

Is English your new language?
This paper is for you!
(It's for anyone else, too!)



We are seven billion now

The United Nations **estimated*** that on October 31 this year, there were 7 billion people in the world. The world's **population*** is growing by about 80 million people each year. The UN says there may be 9.1 billion people by 2050. Some experts think the number will be 12 billion. There are now 21 cities with populations larger than ten million,

The **growth rate*** is highest in Latin America, the Middle East, and Africa. The growth rate is lowest in China, Japan, and Europe.

Why is the population increasing?

People are living longer. The **death rate*** has gone down. Since 1940, there has been a "**green revolution***" in farming. There are new kinds of

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China has the highest population in the world, with 1.34 billion people. This photo shows **crowds*** of people in Tiananmen Square on China's National Day in Beijing on October 1, 2011. China's growth has slowed because of the government's promotion of just one child per family. The population will start to **decrease*** by 2027. AP Photo/Andy Wong

Words in **black** print with a star (*) are in **WORD HELP** on page 12.



Life in the U.S.A. Looking for work—part one

Many people in the U.S. are out of work. They look for a job for a few weeks but can't find any. They may get **discouraged***. They read or hear about the high rate of unemployment. They may feel there is no hope. They stop looking.

Other people are also out of work, but they stay hopeful. They look at the other side of the facts. If there is 16 percent **unemployment***, that means there is 84% employment.

Every day, people with jobs leave their jobs. Some **retire***. Some get **fired***. Some are **transferred***. Some go back to college. Some stay home to have a baby. Some win the **lottery***. Some die. Some get a better job. This **turnover*** in jobs creates openings—for those who are in the right place at the right time.

Many small businesses **prefer*** to **hire*** someone they already know or someone who is **recommended***

by friends or their other **employees***. They don't **advertise*** the job. They don't have time to **interview*** a lot of strangers.

Getting a job

Looking for a job is a full time job! A person has to be "part detective"

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The newspaper is only one place to look for a job. Some employers use Internet job services. Many employers use **word-of-mouth*** to advertise their job openings. Bigstockphoto.com

Events in

Hanukkah

Hanukkah is a Jewish holiday that lasts eight days. It begins the evening of December 20. At this time, Jews remember the “**Miracle*** of the Lights”. They say special **prayers***. On the first night, they light a “shamash” candle. They use the shamash candle to light one other candle in a **menorah***. On the second night of Hanukkah, they light two candles. On the third night, they light three candles, and so forth.



A menorah with Hebrew letters: “A great miracle happened here.” Photo: Dreamstime.com

Families **gather*** for a big dinner. Children play a special Hanukkah game with a **dreidel***. They receive “Hanukkah **gelt***”. This is chocolate covered in shiny gold paper, like coins. Some Jewish families give their children a gift on each night of Hanukkah.

The miracle of the light

About two thousand years ago, the king of Syria took over the Jewish **temple*** in Jerusalem. He put **statues*** of

December 2011						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Greek gods in the temple. A Jewish family called the Maccabees led a long fight against the Syrian king. Finally, the Jews won. They were able to **restore*** the temple for their own use.

The Jews had had an “**Eternal Flame***” in the temple. But when the temple was theirs again, there was enough oil to burn for only one day. It took eight days to **prepare*** more oil. However, the small amount of oil burned for eight days. The Jews said it was a miracle. They felt that God was glad they had gotten His temple back.

Preparing for Winter

December 22 is the first day of winter.

Are you from a warm country? Is this your first winter in the United States? Are you now in a northern state? If the answer is yes, the cold weather may surprise you.

Ask your teacher or your neighbors about the weather you can expect this winter. Be sure that you and your family have warm coats, sweaters, scarves, hats, and gloves for the cold days in December, January, and February.

It costs a lot of money to heat a home. Older windows let cold air in and warm air out. You can buy special clear plastic sheets for your windows. These will help save the heat in your house.

Portable* electric heaters may help heat a small room. Electric heat is expensive, though. Don't leave a portable heater turned on when you are not in the room. It can overheat and cause a fire.

When there is a heavy snowstorm, you may not be able to get to a store. You should prepare **in advance***. Have enough food in the house for a few days.

You have to prepare your car for winter, too. Check the **battery***. (Old batteries often die on the first very cold day!) Check the level of **anti-freeze*** in the car's **radiator***. Fill the **windshield*-washer**



People need hats, gloves, scarves and warm coats in winter in northern states. Bigstockphoto.com



Scrape the ice and snow off all windows of the car and the top of the car before driving. Bigstockphoto.com

What's the temperature*?

Here is an easy way to know the **Celsius*** temperature when you know the **Fahrenheit*** temperature:

Step 1. Subtract 32 degrees from the Fahrenheit temperature.

Step 2. Divide that number by two.

To know the *Fahrenheit* temperature when you know the *Celsius* temperature, do this:

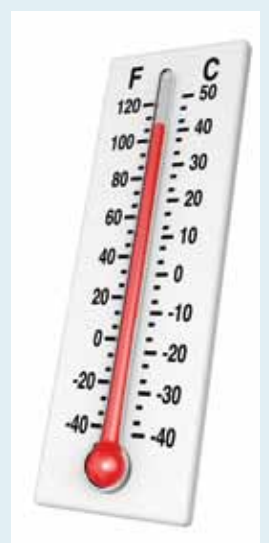
Step 1. Multiply the Celsius temperature by two.

Step 2. Add 32 degrees.

If you want to be more **accurate***, use these **formulas***:

$$C = 5/9 (F - 32)$$

$$F = (C \times 9/5) + 32$$



A thermometer with both Fahrenheit and Celsius temperatures. Bigstockphoto.com

fluid* tank. Check your tires. Tires with thin **tread*** are dangerous on ice and snow. You may need snow tires.

Carry a brush and window **scraper*** in your car. Carry a shovel and **kitty litter*** or sand in the **trunk*** of the car. These will help if your car is stuck in snow. It's also good to have a blanket, **flares***, and drinking water.

Make sure there is no snow on the roof of your car. Clear snow away from all windows. Winter driving takes extra **skill***. It is not easy to stop on icy roads. Drive more slowly. Test your brakes. Stay an “**eight-second distance***” behind the car in front of you.

December

Christmas

Christmas is December 25. It is a very important holiday for Christians. This is their day to celebrate the **birth*** of **Jesus***.

A story in the Bible tells about the birth of Jesus around 2000 years ago.

Mary was **pregnant*** and ready to have her baby. She went with her husband Joseph to Bethlehem. They wanted to stay at an **inn***, but there was no room for them. They went to a **stable*** for the night.

Jesus was born in the stable. There was no bed for the baby.

Mary put him in a **manger***.

The story says that a very bright star appeared in the sky that night. Three kings from the East saw the star. They followed the star until they came to the stable. They believed that the baby was a new king, the son of God. They brought gifts for him.

Celebrating Christmas

Today, at Christmas, people give gifts to family members and friends, especially to children.

December is a busy shopping season. People may send holiday cards to friends, neighbors, and customers. Many people bake special cookies and cakes.

Carolers* sing holiday songs in



A nativity scene. Bigstockphoto.com

The holiday season

Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, New Year's Eve, and New Year's Day are part of the "holiday season". People may greet each other with "Happy Holidays" or "Merry Christmas," and "Happy New Year".

