

Easy English NEWS



February 2024

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

To the Teacher

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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.

Each month's *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 articles.
- 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, or in pairs or 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.
- As capitalization practice: Words in the word bank

are intentionally not capitalized unless it is a proper name. Students can practice capitalization by adding capital letters where it is necessary.

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 might be more than one possible answer in each group of words.

- 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 _____.
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 New Citizenship Test

Immigrants must pass a test to _____ U.S. citizens. The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) _____ making a new test in 2022. The goal is for the new test to be ready by the _____ of 2024.

The test now

People taking the _____ test must show that they can speak, read, and write English. For the reading _____, each applicant reads up to three sentences to the examiner. For the writing test, the examiner asks each applicant to write up to three _____ . Applicants study a list of vocabulary words from USCIS. These words _____ be used in the reading and writing test sentences.

For the speaking test, the examiner asks the applicant questions from the information on the _____ form. The applicant _____ the questions.

People taking the test must also _____ that they know U.S. history and government.

WORD BANK

could	become	citizenship	answers	N-400
test	started	sentences	show	end

Name _____ Date _____

Writing a Resumé

You may need a resumé when you _____ for a job. A resumé is a document with information about you for a _____ employer. It helps an employer _____ about your education, skills, and other jobs you have had. It tells an _____ how to contact you.

Most _____ use a one-page resumé. People with _____ years of work experience may have a two or three-page resumé. In any case, you must prepare it carefully and _____. The resumé may be the first _____ an employer gets about you.

How to write a resumé

Make a list of your strengths, your accomplishments, your education, and your work experience for the _____ of job you want. You can prepare different _____ for different kinds of jobs.

WORD BANK

impression	people	prospective	many	resumés
employer	learn	neatly	kind	apply

Name _____ Date _____

Chinese New Year

Chinese New Year is a 15 day _____. This year, Chinese New Year is _____ 10. Many other Asian countries celebrate _____ New Year at this time, too. The Year of the Rabbit _____. The new year will be the Year of the _____.

This is a very _____ holiday for people in Asian cultures. People pay all their bills and _____ before the new year. People clean their homes _____. They “_____ away bad luck” and make room for good luck to come in. They _____ their doors and windows. They buy new clothes.

WORD BANK

dragon	sweep	completely	decorate	ends
festival	lunar	important	February	debts

Name _____ Date _____

Presidents Day and George Washington

George Washington was _____ on February 22. We celebrate his birthday on the third _____ of February. Presidents Day is a _____ holiday. This year, it's February 19. Abraham Lincoln's _____ is February 12. In many _____, he is also honored on Presidents Day. In eight states, he has his own holiday, Lincoln's Birthday.

George Washington

George Washington was the _____-in-chief of the American army in the American Revolution, also known as the War for Independence (1776-1783). In 1787, _____ led the convention that wrote the constitution for the new country. In 1789, he was _____ as the first president of the United States. Washington wanted to _____ the new country start out on a good foundation. He thought _____ about each thing he did. He knew that future presidents would copy his actions.

WORD BANK

states	commander	carefully	elected	Washington
born	birthday	federal	help	Monday

Name _____ Date _____

Abraham Lincoln

_____ Lincoln became president in 1861. The Civil War

_____ soon after Lincoln was elected. _____

southern states left the Union. They formed a new country, The Confederate States of America.

Soon, six other states joined _____. The laws of those states

_____ people to have slaves. Landowners wanted slaves to work on their

_____ in the South.

Abraham Lincoln did not _____ the United States to be cut into two parts.

He believed the U.S. Constitution bound the states _____. Lincoln sent

soldiers to _____ the South back into the Union.

The _____ States fought for their independence.

WORD BANK

force

them

plantations

began

together

seven

want

confederate

allowed

Abraham

Name _____ Date _____

One Way to Breathe

Let me tell you about a wonderful _____ kit that you can carry around.

You can't _____ it. It is _____ there when you need it. This "first aid" is a special way of _____. I call it "limbic breathing."

If you watch a small baby breathe _____ it's asleep, you can see the natural way we all *used to* breathe.

We see the baby's belly come _____. (The large muscle called the _____ lowers into the abdominal cavity.) The lungs expand into the _____ space. Air _____ through the nose or mouth into the lungs.

