told that perhaps a position can be found for him, if he has the proper capabilities, but he cannot be hired before he has an interview with the personnel department of the company.

Thu is greatly distressed by his cousin's attitude and information. He writes his family that Toai has forsaken his relatives.

How best could you explain the position taken by Thu's cousin, Toai?

- a. After becoming a success, he wished to free himself of his family connections with the simple villagers.

Go to page 26-a

- b. Thu's cousin feared for the competition, which the hard-working villager would create for his job.

Go to page 26-b

- c. Traditional practices have broken down in a large city.

Go to page 26-c

- d. Thu was a particularly repulsive young man, and his cousin found him despicable.

Go to page 26-d

You selected a: After becoming a success, he wished to free himself of his family connections with the simple villagers.

This is not correct.

Since the ties of kinship are very strong in Vietnamese culture, would they, or could they, be easily put aside?

Go to page 26-1

You selected b: Thu's cousin feared for the competition which the hard working villager would create for his job.

A much better choice.

Would a simple villager like Thu, with little or no industrial training be given a job which would be in competition with Toai, as a middle-level manager?

Go to page 26-1

You selected c: Traditional practices have broken down in a large city.

Correct. This is the most appropriate alternative.

The central factor of change is shown operating here. Today, the increasing self-sufficiency of the individual families, and, most important, the increasing acceptance of commercial values, industrialization, and a diversified economy, have served to break down kinship ties. The personnel department in the firm would have the hiring right; he could only recommend his cousin.

Thu's cousin has probably accepted these new ideas as right and necessary, and although kinship ties are still quite strong, he is not able to guarantee that his cousin would be hired.

Go to page 27-1

You selected d: Thu was a particularly repulsive young man,
and his cousin found him despicable.

A very poor answer.

Is there evidence for these descriptions and attitudes in
the passage?

Go to page 26-1

Robert Allen, a 32 year old businessman, in a medium-sized American city, enters his suburban home, after a day at the office. He notices a few of his childrens' toys and clothes scattered around the house. Upon calling to his wife, he learns that she is giving their young daughter a bath and having their son wash up for dinner.

Robert proceeds to pick up the childrens' clothes and toys stacking them where they belong in the childrens' rooms. Then he goes to the refrigerator and helps himself to a cold can of beer, and relaxes in front of the T.V. set until dinner is ready.

What point is illustrated by the chain of events in this passage?

- a. American men do not like to take care of their children, and so they leave the duties, such as washing and dressing the children to their wives.

Go to page 27-a

- b. The American male is not expected to, and does not, help his wife in the maintenance and running of the home.

Go to page 27-b

- c. American males will often help around the house, doing menial tasks, and serving themselves.

Go to page 27-c

- d. Beer and television are favorite American pleasures.

Go to page 27-d

You selected a: American men do not like to take care of their children, and so they leave the duties, such as washing and dressing the children, to their wives.

Your answer is not correct. A better answer would require only giving a little more thought to your answer.

Although the wife was caring for the children in this instance, isn't it probably because she had already begun before the father came home? It is quite common for the American father to take an active part in the care and training of the children.

Go to page 27-1

You selected b: The American male is not expected to, and does not, help his wife in the maintenance and running of their home.

That is the wrong choice.

The father, returning from work, does often pick up the scattered toys in the house, and serve himself without prompting from his wife. Try again.

Go to page 27-1

You selected c: American males will often help around the house, doing menial tasks, and serving themselves.

A good choice.

The average daily episode illustrates that most American men do not feel that they are above performing certain menial tasks; e.g., picking up the kid's toys, when the wife is busy. They do not expect to be waited on, whenever they want something. However, this is not the practice in all cultures, nor even in all the western societies.

Go to page 28-1

You selected d: Beer and television are favorite American pleasures.

While this may be so, it is not the most important point made by the passage.

Go to page 27-1

A Vietnamese man walked slowly back home from work in the field. When he saw that his wife was giving a bath to his youngest son and the older children were playing outside, he called to his wife to bring him a glass of water, which she did. After relaxing for awhile, an old neighbor friend of his dropped in. They talked about their crops, while his wife started preparing the family evening meal. The children were called in by their mother to wash their hands and faces for dinner. When the wife had finished preparing the supper, the guest was invited to have supper with the family.