Kwanzaa

Kwanzaa is a seven-day celebration of African-American **heritage***. Kwanzaa begins December 26 and ends on New Year's Day.

During this time, African-American parents teach their children about art, music, and customs that come from Africa. Children learn **crafts***; they make Kwanzaa

place mats. Families light candles each night and they enjoy African games.

They talk about the seven **principles*** of Kwanzaa: **Unity***, **Self-Determination***, **Community responsibility**, **Cooperative Economics***, **Purpose**, **Creativity**, and **Faith***.



Symbols of Kwanzaa: hand-made placemat, red and green candles, corn, fruit, African art, and music. Photo: Dreamstime.com

Many African-American families have a Kwanzaa **feast*** on January 1. They may give each other educational or hand-made gifts. They do not usually send Kwanzaa cards, or buy gifts in stores. The purpose of Kwanzaa is to be creative and to make things by hand for each other.

schools, churches, hospitals, and at shopping malls. People **decorate*** their homes, offices, and classrooms. They set up Christmas trees with lights and **ornaments***. People put **wreaths*** on their doors.

Churches and some homes set up **nativity scenes***. A nativity scene **illustrates*** the story of the birth of Jesus. There is a stable with **statues*** of Mary and Joseph and the baby Jesus. There are statues of farm animals, of shepherds, and of the three kings.

Young children expect Santa Claus to visit on Christmas **Eve***. They hope to find

presents in their stockings and under the Christmas tree.

Many families go to church on Christmas Eve or Christmas morning. They eat a special Christmas dinner. **Traditional*** foods are turkey, roast beef, or baked ham. There usually are many Christmas cookies, fruit cakes, **eggnog***, and special treats.

Non-Christians may enjoy the **secular*** parts of the holiday, too. Anyone may **exchange*** gifts, decorate a tree and their homes, and tell their children about Santa Claus. (See pages 6 and 7 for a favorite Christmas poem: *A Visit from Saint Nicholas*.)

New Year's Eve

December 31 is New Year's Eve.

There are many New Year's Eve parties all over the country. Most parties are in people's homes with family and friends. Restaurants, bars, and **nightclubs*** also have special New Year's Eve parties.



The biggest New Year's Eve party in the U.S. is in **Times Square***, New York City. Thousands of people **gather*** at 42nd Street and Broadway. They wait for **midnight***. Ten seconds before 12 am, a large ball of lights starts to drop from a **tower*** at One Times Square.

As the ball slowly falls, thousands of people count: *nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, one*. When the ball reaches the bottom of the tower, everyone shouts "Happy New Year!"

They hug and kiss their friends and even **strangers***. There is a lot of noise from fireworks, noisemakers, and bells.

People at home and at parties watch the Times Square activities on TV. They may drink a **toast*** to the new year with **champagne***. They sing a traditional New Year's Eve song, "**Auld Lang Syne***".

There are six **time zones*** from the East Coast to Hawaii. It takes six hours for the new year to come to all of the states.

If you drink, don't drive

Some people drink too much **alcohol*** on New Year's Eve. Drunk driving is a big problem at this time. Many police officers work extra hours on New Year's Eve. They stop cars to test the drivers. They **arrest*** any driver who is drunk.



This is your page

Christmas memory

My favorite Christmas was the first one I celebrated in America. Before Christmas we put the tree up in the **den*** and **decorated*** it. Then we **wrapped*** the presents and put them under the tree.

One day my husband went to work. I sat on the **couch*** and looked at all the presents. I picked up one of the boxes. It was for me from my husband. I wondered what it was. I decided to open the box. I was **shocked***! It was a beautiful Apple cell phone. I carefully put it back under the tree.



On Christmas morning my husband, my son and I opened the presents. They both were surprised by their presents. I wasn't surprised because I already knew what mine was.

A few days later I told my husband what I did. He laughed and said, "Oh! That's not good. Next year I won't put your present under the tree until Christmas Day." We both laughed.

*Xian Li Zhong
Decatur, Alabama
(China)*

Holiday tradition*

Last December we went to visit my daughter in Texas. On Christmas Day we cooked different kinds of food and desserts. After dinner we opened our presents.

At midnight on New Year's Eve we followed our tradition. Everyone gets 12 grapes and a glass of **champagne***. Then everyone makes a wish, eats a grape and takes a **sip*** of

champagne. We do this for each month in the new year.

We also make sure the table is set with *espigas de trigo* (thin stalks of wheat), a **loaf*** of bread, and other seeds and **grains***. This **symbolizes*** the hope for a table full of food for the next year. ¡Feliz Navidad y Prospero Año Nuevo! Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



*Esperanza Munar
Centereach, New York
(Columbia)*

I was half right

One winter day I went **sledding*** on Jerico Hill. At the time I only knew a few words in English. My husband speaks English very well. He told me, "If somebody is in front of you when you are sledding, you need to say, 'Watch out!' or '**Heads up***!'"



When I started going down the hill I saw someone in front of me. I forgot what I needed to say. Suddenly, I remembered so I said, "**What's up***?" No one turned around.

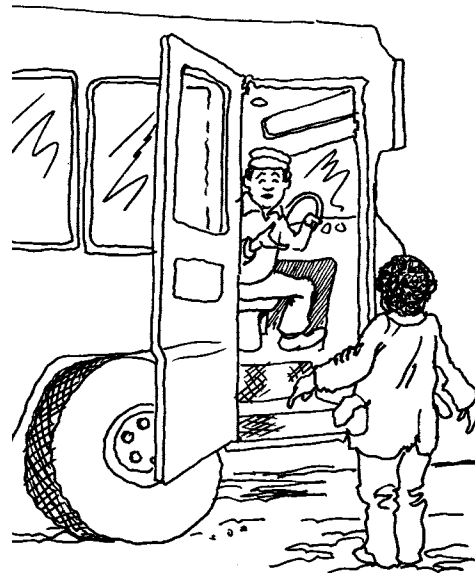
My husband explained later that I made a big mistake. I mixed up *watch out* and *heads up* with *what's up*. At least I said half of it right!

*Rosimara da Costa
Marlborough, Massachusetts
(Brazil)*

Just one time only

My husband has a bad memory. He always forgets the words or phrases he learns in his English classes. He has to repeat everything he learns so he doesn't forget.

One night he was coming home from work on the bus. At one stop, a man tried to get on the bus. He told the driver that he had no money to pay for his ride. The driver wouldn't let him on. Then the man told the driver that his daughter was waiting for him. The man promised he would never do it again. The driver let him get on



the bus and said, "Just one time only."

My husband understood that if someone tells someone else that it's the last time to do something he must say, "Just one time only." He started to repeat this sentence many times to fix it in his mind. "Just one time only...Just one time only."

The bus driver turned around to look at my husband. He gave him a very angry look. My husband understood and stopped repeating what he heard.

*Muntaha Sahban
Everett, Washington
(Iraq)*

God came to help our concert

Our senior center put on a **concert*** last year. We were very **proud*** that people liked it. So we decided to put on another concert this year.

However, only a few people signed up. We didn't have a music teacher. We each had a tape of the music so we could

take it home and practice singing to the music.

