Marking a grim milestone

Joseph Graham, 67, Chicago, school custodian.
Skylar Herbert, 5, Michigan’s youngest victim of the coronavirus pandemic.
Freda Ocran, 51, New York City, nurse with a zest for travel and knowledge.
Israel Saiz, 22, Broken Arrow, Okla., new father.
Josephine Posnanski, 98, New Jersey, loved to dance.

The New York Times dedicated its entire front page on Sunday, May 24 to listing some of the names of people who have died from COVID-19. As the United States’ death toll nears 100,000, they said they wanted to pay tribute to the individuals who died. They wanted to honor individuals from around the country and give them a face, not just report statistics. It took much effort and teamwork to research the names. The headline is “U.S. deaths near 100,000, an incalculable loss.” The sub-heading said: “They were not simply names on a list. They were us.”

The paper published nearly 1,000 victims’ names, ages and personal details. “The 1,000 people here reflect just 1 per cent of the toll,” says the paper. “None were just numbers.”

Jessica Baric Cortez, 32, Los Angeles, immigrated to the United States three years ago.
Lila Fenwick, 87, New York City, was the first black woman to graduate from Harvard Law.
Mario Aranjo, 49, Chicago firefighter.
Fred Walter Gray, 75, Benton County, WA, liked his bacon and hash browns crispy.
Orlando Moncada, 56, Bronxville, N.Y., left Peru and grabbed hold of the crispy.

A world of information for English learners www.easyenglishtimes.com

Community organizations work together

People were waiting when they opened. The kits were going fast and were all gone by 3 p.m. Volunteers were wearing masks.

Kits will also be delivered to the elderly and shut-ins who are served by a meal delivery program, said Angie Sanchez, community engagement manager for La Luz.

The event was a partnership of La Luz Center, the Botanical Bus and Daily Acts. The Botanical Bus is a bilingual mobile herb clinic and outreach events. This event was special. It was a distribution of garden kits. The kits included organic soil, herb and vegetable plants, seeds and instructions, and herbal teas. Much thought went into planning what was distributed. The garden kits were packed in a special bag that could also serve as a planter for people who live in apartments or do not have room to plant a garden. They chose herbs and vegetables that are familiar to the people receiving the kits.

They also handed out cloth masks, hand sanitizer and information on the Census. In addition, they provided information on other resources that may be helpful during this stressful time.

On this day the La Luz Center started out with 150 kits at 1 p.m.

Left to right, Yatziry Galvan, Refugio Mata, Amanda Hernandez and Angie Sanchez, the La Luz community engagement team. (Photo by Betty Malmgren)
VOCABULARY HELP

asympotomatic - (of a condition or a person) producing or showing no symptoms at odds - in conflict blow - a big disappointment course - the way in which something progresses or develops easing - becoming less serious or severe key - a thing that provides a means of gaining access to something lockdown - a state of isolation or restricted access outbreak - the sudden or violent start of something unwelcome, such as a disease, war, etc. protocols - the accepted or established codes of procedure or behavior in any group, organization, or situation rally - come together in order to support a person or cause or for concerted action spike - a sharp increase in the magnitude or concentration of something superspreader event - an occasion when something is spread or dispersed to a great or extreme degree track - find or discover by investigation

The first sign of civilization

Years ago, anthropologist Margaret Mead was asked by a student what she considered to be the first sign of civilization in a culture. The student expected Mead to talk about fishhooks or clay pots or grinding stones. But no, Mead said that the first sign of civilization in ancient culture was a femur (thighbone) that had been broken and then healed. Mead explained that in the animal kingdom if you break your leg, you die. You cannot run from danger, get to the river for a drink or hunt for food... No animal survives a broken leg long enough for the bone to heal. A broken femur that has healed is evidence that someone has taken time to stay with the one who fell. Someone has bound the wound, has carried the person to safety... Helping someone else through difficulty is where civilization starts, Mead said. We are at our best when we serve others. (Source: chartforcompassion.org)

Instant activity: More coronavirus headlines

(Editors note: In the April and May issues we also featured headlines and “new” words connected to the current pandemic.) Directions: Read the headlines and quotations below. If there are new words for you, look at the definitions in VOCABULARY HELP. Choose two or three headlines and tell what they mean to you. Try to create original sentences with any words you want to remember. Share them with your teacher or tutor.