If you were to draw a conclusion concerning the life in a traditional Vietnamese family, you would say that:

- a. The Vietnamese wife in the farm village was too poor to hire a woman to help her with the housework.

Go to page 28-a

- b. In the traditional Vietnamese family, the husband did not have much to do with the housework; his wife alone took care of her children.

Go to page 28-b

- c. The Vietnamese children were very obedient.

Go to page 28-c

- d. The traditional Vietnamese husband was lazy and wanted to sit quietly and let his wife do everything by herself.

Go to page 28-d

You selected a: The Vietnamese wife in the farm village was too poor to hire some woman to help her with the house work.

No, this is not the correct choice.

Was the Vietnamese wife unable to do the work by herself? Her husband was happy, dinner was done in time, and the children were clean.

And, if she found that housework was too much for her, would she hire a strange woman to help her? Couldn't she get help from one of her female relatives who was in the same household or nearby?

Go to page 28-1

You selected b: In the traditional Vietnamese family the husband did not have much to do with the housework; his wife alone took care of the children.

Very good. You are utilizing the information in the episodes to its fullest extent.

The Vietnamese mother is formally more subordinate to her husband than a mother or wife in the West, but she also has considerable power in rearing young children and in her functions as exclusive guardian of the household's finances. The division of functions between them is more precise and less often ignored. As in this case, the husband worked outside in the field and the wife stayed home to take care of their house.

Within the family it is both the father and mother who teach the children the proper way for a child to behave.

Go to page 29-1

You selected c: The Vietnamese children were very obedient.

This is only partially correct.

Generally, the Vietnamese children are more obedient and submissive than American children. But this is not the key point in the message.

Go to page 28-1

You selected d: The traditional Vietnamese husband was lazy and wanted to sit quietly and let his wife do everything for herself.

No, this is not the right answer.

Was the husband lazy? He went to work in the field everyday and came back home in the late afternoon. Working in the field is a tiring job, so he was entitled to rest for awhile. Try again.

Go to page 28-1

Thanh was the 12 year old son of a Vietnamese official at the Vietnamese Embassy in Washington. One summer day he went over to visit Jack Miller, a friend of his in school. As he approached Jack's house he noticed that Jack was outside mowing the lawn with a power mower. Jack told Thanh to go inside and chat with his parents and he would be finished in a moment.

Thanh talked with Jack's parents for about twenty minutes and then Jack came in from the yard. Jack mentioned that he was hot and wanted to wash up. When he returned, his father thanked him for doing the lawn and gave him two dollars for the work done. Jack put the money in his pocket and told Thanh to come on and they would go to the movies. Thanh was somewhat surprised by the whole affair.

Why was Thanh surprised?

- a. It is un-Vietnamese for a father to thank his son for doing the house chores.

Go to page 29-a

- b. It appears to Thanh that Mr. Miller had to hire his son to do the house chores.

Go to page 29-b

- c. Thanh thought that Jack was not behaving as a son should to his father, in that he did not take the house chores as his obligation and his responsibility. He had to be bribed to do the job.

Go to page 29-c

- d. Thanh was surprised by the fact that a rich boy like Jack should have to do the hard manual labor himself. Besides, he should not have to work to get the money from his father; he should be able to ask for it anytime he wants it.

Go to page 29-d

You selected a: It is un-Vietnamese for a father to thank his son for doing the house chores.

Partially acceptable answer.

Even though it is usually true that the Vietnamese do not use the term 'thank you' as frequently as the Americans do, particularly in the case of a subordinate doing something that is expected of him, Vietnamese fathers once in awhile would thank their sons for doing them a favor. So, it is not entirely un-Vietnamese for a father to thank his son for doing some sort of special job.

You possibly have missed the more important cue in the passage. Reread the story while recalling other relevant information you have already learned about the Vietnamese family.

Go to page 29-1

You selected b: It appears to Thanh that Mr. Miller has to hire his son to do the house chores.

You made a correct choice.

