

Easy English NEWS



December 2021

Cloze Exercises, Short-answer Tests, and Critical-thinking Questions

To the Teacher

Cloze Exercises

**Supply Chain Troubles
Food Safety
Wright Brothers Day
Who is Santa Claus?
New Year's Eve
Winter in the U.S.**

Which Word Does Not Belong?

Short-answer Tests

**Supply Chain Troubles
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Critical-thinking and Creative-thinking Questions

Answers

To the Teacher

Thank you for downloading the free supplementary tests for *Easy English NEWS*. I hope these will save you many hours of work each month and will help expand your students' reading skills, vocabulary, and retention of important information.

The *Cloze Exercises and Short-Answer Tests* will be posted at the website by the first of the month, if not earlier. Many of the tests are useful with or without *Easy English NEWS*.

There are dozens of ways to use the tests. Experiment to see the methods that work best for your classes. Some techniques will be better for students with less command of English and others appropriate for those with greater fluency. You can alternate the ways you use them to provide more variety in lessons.

CLOZE EXERCISES

The purpose of the cloze exercises is to present a small amount of important material in another format to enhance comprehension and retention, and reinforce vocabulary.

- The cloze exercises may be used before or after reading the article. The exercises are taken directly from articles in the paper so students can check their own or others' work by referring back to the text.
- If you assign a cloze exercise before reading the article, it serves as an introduction to reading the full article. Use this with students with better reading ability.
- To increase the challenge, cut off the word bank at the bottom of the page before duplicating the cloze exercises. Students can work individually, in pairs, or in small groups. They can use their newspapers, or not.
- As a spelling test (and listening exercise): Dictate the sentences including the missing word for the students to write in.
- As copy practice: Students can copy the entire selection, filling in the missing words.

WHICH WORD DOES NOT BELONG?

Vocabulary, logic, and discussion practice. Students read the four words in each row, and decide how three of the words go together and one does not. There is not necessarily one firm answer to this activity.

- Have students circle their choices, and then discuss them. Students should be able to give their reasons for choosing a word that doesn't belong. *Any good reason makes their answer correct.*
- Students can work in small groups to discuss the reasons for their answers. They can write out their reasons for the decision.
- Teach the patterns:
A, B, and D are all _____s.
C is not a _____.
Or: B, C, and D are all kinds of _____. A is not.
Or: You can find A, B, and C in a _____. And so forth.

SHORT-ANSWER TESTS

These tests focus on fact-gathering.

- You may give these tests as pre-tests to learn what students already know about the topic and again as post-tests to see what they have learned.
- After reading the article, students can read the questions aloud in class and give the answers orally.
- You can let the students do the tests as "open book (newspaper) tests."
- Students can work in pairs or groups to come up with the answers after having read the article.
- Students can use the Answer Page to correct their own or others' answers.
- You can give the same test a week or more later to evaluate students' retention of the information.

Name _____ Date _____

Supply Chain Troubles

_____ in the pandemic, store shelves were empty. Paper towels, toilet paper, cleaning supplies, and other grocery items were _____ out in most stores. People were _____ about the pandemic. They bought _____ than they needed. Companies could not make products fast _____. Stores put limits on how _____ of each item a person could buy.

After a few _____, people stopped panic buying. Companies started to _____ up. Slowly, paper towels, toilet paper, and other goods _____ on store shelves. Stores removed buying limits. But this was only _____.

WORD BANK

many	more	reappeared	enough	sold
early	nervous	temporary	months	catch

Name _____ Date _____

Food Safety

Are you _____ people over to celebrate the holidays? Will you have a
_____ meal or an open house where food is out all day for people to enjoy?
_____ you make food for people, it is very
_____ to know how to buy, cook, and store it safely.

There are almost 50 million cases of food _____ in the United States each
year. Three thousand people in the U.S. die each year from eating _____ or
spoiled food.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has many tips to help you and your family
_____ food poisoning:

• Buy fresh food

Look at the “sell by,” “best by,” or “use by” _____ on food packages. Buy
_____ food that you will eat or freeze before this expiration date.

