



Dear Colleague:

Greetings and happy holidays! Supply chain issues have been in the news for months, but the stories have increased with the holidays coming. It is important to understand what supply chains are and how they have been disrupted in many ways over the last year and a half. We hope this month's front page story helps with that.

We are still looking for more Readers' Stories. If the stories are chosen for print, we send the writer \$20 and two free copies of that month's newspaper. The guidelines for what we print are listed on our website, [easyenglishnews.com](http://easyenglishnews.com). We hope you all have a wonderful holiday season!

*Carol Brigham*

### Supply Chain Troubles (pages 1 and 9)

**Objectives:** Students will be able to tell what a supply chain is and why there are problems with product shortages now. Students will be able to name at least four causes for the supply chain troubles. Students will be able to tell when these shortages may end.

**Preparation:** Bring in additional headlines and photos regarding the shortages, especially in your area.

**Procedures:** Ask students if they have noticed empty shelves at local stores. Ask them what products they have had trouble finding. Talk about other issues that they notice (i.e. signs at restaurants about being short staffed, slower service, etc.) Read the article and have students identify reasons for the supply and product shortages. If you have students who celebrate Christmas and will be shipping out packages to family members, have a discussion about slower shipping times during this time of year. The chart on page 9 gives an idea of when packages should be shipped to get to the recipient by Christmas.

As an extension activity, if it is appropriate for the level and interest of your students, have a discussion about rising prices. Have students compare what milk cost before the pandemic compared to what milk costs now. Ask questions like:

*Do you see higher prices at the grocery store? What products cost more now? Why do you think these items cost more? Have you changed the way you shop because of higher prices or items being out of stock?*

### Food Safety (pages 1, 10, and 11)

Food is more dangerous than it used to be! In addition, busy parents are not always able to pass down traditional kitchen safety practices. There is a very high proportion of people new to living in America represented in the 50 million cases of food poisoning each year. For one thing, they may not notice labels such as "Refrigerate after opening."

**Objectives:** Students will be able to explain safe practices for buying, transporting, preparing, cooking, and storing perishable foods. They will be able to locate expiration dates on containers, and tell why they're important. Warn about party and picnic food left out at room temperatures. Many schools no longer have food at their culture fairs because of the dangers of unsupervised preparation and perishable foods. For more details on food safety see [Foodsafety.gov](http://foodsafety.gov). For descriptions of symptoms of various food-borne illnesses, see [CDC.gov](http://CDC.gov).

### Events in December (pages 2 and 3)

Ask students what events and holidays, birthdays, anniversaries, and school activities occur in December. *What days will the school be closed?* Have them write these, plus the holidays and events mentioned in *Easy English NEWS* on the calendar on page 2. Decorate your classroom with symbols and pictures from all four holidays (unless your school directives say otherwise), or with symbols of winter. Ask questions such as: *What holidays do you celebrate in your home country this month? How do you celebrate those holidays? Were you in the U.S. last year in December? What was it like?*

**Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day:** Not many newcomers are aware of the history of World War II, or the fact that a current ally of the United States, Japan, was once a fearsome enemy. The events on September 11, 2001, were often referred to as the worst attack on U.S. soil since Pearl Harbor. The attack by Japanese planes that

wiped out the U.S. Pacific fleet stationed in Pearl Harbor was the event that brought the U.S. into World War II. The U.S. declared war on Japan, and Germany declared war on the United States. After four years, the U.S. and its allies won.

**Hanukkah:** Students will be able to tell when Hanukkah is, who celebrates it, and the story of the holiday. If there are any Jewish students in your class, have them tell about the way their families celebrate Hanukkah. You can make potato *latkes* from a mix in class, or bring some in, heat in a microwave, and eat with applesauce.

**Bill of Rights Day: Preparation:** Download a free copy of *The Constitution in Simple English* from our website. (Go to [easyenglishnews.com](http://easyenglishnews.com) and click on "Free Stuff".) The first 10 amendments are on pages 31 to 33. Bring in newspaper stories and illustrations of rights in the news.

**Procedures:** Elicit a definition of "rights" from the class. Help students understand that their rights are limited by the rights of other people. "Your right to swing your arm ends at my nose." American adults with no criminal record or mental health disturbance may buy and own guns, but they must register them. A newspaper may print anything, but if they print a lie that hurts a person, that person may sue the newspaper. A person has the right to say anything, but may not slander (tell untrue things that hurt a reputation of another person). Talk about differences in rights between the U.S. and their native countries. *Are there rights that Americans don't have?* (E.g.: free higher education for all; free healthcare for all) *Do Americans have too many freedoms? Not enough?*

**Wright Brothers Day:** Students will be able to name the first Americans who piloted a heavier-than-air flying machine. Point out that the Wright Brothers went through years of hard work and failures. They had the determination to keep on working, even though people said it could never be done. They are great role models to inspire persistence.

