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The 4 page 60 minute ESL British English lesson – 25/11/13

## Countdown to Christmas!

Today, we are going to countdown to Christmas! Look at today's date. How many shopping days are there still to go?

Have you bought yourself an advent calendar yet? If you have what is your favourite picture on it? Perhaps it is a chocolate advent calendar?

Christmas comes just once a year. Father Christmas, a.k.a. Santa Claus, will no doubt be saying his favourite phrase of "Ho, ho, ho!" to Uncle Tom Cobley and all.

People will do their Christmas shopping. The shops are choc-o-block of enticing goodies. Have the sales started in your neck of the woods yet? Have you bought your Christmas wrapping paper? Do you bother to send Christmas cards or do you prefer to just send electronic versions?

Have your children told you what they want for Christmas yet? What will be the 'must-haves' for Christmas in your country this year for kids or for adults?

People like to visit Christmas markets. These highly popular events are dotted across Europe. They provide a bit of festive fun for all the family. Christmas markets allow folk time to enjoy a hot mug of red wine and some local seasonal food.

For kids the Christmas countdown includes school events; like Christmas bazaars, church services and Christmas parties. For adults there can be visits to the pub and Christmas office parties.

Counting down to Christmas means the postmen are normally busier. Seasonal workers get taken on to cope with Christmas orders. Online shopping massively increases.

What about the Christmas tree and the Christmas meal preparations? Christmas is all about family and friends. Enjoy it together! Happy Christmas!

### SPEAKING – WARM UP

Think of three things you do in the 'countdown to Christmas'. Go round the room swapping details with others.

### LISTENING – WRITING - DICTATION

The teacher will read some lines of the article slowly to the class.

### READING

Students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

### SPEAKING - UNDERSTANDING

**1) The article** – Students check any unknown vocabulary or phrases with the teacher.

**2) The article** - Students should look through the article with the teacher.

- 1) What is the article about?
- 2) What do you think about the article?
- 3) Was this an easy or difficult article to understand?
- 4) Was this a boring or interesting article?
- 5) Discuss the article.

**3) Article quiz** - Students quiz each other in pairs. Score a point for each correct answer. Score half a point each time you have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

#### Student A questions

- 1) What does 'A.K.A.' mean?
- 2) What does 'Uncle Tom Cobley and all' mean?
- 3) What does 'in your neck of the woods' mean?
- 4) What does 'must-have' mean?
- 5) What does 'choc-o-block' mean?

#### Student B questions

- 1) What does 'enticing goodies' mean?
- 2) What does 'bother' mean?
- 3) What is a Christmas market?
- 4) What is a Christmas bazaar?
- 5) What is an advent calendar?

**Category: Christmas / December / Events**  
**Level: Intermediate / Upper Intermediate**

## Countdown to Christmas! – 25<sup>th</sup> November 2013

### WRITING / SPEAKING

*In pairs.* On the board write as many things you will do in the 'Countdown to Christmas'. *One-two minutes.* Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

### WRITING / SPEAKING

*In pairs* – think of three types of Christmas drinks then add three Christmas foods you might eat. Write them below.

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_ (2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_ (3) \_\_\_\_\_

**Add** three advantages and disadvantages of Christmas! Discuss together.

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_ (2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_ (3) \_\_\_\_\_

*The teacher* will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

### WRITING / SPEAKING - ROLEPLAY 4

*In pairs/As a class.* On the board draw two columns. Then write down 10 things you do today at Christmas time. Then write down 10 things people did in the past that we don't necessarily do now! Compare and discuss together. *5 mins.*

### DISCUSSION

#### Student A questions

- 1) Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- 2) What song will be No 1 for Christmas in your country?
- 3) How many Christmas shopping days to go are there?
- 4) Have you bought yourself an advent calendar?
- 5) Had you heard of the phrase 'Uncle Tom Cobley and all' before?
- 6) Have the sales started in your neck of the woods yet?
- 7) Do you prefer to send Christmas cards in the post or electronically?
- 8) Have your children told you what they want for Christmas yet?
- 9) Do you like Christmas?
- 10) Have you learnt anything today?

