

# Easy English NEWS

Is English your new language?  
 It's here for you!  
 It's for anyone else, too!



\$2.50

Volume VIII Number 1

September 2002

## Nine Eleven—One year later



Construction workers have cleared the World Trade Center site\* in New York City. AP Photo/Suzanne Plunkett, July 30, 2002

One year has passed since **terrorists\* attacked\*** the World Trade Center and the **Pentagon\***. Americans will be **marking\*** this **anniversary\*** all over the country. There will be special TV programs, speeches, and **memorial ceremonies\***.

Leaders wonder what to build at the World Trade Center **site\***. They want everyone to remember the people who died there on September 11, 2001.

### Lessons from 9/11\*

Educators ask, *What must we learn from 9/11?* In many high school and college classes, students will talk about the changes that 9/11 has brought to this country. They will learn about the **roots\*** of terrorism.

### Security

Since September 11, the government has been working 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to prevent more terrorism. President Bush has asked all Americans to “add your eyes and ears to protect our homeland.”

### The war on terrorism

The United States fought a war in Afghanistan. They **destroyed\*** the terrorist training camps there. Sixty thousand U.S. **troops\*** are now working around the world. However, they have not yet found Osama bin Laden, the leader of **Al-Qaeda\***.

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



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## School in the U.S.A.

Forty-seven million students will be going to public schools this year. Another five million will go to private schools.

Our national government wants U.S. students to be the best in the world.

### American schools are getting harder

Most states have already **raised the standards\*** for graduation. Teachers are giving more homework. Tests are harder. More students are taking difficult science and math courses. Students must know how to use computers. They must pass state examinations to get a high-school **diploma\***.

Workers need a good education to get good jobs. The United States does not have many factory jobs. Factories have moved to other countries, where **wages\*** are much lower.

(continued on page 3)



Giselle Cruz, 7, is an ESL student at West Elementary School in Washington, D.C. Sandra Larios, a teaching aide, stands ready to help. AP Photo/ Rick Bowmer

# Events in

## Labor day

Monday, September 2, is Labor Day. It's a national holiday. There are parades of workers in many cities. There are picnics and parties. **Union\*** leaders and government leaders make speeches.

Labor Day is a three-day weekend for many people. It's the last summer holiday before many schools begin.

### Immigrants and America

Many of the workers who built America were immigrants. Those immigrants built our railroads, highways, bridges, tunnels, canals, and tall buildings. Immigrants also found jobs in factories. They made clothing, shoes, machinery, cars, and many other things. Immigrants worked in **mines\***. They dug the coal for America's factories.

In America's early history, workers' pay was low. Jobs were dangerous. Workers worked 12 hours a day, six days a week. If a worker asked for more money, he was **fired\***. When a worker got killed on the job, there was no **insurance\*** to help his family.

Owners of factories, mines, and construction companies did not think about the workers' safety or health. They could always get new workers.

### The first unions\*

Some workers tried to **organize\*** labor unions. "One

person cannot change this system," said the union organizers. "Let's stand together. Then we can ask for better pay and safer conditions. We can **strike\*** until the owners treat us fairly."

Owners of mines and factories tried to stop unions. They asked the government to make laws against unions. Police **arrested\*** labor leaders and strikers. Owners hired private armies to fight the unions. They beat union leaders, and burned their homes. These labor wars continued from 1820 up to the 1940s.

### Labor laws

Labor unions needed the government to help them. But how? The government was on the side of the *owners*.

Unions worked hard to elect new lawmakers. In the 1930s and 1940s, new members of Congress passed laws to protect workers:

- Children must go to school.
- Child labor is not allowed.
- A full work-week is 40 hours. Employers must pay **time and a half\*** for overtime.
- Employers must pay **unemployment insurance\***, and **Workman's Compensation\*** Insurance.
- Employers must pay the **minimum\*** wage to all workers.

September 2002						
Sun	Mon	Tues	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					



Workers in a Manhattan garment factory. AP Photo/Paul Warner 1999

A government agency, OSHA (**Occupational\*** Safety and Health Administration), was set up. OSHA makes rules to protect workers' health and safety on the job.

Unions wanted contracts between the employers and the workers. They asked for paid vacations, paid holidays, and paid health insurance for the workers. Strong unions got many of these things for their members.

The new laws created better conditions and better pay for American workers. Workers began to enjoy life. Their children could go to school. Workers could **afford\*** to buy more of the things that other workers made. This created a very good **economy\*** in the United States. It created a large **middle class\***.

### Factories move

Factory owners were not happy with unions. First, they moved to

southern states. There were no unions there. They could pay lower wages. When southern workers joined unions, owners closed their factories. They opened factories in "Third World" (poor) countries. There are no laws to protect workers there. The workers' conditions in those countries now, are like conditions in the U.S. 100 years ago.

### Sweatshops\* today

Many immigrants work in small factories in American cities. In some of these sweatshops, working conditions are as bad as in Third World countries. The pay is low. Employers treat workers like slaves.

The workers do not have legal visas to be in the U.S. They do not speak English. They are afraid they will be **deported\***. They do not complain to the government. American unions want to protect these workers, too.



A Labor Day parade with giant puppets, in Detroit, 1999. The puppets are of famous labor organizers Walter Reuther, left, and Mother Jones, right. AP Photo/Paul Warner

# September

## Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur

Rosh Hashana, the Jewish New Year, begins on the evening of September 6. It is celebrated for two days.

On Rosh Hashana, Jews go to the **synagogue\***. They take an honest look at themselves. They look for ways to improve themselves. They ask God to give them one more year of life.

They have a dinner with family and friends. They say special prayers. They eat *challah* (a sweet bread) dipped in honey. This is to show their hope for a sweet new year. Then many Jews spend ten days preparing for Yom Kippur, the Day of **Atonement\***.

Yom Kippur begins at sundown, September 15. Many Jews spend the whole day in the synagogue. They do not eat or drink for 24



Emma Lazarus 1840-1887

hours. They **apologize\*** to God for breaking their promises.

### Jews in U.S. history

Jews live in almost every country in the world. About five million Jews live in Israel. Almost *six million* Jews live in the United States.