Every week we went to singing **rehearsal***. We put on the CD and sang along to the music. It was difficult. It took us a long time to prepare ourselves. I was very worried that we wouldn't be able to do the concert. We all worried that the concert would not be good enough.

There was no **schedule*** for the order of the songs. We didn't know who was going to sing first or second. The leader just told everyone to come early on the day of the concert, and we'd find out.

When the day came, it seemed that it was a **miracle***. It seemed as though God came to help everything, and everything turned out OK. A **line dancing*** group joined us and made it more exciting.

We had prepared 18 tables and chairs, but it wasn't enough for all the guests who came. We had to set up more chairs. I counted about 200 people who came to hear us.

We had lunch after the concert. People said it was great. Some guests gave money to our senior center. We all cleaned up together, and had a good time. It was very exciting.

*Hang Cao Nguon
San Jose California*

Do you have a job in the U.S.? What do you do? What skills do you need for your job? How did you get your job?

We will pay \$15 for stories that we publish. Send your story about your job to ESL@elizabethclaire.com

Or mail it to **Easy English NEWS** 2100 McComas Way, Suite 607, Virginia Beach, VA 23456

Be sure to write your name and address on your story. If you don't want us to put your name in the newspaper, write "Please don't print my name."

Dr. Ali: Your Health Eat well for longer life: Part 2

by Dr. Majid Ali



Last month I gave ten ideas about foods to eat and foods to **avoid*** in order to live out your full **life span***.

Here are some more suggestions for **life-span nutrition***.

11. Our **immune system*** works to keep us healthy. We, in turn, should keep our immune system healthy.

The immune system works best when our blood is just a little bit **alkaline***. The immune system cannot do its job well when our blood is **acidic***. The foods we eat make the difference.

After our body digests food, there is an **ash***, just as a fire leaves an ash. Most vegetables, some fruits, tofu, **miso***, **herbs***, and some spices leave an alkaline ash.

Other foods leave an acidic ash: **protein*** in meat, fish, milk, and cheese; sugar, sweet fruits; bread, cake, noodles, pasta, and other **wheat*** products. Our body organs and our immune system do not do well in an acidic **environment***.

On the other hand, cancer loves acid! An acidic environment **encourages*** the growth of cancer cells.

Eat more foods that leave an alkaline ash, and less of foods that leave an acidic ash. You can find a list of each kind of food at **Elizabethclaire.com**. Go to "Free Materials" and click on *Food and Your Immune System*.

12. Think of your **colon*** as a garden. You can seed, feed, and weed "the garden" in your **bowels***.

Seed the garden with lactic-acid-producing **microbes*** such as the ones found in

plain yogurt, sauerkraut, and **kimchee***.

Feed the lactic-acid producers with **nutrients*** such as **pantothenic acid*** and vitamin B12. Get more information about your own needs from a **nutritionist***.

Weed out the microbes such as yeast, bacteria and **parasites***. Garlic helps. It also helps to cut out sugar and sweets.

13. Sadly, we can't get all the nutrients we need from the American diet. Farmers grow many foods with chemical **fertilizers***. These chemicals help the plants to grow. But they do not help the plants make the vitamins that people need.

There are **contaminants*** in most foods we buy. There are contaminants in the water we drink. There is **pollution*** in the air we breathe. Vitamin and **mineral* supplements*** help

our bodies to **neutralize*** these harmful things..

14. Don't follow these suggestions like a machine. Just make a little effort each day to grow new eating habits. Live, work, play, and eat with an **attitude of gratitude***. Be thankful each day for the gifts life has given us...Connect with the **spiritual*** side of your being. Think and speak of your **blessings***.

Be kind to your body so your body will be kind to you.

Dr. Majid Ali is an integrative physician and the author of hundreds of research articles and many books. Listen to Dr. Ali on WBAI (99.5 FM) in New York City.

VISIT Dr. Ali's website: Majidalimd.com
You will get information you need to make better-informed health decisions. Dr. Ali presents useful ways to look at disease, and **effective*** ways to help the body heal itself.

Ask a Speech Coach: Weak words

by Gene Zerna



Gene Zerna

When Americans speak quickly, they **stress*** important words. They speak the unimportant words very

quickly and

softly. It is hard to hear the "little" words. I call them the "**weak*** words."

Pronouns, articles, auxiliary verbs, conjunctions, and prepositions are often weak in American speech. Sometimes there are two or three weak words in a row.

We write **contractions*** to show some of these weak words: *I'm, you're, he's, can't, I've, what's*, and so forth. We **contract*** other weak words when we speak, but we don't generally contract them in writing.

It sounds strange to Americans when new speakers of English stress the weak

words. Other newcomers leave the weak words out completely. That makes it hard for people to understand them. Words that are usually stressed in a sentence are people's names, nouns, adjectives, main verbs, question words, yes, no and please.

Ask a **native*** English-speaker to say the sentences below at a normal speaking rate. Listen to the way the weak words **link*** to the important words. The **vowel sounds*** in the weak words are very short. Most of them sound like *uh*. But they can also sound like *eh, ih, oo, er*.

Then practice saying the phrases. Have an English speaker coach you.

I'm new here.

What's your name?

Alonzo Gonzales.

Where are you from?

I'm from the Dominican Republic.

How long have you been in the U.S.?

About four and a half years.

Where do you work?

I drive a cab in Manhattan.

Do you like your job?

The pay is good, but the hours are long. I work seven days a week. Some day I want to buy my own cab.

Does your family live with you?

No, my family is in the D.R.

I hope they can come next year. I miss my wife and children.

Would you like some coffee?

Yes, please.

Do you want milk in that?

Just a little bit, please.

How about some sugar?

No thank you. I don't take sugar in my coffee.

Sometimes you do want to stress the weak words. Stress a weak word when you want to **contrast*** it with something you just said or something that the listener is confused about.

For example, if you are speaking to two people, you say, *WHERE are you FROM?* to the first person. The *are* and the *you* are weak ; *where* and *from* are stressed. Then when you ask the second person, you say,

And where are YOU from? The word *you* is stressed while *And, where, and are* are weak; *from* is lightly stressed.

Perhaps a person didn't understand the question. She answered by telling you where she lives now. Then you might say,

"I don't mean, *Where do you LIVE*; I mean *Where are you FROM?*"

Gene Zerna is the producer and director of **Master Spoken English: Feeling Phonics**. This five-DVD program helps speakers improve pronunciation and fluency: Visit his website at **www.masterspokenenglish.com**

Heroes and History

Clement Clarke Moore and America's most famous poem

Clement Clarke Moore was a college professor in New York City. He wrote many books and poems. Today, people remember only one of them: *A Visit from Saint Nicholas*.

