

Being a Good Parent

A national discussion about parenting has burst on to the stage in the US with the publication of Amy Chua's book, *The Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother*. In it, she argues that parents should push their children for academic and musical achievement by any means necessary (including forced four-hour piano practices, calling them names like "garbage," and the like). My own experience with Asian parents is so different from this. I wonder what you think:

Since 2000, I've run a Writers' Club for over 100 Asian newcomers living in my community. Members write short essays about cultural differences they have observed – what surprises them and what they'd like Americans to understand. In the more than 200 essays I've collected, they communicate a perspective on parenting that consistently challenges and instructs me, focused far more on raising caring and respectful members of their society than on dogged achievement.

Virtually none of the essays has been about Americans' low levels of achievement or over-permissiveness, although they are surprised that teachers write "Great job!" at the top of a spelling test with errors on it, and that coaches shout "Good eye!" to the kid who just struck out. They mostly seem to like this US instructional technique and its positive effect on their children, although they worry that their children will have neither the expected set of skills nor the

skin thickness to move easily back into their culture when they go home. Still, the idea that a child's self-esteem would need to be bolstered is a novel one to them.

Much more common in their essays is a deep concern about the development of their children's character and how they can convey their values to their children being raised in the US culture:

I always feel that my children have too much self-confidence. I cannot help telling them to be modest, which my husband and I were told by our parents...When my son shot a victory goal at the final soccer tournament, his teammates hugged him and praised him. At the ceremony, his coach and his teammates offered him a champion cup. But my son hesitated to have it and he gave it to the goalie. My son thought the goalie should have the champion cup. Many people didn't understand his behavior. I immediately understood how he took care of his friends.

Americans almost do not understand the notion of "too much self-confidence!" But if parents' goals are to instill a generous spirit, teamwork and modesty, then it starts to sound quite appealing.

In Japan, students prepare lunch by themselves, starting in first grade. The students in charge wear white aprons, white caps and masks. They carry very heavy containers from the school kitchen to the classroom. Then they serve food to their classmates. Before eating, the students say in unison words of appreciation for those who prepared the

Inside This Issue

Being a Good Parent	1
Presidents Day	2
Presidential Facts	2
State vs. Federal Holidays	2
Groundhog Day	2
Cherry Trees and Log Cabins	3
The Other Side of Love	4
Black History Month	4
Valentine's Day	5
Chocolate Bits	5
Translating the US Kitchen	6
The Academy Awards	6
Birthday Biography: Laura Ingalls Wilder	7
Gun Control and Gun Ownership	7
Practicing English on the Web	7
That Crazy English: Happy Times!	8

Compliments of

Boston University CELOP Program

Distribution restricted per
terms of educational site
license.

Copied with permission of
The Interchange Institute
under terms of
Current Site License

Presidential Facts

◆ We say that Barack Obama is the 44th President of the US, but in fact he is only the 43rd person to serve as President. Grover Cleveland was President twice, as the 22nd and as the 24th President.

◆ One Presidential term lasts four years. Presidents cannot be elected more than twice.

◆ As you surely know, Obama is the first African American president. In fact, of the 42 other Presidents, all were white and of northern European ancestry: 37 were of English, Scottish, or Irish ancestry (or a combination of these); three had Dutch roots, and two were from Swiss-German families.

◆ Since 1999, the salary of the President of the US has been \$400,000. The last raise before that was in 1969, when it was set at \$200,000. If that salary had been adjusted every year since 1969 for inflation, it would now be more than \$900,000. George Washington was offered \$25,000, but he worked for free. So did John F. Kennedy.

◆ The White House has a tennis court, putting green, bowling alley, movie theater, swimming pool, and jogging track. Air Force One, the President's airplane, has 4000 square feet of floor space, including a dining room, a conference area, private quarters, office space, and two kitchens.

continued on page 3

Presidents Day

Most states observe a holiday on the third Monday in February (this year, February 21). The federal government calls it George Washington's Birthday. Many states call it Presidents' Day (or President's Day or even Presidents Day) instead, and honor Abraham Lincoln (born February 12, 1809) as well as Washington (born February 22, 1732). Still other states say the holiday is to honor all Presidents of the US. And, well, a few don't observe it at all (see below).

George Washington was the general who led the colonists' army during the American Revolution against England. Later, he was elected to be the first President of the US, unanimously (no one ran against him, as he was such a popular figure). Some call him the "Father of the United States." He is remembered as an honest man with good

judgment. Find his picture on one-dollar bills.

Abraham Lincoln was President during the US Civil War between the northern and southern states. He made slavery illegal in 1863 and was the first President to be assassinated (killed), just after the end of the Civil War in 1865. He is also remembered as Honest Abe. (Stories about these two popular Presidents tell a lot about American values — see page 3). Find his picture on five-dollar bills.