A Jew, Luis de Torres, sailed with Christopher Columbus in 1492. Jews fought and died in the **American Revolution\***. One American Jew, Haym Salomon, gave most of his fortune to help pay for that war. Jews brought the **Liberty Bell\*** from England. They fought in the Civil War. They helped in the **Civil Rights Movement\***.

Many Jews came to America for religious freedom. Thousands came here during the 1930s to escape **Nazi\*** Germany.

Many Jews have become teachers, doctors, dentists, research scientists, lawyers, **entertainers\*** and business owners. They have helped America's projects in space, engineering, and power plants. They served in American armed forces.

Emma Lazarus, a Jewish writer, wrote the poem that is on the base of the Statue of Liberty. This poem welcomes poor immigrants to the United States.

*Give me tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses  
yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse  
of your teeming shore,  
Send these, the homeless,  
tempest-tossed, to me:  
I lift my lamp beside the Golden Door.  
Emma Lazarus, The New Colossus*

## Autumn

Autumn begins September 23. The weather becomes cooler.

In many parts of the U.S., leaves change color, from green to yellow, orange, and red. People enjoy driving in the countryside to see the autumn leaves. There are bus tours to the **New England\*** states. The leaves are very colorful there.

### Autumn safety tip

When autumn leaves fall, people rake or blow the leaves into big piles. In some towns, leaves are piled in the street, near the sidewalk. Trucks from the town pick up the leaves. These piles of leaves can be dangerous for cars. Never park a car over a pile of dry leaves! A hot part of the car can set the leaves on fire. When you start your car, a **spark\*** from your engine could cause a fire. This would be right near your gas tank!



A dangerous place to park a car.

## School in the U.S.A.

(continued from page 1)

### ESL students

Five million school students speak no English, or very little English. A few years ago, most English-as-a-Second-Language students were in the big cities. Today, there are ESL classes in every state. There are ESL students in many small towns. Hispanic students are the fastest-growing student group. The number of Asians is also increasing very fast.

These students have a big job: learning English. They also need to learn how to get along in their new country.

### Not enough teachers

Many teachers will **retire\*** this year or in the next few years. There will be a teacher **shortage**, especially in science, math, and ESL. Some schools are **overcrowded\*** now. Teachers' salaries are low. College graduates can choose jobs that pay much more than teaching pays.

### The cost of schools

Public schools are free. The average cost per student in elementary schools is about \$6,000. In high school, the average cost is \$7,700. Americans pay for schools by **local\*** taxes on **property\***, and by state **income\*** taxes. The **federal\*** government

sends money to some schools, too.

The cost of a college education is about \$19,800 per year. This is more than any other country spends on higher education. The costs at **public** colleges are paid for partly by state, county, or city taxes.

Students with very good grades or special abilities can get **scholarships\***. Students from low- and middle-income families may get government **grants\***. Students may also get **loans\***. Many college students work part time, too.

Sources: National Center for Education Statistics; National Research Council.



Dawn DiBella, a college student from Saddle Brook, NJ, works to help pay her costs at college. She is an assistant in a dentist's office.

# This is your page

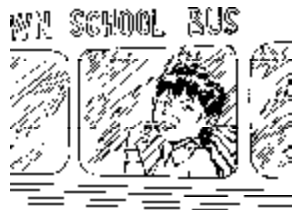
## My worst day

My first day in school in the U.S. was so strange. I did not know what to do.

When I went to school, I got a schedule from the guidance counselor. She got someone to translate it for me. My first class was ESL. There were just ten students in my ESL class. One of them was Korean. That made me very happy. But when the ESL teacher said, "Introduce yourself," I could not say anything at all.

A bell rang and I went to my social studies class. I just sat there, and listened. I did not understand anything. Most of the students were playing and talking loudly. That class was horrible.

Finally, the school day was over. I put my things in my locker and went to get the bus. I did not know where to get off. After 15



minutes, I felt that something was wrong. I realized that I had passed my house. I was really scared. But the bus driver was a very nice person. After all the students got off, he drove back to my stop.

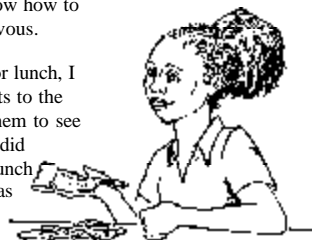
Now I can speak English, and I have many friends. I am also doing school activities. I even do community service in a hospital. I like going to an American school, now.

*Steven Song*

## The first day of school

The first day of school was very difficult for me. The students **stared\*** at me. I wanted to go home, but I didn't know how to say that. I was so nervous.

When a bell rang for lunch, I followed other students to the cafeteria. I watched them to see what they did. Then I did the same. They took lunch and I took lunch. It was pizza and French Fries. I had never



seen this kind of food before. I tasted it, and I didn't like it.

Some students came up to me. They asked me where I was from. I didn't understand. One girl opened one of her books. She showed me the world map. I pointed to my country, Ethiopia.

After lunch I started to walk down the hall. I didn't know where my next class was. A teacher yelled at me. She thought I spoke English. I didn't know what to say. She kept yelling at me. I just stared at her. She took me to the office.

The secretary knew me. She told the teacher that I didn't speak English. After that the teacher took me to my class.

When I was in the class I needed to go to the bathroom. I walked up to the teacher. I used sign language to tell her I wanted to go to the bathroom. She said OK. But I did not understand which one was for boys and which one was for girls. I went into the boys' bathroom.



When I walked in, a boy looked at me and laughed at me. The teacher came up to me and showed me the girls' bathroom.

After I got home, I told my mom and dad about my first day. They felt sorry for me. After that day I started to learn English. Now I am good at it.

*Messay Bekele  
Columbia, SC (Ethiopia)*

## From the bottom to the top

When I came to America from Brazil I was seven and a half years old.

My mom wanted to put me in second grade. The secretary of the school said that it would be better to put me in first grade, because I didn't know any English.

I knew how to write and read in Portuguese. I knew a lot of math too. But I was really scared. I wondered if I would ever learn English like everybody else.

At the beginning, I had to use the dictionary a lot. I spent a lot of time doing my homework. I kept on trying and trying to get better.

