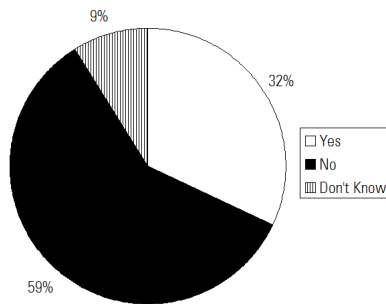


Inside This Issue

In the News: The Presidential Players

The Presidential election race is on. The vote happens every four years, on the first Tuesday after the first Monday of November - that is, November 6, 2012. Each of the two major parties will be picking its final candidate between now and next summer. So far, there is little talk about any Democrat running against President Obama:

“Would you like to see other Democratic candidates challenge Barack Obama for the party’s nomination for president in 2012?”



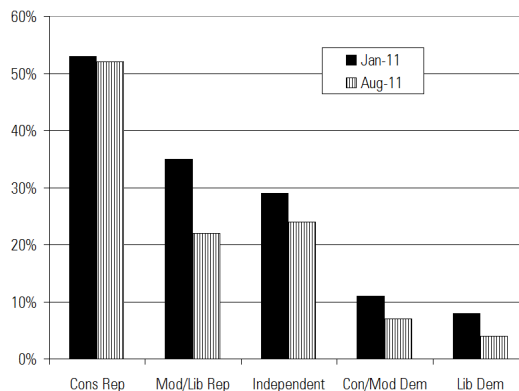
Note: Based on responses of Democrats and Democratic-leaning Independents
Source: Pew Research Center, August 2011

But there’s loads of talk about who the Republican candidate will be. You have probably heard about these candidates in the past few weeks, as they have officially announced their candidacy, and started debating each other: Mitt Romney, former Governor of Massachusetts; Rick Perry, Governor of Texas; Michelle Bachmann, Congresswoman from Minnesota; Jon Huntsman, former Governor of Utah; Newt Gingrich, former Speaker of the US House of Representatives; Herman Cain, Businessman; Ron Paul, Congressman

from Texas. See abcnews.go.com/Politics (then click on Vote 2012 along the top) for a brief biography of each of these candidates, and a few others.

One new factor in this election is the unknown influence of the Tea Party. The Tea Party is not an official political party but rather, a coalition of people who value limiting the power of the federal government power, oppose many forms and targets of taxation, and value reducing the national debt. While it claims adherents from both parties, most members of Congress who agree with the Tea Party are Republicans. The Tea Party was a powerful force in August’s debt ceiling negotiations, and its impact on the Presidential race is not yet known. The latest polls (see below) show a slip in its assessment among voters, but November 2012 is a long way away.

“The Tea Party has a mostly positive effect on Congress.” (% who agree)



Views of Conservative Moderate and Liberal Republicans and Democrats, and Independents.
Source: Pew Research Center

In the News: The Presidential Players 1

Labor Day 2

Plan Your Car Trip 2

Worcestershire Sauce, Pam and Other Mysteries 2

Social Attitude Trends in the US 3

On-Line Translators 3

Open House (and Other Hidden Messages) 4

Vocabulary for the First Day of School 4

Biography: Arthur Nielsen 6

Pushed from the Nest or Given Wings to Fly? 6

Jewish High Holy Days 6

The Jewish Calendar 6

That Crazy English: Mythology 7

8

Compliments of

**Boston University
CELOP Program**

Distribution restricted per terms of educational site license.

Worcestershire Sauce, Pam and Other Mysteries

Recently I was looking through some American cookbooks with you, Reader, in mind. I thought this might help:

Worcestershire Sauce (pronounced “WUH-ster-sheer”): A combination of water, vinegar, molasses, corn syrup, anchovies, spices and flavorings, used to add intensity to sauces, marinades, and dips.

Mayonnaise and Miracle Whip: Mayonnaise is a sauce made of eggs, oil, lemon or vinegar, and seasonings, used in the US mostly as a sandwich spread or as one ingredient in salad dressing. Miracle Whip is one brand of a lower-fat, usually cheaper version of mayonnaise. Both are now available in low- or no-fat versions.

Tabasco Sauce: Hot pepper sauce made of red peppers, vinegar, water and salt. Very intense flavor.

Crisco: A shortening made of vegetable oil. Used in baking, especially in wheat-based dough. Is solid at room temperature, with a higher smoke point than butter or margarine, so some people use it to grease a cookie sheet too.

Pam: A spray oil; use to cover baking sheets to prevent sticking, or to add a light layer of oil to meat or vegetables.

Labor Day

Labor Day, the first Monday in September (this year, September 5), is a legal holiday in all 50 states. The holiday began over 100 years ago as a day to honor people who worked in factories, usually for low pay and under poor conditions. During that time, many labor unions were formed to protect the US workers. Unions grew in size, to a peak in the mid-1940s.

Today in the US there are unions for actors, musicians, postal workers, police, teachers, nurses, farm workers, painters, and more — about 80 unions in all. The American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial

Organizations (AFL-CIO) is a kind of union of unions, with about 14 million members. Still, the proportion of workers who are union members has decreased steadily in the last 50 years (to a record low now of about 13%), as has the number of work stoppages, or strikes.

