

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA SPECIAL TECHNICAL AND
ECONOMIC MISSION TO CAMBODIA, LAOS AND VIETNAM

English translation

ANH BA FAMILY Reader

1. The family of Anh Ba is comprised of his parents, his wife, and two children. He has a boy, named Ty, who is six years old and a girl, named Nu, who is four years old.

2. Ba and his family live in a paillotte of three compartments, built on hard-packed mud. The altar of ancestors is located in the main room of the house. Next to the latter there are three wooden couches. The sleeping rooms are in back of the altar.

3. Mr. Ba's home is surrounded by a garden. In the garden there are areca trees, betels, cabbages and other vegetables and fruit trees, which help to supply the family with food the year round. Whenever they have a good crop, Mr. Ba's wife, Mai, carries the extra fruits and vegetables to market.

4. Mr. Ba owns 20 acres of paddy field given to him by his parents. All year he works hard in his fields. The dry season is harvesting time.

5. Mr. Ba's two children are small. Little Ty goes to the village school near the town hall. Little Nu, his sister, stays at home and is cared for by her grandparents.

6. In the rainy season, Mr. Ba ploughs his fields with a pair of buffalo. He prepares the seed bed and the ground for transplanting when the sowing ends.

7. In the transplanting season, Mrs. Ba helps her husband in the fields. She and her friends work joyfully while transplanting rice seedlings. They sing beautiful love songs in the form of questions and answers.

8. Mr. Ba and his servant, Lo, and his friends go around, distributing seedlings to be transplanted. The servant, Lo, carries on his head the lunch for the field workers

9. After the transplanting season, Mr. Ba spends his time repairing his house, the buffalo shed and the fence. He also cares for his fruit trees during this time.

10. Mr. Ba has done something new this year. He obtained from the Agriculture Bureau of his province fertilizer for his fruit trees. In fact, he got 30 kg. of fertilizer, plus a booklet giving instructions on the use of the fertilizer, and how much to use for each tree.

11. He also obtained 100 kg. of fertilizer for use on his rice seeds. Thanks to this fertilizer, his seed bed is much better this year.

12. His wife, Mai, is a good mother and a diligent wife. All day she works hard raising her hogs and poultry. She cooks all the family's meals, sews and mends their clothing. She cares for and teaches her children how to behave according to national tradition.

13. Mr. Ba and his wife have a good crop every year. After a good harvest, he sells half of the crop for cash and keeps the remainder for his own use. His wife also sells a few pigs every year. At the end of the year the couple save a considerable amount of money.

14. Mr. Ba's father is now too old to work in the fields. At the end of the day he used to walk around the paddies to supervise his son's work and give him advice.

15. Mr. Ba's father is a learned man of the Confucian school. He taught his son, when he was a child, the duties of a good man according to Confucianism, and taught him to read the book of "Three Principles" in Chinese.

16. Mr. Ba has attended the Popular Education classes during the last six months. He can now read and write in Vietnamese. In the evening, Mr. Ba reads books on the history and geography of his country, as well as on elementary sanitation--knowledge which every Vietnamese should know.

17. Mr. Ba and his wife have a happy life. When he reads to his wife, she does needle work. Next year she will also be able to read, for she has just begun spelling lessons.

18. Each year the Ba family has to commemorate three anniversaries. They are death anniversaries. Each year Mr. & Mrs. Ba's relatives gather at their home for these celebrations. When Mrs. Ba returns from the market, everybody helps to prepare the anniversary meal.

19. The Anniversary is a happy time. Mr. Ba and his father clean the altar so that everything is neat and clean for the offerings. Their relatives and parents, with their children, crowd in the house.

20. The anniversary also has deep significance. After the offering, the family and guests enjoy the meal. Mr. Ba's father tells his son and guests the life story of his father, whose death is being commemorated this day. He tells the story with deep feeling

while the guests listen silently. After the story, Mr. Ba's father invites the guests to partake joyfully of the meal.

21. When the celebration comes to an end, the guests begin to depart one by one, each one followed by his children carrying cakes and fruit.

22. The Ba family enjoys life and have a good name in the village. He is a hard worker. He has a loving and kind wife who is thrifty and is loved by his parents and the neighbors. Mr. Ba is also a good man and is very good to the villagers whenever they are in need of help.

23. Mr. Ba and his wife are very good to his parents. Ba works hard and takes care of his parents' needs. Mrs. Ba cooks their meals and sews and mends their clothes. They know that if they take good care of the parents, their children will do the same towards them when they grow old.

24. All the villagers agree that the Ba family is happy and enjoy increasing prosperity. The family is a model for their neighbors and all the villagers.

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