Teacher Guide Section 1

1 Family and demographic change

General

This is an introductory chapter, in which students are given an early opportunity to try out and practise skills without the pressures of assessment. Coming from many education systems today where there is huge pressure on students to achieve highly in subject-based assessment, they will need:

- reassurance that it is ok not to be perfect – failure, mistakes and partial attempts are all acceptable, and indeed, essential parts of the learning process
- encouragement to try thinking and acting for themselves
- reminders that the content is important and interesting, but that the ability to find, think about and use information is much more important than the actual information
- support as they learn to direct and manage their own learning – it is particularly important to give students time to make this step, rather than giving up in frustration and telling them what to do.

Guidance to activities

Activity 1.1

Encourage students to choose in line with their interests, but also to keep their minds open to change as they gain new information.

Activity 1.2

Encourage students to think about the kind of information they need rather than about the answers to the questions. Some students may be ready to consider the overlaps and blurred boundaries between different kinds of information.

(a)(i) Definition.

(a)(ii) Statistical information. In an ideal world this would be factual, but this will depend on definitions: what is “older”, in what region, and on estimates if the region is large. These estimates might also use predictions (about population growth, population trends and so on).

(a)(iii) Prediction. This could be based on facts and statistics about what has been happening over the past few years. You would need to look at social trends.

(a)(iv) Opinion. This could be based on factual information, statistics or value judgments.
(a)(v) You can look up a life expectancy figure as a fact which can be checked. But if you wanted to work it out, you would need to make predictions and estimates using complex calculations, based on statistical information about public health, medical care, diet, illness, war, economic circumstances, occupation, gender, lifestyle choices.

(a)(vi) This question can only be answered with opinions, and is likely to be based on value judgments about what “better” means for families. You could also use other kinds of information to support your opinions, information about life chances in different kinds of family, support available, relative wealth.

(b) Allow students to work independently and edge their way towards finding the right questions and identifying the right sorts of information.

Activity 1.3
For (a) and (b) there are no right answers. Allow students to spend time playing with different combinations of search terms to investigate which produce better results.

For (c) again, there are no right answers – there are various combinations that can work. The important feature here is for students to begin thinking for themselves about how they will look for key words, and experiment with success. Encourage students to go beyond simple underlining of words from the question. For instance, a student who looks only for “nuclear family” might miss relevant information expressed differently.

Activity 1.4
(a) “They never let me do what I want” could be a fact, if you can verify that Anya’s family never lets her do what she wants. There are some families where this might happen. But it is more likely to be an opinion based in frustration and exaggerated from a few instances of not being allowed to do what she wants, especially as Anya also says that her family are wonderful. We also see another instance of probable exaggeration when she says, “they are always arguing”.

(b)

Facts: I live with my mum. It’s just the two of us. We watch films together and cook together. I help with the household chores. I make a mess too.

All these can be verified and checked. (“I help with the household chores” could be an unfounded opinion, of course.)

Opinions: Sometimes this is great. Sometimes I wish we had a bigger family.

These are clearly personal opinions, how Kofi feels, things which can’t be checked or verified.

Prediction: I think my mum will be lonely when I leave home.

This is talking about a future event.

Value judgment: It’s only fair.

This is about what Kofi ought to do, fairness is a value.
(c) Allow students to explore the possibilities, encouraging first creative imagination and then analytical refinement of the ideas in terms of what is realistic and likely. Encourage students to explore the difference between unfounded speculation (including long imaginative stories about disasters that might have occurred in the family) and reasonable possibilities (it might be culturally normal, or the family might have pooled their resources to buy a large house and garden).

(d) Again, allow students to explore the possibilities, refining down to the realistic and likely. Encourage them to realise that consequences here depend on the personalities and choices of the family members. Even if they believe that extended families are generally good/bad, this doesn’t mean that the consequences in this case will be good/bad. Also, encourage students to consider their proposed consequences in the light of the few facts that we do have. For instance, Anya’s parents are both teachers, so we can assume that education is important in the family.

(e) Here, students have more knowledge on which to base their predictions of the consequences. Encourage them to justify and explain, using their knowledge of the personalities involved. Encourage them also to look at alternatives, and to be reasonable about the seriousness and degree of certainty: “My mother would definitely kill my dad’s mum” (very serious and very certain, probably too strong to be supported). “My mother and my dad’s mum would probably argue a lot. So they’d have to find ways of being out of the house – get a job, join the women’s institute, volunteer for a charity. Actually, this might be good for them” (not as serious as killing, and not as certain – “probably”, “might be” – this makes it more realistic).

(f) Again, allow students to explore the possibilities. It might be worth exploring the many and various reasons that women can be alone with children. If you live in a culture (as in the UK) where women alone with children are often blamed in the popular media for their situation, it might be worth comparing the statistics for widows with children, women who have been divorced or left by their partners with statistics about women who have chosen to be alone with their child.

(g) See (d).

(h) See (e).

(i) Encourage students to really think through their opinions and to give reasons which really add to the discussion and support their opinions, not just restating or illustrating without adding to the opinion.

Examples:

| Big families are better because there are lots of people: brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, cousins. | 😓 | This does not add anything, but just lists some of the people you might find in a big family. Why is it better to have these people around? |
| Big families are better because there is always someone who has time for you. | 😄 | This does give a reason why big families are good, but not why they are better than small families. The comparison has not been made. |
Big families are better because there is always someone who has time for you. In small families like Kofi’s, there is only one person, and if Kofi’s mum is busy, there is no one there for him.

