**Student \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_\_ OPTION E**

**Instructions: COMPLETE ALL QUESTIONS AND MARGIN NOTES using the CLOSE reading strategies practiced in class. This requires reading of the article three times.**

**Step 1: Skim** the article using these symbols as you read:

**(+)** agree, **(-)** disagree, **(\*)** important, **(!)** surprising, **(?)** wondering

**Step 2: Number** the paragraphs. **Read** the article **carefully** and **make notes in the margin**.

Notes should include:

* Comments that show that you **understand** the article.
* Questions you have that show what you are **wondering** about as you read.
* Comments that show connections to the article and inferences made while reading.

**Step 3:** A **final quick read** noting anything you may have missed during the first two reads.

**Step 4:** COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING:

* Answer the comprehension question(s).
* Define any unknown vocabulary words. DUE: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Purpose and Audience Sentence
* Summary Statement
* Option for the week

**Asian-American Women Struggling To Move Past Cultural Expectations** By. Scott Robinson, *The New York Times*

When Jennifer Ng, who immigrated from Hong Kong as a child, was growing up in Manhattan, she said she believed she would never meet the expectations of her parents or society. Her parents expected her to study hard, choose a safe, lucrative career, stay near Chinatown, marry and take care of the family. Society, she said, type-cast her as passive and industrious.

But even as Ms. Ng (pronounced ING) tried to meet these goals, she found herself doing other things. She boarded at Barnard College in upper Manhattan, rather than commute from home in Chinatown, as her family wished. Now 27, she is an investment consultant for Citibank, but she is also considering whether to apply to a business graduate school, even though she said her mother believed her energies would be better spent looking for a husband.

**Discrimination and Isolation**

"She tells me: 'You better stop being so independent, so outgoing,' " said Ms. Ng, who left Hong Kong in 1973. " 'That's why you have a problem finding a husband. This is the type of woman you should be: you should be very quiet and not express your opinions.' "

For people coming to the United States, culture clash is common. But racial discrimination often isolates Asian-Americans to a greater extent than other ethnic groups, say experts in Asian-American studies.

"No matter how hard you try, you can't blend in as someone of Euro-American heritage can," said Shirley Hune, associate dean of the graduate division of the University of California at Los Angeles. While immigrants of other ethnic groups typically assimilate by the second generation, Dr. Hune said, Asian-Americans whose families have been here three to five generations still get asked: "Were you born here?" and "Do you speak English?"

In the face of such isolation, Asian-Americans often retain a traditional emphasis on the family and the collective unit, which heightens the cultural conflict, said Dr. Setsuko Matsunaga Nishi, professor of sociology at Brooklyn College and the Graduate School of the City University of New York. "Even though they may not be taught in a conscious way, the socialization we undergo is such that we might feel guilty or ashamed if we don't fulfill those roles," she said.

**Pressure by Family and Society**

This tradition helps keep alive specific sexual roles and values, and that puts distinctive pressure on Asian-American women, said Dr. Peter Kwong, director of Asian-American Studies at Hunter College.

"The female role is to structure this family, and to maintain this family in terms of income, be responsible for the children's education," Dr. Kwong said. "It means subsuming your own ambitions and career for the family good. Because that's the way it's been traditionally, parents try to teach the kids. And that causes tremendous tension for the younger generation."

In interviews with 18 women of Asian descent around the country, the women spoke of feeling torn between reluctance to take on traditional roles and guilt over rejecting them, between the sense of independence American society offers and the sense of obligation they feel not only to their parents, but to their parents' cultural values. And even as they strive for independence, they confront a society that often type-casts Asian-American women as meek and submissive, as good workers but bad managers. It is a stereotype that all Asian-Americans face, says Dr. Nishi, but one that is particularly strong for women.

In every aspect of her life, says Helen Lee, the daughter of Korean immigrants, she has to work through the often conflicting ambitions. When she told her parents she was dropping her medical studies to become a minister, they could not understand why she wanted to pursue a field with such uncertain prospects. She and her parents did not speak for more than a month, she said.

"A lot of things you learn at home, you carry with you," said Ms. Lee, who said she has reconciled with her parents. "I was raised with one set of values and living in a world with another set."

For one thing, she is 24 years old and still single, a subject of humor for her parents but also growing concern.

**Cultural Tensions**

"They're more worried that I won't get married at all," said Ms. Lee, who is studying for her masters' degree in interdisciplinary studies, in communications and theology at Wheaton College in Illinois. "Twenty-five is the witching age for Korean women."

Ms. Lee's description of her struggles was echoed by other women interviewed. They say their parents want them to be trailblazers, yet specify the age a woman should be married, how much education she should have and what career she should pursue to allow enough time for husband and family.

While every woman's experience is different, these kinds of cultural tensions are most strongly felt by first- and second-generation Asian-Americans and tend to dissipate the longer a family has been in the United States, especially as the family income level rises, experts said.

"A young Vietnamese immigrant woman would be put last in order in terms of financing her education; that is, she could be expected to quit school if her younger brother came of college age" and the family could not afford to have two children in a university, said Dr. Audrey Yamagata-Noji, dean of student development at Rancho Santiago College in Santa Ana, Calif. But, he added, for a Chinese-American family who had been in the United States longer, the distinction between educating a daughter or a son would not be as great, especially if the family could afford to educate both.

As more women of Asian heritage pursue higher education and professional careers, they find themselves wrestling with similar issues, Dr. Kwong said. The women, he added, are making different choices than those of their mothers, many of whom came to the United States to study in the 1950's or 1960's and opted for marriage and motherhood, rather than careers.

***Notes on my thoughts, reactions and questions as I read:***

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**Comprehension Question:** *Analyze and explain the struggle of individuality vs. cultural expectations that these woman are facing.*

*8.RI.3,8,9*