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Level 3

Christmas becoming less religious in U.S.

20th December, 2013

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1312/131220-happy-holidays.html>

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Please try Levels 0, 1 and 2 (they are easier).

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THE ARTICLE

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1312/131220-happy-holidays.html>

A new report says Christmas in the USA is becoming less religious. Nine out of ten Americans celebrate Christmas, but only about half think it is a religious holiday. The report is from the Pew Research Center. It asked 2,001 adults about their opinions on Christmas. Just over half of those questioned thought Christmas was a religious celebration, while 32 per cent said it was, "more of a cultural holiday". Greg Smith from Pew Research said: "Younger adults are less likely than older adults to see Christmas as a religious rather than cultural holiday. They're less likely to say they will attend [church at] Christmas...and they are less likely to believe in the virgin birth."

People are also changing what they say to each other at Christmas and what they write in cards. More and more people are choosing to say "Happy Holidays" instead of "Merry Christmas". This is because there are also non-Christian holidays happening around the same time as Christmas. Many people want to include all holidays in their holiday wishes. The research also found that 79 per cent of Americans will watch a Christmas movie, but only 59 per cent will go to church. Just 36 per cent will read the Christmas story in the Bible. The average amount of money people spend on Christmas is \$914. Ten per cent of Americans spend over \$2,000. People most look forward to spending time with their family.

Sources: http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/religion/poll-christmas-is-a-commercial-holiday-not-a-sacred-holy-day-for-many/2013/12/17/e07cd7fa-672e-11e3-997b-9213b17dac97_story.html
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/12/18/christmas-non-religious_n_4453828.html

WARM-UPS

1. CHRISTMAS: Students walk around the class and talk to other students about Christmas. Change partners often and share your findings.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

report / religious / celebrate / holiday / opinions / questioned / adults / attend church / changing / Merry Christmas / non-Christian holidays / wish / average / look forward to

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. CELEBRATE: What's the best way to celebrate? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners often and share what you wrote.

	What do you do now?	What would you really like to do?
People		
Presents		
Food		
Clothes		
Parties		
Words		

4. MERRY CHRISTMAS: Students A **strongly** believe saying "Merry Christmas" is better than saying "Happy Holidays"; Students B **strongly** believe the opposite. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

5. PRESENTS: Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the (same-price) presents you'd want most at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- iPad
- clothes
- books
- jewellery
- expensive meal
- sports equipment
- a painting
- chocolate

6. RELIGIOUS: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "religious". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1312/131220-happy-holidays.html>

1. TRUE / FALSE: Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. A new report say 80% per cent of Americans celebrate Christmas. | T / F |
| b. A research company asked over 20,000 people about Christmas. | T / F |
| c. Older people are more likely to see the religious side to Christmas. | T / F |
| d. Older people are more likely to do to church than younger people. | T / F |
| e. More people are saying "Happy Holidays" instead of "Merry Christmas". | T / F |
| f. Over 80% of Americans will watch a Christmas movie. | T / F |
| g. More than 40% of Americans will read the Bible's Christmas story. | T / F |
| h. People look forward to spending time with family most. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article.

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| 1. report | a. rather than |
| 2. half | b. probable |
| 3. opinions | c. opting |
| 4. likely | d. study |
| 5. attend | e. discovered |
| 6. choosing | f. thoughts |
| 7. instead of | g. total |
| 8. happening | h. be present at |
| 9. found | i. taking place |
| 10. amount | j. fifty per cent |

3. PHRASE MATCH: (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. Nine out of | a. church |
| 2. Just over half of | b. to say "Happy Holidays" |
| 3. see Christmas as a religious rather | c. in the virgin birth |
| 4. They're less likely to say they will attend | d. they say to each other |
| 5. they are less likely to believe | e. money people spend |
| 6. People are also changing what | f. than cultural holiday |
| 7. more people are choosing | g. time with their family |
| 8. happening around the same | h. those questioned |
| 9. The average amount of | i. time as Christmas |
| 10. look forward to spending | j. ten Americans celebrate |

