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09 Marriage Rates Drop

Why People Around the World Are Not Getting Married Anymore

LIVE ESL – APIBECI

LIFESTYLE NEWS

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Marriage Rates Drop

Why People Around the World Are Not Getting Married Anymore

Pre – Test

Complete the set of pre-assessment activities given below. Read instructions carefully.

PRE – 01 | True or False Not Given

Listen to the audio carefully and determine whether the statements provided are True, False or Not Given based on the information you hear. Mark **True** if the statement is **correct**, mark **False** if the statement is **incorrect**, and **Not Given** if the information is **not mentioned** in the audio.



| | TRUE | FALSE | NOT GIVEN |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Among the 38 OECD nations, most recorded between 7 and 10 marriages per 1,000 people in 1970. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 By 1995, this fell to around 5 to 7 marriages, and it continues to plummet today. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 69% of the world's population now live in countries with falling marriage rates. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 He bought a presale apartment for \$36,000, not knowing that eight years later it would still be unfinished. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

PRE – 02 | Re-Tell

Listen to the audio carefully and **take notes** on the main points and key details. After the audio ends, **re-tell what you heard in your own words**. Focus on summarizing the **main ideas**, **supporting details**, and **any examples** mentioned.

01

Reading

89%

of the world's population now live in countries with falling marriage rates.

This is especially **pronounced** in the richest countries. Among the 38 OECD nations, most recorded between 7 and 10 marriages per 1,000 people in 1970. By 1995, this fell to around 5 to 7 marriages. And it continues to **plummet** today. So, why is this happening, and will it spell the end of marriage as we know it?

A stable marriage has often been associated with financial stability. Married **households** in the U.S. hold significantly higher wealth than cohabiting couples or singles. But despite this, the marriage rate in the U.S. has dropped by nearly 60% since the 1970s. And the median age for first-time marriages has increased for both women and men.

For a variety of reasons, I think, upper-middle-class Americans are just much more likely to be kind of **intentional** about sequencing their lives in terms of education first, work second, and marriage third, and the baby carriage after all of that. And so that they're just in a much better spot, both financially and relationship-wise when they go ahead and have kids.

The cost of marriage usually starts with a wedding. There is a tiny wedding cake I bought in London for \$50. Thankfully, just within our production budget. But if you wanted the same cake but big enough to serve 100 people, then you would have to pay at least \$250. Add in the price of a tuxedo, a dress, drinks and music, and suddenly, you are looking at a very large bill.

Getting married is just the tip of the iceberg. Starting a family adds all sorts of economic **commitments**. It typically starts with a house, followed by a car, maybe kids, which means more expenses like books, toys, and family vacations. In a nutshell, you become a fully engaged consumer in the economy. Some people choose not to go down this road while others simply can't afford to.

From about 1980 to the present, there's been no greater increase in family instability than there has been among this working-class demographic in the US. Basically in the second quintile of the family income distribution. Since the 1970s, there has been a decline in the number of American men without college degrees in the U.S. labour force. The last 50 years also saw their earnings stagnate and decrease. By contrast, we're seeing women having a more secure footing in today's sort of more service, post-industrial economy.

01

Reading

And so, we know that marriage is many things but it's also, in part, a financial undertaking. And when you have men who are losing ground financially in this working-class **demographic**, and women who are gaining ground, I think they both kind of see that the guy is less marriageable. With this, they're less likely to kind of get married in the first place, and more likely to get divorced in the second place.

Another **phenomenon** that affects marriage is the rise of secularism in modern societies. Here in the U.K., for example, 1 in 3 people say they have no religion, up 25% since 2011. And this is a key reason why marriage is no longer seen as the only basis for family formation. For countries where this is acceptable socially, the decline in marriage does not necessarily spell trouble for the country's demographics. But in other parts of the world, most notably in east and south Asia, marriage and birth rates are highly correlated.

2.3%

Only 2.3% of babies are born outside of marriage in Japan, which means if people don't get married, they're also very unlikely to have children.

This is a problem for Japan, the world's 3rd largest economy, and home to the world's oldest population. The falling birthrate is something that happens in many countries. And governments all over the world are worried because of economic **implications**. From state funded matchmaking apps to marriage support concierges, the Japanese government has introduced several incentives to promote marriage, but so far, nothing has worked.

A similar problem is troubling authorities in neighbouring China, which registered the fewest marriages in 2022 since public records began. The country also saw its birth rate fall to a record low the same year. By 2050, China's working population will be reduced by 10%, and not enough, you know, babies born to fill that gap, and the dependent population, those who reach retirement age, will double.