### SPEAKING – ROLEPLAY 1

*In groups.* One of you is the interviewer. The others are one of the following people. You are in the *Discussion FM* radio studio. Today's interview is about: *Countdown to Christmas!*

- 1) A Christmas tree seller.
- 2) A shop worker.
- 3) A publican.
- 4) A teacher.

*The teacher* will choose some groups to roleplay their interview in front of the class.

### SPEAKING - ROLEPLAY 2

*In pairs.* You are online talking to a friend in another country on the opposite side of the world. Start a conversation about 'Christmas in my country'. *5 mins.*

### SPEAKING - ROLEPLAY 3

*In pairs/As a class.* On the board draw two columns. Each writes down 10 things what you still need to do before the big day! Compare lists and discuss together. *5 mins.*

### SPEAKING - ROLEPLAY 3

*In pairs/As a class.* On the board draw a large rectangle. Divide it into 4! Add five words in each rectangle about: The Christmas tree; Jesus; Father Christmas; Family. Join the words together to tell a short story. *5 mins.*

### DISCUSSION

#### Student B questions

- 1) What do you think about what you've read?
- 2) What will be the 'must-haves' for Christmas in your country for kids and adults?
- 3) Will you be visiting a Christmas market?
- 4) What type of Christmas tree will you be using?
- 5) Do you help with the Christmas meal preparations? Explain.
- 6) Will you be spending Christmas with your family?
- 7) Who cooks the Christmas meal?
- 8) Which is your favourite Christmas event?
- 9) What part of Christmas don't you like?
- 10) Did you like this discussion?

**GAP FILL: READING**

**Countdown to Christmas!**

Today, we are going to (1)\_\_\_ to Christmas! Look at today's date. How many shopping days are there still to go?

Have you bought yourself an advent (2)\_\_\_ yet? If you have what is your favourite picture on it? Perhaps it is a chocolate (3)\_\_\_ calendar?

Christmas comes just once a year. Father Christmas, a.k.a. Santa Claus, will no doubt be saying his (4)\_\_\_ phrase of "Ho, ho, ho!" to Uncle Tom Cobley and all.

People will do their Christmas shopping. The shops are (5)\_\_\_ of enticing goodies. Have the sales started in your neck of the woods yet? Have you bought your Christmas wrapping paper? Do you bother to send (6)\_\_\_ cards or do you (7)\_\_\_ to just send (8)\_\_\_ versions?

**Christmas / advent / electronic / countdown / favourite / prefer / calendar / choc-o-block /**

Have your children told you what they want for Christmas yet? What will be the 'must-haves' for Christmas in your country this year for kids or for adults?

People like to visit Christmas markets. These highly popular events are dotted across Europe. They provide a bit of festive fun for all the family. Christmas markets allow (1)\_\_\_ time to enjoy a hot mug of red wine and some local seasonal food.

For kids the Christmas countdown includes school (2)\_\_\_; like Christmas (3)\_\_\_, church services and Christmas parties. For adults there can be visits to the pub and Christmas office (4)\_\_\_.

Counting down to Christmas means the postmen are normally busier. (5)\_\_\_ workers get taken on to cope with Christmas orders. Online shopping (6)\_\_\_ increases. What about the Christmas tree and the Christmas meal (7)\_\_\_? Christmas is all about (8)\_\_\_ and friends. Enjoy it together! Happy Christmas!

**bazaars / seasonal / preparations / folk / family / events / massively / parties**

**GAP FILL: GRAMMAR**

**Countdown to Christmas!**

Today, we are going to countdown to Christmas! Look at today's date. (1)\_\_\_ (2)\_\_\_ shopping days are there (3)\_\_\_ to go?

Have you bought yourself an advent calendar (4)\_\_\_? If you have (5)\_\_\_ is (6)\_\_\_ favourite picture on it? Perhaps it is a chocolate advent calendar?

Christmas comes just once a year. Father Christmas, a.k.a. Santa Claus, will no doubt be saying his favourite phrase of "Ho, ho, ho!" to Uncle Tom Cobley and all.

People will do (7)\_\_\_ Christmas shopping. The shops are choc-o-block of enticing goodies. Have the sales started in your neck of the woods yet? Have you bought your Christmas wrapping paper? Do you bother to send Christmas cards or do you prefer to (8)\_\_\_ send electronic versions?