There are no special celebrations or traditions for this holiday. Many schools and government offices will be closed, but many businesses will be open. Stores consider this a good chance to have a sale! Cards and gift-giving are not expected.

State vs. Federal Holidays

Did you know that there are no "national" holidays in the US? The federal government has 10 holidays*. These apply to people who work in Washington, DC, and to employees of federal agencies in any state (like the US Postal Service or US Social Security offices). Each state makes its own rules about which holidays it will observe. These state rules then apply to employees of state agencies (like state and local government, public schools, and libraries) and most (but not all) businesses.

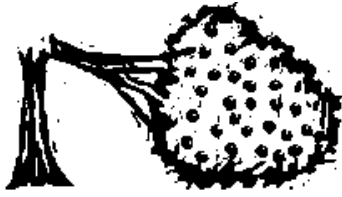
In 1968, some holidays were set always to occur on a Monday, so employees get a three-day weekend. Other holidays always occur on the same date because they are tied to a particular calendar day (New Year's Day and Independence Day — or Fourth of July) or to a date with historical or religious meaning (Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas).

* *New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr's Birthday, Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas.*

Groundhog Day

February 2 is Groundhog Day, a light-hearted tradition in which people watch to see if a groundhog, coming out of its hole in the ground, sees its shadow. If so, according to the legend, there will be six more weeks of winter weather. If there is no shadow, spring will come sooner. On TV you will see Punxsutawney Phil, a Pennsylvania groundhog who, they claim, has not been wrong in 90 years...

Cherry Trees and Log Cabins



George Washington, the first US President, chopped down a cherry tree when he was a little boy in the 1730s. When his parents asked him if he had done it, he said, "I cannot tell a lie — yes, I did."

Abraham Lincoln, the 16th US President, was born in a log cabin. He taught himself to read, lying on the floor, by the light of the fireplace. He only went to school for one year. One day a book he had borrowed from a neighbor got wet. He worked three days in the neighbor's field to pay for it.

Every school child in the United States knows these "facts" about these two US Presidents. Actually historians agree that the cherry tree story is completely false. But the lessons told in the stories are important anyway.

Lincoln's log cabin is a well-loved symbol of American opportunity. It says, "You can start from a very poor family, and rise to an important position in life and history." The picture of him stretched out in front of the fireplace, reading, says, "Even if life is difficult, you should get an education." Lincoln's borrowed book and Washington's cherry tree say, "Honesty, above all else, is what is important." You may have been surprised by Americans' reactions to past scandals in which politicians are held to a high standard of honesty; these stories explain the roots of their reactions.

Stories about heroes teach children about a nation's values. You can continue to teach your children about your country's values

while living in the US. Tell them stories of your national heroes. Who were the famous people in your country's history? What did they do that was important? What do their stories say about their character and personality? (Bravery? Loyalty? Integrity? Fairness? Wisdom?) If you keep these heroes alive in your family, the values will stay alive too.

In the same way, stories about parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents teach children about a family's values. In her book *Black Sheep and Kissing Cousins: How our Family Stories Shape Us* (Penguin), Elizabeth Stone reports on interviews with more than 100 Americans about their families' stories. Some stories were long and detailed. Others were really just a phrase, told over and over about a person. Some gave the family an identity (as "rebellious people," or as "a family that is loyal to each other even in hard times," for example). Others taught warnings (like "don't be too interested in making money," or "stay away from strangers").

For example, Stone told of her own great-grandmother who was the daughter of a rich man in Italy. She married the poor town postman who was "able to play any musical instrument he laid eyes on." Stone then describes all her family members who were more interested in the arts than money.

What stories do you tell about your family? What do they teach? Tell these stories to your children, especially now while you are far away. You will be keeping the link with your family alive.



continued from page 2

- ◆ Only one US President, Ronald Reagan (1981-88), has been divorced. Only one president, James Buchanan (1857-60), was never married.
- ◆ Ronald Reagan was the oldest US President to begin office. He turned 70 two weeks after his term began. The youngest President to be elected was John F. Kennedy who was 43. Theodore Roosevelt was 42 when he became President after William McKinley was assassinated.
- ◆ To impeach a President means to charge him with serious misconduct in office, and to put him on trial in the Senate. If he is found guilty, he must resign from office. Only two Presidents, Andrew Johnson (1868) and Bill Clinton (1999), have been impeached. Both were allowed to complete their terms. Richard Nixon was the only President ever to resign from office, in 1974. Several days earlier, Congress had threatened to impeach him for his role in the Watergate affair.
- ◆ Eight Presidents have died while serving as President. Four were assassinated. The other four died of natural causes.
- ◆ If the President dies in office, the Vice President becomes President. If the Vice President then dies, the Speaker of the House of Representatives becomes President (but this has never happened).