**Christmas:** Bring in symbols of Christmas (bells, holly, candles, snow people, Santa, Nativity Scenes, carolers, doves, stars, etc.) for Christmas. Point out that there are religious customs around

Christmas (church, Nativity Scenes, carols), and *non-religious* customs (decorating, parties, winter songs, trees, exchanging gifts, Santa Claus). Have students read the article and report which Christmas holiday customs are similar to those in their home country and which were new to them. Point out that businesses often need extra help from November to the new year and it can be a good time to get a temporary job. Also point out the pressures of the season to spend more money than they have and use credit cards that can lead to debt.

**Who is Santa Claus?** Before reading, ask students to look at the photo. Ask questions such as: *Who is Santa Claus? What does he do? Where does he live? Who helps him? What is his name in your country? How does he dress? How does he bring gifts?* Point out that many American children believe in Santa Claus until the age of 7, 8, 9, or even later. Bring in a children's illustrated book and read the Visit from St. Nicholas to your class.

If allowed at your school, ask your class if they would like to have a gift exchange (grab bag). Each person brings a small wrapped gift that can be suitable for male or female (or mark it), either a recycled book or CD/DVD, or something new of \$3 - \$5 value. Place it in Santa's Gift Bag." Those who brought a gift reach in and take out a gift, unwrap it, and say "Thank you. I've always wanted one of these."

**Kwanzaa:** This holiday is only 51 years old. It is not intended to be a commercial holiday. Children and others are encouraged to give gifts, but not factory-made gifts; instead, educational gifts, or gifts that they make themselves. Have students list the seven principles of Kwanzaa. Are these principles important in the students' own culture? Have students think about inventing a new holiday, or bringing one of their own culture's holidays to the U.S. *What would it be for? How many days would it be? Who would celebrate it? When? What would some customs be? What special foods would be part of the holiday?* Ask students to give a presentation about their invented or imported holiday to see if others in the class would like to celebrate it, too.

**New Year's Eve** Ask students how they usually spend this evening, and ask if they have any plans for this year. Point out the dangers of drinking and driving (or walking!)

### This Is Your Page (page 4)

**Procedures:** Read the stories and discuss

any applications in their own lives. *Do you have a government mail system in your home country? How is it different from the U.S. mail system? Do you have any problems with the U.S. mail system? What are they? Have you ever rented an apartment? Were there any problems in the apartment? What did you do about them? Did you ever have to leave the building because of a fire in another apartment? Have you ever gone to a water park? What did you do there? Have you had issues hearing the difference between numbers in English? If so, which ones? Do you have sweet pies in your home country? Do you have savory pies with meat and vegetables? Which do you like better?*

### Why Doesn't The U.S. Use The Metric System (page 5)

**Objectives:** Students will be able to tell eight of the difficulties and expenses that would come if businesses were forced to change to the metric system.

**Procedures:** Give more practice in using the U.S. system of measurement. Have students make a list of all the things in their environment that would have to be changed and research ideas from Americans about whether it is a good idea.

### Ask a Speech Coach (page 5)

**Objectives:** Students will be able to recognize five double consonant sounds, and tell four examples of each.

**Background:** English falls in the middle of the road when it comes to consonant clusters. German and Russian speakers may be used to many more consonants, while Japanese and Chinese speakers tend to find consonant clusters challenging, especially at the ends of words.

**Procedures:** Say and have students repeat the example words slowly, emphasizing the double drumbeat of the consonant sounds. Then read the sentences out loud. Have students write their own sentences using the example words and read them out loud to the class.

### Winter in the U.S. (page 6)

**Objectives:** Students will be able to give 10 tips for enjoying winter and staying safe. Given a temperature in degrees Fahrenheit, they will be able to mentally convert it to an approximate Celsius temperature.

**Procedures:** Elicit students' experiences in their home country in winter. Ask students who have lived in a cold climate

to explain to newcomers how cold it can get and how to prepare. Read the article and discuss. Point out the importance of smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors in winter and safe ways to stay warm. Have students list the things that are fun about winter: sports, beautiful scenes, making a snow fort or snow person, sledding, skating, hot chocolate, etc. Have students write a letter to a real or imaginary friend in a tropical country to tell him or her what to expect if they come for a visit in January. Explain how to start a snow person by rolling a large snowball in sticky snow until it is as large as can be, for the "feet" for the snow person.

### Ask Carol: Thumbprint Cookies (page 7)

**Objectives:** Students will be able to list ingredients for making thumbprint cookies and the equipment they would need. They will be able to explain verbs such as cream, soften, sift, mix, and melt.