By the second grade, I was one of the best students in my class. My teacher gave me and some of my friends extra work in spelling and reading. I was glad because it would help me get better.

In third grade, I was still one of the top students, and I could read very well. In the middle of the year I had a test called the I.O.W.A. Test. This was to see if I could go to the special program at Roosevelt School. Only 12 third-graders could go.

I got 99% on math and 93% on reading. The teachers asked if I wanted to go to Roosevelt. I said "Yes!"

So this year I will go to Roosevelt School.

*Guilherme Sano  
West Bloomfield, MI (Brazil)*

## We called 911

One night, my friend Livia and I were driving down a small road. It was night time. We had just left a **Karaoke\*** club.

Suddenly, my friend asked me: "Did you see the **body** in the street?"

I said "No, it must be your **imagination\***." But I decided it was better to go back and make sure. So we went back.

We saw a car on the sidewalk. The engine was running. The car was smashed up against a tree.



Then we realized that it was an accident.

We went back to the place where my friend saw the body. It was a man lying on the side of the street. He was bleeding.

We were afraid to get out of the car. We called 911. We told the police about the accident. It was the first time we had ever called this phone number. After two minutes, the police and an ambulance came. We saw that the man was not dead. He could walk.

Then the police asked us about the accident. We hadn't seen it, so we could not say anything about it. Then we asked if we could leave. We drove back home. We were so upset that night. The next day we told that story to everybody we knew.

I think the readers of *Easy English NEWS* should learn to call 911, in case they see an accident like this.

*Rima Kalinauskaitė  
Reston, Virginia (Lithuania)*

## My sad experience

My sad experience was last year. An army of **rebels\*** attacked my **village\*** early one morning. They were fighting for power. They moved all of us out of our village. We had to walk all the way to the next country, Guinea, to save our lives. It was 110 miles.

We slept in the **bush\*** for three days. We had no food to eat. During that time, the rebels killed two of my uncles. I lost some of my family members and my friends. I also lost my money. I pray that I don't go through that kind of experience again in my life. I miss my home and my family. But now, I thank God because there is peace in my life, and I have good health.

*Isatu Tarawa, North Brunswick,  
NJ (Sierra Leone)*



# Ask Elizabeth

student in front of the class. The teacher said that this woman could never become a lawyer in the U.S. because she came from a Muslim country. The teacher made fun of the kind of clothes that this girl wears.

Each state has rules about who may practice law. In some states, a person must be a U.S. citizen. In other states, it is not necessary. There is no law against wearing Muslim clothing in court.

for drunk driving may show that a person is an **alcoholic\***. The **Immigration and Naturalization Service\*** might decide that the person does not have a good moral character.

Dear Elizabeth,

I'm a **freshman\*** in high school. I just got here two and a half years ago. How can I get high scores on college tests? What are the important things to notice on the test? Do I need to take any classes?

I could not stand there and see the girl with tears in her eyes. I came home thinking that I needed to do something to help her. This student has nothing to do with the terrorist crimes that have happened. She is a lovely, well-educated girl. I am afraid the teacher is not very **wise\***. She is spreading wrong information to that girl and other students.

Dear Elizabeth,

Last fall, you wrote that a person could lose their green card for a **minor\* crime\***, even if it was a long time ago. Is *drunk driving* a minor crime? Can you lose your **green card\*** for that?

In some states a person can be sent to jail after three convictions for drunk driving. Then it is a felony. The person can lose the green card.

**Driving under the influence\*** of alcohol or drugs (DUI) can lead to an accident. Then drunk driving is a crime of **violence\***, and a felony.

Raimundo

Dear Raimundo,

A **felony\*** is a serious crime. A person who is **convicted\*** of a felony can lose his or her green card. He or she cannot become a citizen. A person must have a good **moral character\*** to become a citizen.

A person who has had this kind of problem should see an immigration lawyer.

Theresa

Dear Theresa,

Work hard in *all* of your classes. Learn to read and understand English well. Increase your vocabulary.

Dear Elizsa,

I'm sorry to hear that a university instructor did this. It's hard to believe! Students are in college for an education, not to be hurt.

Eliza

Many colleges want students who are **well-rounded\***. They look at a *total picture* of the student: your SAT or ACT scores, your high-school grades, and any special talents, such as art, music, or sports. They want to know about your **extra-curricular activities\***, and service to the community. Some colleges do *not* look at SAT or ACT scores.

These are difficult times for foreign students, especially Muslims. Some Americans are very fearful. A few Americans have become **prejudiced\*** against *any* Muslim. Educated people are supposed to know better!

One arrest for drunk driving is not a felony. But three **arrests\***

Do you have a question for Elizabeth? Write to:  
**Ask Elizabeth**  
 Easy English NEWS  
 P.O. Box 2596  
 Fair Lawn, NJ 07410  
 or email your question to: Ecardley.com

English is not your native language. So you may have to take the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language). This will show if you can do college-level courses in English.

What department does this instructor work in? Go to the **head of the department\***. Explain what you saw and heard. Ask what can be done. If you are not satisfied, then write a letter about it. Send the letter to the president of the university.

## Proverb

**"If the shoe fits, wear it."**

(If someone says something you don't like, see if it is true. If it is, accept it.)

Do you agree?  
 Is there a similar proverb in your language?



Speak to your guidance counselor about the SAT, the ACT, and the TOEFL. Ask for books that have practice tests. Ask about computer programs that can help you, too. You can buy these books and programs at a large bookstore. You can take a course online. Try [www.prepusa.net/](http://www.prepusa.net/)

Vocabulary is very important on these tests. There are also difficult readings. Many students take a class to prepare for these tests. A good course can help you to get a higher score. You can take the tests more than once.