Black History Month

February is Black History month in the US. You cannot really understand US society today without knowing something about slavery, the post-slavery period of 1865-1960s, and the Civil Rights movement of the mid-20th century.

Here are some movies you could rent to help you learn about this important history:

Eyes on the Prize (6 tapes). A documentary series on the Civil Rights movement from 1954-1965. A sequel continues to cover 1964-1980s.

Amazing Grace. The first documentary about Martin Luther King, Jr. made by African-American producers. Watch this to get a sense of his power and charisma.

Malcolm X (1992). The story of Malcolm X, who lived and died in the same era as Martin Luther King. The two men's messages differed deeply and it is useful to hear both.

Hoop Dreams (1994). A simple but compelling documentary about two African American boys who hope their basketball playing will lead to a good education and life out of the city.

The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman (1974). Tells the fictional story of Jane Pittman who began her life as a slave, then lived to see, at the age of 110, the beginning of the Civil Rights movement.

The Other Side of Love

This month on Valentine's Day, people around you will be talking a lot about love. But if you have recently moved to the US, you may not be feeling so happy with your spouse all the time! Moving to a new country can be difficult for couples, because:

(1) Moving here means being away from family and friends. Husbands and wives may depend on each other more, for advice and friendship. Even in the happiest marriages, this change can be hard because it is so different. In couples who have some problems, the increased time together often raises problems that were always there, but now come to the surface.

(2) Because they are away from those who know them best, some people try new ways of behaving. This can be a wonderful — or a difficult — change for a couple.

(3) The amount of time spouses spend in the family may have changed a lot — sometimes it increases, sometimes it decreases. Either way, family roles have to change. Who cooks dinner? Who talks to the children? Who notices that the sink is broken? Who makes social plans? These may also be big changes for a marriage.

(4) Husbands and wives may have very different day-to-day experiences. Maybe one spouse goes to a job every day where he/she meets new people, practices English, and has interesting work that he/she is good at. Of course, that spouse may feel the responsibility for moving here, and therefore guilty if some in the family are unhappy.

The other spouse may not have a job. Meeting people and practicing English is harder then. That spouse may spend more time doing things that have very different customs — like understanding new school systems, housing, and shopping. If that

spouse had a job or other important responsibilities at home, the loss of identity (as "a teacher" or "a community leader") can be very difficult. The simple fact that the spouses made different sacrifices means that they face different kinds of adjustment.

So - some advice: Do not expect that you and your spouse will always feel the same way at the same time. Most people who move to a new country go through times of liking their new lives, and other times of being unhappy. It is rare for two people to adjust at exactly the same rate. If your up and down cycles are short, try not to feel abandoned if your spouse is happy when you are sad. And try not to feel discouraged if you are happy when your spouse wants to go home. With time, you will probably meet often at points in the cycles where you both feel fine.

Try not to get stuck into "The Happy One" and "The Unhappy One" roles. When adjusting to a new country feels too difficult, it is common for spouses to split their emotions like that. But in couples that adjust most easily to an intercultural move, both spouses agree that there are both good and bad things about living in the new country. They may disagree about what is good and bad but they both have some things they like, and are allowed to dislike others. If your spouse always seems to talk about how great the US is and you disagree, try talking about something you do like in the US. With time, your spouse may say, "Yes, but this part is not so good..." In the same way, if your spouse seems more unhappy than you, try talking about something in the US that you do not like. It may sound backwards. But remember that if both of you can speak to each other about the good and bad parts of living here, you will feel less lonely. And you will return more quickly to the natural cycles of adjustment.

Valentine's Day

Red hearts with white lace. Heart-shaped candy boxes. Cards that say "Be mine." Red-dyed food. Fat babies (called cupids) carrying arrows. These are the symbols of Valentine's Day (February 14), the day to celebrate love and affection. This is not a legal holiday. Businesses and schools will not close. But Americans who ignore the holiday may end up with an angry and hurt spouse or lover!

The origins of Valentine's Day are not clear. There were several Saint Valentines in early Christian history, each with a feast day on February 14. But none of them was linked to love in any clear way. Somehow, by the 14th century in England, Chaucer was writing about Valentine's Day as a day for lovers. Another story (popular but not based in much fact) says that St. Valentine was in jail and fell in love with the jailer's daughter. He sent her a letter, signed, "From your Valentine," perhaps the first Valentine card. Other historians think that the holiday grew

out of a Roman celebration, Lupercalia, held in February. At Lupercalia, names of young women were put in a box. Young men picked a name. The two were considered a "pair" for a year. Early Christian leaders tried to replace the names of young women with names of saints. Young men would pick the name of a saint, and try to be like the saint for a year. Hm, the custom of picking young women's names was always more popular...

Today's Valentine's Day is a light-hearted, non-religious holiday in the US. The link to an early Christian saint is gone.

