

Easy English NEWS



March 2024

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

To the Teacher

Cloze Exercises

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The Appalachian Trail
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Which Word Does Not Belong?

Short-answer Tests

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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.

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 _____

An Eclipse of the Sun

On _____ 8, a total solar eclipse will pass over the United States. In a solar eclipse, the moon moves _____ Earth and the sun. The moon _____ the sun's light. It looks like the _____ covers the sun.

Totality

In a total solar eclipse, the moon _____ covers the sun for up to seven minutes. The time that the sun is completely covered is called _____.

During totality, the sky gets _____ like nighttime.

The distance between the moon and Earth tells _____ long totality will be. If the moon is _____ to Earth, totality is longer. If the moon is farther _____ from Earth, totality is shorter.

WORD BANK

closer	April	completely	dark	away
blocks	totality	between	moon	how

Name _____ Date _____

The Job Interview

A job interview is a two-way _____ between an employer and an applicant for a job.

The employer wants to find the best _____ for the job. The applicant wants to _____ about the job and the company. If the job is a good fit, the applicant _____ to get the job.

It's not _____ for employers to make a decision. A company interviews many people before they hire _____. They may ask some applicants to come _____ for a second and third interview.

Before the interview

Before you go to a job interview, learn _____ you can about the company and the job. Read about the company on its _____. _____ big is the company? What does the company do?

WORD BANK

easy	person	conversation	someone	how
learn	website	everything	wants	back

Name _____ Date _____

Women's History Month

The month of _____ is Women's History Month in the United States.

This month is a time to learn more about women in American _____ . In

many other countries, March 8 is _____ Women's Day.

Do women have the same rights as men?

In the mid-1800s, women in the U.S. started a movement to gain the right to vote. They received this right in 1920. A second Women's _____ Movement began in the 1960s.

Women's groups wanted an _____ Rights Amendment (ERA) to the U.S.

Constitution. The amendment would _____ that women have the same rights as men all across the country.

The Equal Rights Amendment _____ both houses of Congress. It needed three-fourths of the _____ (38) to ratify it. Congress put a deadline of seven years for _____ by the states. Only 35 states voted for it by the deadline. The ERA did not become part of the U.S. _____ .

WORD BANK

history	Constitution	ratification	equal	passed
rights	guarantee	International	March	states

Name _____ Date _____

Easter

Easter is the holiday when Christians celebrate the _____ of Jesus Christ.

It is the _____ important holiday for Christians.

The Easter season has many parts. Some events are _____ and

some are not. February 14 was Ash _____ . Ash Wednesday

_____ the beginning of Lent. Lent is the 40-day period of sacrifice

_____ Easter Sunday.

Palm Sunday

The Sunday before Easter Sunday is _____ Palm Sunday.

Palm Sunday is March 24 this year. It reminds Christians of Jesus' arrival in the city of

_____ about 2,000 years ago. It was five days before he died.

Good Friday

March 29 is Good Friday. It marks the day that Jesus died on the _____.

The Bible story says that _____ friends wrapped his dead body. They put

it into a tomb. They rolled a huge stone in front of the tomb. Roman soldiers guarded it.

WORD BANK

religious	cross	resurrection	called	Jesus'
Jerusalem	marks	Wednesday	before	most

Name _____ Date _____

A Good Night's Sleep

by Dr. Majid Ali

We all _____ sleep. During sleep, our _____

repair our cells and fight disease and infection. A good night's sleep helps our concentration the

_____ day. We can learn better and _____

more. A _____ night's sleep improves our coordination. Our reflexes are

faster.

Unfortunately, many people do not get a good night's _____. Stress,

worries, anger, low blood sugar, and _____ disease can make it difficult

to get to sleep. People who work _____ shifts may not sleep well in the

daytime.

Sometimes we find it hard to _____ asleep. Sometimes we wake up

without enough sleep to _____ our bodies and minds.

WORD BANK

need

next

remember

fall

good

refresh

sleep

chronic

bodies

night

Name _____ Date _____

The Appalachian Trail

The Appalachian [a-puh-LATCH-in or a-puh-LAY-shun] Trail is a _____ trail through the Appalachian Mountains. The trail is _____ 2,190 miles long. It goes _____ Springer Mountain in Georgia and Mount Katahdin [ka-TAH-den] in Maine. Parts of the trail go through 14 states: Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Vermont, _____, and Maine.

The first _____ of the trail opened in 1923. The trail was _____ in 1937. Most of the trail was on _____ land and in wild forests then. Today, national and state parks own most of the _____ land.

_____ of people visit places on the trail each year. Some people just go to step on the trail. Other people hike parts of the trail in one or _____ days. Some people hike the whole 2,190 miles. These people are called thru-hikers.