GAP FILL

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1312/131220-happy-holidays.html>

A new report says Christmas in the USA is becoming less religious. Nine (1) _____ of ten Americans celebrate Christmas, but only about half think it is a religious holiday. The report is from the Pew Research Center. It asked 2,001 (2) _____ about their opinions on Christmas. Just over (3) _____ of those questioned thought Christmas was a religious celebration, while 32 per cent said it was, "more of a (4) _____ holiday". Greg Smith from Pew Research said: "Younger adults are less (5) _____ than older adults to see Christmas as a religious (6) _____ than cultural holiday. They're less likely to say they will (7) _____ [church at] Christmas...and they are less likely to believe in the virgin (8) _____."

likely
half
birth
out
attend
adults
rather
cultural

People are also (9) _____ what they say to each other at Christmas and what they write in cards. More and (10) _____ people are choosing to say "Happy Holidays" (11) _____ of "Merry Christmas". This is because there are also non-Christian holidays happening (12) _____ the same time as Christmas. Many people want to include all holidays in their holiday (13) _____. The research also found that 79 per cent of Americans will watch a Christmas movie, but only 59 per cent will go to (14) _____. Just 36 per cent will read the Christmas story in the Bible. The (15) _____ amount of money people spend on Christmas is \$914. Ten per cent of Americans spend over \$2,000. People most look (16) _____ to spending time with their family.

wishes
average
more
around
forward
changing
church
instead

LISTENING – Guess the answers. Listen to check.

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1312/131220-happy-holidays.html>

- 1) Nine out of ten Americans celebrate
 - a. celebrates
 - b. celebrated
 - c. celebrate
 - d. celebrating
- 2) It asked 2,001 adults about their _____ Christmas
 - a. opinions on
 - b. opinion on
 - c. opinion son
 - d. opinions son
- 3) Just over half of _____
 - a. those questions
 - b. these questioned
 - c. them questioned
 - d. those questioned
- 4) They're less likely to say they will _____
 - a. attendant church
 - b. attends church
 - c. attending church
 - d. attend church
- 5) they are less likely to believe in _____
 - a. the virgin birthday
 - b. the virgin birth
 - c. the virgin birthed
 - d. the virgin birthing
- 6) changing what they say to each other at Christmas and what they _____
 - a. write in cards
 - b. writing cards
 - c. writing in cards
 - d. right in cards
- 7) This is because there are also non-_____
 - a. Christianity holiday
 - b. Christians holidays
 - c. Christian holidays
 - d. Christian holiday
- 8) Many people want to include all holidays in their _____
 - a. holiday wish lists
 - b. holiday wish is
 - c. holiday wishes
 - d. holiday wishful
- 9) Ten per cent of Americans _____
 - a. spent over \$2,000
 - b. spend over \$2,000
 - c. spends over \$2,000
 - d. spending over \$2,000
- 10) People most look forward to spending time _____
 - a. with their family
 - b. with there family
 - c. with they're family
 - d. with that family

LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1312/131220-happy-holidays.html>

A new report says Christmas in the USA is becoming less religious.

(1) _____ Americans celebrate Christmas, but only about half think it is a religious holiday. The (2) _____ Pew Research Center. It asked 2,001 adults (3) _____ on Christmas. Just over half of those questioned thought Christmas was a religious celebration, while 32 per cent said it was, "(4) _____ holiday". Greg Smith from Pew Research said: "Younger adults are less likely than older adults to see Christmas (5) _____ rather than cultural holiday. They're less likely to say they will attend [church at] Christmas...and they are less (6) _____ in the virgin birth."