Labor Day has an unofficial meaning in the US as well. It marks the end of summer. Outdoor swimming pools may close.

Museums and parks begin new winter hours. Many public schools and universities begin the new academic year in “the week

after Labor Day,” whenever that happens to be. For students in the US, Labor Day is a kind of New Year holiday.

Labor Day Weekend is a time for families to enjoy one last piece of summer. Picnics are traditional. But beware! On Friday and Monday afternoons, the highways will be crowded with cars filled with bicycles, barbecue equipment, canoes, ice coolers, suitcases, camping tents, children, and dogs. Plan your driving carefully.



Plan Your Car Trip

The American Automobile Association (www.aaa.com) estimates that more than 30 million people will travel more than 50 miles from home over the Labor Day weekend, mostly by car. If you plan to be one of them, you might check these web sites first:

www.fuelcostcalculator.aaa.com Select your starting city and destination city, and information about your car, and it will compute how much your gasoline will cost for the trip.

www.gasbuddy.com Find gasoline prices at stations near you or on your route.

www.traffic.com If you live in (or will be traveling to) one of 50 cities in the US, you can find a map that shows current traffic problems. Or, you can “customize a drive” — tell it where you plan to drive — and it will rate the severity of any traffic problems you will encounter and save the customized route for future use.

maps.yahoo.com or **maps.google.com** These mapping sites combine travel maps with traffic status information.

And if you have a smart phone or iPad, try these apps:

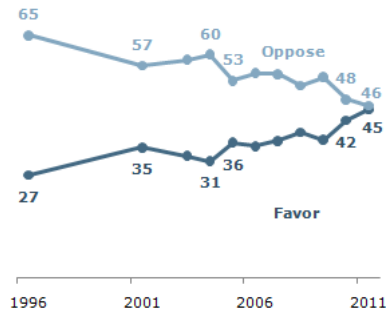
MotionX GPS Drive Directions, interface with wikipedia and Facebook, maps

City Maps 2Go Download city maps onto your device while

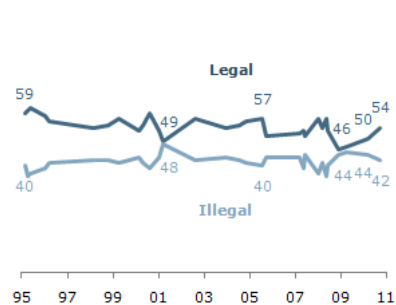
Social Attitude Trends in the U.S.

Here at the beginning of the Presidential election cycle, it is a good time to review U.S. opinion on various social issues. Overall trends are shown in the charts; subgroup differences are described to the right.

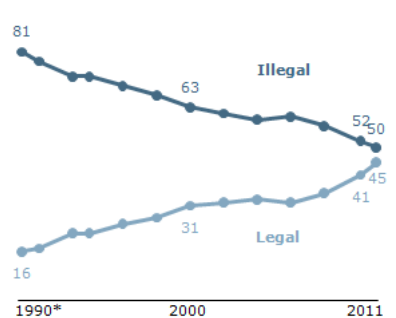
Support for Gay Marriage Nearly Matches Opposition



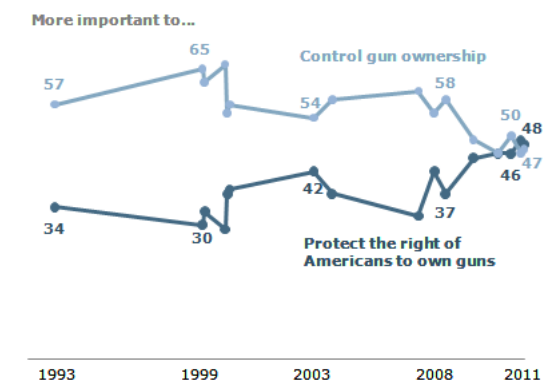
Majority Says Abortion Should be Legal in All or Most Cases



Should Marijuana Use be Legal?



Long-Term Rise in Support for Gun Rights



Source: Pew Research Center

There has been a clear increase in support for gay marriage in the last 15 years, especially among Democrats (from 33% to 57%) and Independents (from 33% to 51%), but also among Republicans (from 15% to 23%). There are also regional differences, with support for gay marriage strongest in the Northeast (59% in favor) and West (56%), compared to the Midwest (40%) and South (34%).

Support for legal abortion (“in all or most cases”) has waxed and waned from a high of 59% in 1995, to a low of 46% in 2009; currently, 54% currently favor it. Support is higher among Democrats (65%) and Independents (58%) than among Republicans (34%). Support is weakest among White evangelical Protestants (34%), compared to White mainline Protestants (60%), Catholics (52%) and Religiously Unaffiliated (71%).

Support has gradually grown over the last 20 years for legalizing marijuana, although 50% Americans still oppose it (compared to 45% who support it). Those under 30 are most likely to support legalizing the drug (54%). Support is stronger among those who completed some (50%) or all of college (48%), compared to those who finished high school or less (40%).

