

Chinese couples asked to take divorce exam

5th June, 2018



Authorities in China are looking at a new way of halting the country's increasing divorce rate. In parts of China, couples who file for divorce are being asked to take an exam to ascertain how much they still might love each other and whether or not their marriage can be salvaged. Up to

half of all Chinese marriages between those who were born in the 1980s have ended in divorce. China's rising divorce rate has been attributed to the increased empowerment of working women, who are more financially independent and less reliant on a partner. Media sources say the rise of social media and dating apps are adding to the problem, as there are increasing numbers of extramarital affairs.

The divorce tests have had a mixed reaction in China. Liu Chunling, the director of a marriage-registration office, told reporters that the test was aimed at reducing the divorce rate and preventing "impulsive divorces". She said: "Only the harmony of millions of family units can achieve the harmony of an entire society." Chinese Internet users were less enthusiastic about the 15-question test being used to determine a couple's love for each other. One post on the Weibo social media site asked: "So if you remember your wedding anniversary you can't divorce? Divorce isn't a case of amnesia." Another wrote: "They are adults and they have the right to divorce. This is interference in domestic affairs."

Sources: telegraph.co.uk / businessinsider.com / nytimes.co

Writing

Divorce tests are a good way of saving marriages. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

authorities / divorce / exam / love / marriage / working women / independent / dating / impulsive / harmony / family / society / enthusiastic / social media / wedding / right

True / False

- a) Every Chinese couple in China must now take an exam to get divorced. T / F
- b) Up to half of all marriages between people in their 80s end in divorce. T / F
- c) One reason for higher divorce rates is there are fewer working women. T / F
- d) More people are cheating on their partners because of social media. T / F
- e) The test is to stop people getting divorced on impulse. T / F
- f) There are 15 questions on the test. T / F
- g) A social media user suggested divorce wasn't about forgetfulness. T / F
- h) A social media user called the test an intrusion into national affairs. T / F

Synonym Match

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

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| 1. halting | a. intrusion |
| 2. file | b. put down to |
| 3. salvaged | c. spontaneous |
| 4. attributed | d. apply |
| 5. reliant | e. balance |
| 6. impulsive | f. decide |
| 7. harmony | g. stopping |
| 8. enthusiastic | h. dependent |
| 9. determine | i. keen |
| 10. interference | j. saved |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think of the divorce exam?
- b) Would it be better to have a marriage exam before weddings?
- c) Can an exam ascertain how much love there is between a couple?
- d) What questions would you put in the exam?
- e) What's the divorce rate like in your country?
- f) What are the biggest reasons for divorce?
- g) What kind of mess is left after a divorce?
- h) What do you think of extramarital affairs?

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Phrase Match

1. couples who file
 2. whether or not their marriage
 3. financially independent and less
 4. dating apps are adding
 5. extramarital
 6. preventing impulsive
 7. the harmony of
 8. determine a couple's love
 9. wedding
 10. they have the right
- a. an entire society
 - b. to the problem
 - c. anniversary
 - d. divorces
 - e. reliant
 - f. for divorce
 - g. can be salvaged
 - h. to divorce
 - i. affairs
 - j. for each other

Discussion – Student B

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What do you think about divorce?
- c) Why would someone get divorced on an impulse?
- d) Is it harder to stay married these days?
- e) Should the authorities get involved with divorcing couples?
- f) What damage does divorce do to society?
- g) What would happen if divorce was made illegal?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the Chinese authorities?

Spelling

1. routeiisaht in China
2. take an exam to rsceaitan how
3. their marriage can be deglasav
4. tdtiubtaer to the increased empowerment
5. more incaiflanly independent
6. extramarital iaffsra
7. had a mixed ecaotirn
8. aimed at ncugdei the divorce rate
9. preventing svmeiulpi divorces
10. users were less iteunictsahs
11. used to ritemdeen a couple's love
12. interference in stmoidec affairs

Answers – Synonym Match

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

Role Play

Role A – Money

You think money is the biggest reason to get divorced. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their reasons aren't as bad. Also, tell the others of these is the worst reason to get divorced (and why): cheating, a lazy partner or boredom.

Role B – Cheating

You think cheating is the biggest reason to get divorced. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their reasons aren't as bad. Also, tell the others of these is the worst reason to get divorced (and why): money, a lazy partner or boredom.

Role C – Lazy Partner

You think a lazy partner is the biggest reason to get divorced. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their reasons aren't as bad. Also, tell the others of these is the worst reason to get divorced (and why): cheating, money or boredom.

Role D – Boredom

You think boredom is the biggest reason to get divorced. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their reasons aren't as bad. Also, tell the others of these is the worst reason to get divorced (and why): cheating, a lazy partner or money.

Speaking – Divorce

Rank these with your partner. Put the biggest reasons for divorce at the top at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- communication breakdown
- always arguing
- lack of equality
- domestic violence
- money
- cheating
- lazy partner
- boredom

Answers – True False

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