People are also changing what they (7) _____ at Christmas and what they write in cards. More and more people are choosing to say "Happy Holidays" (8) _____ Christmas". This is because there are also non-Christian holidays (9) _____ same time as Christmas. Many people want to include all holidays in their holiday wishes. The research (10) _____ 79 per cent of Americans will watch a Christmas movie, but only 59 per cent will go to church. Just 36 per cent will read the Christmas story in the Bible. (11) _____ of money people spend on Christmas is \$914. Ten per cent of Americans spend over \$2,000. People most look forward to (12) _____ their family.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1312/131220-happy-holidays.html>

1. How many Americans celebrate Christmas?

2. How many Americans believe Christmas is a religious holiday?

3. How many people answered questions about Christmas?

4. Who was more likely to think of Christmas as a religious holiday?

5. Who are less likely to go to church at Christmas time?

6. What are more and more people changing?

7. What else happens around the same time as Christmas?

8. What will 79% of Americans watch this Christmas?

9. Who spends more than \$2,000 on Christmas?

10. What do Americans look forward to most about Christmas?

MULTIPLE CHOICE - QUIZ

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1312/131220-happy-holidays.html>

1. How many Americans celebrate Christmas?
 - a) ten out of ten
 - b) nine out of ten
 - c) nine into ten
 - d) ten out of nine
2. How many Americans believe Christmas is a religious holiday?
 - a) a third
 - b) 89%
 - c) three-quarters
 - d) half
3. How many people answered questions about Christmas?
 - a) 2,001
 - b) 1,002
 - c) 21,000
 - d) 2,100
4. Who was more likely to think of Christmas as a religious holiday?
 - a) younger adults
 - b) non-Christians
 - c) older adults
 - d) children
5. Who are less likely to go to church at Christmas time?
 - a) Americans
 - b) younger people
 - c) those questioned
 - d) Christians
6. What are more and more people changing?
 - a) their Christmas greetings
 - b) the presents they buy
 - c) when they celebrate Christmas
 - d) Christmas food
7. What else happens around the same time as Christmas?
 - a) holiday wishes
 - b) shopping
 - c) non-Christian holidays
 - d) skiing
8. What will 79% of Americans watch this Christmas?
 - a) a movie
 - b) the sun rise
 - c) their weight
 - d) how much they spend
9. Who spends more than \$2,000 on Christmas?
 - a) 10% of Americans
 - b) 20% of Americans
 - c) the average American
 - d) Most Americans
10. What do Americans look forward to most about Christmas?
 - a) not working
 - b) eating
 - c) presents
 - d) family time

ROLE PLAY

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1312/131220-happy-holidays.html>

Role A – iPad

You think an iPad is the best present for your class to buy your teacher. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their ideas. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): a restaurant meal, chocolates or an iTunes voucher.

Role B – Restaurant meal

You think a restaurant meal is the best present for your class to buy your teacher. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their ideas. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): iPad, chocolates or an iTunes voucher.

Role C – Chocolates

You think chocolates are the best present for your class to buy your teacher. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their ideas. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): a restaurant meal, iPad or an iTunes voucher.

Role D – iTunes voucher

You think an iTunes voucher is the best present for your class to buy your teacher. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their ideas. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): a restaurant meal, chocolates or iPad.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1312/131220-happy-holidays.html>

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionary / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'happy' and 'Christmas'.

happy	Christmas
--------------	------------------

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ten• opinions• 32• younger• attend• believe	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• say• instead• same• 79• 36• 914
--	--

CHRISTMAS SURVEY

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1312/131220-happy-holidays.html>

Write five GOOD questions about Christmas in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.
When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

CHRISTMAS DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'Christmas'?
- c) What do you do at Christmas?
- d) Why is Christmas becoming less religious in America?
- e) Do you like Christmas?
- f) Why do many people get stressed at Christmas?
- g) How should a very traditional Christmas be spent?
- h) Have your feelings towards Xmas changed since you were a child?
- i) Is Christmas too commercial nowadays?
- j) Should people go to church at Christmas?