• Keep perishable food cold

Bacteria grow _____ in milk, eggs, meat, poultry, and fish.

WORD BANK

anytime	avoid	contaminated	quickly	only
formal	dates	poisoning	having	important

Name _____ Date _____

Wright Brothers Day

Wright Brothers Day is _____ 17. On this day, in 1903, Wilbur and Orville Wright flew their new _____, the Wright Flyer. The Wright Brothers were the first people to pilot a _____-than-air machine and _____ its wings.

On December 17 _____ year, there are special events in _____ Hawk, North Carolina (where they flew the plane), and in Dayton, Ohio (the _____ Brothers' hometown).

People go to Kitty Hawk each year to _____ different kinds of planes fly over the Wright Brothers National Memorial. _____ learn about the history of _____.

WORD BANK

watch

control

invention

heavier

each

Kitty

students

December

Wright

flying

Name _____ Date _____

Who is Santa Claus?

“Santa Claus” came to _____ with Dutch immigrants. *Sinterklaas* was the Dutch _____ for Saint Nicholas. Saint Nicholas was a bishop in a Christian church in Turkey in the fourth _____ C.E. There are many _____ of Nicholas’s kindness and miracles. He became the patron _____ of children.

At first, children _____ gifts on St. Nicholas Day, December 6. Starting in the _____ century, gifts “from St. Nicholas” came on Christmas Day.

In _____ countries, children believe their gifts are from Father Christmas, Grandfather Frost, Pere _____, Kris Kringle, and the Three Kings.

In 1822, an American, Clement Clark Moore, wrote a _____ for his children called “A Visit from Saint Nicholas.”

WORD BANK

sixteenth	other	saint	received	America
name	stories	poem	century	Noel

Name _____ Date _____

New Year's Eve

New Year's Eve is December 31. Some people go to sleep _____. Others stay up late to enjoy a _____ and ring bells, blow horns, shake noisemakers at 12 o'clock _____. They _____ a traditional song, "Auld Lang Syne."

In New York City, almost a _____ people go to a big outdoor party at Times Square. Famous _____ and singers play music. At 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time, a ball of lights falls slowly down the flagpole at the _____ of One Times Square. When it stops one _____ later, the new year has begun. Fireworks light up the sky. People kiss each other, hug, or shake _____ to greet the new year.

Last year, this party and most of the other parties were online or on TV. People celebrated at home because of COVID-19. This year, people may celebrate in _____ again.

WORD BANK

person	million	early	midnight	hands
sing	minute	top	bands	party

Name _____ Date _____

Winter in the U.S.

Dress for the weather

You'll need winter coats, hats, scarves, and _____ when the temperature goes down to 45° F or lower. You'll need _____ boots when there is snow or rain. On a _____ cold day, dress in layers: wear a T-shirt, long-sleeve shirt, a sweater, and _____ a coat or jacket. Wool is _____ than polyester. Cotton _____ the most comfortable near your skin. _____ a scarf for your neck and a hat to keep your head warm.

Prevent frostbite

The wind-chill factor is important, too. When the wind is blowing, it can _____ your body more. Fingers, toes, nose, and ears may freeze. This is called frostbite. This is a danger when a person is _____ in the cold for a long time or gets wet when outdoors. A person may need to go to the _____ for treatment.

WORD BANK

very	outside	then	waterproof	wear
feels	warmer	hospital	chill	gloves

Name _____ Date _____

Which Word Does Not Belong?

Three words in each row go together. One word does not belong with them. Draw a circle around the word that does not belong. Be able to explain your reasons.