On February 14, it is traditional to give the love in your life a card or gift. Chocolate candy and pink or red flowers are common. Stores will urge you to buy more expensive, personal gifts. Young school children often send classmates small Valentine cards. Friends, grandparents, and children may also send cards to each other.

continued from page 1 BEING A GOOD PARENT

food. In all these ways, students are supposed to learn cooperation, responsibility and independence from adults...I was so surprised that students at my child's school in the US stay at the cafeteria unsupervised by their home room teachers. It also surprised me that they throw away food, even food that is wrapped and could easily be saved.

Frugality, gratitude, cooperation, civility. All that and lunch, too. One mother resisted, at first, her daughters' request for a slumber party, but then changed her mind:

I did it, I had a slumber party for my daughters last week. And I found out that there was really something in there! It offered me a chance to observe how they interact... The most important part was I could tell one of the girls wasn't so comfortable and the other just perfectly fit in my house. And this is the part that I am curious about most. Because I hope my daughters can feel comfortable and relaxed while they are staying with their friends. I hope my girls can feel at ease no matter under what kind of situation.

Flexibility, at ease in all situations, open to new ways. Asian parenting styles can teach something more than applying discipline and expecting achievement. They can also show us the value of cooperation, modesty, and gratitude. In turn, these writers have opened their eyes and minds to what American parenting styles can teach them - that sometimes success is due to individual effort, self-confidence and flexibility. Discipline and achievement, cooperation and modesty, self-confidence and flexibility – Asian and American. Let's talk.

Chocolate Bits

♦ You may be homesick for chocolate from your home country. Countries differ in their traditional chocolate-making procedures. For example, Spanish and German chocolate makers roast their cocoa beans more fully than Swiss and US makers. Swiss and German chocolate makers press and roll chocolate, to smooth the sugar crystals, more than US makers.

♦ Chocolate comes from cacao seeds. The seeds are roasted and cracked into "nibs." Cocoa butter is melted off, leaving the "chocolate liquor," or raw chocolate. Cocoa butter is added back in during the chocolate-making process.

♦ *Milk chocolate*, the most common kind sold in the US, is made of at least 10% chocolate liquor and 12% mild solids. *Dark chocolate* (sometimes called *semi-sweet*) has 15-35% chocolate liquor. *White chocolate* has cocoa butter but no chocolate liquor.

♦ *Baker's chocolate* (also called *bitter*) is pure chocolate liquor, hardened into blocks or bars. It is not sweet at all, and is used for baking.

♦ *Chocolate truffles* have nothing to do with the fungi by the same name, except how special they are. The center is usually heavy cream and chocolate. The outside may be rolled in cocoa powder.

Academy Awards

Hollywood's highest honor, the Academy Awards, will be announced at a televised ceremony on February 27. Here's some background.

Awards are chosen by the 6000+ members of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. This is an honorary professional organization — members have to be invited by the Board to join one of its divisions, and have to have "achieved distinction" in some aspect of film making. There are 15 divisions: Actors, Art Directors, Directors, Cinematographers, Executives, Documentaries, Film Editors, Makeup, Music, Producers, Public Relations, Short Films and Feature Animation, Sound, Visual Effects, and Writers.

Academy members nominated films or people for awards in their division — that is, Directors nominate for Best Director; Actors for Best Actor; etc. Members in all divisions can nominate films for Best Picture. The top people/films are the Academy Award Nominees; these were announced in January.

Final winners are chosen by all eligible Academy members, regardless of their membership division. They send their votes to PricewaterhouseCoopers, who keeps the votes very secret. Only two employees of this organization know the results until the night of the Awards ceremony. Enjoy the show!

Translating the US Kitchen

It is hard enough learning to cook in a new country, with new foods, new ways of measuring, and a new language. What do you do when you finally know how to cook a recipe and ... you don't have the ingredients you need. Here are some substitutions you can make. In most cases, the flavor will be quite similar. By the way, **C = cup, T = tablespoon, and t = teaspoon.**

If the recipe says to use...:	...you can use this instead:
1 t double-acting baking powder	¼ t baking soda plus ½ t cream of tartar
4 extra large eggs	5 large eggs or 6 medium eggs
1 C cake flour	1 C minus 2 T all-purpose flour
1 C all purpose flour	1 C plus 2 T cake flour
1 C granulated (white) sugar	1¾ C confectioner's (powdered) sugar or ¾ C honey and reduce other liquid by ¼ C or 1 C brown sugar (packed tight)
1 C brown sugar	1 C white sugar plus 1½ T molasses
1 C buttermilk	1 C plain yogurt or 1 C minus 1 T warm milk plus 1 T vinegar or lemon juice (let stand for 5 minutes)
1 C heavy cream	¾ C whole milk plus 1/3 C melted butter
1 C half-and-half	½ C light or medium cream plus ½ C whole milk
1 C sour cream	1 C plain yogurt
1 T fresh herbs (like basil or dill)	1 t dried herbs
1 T mustard	1 t dry mustard plus water