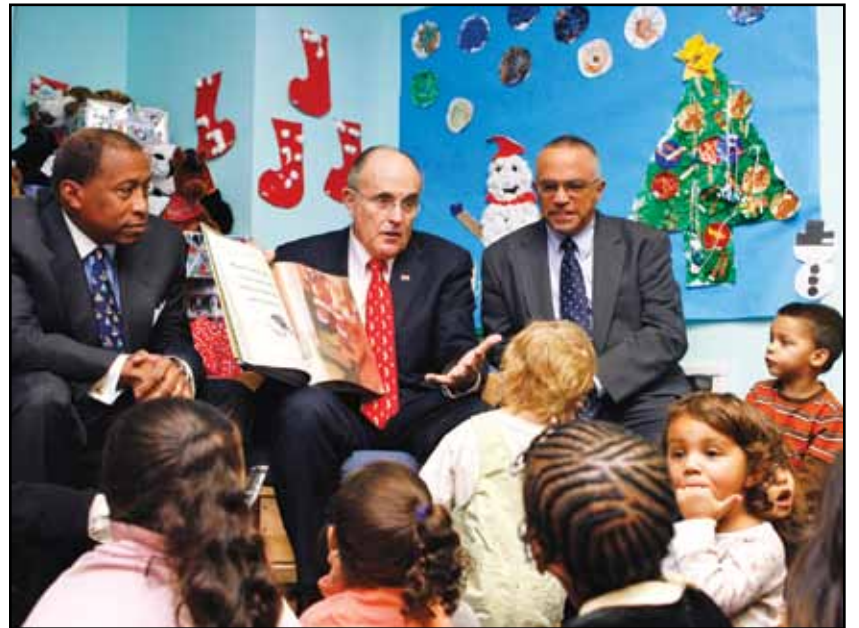
Moore wrote this poem for his children one Christmas. He did not want to **publish*** it. A visitor in his home heard him read it. She made a copy and sent it to a newspaper. That paper published the poem on December 23, 1823 with no name.

Before Clement Clark Moore's poem, there were many different ideas about St. Nicholas. In Holland, *Sinterklass* traveled by horse and wagon. He left gifts at people's doors, or sent them through the window.

In Moore's poem, St. Nicholas is a fat and happy **elf***. He travels through the sky in a **sleigh*** pulled by eight **reindeer***. St. Nicholas comes down the **chimney*** to put toys in children's stockings.

After Moore died, people remembered him as a good father, a good husband, and a good teacher. No one thought that his poem would become so famous. No one thought that people would read his poem every year for another hundred ninety years.

A Visit from St. Nicholas is a popular part of Christmas. Many people know the first four lines by heart. Some people **memorize*** the whole poem.



It is a tradition for teachers, parents, actors, and **government officials*** to read *A Visit from St. Nicholas* in schools, homes, libraries, and on the radio each year. In this 2007 photo, New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani reads the poem to children at Mother Hale Learning Center in Harlem. AP Photo/Kathy Willens

A Visit from Saint Nicholas

by Clement Clark Moore

[The word help for this poem is below each column.]



'Twas¹ the night before Christmas,
When all through the house
Not a **creature**² was **stirring**³,
Not even a mouse;

The stockings were hung
By the **chimney**⁴ with
care,
In hopes that Saint
Nicholas
Soon would be there;



The children were **nestled**⁵
All **snug**⁶ in their beds,
While **visions of sugar-plums**⁷
Danced in their heads;

And Ma in her
'kerchief⁸,
And I in my cap,
Had just **settled our**
brains⁹
For a long winter's
nap.

When out on the
lawn¹⁰
There arose such a
clatter¹¹,
I **sprang**¹² from my bed
To see what was the matter.

Away to the window
I flew like a **flash**¹³,
Tore open the
shutters¹⁴
And **threw up the**
sash¹⁵.



The moon on the **breast**¹⁶
Of the new-fallen snow
Gave the **luster**¹⁷ of mid-day
To objects below.

When, what to my wondering eyes
Should appear,
But a **miniature**¹⁸ **sleigh**¹⁹,
And eight tiny reindeer,



With a little old driver,
So **lively**²⁰ and quick,
I knew in a moment
It must be Saint Nick.

(continued on page 7)



¹It was

²Person or animal

³Moving

⁴Where smoke goes up from a fireplace

⁵Comfortable

⁶Covered up tightly

⁷Dreams of sweet things

⁸A covering for a woman's head

⁹Relaxed our minds

¹⁰Area around the house

¹¹Loud noise

¹²Jumped

¹³Lightning

¹⁴Window protectors

¹⁵Opened the window

¹⁶Top

¹⁷Light

¹⁸Tiny

¹⁹Wagon on skis for use in the snow

²⁰Full of energy; fast

A Visit from Saint Nicholas

(continued from page 6)



More **rapid**²¹
than **eagles**²²
His **coursers**²³
they came,
And he whistled,
and shouted,

And called them by name:

“Now, Dasher! now, Dancer!
Now, Prancer and Vixen!
On, Comet! on, Cupid!
On, Donner and Blitzen!

To the top of the porch!
To the top of the wall!
Now **dash**²⁴ away! dash away!
Dash away all!”

As dry leaves that
Before the wild hurricane fly,
When they meet with an **obstacle**²⁵,
Mount²⁶ to the sky;

So up to the house-top
The coursers they flew,
With the sleigh full of toys,
And St. Nicholas too.

And then, **in a twinkling**²⁷,
I heard on the roof
The **prancing**²⁸ and pawing

of each little
hoof²⁹.



As I **drew**³⁰ in
my head,
And was
turning
around,

Down the chimney St. Nicholas
Came with a **bound**³¹.

He was dressed all in fur,
From his head to his foot,
And his clothes were all **tarnished**³²
With ashes and **soot**³³;

A **bundle**³⁴ of toys
He had **flung**³⁵ on his back,
And he looked like a **peddler**³⁶
Just opening his pack.

His eyes—how they **twinkled**³⁷!
His **dimples**³⁸ how **merry**³⁹!

His cheeks were like roses,
His nose like a cherry!

His **droll**⁴⁰ little mouth
Was drawn up like a **bow**⁴¹
And the beard of his chin
Was as white as the snow;



The **stump**⁴² of a pipe
He held tight in his teeth,
And the smoke it
encircled⁴³
His head like a **wreath**⁴⁴;



He had a **broad**⁴⁵
face
And a little round
belly⁴⁶,
That shook when
he laughed,
Like a bowlful of
jelly.

He was **chubby and**
plump⁴⁷,
A right **jolly**⁴⁸ old **elf**⁴⁹,
And I laughed when I saw
him,
In spite of⁵⁰ myself;



A **wink**⁵¹ of his eye
And a **twist**⁵² of his head,
Soon gave me to know
I had nothing to **dread**⁵³;

He spoke not a word,
But went straight to his work,
And filled all the stockings;
Then turned with
a **jerk**⁵⁴,



And laying a
finger
Aside of his nose,
And giving a **nod**⁵⁵,
Up the chimney
he **rose**⁵⁶;

He **sprang**⁵⁷ to his sleigh,
To his **team**⁵⁸ gave a whistle,
And away they all flew
like the **down of a**
thistle⁵⁹,



But I heard him exclaim,
“**Ere**⁶⁰ he drove out of
sight,

“**Happy Christmas to all,
And to all a good-night!**”



