Teacher's Key

Long Courtships and Late Marriage: A K-Drama Asks Why (Level C1)

Vocabulary Matching

1 reflexively = **N**
2 mortifying = **A**
3 lukewarm = **H**
4 divergence = **L**
5 proxy = **G**
6 cohort = **M**
7 courtship = **I**
8 precarious = **E**
9 trajectory = **D**
10 curdled = **O**
11 inertia = **J**
12 deliberate = **K**
13 unsettling = **B**
14 candid = **C**
15 hiatus = **F**

Fill in the Blank

1 reflexively
2 mortifying
3 lukewarm
4 divergence
5 proxy
6 cohort
7 courtship
8 precarious
9 trajectory
10 curdled
11 inertia
12 deliberate
13 unsettling
14 hiatus

True or False

1 **True.** Paragraph 1 says the drama ends its central relationship in the first episode.

2 **False.** Paragraph 2: it streams on Prime Video in more than 240 countries.

3 **False.** Paragraph 2: the lists rank titles without saying how many people watched.

4 **True.** Paragraph 2: it topped the Wavve and Coupang Play charts.

5 **False.** Paragraph 3: registrations rose 8.1 percent, the third increase in a row.

6 **True.** Paragraph 4: precarious employment, 12.9 percent.

7 **False.** Paragraph 5: the average rose from about 2.5 to 4.3 years.

8 **True.** Paragraph 5 states this.

9 **False.** Paragraph 6: the study was correlational and cannot show cause.

10 **True.** Paragraph 7 states this.

Language Focus: Mixed Conditionals

Example answer: If Ho and Mi-do **had decided** to marry at thirty, they **would not be arguing** (or **would not argue**) about it now. **Had** Ho and Mi-do **decided** to marry at thirty, they would not be arguing about it now.

Comprehension Questions: Model Answers

1 They break up in episode one, but the next morning Ho calls to wake Mi-do out of habit and they say "I love you". By the end of episode two, Ho has proposed.

2 It suggests that after ten years, habit and love are hard to separate: their routine continues even after they decide to end the relationship.

3 Nielsen Korea measured 2.6, 2.8, and 2.5 percent for the first three episodes. Abroad, FlixPatrol placed it seventh among Prime Video series worldwide for September 14 to 20, first in Indonesia and Thailand and in the top ten in 35 countries.

4 The two measure different things: Nielsen estimates the share of households watching the live broadcast, while FlixPatrol compiles top-ten lists that do not reveal viewer numbers. Neither is a perfect proxy for the audience.

5 The average age at first marriage was 33.9 for men and 31.6 for women, 1.3 and 1.7 years older than ten years earlier. The number of marriages rose 8.1 percent to about 240,000, the third rise in a row, so marriage is delayed rather than disappearing.

6 A lack of money for marriage was chosen most often, followed by the burden of raising children and precarious employment; many unmarried women did not feel a need to marry. The drama gives the couple unequal careers: Ho's is steady, while Mi-do's has stalled.

7 It shows the same direction elsewhere: Japanese couples dated for 4.3 years on average in 2021, up from about 2.5 in 1987, and the 2025 round found fewer young unmarried people intend to marry.

8 Sliding means moving through a relationship step out of inertia; deciding means choosing it deliberately. People who described more deliberate decision-making reported more dedication, more satisfaction, and fewer outside involvements, though the study was correlational.

9 Open answer. A strong answer notes that the reading gives no evidence that length itself helps or harms, refers to the sliding and deciding research and its limits, and adds a reasoned personal or cultural example.

10 Not Given. The reading reports that the drama paused for the Games but gives no ratings for episodes after the break.

11 No. The writer says the two measures are not directly comparable and that the ratings would look like a verdict only if the series had been made for Korean audiences alone.

12 To move from statistics about when people marry to the question of how they decide, and to suggest that for Ho and Mi-do, whether they chose their ten years may matter more than how long the ten years lasted.

Notes on the Evidence

- Drama facts: A Love Other Than Yours (Korean title Neo Malgo Dareun Yeonae) premiered on KBS2 on September 12, 2026, 14 episodes, Saturdays and Sundays at 21:20 KST, streaming the same day on Amazon Prime Video in 240+ countries. Episode 2 (September 13) ends with Ho's proposal (Sports Kyunghyang English edition, September 14). Nielsen Korea nationwide household ratings: 2.6% (ep. 1, Soompi), 2.8% (ep. 2), 2.5% (ep. 3, series low, Topstar News, September 20). Wikitree (September 24) reported four consecutive episodes in the 2% range; the ep. 4 figure was not checked separately.
- Global figures: FlixPatrol, as reported by Wikitree (September 24), ranked the drama 7th among Prime Video TV shows worldwide for September 14 to 20, 1st in Indonesia and Thailand, top ten in 35 countries; an earlier Wikitree report gave 5th worldwide on September 15. FlixPatrol aggregates platform top-ten lists and does not publish viewer counts. Domestic streaming: 1st on Wavve and Coupang Play on September 16, per Kinolights (Tenasia, September 17). These figures date quickly; recheck before publishing.
- Marriage data: Korea's 2025 Marriage and Divorce Statistics (national statistics office, formerly Statistics Korea, released March 19, 2026; reported by Etoday): 240,000 marriages (+8.1%, third straight rise); mean age at first marriage 33.9 (men) and 31.6 (women), up 1.3 and 1.7 years in ten years. 2024 Social Survey (Statistics Korea, November 12, 2024; SBS Biz, Financial News): reasons for not marrying, lack of money 31.3%, childbirth and child-rearing burden 15.4%, unstable employment 12.9%; unmarried women's second reason, no need to marry 19.1%. Outlets differ on the respondent base for the 31.3% figure, so the reading says 'the most common reason chosen' without naming the group. Japan: National Fertility Survey 2021 round, mean courtship 4.3 years (couples married in the previous five years); 1987 figure 2.54 years (MHLW summary). The 2025 round (published September 11, 2026) was checked for marriage intention (men 75.1%, women 77.8%) and online meetings (20.2%); its courtship-length figure was not found in the summary.
- Research: Stanley, Rhoades, and Markman (2006), Family Relations 55(4), 'Sliding versus deciding: Inertia and the premarital cohabitation effect'. Owen, Rhoades, and Stanley (2013), Journal of Couple and Relationship Therapy 12(2), 252 participants; association only, US sample. The reading states these limits.
- Revision (September 26, 2026): rebuilt from a review-style reading about the drama into a reading on long courtships and delayed marriage, with the drama as the hook. Corrections: the earlier text called the show a 'weekend drama' in the family-drama sense (it is a Saturday-Sunday miniseries); it said the show paused 'rather than compete against national broadcasts', but KBS2 skipped the episodes because it is airing its own Asian Games coverage; the Language Focus used two constructed examples and mislabeled a second conditional as mixed; the Yes/No/Not Given item was reclassified; resource descriptions addressed the editor; two discussion questions overlapped; the claim about Korea's rising marriage age had no named source. Added ratings versus streaming data. Vocabulary dropped: unglamorous, helmed, asymmetry, imbalance, lapsing, inadvertently, anti-climactic, restraint, coasting. Added: lukewarm, divergence, proxy, cohort, courtship, precarious, inertia, deliberate, hiatus.
- Hindi and Arabic translations are unchecked by a native speaker, as with every EnglishBridges unit.