

# **Easy English NEWS**



**December 2017**

## **Cloze Exercises, Short-Answer Tests, and Critical-Thinking Questions**

**To the Teacher**

**Cloze Exercises**

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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.

### 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 \_\_\_\_\_

## Western Wildfires

Wildfires are a danger every year in \_\_\_\_\_ states. During the hot, dry \_\_\_\_\_ of summer and fall, forests burn in California, Washington, Oregon, Texas, Montana, \_\_\_\_\_, Colorado, and Idaho.

Wildfires \_\_\_\_\_ thousands of acres of grassland and forest. Some wildfires destroy \_\_\_\_\_ of people who live close by.

Ninety percent of fires start \_\_\_\_\_ of human carelessness. A fire can start when a person doesn't \_\_\_\_\_ put out a campfire. A person can cause a wildfire by \_\_\_\_\_ a lit cigarette or match away. Fireworks can cause wildfires. Lightning and fallen \_\_\_\_\_ lines start about ten \_\_\_\_\_ of fires.

Arsonists have also caused fires.

### WORD BANK

homes	western	completely	months	percent
Arizona	throwing	because	burn	power

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Buying Meat

Supermarkets sell many \_\_\_\_\_ of meat: pork from pigs, beef from cows, veal from calves, and lamb from \_\_\_\_\_ sheep. Americans also eat a lot of poultry, such as \_\_\_\_\_ and turkey.

Only a few \_\_\_\_\_ sell meat from rabbits, goats, or sheep (mutton).

No supermarket \_\_\_\_\_ horse meat, cat meat, or dog meat. That \_\_\_\_\_ is taboo. These animals are pets. Most state laws prohibit the \_\_\_\_\_ of horses, cats, or dogs for food for humans.

**Beef: Meat from \_\_\_\_\_**

Beef may be cut into steaks: round steak, sirloin steak, London broil, and T-bone \_\_\_\_\_.

A large \_\_\_\_\_ of beef may be used as a roast.

### WORD BANK

cattle	meat	piece	killing	young
chicken	kinds	sells	supermarkets	steak

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Wright Brothers Day

Wright \_\_\_\_\_ Day is December 17. On this day, in 1903, Wilbur and Orville

Wright \_\_\_\_\_ their new invention, the Wright Flyer. The Wright Brothers

were the \_\_\_\_\_ people to pilot a heavier-than-air machine and control its

\_\_\_\_\_.

On \_\_\_\_\_ 17, there are special events in Kitty Hawk,

\_\_\_\_\_ Carolina (where they flew the plane) and in Dayton, Ohio (the Wright

Brothers' \_\_\_\_\_).

People go to Kitty Hawk each year to watch \_\_\_\_\_ kinds of planes fly over

the Wright Brothers National \_\_\_\_\_ . Students learn about the history of

\_\_\_\_\_.

### WORD BANK

first

December

flew

flying

North

Brothers

hometown

Memorial

wings

different

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 \_\_\_\_\_ in Turkey in the fourth century 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 other \_\_\_\_\_, 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	countries	saint	received	America
name	stories	poem	church	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 \_\_\_\_\_ o'clock midnight. 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.

People in different parts of the U.S. celebrate the \_\_\_\_\_ year when it's midnight in their time zone.

### WORD BANK

new	million	early	twelve	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 waterproof boots when there is snow or \_\_\_\_\_. On a very \_\_\_\_\_ day, dress in layers: wear a T-shirt, long-sleeve shirt, a \_\_\_\_\_, and then a coat or jacket. Wool is \_\_\_\_\_ than polyester. Cotton \_\_\_\_\_ the most comfortable near your skin. Wear a scarf for your \_\_\_\_\_ 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

cold	outside	sweater	rain	neck
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.

	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
1.	Bill of Rights	jury	Constitution	amendment
2.	clams	pork	lamb	beef
3.	dog	horse	cat	pig
4.	oysters	mussels	salmon	clams
5.	milk	eggs	cream	yogurt
6.	Kwanzaa	Santa Claus	St. Nicholas	Kris Kringle
7.	scarf	gloves	coat	T-shirt
8.	ice	frost	snow	rain
9.	fire	blaze	ashes	spark
10.	kilometer	ounce	inch	gallon
11.	liter	pound	gram	meter
12.	menorah	carol	oil	candles