A father giving money in exchange for his son's service would be a strange custom for a Vietnamese to witness. In the Vietnamese family, children are expected to help do the chores around the house as well as other family economic activities like farming. The rationale behind this expectation is that the children feel obligated to their parents for being raised, fed, clothed, sheltered and protected. So, the children are expected to contribute their labor to the family, without pay. If the children refuse to do the house chores, they could be punished and the worst thing is to be called an ungrateful son.

Go to page 30-1

You selected c: Thanh thought that Jack was not behaving as a son should to his father, in that he did not take the house chores as his obligations and responsibilities. He had to be bribed to do the job.

No, that is not it.

According to the expectations in the Vietnamese family, a son is expected to take house chores as part of his obligations and responsibilities. In the farming family, the son even plays an important part in the total family livelihood. He sometimes even 'cuts classes' to help the family with the heavy labor during the farming season. But this expectation is not significant in this episode since the story did not indicate that Jack would not mow the lawn if he would not have been paid (by his father). It would not be viewed as bribery but as something else. Look at the other alternatives.

Go to page 29-1

You selected d: Thanh was surprised by the fact that a rich boy like Jack should have to do the hard manual labor himself. Besides, he should not have to work to get the money from his father; he should be able to ask for it anytime he wants it.

That is the wrong choice.

Generally, it is true that a rich Vietnamese family will have a gardner do the job of mowing the lawn, but the passage did not give any cues which would indicate that Jack is a rich boy. It is your assumption. Try again.

Go to page 29-1

Tam and his young wife left his father's village home and headed for a nearby city where a new industry was being established. Most of the people who were already living in the city were employed in small businesses and the service trades, and thus were not available for the new factory's labor force. So the new industry had sent representatives out to many of the surrounding villages to recruit workers, since most of the nation's population was rural.

Tam, who had helped his father raise chickens, had no other specific work skills, but he had attended the local school, so he was the first of his father's family who could read and write.

A thumb-nail sketch of Tam would make it clear that

which of the following probably is a statement of his main reason for leaving his father's village home?

- a. Tam and his father believed that going to the city to work in the factory offered a brighter future of the young man than tending chickens near the village.

Go to page 30-a

- b. Tam and his father realized that the profit in chicken raising was steadily declining, and it soon would not be sufficient to support both families.

Go to page 30-b

- c. Tam and his wife both wanted to get away from the older folks, and going to work in the city factory provided a good excuse for them to leave the village.

Go to page 30-c

- d. Tam did not have the proper sense of responsibility about helping his old father with his work, and so he considered only his own interests.

Go to page 30-d

You selected a: Tam and his father believed that going to the city to work in the factory offered a brighter future for the young man than tending chickens near the village.

Good. You are utilizing the information in the episodes to its fullest extent. There are several hints in the passage that could be used to justify this choice.

Since his father has sent Tam to school, he probably wanted Tam to be better prepared for life than he had been. Further, Tam's literacy probably wouldn't be fully utilized by tending and marketing the family's relatively small flock of chickens. Therefore, since both men are aware of the nation's emphasis on the development of local industries, the prospects for the future look brighter for the young in the area of industrial work than they do in the area of small-scale livestock raising.

Go to page 31-1

You selected b: Tam and his father realized that the profit in chicken raising was steadily declining, and it soon would not be sufficient to support both families.

This is not the correct choice. You have made an incorrect assumption.

The episode did not contain any information pertaining to the declining of profit in chicken raising. Also, we have no reason to believe that the family was having financial problems. Reread the passage and try again.

Go to page 30-1

You selected c: Tam and his wife both wanted to get away from the older folks, and going to work in the new city factory provided a good excuse for them to leave the village.

You have missed the point.

This sort of situation may be the case when young couples live with their in-laws. However, in Vietnam, the older people are shown great respect and deference by younger people. Therefore, wouldn't the conditions of the household have had to be quite unpleasant for the situation described in (c) to have occurred?

Is this statement the main reason for the departure?
Imagine how Tam and his family see the matter.

Go to page 30-1

You selected d: Tam did not have the proper sense of responsibility about helping his old father with his work, and so he considered only his own interests.

This choice is incorrect.

