

Easy English NEWS



January 2022

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

To the Teacher

Cloze Exercises

**A Record-breaking Storm
The Calendar
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COVID-19: A New Variant
How Did The U.S. Grow?**

Which Word Does Not Belong?

Short-Answer Tests

**A Record-breaking Storm
Shopping for Groceries: What's Inside?
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COVID-19: A New Variant
How Did The U.S. Grow? (2 pages)**

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 _____

A Record-breaking Storm

On Friday, _____ 10, National Weather Service offices issued more than 100 tornado warnings. This is the _____ number of warnings issued on a December day, ever. Normally, there are _____ storms and snow in December, not tornadoes. But Friday, December 10 and _____, December 11 were very warm. The temperature was higher _____ normal. There was more humidity in the air, _____. High temperatures and _____ make storms more severe.

Tornado outbreak

A large storm _____ moved across the U.S. In the north, it _____ lots of snow and winter weather. In the middle and southern parts of the U.S. it caused groups of _____. These thunderstorms were very powerful. They caused more than 30 tornadoes in six different states.

WORD BANK

highest	Saturday	thunderstorms	winter	too
caused	humidity	December	front	than

Name _____ Date _____

The Calendar

When does a new year begin?

In ancient Rome, the new year _____ in the spring. In _____ Egypt, the new year began when the Nile flooded in July. In northern Europe, the new year began when the _____ were all gone from the trees. The Jewish New Year (Rosh Hashanah) begins at the end of the growing _____. In China, the new year is two months after the winter _____. In the Muslim calendar, the new year is not in _____ special season.

Lunar calendars

The first calendars were _____ calendars. They were _____ on the cycle of the moon. It was easy to see the changes each month. However, twelve lunar months add up to _____ 354 days. That is _____ than the solar year of 365 days.

WORD BANK

season	leaves	only	shorter	ancient
began	based	solstice	lunar	any

Name _____ Date _____

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

The third _____ in January is Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. This year it is _____ 17. Post offices and federal offices are _____.

Some _____ and business places are closed.

Martin Luther King, Jr. worked all of his life for _____ rights for black people and poor people.

Segregation

Before 1955, _____ southern states had laws to separate black people from white people in schools, trains, buses, and theaters. There were separate public restrooms and separate _____ fountains.

White people sat in the _____ of buses, and black people sat in the back.

Many hotels, restaurants, swimming pools, and parks were for white people

_____. Black people in those states could not register to

_____. So they could not change the laws.

WORD BANK

Monday	only	equal	closed	water
January	front	vote	sixteen	schools

Name _____ Date _____

COVID-19: A New Variant

On November 24, doctors in _____ Africa told the World Health Organization (WHO) that there was a new variant of COVID-19. They found this new _____ on November 11 in Botswana and November 14 in South Africa. The WHO named the new variant _____.

The Omicron variant is _____ to people in other countries around the world. _____ found the first case in the United States on December 1.

_____ then, they have found cases in 24 states.

Doctors think this variant will spread _____. They

_____ there will be cases in all 50 states. But, right now

_____ COVID-19 cases in the U.S. are still the Delta variant.

Scientists are testing to find out _____ about Omicron. They want to know what symptoms people will have if they get this variant.

WORD BANK

since	believe	Omicron	most	doctors
variant	southern	spreading	more	quickly

Name _____ Date _____

How Did The U.S. Grow?

The United States is the third-_____ country in the world. The land area of the U.S. is 3,718,711 square _____. Only Russia and _____ are larger than the U.S. How did the United States get so _____?

The original 13 states

After a war with France in 1754, Britain claimed land from the East Coast of North America all the way to the _____ River. Britain made a treaty with the Indians who lived _____ of the Appalachian Mountains. Britain promised the Indians that British _____ would not move west of the Appalachians.

Thirteen of the British colonies wanted to be free _____ Britain. They fought a _____ against Britain. They became independent states in 1781. They _____ united to form a new country.