Almost equal numbers of Americans say it is more important to protect the right to own guns (48%) as say that it is more important to control gun ownership (47%). This poll was taken just two months after the highly publicized shooting of Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords; attitudes showed very little effect as a result of this event.

On-Line Translators

(by Celia Valada)

On-line English translators can be very useful when you need to look up single words, or understand the gist of a sentence or website. However, problems may occur if you use the dictionary to translate whole sentences. Computer translators are not very good at interpreting meaning. And they are not very sensible about what to do about words with more than one meaning.

Take this example: “The hail was the size of quarters.” “Hail” can mean “icy rain” or “greeting.” “Quarters” can mean “coins” or “part of an academic year.” An English-Spanish translator produced: “El saludo era el tamaño de cuartos.” Back to English, it became: “The salutation was the size of semesters.” You see the problem!

We asked several English teachers for their recommendations about on-line translators. Here is their advice:

babelfish.yahoo.com:

Translates words or sentences to or from 10 languages. Or type in a URL and it will translate a whole web site, amazingly quickly. It is a rough translation — see notes above — but pretty good.

www.reverso.net: Easy to use for simple text.

www.lexicool.com: Links to many dictionaries and translation aids.

Vocabulary for the First Day of School

Open House: A night when parents come to the school to meet the teacher, visit the classroom, and hear about the plans for the year.

Field Trip: A class trip away from the school — perhaps to a museum, historic site, factory, farm, etc. May cost extra money (for bus travel, admission fees, or snacks) but schools usually have a fund to help children pay if necessary.

Permission Slip: A form signed by a parent, giving permission to do a special activity or go on a field trip.

Show and Tell: In younger grades, there may be a regular time during the week for children to show something (like a picture of a grandparent who visited) or tell about something (like a trip to the zoo) to the class.

Report Card: A written notice about a child's progress in different subjects in school.

Recess: A time during the school day for (younger) children to play outside.

PTO or PTA: Parent-Teacher Organization (or Association). A voluntary group that serves as a liaison between parents and school officials. It may offer regular evening meetings, discussion groups, and lec-

continued on page 5 sidebar

Open House (and Other Hidden Messages)

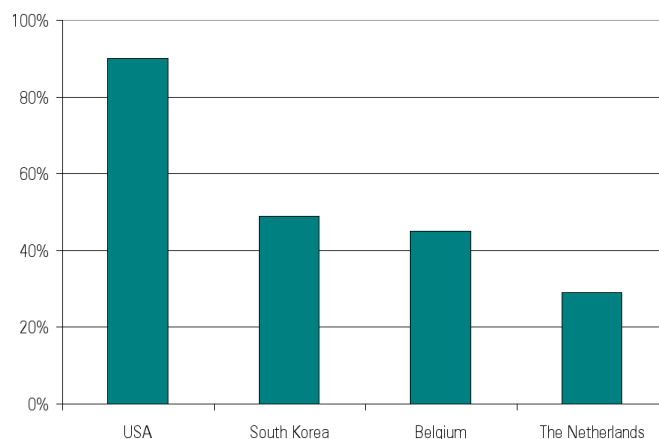
This Fall, if you have a child in a US school (any age, private or public), you will probably be invited to an "Open House" or "Back to School" event. On this night, you can visit your child's classroom(s) and meet the teacher(s). What the teachers do that night may surprise you unless you understand something about the values they are hoping to communicate. For example:

Parental Involvement

The teacher does this: invites you to volunteer your special skills and opportunities with the class. Do you work in a restaurant? A laboratory? Have an interesting craft collection? Know how to draw animation? Can you bring the class to your workplace or go to the school to explain your work or skill to them?

You may think: education should be left to the experts. (One mother said to me, "In my country, we leave the teaching to the teachers just as we leave surgery to a surgeon. We don't expect to be invited into the operating room and we don't expect to be invited into the classroom.") See the chart below for evidence about principals' expectations around the world about parental involvement.

% Principals who said they expect parents to volunteer for school projects and trips



Source: *Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study*

But the teacher intends: to work as a partner with you and to use your skills to enhance the classroom experience in creative ways.

Promoting Individualism

The teacher does this: tells a cute story about a boy in her class who corrected her description of something they were studying.

You may think: the teacher is risking losing the students' respect; with so much to learn, you may feel it is best for the teacher to do the explaining, describing, and lecturing.

But the teacher intends: to communicate that she encourages independent thinking in her students. Some researchers asked eighth grade students how much they agreed with this statement: "In my mathematics class students do exactly as the teacher says." In the US, 48.8% agreed or strongly agreed with that statement. Compare this with 73.8% in Taiwan, 79.8% in England, 69% in Japan, and 85.1% in Jordan. While this might reflect a difference in teachers' abilities to maintain discipline, I think instead that it reflects a difference in teachers' willingness to allow - or even to encourage - challenge and interruption, as they believe this helps build individualism.

Student-Led Learning

The teacher does this: tells you that children will be expected to read books of their own choosing, both in school and at home.