²¹fast

²²large powerful birds

²³reindeer

²⁴Move fast

²⁵A thing blocking the way

²⁶Rise up

²⁷In a very short time

²⁸Dancing sound of feet

²⁹Reindeer's foot

³⁰Pulled

³¹Sudden jump

³²Dirty

³³Black stuff left from a fire

³⁴Large bag

³⁵Thrown

³⁶Street salesman

³⁷Shone brightly like stars

³⁸Small indents in a person's cheek

³⁹Funny, happy

⁴⁰Funny

⁴¹Shaped like a bow on a ribbon

⁴²Short stem of a pipe

⁴³Went around

⁴⁴A round decoration for a door made
from evergreen branches

⁴⁵Wide

⁴⁶Stomach

⁴⁷Fat in a cute way

⁴⁸Happy

⁴⁹Magic person

⁵⁰Even though I didn't want to

⁵¹quick open and close

⁵²Turn

⁵³Be afraid of

⁵⁴Sudden movement

⁵⁵Movement up and down of his head
(a magic movement to cause him to
rise up the chimney)

⁵⁶Past form of *rise*: went up

⁵⁷Jumped

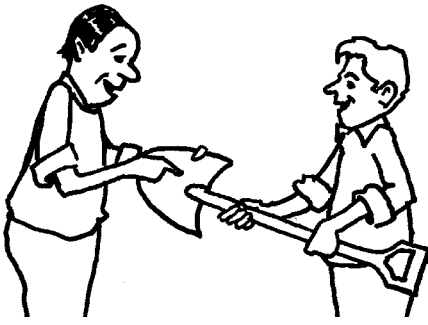
⁵⁸Eight reindeer

⁵⁹Soft white fluffy part of the seed of a
thistle plant

⁶⁰Before

Idiom Corner

Have you heard people use these idioms?



1. to call a spade* a spade
to speak plainly; to tell the truth even when people don't want to hear it.

Charles did not hesitate *to call a spade a spade*. "You drink too much," he told his friend.

"I'm not afraid *to call a spade a spade*," said the teacher. "Some of you are not going to graduate."



2. It's downhill all the way

It's easy. You don't have to work hard.

Mac won the lottery. His life is now *downhill all the way*.

Emma worked hard at her business. It's a big success, and she has a manager to run it. *It's downhill all the way* now for her.

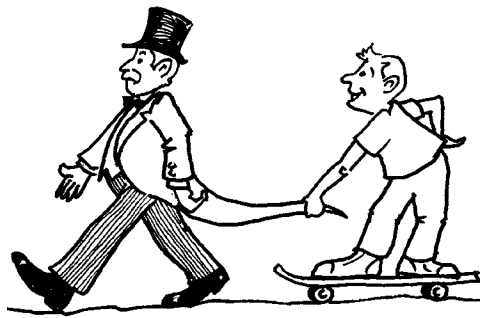
[Caution: do not confuse this idiom with "It's all downhill from here," which means *It gets worse and worse*.]



3. handyman
a person who can fix things around a home or office

The *handyman* built some bookshelves in the living room.

Carlos makes a good living as a *handyman*. He can fix anything.



4. riding (on) someone's coattails*

to get a job by association* with a powerful person

John A. got elected to Congress *on the president's coattails*.

Bob *rode* his brother Pete's *coattails*. He got a good job at the company where Pete had worked for a long time.

Practice

Write an idiom in each sentence. Be sure to use the correct tenses of the verbs, and the correct pronouns. (Answers are on page 11.)

1. Jan's father gave her a million dollars when she turned 21. She has an easy life; it's _____.

2. I sure could use a _____ to fix some of the broken things around this house.

3. Nan got her book published by _____ her famous mother's _____.

4. The governor always _____, even when it wasn't popular to do that.

Illustrations by Dave Nicholson

Funny Stuff

Two men met at a large party. They were having a nice conversation. Every once in a while, someone came up to the first man and spoke to him.



The second man asked, "Why are so many people coming over to talk to you?"

"It's terrible," said the first man, "I'm a doctor. People always come over to me at parties for free medical **advice***. I wish I knew what to do."

"I'm a lawyer," said the second

man. "This happens to me, too. Here's what I do: When people ask me for advice at a party, I give it to them. Then the next day, I mail them a **bill***."

The doctor thought that this was a good idea. The next day he mailed out bills to all the people who had asked him for medical advice at the party.

The day after that, he got a letter from the lawyer.

It was a bill!



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We are seven billion now

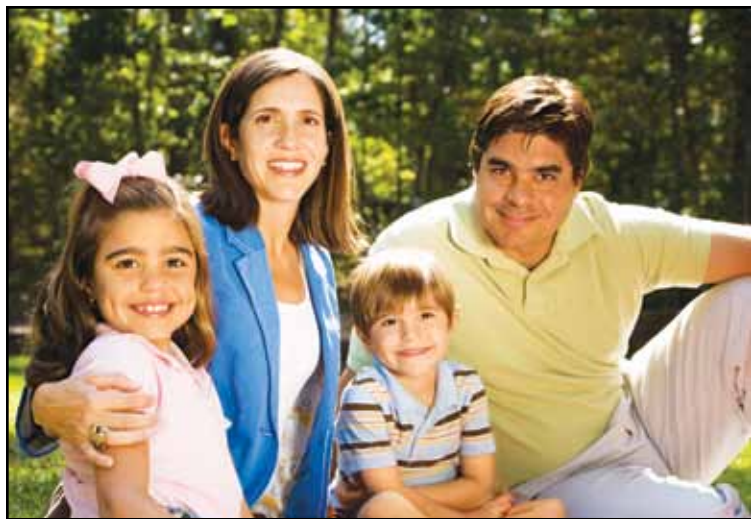
(continued from page 1)

foods, new seeds, modern **irrigation***, **pesticides*** and **fertilizers***. Farms can feed more people. Not as many people die of starvation.

Sanitation*, clean water, and garbage collection prevent disease. The **smallpox* vaccine***, **penicillin***, and **DDT*** saved millions of people. More children live to adulthood and have their own children. **Advances*** in medicine, drugs and surgery save lives and **prolong*** life. People are living longer.

Birth rates

In the **developed nations***, the population is not growing. Women have an average of less than two children during



In developed countries, women are educated and can choose a career. Many get married and have children later in life. Families in the developed world spend more money on each child. Good health and a good education for each child becomes more important than having many children. Photo: Dreamstime.com

their lifetime. The **birth rate*** is not high enough to replace the people who die.

In the **developing nations***, the birth rate is much higher. The average woman has six children during her lifetime. Vaccinations and medical services help many children **survive*** to adulthood. The high birth rate and a reduced death rate increases the population rapidly.