**just / still / your / their / many / what / yet / how**

Have your children told (1)\_\_\_ what they want for Christmas yet? What will be the 'must-haves' for Christmas (2)\_\_\_ your country this year for kids or for adults?

People like to visit Christmas markets. These highly popular events are dotted across Europe. They provide a bit of festive fun (3)\_\_\_ all the family. Christmas markets allow folk time to enjoy (4)\_\_\_ hot mug (5)\_\_\_ red wine and some local seasonal food.

For kids the Christmas countdown includes school events; like Christmas bazaars, church services and Christmas parties. For adults there can be visits to the pub (6)\_\_\_ Christmas office parties.

Counting down to Christmas means the postmen are normally busier. Seasonal workers get taken on to cope with Christmas orders. Online shopping massively increases. What about (7)\_\_\_ Christmas tree and the Christmas meal preparations? Christmas is all about family and friends. Enjoy (8)\_\_\_ together! Happy Christmas!

**for / you / and / the / a / in / it / of /**

## GAP FILL: LISTENING

### Countdown to Christmas!

Today, we are going to \_\_\_\_\_!  
Look at today's date. How many shopping days are there still to go? Have you bought yourself an advent calendar yet? If you have what is your favourite picture on it? Perhaps it is a chocolate \_\_\_\_\_?

Christmas comes just once a year. \_\_\_\_\_, a.k.a. Santa Claus, will no doubt be saying his favourite phrase of "Ho, ho, ho!" to \_\_\_\_\_.

People will do their Christmas shopping. The shops are choc-o-block of enticing goodies. Have the sales started in your neck of the woods yet? Have you bought your Christmas wrapping paper? Do you bother to send Christmas cards or do you prefer to just send \_\_\_\_\_? Have your children told you what they want for Christmas yet? What will be the 'must-haves' for Christmas in your country this year for kids or for adults?

People like to visit \_\_\_\_\_. These highly popular events are dotted across Europe. They provide \_\_\_\_\_ for all the family. Christmas markets allow folk time to enjoy a hot mug of red wine and some local seasonal food.

For kids the Christmas countdown includes school events; like \_\_\_\_\_, church services and Christmas parties. For adults there can be visits to the pub and Christmas office parties.

Counting down to Christmas means the postmen are normally busier. \_\_\_\_\_ get taken on to cope with Christmas orders. Online shopping massively increases. What about the Christmas tree and the Christmas meal preparations? Christmas is all about family and friends. \_\_\_\_\_!  
Happy Christmas!

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## WRITING/SPELLING

### WRITING / SPEAKING

**1) In pairs.** On the board write as many words as you can to do with '**Christmas**'. *One-two minutes.* Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

**2) Sentence starters** - Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

- 1) I like \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) The countdown \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) Christmas \_\_\_\_\_

### 3) SPEAKING - DISCUSSION

*Allow 10 minutes – As a class.*

*Discuss the following...*

Is Christmas too commercial?

*The teacher can moderate the session.*

**4) Homework** - Write and send a 200 word email to your teacher about: **Countdown to Christmas!** Your email can be read out in class.

### GAP FILL READING

- 1) countdown
- 2) calendar
- 3) advent
- 4) favourite
- 5) choc-o-block
- 6) Christmas
- 7) Prefer
- 8) electronic

### ANSWERS

- 1) folk
- 2) events
- 3) bazaars
- 4) parties
- 5) seasonal
- 6) massively
- 7) preparations
- 8) family

### SPELLING

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards check your answers.

- 1) countdown
- 2) Christmas
- 3) calendar
- 4) popular
- 5) folk
- 6) yet
- 7) still
- 8) seasonal
- 9) bazaars
- 10) parties

### SPELLING

Use the following ratings:

**Pass = 12**

**Good = 15**

**Very good = 18**

**Excellent = 20**

- 11) massively
- 12) preparations
- 13) together
- 14) postmen
- 15) kids
- 16) family
- 17) country
- 18) electronic
- 19) bother
- 20) choc-o-block

Countdown to Christmas! – 25<sup>th</sup> November 2013