

Describe a family and explain a custom

HSK 2

Original teaching practice. Read one pattern, cover its model and try the questions before checking the separate answer section. Examples adapted from Chinese Grammar Wiki (AllSet Learning, CC BY-NC-SA) retain the course-reference provenance.

Give basic family information and describe a festival activity.

Before you start: Recall family relationship words and 有 for having family members. 因为 introduces a reason and 所以 a result; each account concerns the people and occasion it actually names.

■ Build the meaning

有 describes family members or possessions. 我有一个姐姐 gives the relationship and quantity.

因为 所以 links a reason and result. Chinese can use both markers; English often translates the relationship with just because or so.

Talk about family and a festival

A

when	who	question word
春节 Chūnjié Spring Festival	你们 nǐmen you	做什么 zuò shénme do what

B

	how	answer
我们 wǒmen we	一起 yìqǐ together	吃饭 chī fàn eat a meal

■ Work through a decision

因为姐姐回家了，所以大家很高兴 – everyone is happy because the older sister has come home. Identify 回家了 as the stated reason and 很高兴 as the result. This gives the family's explanation on this occasion, not proof that every family feels the same way or follows the same festival custom.

Compare: 春节我们家吃饺子 describes this family eating dumplings at Spring Festival. It does not say all families must do so. A reason-result account also differs from two events merely listed together; use the reason explicitly stated instead of inventing

one.

■ Useful words in context

- 姐姐 jiějie – older sister. 我有一个姐姐。
- 家人 jiārén – family members. 我和家人吃饭。
- 春节 Chūnjié – Spring Festival. 春节我们在家。
- 因为 yīnwèi – because. 因为姐姐回家了。
- 所以 suǒyǐ – so / therefore. 所以我们一起吃饭。

■ Listen before reading the script

Ask a partner to read the listening script from the answer section while you keep it covered. Then attempt the listening question. If you work alone without audio, use the script for reading practice; it is not a listening test.

■ Read a different account

春节，林安的姐姐回家了。因为家人在一起，所以大家很高兴。晚上他们吃饺子。
Try the reading question before checking the English meaning in the answer section.

■ Speak with a partner

Describe one fictional family activity during a festival. Ask what another family does, without assuming the same custom.

Check the distinction: Festival customs differ by region and family. The example is one family's practice, not a rule for everyone.

Learn step by step · Practise and review.

Practice without the models

Choose a pattern, cover its teaching examples, and attempt its questions. Use the labels to find feedback in the separate key.

■ Describe a family and explain a custom

0501.1 Listening. Why does the family call the sister?

- A. She is not at home
- B. She cooked dumplings
- C. She is a teacher

0501.2 Reading. What causes the family's happiness in the reading?

- A. They buy a phone
- B. They are together
- C. The school opens

0501.3 Complete the result marker: 因为家人在一起，..... 大家很高兴。

0501.4 Match each word with its meaning in this unit.

- 1. 姐姐
- 1. 家人
- 1. 春节
- 1. 因为
- 1. 所以
- A. family members
- B. Spring Festival
- C. so / therefore
- D. older sister
- E. because

0501.5 Write a family activity and one reason-result sentence.

Write or say your own response before reading the key.

0501.6 我有一个姐姐。一个 means one and 姐姐 means older sister. Which information is supplied?

- A. Every family has an older sister.
- B. The sister will return tomorrow.
- C. The speaker has one older sister.

0501.7 因为哥哥明天要上班，所以今天回家。哥哥 means older brother, 明天要上班 must go to work tomorrow, and 今天回家 goes home today. First locate 因为, the reason marker. Why does he go home today?

- A. Because everyone always returns home on this date
- B. Because the account says he dislikes the family
- C. Because he must work tomorrow

0501.8 Read: 林安有两个弟弟。今年春节，一个弟弟回家，另一个在学校。晚上家人一起吃米饭。弟弟 means younger brother and 另一个 the other. Which account fits this family?