Dear Elizabeth,

I would like to find a way to help a classmate. A teacher at the university **humiliated\*** this

## The U.S. and you: facts and figures

### Immigration to the U.S. — 1991 to 1998

Almost a million immigrants come to this country each year. More than 11% of people in the United States today were born in other countries. The largest number of immigrants in the past ten years came from 31 countries:

Bangladesh	52,599	Haiti	142,668	Peru	87,494
Canada	118,415	Honduras <sup>2</sup>	49,536	Philippines	430,765
China <sup>1</sup>	487,987	India	308,981	Poland	150,432
Colombia	106,325	Iran	93,090	Soviet Union <sup>3</sup>	399,574
Cuba	145,598	Ireland	55,766	Trinidad & Tobago <sup>2</sup>	7,458
Dominican R.	302,219	Jamaica	142,449	United Kingdom	116,695
Ecuador <sup>2</sup>	52,999	Japan <sup>2</sup>	45,629	Vietnam	371,843
El Salvador	180,154	Korea	141,848	Yugoslavia <sup>2</sup>	41,343
Germany <sup>2</sup>	51,026	Mexico	1,930,043	Other countries	1,215,571
Guatemala <sup>2</sup>	78,062	Nicaragua <sup>2</sup>	56,646		
Guyana <sup>2</sup>	60,462	Nigeria <sup>2</sup>	44,432		
		Pakistan	96,959		
		<b>Total</b>		<b>7,605,068</b>	

# Nine Eleven—One year later

(continued from page 1)

## A new department for the government

The U.S. government did not have a special agency to fight terrorism. President Bush wants to put twenty-two government agencies together. It will make one large department. This Department of Homeland Security would be part of the President's **Cabinet\***. This would make many changes in the way government works.

The Department of Homeland Security would have four important jobs:

1. to prevent terrorists from entering the country.
2. to quickly help in **emergencies\***.
3. to find ways to deal with **biological\*** and chemical **weapons\***.
4. to protect people from diseases caused by biological weapons.



Many changes were made in security checkpoints at all airports. This checkpoint is at American Airlines terminal at Los Angeles International Airport. AP Photo/Damian Dovarganes August 1, 2002.

Homeland Security would watch over:

- airline security
- bridges and tunnels
- drinking-water **sources\***
- large buildings
- **nuclear reactors\***
- **national monuments\***
- **sports arenas\***
- other places where there are many people.

There is more **security\*** now at the U.S. **borders\***. Travelers will wait in longer lines. It will take longer to go through Immigration and **Customs\***.

Security guards will give extra attention to some visitors. These will be visitors from countries where terrorists have lived. The security guards will take these visitors' pictures. They will take their fingerprints. If these visitors

**overstay\*** their visa, the government will remove them from the U.S.

The government has a big job. How can it find terrorists in a free country? Visitors, students, and tourists can come into the country easily. Many immigrants come



President George W. Bush speaks about the War on Terrorism in Scarborough, Maine, August 3, 2002. AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite

in. People can go wherever they want to.

President Bush says, "The government's most important job is to protect America from terrorist attacks. We are at war."

Civil liberties organizations say, "Be careful. We do not want to lose our liberties. The president must not go against the Constitution. People in America still have rights."

## Almost normal?

Daily life for most people has returned to normal. Ordinary Americans are traveling, shopping, and making plans for the future again. Still, people worry that the war on terrorism will go on for a long time.

## Attack Iraq?

President Bush is very **concerned\*** about Saddam Hussein. Bush thinks that Hussein has been making **biological\*** and chemical **weapons\***. Bush feels sure that Iraq would use these weapons of **mass destruction\*** against the United States. The president wants to take that power away from Saddam Hussein.

It is against United Nations rules to strike another nation first. Other countries have asked the U.S. to stay out of war with Iraq.

Many Americans, too, think it is wrong for the U.S. to attack Iraq.

The president says that he has to act to protect Americans.

Congress is trying to find out all the facts. They are **debating\*** the issue.

The *President* has the power to act in emergencies. But only *Congress* has the right to declare a war.



*Demonstrators\** in Scarborough, Maine, wave at passing cars on August 3, 2002. They are carrying signs protesting talk of war with Iraq. AP Photo/Steven Senne

# Too hot, too dry, too wet, . . .



Firefighter Jose Martinez works on a burning stump of a tree near a fire in Selma Oregon, August 3, 2002. AP Photo/Don Ryan



Elizabeth Corrigan examines a 12-foot tall bunch of hogweed in Connecticut before cutting them down. AP Photo/Steve Miller August 8, 2002



Nature created a lot of problems this summer.

## Heat

It was the hottest summer in history. People tried to cool off any way they could. Too much air conditioning caused many power failures. Hundreds of people died from the heat.

## Drought\*

Some places did not get any rain. This drought hurt farmers in the West and South. **Many crops\*** could not grow well. Some farmers had to sell their **cattle\*** because

they couldn't feed them.

The drought hurt tourist places too. Some lakes dried up. People could not swim, boat, or fish in them.

## Fires

Forests became very dry. Hundreds of wildfires burned in California, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, Oregon, and other western states and Canada. It was the worst fire season in U.S. history. In July, smoke covered one third of the country.

## Floods

Parts of Texas were flooded after the skies dropped six inches of rain in one day.

Europe, India, and China had their worst floods in 500 years.

## Grasshoppers

The drought brought millions of grasshoppers to some western states. Grasshoppers ate grass and farm crops in Nebraska,

Flood waters from the San Antonio River cover land near Goliad, Texas. AP Photo/Corpus Christi Caller-Times, David Pellerin



Dr. Grasso Ebako prepares a dead bird to test it for West Nile virus. The virus is carried by mosquitoes. It can affect birds, horses, and people. Dr. Ebako is a veterinarian at the University of Nebraska. AP Photo/Nati Harnik August 8, 2002.

New Mexico, Idaho, Oregon, and South Dakota. In some places there were 200 grasshoppers in a square yard of grass.

## Disease

West Nile virus is a disease spread by mosquitoes. It is now in 34 states. Hundreds of people became ill in southern states. Some people died from this virus. States spent millions of dollars to

spray poison to kill the mosquitoes.

## Hogweed

Giant hogweed is a fast-growing plant. It has recently been growing in Washington, New York, Connecticut and a few other states. The hogweed can grow 15 feet high. The leaves contain a **poisonous\* sap\***. It can cause very bad burns on the skin for many months.

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## Around the world in a balloon

Steve Fosset has gone around the world in a balloon. He is the first person to fly **solo\*** around the world in a balloon. His trip took thirteen and a half days.