About recent changes
1. Lockdown rules are easing
2. Masks key to get transit back on track
3. New protocols for restaurants
4. Nation to test, track and trace
5. Governor tweaks reopening orders
About continuing problems
6. Lockdown restored after spike in cases
7. Coronavirus olduk called ‘superspreader event’
8. Casino shutdowns deal a big blow
9. Americans fear second wave
About controversial positions
10. Protesters rally against stay-at-home orders
11. Health care workers at odds with anti-lockdown protesters
12. Democrats protest watchdog’s removal

Read the following quotations. What do you think?

Quotations from two governors
1. “This virus knows no political ideology. It doesn’t know if you’re a Republican or Democrat, supporting the president, opposing the president,” the governor said last month. “Practice physical distancing. Make sure that you’re not infecting others. Even if you feel healthy, you have no symptoms, you’re asymptomatic. You can spread this.” –California Gov. Gavin Newsom
2. “These are difficult and frustrating times... I support free speech. But crowd counts or speeches won’t determine our course. This isn’t about politics. It can only be about doing what is best for the health of all Washingtonians.” –Washington Gov. Jay Inslee

From the publisher and editor

In our March issue we informed about the virus, symptoms and spread, and encouraged hand washing and staying safe. Coverage continued in April with more health-related information, resources and a description of flattening the curve. “We are all in this together” was one headline. In May we looked at the economic impact. Stress and mental health resources and other impacts such as domestic violence and child abuse were topics. We saluted essential workers.

From groups of volunteers at food banks to individual acts of kindness, in this issue we wanted to share some positive examples of people helping each other. As we went to press for this June issue, the U.S. death toll from COVID-19 was nearing 100,000. The country was starting to re-open. We have a national circulation so encourage you to get updated information from trusted sources on the situation where you live. We have chosen not to report on issues around national and state leadership and, given our publication schedule, can’t include complex topics where information is rapidly changing.

Teachers’ corner

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Publisher: Betty Malmegren
Editor: Lorraine Ruston
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Above, in Sonoma, California there are large painted wood hearts all over town (theREDifSonoma). Left, this sign is in front of a Napa community hospital.

The number of deaths, casualties, or toll - an action or event marking a grim and brittle surface

VOCABULARY HELP

crispy - of cooked food, having a firm, dry and brittle surface
grim - depressing or worrying to consider; unwelcoming
inmculatable - too great to be calculated or estimated
milestone - an action or event marking a significant change or stage
toll - the number of deaths, casualties, or injuries arising from particular circumstances
zest - great enthusiasm and energy

A sign in front of a restaurant offering food to be picked up (to go).

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**Have you ever donated blood?**

Blood donation centers across the country are asking for people to come forward and donate. Under stay-at-home orders, blood drives have been cancelled and donations have decreased. According to the Red Cross, there is a shortage. The reason to donate is simple, they say, it helps save lives. They say every two seconds of every day, someone needs blood. Whether a patient receives whole blood, red cells, platelets or plasma, this lifesaving care starts with one person making a generous donation.

There are many reasons patients need blood. Here are some examples: cancer treatment, surgery, blood disorders, chronic illness, or traumatic injuries. Now in at least 30 states, people can have elective surgeries again.

The medical lab company Vitalant, for example, said its donation centers continue to use strict precautionary measures to ensure the safety of donors, patients and staff. They will take the donors’ temperatures when they check in. They require face coverings for all. They disinfect the surfaces after every donation. And they make sure that social distancing is observed.

To learn more about donating blood, go to this website: redcrossblood.org. There you will find out if you are eligible to give blood, what to expect, and how to get ready for your first blood donation.

**VOCABULARY HELP**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>chronic</td>
<td>(of an illness) persisting for a long time or constantly recurring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disorders</td>
<td>diseases or abnormal conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>elective</td>
<td>(of surgical or medical treatment) chosen by the patient rather than urgently necessary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eligible</td>
<td>satisfying the appropriate conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plasma</td>
<td>the colorless fluid part of blood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>platelets</td>
<td>the small colorless disks involved in clotting (coagulating)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shortage</td>
<td>a state or situation in which something needed cannot be obtained in sufficient amounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>traumatic</td>
<td>relating to or denoting severe injury</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Community organizations**

Continued from page 1 supported the event by providing bottles of hand sanitizer.