	A	B	C	D
1.	paper towels	toilet paper	cleaning supplies	cars
2.	droughts	microchips	wildfires	floods
3.	video game consoles	laptops	container ships	iPhones
4.	chlorine bleach	food poisoning	botulism	parasites
5.	Bill of Rights	jury	Constitution	amendment
6.	Kwanzaa	Santa Claus	St. Nicholas	Kris Kringle
7.	scarf	gloves	coat	T-shirt
8.	ice	frost	snow	rain
9.	turkeys	steaks	roasts	chops
10.	kilometer	ounce	inch	gallon
11.	liter	pound	gram	meter
12.	menorah	carol	oil	candles

Name _____ Date _____

I. Supply Chain Troubles

1. Which of these cause supply chain product shortages? Mark your answers

- | | | |
|------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| a. COVID-19 | b. closed factories | c. not enough truck drivers |
| d. pumpkins | e. climate change | f. paper towels |
| g. power outages | h. poultry | i. closed shipyards |

2. What is it called when people buy things they don't need because they are afraid they will run out? _____

3. Why did some parents quit their jobs during the pandemic? _____

4. What are waiting in the ocean to be unloaded? _____

5. What caused low harvests of durum wheat and pumpkins this year? _____

6. What are used for technology in cars, smart phones, video game consoles, and other devices? _____

7. What punishment did the U.S. put on China that made it harder for companies to get Chinese products? _____

8. When do experts say these shortages will end? _____

Name _____ Date _____

II. Food Safety

1. How many cases of illness are there each year from food? _____
2. What date on a product tells you when it is safe to buy it? _____
3. Which three of these foods should you buy last when shopping on a hot day?
a. bread b. meat c. milk d. can of soup e. rice f. eggs
4. Keep these foods cold because they are _____.
5. At what temperature should a refrigerator be kept? _____
6. At what temperature should food in the freezer be kept? _____
7. “When in doubt, throw it _____.”
8. What temperature should ground beef be cooked to? _____
9. Between what temperatures do bacteria grow quickly? _____
10. What is a deadly bacteria that can grow in improperly canned food? _____
11. What kind of germs grow quickly in eggs? _____
12. What heavy metal is in almost all large fish? _____

Name _____ Date _____

III. Events in December

1. What country attacked the U.S. at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941? _____

2. Who flew the first heavier-than-air machine on December 17, 1903?

3. Where did that happen? _____

4. On what day was the Bill of Rights added to the U.S. Constitution? _____

5. What day is the winter solstice? _____

6. On what day do most Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus? _____

7. When do Eastern Orthodox Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus? _____

8. What percentage of Americans are Christian? _____

9. Who became the patron saint of children? _____

10. Who brought the tradition of Santa Claus to the United States?

11. Who wrote the poem, *A Visit from Saint Nicholas*? _____

III. Events in December (continued)

12. What animals pull St. Nicholas's sleigh in *A Visit from St. Nicholas*? _____

13. Who started the holiday called *Kwanzaa*? _____

14. In what language are the seven principles of Kwanzaa named? _____

15. The principle for the first day of Kwanzaa is *Umoja*. What does that mean? _____

16. On what holiday in late December do people ring bells, blow horns, and set off fireworks?

17. What is the traditional song that people sing at midnight on that holiday?

18. What does it mean? _____

19. Complete this warning: "If you drink, don't _____."

IV. Winter in the U.S.

1. What is the Celsius temperature when the Fahrenheit temperature is 32 degrees? _____

2. What will keep a person warmer, a wool sweater or a polyester shirt? _____

3. What material feels comfortable next to your skin? _____

4. When the wind blows, it takes heat out of your body.

This is called the _____.

5. What is the danger to fingers, toes, nose, and ears on a very cold, windy day?

6. Who is responsible for clearing the snow from the sidewalks in front of a house?

7. What can you put on icy sidewalks to make them safer to walk on?

_____, _____, or _____.

8. Cold air is dry because it cannot hold _____.

9. If you have a gas stove, what kind of detector do you need?

Name _____ Date _____

V. Ask Carol: Making Thumbprint Cookies

1. Match the ingredients in column I with the measurements in column II. (Write the letter of the measurement on the line next to each ingredient. You will use some measurements more than once.)

