



### Unit 1 Nice to see you again

#### Before you read

The article is about kissing. Think about this question. When and why do people kiss in your culture?

#### Read the article

##### Kissing Around the World

Why do people kiss? The answer to that question depends on where in the world you are.

To many people in the world, a kiss means "I love you." Loving kisses range from romantic kisses between lovers to goodnight kisses between parents and children.

Kisses are also a popular way to say hello. In Europe and South America, people often kiss their relatives and friends on the cheek to greet them. Some men even kiss each other on the cheek at business meetings. The proper way to greet someone with a kiss is to do it twice, one kiss for each cheek. Start with the right cheek—if you start with the left cheek, the person you are kissing might get confused!

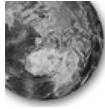
The ancient Romans did a lot of kissing. They kissed friends and acquaintances on the hand, the cheek, or the mouth, and they often put perfume in their mouths to make their kisses smell good. Roman students kissed the hands of their teachers to show their respect. Other ancient peoples also showed respect by kissing religious statues and flags as well as the feet and footprints of kings and queens.

Kisses also used to seal promises. In the Middle Ages in Europe, knights and their lords took part in special ceremonies in which the knight knelt down in front of the lord and promised to fight for him. In return, the lord promised to reward the knight with land and other riches. Then, to seal their agreement, the men kissed each other on the mouth.

The medieval knights also kissed paper contracts to show that they meant to stick to the agreement they had made. Many of them couldn't write, so they signed their names with an X (symbolizing a cross). Then they kissed the paper to finalize the agreement. These Xs still exist nowadays, though they have nothing to do with promises anymore. Many people still like to sign their letters with a row of XXXs at the bottom, sending kisses to the person they are writing to.

People even used to think kisses had magical powers. The English kissed hurt fingers to make them well. When the French gambled, they kissed their cards for good luck. You may have noticed that some people still kiss a pair of dice before they roll them.

A thousand years from now, people will probably still be kissing each other. But it's likely that the rules for when and why people kiss will be completely different by then.



### Build your reading skills: Identifying the main idea

Read the article again. Which sentence best describes the main idea of the article?  
Circle the letter of the correct sentence.

1. In many countries a kiss means, "I love you."
2. Kissing is a common form of greeting.
3. Kissing has different meanings in different cultures.
4. Kissing is a sign of respect.

### Check your comprehension

Read the sentences. Write *T* (true) or *F* (false) after each statement.

- |   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| 1. A kiss always means "I love you."  | _____ <i>F</i> _____ |
| 2. Europeans and South Americans kiss each other on the cheek in greeting.          | _____                |
| 3. The ancient Romans only kissed people they loved.                                | _____                |
| 4. Nowadays, writing a row of XXXs on a letter means that you are making a promise. | _____                |
| 5. Some people believe that kissing something you are using can bring good luck.    | _____                |
| 6. The rules for kissing will probably stay the same as time goes on.               | _____                |