Although many Vietnamese men may marry at relatively later ages, does the passage indicate that Tam's father is an old man, or that he is dependent on him? In addition, aren't older people, especially parents, traditionally treated with great respect?

Go to page 30-1

Two older men, who lived in a village near My Tho, were talking about their families. The one man said that even though his wife could not read and write, he would like his daughter to get an education. They both felt that education for a girl would be advantageous for her and her family. The other man, however, mentioned that an educated wife would be a problem to her husband, and he hoped that the young men would know how to deal with their educated wives.

There seemed to be some conflicting ideas expressed in this conversation. How do you think the older Vietnamese men expressed their attitude toward education for women? Choose one of the following:

a. The Vietnamese men were not satisfied with their wives' illiteracy; therefore, they wanted to educate their daughters.

Go to page 31-a

b. The attitude of Vietnamese men towards this was mixed. Education for women was seen as a mixed blessing that would bring both good and bad changes to the Vietnamese women.

Go to page 31-b

c. The older Vietnamese men agreed that education was the best thing that ever happened to women.

Go to page 31-c

d. The Vietnamese men were opposed to the idea of education for young girls and they were trying to stop it.

Go to page 31-d

You selected a; The Vietnamese men were not satisfied with their wives' illiteracy; therefore, they wanted to educate their daughters.

This is not a very good choice.

Would the men be dissatisfied with their wives' illiteracy? As far as the Vietnamese husbands are concerned, the wives' education has little effect on their family lives, and they have had illiterate wives for centuries. Also, they are aware of the repressive character of the traditional family life for women. But the conditions of family life and the value implanted by it and the society at large dispose men toward keeping their wives in the traditional way.

Go to page 31-1

You selected b: The attitude of Vietnamese men towards this was mixed. Education for women was seen as a mixed blessing that would bring both good and bad changes to the Vietnamese women.

Good. This episode was fairly difficult. The selection of this alternative is indicative of good judgment.

This attitude of Vietnamese men towards all the changes happening to women is mixed. Most Vietnamese men today feel that their mothers were greatly restricted. This attitude is favorable for the liberal treatment of succeeding generations of women, but the conditions of family life and the values implanted by it and the society at large dispose men toward keeping their own wives in traditional subordination to themselves. When it comes to their daughters, however, they are more easily convinced of the advantages of female education and independence.

In traditional families the men may not feel it is necessary to go to the expense of higher education for women since the girls would leave home and join their husband's family. Also at the high school level the sexes are educated separately and the feeling is that it would be an unwarranted expense to organize a school just for girls. There are only a few public high schools for girls in the country. There are, however, more private schools.

Go to page 32-1

You selected c: The old Vietnamese men agreed that education was the best thing that ever happened to women.

That is entirely incorrect.. You did not think about your answer.

Americans feel that educating women is necessary, but Vietnamese men are less sure of the effects of education on the characteristics and expected behavior of the women.

Putting yourself into the place of a Vietnamese man, how would you react to the idea of education for women?

Go to page 31-1

You selected d: The Vietnamese men were opposed to the idea of education for young girls and they were trying to stop it.

This is poorly chosen.

Many of the Vietnamese men believe that education of the women will equalize the sexes, thus "defeminize" women. Educated women will enter the "men's world" and compete with them. At the same time they are wise enough to see other effects of education and therefore will not try to stop the process.

Go to page 31-1

One evening Són and his two adult sons were talking about a newly established industry in the nearby city. They all agreed that the industry would bring a lot of good changes to the city and the surrounding villages including the one they lived in. They also heard that many workers would be employed. Their conversation somehow interested the eighteen year old daughter who was busily doing her homework in the next room. The daughter came and listened at the door to the discussion. Later she told her father that with her good grades in high school, she thought she could get a job in the new industry after she graduated. Her father and brothers did not like her idea of staying away from home in the city.

If you had heard what the daughter had decided to do with her future, you would characterize her as which of the following?

- a. A strong-willed girl who wants more freedom which she knows she will not get at home in her own village.

Go to page 32-a

- b. A curious young girl who would like to see more of the world besides the village where she has been born and raised.

Go to page 32-b

- c. A typical daughter of a prominent Vietnamese villager who has been spoiled by her parents and has become a problem child.