You may think: it would be better for teachers, as experts, to select the best books to be read.

But the teacher intends: to encourage student-driven

learning (which presumably will be more meaningful to the children) and expand the range of information present in class discussions. When researchers asked fourth graders how often they read a book during school hours that they had chosen by themselves, 71.9% of the American children said they did this every day, much more often than children in many other countries (see chart below).

Teacher Feedback

The teacher does this: hands you a folder of your child's recent work, with stickers and "Great job!" written at the top of each one, even pages with some mistakes on them.

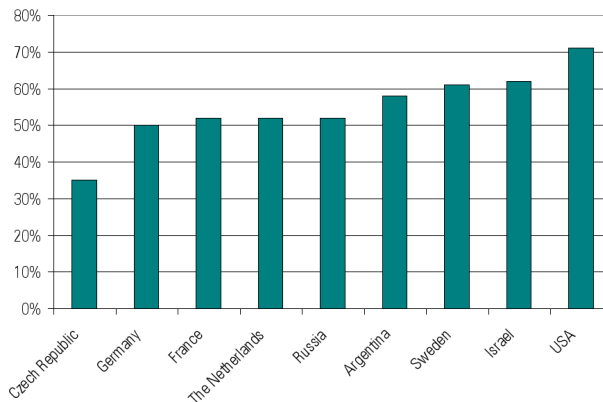
You may think: the teacher seems to be rewarding mediocrity; if there are mistakes, how can they be considered "great?" You may worry that if all students are told they are "great" they will not work hard to improve.

The teacher intends: to encourage children to feel like competent learners and to solidify their base of self-esteem so they will grow into adults who love learning.

By the way, it is likely that, even if you have these worries at your first Open House, you will come to like some/much of what the US educational experience offers. The parents I know love joining their children's classes, they become regular parent volunteers, and they come to understand the benefits of emphasizing each child's individual progress. But it takes a while to understand the teacher in context.

At the same time, school is often a place where parents feel caught between cultures — even if they see benefits to a new way, the loss of their own educational values is tough. Talk to your child and your child's teachers about differences and see if you can come to a balance that works for all.

% Fourth Graders who said they read a book during school hours that they had chosen themselves



Source: Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study

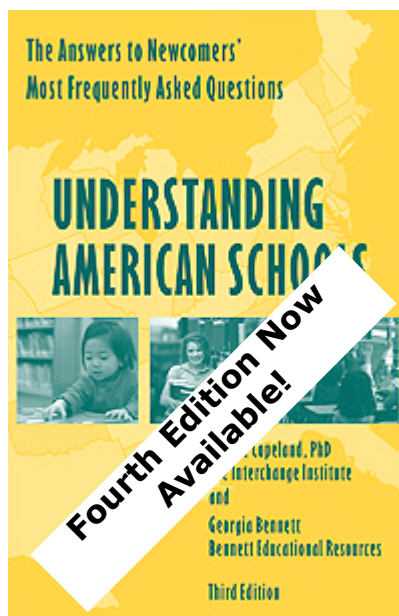
tures. It may hold orientation activities for new families or organize money-raising activities to supplement teachers' budgets for individual classroom budgets.

Science Fair: A school or district may invite students to demonstrate original science experiments or activities on one particular day; sometimes prizes are given. Or, science (and other) teachers may organize a day of interactive science activities.

Library Volunteer: Most US schools welcome parents' participation and involvement. One common way of helping is to volunteer to work in the school library. It's a fun way to catch a glimpse of your child at school, and help the school, too.

Homeroom: In grades in which children move from one classroom to another for different subjects (usual in middle and high school), this is the room (and teacher and group of children) in which they hear announcements. May be the first class of the day.

College vs. University: "College" usually refers to any four-year undergraduate program of education that follows high school. A "university" is similar but has several different degree programs, including a graduate program and research facilities. Universities are not necessarily higher in quality than colleges in the US.



Our book, **Understanding American Schools: Answers to Newcomers' Most Frequently Asked Questions** (by education specialist Georgia Bennett and me - Anne Copeland) has already helped over 10,000 newcomers to the US understand how to navigate the public and private school system. We've just finished updating every fact, statistic and tip, in time for a September 2011 launch. Order your copy of the Fourth Edition today at www.interchangeinstitute.org. In the Comments box, note that you are a *Newcomer's Almanac* reader and we'll give you a 15% discount.

Pushed from the Nest or Given Wings to Fly?

In the US, many high school graduates will enter a college or university this September — 83.4% in the town where I live, for example. This rate, coupled with the high value that Americans place on independence and individualism, has one very interesting effect on American family life. My friend from South America first brought it to my attention.

She told me about a woman from the US whose daughter had finished high school and was planning to go to another city to go to college. The mother planned to re-decorate the daughter's bedroom and make it into a family TV room. My friend was shocked. She asked me why American parents push their children out of their homes at such a young age. And she asked me if I thought the mother still loved her daughter.