WORD BANK

west	Canada	stayed	miles	colonists
big	from	largest	war	Mississippi

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.	supercell	thunderstorm	tornado	snow
2.	Arkansas	Alabama	Illinois	Kentucky
3.	Amazon warehouse	nursing home	grocery store	candle factory
4.	Johnson & Johnson	CDC	Pfizer	Moderna
5.	vaccines	masks	variant	testing
6.	weight	brand name	product	can
7.	Puerto Rico	Cuba	Virgin Islands	Philippines
8.	Andrew Jackson	William McKinley	Thomas Jefferson	Napoleon
9.	France	Mexico	Spain	Texas
10.	the	this	thumb	that
11.	lunar	solar	Julian	Nile
12.	bombs	marches	boycotts	sit-ins

Name _____ Date _____

I. A Record-breaking Storm

1. What day did National Weather Service offices issue a high number of tornado warnings?

2. How many tornado warnings did they issue? _____

3. What two things make thunderstorms more severe? _____

and _____

4. What is a rotating thunderstorm called? _____

5. What other kind of storm does this rotating thunderstorm form? _____

6. What four states were affected by the record-breaking tornado? _____,

_____, _____, and

7. What building was hit in Monette, Arkansas? _____

8. What building was hit in Mayfield, Kentucky? _____

9. What building was hit in Edwardsville, Illinois? _____

Name _____ Date _____

II. What's Inside?

1. What does the abbreviation lb stand for? _____

2. If a seal is broken on a jar of food, should you buy it? YES NO

3. A package of hotdogs says "Sell by 12/15/2021." Should you buy it? YES NO

4. A package of crackers says "Sell by 2/15/2022." Should you buy it? YES NO

5. Match these words with samples from a package label:

a. ingredients

b. weight

c. expiration date

d. nutritional information

e. warning

_____ 1) 18 oz.

_____ 2) calories, fat, sugar, protein

_____ 3) sell by 1/25/2022

_____ 4) do not purchase if seal is broken

_____ 5) water, beans, molasses, pork

Name _____ Date _____

III. Events in January

1. When did the new year begin in these cultures or religions:

a. Ancient Rome? _____

b. Ancient Egypt? _____

c. Northern Europe? _____

2. When does the new year begin in these cultures or religions:

a. Jewish religion? _____

b. China? _____

3. Which kind of calendar is based on the moon? _____

4. How many days are in a solar year? _____

5. What emperor asked an astronomer to prepare a calendar? _____

6. What is added to the calendar in a leap year? _____

7. In 1582, how many days behind the actual solar year was the Julian calendar? _____

8. Who created the new calendar that we use today? _____

9. Which religious group still uses the Julian calendar for their holidays?

Name _____ Date _____

III. Events in January (continued)

10. Where is the Mummer's Parade on New Year's Day? _____

11. What day is Martin Luther King, Jr. Day? _____

12. In 1955, a woman refused to give up her seat on a bus to a white person. Police arrested her.

Who was it? _____

13. Where did this happen? _____

14. In what year was there a huge March on Washington, D.C.? _____

15. Who gave his "I Have a Dream" speech at the march?

16. What prize did this person receive in 1964? _____

17. Who will give a State of the Union address to Congress sometime in early 2022?

18. Where can you see this speech if you miss it on TV? _____

Name _____ Date _____

IV. COVID-19: a New Variant

1. Where did doctors first find the new COVID-19 variant? _____

2. What did the WHO name the variant? _____

3. Do doctors think this variant will spread quickly? YES NO

4. What variant still has the most cases in the United States? _____

5. Can children five years and older get a COVID-19 vaccine? YES NO

6. Can children five to 11 years old get a COVID-19 booster? YES NO

7. Can 16- to 17-year-olds get the COVID-19 vaccine? YES NO

8. Can 16- to 17-year-olds get the COVID-19 booster? YES NO

9. Do scientists say it is safe to mix vaccines? YES NO

10. What should people wear indoors and in places with a lot of people to help stop the spread of COVID-19? _____

11. What is another thing people can do before getting together with friends and family?

Name _____ Date _____

V. How Did The U.S. Grow?

1. How many British colonies became independent in 1783? _____
2. What river was the western border of the U.S. in 1783? _____
3. What land did Thomas Jefferson buy from Napoleon in 1803? _____
4. How much money did the U.S. pay for this land? _____
5. What Indian woman was a guide for the explorers Lewis and Clark? _____
6. What line is the boundary between Canada and the central part of the U.S.?

7. From what country did the U.S. get Florida? _____
8. Which president forced the Cherokee Indians to leave their homes and walk to Oklahoma?