_____ softened butter	a. 1/2 cup
_____ white sugar	b. 2 cups
_____ all-purpose flour	c. 1 cup
_____ fruit jam	
_____ chocolate chips	
_____ white chocolate chips	

2. At what temperature do you need to bake thumbprint cookies? _____

3. How long do you leave them in the oven? _____

4. What is it called when you mix the sugar and butter together until it is light and fluffy?

5. What are these abbreviations for?

a. tsp. _____

b. Tbs. _____

c. oz. _____

d. c. _____

e. pt. _____

f. qt. _____

6. How many milliliters equal one cup? _____

Critical-thinking and Creative-thinking Questions

A. Choose questions to discuss or research in a small group and share with the class.

1. Different products are out of stock in different areas. Experts say this is because people living in different parts of the country like different things. What are some products that are out of stock in your area that may not be out of stock in other parts of the country? What are some ways that people in your area can help the product shortages? If you were a store owner during these supply shortages, how would you change your business to help keep customers happy and products on your shelves?
2. Prices have increased because of the pandemic and the product shortages. This is known as supply and demand. Because there is low supply and high demand, the prices for products increase. Make a list of what you normally buy at the grocery store and about what it costs. Then go to the grocery store or order groceries online. How does your total compare to what you would normally pay? What products cost more? Do any products cost less? How do these changing prices affect your weekly grocery list and budget?
3. Plan a holiday party. Will it be a formal sit down meal or an open house? What food will you serve? How will you make sure that all the food you are serving is safe?
4. The Wright Brothers' invention changed the world. What examples of this can you give?
5. Almost everyone told the Wright Brothers that flying a heavier-than-air machine was impossible. They persisted and proved that it could be done. Have you ever done something that people said was impossible? How did you do it? Or, did you stop trying to do something that people said was impossible? Would you succeed if you had a brother, sister, or partner to work with? How would that help?
6. Work in a group to invent a holiday to teach people about something from your home country, your culture, or your religion. What would you call the holiday? When would it be? What would you invent for traditions? What foods would you eat? Write a song or a poem for your holiday.
7. Cookie swaps are very popular in the United States. They help people get a lot of different kinds of cookies while only having to make one kind. Plan a cookie or recipe swap with the class. What are the best kinds or cookies or recipes to swap? Why?

December 2021
Answers to *Easy English NEWS*
Short-Answer Tests

I. Supply Chain Troubles

1. a, b, c, e, g, i
2. panic buying
3. to stay home with children
4. container ships
5. droughts
6. microchips
7. sanctions
8. into 2022 or 2023

II. Food Safety

1. almost 50 million
2. expiration date (sell by, best by, use by date)
3. b, c, f
4. perishable foods
5. between 34 - 37 degrees F
6. 0 degrees F
7. out
8. 160 degrees F
9. between 40 and 140 degrees F
10. botulism
11. salmonella
12. mercury

III. Events in December

1. Japan
2. Wilbur and Orville Wright
3. Kitty Hawk, North Carolina
4. December 15, 1791
5. December 21
6. December 25
7. January 7
8. 70%
9. Saint Nicholas
10. Dutch immigrants
11. Clement Clark Moore
12. reindeer
13. Maulana Karenga
14. Swahili
15. unity

16. New Year's Eve
17. Auld Lang Syne
18. days of long ago
19. drive

IV. Winter in the U.S.

1. 0 degrees C
2. wool
3. cotton
4. wind-chill factor
5. frostbite
6. the homeowner
7. sand, cat litter, or rock salt
8. moisture/water
9. carbon monoxide detector

IV. Ask Carol: Making Thumbprint Cookies

1. c, a, b, a, a, a
2. 375° F
3. 15 minutes
4. cream
5. a. teaspoon
b. tablespoon
c. ounce
d. cup
e. pint
f. quart
6. 236 milliliters