Christmas becoming less religious in U.S. – 20th December, 2013
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CHRISTMAS DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article? Why/not?
- b) Is Christmas the same today as it was 100 years ago?
- c) Do you think Christmas is the best holiday of the year?
- d) What do you want for Christmas?
- e) What is your favourite Christmas song?
- f) Is Christmas better in the cold Northern Hemisphere or on a beach in the Southern Hemisphere?
- g) How important is it to celebrate occasions from other religions?
- h) Would you like to spend Christmas in another country?
- i) Is it OK to spend a lot of money on Christmas?
- j) What questions would you like to ask the head of Pew Research?

DISCUSSION (Write your own questions)

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

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DISCUSSION (Write your own questions)

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

LANGUAGE - CLOZE

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1312/131220-happy-holidays.html>

A new report says Christmas in the USA is becoming less religious. Nine (1) _____ of ten Americans celebrate Christmas, but only about (2) _____ think it is a religious holiday. The report is from the Pew Research Center. It asked 2,001 adults about their opinions on Christmas. Just (3) _____ half of those questioned thought Christmas was a religious celebration, while 32 per cent said it was, "more (4) _____ a cultural holiday". Greg Smith from Pew Research said: "Younger adults are less likely than older adults to (5) _____ Christmas as a religious rather than cultural holiday. They're less likely to say they will attend [church at] Christmas...and they are less likely to believe (6) _____ the virgin birth."

People are also changing what they say to each (7) _____ at Christmas and what they write in cards. More and more people are (8) _____ to say "Happy Holidays" instead of "Merry Christmas". This is because there are also non-Christian holidays happening around the same time as Christmas. Many people want to (9) _____ all holidays in their holiday (10) _____. The research also found that 79 per cent of Americans will watch a Christmas movie, but only 59 per cent will go to church. Just 36 per cent will read the Christmas story in the Bible. The average (11) _____ of money people spend on Christmas is \$914. Ten per cent of Americans spend over \$2,000. People most look forward to (12) _____ time with their family.

Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- | | | | | |
|-----|---------------|-------------|------------|----------------|
| 1. | (a) for | (b) as | (c) from | (d) out |
| 2. | (a) halve | (b) halves | (c) halved | (d) half |
| 3. | (a) more | (b) over | (c) than | (d) exactly |
| 4. | (a) to | (b) by | (c) of | (d) from |
| 5. | (a) speak | (b) happen | (c) see | (d) do |
| 6. | (a) in | (b) at | (c) on | (d) of |
| 7. | (a) another | (b) other | (c) others | (d) the others |
| 8. | (a) choosing | (b) choice | (c) chosen | (d) chose |
| 9. | (a) put in | (b) include | (c) insert | (d) invite |
| 10. | (a) wish list | (b) wishful | (c) wishes | (d) wished |
| 11. | (a) volume | (b) stack | (c) amount | (d) pile |
| 12. | (a) spender | (b) spends | (c) spent | (d) spending |

SPELLING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1312/131220-happy-holidays.html>

Paragraph 1

1. eaeebtrlc Christmas
2. about their nopisoni on Christmas
3. Just over half of those unoteidesq
4. more of a latulucr holiday
5. less eyklil
6. older atdsul

Paragraph 2

7. hgancnig what they say to each other
8. holidays gpnaihpne around the same time
9. dlcienu all holidays
10. holiday ehwsis
11. The aagvree amount of money
12. look wdfaror to

PUT THE TEXT BACK TOGETHER

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1312/131220-happy-holidays.html>

Number these lines in the correct order.