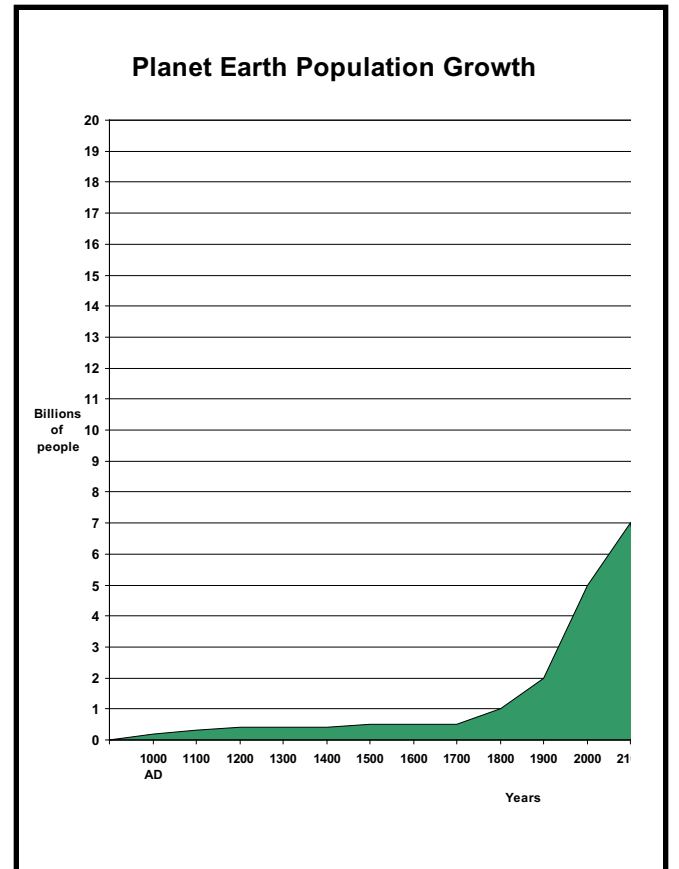
Government actions

Some countries want to **increase*** their population. Some governments give money or benefits to families with more children. Some countries gain more people by welcoming new immigrants. Some religions **encourage*** people to have many children.

Other countries want to slow down their population growth. China lowered its population growth by strong social pressure: one child per family. Some countries such as India once paid people to get **sterilized*** after having two children.

How many people can the Earth support*?

Will there be enough water, space, land, and food as the population grows? Experts do not



agree on the answers. Right now on Earth, clean water is becoming **scarce***. Global warming is causing many new problems.

In many areas, good farmland is **eroding***. In the oceans, some fish populations are disappearing. **Famine***, **drought***, disease, and war still kill many people each year. In the developing nations, almost a billion people go hungry each day.

Crossword Puzzle

Across

- City in Texas (Spanish for Saint Anthony)
- United States of ____
- New York City (abbreviation)
- Children
- I want a ____ for Christmas.
- Friendly way to say hello
- Post office motto: "If it ____, it ships." (If it can get into their box)
- Food for horses and people
- Albert Einstein's initials
- Thick strings
- National Rifle Association (abbreviation)
- ____ Superior is very deep. (body of water)
- Indian princes
- Preposition. I'll meet you ____ 3 pm.
- We need ____ to breathe.
- People who show the way to your seat in a theater or church.
- ____ mobile (car)
- Playful water animals
- Preposition. Put this ____ the table, please.

Down

- Another name for St. Nicholas
- Time in the morning
- A state north of New Jersey and Pennsylvania
- Abbreviation for Arkansas
- Opposite of *days*.
- Tom Cruise's initials
- A strong tree
- A state west of Pennsylvania and east of Illinois
- A kind of shell fish that people eat
- Conditional word: You can do it ____ you try hard.
- Verb. This ____ a crossword puzzle.
- Lemon ____ (a drink)
- Same as 18 Across
- I can drive a ____
- Go up
- A person who teaches people to draw is an ____ teacher.
- My daughter's brother is my ____.
- Santa says this three times when he laughs.
- Extra Terrestrial (abbreviation)
- Adverb. Do this as soon ____ possible
- Preposition. Let's walk ____ the store.



1	2	3	4	5	6	7		8	9	
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Looking for work—part one

(continued from page 1)

to find job openings. After that, a person has to be part salesperson to get an **interview***, and then to get the job.

It's a numbers game*.

This means, you don't need *every* job, you only need *one* job. If you go to 200 places and get turned down, that's OK. Keep on looking and asking. You are learning valuable skills each time you interview. Stay encouraged. Never give up. There are jobs out there. Eighty-four percent of American workers have jobs.



Finding a job depends on many things: your skills, your education, your health and **appearance***, your **ability*** to

communicate, your **experience***, your **references***, where you live, who you know, your means of **transportation***, and your immigration **status***.

Many businesses are looking for skilled workers and can't find them. There are many people with no special skills. There are fewer jobs today that don't need skills.

Getting ready for a job

Make yourself more valuable to an employer. Improve your communication skills, appearance, **contacts***, job



skills, strength, and education. **Volunteer*** at a place where you can learn job skills or meet new people.

Take classes in English, typing, computer skills, cooking, home repairs, auto repairs, or anything you are interested in.

Network*

Make a list of the people you know. Tell everyone that you are looking for a job. Let them know the skills you have and what you can do for an employer. Meet new people by joining a group: church, social club, service club or **Toastmasters***. Volunteer at a hospital or nursing home, **animal shelter***, etc. Prepare a **resumé** so people know how to contact you.



In future issues of *Easy English NEWS*:
Where are the jobs?
Interviewing for a job.
Creating your own job.
Job scams.

Source: U.S. Department of Education

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Job scams

Watch out for **scams*** when you answer an ad for a job. Young people and immigrants are often victims of people who want to trick them out of their money, credit card information or other information that they can use or sell.

Do not give out personal information on a job **application*** on the Internet. Save your Social Security number, birth date and address for a company you are sure of. **Employers*** often want to check a worker's **references***. You should check an **employer's*** references too. Visit their place of business, examine their website, check their phone number in the yellow pages, and talk to people already working there.

If a job application asks for your bank account information, "to make **direct deposits*** of your paycheck" turn around and run! If an **agency*** asks you to pay **in advance*** for helping you get a job, watch out!

We'll have more news on job scams next month.

Happy holidays from Elizabeth Claire

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Answers to Idiom Quiz

1. downhill all the way
2. handyman
3. riding on ...coattails
4. calls a spade a spade

Answers to Crossword Puzzle

N	O		S	R	E	L	L	O		S
O	L	P	V		S	R	E	H	S	P
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Let's Talk About It

Seven billion (pages 1 and 9)

1. Who estimated that there are 7 billion people in the world?
2. Which areas of the world have the highest growth rate? Which have the slowest?
3. What are some reasons the population is growing fast in some countries?
4. What is the population of your home country? Is it increasing or decreasing? Why do you think it is?
5. What are some problems of such a big population?
6. Tell the meaning of these words: *estimate, irrigation, green revolution, fertilizer, sanitation, vaccine, prolong, advances, developing nation, replace, scarce, famine.*

Looking for a job (pages 1, 10, and 11)

1. Do you have a job? How did you get it? What do you do? What skills does your job require?
2. Have you been looking for a job? How do you look? What skills do you have?
3. What is a job turnover?
4. Why does a person need to be "at the right place at the right time?"
5. What are some things that getting a job depend on?
6. How can you improve your skills for a job?

7. How can networking help a person find a job?
8. Is it a good idea to put your Social Security number on a job application?
9. Tell the meaning of these words: *discouraged, hire, retire, fire, transfer, prefer, recommend, reference, interview.*

Events (pages 2 and 3)

1. What holidays do you celebrate in the month of December? What are your customs?
2. What kind of weather do you have in December, January, and February in your home country?
3. What are some Jewish customs at Hanukkah?
4. What are some American customs at Christmas time?
5. What is the purpose of Kwanzaa? What are some customs for this holiday?
6. What do you usually do on New Year's Eve?
7. What will you do this year?
8. Invent a holiday! What would you celebrate? What customs would you invent?
9. Tell the meaning of these words: *Fahrenheit, eternal, miracle, temple, menorah, dreidel, stable, manger, birth, nativity scene, wreath, ornament, carol, decorate, statue,*

eggnog, gather, Times Square, Auld Lang Syne.