According to the La Luz website, in 1985, the wine industry was booming in Sonoma Valley. Hundreds of workers were hired from Mexico, Central and South America to work in the vineyards. On weekends they attended church where they met Ligia Booker. Born in Colombia to a large philanthropic family, Booker saw Sonoma Valley through the eyes of an immigrant. She learned that the vineyard worker families had basic needs like language skills and access to food, clothing and housing. They also needed assistance with medical, legal and financial issues. Booker and a group of Sonoma residents came together to form “La Luz”, Spanish for “The Light.” Over the years, the La Luz Center has expanded services through community partnerships and a talented, resourceful staff.

**VOCABULARY HELP**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>beehive</td>
<td>a busy, crowded place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>booming</td>
<td>having a period of great prosperity or rapid economic growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kits</td>
<td>sets of articles or equipment needed for a specific purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>outreach</td>
<td>an organization’s involvement with or activity in the community, especially in the context of social welfare</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gardening made easy

The garden kit came in a bag that can be used as a planter.

Stickers were handed out to encourage wearing masks and participating in the Census.

Liz Platte-Bermeo of Daily Acts was one of the people working on preparing the garden bags.

**Instant Activity Easy, Easy English**

(Importer’s Note: this space is offered in response to teachers who said they needed easier content for beginning readers.)

The photo above was taken before the COVID-19 crisis. That is why the people in the picture are not wearing masks. The woman who is taking the blood is a phlebotomist. People who have learned this profession work mainly in hospitals, medical laboratories, and blood donor centers. Nurses and other health care professionals also can draw blood.

Use these words to fill in the blanks: blood, center, chair, comfortable, left, looks, putting, smiling

A woman is sitting in a ________ chair at a blood donation center. Her left arm is resting on the arm of the ________. The woman who is donating blood is ________. She _______ relaxed. She has been squeezing a ball in her _____ hand. This helps with the procedure. The phlebotomist is ________ a bandage on the woman’s arm. I think the draw is finished. Now the woman who gave blood will get some _____ juice and cookies before she leaves the ______.

**Our readers write from San Mateo, California**

(Importer’s note: Maki Tanaka sent us the story below. She writes, “I’m learning English at San Mateo Adult School. Before staying home in this situation I went to the adult school. My teachers and friends there are very wonderful. I hope to go back as soon as possible.”)

Being grateful to mothers, fathers and supporters

by Maki Tanaka (Japan)

Mother’s Day means that we indicate to our mother that we are always grateful for her. Before writing about this topic, I never knew that the modern celebration of this day came from the U.S. It started on May 9th, 1905. A girl, Anna Jarvis, lost her mother and wanted to pay tribute to her. In Japan at first, Mother’s Day was March 6th, the empress’s birthday. It changed to the second Sunday in May, the same day it is celebrated in the U.S.

Father’s Day was celebrated in 1910 because an American girl suggested establishing a Father’s Day holiday. Her father was a single parent who raised his six children. In 1966, President Lyndon B. Johnson issued the first presidential proclamation honoring fathers. He designated the third Sunday in June as Father’s Day. After that in 1972, Father’s Day became a national holiday in Japan.

When I was a child, my older brother and I bought something special for our mother. Sometimes, it was a bouquet of flowers and other times it was a handwritten note for helping her. The year of a handwritten note might be that we were broke. I remembered that every time we gave her something, she was overwhelmed and she hugged us tightly.

Of course, we gave our father something on Father’s Day. But I always thought that something in my mind was a little different compared to the feeling toward my mother. I wondered why I felt like this. Nevertheless I loved my father as much as my mother.

The time went by and we grew up and left our parents. We handed them something, not handwritten notes but presents bought somewhere.

One day, I asked them casually if they felt a little melancholic. They answered no, because they received a lot of presents as memories

Continued on page 5
My daily walks

(EDITOR’S NOTE: Sarah Rohrs is a contributor to Easy English Times. She lives in Salem, Oregon.)

Story and photos by Sarah Rohrs

Staying at home, wearing a mask and keeping my distance from other people when out in public have been the central features of my life since early March. This is when the coronavirus pandemic caused so many changes in the way I and all of us live.