Fosset is a 58-year-old American millionaire. He tried this balloon trip six different times. He failed the first five times. The sixth time, he was successful.

Fosset's balloon moved along at 200 miles per hour, very high in the sky. Fosset flew in the southern **hemisphere\***, mostly over water. This helped him to stay away from countries that did not want American balloonists flying over their land.

Fosset faced many problems. He lived in a tiny **capsule\***. It was as small as a closet. He was able to sleep for only 45 minutes at a time. He got only 4 hours of sleep a day. A fire started outside his capsule. He had to go out into freezing air to put the fire out.

His balloon came down safely at last in Australia on the Fourth of July.

The capsule will be placed in the **Smithsonian\*** Museum in Washington, DC.



Steve Fosset lands his balloon near Brisbane, Australia, July 4, 2002. He had just completed a solo flight around the world. No one had ever done this before. AP Photo/Rob Griffith

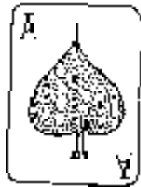
Population of the United States	287,760,260
Population of the planet Earth	6,243,074,355

Estimates by the U.S. Census Bureau (as of August 10, 2002)

# Idiom Corner

*Illustrations by Dave Nicholson*

Have you heard people use these idioms?



**1. to ace**

**to get an “A” on an exam, or in a class**

“How did you do on the biology test?”  
“It was easy. I *aced* it.”

Harry *aced* his math and science classes, but he almost failed English.

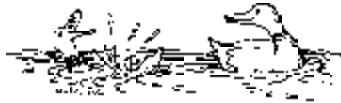


**4. to cut (something or someone) down to size**

**to make a difficult job easy to do; to tell a person that he or she is not as grand as he or she thinks**

Starting a new school is a big job. We’ll have to *cut it down to size*. We’ll begin with just kindergarten and grade one.

Wendy thought she knew everything. Mr. Carter *cut her down to size*. He told her all her mistakes.



**2. to sink or swim**

**to get no help in a new situation; to either fail completely, or to do well**

In some schools, newcomers do not have ESL classes to help them learn English. They are left to *sink or swim*.

Parents used to throw their children into water to teach them that they had to *sink or swim*.



**5. to lift a finger**

**to do a small amount of work**

Sean *didn’t lift a finger* to help us at the picnic. We did all the work.

Hazel married a rich banker. From then on, life was easy. She *didn’t have to lift a finger*.



**3. to fall flat on one’s face**

**to fail [in public] at a job or speech**

Bob gave a speech to the group. *He fell flat on his face*. “Next time I’ll practice more,” he said.

Let’s prepare well for our show. We don’t want to *fall flat on our faces*.



**6. to be in the driver’s seat**

**to be the person who makes decisions**

Tom is president of the club, but really, his brother is *in the driver’s seat*.

Paula liked *being in the driver’s seat*—she started her own business.

**Practice**

**Write an idiom in each sentence. Be sure to use the correct tense of the verb, and the correct pronoun, too. Answers are on page 11.**

1. Samson and Jones are partners. Samson is \_\_\_\_\_, but Jones does the work.

2. “She thinks she’s so grand. I’d love to \_\_\_\_\_.”

3. Hannah soon became unpopular in the club. She never \_\_\_\_\_ to help with the clean-up.

4. Chen studied all night for his chemistry exam. He wanted to \_\_\_\_\_ it.

5. Hank played the guitar, and sang a song he had written himself. But he \_\_\_\_\_.  
The audience laughed.

6. There’s no one here to train the new teacher. He’ll either \_\_\_\_\_.

# What's up?

"What's up?" is a common greeting among young people. It means "What's new?" or "What's happening?" This **column\*** will bring news about young people in the United States.

There are about 29,000,000 teenagers in the United States. These are young people aged thirteen to nineteen.

The teen years can be both happy and **turbulent\***. Young people are changing from children to adults. Teens have many things to think about:

## School

Most teens are in school from 8 a.m. to 2 or 3 p.m. They usually have many hours of homework. They may belong to a sports team, and have other after-school clubs or activities. Teens often have some free time, too.

Teens are **concerned with\*** passing tests, and getting good grades. Good grades in high school will **open many doors\*** later, in their future.

## Money

The law says that at age 18, a person is an adult. Parents do not have to **support\*** adult children. Many parents help their children after that age. But the law does not **require\*** it. So teens have to think about how they will **earn a living\***.

Many American teens earn their own money with part-time jobs. They begin to pay for their own clothes and **entertainment\***. They start to save for college or a car. Some may help their families pay for food and rent.

## Driving

Teens who live outside of cities need a way to get to school,



Dawn DiBella on her way to work

work, and other places. Most schools have classes to teach students how to drive. A driver's license is an important **goal\*** for many teens.

## Friends

Social life is very important in the teen years. Teens like to **hang around\*** with a group of other teens, or at least one friend. Teens often "follow the crowd." They wear similar clothing. They listen to the same music. They have many of the same likes and dislikes.

## Drugs, alcohol, and sex

Teens may feel **peer pressure\*** to smoke cigarettes, use drugs, and drink alcohol. Movies, TV, and music advertise **casual sex\***. Some teens have a hard time saying no to these dangers.

Cigarettes can shorten a person's life. Alcohol can lead to accidents, bad behavior, and addiction. Thoughtless sex can lead to emotional ties or upset, pregnancy, and many **sexually-transmitted diseases\*** (including

AIDS). Drugs can lead to addiction, bad health, crime, and jail. Drug use can also spread **AIDS\***, and other diseases.

## Teens and parents

Teens and parents usually look at the world in different ways. Usually, teens think they will live forever. They think nothing bad can happen to them. It's hard for teens to see 20 years into the future, or even into next week.

Parents know some of the dangers of life. They make rules to protect their children from doing foolish things.

Many teens cannot understand the fears of their parents. Parents' rules often seem too **strict\*** to teens. It's often difficult, also, for parents to understand the feelings of their teen children.

Young people have many choices to make during their teen years. Good choices can lead to a healthy and happy future. Poor choices can lead to many years of difficulty.