This is your page (page 4)

1. What is your favorite holiday memory? Tell about it.
2. What holiday traditions do you have in December?
3. Have you ever shouted out the wrong words? Tell about it.
4. Have you ever been in a school concert, play, or other program? Tell about it.
5. Tell the meaning of these words: *den, wrap, couch, champagne, sip, grains, sled, heads up!, what's up?, rehearsal*

Dr. Ali Your Health (page 5)

1. Why is it good to have our bodies just a bit alkaline?
2. Which foods leave an alkaline ash?
3. Which foods leave an acidic ash?
4. Why can't we get all the nutrients we need from food in the supermarket?
5. What helps us neutralize the contaminants in food, water, and air?
6. What is an *attitude of gratitude*? How does this help us?
7. Tell the meaning of these words: *life-span, effective,*

wheat, protein, microbe, colon, toxin, pollution, supplements.

Ask a Speech Coach (page 5)

1. Give examples of words that are usually weak in English.
2. What happens to the weak words when Americans speak quickly?
3. When do people stress the weak words?
4. Tell the meaning of these words: *vowel sound, contract, contraction.*

Heroes and History: Clement Clark Moore/A Visit from St. Nicholas (pages 6,7)

1. Why did Moore write *A Visit from St. Nicholas*?
2. Can you say the first four lines from memory? Any more?
3. According to the poem, How does St. Nicholas come to the house?
4. How is he dressed?
5. What does he look like?
6. What does he do?
7. Say *Saint Nicholas* very fast 5 times. Can you hear the name *Santa Claus*?
8. Tell the meaning of these words: *'Twas, creature, snug, dash, twinkling, soot, bundle, peddler, dimple, merry, wreath, belly, chubby, jolly, wink.*

WORD HELP

Some of the words below have many meanings. We give only the meanings you need for this month's newspaper.

ability *noun*. The power or knowledge to do something.
accurate *adjective*. Exactly right.
acidic *adjective*. Having a PH value of less than 7 (neutral)
advances *noun, plural*. New and better ways to do things.
advertise *verb*. To put an ad in a newspaper or on the Internet.
advice *noun*. Suggestions about how to do something.
agency *noun*. An organization or group that does a particular job for the government or private services.
alcohol *noun*. The chemical in beer, wine, whiskey, etc. that can make a person drunk.
alkaline *adjective*. Having a PH value of more than 7.
animal shelter *noun phrase*. An organization that cares for abandoned animals until they can be adopted.
antifreeze *noun*. A liquid that keeps a car's radiator from freezing.
appearance *noun*. The way a person looks, dresses, shaves, wears makeup, etc.
application *noun*. A paper or form on which to enter information to apply for a job, college, loan, etc.
apply *verb*. To formally ask for something, such as a job.
arrest *verb*. To take into custody by the police.
ash *noun*. Residue. What is left over after a fire burns.
association *noun*. 1. Socializing with another person. 2. A group of people.
attitude of gratitude *noun phrase*. A feeling of being thankful and expressing thanks.
Auld Lang Syne [awld lang ziyn] Song title: "long ago."
avoid *verb*. to stay away from.
battery *noun*. The container next to a car's engine that stores chemical energy which can be turned into electrical energy.
bill *noun*. An invoice; a paper with the amount that a person owes for a service.
birth *noun*. The beginning of a baby's life outside the womb.
birth rate *noun phrase*. The number of children a woman has in her lifetime.
blessing *noun*. Good things that one has: family, home, love, a job, health.
bowels *noun, plural*. The intestines; the last part of the digestive tract.
carol *noun*. A holiday song.
caroler *noun*. A person who sings holiday songs to others.
Celsius *noun*. The name of the temperature scale used in most countries of the world.
champagne *noun*. A bubbly dry wine often used for celebrations.
chimney *noun*. The brick or stone exit for smoke from a fireplace.
coattails *noun, plural*. Long flaps in the back of a man's formal jacket or coat (worn at weddings, other formal occasions)
colon *noun*. The lower part of the alimentary canal or digestive system; bowel.
communicate *verb*. To listen and speak.
concert *noun*. A public event with music and/or singing.
contact *noun*. 1. A way to communicate with a person; 2. A person that one knows and can call on for help or information.
contaminant *noun*. Something

that spoils or dirties something else, so it is no longer pure.
contract *verb*. To make shorter.
contraction *noun*. A short word formed from two words: *can't, isn't, I'd, you're, I'm*, etc.
contrast *verb*. To show a difference between two or more things.
cooperative economics *noun phrase, plural*. Working to help each other in business or earning money.
couch *noun*. Sofa.
craft *noun*. Something made skillfully by hand.
crowd *noun*. A large number of people in a space.
DDT *noun*. A poison to kill mosquitoes and other insects.
death rate *noun phrase*. The number of people per 1,000 who die in a year.
decorate *verb*. To add things to make something more beautiful, or in a traditional way.
decrease *verb*. To get small in size or numbers.
den *noun*. A room for family social purposes, watching TV, playing games, etc.
developed nations *noun phrase*. Countries that have a high level of industrialization, education, medical and other services.
developing nations *noun phrase, plural*. Countries with limited industry, electrification, communication networks, educational and medical services.
direct deposit *noun phrase*. An ability of a company to pay someone electronically directly into that person's bank account.
discouraged *adjective*. Giving up hope; not able to try again because it seems hopeless.
dreidel *noun*. A small top used for a children's game.
drought *noun*. A long period of time without rain.
effective *adjective*. Able to get a job done well.
eggnog *noun*. A sweet drink made from cream and eggs; often with rum added.
eight-second distance *noun phrase*. On icy or snowy roads, count to eight before you pass a mark that the car in front of you has passed.
elf *noun*. A magical person.
employee *noun*. A person who works for someone else.
employer *noun*. A person who pays another person to do a job.
encourage *verb*. To give a person hope of a good result.
environment *noun*. Things that are in the space around something: air, water, land, sounds, acid, etc.
erode *verb*. Wash away.
estimate *verb*. To guess, without complete information.
eternal flame *noun phrase*. A light that lasts forever.
eve *noun*. 1. Evening 2. The night before a holiday.
exchange gifts *verb phrase*. Give and get presents.
experience *noun*. Practical knowledge or skill that a person has gained through actions in the past.
Fahrenheit *noun*. The U.S. system of measuring temperature.
faith *noun*. Belief and hope in a religion or in a goal.
famine *noun*. A time when there is no food to eat.
feast *noun*. A large delicious dinner.
fertilizer *noun*. Material added to soil to help plants grow.
fire *verb*. To end a person's job.