This does give a reason and makes the comparison. You could argue against this reason (for instance, by suggesting that Kofi could talk to other people such as friends or teachers or that he could learn some self control by waiting until his mother has time), but that is fine. We are not expecting logically perfect arguments!

Small families are better because you have quieter, more meaningful relationships than in big families. If there are lots of people in the family, there is a lot of noise, and you never get to spend proper time with any of them.

This also gives a reason which adds to the discussion, and makes the comparison. It also raises a point for discussion – do you have more meaningful relationships in small groups? Are we all the same in this way? What are the relative merits of noise and quiet at home?

(j) Consider questions such as: Does the country need more workers/more young people to support the old? What are the financial pressures and benefits of smaller/larger families? Is there a problem with growing/shrinking population?

Activity 1.5
Encourage students to begin to work independently. Support them with questions and gentle direction rather than direct instruction.

Activity 1.6
Encourage students to work in groups and individually to think about the questions. Fiction can help some students to reflect – you could ask students to share any poems, stories, films or television programmes that have influenced the ways they think about families and relationships between parents and children. Some students may find that drawing, assembling collages or writing (stories, poems, scripts, mind maps, diaries) can help them to reflect on the issues. Others will prefer to talk in groups. At this stage of the course, it is important to help students to make a start, and to explore possibilities for reflection. As the course develops, students can be encouraged to think about the relationship between a task – writing a poem, making a collage – and reflection, and how to balance focus on the task and focus on the thoughts. It’s a feature of reflection that thoughts may refuse to come when we want them, but pop up when we are engaged in another task, so students will need to learn to manage this.

Activity 1.7
Students are likely to need assistance in focusing on the task planning rather than the content.

Example 1
(a) Report on families
(b) Researchers – Joel and Ali; writers – Mariah and Jonas
(c)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Who will do it</th>
<th>When it should be done</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Research families</td>
<td>Joel and Ali</td>
<td>January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Write a report on families</td>
<td>Mariah and Jonas.</td>
<td>February</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This group of students needs help to refocus their ideas. This is a very weak plan of action. The outcome is vague – "write a report about families". Write about what aspects of families? This is not active, it is not focused, and it seems likely to lead to writing some random facts and opinions about families with no goal and no purpose. Dividing the roles and tasks into writers and researchers is not helpful – how are Mariah and Jonas to write about things they haven’t researched or thought about themselves? What will Mariah and Jonas do if Joel and Ali do not do their share of the work or do it too late? Who will urge people to fulfil their tasks on time? How will the research be structured? What is being researched? What is the precise focus of the report? Why a report rather than an active project?

Example 2

(a) Make a photo display of families working with a team from a different country, focusing on family structure and family values.

b) Group leader with responsibility to ensure tasks are completed on time: Monique

Creative director with responsibility to arrange display: Qing Yu

Liaison with school in different country: Petra

Other team members: Sarah and Ka Yan

c)

<table>
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<th>When it should be done</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Decide which country to partner with</td>
<td>Whole group discuss possibilities with teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Discuss how a photo might show family values</td>
<td>Whole group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Find photos of our own families which show family structure/values</td>
<td>Each of us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Talk to partner school about family values in their country</td>
<td>Petra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Start to produce writing, diagrams, material about family values here</td>
<td>Monique and Qing Yu to direct the rest of us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Meet to discuss next steps</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Finalise display</td>
<td>Qing Yu to direct, all of us to help her</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is a much more promising beginning. The students have chosen a task from the suggested projects in the book, and have really engaged with breaking the tasks down into manageable chunks and giving deadlines. They can now be helped with specifics of organising the task:
Should Petra be the only one to discuss family values with the partner school? Or will there be an arrangement which allows everyone to have a discussion with a partner?

How can task 5 be broken down into manageable steps so that everyone knows exactly what they are doing?

**Activity 1.8**

Encourage students to write one, two or three clear sentences for each heading, using their own words. Suggest that they use a maximum of one quotation per section, and/or refer to statistics briefly. For causes and consequences, students might be more comfortable using diagrams or charts, as used in the skills section. This is not intended to be assessment-ready work. Encourage relevance, clear summaries of the issues, use of own words and clear analysis of the issues. Discourage over-long responses, overload of information and long passages clearly taken without manipulation from sources. Some able students may find the restrictions frustrating, and may need to be reminded that selecting the right 300 words is a greater skill than producing 3,000 words with less thought.

**Activity 1.9**

Encourage students to think carefully about their project work. These questions will lead eventually to project evaluations, but at this stage students are only beginning the process. They may need assistance in considering problems and solutions without unpleasant recriminations or blame casting.

**Developing material from this section for assessment**

The tasks in this section are intended as introductory materials and not as assessment-ready work. However, the topics are on the IGCSE Global Perspectives syllabus and work in these areas can be submitted for assessment. If students choose to submit work in these areas, it is recommended that they revisit the areas after further study.

**Research questions**

The research questions suggested in the topic could be used for assessed work, with more developed, analytical answers. Additional suggestions, focusing less on personal and family perspectives might include:

How should governments manage the population problems caused by migration of certain population groups? (This could be older people migrating to warmer, seaside climes; groups of young men migrating to the cities; groups of young working people migrating from one country to another to seek work.)

To what extent should governments try to affect birth rates?
Projects

The projects suggested in this topic are too limited to be submitted for assessment, focusing more on managing the process of presenting thoughts than on taking action. Possible projects for assessment might include:

- design a poster, campaign, or public services advertisement to persuade people that two children is enough
- work with deprived families in a local community to improve literacy, numeracy or IT skills.