- A. One brother returns, the other is at school; the family eats rice.
- B. Both brothers return home; the family eats rice together that evening.
- C. One brother returns, the other is at school; the family eats dumplings.

0501.9 Use Mandarin for the new sentences or dialogue. You may explain your reasoning in English. Invent a fictional family gathering. Give a relationship and quantity, describe one activity, and explain one choice with 因为 ... 所以 Ask a partner a question about that family. State why the account does not establish a custom for everyone.

Write or say your own response before reading the key.

A fresh situation

R1. Interpret and repair. A learner reads 因为春节，家人回来了 as proof that every family follows one identical custom. What should you limit?

R2. Use it yourself. Explain a fictional family's holiday arrangement and ask a partner about theirs without assuming it is the same.

Write your responses before opening the key. Compare meaning as well as form; a different valid answer need not copy the model.

Answers and explanations

Check after your attempt. For open tasks, compare the message and the stated criteria, then revise one detail.

■ Describe a family and explain a custom

0501.1 A. She is not at home

不在家 is given as the reason for calling.

0501.2 B. They are together

因为家人在一起 states the cause.

0501.3 所以

所以 introduces the consequence.

0501.4 1-D: 姐姐 = older sister; 2-A: 家人 = family members; 3-B: 春节 = Spring Festival; 4-E: 因为 = because; 5-C: 所以 = so / therefore

Use the example sentences to check each word's meaning in context.

0501.5 One possible response: 姐姐回家了。因为家人在一起，所以我们很高兴。

Check meaning and form:

- Name the people or relationship.
- Give a specific activity.
- Keep the reason and result in the intended direction.

Compare the meaning and structure with the checklist. Your own response may differ from the model.

0501.6 C. The speaker has one older sister.

The sentence gives one relationship and quantity for this speaker. It supplies neither a rule for other families nor a return plan.

0501.7 C. Because he must work tomorrow

明天要上班 is the reason after 因为. No universal custom or dislike is stated. Today and tomorrow belong to different parts of the explanation.

0501.8 A. One brother returns, the other is at school; the family eats rice.

The text separates one brother returning home from the other being at school, and names 米饭, rice, for the meal. The first choice moves both brothers home; the second changes the food. No rule about other families is established.

0501.9 One possible response: Possible account: 我有一个姐姐。因为姐姐明天要上班，所以我们今天一起吃饭。Question: 你们为什么今天一起吃饭? Reply: 因为姐姐明天要上班。This family chooses today because of the work schedule; other families may choose differently.

How to revise: If the reason merely repeats the choice, supply the circumstance that explains it. If you wrote everyone does this, narrow the account to the people whose practice you actually described.

Check meaning and form:

- Keep the named family relationship and quantity consistent.
- Give a specific activity for this fictional family.
- Make the reason explain the stated choice.
- Avoid turning one household's practice into a universal cultural rule.
- Write or speak the requested sentences, questions or dialogue in Mandarin; optional English reasoning does not replace them.

If the reason merely repeats the choice, supply the circumstance that explains it. If you wrote everyone does this, narrow the account to the people whose practice you actually described.

■ Listening script and meaning

春节我和家人吃米饭。姐姐不在家，所以我们给她打电话。

At Spring Festival I eat rice with my family. My sister is not at home, so we call her.

■ Reading meaning

At Spring Festival, Lin An's older sister comes home. Everyone is happy because the family is together. In the evening they eat dumplings.

■ Speaking model

A: 春节你们做什么? B: 我们一起吃饭。你们呢?

Compare the intended message first. Ask a listener to comment on intelligibility and pronunciation; matching the written model does not establish speaking accuracy.

■ Fresh-situation answers

R1. The sentence gives a reason for this family's return; it does not establish a universal custom. Describe the named people and context before generalising.

R2. One possible response. 我们家过年时一起吃饭。你们家呢? This describes one family's practice and invites another account. A partner may give a different custom or say they do not celebrate it.

Recall later. Tomorrow, distinguish a family's example from a claim about everyone.