Go to page 32-c

- d. A typical educated girl who is the product of the transitional period of Vietnamese society.

Go to page 32-d

You selected a: A strong-willed girl who wants more freedom which she knows she will not get at home in her own village.

This choice is incorrect. You have not evaluated other alternatives thoroughly.

Was the girl strong-willed? There really is no evidence pointing to this conclusion at all. Rather, she was polite and asked her father about working in the new industry. Also, did she indicate that she wanted more freedom? The fact that she was attending high school would mean that she already had more freedom of movement and privileges than many other girls who had not been to school.

Reread the passage and make another choice.

Go to page 32-1

You selected b: A curious young girl who would like to see more of the world besides the village where she has been born and raised.

This is wrong.

While the amount of education she is receiving may make the daughter curious about the world around her, is this the same as going to a nearby town and working? Her motivations for going are not explained but, in view of the role of women in Vietnamese culture, would curiosity be the most significant reason she desires to work outside her own village?

Go to page 32-1

You selected c: A typical daughter of a prominent Vietnamese villager who has been "spoiled" by her parents and has become a problem child.

No, this is not right.

The daughter has done well at school and seems dedicated to her studying. Her father and brothers listened to what she had to say. It seems more likely that she knew what she wanted and what was the best for her in light of her education. So far there is no evidence to indicate that she has brought trouble and shame to her family. She also listened to her elders and behaved appropriately toward them.

Go to page 32-1

You selected d: A typical educated girl who is the product of the transitional period in Vietnamese society.

This is the best answer.

The effect of education is to give Vietnamese girls a wider perspective and to create desires which the traditional way of life cannot satisfy. With increased education the Vietnamese women want and receive more freedom. Formal education for girls leads to the growing desire and opportunities for women to follow careers in commerce, industry, and the professions. However, education and a new role for women in a changing society is still a slow process and is still meeting with some resistance among parents holding to traditional values and concepts. It is not easy for a girl to break away from old patterns especially if they involve family life. This is supported by the fact that the girl's father and brothers were upset at the idea of her staying away from home. In a traditional Vietnamese family, a girl's place is in her home where she will receive counsel and protection.

The family might consider letting her go to the city if she could live with a relative there, but still they might be reluctant to let her go because they would feel she needed the protection and care of her family.

During his visit to the United States, a thirty-year old Vietnamese told an American sociology student that his mother was married before the age of 16. He also said that his wife, who had a college education, had worked in the government office before she got married. She was 23 of the time of her marriage.

If you were to make a conclusion about the wife of this Vietnamese, how would you characterize her?

- a. As a rather well-educated Vietnamese woman who has already adapted herself to the changing Vietnamese society.

Go to page 33-a

- b. As a rich and spoiled Vietnamese woman who thought that early marriage would bring early responsibilities.

Go to page 33-b

- c. As a Vietnamese wife who had to work to help support her family.

Go to page 33-c

- d. A Vietnamese woman who had to "kill time" by working because her husband was rarely home with her.

Go to page 33-d

You selected a: As a rather well-educated Vietnamese woman who had already adapted herself to the changing Vietnamese society.

Very good.

There are many changes going on in the Vietnamese society such as the increase in education for women. This development, and the increase in formal education for both boys and girls, as well as the growing opportunities for women to follow careers in commerce, industry and the professions, are all factors in postponing the age of a first marriage.

The rising status of women and their emergence into the world of business affairs is one of the most powerful forces for change, not only in the Vietnamese family, but in the Vietnamese society in general. If these forces already set in motion are permitted to work out their potentialities, or as likely, even to become more pronounced, there is no doubt that women's aspirations, demands, and success will play a significant role in developing Vietnam.

Go to page 34-1

You selected b: As a rich and spoiled Vietnamese woman who thought that early marriage would bring early responsibilities.

Incorrect.

This Vietnamese woman did get married at the age of 23, while the women of her country in older generations usually got married much earlier. However, since she had received a higher level of education, wouldn't this be the cause for her postponing marriage a few years? Isn't the college-age marriage a relatively recent trend even in the United States?

