

## 8.2 Gen X, Gen Y, Gen Z

GOALS ■ Describe people ■ Use participle clauses

### Vocabulary & Reading describing people

- Work with a partner. Discuss the questions.
  - What do you understand by the term 'generation gap'?
  - How different are your attitudes and opinions from those of other generations in your family? Think about the following.
    - bringing up children
    - importance of social status
    - new technology
    - saving and spending money
    - other cultures and nationalities
    - fashion
    - manners
    - music
    - working hard
- Look at the names of the different generations, as used by demographers and the media. Which are you?
 

1 <b>Baby Boomers</b>	Born 1946–1964
2 <b>Generation X</b>	Born 1965–1980
3 <b>Generation Y</b>	Born 1981–2000
4 <b>Generation Z</b>	Born after 2000

- Match profiles A–D to generations 1–4 in exercise 2.

A \_\_\_\_\_

Born shortly after World War II, this generation had more opportunities in life than their parents. Optimistic and willing to work long hours, they tend to define themselves by their professional achievements. They are often **well educated** and can be quite competitive in the workplace. Outside work they 1 \_\_\_\_\_ seek enjoyment in life.

B \_\_\_\_\_

This generation, joining the workforce at the start of this millennium, is also known as the 'millennial' generation. They have different priorities from their parents, caring less about earning large salaries 2 \_\_\_\_\_. They have a (perhaps unfair) reputation for being **self-centred, arrogant** and believing they deserve the best in life. Some think this comes from constantly being told since birth 3 \_\_\_\_\_. This generation is more **open-minded** than previous ones in their attitudes to other cultures and nationalities.

C \_\_\_\_\_

Sometimes referred to as **Generation Net**, this generation never experienced a world without the internet. Because of the internet they are very **well informed** about world events. They are also even more **tech-savvy** than previous generations, with children as young as two being able 4 \_\_\_\_\_. This generation, having lived through an economic recession, probably won't take money for granted.

D \_\_\_\_\_

Sandwiched between Baby Boomers and Generation Y, this generation shares many of their characteristics. They 5 \_\_\_\_\_ they value a work-life balance. A higher divorce rate and an increase in working mothers meant many from this generation grew up often being alone. They therefore tend to be independent, **family-focused** and have a **realistic** attitude to life. They also tend to be **critical** of authority.



- 4 Complete the profiles in exercise 3 with phrases a–e.
- and more about work-life balance
  - like to be active and
  - tend to be hard-working, but
  - to operate smartphones and tablets
  - that they are special
- 5 Work with a partner. Although stereotypical, are the generation profiles true for people in your country/people that you know? Give examples.
- 6 Match five of the adjectives in bold in the profiles in exercise 3 to definitions 1–5.
- knowing a lot
  - knowing a lot about computers, etc.
  - having studied at college or university
  - willing to accept ideas and situations different from your own
  - expressing your negative opinion about something you think is wrong
- 7a With a partner, complete the table with all the adjectives in bold in the profiles in exercise 3.

Positive	Negative	It depends

- b Add these words to the table in exercise 7a.
- conventional easy-going irresponsible loyal  
self-confident stubborn
- 8a Write six adjectives from the completed table in exercise 7a, three that apply to you and three that don't.
- b Work with a partner. Tell your partner how you see yourself. Give examples.
- I would say I'm quite ... I can be a bit ... sometimes.  
People tell me I'm ...*
- c How similar or different are you? Tell the class.

## Grammar & Speaking participle clauses

- 9 The highlighted words in the profiles are **participle clauses**. Read the Grammar focus box and answer the questions.
- Which of the highlighted participle clauses ...
- replace relative clauses?
  - have an active meaning?
  - have a passive meaning?

## GRAMMAR FOCUS participle clauses

A **participle clause** begins with a **present participle**, e.g. *coming, eating*, or a **past participle**, e.g. *gone, taken, born*.

- Participle clauses allow us to include more information in a single sentence. Compare:  
*This generation is sandwiched between Baby Boomers and Generation Y. It shares many of their characteristics.*  
**Sandwiched between Baby Boomers and Generation Y, this generation shares many of their characteristics.**
- Some participle clauses can replace relative clauses:  
*Generation Y, **told since birth that they are special**, (= who have been told that they are special) can sometimes be self-centred.*
- The present participle has an **active** meaning. The past participle has a **passive** meaning.  
*People **growing up after World War II** (= who grew up after ...) had more opportunities than their parents.*  
*Generation Z, **also known as Generation Net** (= who are also known as ...), were born in this millennium.*
- We use *having* + present participle with verbs with an active meaning to make it clear we are talking about the past.  
*Generation Z, **having lived through an economic recession**, won't take money for granted.*

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- 10 Complete the sentences with the present or past participle form of the verbs in brackets.
- It's not strange nowadays to see two-year-olds \_\_\_\_\_ (operate) smartphones.
  - Generation X, \_\_\_\_\_ (call) 'Gen X' for short, was born between 1965 and 1980.
  - Generation Y, is the generation \_\_\_\_\_ (follow) Generation X.
  - (Have) \_\_\_\_\_ grown up in the Digital Age, Gen X and Y are tech-savvy.
  - Gen X is the name of a famous British punk band, \_\_\_\_\_ (form) in 1976.
- 11 Rewrite the questions using participle clauses.
- What are some of the challenges which face those who work in a multi-generational workplace?
  - In what ways are people who were brought up in the age of social media different from older generations?
  - What are the factors which affect the beliefs and attitudes of a generation?
  - How do you think people who are born after 2020 will be different?
- 12 **TASK** Work in groups. Select three of the questions and discuss them. Compare ideas with another group.