I take a daily walk or bike ride in my neighborhood to help me cope with the stress and worry the COVID-19 pandemic has caused. These walks and bike rides are good exercise, a vital component of staying healthy. I also get to enjoy the flowers, trees and lovely gardens my neighbors have planted.

People can spread the virus before they know they are sick, so it is important to practice social distancing, even if you have no symptoms. When I go for my walks and bike rides, I wear a mask and carry hand sanitizer with me. I cross the street when someone is walking toward me, and stay away from crowded parks and paths.

I enjoy the fresh air and sunshine, and can get away from the continuous news about the coronavirus on my computer and TV. I also take lots of photographs, one of my favorite hobbies.

There is always so much to see. This spring, I have enjoyed pink flowering dogwood trees, lavender lilac bushes, and many azaleas bushes and irises.

I often spot attractive houses painted bright colors, and, sometimes, spot funny things, such as a stone lion with a mask. I like to stop at the Little Free Library boxes in my neighborhood. I put on hand sanitizer before looking through the books.

When I get back home from my walk or bike ride, I wash my hands and sanitize any surfaces I may have touched after being outdoors. My daily walks help relieve stress and provide much enjoyment of the beauty of our natural world. It’s all available just outside my door.

VOCABULARY HELP
get away - leave one’s home or work for a time of rest or recreation; go on a vacation path - a way or a track for walking; trails
glare - to stare at someone or something in a threatening or scolding manner
menace - a person, animal or thing that is likely to cause harm; a threat or danger
opossum - a nocturnal freshwater crustacean that resembles a small lobster and inhabits streams and rivers
predators - animals that feed on carrion - scavengers - animals that feed on carcasses or excreta
recreationalization - (informal) living creatures; animals
scavengers - (informal) living creatures; animals
screw - (verb) to unfasten by twisting
unscrew - (verb) to unfasten by twisting
unscrew - (verb) to unfasten by twisting
"It’s not what you look at that matters; it’s what you see.”
— Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862), writer and philosopher

“Everything has beauty, but not everyone sees it.”
— Confucius (551 BC – 479 BC), Chinese philosopher and politician
June 2020 Easy English Times Page 5

Flag Day is June 14

On June 14, 1777, the Continental Congress, seeking to promote national pride and unity, adopted the national flag. Here is what they wrote: "Resolved: that the flag of the United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation."

Right, the American flag flies daily over this high school in California. On May 22 a rainbow flag flew below it for Harvey Milk's birthday.

The flag that inspired the national anthem

On September 14, 1814, U.S. soldiers at Baltimore’s Fort McHenry raised a huge American flag to celebrate a crucial victory over British forces during the War of 1812. The sight of those “broad stripes and bright stars” inspired Francis Scott Key to write a song that became the national anthem of the United States.

The Star-Spangled Banner

O say, can you see, by the dawn’s early light? What so proudly we hailed at the twilight’s last gleaming? Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the perilous fight, O’er the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming? And the rockets’ red glare, the bombs bursting in air, Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there. O say, does that Star-Spangled Banner yet wave O’er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

VOCABULARY FROM THE SONG

brave - ready to face and endure danger or pain; showing courage
broad - wide; having a large distance from side to side; wide
bursting - breaking suddenly and violently apart
dawn’s - the first appearance of light in the sky before sunrise
gallantly - in a brave or heroic manner
glare - a strong or dazzling light
gleaming - shining, especially with reflected light
hailed - acclaimed or praised enthusiastically
o’er - over
perilous - full of danger or risk
proof - evidence sufficient to establish a thing is true
proudly - with a feeling of deep satisfaction
ramparts - defensive or protective barriers
star-spangled - the stars decorating the American flag
streaming - flowing or waving
twilight - the period of the evening when twilight takes place, between daylight and darkness
wave - move to and fro with a swaying or undulating motion while remaining fixed to one point

June holidays

June is Gay Pride Month

June is Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) Pride Month. It is an international celebration. The month has been observed since 1970 in the United States, one year after the Stonewall Rebellion which took place on June 28, 1969. People remember the rebellion as the first major demonstrations for gay rights in America. It was estimated that more than 2 million people took part in the 2019 New York Pride celebration to mark the 50th anniversary of that event. The New York Pride Parade, like most other large public events, will not be held this year. Celebrations will be virtual.