flares *noun, plural*. Lights to warn or signal people.
fluid *noun*. A liquid; water, tea, juice, etc.
formula *noun*. A mathematical sentence useful for finding answers to number questions.
gather *verb*. To bring things or people to one place.
gelt *noun*. [Yiddish] Money.
government official *noun phrase*. A person who has a position in the government such as mayor, president, etc.
grains *noun, plural*. Oats, wheat, spelt, rye, quinoa, etc.
green revolution *noun phrase*. Changes in agriculture that have helped farmers grow more food.
growth rate *noun phrase*. The percent of increase each year.
heads up *verb phrase, imperative*. Look up; danger is coming from above.
herb *noun*. A plant that has some medicinal uses.
heritage *noun*. The art, language, music, culture, and history that we get from our parents, national group, etc.
hire *verb*. To give someone a job and pay for the work.
illustrate *verb*. To give examples; to draw pictures.
immune system *noun phrase*. White blood cells that destroy and eat bacteria, cancer cells, viruses, etc.
in advance *adverb phrase*. Before something else happens.
increase *verb*. To become larger or greater in number.
inn *noun*. A place to stay when one is traveling.
interview *noun*. A meeting between two people to get information from each other.
irrigation *noun*. The practice of watering crops.
Jesus *noun*. Jesus Christ, whom Christians believe is the son of God and whose teachings formed the basis of the Christian religion.
kimchee *noun*. Fermented cabbage and other vegetables; a favorite Korean food.
kitty litter *noun*. Granular material that is used in a cat's "bathroom" box.
life span *noun phrase*. The life a person would live if in good health and had no accidents.
line dancing *noun phrase*. A group dance in a line, where a person doesn't need a partner.
link *verb*. To connect.
loaf *noun*. The shape of bread when it is baked.
lottery *noun*. A game of chance in which people buy a ticket hoping to win a lot of money.
manger *noun*. A raised wooden box for food for cows and horses.
memorize *verb*. To learn something by heart; to be able to repeat it without reading it.
menorah *noun*. A holder for the 9 candles used in the celebration of Hanukkah.
microbe *noun*. A very tiny cell that can only be seen with a microscope.
midnight *noun*. 12 a.m.
mineral *noun*. An element in the earth such as calcium, sodium, sulphur, magnesium, iron, gold, etc.
miracle *noun*. An event that seems impossible, so must have been done by God.
miso *noun*. Soybean paste.
native *adjective*. Born in a place; from birth.
nativity scene *noun phrase*. Statues of people and animals that represent the birth scene of Jesus Christ.
network *verb*. To use social connections to get information,

to sell products, to learn about jobs, to exchange ideas.
neutralize *verb*. To make something neutral and not harmful.
nightclub *noun*. A place for dancing, dinner, and drinking.
numbers game *noun phrase, slang*. A game in which you have a better chance to win when you buy more tickets.
nutrient *noun*. An element in food that the body needs.
nutritionist *noun*. A person who has studied the science of foods and digestion.
ornament *noun*. A pretty thing to hang on a holiday tree.
panthothenic acid *noun phrase*. An essential nutrient; vitamin B5
parasite *noun*. An animal that gets food from another animal without giving anything in return.
penicillin *noun*. A strong antibiotic.
pesticide *noun*. A poison that farmers spray on plants to keep insects from eating them.
pollutant *noun*. Dirt or harmful thing in water or air.
population *noun*. The number of people in a place.
portable *adjective*. Easy to carry around.
prayer *noun*. A personal communication with God to ask for, or thank for something.
prefer *verb*. To want something more than another thing.
pregnant *adjective*. Expecting a child to be born.
prepare *verb*. To get ready for; to put things together for.
principle *noun*. A standard or value that underlies a religion, business, law, etc.
prolong *verb*. To make something last longer.
protein *noun*. An element in food that helps build muscles and repair the body.
proud *adjective*. Feeling good about one's appearance, family, nation, accomplishment, etc.
publish *verb*. To put into a printed form and distribute.
radiator *noun*. A part of a car that cools the engine so it won't get too hot.
recommend *verb*. To advise someone about a way to do something; to say something about a person's qualifications.
reference *noun*. A person who can give information about someone regarding his or her honesty, skills, experience, etc.
rehearsal *noun*. A practice for a musical performance, a play, or speech.
reindeer *noun*. A type of deer that lives in northern countries of Europe.
restore *verb*. Replace something that was taken away.
resumé *noun*. A paper describing a person's qualifications for a job.
retire *verb*. To leave a job and stop working after many years.
sanitation *noun*. Garbage collection, toilets, clean water.
scam *noun*. A trick or lies to get a person's money.
scarce *adjective*. Not abundant; not plentiful.
schedule *noun*. A list of events, and the times they will happen.
scraper *noun*. An object that can clean ice off windows.
secular *adjective*. Not connected with religion.
self-determination *noun phrase*. The ability to decide one's own future for oneself.
shock *noun*. A sudden surprise as though touched by electricity.
sip *verb*. To drink slowly.
skill *noun*. An ability.
sledding *noun*. Riding a sled

downhill on snow.
sleigh *noun*. A wagon that has skis for riding on snow.
smallpox *noun*. A deadly disease.
spade *noun*. A shovel for digging holes in dirt.
spiritual *adjective*. invisible connections to nature, others, God, etc.
stable *noun*. A barn for animals.
statue *noun*. A figure of a person or an animal carved from wood, stone, plaster, etc.
status *noun*. Condition; level in society.
sterilize *verb*. To make a person unable to have children.
stranger *noun*. A person one doesn't know.
stress. 1. *verb*. Say louder; make more important. 2. *noun*. The body's reaction to pressure, work, illness, or upset.
supplements *noun, plural*. Vitamins, minerals, herbs, and other additions to food.
support *noun*. Help.
survive *verb*. To live through a dangerous experience or time.
symbolize *verb*. To represent something. *A ring symbolizes marriage.*
temperature *noun*. A measurement of heat.
temple *noun*. A house of worship.
time zone *noun phrase*. One of the 24 zones around the earth which are one hour apart.
Times Square *noun phrase*. The corners of Broadway, Seventh Avenue and 42nd Street in New York City.
toast *verb/noun*. To take a short drink to honor an event or a person.
Toastmasters *noun*. A club that helps its members learn to speak in public.
tower *noun*. A tall structure.
traditional *adjective*. As it was done in the past.
transfer *verb*. To move to a part of a company in a different location.
transportation *noun*. A way to move from one place to another place: car, bus, train, etc.
tread *noun*. The thickness of the ridges on an automobile tire.
trunk *noun*. A large compartment in a car where you can store things.
turnover *noun*. The changing of people in a position or place.
unemployment *noun*. The condition of being without a job.
unity *noun*. Togetherness; working in cooperation with a group.
vaccine *noun*. A medicine that prevents a disease.
vitamin *noun*. A small element in food that is necessary for human health.
volunteer *verb*. To willingly work at a place without pay.
vowel sound *noun phrase*. Sounds for which the parts of the mouth do not touch each other: *ah, ay, a, aw, uh, ee, eh, iy, ih, oh, u, oo, or, oi, ow*, etc.
weak *adjective*. Not strong. Having very little power.
what's up? *Verb phrase, idiom*. A greeting; What's new? What's happening?
wheat *noun*. A grain used in making bread.
windshield *noun*. The glass window in the front of a car.
word-of-mouth *idiom*. Unpaid advertising; people talking about something.
wrap *verb*. To put paper around something (a gift, etc.).
wreath *noun*. A circular decoration made of evergreen branches.