In a sharp reversal from its former one child policy, the Chinese government encourages marriage and child birth since 2016. But this time, it's Chinese women who have reservations about married life. The women tend to spend significantly much more time than their husband in child care and other related care. And also, the Chinese workplace is not very women friendly. Why women don't want to get married or why women don't want to have children is because the society is not women friendly, the society is not child friendly. Men talk about the personal freedom that they get for not getting married. But at the same time, they are really worried that if they were to set up a family, they will not be able to sustain a family with the income.

The Western heart is closing in an important extent to marriage and family life. And that's going to have a huge impact not just economically, but also obviously, socially and emotionally on young adults today.

02

Activity

A1 | Pair Me Up

Match the words on the first column to its corresponding meaning on the second column.

- | | | | |
|-------------|---------|----------|---|
| PRONOUNCED | 1 _____ | A | a group of people, who live together |
| PLUMMET | 2 _____ | B | planned or intended |
| HOUSEHOLD | 3 _____ | C | an occasion when you seem to suggest without verbally saying it |
| INTENTIONAL | 4 _____ | D | a promise or firm decision to do something |
| COMMITMENT | 5 _____ | E | something unusual or interesting you can perceive |
| DEMOGRAPHIC | 6 _____ | F | very noticeable or certain |
| PHENOMENON | 7 _____ | G | a group of people with similar age, social class etc. |
| IMPLICATION | 8 _____ | H | to fall very quickly and suddenly |

A2 | Right Words

Complete the sentence by choosing the word that fits the context. Choose from the left box below.

| | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| cohabitating | households |
| stability | associated |
| significantly | implication |

1 A stable marriage has often been _____ with financial _____. Married _____ in the U.S. hold _____ higher wealth than _____ couples or singles.

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| expenses | typically |
| iceberg | commitments |

2 Getting married is just the tip of the _____. Starting a family adds all sorts of economic _____. It _____ starts with a house, followed by a car, maybe kids, which means more _____ like books, toys, and family vacations.

| | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| correlated | demographics |
| trouble | decline |
| socially | intentional |

3 For countries where this is acceptable _____, the _____ in marriage does not necessarily spell _____ for the country's _____. But in other parts of the world, most notably in east and south Asia, marriage and birth rates are highly _____.

| | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| economically | emotionally |
| impact | extent |
| obviously | implication |

4 The Western heart is closing in an important _____ to marriage and family life. And that's going to have a huge _____ not just _____, but also _____, socially and _____ on young adults today.

03

Speak Up

You are welcome to authentically share your thoughts as you go through the following questions.

1 What has been associated with a stable marriage?

2 What are the reasons for the decline of marriage in the US?

3 What another phenomenon that affects marriage?

4 What did the Japanese government do to promote marriage in Japan?

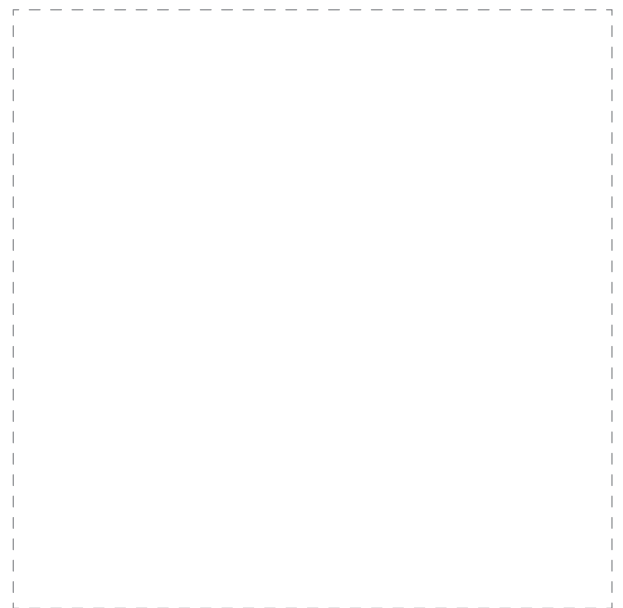
5 What are the reasons for the decline of marriage in China?




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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

All things happen for a reason.



The Creative Box; Draw something, write something, do anything to this box – let yourself be free with the box. 

KEY ANSWERS

1F 2H 3A 4B 5D 6G 7E 8C

1 associated stability households significantly cohabitating

2 iceberg expenses typically commitments

3 socially demographics trouble decline intentional

4 extent impact economically obviously emotionally

LESSON SUMMARY

READING + LISTENING + SPEAKING

1HR

ISSUE 06: MARRIAGE RATES
DROP AROUND THE WORLD
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ASSESSMENT PROFICIENCY INFORMATION

STUDENT

SCORE

DATE



SCAN FOR EDUCARE.