Harvey Milk was California’s first openly LGBTQ politician, LGBTQ civil rights champion and an inspiration to many. He was elected to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. On November 27, 1978, Milk and Mayor George Moscone were assassinated by Dan White, who was another supervisor. On Harvey Milk Day, his birthday May 22, people in San Francisco and across the country honored his life. The symbolic rainbow flag was flown in many places on his birthday. It will also be raised as part of the June celebration.

Juneteenth

Juneteenth is an annual holiday which occurs on June 19th. “Juneteenth is named for a combination of ‘June’ and ‘nineteenth.’ It is said to be one of the oldest celebrations of the abolition of slavery. This holiday isn’t an official government holiday but it is recognized as a ceremonial observance in about half of the U.S. states.

VOCABULARY HELP

rainbow flag - a symbol of the diversity of the LGBTQ community
Stonewall Rebellion - a series of spontaneous, violent demonstrations by members of the LGBTQ community against a police raid that began in the early morning hours of June 28, 1969 at the Stonewall Inn in the Greenwich Village neighborhood of New York City.
virtual - created in a computer or online world

YouTube graduation celebration in June

On June 6 former President Barack Obama and his wife Michelle will participate in a graduation celebration via YouTube. Many other famous people will also speak. Some of them are Lady Gaga, Alicia Keys, former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, and Malala Yousafzai, the Pakistani women’s education activist who won the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize.

Summer solstice is June 20

The first day of summer arrives with the solstice on Saturday, June 20. In the Northern Hemisphere, this marks the longest day of the year and the moment when the Sun reaches the Tropic of Cancer, its highest point. In the Southern Hemisphere, this is the shortest day of the year and the beginning of winter.

Citizenship

(Answers, page 7.)
1. Why does the flag have 13 stripes?
2. Why does the flag have 50 stars?
3. What is the name of the national anthem?

Our readers write from California

(Editor’s note: Evelia is a student in Lorraine Ruston’s Napa Valley College ESL class.)

What does citizenship mean to you?
by Evelia (Mexico)

For me citizenship means that I can do many things in this country. The first thing I can do is vote in the election. If I were a citizen, I would have more opportunities. For example, I could have a driver’s license and look for a good job that offers good benefits. Another thing I can do as a citizen is travel wherever I want.

Our readers write from San Mateo

Continued from page 3

from us, and now they have another Memorial Day named Respect of the Ages. They have five grandchildren. We, including our children, are planning to do something together every year. Last year, we all went for a climb which took an hour from home. It was very exciting and fun.

Now I’m back to the question about the difference between Mother’s Day and Father’s Day. I finally reached a conclusion. There are the words Mother Earth or Mother Sea. The plants couldn’t live without Earth, and also the Sea enables marine life to live. Every creature starts from mothers.

Now I talk about human mothers. Mothers deserve to be praised.

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Continued from page 3

from us, and now they have another Memorial Day named Respect of the Ages. They have five grandchildren. We, including our children, are planning to do something together every year. Last year, we all went for a climb which took an hour from home. It was very exciting and fun.

Now I’m back to the question about the difference between Mother’s Day and Father’s Day. I finally reached a conclusion. There are the words Mother Earth or Mother Sea. The plants couldn’t live without Earth, and also the Sea enables marine life to live. Every creature starts from mothers.

Now I talk about human mothers. Mothers deserve to be praised.
I. Conversation questions: Talk with your classmates or tutor and share your movie experiences. You can also start a conversation by asking for movie suggestions.
1. Have you seen any good movies lately?
2. How often do you see movies?
3. Where do you find movies to watch at home?
4. Which movies have you seen that took place in New York?
5. Have you ever seen a celebrity or famous actor? Where?
6. Have you ever acted in a play or movie? Can you describe your experience?
7. Which genres of movies do you enjoy most? Why?
8. What movies have you seen that took place in New York?
9. How many times have you watched the movie?
10. Did you have a favorite movie as a child?
11. Do you know anybody who had a "crush" on a famous actor or actress?