**Procedures:** If you are teaching virtually, gather the ingredients and equipment to demonstrate in front of your computer's camera. If you are teaching in person, bake the thumbprint cookies or some other favorite of yours and bring them in for the class to sample. Talk about measurements, equivalents, baking temperatures, and conversions. Invite students to try out the recipe at home and to share their favorite cookie recipe with the class. If your students are interested, you could have a cookie swap in your class.

### ANSWERS

- |                     |                       |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. a                | 16. T                 |
| 2. b                | 17. F (fruit jam)     |
| 3. d                | 18. F<br>(tablespoon) |
| 4. b                | 19. F (Wright)        |
| 5. c                | 20. F (cold)          |
| 6. b                | 21. H (humidifier)    |
| 7. c                | 22. D (drought)       |
| 8. d                | 23. C (consoles)      |
| 9. c                | 24. J (jolly)         |
| 10. a               | 25. A<br>(amendment)  |
| 11. T               | 26. B (battery)       |
| 12. T               | 27. I (ingredients)   |
| 13. T               | 28. F (frostbite)     |
| 14. F (zero)        | 29. E (expensive)     |
| 15. F<br>(the U.S.) | 30. G (ground)        |

**December 2021 Quiz I**

Choose the best answer. Write its letter on the line in front of the number.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Early in the pandemic, people panic bought
- a) toilet paper.
  - b) shoes.
  - c) cars.
  - d) movie tickets.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The pandemic created
- a) too many workers.
  - b) a worker shortage.
  - c) too many products on store shelves.
  - d) large public parties.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Where does the U.S. send a lot of its fish to be processed?
- a) Russia
  - b) Canada
  - c) Italy
  - d) China
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. What pasta ingredient had a low harvest this year because of drought?
- a) milk
  - b) durum wheat
  - c) eggs
  - d) water
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. What do car companies use in the technology in their cars?
- a) containers
  - b) cleaning products
  - c) microchips
  - d) iPhone 13s
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. How long will product shortages last?
- a) two weeks
  - b) until the beginning of 2022
  - c) they're already getting better
  - d) seven years
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. How many cases of food poisoning are there in the U.S. each year?
- a) 150,000
  - b) 50,000
  - c) 50,000,000
  - d) 125
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Whole chickens and turkeys should be cooked to what temperature?
- a) 145° F.
  - b) 160° F.
  - c) 165° F.
  - d) 180° F.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. What is the deadly form of food poisoning found in dented cans called?
- a) salmonella
  - b) ammonia
  - c) botulism
  - d) pesticides
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. What should you do to all fruits and vegetables before you eat them?
- a) wash them
  - b) put them in the refrigerator
  - c) cut them
  - d) peel them

### II. From Here and There

**True or False?** Write “T” for true, and “F” for false. If the sentence is *false*, *make it true*. Write a word to replace the underlined word.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Americans think about other people during the December holidays.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Many American children believe that Santa Claus brings toys on Christmas Eve.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. A holiday that starts December 26 and continues to January 1 is Kwanzaa.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Thirty-two degrees Fahrenheit is the same as twenty degrees Celsius.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. The first country in the world to use a decimal-based money system was France.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. You use a mixer to cream butter and sugar together.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. The ingredients for thumbprint cookies are butter, flour, sugar, and almonds.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. Three teaspoons equal one cup.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. People go to Kitty Hawk, North Carolina to celebrate the Jewish Brothers' first heavier-than-air flight.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. Wear a T-shirt, sweater, and coat in hot weather.  
\_\_\_\_\_

### III. Building Vocabulary

Write the best word to complete each sentence. Write the letter of that word on the line in front of the number.

#### Word List

- |              |                |
|--------------|----------------|
| A. amendment | F. frostbite   |
| B. battery   | G. ground      |
| C. consoles  | H. humidifier  |
| D. drought   | I. ingredients |
| E. expensive | J. jolly       |
- 
- \_\_\_\_\_ 21. Use a \_\_\_\_\_ to put moisture back in the air during winter.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 22. The pumpkins didn't get enough water this year because there was a \_\_\_\_\_.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 23. The Xbox and Playstation video game \_\_\_\_\_ are very hard to find.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 24. Santa Claus has a white beard, a large belly, and a \_\_\_\_\_ laugh: "Ho, ho, ho!"
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 25. An \_\_\_\_\_ is a change or an addition to the U.S. Constitution.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 26. The child's toy needed a \_\_\_\_\_ to work.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 27. A recipe has a list of \_\_\_\_\_ that are needed to make the cookies.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 28. Extreme cold can cause a dangerous condition called \_\_\_\_\_.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 29. The new car was very \_\_\_\_\_.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 30. Hamburger is another word for \_\_\_\_\_ beef.