- () Christmas, but only about half think it is a religious holiday. The report is from the Pew Research Center. It asked
- () People are also changing what they say to each other at Christmas and what they write in
- () \$914. Ten per cent of Americans spend over \$2,000. People most look forward to spending time with their family.
- () read the Christmas story in the Bible. The average amount of money people spend on Christmas is
- () are also non-Christian holidays happening around the same time as Christmas. Many people want to
- (**1**) A new report says Christmas in the USA is becoming less religious. Nine out of ten Americans celebrate
- () questioned thought Christmas was a religious celebration, while 32 per cent said it was, "more
- () cards. More and more people are choosing to say "Happy Holidays" instead of "Merry Christmas". This is because there
- () attend [church at] Christmas...and they are less likely to believe in the virgin birth."
- () of Americans will watch a Christmas movie, but only 59 per cent will go to church. Just 36 per cent will
- () of a cultural holiday". Greg Smith from Pew Research said: "Younger adults are less
- () likely than older adults to see Christmas as a religious rather than cultural holiday. They're less likely to say they will
- () 2,001 adults about their opinions on Christmas. Just over half of those
- () include all holidays in their holiday wishes. The research also found that 79 per cent

PUT THE WORDS IN THE RIGHT ORDER

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1312/131220-happy-holidays.html>

1. celebrate ten out Christmas Americans of Nine.

2. adults opinions asked 001 their It , about 2.

3. per 32 holiday cultural a of more was it said cent.

4. than adults older are adults less likely Younger.

5. birth They are less likely to believe in the virgin.

6. to each other People are also changing what they say.

7. the Christian around time - happening same Non holidays.

8. the per read story 36 will Christmas Just cent.

9. spend people money of amount average The.

10. with forward their to family spending time Look.

CIRCLE THE CORRECT WORD (20 PAIRS)

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1312/131220-happy-holidays.html>

A new report says Christmas in the USA is *become / becoming* less religious. Nine out of ten Americans *celebrations / celebrate* Christmas, but only about *half / halve* think it is a religious holiday. The report is from the Pew Research Center. It asked 2,001 adults about *their / they're* opinions on Christmas. Just over half of *them / those* questioned thought Christmas was a *religiously / religious* celebration, while 32 per cent said it was, "*most / more* of a cultural holiday". Greg Smith from Pew Research said: "Younger adults are less *liken / likely* than older adults to see Christmas as a religious rather than cultural holiday. They're less likely to say they will *attendance / attend* [church at] Christmas...and they are less likely to believe *in / on* the virgin birth."

People are also changing what *they / these* say to each other *at / by* Christmas and what they write in *card / cards*. More and more people are choosing to say "Happy Holidays" *instead / rather* of "Merry Christmas". This is because there are also non-Christian holidays *happening / happened* around the same time as Christmas. Many people want to *inclusive / include* all holidays in their holiday *wishful / wishes*. The research also found that 79 per cent of Americans will watch a Christmas movie, but only 59 per cent will go *to / for* church. Just 36 per cent will read the Christmas story in the Bible. The average *volume / amount* of money people spend on Christmas is \$914. Ten per cent of Americans spend over \$2,000. People most look forward to *spending / spent* time with their family.

Talk about the connection between each pair of words in italics, and why the correct word is correct.

INSERT THE VOWELS (a, e, i, o, u)

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1312/131220-happy-holidays.html>