II. Quotations
1. "Talking about dreams is like talking about movies since the cinema uses the language of dreams: years pass in a second and you can hop from one place to another." – Federico Fellini (1920-1993) Italian film director
2. "You know what your problem is? It's that you haven't seen enough movies – all of life's riddles are answered in the movies." – Steve Martin (1945- ), comedian
3. "Watch this if you like, and if you don't take a hike. Clint Eastwood (1930- ), actor, director, and producer
4. "Life is like a movie, write your own ending. Keep believing, keep pretending." – Jim Henson (1936-1990), American creator of Muppets
5. "Acting is not an important job in the scheme of things. Plumbing is." – Spencer Tracy (1900-1967), actor

III. Search and Share - reviewing movies
Select one of your favorite films. Go to imdb.com or metacritic.com and research your selected film. Take notes. A strong movie review will combine both facts and opinions. Share your information:
Movie title: __________________
Year released: ____________
Length: ___________
Actor/Actresses: __________________
How many times have you watched the movie: ___________
Plot information:
1. Where and when did the movie take place?
2. Who is the main character? Can you describe any other important characters?
3. What happens in the movie?
4. What is the best part? Why?
5. Does the movie surprise the audience? How?
6. Who do you think would like this movie?
7. How could the movie be better?
8. How would you rate the movie on a scale of 1-5 with five being the highest?
9. Can you choose three adjectives to describe this movie?

Vocabulary Help
- Crush on - (informal) have a brief but intense infatuation for (someone)
- Hike - a long walk, especially in the country or wilderness
- Hop - (informal) pass quickly from one place to another
- Plot - the main events of a play, novel, movie, or similar work, devised and presented by the writer as an interrelated sequence
- Pretending – making believe
- Research - investigate
- Scheme – an ordered arrangement, plan

A blast from the past
Movies with social distance
It is said that the first drive-in movie theater opened on June 6, 1933 in Camden, New Jersey. Soon more and more drive-ins appeared in every state. Drive-ins were especially popular during the 1950s and ‘60s. Many Baby Boomers remember going to drive-ins as children and later on dates. There were more than 4,000 drive-ins throughout the U.S. Most were located in rural areas. Today there are only about 300 drive-ins still in operation. Ohio, New York and Pennsylvania have the most. With COVID-19 some drive-ins are seeing more business. And, in some places, new temporary drive-ins have been created in large parking lots.

Our readers write from California
(Editor's notes: The stories below were by students in Lorraine Ruston’s Napa Valley College ESL class. They were prompted by the 'Search and share' activity on page 6 of the May issue of Easy English Times about television.)

Watching a TV series
by Sherry Chen  (China)
I used to make an excuse for myself to watch an English TV series to improve my English, so I've watched many English TV dramas, such as Modern Family, Shameless, Game of Thrones, Downton Abbey etc. However, I found my English didn’t advance as expected after watching so many TV shows, because I just watch and pay attention to the plot instead of spending much energy and making efforts to learn from the conversations. Anyway, I still like to watch English TV series now, with some kind of guilty pleasure.

Recently, I've been addicted to a TV series which is called The Big Bang Theory. It’s a good companion while eating. It is an American situation comedy, resembling Friends or How I Met Your Mother which are both based on a group of twenty-somethings’ lives, but the characters of The Big Bang Theory are mostly nerds, especially the male characters. One of the important characters is Sheldon, who has a mixture of nerdish arrogance and childish qualities. He went to college at the age of 11 and worked at the California Institute of Technology at the age of 23 after he got two master’s degrees and two doctorate degrees. He is a down-right genius in IQ but his social behavior and lifestyle are very strange. This character often brings much laughter with nerd traits in the TV plot, but I think if I knew such a person in real life, I could not tolerate him. This TV series is highly rated, but there are various criticisms of it. Some people think it caters to and intensifies all kinds of stereotypes of ordinary people, including nerd life, gender bias, racial discrimination etc. Anyway, that doesn’t affect the fact that many people still like the series. But because this TV series enjoys great

Create Compelling American Conversations
Compelling American Conversations: Questions & Quotations for Intermediate American English Language Learners is designed to help American English language students develop their fluency skills and academic vocabulary through conversation exercises. Focusing on American culture through proverbs, quotations, and speaking exercises, intermediate English language learners will explore these topics, learn common American expressions, and develop vital discussion skills. Includes online activities.

“Create Compelling American Conversations” is also available at Amazon.com & in ebook format. The e-book is also available for download.

Created and produced for Quick Start English Times by the authors of this book: Toni Aberson, Hal Bogatch, and Teresa X. Nguyen. See ad on this page.
Safe for consumers

The World Health Organization, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have all affirmed that COVID-19 cannot be spread through food itself.