Her husband was probably not poor since he is in America, but does the passage indicate that she is a spoiled woman who dreads early responsibilities? Didn't she assume responsibilities that not all Vietnamese women do by working immediately after she graduated from college?

Go to page 33-1

You selected c: As a Vietnamese wife who had to work to help support her family.

This is wrong.

Since the husband came to visit the United States, wouldn't their family have an income above average for them to make the trip mentioned in the passage? Therefore, would the wife have had to work in order to help support her family? Also, she was working even before she got married.

Go to page 33-1

You selected d: As a Vietnamese woman who had to "kill time" by working because her husband was rarely at home with her.

This is a bad choice.

It is incorrect since she had begun working before she was married. In addition, would most Vietnamese women regard working at a job outside the home as an appropriate or attractive way to "kill time"?

Go to page 33-1

A University association in Vietnam decided to raise money for building restrooms in rural schools. There was much enthusiasm among the members for such a constructive project in the part of their organization. After the work was completed, Dr. Wan, an active member of the association, happened to visit one of the rural schools where the restrooms had been built. She was proudly shown the restrooms by the principal, who opened them with a key. They were spotlessly clean and had obviously not been used. The principal told her how proud the whole area was of their beginning signs of modernization.

It is generally realized that restrooms are an essential public utility. But in this case why were they not used at this school?

- a. The school was waiting for some sort of holiday or occasion when the restrooms could be opened with a great amount of fanfare.

Go to page 34-a

- b. The principal did not want to use the restrooms until they had been checked by one of the members of the association that had helped contribute to the construction.

Go to page 34-b

- c. They had not been used because the students avoided them. They were not pleased at having to change their private habits.

Go to page 34-c

- d. The restrooms were viewed as a sign of modernization.

Go to page 34-d

You selected a: The school was waiting for some sort of holiday or occasion when the restrooms could be opened with a great amount of fanfare.

This is incorrect. While your choice may be a plausible explanation, there is a much better one.

It sometimes happens that in Vietnam a special occasion or an auspicious day as calculated by an astrologer is the official time to open a new building or a new bridge. But to have a special occasion for the opening of the restrooms would seem quite silly to the Vietnamese who consider restrooms to be dirty and therefore not worth the auspicious occasion. This attitude regarding the restrooms as a low place is the reason why most Vietnamese houses pay less attention to their importance.

Go back to the passage and make a more likely choice.

Go to page 34-1

You selected b: The principal did not want to use the restrooms until they had been checked by one of the members of the association that had helped contribute to the construction.

This is not a poor response.

Surely the restroom have to be checked when being built, but not by Dr. Wan, who was neither an architect nor a technician. Besides, the episode did not indicate that Dr. Wan went there to check the restrooms. She just happened to visit one of the rural schools where the restrooms had been built. However, restrooms would not be used until they had been officially checked. Analyze the episode and interaction between the people involved in the episode, then make another choice.

Go to page 34-1

You selected c: They had not been used because the students avoided them. They were not pleased at having to change their private habits.

Although this may be a possible analysis of the situation, you could hardly suppose from the passage that this is true.

There is nothing in the episode that says students avoided the restrooms because they were not pleased at having to change their personal toilet habits. Rather, they could not use them because they were locked.

Go to page 34-1

You selected d: The restrooms were viewed as a sign of modernization.

Very well done.

This is a good analysis of the situation. In American society, spotless, luxurious restrooms are usually taken for granted and are considered as a necessity. The day of the "out houses" are long gone and forgotten by most Americans, although some can still be seen in the rural South.

But in a rural community in a developing Vietnam, a modern restroom is a culturally new item. There might be restrictions on its use to make sure it would not be spoiled by the children.

Go to page 35-1

You have recently learned of the increasing role of education in Vietnam and how it is making its effect on the position of women particularly, but is also affecting all of society. You are also probably aware that industrialization is increasing in Vietnam.

We have also presented you a picture of the typical traditional Vietnamese extended family.

Taking all these factors into account, which of the alternatives listed do you think best describes the family situation in Vietnam today and in years to come?

- a. Traditional patterns of living are held so strongly in Vietnam that there is little chance for change in their family structure now or in the near future.

Go to page 35-a

- b. The traditional extended family pattern is gradually breaking down in the larger cities but remains relatively unchanged in the smaller villages and farms.