9. What is the forced march of Indians from the east to Oklahoma called?

10. From what country did Texas win its independence? _____
11. For how many years was Texas an independent country? _____

Name _____ Date _____

V. How Did The U.S. Grow? (continued)

12. In what year did the U.S. win a war with Mexico? _____

13. Which of these states were once part of Mexico: (Mark all that were.)

California	New Mexico	Florida	Georgia
Colorado	Oregon	Texas	Kansas
Louisiana	Nevada	Utah	Alabama
Vermont	Arizona		

14. From which country did the United States purchase land in 1853? _____

15. Where was gold discovered in 1849? _____

16. Who claimed the Oregon Territory for the United States? _____

17. What other country claimed this land? _____

18. From whom did the U.S. buy Alaska? _____

19. How much did they pay for it? _____

20. In what year did the U.S. annex Hawaii? _____

21. What island that had belonged to Spain is now a commonwealth with the U.S.?

Critical-thinking and Creative-thinking Questions

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

1. People who live in areas that have a lot of tornadoes practice what they will do if one happens. Create a plan for what your class or family should do if a tornado forms in your area. Where will you go to stay safe? What supplies will you take with you? How will you get information about the storm if the power goes out? How will you know the storm is over and it is safe again?
2. Research the difference between a tornado watch and a tornado warning. Tell your class what each means and what they should do if there is one in your area.
3. Many people use the new year as a time to think about what they want to change from the last year and what they want to do in the next year. Make a list of New Year's resolutions. How will you accomplish these resolutions? Are they long term goals or things you can do quickly? Why do you want to do these things? How will they make your life better?
4. In 1582, Pope Gregory declared that the day following October 4 would be October 15. That made the month of October only 21 days long. Many people in Catholic countries at the time thought their lives were being shortened by 10 days. What would happen to a month's wages? Rent? Interest? People in Protestant countries did not want a calendar created by the Catholic Pope. What difficulties can happen when two countries near each other have different calendars?
5. Work with a partner or a small group. Create a calendar for a solar year. Have today be Day One. Create subdivisions of the year (weeks and/or months). How many days will be in each? What will you name the days of the week? What will you name the months? Will all of the months be the same number of days? What will you do with any "extra" days?
6. Find out more about Martin Luther King, Jr. What do you think gave him the power to lead so many people?
7. What made it possible for the United States to grow to the third largest country in the world? What do you think would have happened if each of the original 13 states became an independent country instead of united into one country?

January 2022
Answers to *Easy English NEWS*
Short-Answer Tests

I. A Record-breaking Storm

1. Friday, December 10
2. 100
3. high temperature, high humidity
4. supercell
5. tornado
6. Arkansas, Missouri, Tennessee, Kentucky
7. a nursing home
8. a candle factory
9. an Amazon warehouse

II. What's Inside?

1. pound
2. NO
3. NO
4. YES
5. 1) b 2) d 3) c 4) e 5) a

III. Events in January

1. a. spring
b. July, when the Nile flooded
c. when all the leaves were gone from the trees
2. a. at the end of the growing season
b. two months after the winter solstice
3. the cycle of the moon
4. 365 days (11 minutes shorter than 365 1/4 days)
5. Julius Caesar
6. a day
7. ten days
8. Pope Gregory the 13th
9. Orthodox Christians
10. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
11. third Monday in January
12. Rosa Parks
13. Montgomery, Alabama
14. 1963
15. Martin Luther King, Jr.
16. Nobel Peace Prize
17. Joe Biden
18. YouTube.com (the internet)

IV. COVID-19: A New Variant

1. Africa
2. Omicron
3. YES
4. Delta
5. YES
6. NO
7. YES
8. YES
9. YES
10. masks
11. take COVID-19 tests

V. How Did The U.S. Grow?

1. 13
2. Mississippi River
3. Louisiana Purchase
4. \$15 million
5. Sacajawea
6. 49th parallel
7. Spain
8. Andrew Jackson
9. Trail of Tears
10. Mexico
11. nine years
12. 1848
13. California, New Mexico, Colorado, Texas,
Nevada, Utah, Arizona
14. Mexico
15. California
16. Lewis and Clark
17. Britain
18. Russia
19. \$7,200,000
20. 1898
21. Puerto Rico