Unsafe for workers

Meat processing plants across the country are having difficulties because of outbreaks of the coronavirus. As we went to press, more than 4,900 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 20 deaths have been connected to the disease at meat and poultry processing facilities in 19 states. This is according to a report published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Experts agree that the actual number is probably much higher because there are problems with reporting and lack of testing. Meat processing plants and places where animals are slaughtered and places where animals are slaughtered share vans or shuttle vehicles, car-sharing transportation such as ride-sharing, and are in close contact with potentially infectious individuals. Shared spaces such as break rooms and locker rooms may also contribute to the risk. A common practice at some workplaces is sharing transportation such as ride-share vans or shuttle vehicles, cars, and public transportation. Crowded living conditions and common practice at some workplaces is sharing transportation such as ride-share vans or shuttle vehicles, cars, and public transportation. Crowded living conditions and frequent contact with fellow workers in the community may also be factors.

At least 12 of the 25 hotspots in the U.S. originated in meat factories where employees work in cramped conditions. The CDC report came the same week that President Donald Trump signed an executive order to keep meat processing plants open. He said he wanted to try to prevent shortages of chicken, pork, and beef in the U.S. More than 20 meatpacking plants had closed as concerns increased because of infected workers. Pork processing plants have been hit especially hard, with three of the largest in the country closing — Smithfield Foods in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, JBS pork processing in Worthington, Minnesota and Tyson Fresh Foods in Waterloo, Iowa. They have since re-opened.

The Texas Panhandle, where a workforce of Hispanics and immigrants are vital to meatpacking plants, is home to the highest rates of infection in that state.

Efforts to protect Georgia's poultry workers have been "too little, too late," said Vanesa Sarazua, the founder and executive director of Hispanic Alliance of Georgia, a nonprofit based in Gainesville.

(VOCABULARY HELP affirmed – stated as a fact; asserted strongly and publicly)

(VOCABULARY HELP cramped - feeling or causing someone to feel uncomfortably confined or hemmed in by lack of space)

(VOCABULARY HELP factors - circumstances, facts, or influences that contribute to a result or outcome)

(VOCABULARY HELP hotspot - a place of significant activity or danger)

(VOCABULARY HELP monitoring - observing and checking the progress or quality of (something) over a period of time)

-Outbreaks - the sudden or violent starts of something unwelcome, such as war, diseases, etc.

slaughtered - killed

Instant Activity: Idioms

by Toni Aberson

(Editor’s note: The lesson below comes from Unit Five, in Toni Aberson’s book, “It’s a Breeze.” See ad below.)

Colorful language

Bright colors are everywhere in our world. We all react to the colors around us. We also use colors in our language to describe our feelings and experiences.

Can you guess where these colors go in the sentences below? Does your language have similar expressions? Check your answers with the answer key on page 8.

Use these colors: black, blue, red, green, pink

1. I bought a _______ dress for my baby granddaughter.

2. When I saw the _______ traffic light, I knew I had to stop.

3. Ida wore a _______ dress to her great aunt’s funeral.

4. When Charles yelled at her for no reason, Kathy saw _______.

5. The bride wore a traditional _______ gown with a veil and long train.

6. When my new car was delivered, I was tickled _______.

7. I realized that my next door neighbor was _______ with envy.

8. She knitted a _______ sweater for the new baby boy.

9. The _______ movement works to protect our oceans, lakes and rivers.

10. John was pleased when he saw that his business was making a profit and was in the _______.

11. Juana was sad when her father moved away. She was feeling _______.

Teaching or Studying Idioms?

It’s A Breeze 4th Booklet English Lessons on American Idioms

This booklet contains 44 lessons that have been designed to teach English language students about American idioms. The lessons are arranged in alphabetical order and cover a wide range of topics, from social and cultural idioms to idioms related to everyday life. Each lesson includes a brief explanation of the idiom, examples of how to use it in context, and exercises to help students practice using the idiom. The lessons are designed to be accessible to students at all levels of proficiency, and the idioms are presented in a fun and engaging way to help students develop their vocabulary and language skills.