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## I. Western Wildfires

- Which of these cause dangers of wildfires in the west?
  - heavy rain
  - hot, dry weather
  - lightning
  - campfires
  - tossed cigarettes
  - firefighters
  - arsonists
  - helicopters
  - fire retardant
  - human carelessness
  - high winds
  - dry, dead plants
- How many wildfires were there in 10 western states this year? \_\_\_\_\_
- How many acres did the fires burn? \_\_\_\_\_
- How many firefighters worked to contain the fires? \_\_\_\_\_
- Which state had the worst fires? \_\_\_\_\_
- How many people died in that state from the wildfires? \_\_\_\_\_
- What was the cost of the damage, as estimated by insurance companies?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- How long was the drought before 2016 rains? \_\_\_\_\_
- There were fires in two counties of California's "Wine Country." Which counties were they?  
\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
- How many people had to evacuate their homes because of the fires? \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## II. Buying Meat

1. Tell the animal that the following meats come from.

- |                     |                       |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| a. ham _____        | b. T-bone steak _____ |
| c. hamburger _____  | d. veal _____         |
| e. drumsticks _____ | f. bacon _____        |
| g. mutton _____     | h. pork chops _____   |

2. A vegetarian is a person who doesn't eat \_\_\_\_\_.

3. A \_\_\_\_\_ is a person who doesn't eat any animal products.

4. Whole milk contains \_\_\_\_\_% fat. Skim milk contains \_\_\_\_\_ % fat.

5. Fat from milk is called \_\_\_\_\_.

6. What is a popular fermented milk food? \_\_\_\_\_

7. What are the heart, liver, and kidneys of animals called? \_\_\_\_\_ meats.

8. What meats are taboo to eat in the United States?

Meat from \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

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*? \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### 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 \_\_\_\_\_."

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## 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. Ellis Island

1. When was Ellis Island the U.S. immigration inspection station?

From \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.

2. How did immigrants cross the Atlantic Ocean during those years? \_\_\_\_\_

3. In what class did the poorest immigrants travel? \_\_\_\_\_

4. What famous statue did new immigrants see in New York Harbor? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Did the U.S. allow immigrants with handicaps or disease into the country? YES NO

6. When people failed the health inspection at Ellis Island, where did they have to go?

\_\_\_\_\_

7. What percentage of immigrants failed inspection? \_\_\_\_\_

8. What was immigrants' nickname for Ellis Island? \_\_\_\_\_

9. What two states share Ellis Island? \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

10. How many immigrants went through Ellis Island? \_\_\_\_\_

## Critical-Thinking and Creative-Thinking Questions

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

1. Western states often suffer droughts, heat, and wildfires in late summer. They are also in danger of earthquakes at any time. Northeastern and north central states often are bitter cold, with heavy snow and ice storms in the winter. Southeastern states are hot and muggy, and in danger of hurricanes from June to November. The central states often have tornados, especially in the spring. In some big cities, there is a lot of crime. What are some dangers in the place where you live? Why do you think people live in places where there are sometimes dangerous conditions?
2. What are some reasons that a person might become a vegetarian or a vegan? Talk to a few people who don't eat meat. Ask them what they do eat, how they feel, and why they chose to not eat meat.
3. The Wright Brothers' invention changed the world. How many ways can you think of?
4. 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?
5. 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.
6. Does your home country welcome immigrants? Is there a system of inspection to get in? Why would a country need an inspection system?
7. Imagine you are the ruler of a country. You have jobs and room for 50,000 people a year. However, 250,000 people want to come to your country each year. How would you choose which people could be allowed to come in to live? Who would you say could not come in?

**December 2017**  
**Answers to *Easy English NEWS***  
**Short-Answer Tests**



**I. Western Wildfires**

1. b, c, d, e, g, j, k, l
2. more than 50,000
3. 8,830,898 acres
4. 23,000
5. California
6. 43
7. over four billion dollars
8. five years
9. Sonoma and Napa
10. 100,000

**II. Buying Meat**

1. a. pig; b. cow; c. cow;  
d. calf; e. chicken or turkey;  
f. pig; g. sheep; h. pig
2. meat
3. vegan
4. 4%; 0%
5. cream
6. yogurt
7. organ
8. horses, cats, and dogs

**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

**V. Ellis Island, the "Island of Tears"**

1. from 1892 to 1954
2. by steamship
3. third class
4. the Statue of Liberty
5. NO
6. back to Europe
7. about two percent
8. the Island of Tears
9. New York and New Jersey
10. 12 million