# Crossword Puzzle

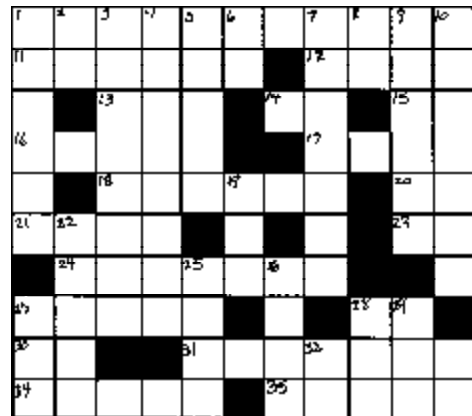
## Across

1. Class that deals with numbers
11. Not you, but the people around you
12. A single one of something
13. A country in North America (abbreviation)
14. You and I
15. Preposition: Let's go \_\_\_ the beach.
16. Famous actress: \_\_\_ Day
17. A large boat
18. Cooked slowly in a pot
20. Elaine Paul's initials
21. Funny-looking, wise creature in Star Wars movies
23. South East (abbreviation)
24. To be enough to end a hunger or need: "A salad doesn't \_\_\_ me. I want meat and potatoes for dinner."
27. Something that lies flat on top of another flat thing, such as a cake or rock
28. Short name for father
30. All right; yes; I agree
31. To use your mind to think of things you cannot see
34. Things you play: chess, checkers, baseball, etc.
35. People between 12 and 20



## Down

1. The first workday of the week
2. Preposition: I'll meet you \_\_\_ 3 p.m.
3. The fourth workday of the week
4. To stop for a minute before continuing doing something
5. To wipe out; to clean up pencil markings
6. Title for a woman, married or unmarried
7. The second workday of the week
8. Preposition: Let's stay \_\_\_ the house.
9. Large towns
10. Did not continue: "He \_\_\_ at the red light."
19. Past form of *is*
22. Large city in Japan
25. A large purple flower; the colored part of an eye
26. Like a floor or wall; having no bumps
27. Wood for a fire; part of a cut tree
28. A dessert made with fruit or pudding
29. A girl's name; \_\_\_ of Green Gables
32. General Electric (abbreviation)
33. Plural ending for a noun



# Culture Corner

by John Chapman

## What's your opinion\*?

America has welcomed people from many parts of the world. These people have brought their customs, culture, and language with them. They brought their **points of view\***, too.

They added their culture to the American culture they found here. Americans in big cities are used to **diversity\*** and many **ethnic groups\***. They are very **tolerant\*** of different ways of speaking, dressing, eating, and thinking.

### Independent thinking

Schools encourage students to share their ideas. Teachers ask students to tell their opinions about stories they read, and about **issues\*** in the news. Students learn to give facts to support their opinions. Class discussions are part of learning. Teachers give grades based on students' class discussion.

### Tact\*

To some people, Americans seem open and honest. They speak up for their ideas. They ask directly for what they want. They give their honest opinions. They can be very **frank\***. They "tell it like it is."

To other people, this directness can seem **rude\***.

Tact is a way to soften our speaking. Tactful people think about other people's feelings. They try not to say hurtful things. They find a kind way to say things that other people don't want to hear. Not everyone is tactful!

### Taboo\* topics

People avoid "taboo topics" in conversation with friends and neighbors. There is a saying,

"At the dinner table, don't talk about sex, politics, and religion." That way, you won't get into an **argument\***, or lose a friend.

But at other times, Americans **love** to talk about these things.

Americans have very strong opinions on some topics. They enjoy **arguing\***. They try to change others' opinions with new facts and ideas.

Money can be a taboo topic too. Americans generally don't ask each other what they earn, or how much money they have in the bank. They don't ask directly how much someone paid for something.

People don't ask women's ages, unless the woman seems under 18 or over 80!

### Talking about the U.S.

Americans love America. Sometimes that's hard to see. That's because Americans love to **complain\*** about America. We're exercising our freedom of speech. We **criticize\*** many things about our government.

However, most Americans don't like it when *other* people criticize America—even if they say the *same thing* we just said! We suddenly remember that we are very lucky to live in the U.S. We may think: *Why did you come to America if you don't like it?*

We like newcomers to tell us why they are happy to be here. We want them to listen to us complain about the government.



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# Let's talk about it

## Nine Eleven, one year later (pages 1 and 6)

1. What happened on 9/11?
2. What are four tasks of the Homeland Security Department?
3. What changes are happening at U.S airports and borders?
4. Tell the meaning of these words: *anniversary, Pentagon, security, emergency, Al-Qaeda, border, national monument.*

## School in the U.S.A. (pages 1 and 3)

1. In what ways are American schools getting harder?
2. Are American schools harder than schools in your native country? Tell the differences.
3. Why will there soon be a teacher shortage?
4. Who pays for your education?
5. How can students pay for a college education?
6. Tell the meaning of these words: *raise standards, wages, shortage, grant, scholarship, loan.*

## Answers to Idiom Quiz

1. in the driver's seat
2. cut her down to size
3. lifted a finger
4. ace
5. fell flat on her face
6. sink or swim

## Events in September (pages 2 and 3)

1. What is the purpose of Labor Day?
2. What were some conditions for workers in the U.S. 100 years ago?
3. What are some laws that protect workers now?
4. What happened to factory jobs in the United States?
5. What are some Jewish customs on Rosh Hashana?
6. Who is Emma Lazarus?
7. What is your favorite season in your native country? Why?
8. Tell the meaning of these words: *union, strike, Workman's Compensation, minimum wage, time and a half, synagogue, entertainer, New England, spark.*

## This is your page (page 4)

1. How was your first day in an American school?
2. What foods were new to you when you came to the U.S.?
3. Have you ever needed the police? How did you call them? Tell about it.

## Answers to Crossword Puzzle



4. Have you ever experienced war or great danger? Tell about it.
5. Tell the meaning of these words: *stare, karaoke club, imagination, ambulance, rebel, village.*

## Ask Elizabeth (page 5)

1. How can a student prepare to take the SAT and the ACT?
2. What is prejudice?
3. How can a person lose a green card?
5. Tell the meaning of these words: *freshman, TOEFL, humiliate, prejudice, minor, felony, convict, DUI, arrest.*

## The U.S. and You (page 5)

1. Which countries have most immigrants come from recently?
2. How many immigrants came from your native country from 1991 to 1998?