Citizenship answers

(1) Learn one of these two correct answers:

- because there are 13 original colonies
- because the stripes represent the original colonies

(2) Learn one of these three correct answers:

- because there is one star for each state
- because each star represents a state
- because there are 50 states

(3) The Star-Spangled Banner

(VOCABULARY HELP grounds - the feeling or quality of being arrogant, having or revealing an exaggerated sense of one’s own importance or abilities)

nerd - a person who lacks social skills or is a single-minded expert in a particular technical field
Movie/DVD review
by Lorraine Ruston

“Linda Ronstadt: The Sound of My Voice”

Documentary film features singer’s beautiful voice

This movie is a musical biography of singer Linda Ronstadt. She was one of the most successful and versatile singers of the 20th century. Today she has Parkinson’s disease and her magnificent singing voice has been affected. But we can hear her songs through this excellent documentary film. Much of the movie is narrated by Linda herself. Many of her professional colleagues also join in the telling of her story. Some of them include Dolly Parton, Emmylou Harris, Bonnie Raitt, Jackson Browne, and Aaron Neville.

We learn about her versatility. She was a very popular pop music performer, but also explored a variety of musical styles. She sang country music songs, classical operetta and traditional Mexican songs. One of her most popular albums is “Canciones de mi Padre” that used three of the best Mariachi bands in the world. It was released in 1987 and is the biggest selling non-English language album in American record history, according to Wikipedia.

A children’s story
(Editors’ note: This is a fable attributed to Aesop, a famous storyteller from ancient days. Aesop lived in the 6th century B.C. and traveled in Babylon, Egypt and Greece. A fable is a short story that teaches a lesson.)

The milkmaid

Reader one: Narrator
Reader two: Milkmaid

Narrator: This story takes place a long time ago. A young woman is walking to the market. She is carrying a jug of milk on her head. As she walks, she begins to daydream.

Milkmaid: With the money I get for the milk, I will buy a basket of eggs. I will let the eggs hatch into four dozen hens. I will raise the hens in the barnyard. They will get fat from eating seeds. Then I will sell them. With the money I earn, I will buy a little pig. Then I will sell the pig and buy ... a calf! Afterward, I will sell the calf and buy myself a beautiful dress. I will wear the dress to town and all the boys will look at me. Then I will lift up my head proudly, like this.

Narrator: As she lifted up her head, the jug of milk fell to the ground and broke.

Milkmaid: Goodbye milk, goodbye eggs, goodbye hens, goodbye pig, goodbye calf! Goodbye beautiful dress!

Narrator: The moral to this story is this: Don’t count your chickens before they hatch!

VOCABULARY HELP
barnyard - the area of open ground around a barn
calf - a baby cow or bull
daydream - to allow the mind to think pleasantly, to fantasize
hatch - to bring a bird or chicken’s eggs to life by sitting on them
jug - a container for liquid with a handle
milkmaid - a girl or woman who milks cows or does other work in a dairy

Sports

COVID-19 has taken a major toll on sports from T-ball and youth soccer to professional sports. And full stadiums with cheering crowds won’t be back anytime soon. Some have said that fans may not be in big stadiums until a vaccine is available.

The film about Linda Ronstadt begins with her singing one of her ‘70s hits, “You’re No Good”. We then learn about how she grew up in Tucson, Arizona. Her great grandfather went to Mexico from Germany in 1839. Her father’s father moved to Tucson when he was 14. His passion was music and he wrote the arrangements for a Mariachi group there. Linda’s family lived on a ranch, isolated from town. Their lives were filled with music.

When she was 18, Linda’s friend Bob Kimmel invited her to go to Los Angeles and sing in a trio. They called themselves the Stone Ponies. They had some success and by the end of the 1960s Linda was singing solos. She hit it big with an album titled “Heart Like a Wheel” in 1974.

In total Linda won 12 Grammy Awards. In 2014 she was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame.

Other topics covered by the film include Ronstadt’s rise as the “queen of country rock” in the 1970s. It shows her advocacy for women in the male-dominated music industry. The film also mentions her romance with California Governor Jerry Brown in 1979. They met each other at Lucy’s El Adobe Mexican Restaurant in Hollywood.

The documentary film was directed by Oscar-winning filmmakers Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman. I recommend watching it with closed captions.

VOCABULARY HELP
advocacy - public support for or recommendation of a particular cause or policy
hit - reached (a particular level or point)
included - admitted formally to an organization or position
rise - an increase in numbers, quantities, or levels
versatile - able to adapt or be adapted to many different functions or activities

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