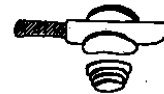
Chop: cut in small pieces, or
Mince: cut in very small pieces



Julienne: cut in thin strips



Dice: cut in small cubes



Slice: cut in thin pieces

It is frustrating when a recipe asks for "2 cups of grated cheese" but the store sells cheese by the pound, not the cup. How much should you buy? Here are some guidelines:

If the recipe says to use...:	...buy this amount, then measure:
3½ - 4 C all-purpose flour	1 pound
4¼ C whole wheat flour	1 pound
3 C shelled almonds, peanuts, or walnuts	1 pound
4 C shelled pecans	1 pound
2 C white sugar	1 pound
2¼ C brown sugar (packed tight)	1 pound
3 C sliced apples	3 medium apples - 1 pound
3 to 4 T lemon juice and 2 to 3 t peel	1 medium lemons
3 C chopped onions	1 pound
2 C cooked mashed potatoes or 3½ sliced	3 medium potatoes
2 C grated cheese	8 ounces (.5 pound)

Birthday Biography: Laura Ingalls Wilder

One of the best ways to learn about one period of US history is by reading the *Little House on the Prairie* books (or watching the TV series; but really, read the books!). This series of eight books written for children is a classic in the US, and is based on the true life experiences of its author, Laura Ingalls Wilder, born on February 7, 1867. Especially if you have children or if you would like practice reading in English, check the books out.

Laura was born in Wisconsin, the second of five children. Her family moved many times, all around the American mid-west: Wisconsin to Minnesota to Iowa to South Dakota. After she married, she moved back to Missouri; her journal about this move became her first published work. Later, her daughter urged her to write about her childhood. She wrote an autobiography of her life from age 3-18 called *Pioneer Girl*. It was full of historical facts but, well, was not that interesting to the public.

She didn't give up, though. At age 65, she started fresh, and re-wrote her life, this time for children and focused on a little girl named "Laura" and her whole family. Less detail, less history, more conversations and stories, happy endings. The first in the series was *Little House in the Big Woods*; soon seven other books would follow, each one describing some part of her (and her husband's) childhood in the days of the American frontier.

This series is a fascinating account of the roots of many US American values — a can-do attitude, ingenuity in the face of need, the willingness to move and start over, independence from extended family, optimism in the face of adversity. I learned so much, as I read them aloud to my young children, about hunting, surviving a blizzard, farming, and family closeness. Plus how to make musket bullets, clean a hog's head, and other useful tips for the 21st century. Happy Birthday, Laura.

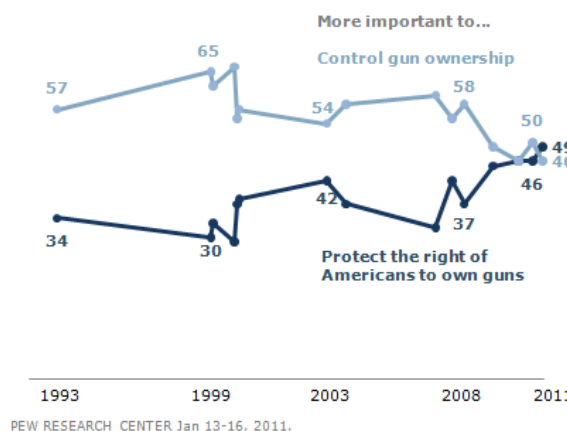
Gun Control and Gun Ownership

Some observers expected a change in attitudes about gun control following the recent shooting in Tucson, Arizona, but 58% of those surveyed by the Pew Research Center say that that incident was an "isolated act of a troubled individual" (compared with 31% who said it "reflects broader problems in American society").

Note several historic moments in the chart to the right. In 1999, 13 people were killed by a gunman at Columbine High School in Colorado. In 2007, 32 were killed at Virginia Polytechnic Institute. Both of these sparked a national conversation about gun control.

Even so, since then, attitudes favoring the rights of Americans to own guns have increased steadily.

Gun Views Remain Divided



Practicing English on the Web

A friend from Germany told me that when she first moved to the US, she had no friends and no way to practice English. She used to read a local newspaper, write a short summary of each article on the front page, and ask her neighbor to make corrections.

Here is a modern version of her technique: go to

www.rong-chang.com.

The site lists dozens of links to web sites that help you practice English. For example, there are:

- ♦ sites to help in Listening, Reading, Writing, and Grammar,
- ♦ Youtube and podcasts to download or listen to on line
- ♦ links to on-line news sources and magazines,
- ♦ lots of grammar quizzes to test yourself, from basic to advanced,
- ♦ sites to help you with pronunciation (including for people's names), with rules and audio examples,
- ♦ lists of sites to help you with Business English,
- ♦ puzzles and games,
- ♦ links to many different kinds of dictionaries for new English learners, and
- ♦ for ESL teachers, lots of lesson plans and articles.