Now _____ how *you* are breathing. How many breaths do you usually take in one minute? Are you raising your ribs and shoulders to get air into your lungs?

WORD BANK

notice	when	breathing	always	out
flows	lose	diaphragm	first-aid	extra

Name _____ Date _____

The Underground Railroad

The Underground Railroad was not a _____. It was not _____. It was a network of homes where runaway slaves _____ get help on their way north to freedom.

_____ 1865, 15 states in the South had laws that allowed people to own slaves. The owners of large plantations _____ many workers. Nineteen states in the North had laws _____ slavery.

Enslaved people from Africa worked in the fields _____ cotton and doing other farm work. They took _____ of horses and farm animals. They built, painted, and repaired _____. Some slaves worked in _____ owners' homes. They cooked, cleaned, washed clothes, and took care of their owner's children.

WORD BANK

could	needed	underground	things	against
care	picking	railroad	their	until

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.	speaking	reading	writing	singing
2.	interviewer	examiner	applicant	questioner
3.	weather	N-400	school	daily activities
4.	Groundhog Day	Mardi Gras	Easter	Valentine's Day
5.	George Washington	Susan B. Anthony	Joe Biden	Abraham Lincoln
6.	go to church	buy new clothes	pay debts	clean their homes
7.	parades	parties	fasting	Carnival
8.	costumes	ash crosses	masks	beads
9.	footballs	cards	candy	flowers
10.	stations	conductors	lines	slave hunters
11.	Maine	Vermont	Georgia	Pennsylvania
12.	work experience	education	email address	age

Name _____ Date _____

I. A New Citizenship Test

1. Who must take a test to become U.S. citizens? _____
2. When did USCIS start making a new citizenship test? _____
3. When might the new test be ready? _____
4. What four things must people taking the U.S. citizenship test show that they know?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
 - d. _____
5. What form do applicants fill out? _____
6. In the test now, how many questions does the examiner ask? _____
7. How many of those questions does the applicant need to answer correctly to pass? _____
8. How are the civics questions different on the new test?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
9. What will the pictures for the new speaking test show? Mark your answers.

a. weather	b. food	c. shopping	d. civics
e. U.S. history	f. school	g. daily activities	h. U.S. government

II. Writing a Resumé

1. Which of these things should a person include on a resumé when applying for a job?

Mark your answers.

- | | | | |
|------------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| a. name | b. education | c. email address | d. Social Security number |
| e. experience | f. jobs held | g. age | h. number of children |
| i. weaknesses | j. strengths | k. skills | l. birthdate |
| m. address | n. telephone | o. race | p. honors received |
| q. job objective | r. Facebook page | s. schools attended | t. typing speed |

2. Which of these will make your resumé clear and easy to read? Mark your answers.

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| a. one-inch margins | b. boldfaced headings | c. small typeface | d. punctuation errors |
| e. four or more pages | f. bank information | g. most important information first | |

3. Which of these are good to do when searching for a job? Mark your answers.

- Post a resumé with your telephone and address on an Internet Job site.
- Set up a new email address just for answers to your job search.
- Sign up for “free resumé writing” on the Internet.
- Have a clear business-like message on your outgoing message on your phone.
- Ask teachers, past employers, and community leaders if they will give you a reference.
- Have an editor, teacher or educated friend look over your resumé for mistakes.

Name _____ Date _____

III. Events in February

1. What group's history is honored for the month of February? _____
2. What animal may "see his shadow" on February 2? _____
3. What animal represents the new Chinese year? _____
4. What sport is played in the Super Bowl? _____
5. Where will the Super Bowl be played? _____
6. What Catholic holiday comes after *Mardi Gras*? _____
7. In what city is the biggest *Mardi Gras* event? _____
8. What is the 40-day period that follows Ash Wednesday called? _____
9. When is Valentine's Day? _____
10. Whose birthday is February 15? _____
11. In what year was the amendment added to the Constitution that gave women the right to vote? _____
12. Who was the "Father of Our Country?" _____