Yes, I said, I think the woman still loves her daughter. It is important to say, first, however, that families in the US differ a lot in how close they are. This is one area where the many subcultures in the US are quite different from each other. Some US families remain very close (physically and emotionally) as the children become adults. Grandparents, aunts and uncles, parents, and adult children may share a house, money, attitudes, and values.

continued on page 7

Birthday Biography: Arthur Nielsen

Have you heard of “Nielsen Ratings” of television shows? They are a measure of how many viewers watch each show, which in turn drives the demand for advertising on those shows — the higher the ratings, the more money advertisers will pay. Arthur Nielsen, born on September 5, 1897, was the marketing expert who invented this approach. Nielsen first started monitoring peoples’ radio channels in 1942, and then televisions in 1950. Participating volunteer families allow a monitor to be placed on their TVs that records what shows they watch.

Nielsen was an early leader in the field of “marketing research,” long before TV was invented. He showed the benefit of “test marketing” (releasing a new product in small numbers, in a small area, to test its popularity). And, in his pre-computer age, he led the use of statistical sampling to measure “market share” — for example, he would randomly select a small number of stores across the country then measure the percent of a product (say, soap) sold that was made by one of his clients. If the random selection were done correctly, this approach would provide valuable information about nationwide sales.

Happy Birthday, Mr. Nielsen.

TV Shows with Highest Nielsen Ratings, Selected Seasons

Season	TV Show	Estimated Viewers
1950–1951	Texaco Star Theater	6 million
1952–1955	I Love Lucy	14-15 million
1957–1961	Gunsmoke	17-18 million
1962–1964	The Beverly Hillbillies	18-20 million
1964–1967	Bonanza	17-19 million
1971–1976	All in the Family	21-22 million
1979–1980	60 Minutes	22 million
1980–1982	Dallas	22 million
1985–1989	The Cosby Show	23-31 million
1994–1995	Seinfeld	20 million
1995–1997	ER	18-21 million
2000–2001	Survivor: The Australian Outback	30 million
2001–2002	Friends	25 million
2002–2003	CSI: Crime Scene Investigation	26 million
2003–2011	American Idol	23-31 million

For reference, there are currently about 116 million households with a television in the US. The traditional way of measuring television watching (that yielded these results) was to put ask people to complete a TV-watching diary or to put a monitor gadget on the TV which would record channel choice. The Nielsen Ratings are having to adapt to the new ways people are watching television, of course. Now it measures digital video recordings (like TiVo), to capture time-shifted TV viewing. And it is now focused on how to capture data from those who watch TV in groups (like in a college dorm or in a pub), through iTunes, or online (like hulu, youtube, or the networks’ own sites).

Jewish High Holy Days

Rosh Hashanah and **Yom Kippur** are two of the most important holy days in the Jewish calendar. Rosh Hashanah (pronounced Rosh Ha-SHAH-na), the Jewish New Year, is a time for Jews to remember the creation of the world, and to renew their faith through *charity* (giving to others) and prayer for a healthy new year. It is a solemn and sacred day, a day to think about all that is good and all that is bad, not just about one person, but about the human race as a whole. Jews may go to the synagogue on the first one or two days of Rosh Hashanah. There the traditional symbol of Rosh Hashanah, the *shofar* (ram's horn) is blown. Jews may also greet each other (or send cards) saying, "May the year be good and sweet," or simply, "For a good year."

At Rosh Hashanah, many Jews gather with their families for a dinner. A traditional bread, *challah*, is shaped in a round loaf on this night, to symbolize the cycle of the year. Families dip apples in honey, to symbolize a sweet year. Some eat a pomegranate; each of the hundreds of seeds stands for a good deed done during the year.

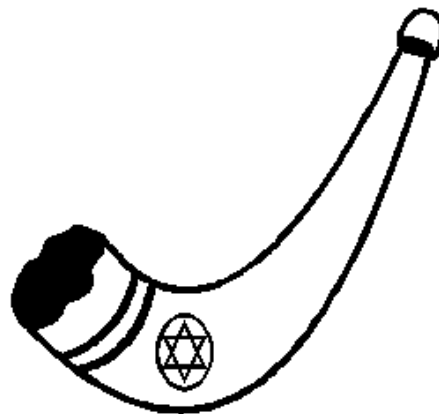
The Jewish Calendar

The Jewish Calendar: With Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish Year 5771 begins. Year 1 is believed to have been the year God created Adam and the world. The timing of Jewish holidays is based on cycles of both the moon and the sun. Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur always occur in the fall, roughly around the time of the vernal equinox. Rosh Hashanah begins on the day of a New Moon, but before the days of accurate astronomy, it was difficult to know exactly when this New Moon would occur - sometimes it was 29 days after the last one, other months it was 30 days after. Therefore, a tradition arose to celebrate this holiday for two days. This tradition is followed by many — but not all — Jews today.

For information about other calendars currently used around the world — Chinese, Christian, Indian, Ethiopian, Balinese, Islamic, Persian (Iranian) and Baha'i — as well as some ancient ones, see webexhibits.org/calendars/calendar.html.