Very cool!

The Interchange Institute
11 Hawes Street
Brookline, MA 02446

Newcomer's Almanac is published monthly by The Interchange Institute, for people who have recently moved to the United States. Its goal is to promote international understanding by providing information about the American holidays, customs, values, social issues, and language that often confuse and surprise newcomers. It is written by Anne P. Copeland, PhD, who is a clinical psychologist and the Director of The Interchange Institute. She is an American and has lived and worked overseas with her family.

The Interchange Institute is a not-for-profit organization that studies the impact of intercultural transitions on individuals, their families, and the organizations for which they work. From the results of this research, the Institute offers seminars and workshops, produces publications, and provides consultative services to the international newcomers, their organizations, and to host communities, recognizing that change and insight on both sides facilitates smooth transition.

Subscriptions: Please contact The Interchange Institute for information about subscription fees, site licenses, and discount rates:

The Interchange Institute
11 Hawes Street, Brookline, MA 02446
Tel. 617.566.2227 Fax 617.277.0889
www.interchangeinstitute.org
email: newcomer@interchangeinstitute.org



The
Interchange
Institute

Anne P. Copeland, Ph.D.
Executive Director

Copyright 2011.
Anne P. Copeland.
All rights reserved.
No photocopying
allowed except under
terms of site license.

That Crazy English: Happy Times!

Here are some idioms you might be able to use on Valentine's Day:

We went on a long walk and then had a candlelight dinner. I was *in seventh heaven*. (*I was extremely happy.*)

When you invited me to spend time with your brothers and sisters, I was *on cloud nine*. (*...I was extremely happy.*)

Ever since we met, I have been *on top of the world*. (*...I have been extremely happy.*)

When we walked through the snow to the movie theater, I *had a ball*. (*...I had a wonderful time.*)

The first time you invited me to go to your friend's house with you, I *jumped for joy*. (*...I was very happy.*)

I remember when we decided to get married. I was *walking on air* all day. (*...I was extremely happy all day.*)

From the moment you first started to talk about your family, I was *head over heels!* (*...I was in love!*)

BEFORE YOU KNOW IT, YOU'RE A POET

HOMEWORK

Read *Valentine's Day* on page 4. The most traditional poem for a Valentine's card is this:

Roses are red
Violets are blue
Sugar is sweet
And so are you.

Children often have fun writing new versions of this poem (Roses are red/Violets are blue/
When you are with me/ You smell like a shoe.). Try making a few new ones yourself:

1. Roses are red
Violets are blue

2) Roses are red
Violets are blue

Adults used to write their own love poetry on Valentine's cards. Here are the first lines of
some Valentine poems from the 1800s. Add your own lines:

3) Oh! come my love, my own delight,

4) Fly Cupid, fly, and wing thy way,*

(*fly away, go on your way)

5) Doubt not - believe each word you see, 6) _____

And treasure up each sacred* line,

And I love you.

(*holy, special)

WITH A PEN

1. Read *Cherry Trees and Log Cabins* on page 3.

Write a brief story that has often been told in your family about you, your mother, or your father. What does this story say about what your family thinks is important?

2. Read *Cherry Trees and Log Cabins* on page 3.

Write a list of 3-5 national heroes in your home country. What is the most famous thing about each? What do children in your country learn about the family or history of each? What lessons do these stories teach?

3. Read *Translating the US Kitchen* on page 6.

Write a list of foods from your home country that you have not been able to find in the US, and what, if any, substitutes you have used for them.

4. Read *Chocolate Bits* on page 5. Write a

description of your home country's most popular sweet. Describe what it is made of, what it looks like, and when it is traditionally eaten.