## Too hot, too dry, too we, ... (page 7)

1. Look at a U.S. map (and a world map). Can you find the places that had a drought? Fires? Floods? West Nile Virus? Grasshoppers? Hogweed?
2. Were there any of these problem in your native country this year? Tell about them.
3. Who is Steve Fosset? What did he do?
4. What problems did he face?
5. What do you think of his balloon trip around the world?

## What's up? (page 9)

1. What does "What's up?" mean?
2. What are some of the things teens think about?
3. How do teens and their parents think differently?
4. What are your goals at school? For your life?
5. How *do* you, or how *will* you, earn a living?
6. Do you have a driver's license? How did you get it?
7. In what ways do you "follow the crowd"? In what ways do you "do your own thing"?
8. What are some rules parents should make for teens?
9. How do choices create a person's future?
10. Tell the meaning of these words: *column, turbulent, concerned, require, strict.*

## Culture Corner (page 10)

1. What is diversity? Is there diversity in your native country? Do the different people there get along peacefully?
2. Why do teachers ask students to express their opinions in school?
3. What topics do many people try to avoid?
4. What is tact?
5. Tell the meaning of these words: *ethnic group, complain, criticize, soften.*

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## Funny Stuff

*Mother:* What did you learn in school today?

*Son:* We learned how to write.

*Mother:* That's wonderful. What did you write?

*Son:* I don't know. They haven't taught us how to read yet!



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# WORD HELP

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

**9/11** *adverb and noun*. September 11, 2001. The date of last year's terrorist attack.  
**AIDS** *noun*. [Auto-immune deficiency syndrome] A very serious disease. The body cannot fight infections.  
**afford** *verb*. To have enough money to pay for something.  
**alcoholic** *noun*. A person who is addicted to alcohol.  
**Al-Qaeda** *noun*. An organization of extremist Muslims. They use terror to try to get what they want. They want to remove all non-Muslims from Muslim land.  
**anniversary** *noun*. The date on which something happened in the past.  
**apologize** *verb*. To say that one is sorry.  
**argue** *verb*. To disagree, and tell one's reasons.  
**argument** *noun*. A discussion (sometimes angry) of different opinions.  
**arrest** *verb*. To put under the control of the police.  
**atonement**. The act of paying for one's bad or wrong acts.  
**attack** *noun*. Sudden, violent action against another person or country.  
**avoid** *verb*. To stay away from.  
**biological** *adjective*. Having to do with living things. Biological weapon: bacteria that can cause disease.  
**border** *noun*. The place where one country touches another country (or a body of water).  
**bush** *noun*. Woods, jungle, wild country.  
**Cabinet** *noun*. The top government agencies that are directed by the President.  
**capsule** *noun*. A small space for a traveler in a space craft.  
**casual sex** *noun*. Sexual relations without marriage or a long-term commitment.  
**cattle** *noun, plural*. Farm animals: cows, bulls, steer.  
**civil liberties** *noun*. The rights of citizens.  
**Civil Rights Movement** *noun*. A time (1954-the present) when Americans organized to end segregation of black people in transportation, restaurants, housing, etc.  
**column** *noun*. A regular article in a newspaper.  
**complain** *verb*. To say what you don't like about something.  
**concerned with** *idiom*. Thinking a lot about; worried about.  
**control** *verb*. To make a person, animal, or machine do what you want.  
**convicted** Found guilty of breaking the law.  
**crime** *noun*. An action that is against the law, such as robbery, or selling drugs.  
**criticize** *verb*. To tell what is wrong with something.  
**crops** *noun*. Things that farmers grow: corn, rice, etc.  
**Customs** *noun*. The government agency that watches over (and sometimes

taxes) the things that come into the U.S.  
**debate** *verb*. To talk about the good and bad points of a plan or idea.  
**demonstrator** *noun*. A person who tries to change other people's opinion by speaking, marching, carrying a sign, etc., in a public place.  
**deport** *verb*. To remove a person from a country.  
**destroy** *verb*. To completely break or damage something.  
**detain** *verb*. To keep a person in jail, without charging him with a crime.  
**diploma** *noun*. A paper that shows a person has completed school.  
**discuss** *verb*. To talk about.  
**diversity** *noun*. People of different languages, races, religions, etc.  
**drought** *noun*. A long time without rain.  
**earn a living** *idiom*. To work for money to pay for one's home, food, clothing, etc.  
**economy** *noun*. The making, marketing, buying and selling of goods in a nation.  
**emergency** *noun*. A dangerous situation that needs quick action.  
**employer** *noun*. A person who pays others for working.  
**encourage** *verb*. To give another person courage to do something difficult.  
**entertainer** *noun*. An actor, musician, comedian, etc.  
**entertainment** *noun*. Things interesting to do or watch.  
**ethnic group** *noun*. People who share a national background, culture, foods, language, holidays, etc.  
**express an opinion** *idiom*. To tell one's ideas.  
**extracurricular activities** *noun, plural*. Things that are outside of one's classes: clubs, sports, service, etc.  
**federal** *adjective*. National.  
**felony** *noun*. A serious crime.  
**fire** *verb*. To stop employing a worker; to end a person's job.  
**frank** *adjective*. Telling one's honest opinions.  
**freshman** *noun*. A student in the first year of high school or college.  
**goal** *noun*. A plan for one's future; something one wants to have or do in the future.  
**graduation** *noun*. Completion of a school program.  
**grant** *noun*. A gift from an organization to help pay the costs of school, etc.  
**green card** *noun*. The official card that an immigrant gets when he or she is accepted into the U.S. as a permanent resident.  
**hang around with** *idiom (slang)*. To spend time with, go places with.  
**head of the department** *noun*. The person in charge of a group of teachers, such as all math teachers, etc.  
**hemisphere** *noun*. Half of the world.