The ten days after Rosh Hashanah are a time of preparation for Yom Kippur, (pronounced YOM Ki-POOR) or the Day of *Atonement* (action to gain forgiveness). This is a time to try to find ways to improve one's relationships and behavior. It is traditional to *fast* (not eat) as atonement for and concentration on past wrong doings, and in the hope of living a sin-free life in the future. Yom Kippur marks the end of the judgment period that started with Rosh Hashanah.

This year, Rosh Hashanah begins on September 29, and Yom Kippur on October 8. The Jewish day, and therefore Jewish holidays, begin at sunset of the previous calendar day. Therefore observation of Rosh Hashanah will begin at sunset on September 28 and Yom Kippur at sunset on October 7.



continued from page 6

But, I continued, the mother's plans for the daughter's bedroom did not surprise me. The goal of many young people in the US is to leave their parents' home and their parents' daily involvement in their lives. It is a sign of their adult status. Children often take a big step toward this goal at the end of high school, when they begin a full-time job or begin college.

It is important to understand that this mother probably shares her daughter's goal of independence. For her, a daughter who sets up her own home and independent life shows that she (the mother) has been a good and loving parent. This mother was helping her daughter reach a shared goal by pushing her along the road toward independence.

Even when living separately, adults stay connected to their parents in the US. This daughter will probably telephone, visit, write to, and ask for advice from her parents. She may share holidays, ask for babysitting help, and arrange for her parents' care as they all get older. But I bet she and her parents will both take pride in her living independently.

Having said all this, the economic troubles of recent years have produced something called "Boomerang Kids" — those who return to their parents' home after college or divorce. US families are learning new rules for how to live together as adults.

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



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

That Crazy English: Mythology

US English speakers use a lot of idioms based on [mostly] Greek mythology:

The lack of sales to teenagers is my company's *Achilles' heel*. (*The lack of sales to teenagers is the weakest part of my company, which is otherwise very strong.*) (*In the Greek myth, infant Achilles' mother held him by the heel and dipped him into the river to make him immortal; he grew up to be a warrior and was killed by an arrow that struck him in his heel.*)

Since her boss told her she might be fired soon, she has had *the sword of Damocles hanging over her*. (*Since her boss told her she might be fired soon, she has had to try to continue living normally even though in danger.*) (*Damocles was a servant to the king; to punish Damocles, the king forced him to sit under a sword held up by a single hair.*)

Don't ask about his last job! That's like *opening Pandora's box*. (*Asking about his last job will lead to all sorts of unpleasant and unexpected information.*) (*Pandora, the first mortal woman, opens a box and releases all human ills into the world.*)

They made a *Herculean effort* to finish before the storm arrived. (*They worked very hard at the huge task of finishing before the storm arrived.*) (*Hercules was the son of Zeus, famous for his strength; Hercules is actually the Roman name for the Greek Heracles.*)

UNDERSTANDING WHAT YOU READ

HOMEWORK

Read *Open House (and Other Hidden Messages)* on pages 4 and 5. Pick the better phrase to complete each sentence below:

1. Open Houses are held _____ every fall:
 - a. in US elementary schools.
 - b. in US schools of all levels
2. US principals are _____ likely than Belgian principals to expect parents to volunteer at school.
 - a. more
 - b. less
3. To an American teacher, a child who disagrees with something she has said
 - a. is showing disrespect and should be punished.
 - b. is showing independence of thought and should be encouraged.
4. Doing exactly what the teacher says to do is _____ common in a US classroom than an English one.
 - a. more
 - b. less
5. Fourth graders in US schools are _____ likely to read books they chose themselves during school.
 - a. not very
 - b. quite
6. When a US teacher writes "Great job!" at the top of a student paper, it means
 - a. that the paper is unusually well done, truly extraordinary.
 - b. that she intends to encourage the student to continue working hard.
7. Teachers in the Czech Republic are _____ likely to select the books their children read during school.
 - a. not very
 - b. quite
8. Parents who are worried about some of the things they see in their child's US classroom should
 - a. first discuss these with the teacher and/or someone who understands US practices.
 - b. look for a different school.

WITH A PEN

1. Read *Vocabulary for the First Day of School* on pages 4-5. Write a list of 5-8 words or phrases (in your home language) that a new-comer to your country would need to know about schools. Write a short definition, in English, of each word or phrase.

2. Read *Open House (and Other Hidden Messages)* on pages 4 and 5. Write a list of the values described that are different in your home country's education system. Add any values that you think are missing from the US school system.

3. Read *Jewish High Holy Days* on page 7. If you observe these holidays, write a brief description of what you do during one of the holy days. If you do not observe these, write a brief description of what you do on your most holy, sacred, or special day of the year.

4. Read *Worcestershire Sauce...* on page 2. Write a list of foods from your home country that would confuse an American, and describe it.