WORD BANK

private	between	New Hampshire	trail's	two
hiking	millions	completed	over	part

Name _____ Date _____

Income Taxes: The W-2 Form

Did you _____ money in 2023? By January 31, employers must send every _____ a W-2 Form. A _____ Form tells how much money you earned in 2023.

The W-2 Form also tells how much _____ and state tax was taken out of your pay. It shows how much _____ was taken out for Social Security and Medicare.

You may have to file an income tax _____. You must send the tax return to the Internal Revenue Service (_____) by April 15 this year. People must also file a tax return for state _____ taxes. In many cities people must file a _____ tax return, too.

You must file a tax return if you are

- unmarried and _____ age 65 with wages of \$13,850 or more
- unmarried and 65 or older with wages of \$15,700 or more

WORD BANK

IRS	income	employee	local	return
W-2	federal	under	money	earn

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.	total	totality	completely	partial
2.	eclipse glasses	sunglasses	solar viewer	filters
3.	Texas	Arkansas	Virginia	Pennsylvania
4.	interviewer	employer	manager	applicant
5.	honesty	weakness	integrity	reliability
6.	shamrock	bishop	leprechaun	pot of gold
7.	spring	autumn	vernal equinox	March 19
8.	palm branch	cross	Easter Bunny	tomb
9.	W-2	1099	1040	2024
10.	tax	income	wages	salary
11.	Newfound Gap	Ireland	Mount Katahdin	Springer Mountain
12.	bus	cabin	shelter	tent

Name _____ Date _____

I. An Eclipse of the Sun

1. When is the next total solar eclipse? _____
2. What is it called when the moon completely covers the sun? _____
3. If the moon is closer to Earth, totality is _____.
4. If the moon is farther away from Earth, totality is _____.
5. How long does totality last in most total eclipses? _____
6. How long do scientists say totality will last on April 8? _____
7. Where will the eclipse start? _____
8. What is the path the eclipse takes called? _____
9. How many states are in this path? _____
10. How many Americans live in this path? _____
11. What state won't see the eclipse on April 8? _____

Name _____ Date _____

I. An Eclipse of the Sun (continued)

12. Is it safe to look directly at a solar eclipse? YES NO

13. What should you wear on your eyes to safely watch a solar eclipse?

14. Is it safe to use a camera with the eclipse glasses on? YES NO

15. What can you get to go on the lenses of cameras and telescopes to use them during the eclipse? _____

16. How many solar eclipses are there each year? _____

17. How often does a total eclipse happen? _____

18. When is the next solar eclipse going to cross the United States? _____

Name _____ Date _____

II. The Job Interview

1. What is a two-way conversation between an employer and an applicant for a job?

2. The employer wants to find the _____ person for the job.

3. What should an applicant do to prepare before an interview? Mark your answers.

a. learn everything about the company b. look at the company website

c. get references d. quit school e. quit his or her current job f. make a resume

4. What are the three most important qualities to an employer? _____,

_____, and _____

5. A person should list his or her skills, experience, and contact details on a _____.

6. When should an applicant arrive for an interview? EARLY LATE

7. Can an applicant ask the interviewer questions during an interview? YES NO

8. Can a person go to more interviews while he or she waits to hear back from one company?

YES NO

9. What should an applicant send to the interviewer after the interview?

Name _____ Date _____

III. Events in March

1. The month of March is _____ History Month.
2. When did the second Women's Rights Movement begin? _____
3. The Equal Rights Amendment needed the votes of _____ of the 50 states to ratify it.
It only received _____ votes by the deadline.
4. How many states have equal rights amendments in their state constitutions today? _____
5. How many women Justices are on the Supreme Court? _____
6. What country became Christian in the year 432 thanks to a Bishop named Patrick ?

7. What color do many Irish people wear on St. Patrick's Day? _____
8. What are some symbols of St. Patrick's Day? (Mark each of your answers):

a. Congress	b. pot of gold	c. the Bible	d. shamrock
e. leprechaun	f. green hats	g. books	
9. What day is the vernal equinox this year? _____
10. What season begins on that day? _____
11. Who's birthday is on March 2? _____

Name _____ Date _____

III. Events in March (continued)

12. On Sunday, March 10, one minute after 1:59 a.m. becomes _____ . (mark one)

2:00 a.m.

2:00 p.m.

1:00 a.m.

3:00 a.m.

3:00 p.m.