UNDERSTANDING WHAT YOU READ

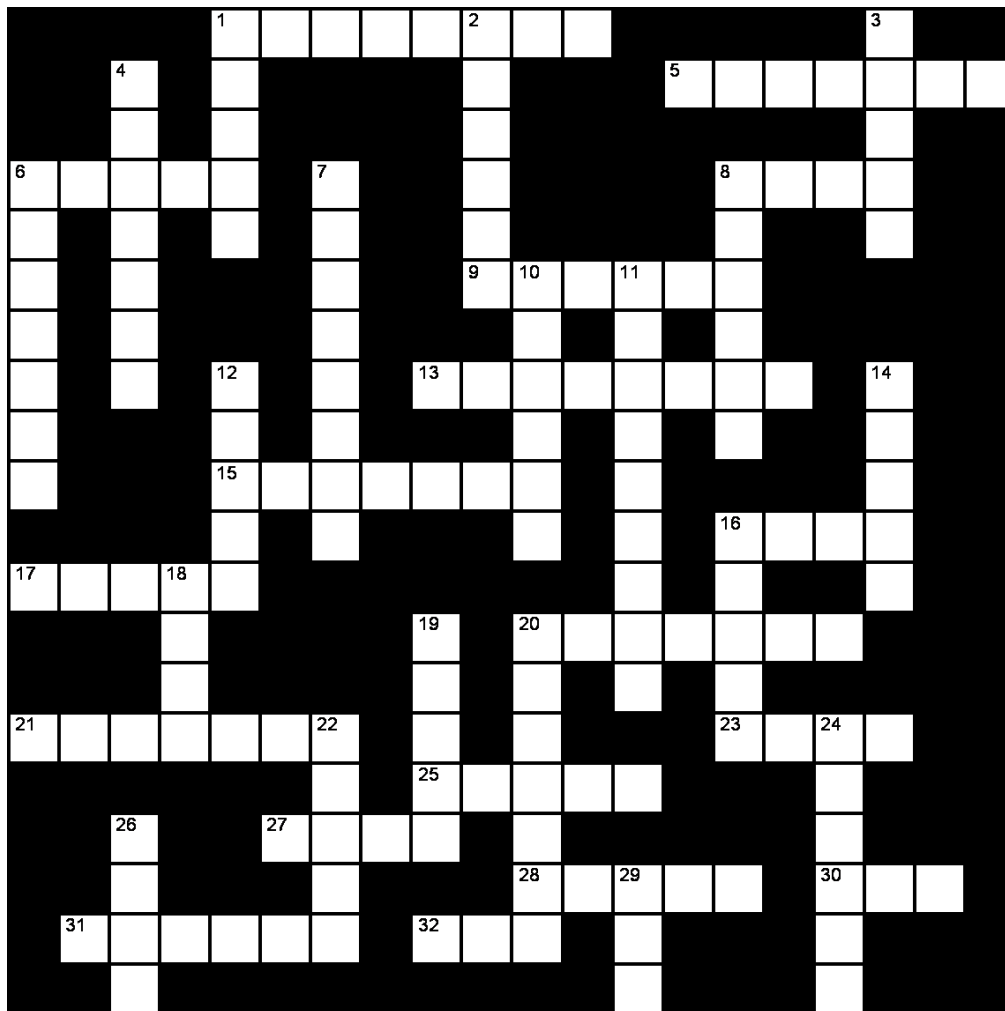
Read *The Other Side of Love* on page 4. Pick the better end for each sentence below. Sometimes, you will have to make an inference from the article rather than look for facts.

1. Moving to a new country
 - a. can be stressful for couples.
 - b. is almost always an exciting and happy time for couples.
2. Couples who have had problems in their marriages before they move to a new country
 - a. usually find those problems go away after their move.
 - b. often find those problems get worse after their move.
3. Spending more time with one's family after moving to a new country can be stressful
 - a. only if the family members do not get along very well.
 - b. even if family members get along well, because they have to learn new roles.
4. When trying to understand how couples adjust,
 - a. we must consider what their day to day lives are like and what sacrifices they have each made.
 - b. we find that wives have a more difficult time moving to a new country than husbands.
5. When one spouse is happy and the other is unhappy
 - a. the happy one should try to convince the other that the new country is great.
 - b. the couple should look for ways to talk about both good and bad parts of the new country.

FUN, USEFUL, COLORFUL, GREAT, AND IMPORTANT ADJECTIVES

Adjectives describe and give meaning to nouns. Read *The Other Side of Love* on page 4. In the left-hand column, write the adjective used in the article to describe the noun. (The number after the noun refers to the paragraph number in which the noun is found.) In the right-hand column, think of another adjective that could describe that noun.

happiest	marriages (2)	longest
_____	change (3)	_____
_____	work (5)	_____
_____	rules (5)	_____
_____	customs (6)	_____
_____	country (8)	_____
_____	cycles (10)	_____



Across

1. Most Americans see the recent Arizona shooting as an isolated act of a ___ individual.
5. The US president who ended slavery.
6. cut in very small pieces
8. "Be ___, Oh Valentine!"
9. the oldest US President ever to take office
13. There are no ___ holidays in the US, just federal and state ones.
15. Laura Ingalls Wilder grew up on the ___.
16. The amount of ___ spouses spend with each other may change when they move to a new country.
17. Buy one ___ of pecans if a recipe requires "4 cups."
20. Tell these to your children to teach them family and national values.
21. charge a President with serious misconduct
23. cut in small cubes
25. ___ Rights Movement
27. ___ on air when you're really happy!
28. Family ___ often change during moves to a new country.
30. the symbolic color of Valentine's Day
31. Use this instead of buttermilk, if you prefer.
32. Jump for ___ when you're happy!