VOCABULARY LESSON

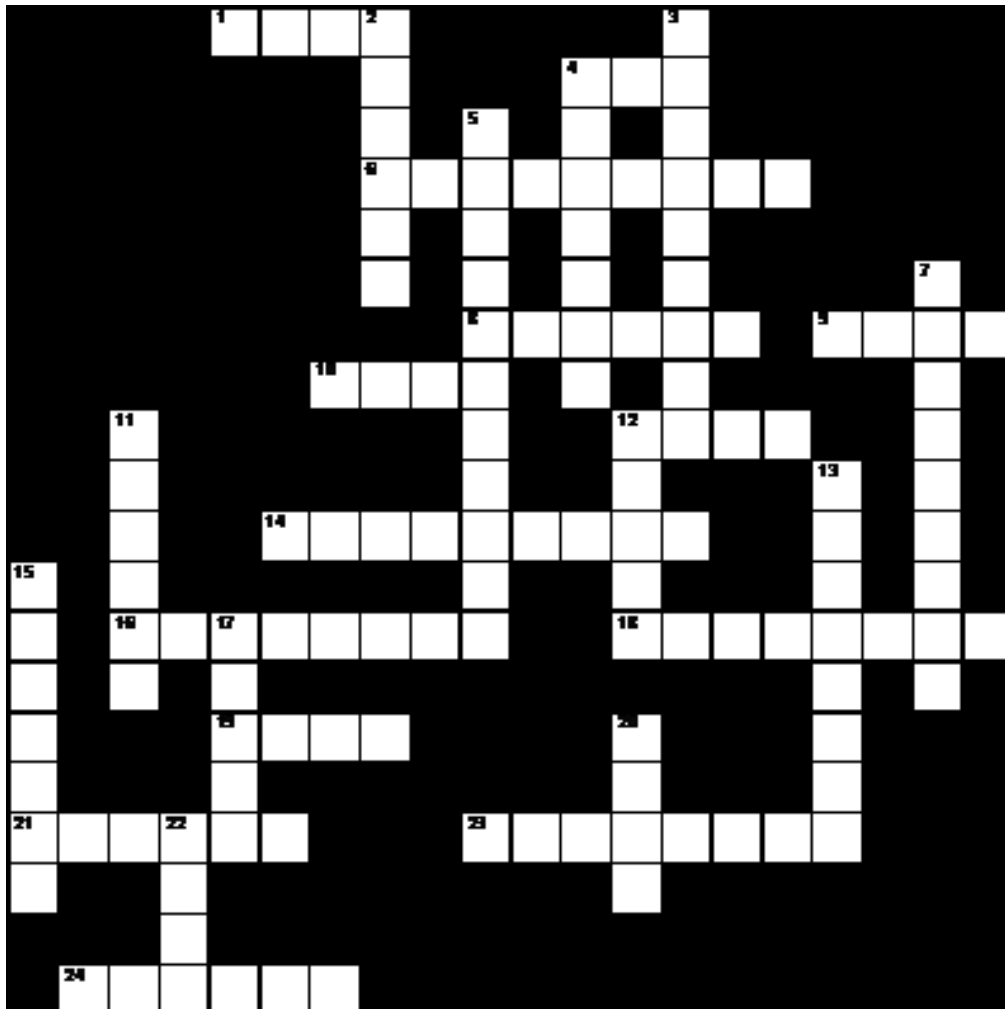
Read *Vocabulary for the First Day of School* on pages 4 and 5. Write in the correct word/words from that list in the sentences below:

1. Jan's favorite part of the school day is _____ because she loves to run and play games with other children.
2. Do not forget to have your parent sign your _____ and bring it tomorrow, or else you will not be allowed to go on the _____ with the rest of the class.
3. His last _____ was so poor that his mother asked to speak with the teacher.
4. I always enjoy going to _____ meetings because I like to get to know the other parents and teachers.
5. At tonight's _____, parents will learn about what their high school students must do to be admitted to _____.
6. Every morning she is greeted cheerfully by her _____ teacher.
7. What are you going to talk about during _____ — your new baby sister or your latest soccer game?
8. Jason is going to the state _____ to get his PhD in math.

PRESENT PERFECT TENSE

Read *Social Attitude Trends in the US* on page 3. Look for examples of the *present perfect* tense, in which the past is connected to the present. For example, "I have worked here for 5 years" (present perfect tense) differs in meaning from "I worked here for 5 years" (simple past tense). In the first sentence, the speaker is saying that he still works at that job while in the second sentence, he says that he used to work here but no longer does. Re-write these sentences from simple past tense into present perfect tense:

1. I studied European history. _____
2. She liked picking apples. _____
3. He rode his bike. _____
4. You sang a pretty song. _____
5. They invited me to go with them. _____



Across

1. Americans are almost evenly divided over the issue of ____.
4. The ____ Party's influence on the presidential election is not yet known.
6. the study of what people would like to buy
8. a ram's horn, a traditional part of a Rosh Hashanah service
9. At ____ and Tell, a child might tell about a trip she took with her parents.
10. American ____ is a very popular TV show these days.
12. not eat
14. Labor Day was started to honor people who worked in ____.
16. Universities are not necessarily higher quality than ____.
18. He lived under a sword held by a single hair.
19. US teachers often encourage children to choose what ____ to read.
21. You will learn how your child is doing in school when you see his/her ____ card.
23. His heel was weak.
24. Jewish holidays begin at ____ on the day before.