**hire** *verb*. To give someone a job.  
**homeland security** *noun*. The government organization set up to protect people within the United States from terror and disaster.  
**humiliate** *verb*. To make a person feel very embarrassed in front of a group.  
**imagination** *noun*. The ability to think of things that are not real or true.  
**Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS)** *noun*. The government agency responsible for immigrants and visitors to this country.  
**income** *noun*. Money that a person receives.  
**innocent** *adjective*. Having done nothing wrong; not guilty.  
**insurance** *noun*. Money, or protection against the cost of a lost home, job, or life, or the cost of medical care.  
**issue** *noun*. A matter that people talk about.  
**karaoke** *noun*. A microphone set-up, with music and words, so a person can "sing like a professional."  
**Liberty Bell** *noun*. The large bell that rang on July 4, 1776, and at other important times in American history.  
**loan** *noun*. Money that is lent or borrowed.  
**local** *adjective*. In one's town or neighborhood.  
**market** *noun*. A group of people who buy a product.  
**mark an anniversary** *verb phrase*. To do something to remember an event that happened in the past.  
**mass destruction** *noun*. The killing of many people at one time, such as with bombs, disease, or nuclear weapons.  
**memorial** *noun*. An event to honor someone's memory; a place to honor someone's memory.  
**middle class** *noun*. The people who have enough; they are not poor or rich.  
**minimum** *adjective*. The least amount.  
**mines** *noun*. Underground tunnels where workers dig for coal, iron, gold, etc.  
**minor** *adjective*. Small; less important.  
**moral character** *noun*. A person's good or bad behavior.  
**national monument** *noun*. A place such as the Statue of Liberty, Mount Rushmore, Washington Monument, etc.  
**Nazi** *noun*. National Socialist Party of Germany, 1933-1945, that was led by Adolf Hitler and started World War II.  
**network** *noun*. A connection among people, organizations or computers.  
**New England** *noun*. The states of the Northeastern part of the U.S.: Connecticut, Rhode Island, Vermont, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine.  
**nuclear reactor** *noun*. A large device that creates nuclear power from by fusion of uranium.  
**occupational** *adjective*.

Having to do with jobs.  
**open many doors** *idiom*. To provide opportunities for a person's future.  
**organize** *verb*. To bring people together for a special purpose.  
**overcrowded** *adjective*. Filled with too many people.  
**oversee** *verb*. To watch over and protect something from going wrong, or being hurt.  
**overstay** *verb*. To stay after the time that one is supposed to leave.  
**peer pressure** *noun phrase*. A strong sense that one must do the things that one's friends want one to do.  
**Pentagon** *noun*. The five-sided building near Washington, DC that has American military offices.  
**point of view** *idiom*. Way of looking at things; opinion.  
**poisonous** *adjective*. Harmful to a person; causing illness or pain.  
**politics** *noun*. The activities of people interested in government, passing laws, getting elected, etc.  
**practice law** *verb phrase*. To do the job of a lawyer.  
**prejudice** *noun*. A negative feeling about a whole group of people, based on limited experience.  
**protect** *verb*. To keep someone from danger.  
**property** *noun*. Things that one owns, such as land, home.  
**provide** *verb*. To give someone something that is needed.  
**raise standards** *idiom*. To increase the level that is needed to be acceptable or excellent.  
**rebels** *noun*. People who fight against their government.  
**require** *verb*. To need; to ask for something that is needed.  
**retire** *verb*. Stop working, as at age 65, etc.  
**revolution** *noun*. A complete change of government; a war for independence.  
**roots** *noun, plural*. Beginnings; causes; source.  
**rude** *adjective*. Not nice; opposite of polite.  
**ruins** *noun, plural*. What is left of a building that has been destroyed by fire, bombing, etc.  
**sap** *noun*. Liquid in a plant.  
**scholarship** *noun*. Money awarded to a student to help pay for college.  
**security** *noun*. Protection against being hurt; safety.  
**sexually-transmitted disease (STD)** *noun*. A disease spread through sexual contact: gonorrhea, syphilis, chlamydia. AIDS can also be transmitted this way.  
**shortage** *noun*. Not enough of something that is needed.  
**site** *noun*. Place; location.  
**Smithsonian** *noun*. The national museum of science, art, and history.  
**solo** *adjective*. Alone.  
**source** *noun*. The place where something comes from.  
**spark** *noun*. A tiny electrical shot that can cause a fire.

**sports arena** *noun*. A stadium or other large place where people go to watch a sports event.  
**stare** *verb*. To look at something for a long time.  
**strict** *adjective*. Having strong rules and punishments.  
**strike** *verb*. To stop working in order to get an employer to pay more, etc.  
**support** *verb*. To pay another person's living expenses.  
**sweatshop** *noun*. A factory where people work in terrible conditions.  
**synagogue** *noun*. The church of the Jewish people.  
**taboo** *adjective*. Not allowed; forbidden.  
**tact** *noun*. A careful way of speaking that protects others' feelings.  
**terrorist** *noun*. A person who uses violence in order to create fear.  
**threat** *noun*. A promise to do something wrong or harmful.  
**time and a half** *adverb*. Payment of one and a half times one's usual wage.  
**tolerant** *adjective*. Able to be with, without having prejudice.  
**traditional** *adjective*. The old way or custom of doing things.  
**troops** *noun*. Soldiers, sailors, marines, air force service people.  
**turbulent** *adjective*. Full of challenges, changes, and emotional upsets.  
**under the influence** *adverbial phrase*. Doing something after having drunk alcohol or used drugs.  
**unemployment insurance** *noun*. Money paid to the government by employers so that workers who become unemployed may get a weekly payment to help them until they find another job.  
**union** *noun*. An organization of workers.  
**variety** *noun*. A lot of different things.  
**village** *noun*. A very small town.  
**violence** *noun*. Force used to hurt someone.  
**virus** *noun*. A tiny organism that can cause disease.  
**wages** *noun*. Payment to a worker for the hours he or she works.  
**weapon** *noun*. A device used to hurt others: gun, knife, bomb, etc.  
**well-rounded** *adjective*. Having many sides; interested in, and good at, many things.  
**wise** *adjective*. Able to give good advice and to make good decisions.  
**Workman's Compensation** *noun*. Insurance to pay for medical treatment and part of a person's wages if he or she gets hurt at work.

