

Denmark is the best country to raise kids

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Scandinavia has ranked as the best place in the world to raise children. The Nordic region holds the top three places on the U.S. News & World Report's list of "The Best Countries for Raising Kids" in 2020. The list has been compiled annually since 2016 in collaboration with the University of Pennsylvania. Denmark topped the list, with Sweden a close runner-up, and neighbour Norway edging out Canada for third place. The 2020 listings will come as little surprise as the three nations also ranked highest on the list for 2019. A spokeswoman explained: "These countries tend to have generous paternal leave and maternal leave, offer free preschool and have good overall public education systems."

The listing was released as part of the annual "Best Countries" list. This survey adopted "a global perceptions-based" approach in examining data and attitudes. It used research from the World Bank, as well as the opinions of 20,000 people in the Americas, Asia, Europe, the Middle East and Africa. Researchers tested countries against 65 different metrics, or what the researchers called "country attributes". These included income equality, well-developed public education and healthcare systems, human rights, gender equality, safety, family friendliness and levels of perceived happiness. Switzerland once again topped the "Best Countries" list, followed by Canada and Japan.

Sources: cbsnews.com / cnn.com / dailymail.co.uk

Writing

"I believe my country is the best country in the world." Argue why this is true.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

Scandinavia / raise children / top / list / collaboration / runner-up / paternal leave / annual / data / attitudes / opinions / metrics / gender / happiness / human rights

True / False

- a) Scandinavia is part of the Nordic region. **T / F**
- b) The top three countries to raise children are in Scandinavia. **T / F**
- c) The USA was fourth on the list of the best places to raise children. **T / F**
- d) Scandinavian countries tend to have generous paternity leave. **T / F**
- e) Researchers used a global perceptions approach for their report. **T / F**
- f) Researchers looked at metrics in 65 different countries. **T / F**
- g) Researchers looked at levels of unhappiness in different countries. **T / F**
- h) Switzerland was top on the "Best Countries" list. **T / F**

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. ranked | a. views |
| 2. top | b. co-operation |
| 3. compiled | c. general |
| 4. collaboration | d. contentment |
| 5. overall | e. issued |
| 6. released | f. leading |
| 7. attitudes | g. parity |
| 8. attributes | h. rated |
| 9. equality | i. qualities |
| 10. happiness | j. assembled |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What do you know about Denmark?
- c) What do you think is the best country in the world?
- d) What are the global perceptions of your country?
- e) What is the world's best continent?
- f) How happy a place is your country?
- g) What would you change about your country to make it better?
- h) What questions would you like to ask a Danish child?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. Scandinavia has ranked | a. -based approach |
| 2. The list has been compiled | b. equality |
| 3. edging out | c. education systems |
| 4. These countries tend to have generous | d. happiness |
| 5. good overall public | e. Canada for third place |
| 6. This survey adopted a global perceptions | f. paternal leave |
| 7. examining data | g. friendliness |
| 8. income | h. as the best place |
| 9. family | i. and attitudes |
| 10. levels of perceived | j. annually since 2016 |

Discussion – Student B

- Which word do you like better - 'kids' or 'children'?
- Where do you think is the best place in the world to raise children?
- What is your country like for children?
- How good was the place you grew up in?
- Why are the Scandinavian countries so good for children?
- Where would you like to have grown up as a child?
- What is the most important thing a country can give its children?
- Where would you like to raise your children?

Spelling

- The Nordic region
- The list has been compiled annually
- in collaboration with the University
- with Sweden a close runner-up
- generous paternal leave
- good overall public education
- a global perceptions-based" approach
- examining data and attitudes
- tested countries against 65 different metrics
- country attributes
- gender equality
- levels of perceived happiness

Answers – Synonym Match

1. h	2. f	3. j	4. b	5. c
6. e	7. a	8. i	9. g	10. d

Role Play

Role A – Denmark

You think Denmark is the best place to raise children. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their places. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): Hollywood, Kyoto or New York.

Role B – Hollywood

You think Hollywood is the best place to raise children. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their places. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): Denmark, Kyoto or New York.

Role C – Kyoto

You think Kyoto is the best place to raise children. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their places. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): Hollywood, Denmark or New York.

Role D – New York

You think New York is the best place to raise children. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their places. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): Hollywood, Kyoto or Denmark.

Speaking – Best Places

Rank these with your partner. Put the best places to raise children at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| • The countryside | • Silicon Valley |
| • By the sea | • Hollywood |
| • New York | • Kyoto |
| • A mountain village | • Denmark |

Answers – True False

a	T	b	T	c	F	d	T	e	T	f	F	g	F	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.