Go to page 35-b

- c. The traditional extended family pattern is breaking down in all parts of Vietnamese society today, and this trend will probably increase in the future.

Go to page 35-c

- d. There is a temporary disruption in the traditional family pattern but when the factors of change stabilize, then family structure will go back to the traditional extended pattern.

Go to page 35-d

You selected a: Traditional patterns of living are held so strongly by the Vietnamese that there is little chance for change in their family structure now or in the near future.

No, this is not the best answer.

Change appears wherever there is a positive emphasis on education and increasing industrialization. In addition, since a great change already has taken place, notably in the role of women, these personality patterns are not held so deeply as to stop all change.

Go to page 35-1

You selected b: The traditional extended family pattern is gradually breaking down in the larger cities but remains relatively unchanged in the smaller villages and farms.

This answer is partially incorrect.

Increasing industrialization requires an increasingly large supply of workers. Where would this manpower come from? Would this influence the way of life elsewhere than in the large cities? Think again of the increase in education, for both men and women. Would there not also be an effect felt throughout the land? Education is not restricted only to those already present in the larger cities.

Go to page 35-1

You selected c: The traditional extended family is breaking down in all parts of Vietnamese society today, and this trend will probably increase in the future.

Good. You are obviously employing logic needed to correctly choose the alternatives.

Change in living patterns such as those that are brought about by the forces mentioned are felt throughout all society. For centuries, children, grandparents, nephews, nieces, aunts, and uncles have all lived together and for a long time this extended family pattern served the Vietnamese society adequately. Now, however, new demands are being imposed.

First, there is the war and its disruption influence. Second, there is the requirement of industry for a large labor pool. This is coming mainly from the small farms and villages, as the younger sons realize that there is far more wealth to be gained in industry than in tilling the soil, particularly as increasing population causes an increase in the breaking down of land holdings.

Then again, rapidly increasing communication facilities has reduced the isolation and broadened the scope of the younger farm boys and girls. They have become increasingly aware of the lure of the larger cities, and the better job opportunities to be found there.

Increased industrialization causes increases in government agencies, some of which are taking over many of the functions previously claimed by the large extended family. The extended family places many demands upon the members but is losing its ability to do things for the family members. It can no longer provide economic security or protection for its members. Hence, its influence is gradually dwindling.

This effect is also seen in the cities where the state is taking over more and more of the functions of the extended

family such as education, orphanages, and social welfare.
The function of this disruption is felt throughout the
entire country and life, as it was known, can never revert
to the old ways.

Go to page 36-1

You selected d: There is a temporary disruption in the family pattern but when the factors of change stabilize then family structure will revert to the traditional extended pattern.

This alternative is incorrect.

In the past hasn't the opposite always been true? The traditional way of life never changed until recently because there was no reason for it to do so. However, now that a sweeping reorganization is taking place, the old traditional ways can never return.

Social organization and customs evolve over the years in such a manner to fulfill the needs of society. As these needs change, so must the social organization change. The breakdown of the traditional extended family is a result of the changes that are taking place, which require a reorganization. The only way in which the organization would revert to the traditional pattern is if the factors producing change were to be removed and this seems unlikely.

Go to page 35-1

SUMMARY FRAME

(SF)

The Vietnamese social structure is based upon the rationale of a close parallel between the society and the family at large. The relationships 'natural' to the family are viewed as prototypes for the vastly more extended relationships of the society. Thus, the emphasis upon power based upon age and position which we have seen to be characteristic of the family is equally characteristic of the whole society.

Society in the Vietnamese eyes consists of a large number of small social units, such as the family, the village, the guild, etc. Each unit consists in turn of individuals varying greatly in their intellectual and physical capabilities due to different merits done in the previous life. Because of these inequalities which are taken for granted, it is inevitable that class differences should exist to a certain degree. The social order, in other words, is a rationalization of existing human inequalities.

This social structure is now in the process of change as a result of modernization and pressures which are characteristic of technological development and social change. In VN, social mobility has always been possible, but changes are more rapid now since the Western influence and occupation.

case studies

Numbers 1 to 3,
Vietnam Series