13. What is the holy month for Muslims? _____

14. What do Muslims read every day during this month? _____

15. What holiday is at the end of this Muslim holy month? _____

16. When is the National Cherry Blossom Festival? _____

17. Where is the National Cherry Blossom Festival? _____

18. How many cherry trees did Japan give to the United States? _____

19. What is the most important holiday for Christians? _____

20. What is the 40-day period before Easter called? _____

21. What day did Jesus arrive in the city of Jerusalem 2000 years ago? _____

22. What do children dye at Easter? _____

23. What does the “Easter Bunny” bring? _____

24. Where is the Easter Egg Roll at the White House? _____

25. When is the Easter Egg Roll at the White House? _____

Name _____ Date _____

IV. The Appalachian Trail

1. How long is the Appalachian Trail? _____

2. What two places does the Appalachian Trail go between? _____

3. How many states does the Appalachian Trail go through? _____

4. When did the first part of the trail open? _____

5. When was the trail completed? _____

6. What are people who hike the whole trail called? _____

7. How many people make it the whole way across the trail each year? _____

8. Does it cost money to hike on the Appalachian Trail? YES NO

9. List 10 animals hikers might see on the Appalachian Trail? _____,

_____, _____,

_____, _____,

_____, _____,

_____, _____,

Name _____ Date _____

V. Income Taxes: The W-2 Form

1. Who gives a worker the W-2 form in January? _____
2. What does this W-2 form show? _____
3. By what date must employers send workers this form? _____
4. What four taxes do employers withhold from an employee's paycheck? _____

5. What form do taxpayers use to send their income tax return? _____
6. By what date must taxpayers file their 2023 income tax returns this year? _____
7. Can an employee get a refund if he or she does not file an income tax return? YES NO
8. What form does an employer give to an independent contractor? _____
9. Does an employer withhold taxes or Social Security from the contractor? YES NO
10. Is the income tax return a legal document? YES NO
11. What is the Internal Revenue Service's website? _____

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. Research the path of totality for the solar eclipse on April 8. How close is it to your town? Can you see the total eclipse from where you live? Make plans for viewing the eclipse. What will you need to keep yourself safe? Where will you go to watch? What time will you need to get there?
2. A confident handshake is a good way to make a good first impression in an interview. What do you think makes a handshake confident? Why do you think it is important to have a good handshake? What can you learn from someone's handshake? Is it important to have a strong confident handshake in your culture? Why or why not?
3. Create a list of questions an interviewer might ask an applicant in an interview. Practice asking and answering these questions with classmates or family members. Create a second list of questions that you might ask an interviewer at an interview about the job, company, or work environment.
4. Is there a difference between reading a book and reading something on a computer, laptop, or Kindle? Which do you prefer? Ask ten people what ways they like to get information or relax with a story. Report to the class.
5. Look for the Appalachian Mountains and the Appalachian Trail on a map. How far away is it from where you live? Would you like to visit the trail? Would you go to step on the trail or would you like to hike it? Would you like to be a thru-hiker? What supplies would you need to pack if you were going to hike the whole Appalachian Trail?
6. A government needs money to pay for defense, salaries for lawmakers and executives, schools, highways, and many more things. Can you think of ways a government can raise money instead of taxes?

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

I. An Eclipse of the Sun

1. April 8
2. totality
3. longer
4. shorter
5. three to four and a half minutes
6. a little over four minutes
7. southern Pacific Ocean
8. path of totality
9. 15
10. 32 million
11. Alaska
12. NO
13. eclipse glasses
14. NO
15. filters
16. two to three
17. two in a three-year period
18. 2045

II. The Job Interview

1. a job interview
2. best
3. a, b, c, f
4. honesty, integrity, and reliability
5. resumé
6. EARLY
7. YES
8. YES
9. a thank-you note

III. Events in March

1. WOMEN'S
2. The 1960s
3. three fourths (38). 35
4. 27
5. four
6. Ireland
7. green
8. b. d. e. f.
9. March 19
10. spring

11. Dr. Seuss
12. 3:00 a.m.
13. Ramadan
14. the Koran
15. Eid al-Fitr
16. March 20 to April 14
17. Washington, D.C.
18. 3,020 cherry trees
19. Easter
20. Lent
21. Palm Sunday
22. hard-boiled eggs
23. baskets of candy/chocolates
24. the lawn
25. Easter Monday/ April 1

IV. The Appalachian Trail

1. 2,190 miles
2. Springer Mountain in Georgia and Mount Katahdin in Maine
3. 14
4. 1923
5. 1937
6. thru-hikers
7. around 700
8. NO
9. black bears, deer, elk, moose, beavers, squirrels, bobcats, foxes, raccoons, coyotes, (birds, snakes)

V. Income Taxes: The W-2 Form

1. employer
2. income from 2023
3. January 31, 2024
4. federal tax, state tax, Social Security tax, and Medicare tax
5. 1040
6. April 15, 2024
7. NO
8. 1099
9. NO
10. YES
11. IRS.gov

