

The Generation Game

Did you know that there's a name for people who were born at the same time as you? Marketing and advertising companies love putting **labels** on people, especially their **attitudes** toward work and money. Here are the things that they believe define the most recent generations.



Your parents

- They were born around 1965–1982.
- They can remember a time when no one had a computer, but they were the first teens to use the Internet!
- They enjoyed **partying**, but they still went to work the next day.
- They lived in a world which had some stability.
- They took risks and started their own businesses, but earning money wasn't the most important thing.
- They **cared about** politics and went on demonstrations and protests.
- Their music: indie, grunge.
- Their technology: CDs, video cassettes.

You!

- You were born around 2000–2010.
- You're "digital natives." You can't remember a time when the Internet and social media didn't exist.
- Parties and girlfriends / boyfriends can wait! They aren't as important as studying.
- You live in a world where political **chaos** and money problems are normal.
- You don't want to take risks. You need to get a job that will pay all your **bills**.
- Your idea of saving the world is doing volunteer work and raising money for good causes.
- Your music: you don't put labels on it!
- Your technology: smartphones.

Your baby brother or sister

- Generation Alpha are the generation that will come after you. They were born after 2010. They're only young children right now, so it isn't so easy to define them. But that hasn't stopped marketing people from making the following predictions.
- They'll do everything with their cell phones. Computers will become old-fashioned.
- They'll get most of their **knowledge** from the Internet.
- They might not go to college. They'll be more interested in starting a business and earning money.
- They might even start businesses before they leave school.
- They won't be so obsessed with technology because living their life online will be normal.

Step 1

- 1 Look at the pictures. Which picture do you think represents your generation?



- 4 Match the **highlighted** words from the text with the definitions a–g.

- | | | | |
|---------------|----------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| 1 labels | <input type="text"/> | 5 chaos | <input type="text"/> |
| 2 attitudes | <input type="text"/> | 6 bills | <input type="text"/> |
| 3 partying | <input type="text"/> | 7 knowledge | <input type="text"/> |
| 4 cared about | <input type="text"/> | | |

- a to enjoy yourself, especially by eating, drinking, and dancing
 b documents that show how much you owe somebody for goods or services
 c words or phrases that are used to describe somebody / something in a way that seems too general, unfair, or not correct
 d the ways that you think and feel about somebody / something
 e to feel that something is important and worth worrying about
 f the information, understanding, and skills that you gain through education or experience
 g a state of complete confusion and a lack of order

- 5 **Pairwork** Ask and answer the questions.

- Which parts of the definition of Generation Z do you agree with?
- Are there any parts that you disagree with?
- The name and the identity of Generation Z was created by people who work in marketing and advertising. How do you feel about this?
- Why do you think marketing people need to define groups of people like this?
- What do you think makes you different from your parents' generation?

- 6 **Think critically!** In groups, make a list of the things that you think make your generation unique. Then decide on your own name for your generation! Have a class vote on the best name.

Step 2

- 2 Read the article. When were these groups born?

- Generation X
- Generation Z
- Generation Alpha

- 3 Which generation might say these things? Write X, Z, or A (Alpha).

- "I can't come to the music festival this weekend because I have a test next week."
- "I don't like this politician's ideas ..."
- "I have so much debt it's crazy!"
- "My cell phone isn't a distraction. I use it for everything in my life."
- "I started my first business at 14."
- "I don't know why young people are so obsessed with money."
- "I really need a job, but so many people are unemployed right now!"
- "I'll go out with my friends tonight; then stay up all night to study for my test."

Step 3

- 7 You saw this notice in an English-language magazine. Write an article answering the questions.

Write 100 words.

MY GENERATION!

- What defines your generation (who you are, what you like, what you do)?
- What don't older people understand about your generation?
- What do you think people of your generation might be like in the future?

We will publish the most interesting articles in our next magazine.