Down

2. Labor Day is the unofficial end of ____.
3. There has been an increase in the number of Americans who think ____ should be legal.
4. Presidential elections are always held on a ____ (day of the week).
5. On line ____ are challenged by words that have two meanings.
7. US school principals hope parents will ____ their time and skills.
11. a shortening made of vegetable oil and is a solid at room temperature
12. A ____ trip is one that a class takes together, away from school, for a day.
13. He was known for his strength.
15. She opened a box that let out human troubles.
17. ____ Day is the day many swimming pools close in the North.
20. Miracle ____ tastes a bit like mayonnaise.
22. ____ House is a time to visit your child's school.

OUT AND ABOUT

1. Read *Labor Day* on page 2. Make a list of changes that happen on Labor Day in your US community — like opening hours for swimming pools, or parks.

2. Read *In the News: Presidential Players* on page 1. Pick three of the Republican candidates mentioned in the article and count the number of times they are mentioned in a national newspaper or web site.

3. Read *Birthday Biography: Arthur Nielsen* on page 6. Were any of the TV shows listed in the chart on that page available in your home country? Were any other US TV shows?

4. Read *Worcestershire Sauce, Pam and Other Mysteries* on page 2. Go to a supermarket and find five items that are unfamiliar to you. Read the ingredients. Does the label tell you how to prepare and use it?

5. Read *Social Trends in the US* on page 3. Do any of these trends or attitudes surprise you? Where would your home country score on these charts?

IF YOU USE THE WEB

1. Read *Plan Your Car Trip* on page 2. Find:
 - a) the fuel cost for a trip from Houston, TX to the Denver, Colorado, in a 2001 Ford Escort.
 - b) a list of gas stations (and the price of gas there) within 2 miles of your US home
 - c) the cheapest place to buy gasoline in Washington, DC
 - d) whether there are any traffic delays in Philadelphia, PA, along Interstate 295
2. Read *In the News: The Presidential Players* on page 1. Go to the abcnews.go.com site mentioned in the article and follow the instructions to see the brief biographies of candidates. Find:
 - a) the names of two candidates who are Mormon.
 - b) the names of five candidates who have at least five children
 - c) the name of a candidate who used to be a business owner
 - d) the names of two candidates who have not written a book



© The Interchange Institute, 2011

WITH A FRIEND

1. Read *Open House (and Other Hidden Messages)* on pages 4 and 5.

Hold a debate with a friend or partner about this statement:

“It is very important for teachers to promote individualism, allow student-led learning, and give positive feedback.”

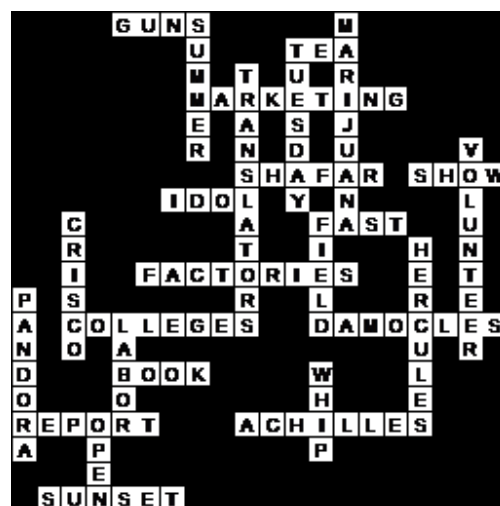
In a debate, each person speaks either in agreement with the statement, or in disagreement. Do not discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each side. One of you should say why it *is* important for teachers to stress these things and the other of you should say why that is *not* what a teacher should do. You do not have to agree with what you are saying! If you like, you can switch sides after five minutes.

Useful Phrases for a Debate

Surely we can all agree that ...
 One thing that is very clear is ...
 I'm sure you'll agree when I say that ...
 A school's most important job is ...
 Some people might say that ...

2. Read *Pushed from the Nest or Given Wings to Fly?* on pages 6 and 7. Describe to a friend or partner what happens when young adults go to university or get a job in your home country. Where do they live? For how many years does a young adult usually live with his/her family? What about you and/or your children? What do you think of the US tradition of encouraging independence?
3. Read *That Crazy English: Mythology*. In your home language, think of some idioms or metaphors that are based on ancient stories. Explain several of these to a friend or partner. Tell the ancient story and describe how it is used in modern language.
4. Read *Social Trends in the US* on page 3. Describe to a friend or partner how you think people in your home country would respond to these social issues. (You do not have to reveal your own attitudes in this discussion, just describe what these charts would look like in your home country.)

ANSWER CORNER



UNDERSTANDING WHAT YOU READ

1b 2a 3b 4b 5b 6b 7b 8a

VOCABULARY LESSON

1 recess 2 permission slip, field trip
 3 report card 4 PTO (or PTA) 5 Open House
 6 homeroom 7 Show and Tell 8 university

PRESENT PERFECT TENSE

1 I have studied European history.
 2 She has liked picking apples.
 3 He has ridden his bike.
 4 You have sung a pretty song.
 5 They have invited me to go with them.