



Unit 25 Arranged marriages

Before you read

The reading is about an arranged marriage. Think about these questions. How do you feel about arranged marriages? Would you agree to have your marriage arranged by someone else?

Read the article

Instant Marriage

David Weinlick, 28, a postgraduate anthropology student from Minnesota in the U.S., was tired of being asked by relatives when he was going to get married. So he decided on a date, arranged for a ceremony, and hoped that a suitable woman would turn up by that time. Six weeks before the date of the ceremony a suitable woman still hadn't appeared. David decided to advertise for a wife, to be chosen by him and his friends and relatives at a "bridal candidate party" on the wedding day.

Early on the Saturday of the ceremony, 36 hopeful brides-to-be from all over the U.S. arrived at the Mall of America, one of the biggest shopping malls in the world, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. None of them had ever met Weinlick before. Each applicant filled out a long questionnaire, answering questions such as what an "ideal" evening out would be like for her and what qualities a good husband should have. Each candidate then had to defend her answers in an interview with a committee consisting of David and 55 of his family and friends.

By 11 A.M., Weinlick had a slightly desperate look. One candidate must have been at least 60. Two couldn't have been more than 17. They all flashed winning smiles at him at every opportunity. At 1 P.M. Weinlick was happier. He told friends he had seen at least three women who looked suitable. He announced a shortlist of candidates soon afterward.

By 3:30 P.M., Weinlick had chosen 28-year-old Elizabeth Runze and had proposed to her in private, on one knee. After she accepted, the bride was rushed to Bloomingdale's department store to be fitted with a \$600 dress. At around 5:00 P.M. Weinlick and his bride were married on stage in the mall's rotunda. More than 3,000 people looked on from the balconies above.

The groom was delighted with the way his wedding had turned out. "I'm incredibly happy. This is the best day of my life," he said. Tessa, an old girlfriend of Weinlick's, was less complimentary about the situation. "I think David is doing this because he can't face a real relationship," she said.

Source: Adapted from *Snapshot, Intermediate* by Brian Abbs, Ingrid Freebairn, and Chris Barker, Longman



Check your comprehension

Read the article again. Match the beginnings with the endings of the sentences.

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| 1. David Weinlick decided on a wedding date before he had a girlfriend because <u>d</u> | a. they wanted to marry David Weinlick. |
| 2. Weinlick advertised for a wife six weeks before the wedding because _____ | b. he couldn't find a suitable woman to marry. |
| 3. Thirty-six woman came to the Mall of America because _____ | c. he couldn't face a real relationship. |
| 4. The bride rushed to Bloomingdale's after she was chosen because _____ | d. his relatives kept asking him when he was going to get married. |
| 5. David's ex-girlfriend thinks he got married this way because _____ | e. she needed to buy a wedding dress. |

Build your reading skills: Supporting opinions with information from the text

Do you think David and Elizabeth will have a happy marriage? Why or why not? Give a couple of examples from the article to support your view.