Down

1. A "___ mother" pushes her children to achieve in school.

2. Chocolate ___ is what is left over after the seeds are roasted and the cocoa butter is removed.
3. one traditional Valentine's Day gift
4. the trait we are supposed to learn after hearing stories of Lincoln and Washington
6. ___ X, an activist during the 1960s
7. the only bachelor President in US history
8. In 1968 many US holidays were moved to occur on a ___.
10. American parents are often concerned with a child's self-___.
11. furry animal who does or does not see his shadow on February 2
12. a fat baby with a bow and arrow
14. ___'s chocolate is not at all sweet.
16. Barack Obama is the forty-___ person to be President of the US.
18. Being on cloud ___ is fun!
19. February is ___ History Month in the US.
20. It is important to understand the history of ___ in the US.
22. In February, buy candy in a box shaped like a ___.
24. Little George Washington is said to have chopped down a ___ tree.
26. cut in small pieces
29. ___ cabin, a basic wooden house

OUT AND ABOUT

1. Read *Valentine's Day* on page 5. Go to a store that sells greeting cards. Find an example of a Valentine's card that:

- (a) is for a young child,
- (b) is for one's spouse,
- (c) is funny, and (d) is serious.

2. Read *Cherry Trees and Log Cabins* on page 3. Watch for pictures of log cabins, cherry trees, Lincoln and Washington in stores.

3. Read *Black History Month* on page 4. Go to a DVD rental shop, iTunes or Netflix on line to see if they have copies of the movies recommended in the article. Which one(s) look most interesting to you?

4. Read *Chocolate Bits* on page 5. Go to a food store, candy aisle. Count the number of different kinds of chocolate. You'd better bring a calculator...

5. Read *Gun Control and Gun Ownership* on page

7. Buy a national US newspaper and count the number of stories in it that involve a gun of some type.

IF YOU USE THE WEB

1. Read *Wiki-How* on page 4. Go to www.wikihow.com and read how to make a pop-up Valentine's Day Card. Search for something you actually want to know how to do (cut an onion without crying? use Skype to make free international calls?), or something you know how to do well so you can compare advice.

2. Read *Practicing English on the Web* on page 6. Go to www.rongchang.com and try a game, a listening exercise, and a grammar exercise.

3. Read about Laura Ingalls Wilder on page 7. See some photos of her, her life and her family (and a few made-for-TV re-enactments) at www.youtube.com/watch?v=cUvkRGsPSpg.

WITH A FRIEND

1. Read *Being a Good Parent* on pages 1 and 5. Discuss with a friend or partner what you think is the most important task for parents. How important is it to help children do well in school? In sports or music? What character traits are most important to instill — honesty, modesty, self-confidence, obedience, respect??

2. Read *Presidential Facts* on page 2 and 3. Discuss two or three facts that surprised you, or that you did not know, or that are very different from your home country.

3. Read *Cherry Trees and Log Cabins* on page 3. Tell a friend or partner a story that has often been told in your family. Discuss what the "lesson" of that story is for you. Is that the same thing you think your family intends you to learn from the story?

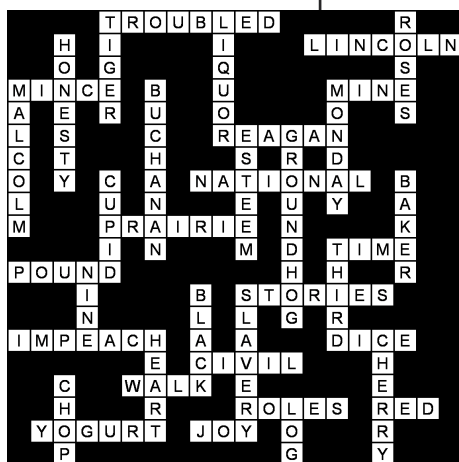
4. Read *Valentine's Day* on page 5. With a friend or partner, compare how people behave when they are "in love" in your home culture with what they do in the US. If you have Valentine's Day in your home country, how is it similar to and different from what you see in the US? When do men and women exchange gifts?

5. Read *Translating the US Kitchen* on page 6. Describe to a friend or partner what an American would find if he or she looked for these foods in a store in your home country (is it the same as the US? is there something similar? what would other choices be?):

brown sugar	nuts	flour
heavy cream	a pound of cheese	mustard
double-acting baking powder	skim milk	sour cream

6. Read *Academy Awards* on page 6. Watch the Awards ceremony on February 27, then discuss it with a partner. Were you entertained? Did you enjoy the show?

7. Read *That Crazy English: Happy Times!* on page 8. Tell a friend or partner about a very happy time you have had, using as many of these idioms as you can.



ANSWER CORNER

UNDERSTANDING WHAT YOU READ

1a 2b 3b 4a 5b

FUN, USEFUL...ADJECTIVES

wonderful (or difficult) change
interesting work
cultural rules
different customs
new country
natural cycles



The
Interchange
Institute

© The Interchange Institute, 2011