Name _____ Date _____

III. Events in February (continued)

13. Who was president during the Civil War? _____

14. What was the name of the group of states that seceded from the Union?

15. How many people died in the Civil War? _____

16. When did the Civil War end? _____

17. What group of people became free after the Civil War? _____

18. Who killed President Lincoln? _____

19. What famous speech did Lincoln give at a large battlefield in Pennsylvania?

20. In a leap year, when is the extra day? _____

Name _____ Date _____

IV. Choosing a President

1. In what month are the first primaries and caucuses? _____
2. Which state has the first caucus? _____
3. Where will the Democratic Convention be this year? _____
4. Where will the Republican Convention be this year? _____
5. What day is the general election? _____
6. Who votes for the candidate that gets the most votes in their state when the Electoral College meets in December? _____
7. What day is the “official election” by the Electoral College? _____
8. When does the House of Representatives count the votes? _____
9. When is the inauguration for the new president? _____

Name _____ Date _____

V. The Underground Railroad

1. Before 1865, how many states had laws against slavery? _____

2. Who was called “President of the Underground Railroad?” _____

3. What were safe homes on the slave’s way north called? _____

4. What were the people who helped slaves run away called? _____

5. Who wrote the book, “The Underground Railroad”? _____

6. What slave was sealed in a box and mailed to a safe address in the North?

7. How many slaves escaped using the Underground Railroad? Between _____

and _____

8. After 1850, where did slaves have to go in order to be free? _____

9. Who was the most famous of the “conductors” on the Underground Railroad?

10. How many slaves did she lead to freedom in the North? _____

11. What abolitionist called her “one of the bravest persons on this continent?”

Critical-thinking and Creative-thinking Questions

Choose one or more questions to discuss with a partner or in a small group. Gather more information. Report to the class.

1. Some people think the U.S. citizenship test is too easy. They think the questions should be harder. Other people think there should not be a U.S. citizenship test at all. They think people should just apply for citizenship and get it. Do you think the U.S. citizenship test is too hard, too easy, or just right? Why? What do you think about the changes USCIS is making to the test? Will these changes make the test easier, harder, or will it stay the same? Why do you think that?
2. Imagine you work for the U.S. government. Design a test for someone who wants to become a U.S. citizen. How would the people apply? What questions would you put on the test? How would you give the test?
3. What's your ethnic group or nationality? What would you share about your group if there was a month to celebrate your history and culture? What month would it be? What stories, foods, clothing, ideas, or other things would you want people to know about your culture and home country?
4. Why do you think millions of Americans watch the Super Bowl? What sport excites people in your home country? Is there anything like a Super Bowl for that sport? How would you get Americans to enjoy playing and watching this sport?
5. This year is a leap year. This means there is an extra day in February. What will you do with your extra day?
6. Imagine it is 1840 and you live in a big house in Ohio. Friends suggest that you could use your house as a station on the Underground Railroad to help runaway slaves get to freedom. Would you say yes or no? Tell why. Tell the dangers and the difficulties such a house might have.

February 2024
Answers to *Easy English NEWS*
Short-answer Tests

I. A New Citizenship Test

1. immigrants
2. 2022
3. 2024
4. a. how to speak English
b. how to read English
c. how to write English
d. U.S. history and government
5. N-400 form
6. 10
7. six
8. a. multiple choice
b. on the computer
9. a, b, c, f, g

II. Writing a Resumé

1. A, B, C, E, F, J, K, M, N, P, Q, S
2. A, B, G
3. B, D, E, F

III. Events in February

1. African Americans (Black people)
2. groundhog
3. dragon
4. football (American football)
5. Paradise, Nevada; Las Vegas, Nevada
6. Ash Wednesday
7. New Orleans, Louisiana
8. Lent
9. February 14
10. Susan B. Anthony
11. 1920
12. George Washington
13. Abraham Lincoln
14. Confederate States of America

15. 620,000
16. April 1865
17. the slaves
18. John Wilkes Booth
19. the Gettysburg Address
20. February 29

IV. Choosing a President

1. January
2. Iowa
3. Chicago, Illinois
4. Milwaukee, Wisconsin
5. November 5, 2024
6. electors
7. December 17, 2024
8. January 6, 2025
9. January 20, 2025

V. The Underground Railroad

1. nineteen
2. Levi Coffin
3. stations
4. conductors
5. William Still
6. Henry “Box” Brown
7. 40,000 - 100,000
8. Canada
9. Harriet Tubman
10. 70
11. John Brown