_ n _ w _ r _ p _ r _ t _ s _ y _ s _ C _ h _ r _ s _ t _ m _ s _ _ n _ t _ h _ _ S _ _ s _ b _ c _ m _ n _ g
l _ s _ s _ r _ l _ g _ _ _ s . N _ n _ _ _ t _ f _ t _ n _ _ m _ r _ c _ n _ s _ c _ l _ b _ r _ t _
C _ h _ r _ s _ t _ m _ s , b _ t _ n _ l _ y _ b _ _ t _ h _ l _ f _ t _ h _ n _ k _ t _ s _ _ r _ l _ g _ _ _ s
h _ l _ d _ y . T _ h _ r _ p _ r _ t _ s _ f _ r _ m _ t _ h _ P _ w _ R _ s _ _ r _ c _ h _ C _ n _ t _ r .
_ t _ _ s _ k _ d _ 2 , 0 0 1 _ _ d _ l _ t _ s _ _ b _ _ t _ t _ h _ _ r _ _ p _ n _ _ n _ s _ _ n
C _ h _ r _ s _ t _ m _ s . J _ s _ t _ v _ r _ h _ l _ f _ _ f _ t _ h _ s _ q _ _ s _ t _ _ n _ d _ t _ h _ _ g _ h _ t
C _ h _ r _ s _ t _ m _ s _ w _ s _ _ r _ l _ g _ _ _ s _ c _ l _ b _ r _ t _ _ n , w _ h _ l _ 3 2 _ p _ r
c _ n _ t _ s _ _ d _ t _ w _ s , " m _ r _ _ f _ _ c _ l _ t _ r _ l _ h _ l _ d _ y " . G _ r _ g
S _ m _ t _ h _ f _ r _ m _ P _ w _ R _ s _ _ r _ c _ h _ s _ _ d : " Y _ _ n _ g _ r _ _ d _ l _ t _ s _ _ r _
l _ s _ s _ l _ k _ l _ y _ t _ h _ n _ _ l _ d _ r _ _ d _ l _ t _ s _ t _ s _ _ C _ h _ r _ s _ t _ m _ s _ _ s _
r _ l _ g _ _ _ s _ r _ t _ h _ r _ t _ h _ n _ c _ l _ t _ r _ l _ h _ l _ d _ y . T _ h _ y ' r _ l _ s _ s
l _ k _ l _ y _ t _ _ s _ y _ t _ h _ y _ w _ l _ l _ _ t _ t _ n _ d _ [c _ h _ r _ c _ h _ _ t]
C _ h _ r _ s _ t _ m _ s _ _ _ n _ d _ t _ h _ y _ r _ l _ s _ s _ l _ k _ l _ y _ t _ b _ l _ _ v _ _ n _ t _ h _
v _ r _ g _ n _ b _ r _ t _ h . "

P _ _ p _ l _ _ r _ _ l _ s _ _ c _ h _ n _ g _ n _ g _ w _ h _ t _ t _ h _ y _ s _ y _ t _ _ _ c _ h _ _ t _ h _ r
_ t _ C _ h _ r _ s _ t _ m _ s _ _ n _ d _ w _ h _ t _ t _ h _ y _ w _ r _ t _ _ n _ c _ r _ d _ s . M _ r _ _ n _ d
m _ r _ _ p _ _ p _ l _ _ r _ _ c _ h _ _ s _ n _ g _ t _ _ s _ y _ " H _ p _ p _ y _ H _ l _ d _ y _ s "
_ n _ s _ t _ _ d _ _ f _ " M _ r _ r _ y _ C _ h _ r _ s _ t _ m _ s " . T _ h _ s _ _ s _ b _ c _ _ s _ t _ h _ r _
_ r _ _ l _ s _ _ n _ n - C _ h _ r _ s _ t _ _ n _ h _ l _ d _ y _ s _ h _ p _ p _ n _ n _ g _ _ r _ _ n _ d
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PUNCTUATE THE TEXT AND ADD CAPITALS

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1312/131220-happy-holidays.html>

a new report says christmas in the usa is becoming less religious nine out of ten americans celebrate christmas but only about half think it is a religious holiday the report is from the pew research center it asked 2001 adults about their opinions on christmas just over half of those questioned thought christmas was a religious celebration while 32 per cent said it was "more of a cultural holiday" greg smith from pew research said "younger adults are less likely than older adults to see christmas as a religious rather than cultural holiday they're less likely to say they will attend [church at] christmas...and they are less likely to believe in the virgin birth"

people are also changing what they say to each other at christmas and what they write in cards more and more people are choosing to say "happy holidays" instead of "merry christmas" this is because there are also non-christian holidays happening around the same time as christmas many people want to include all holidays in their holiday wishes the research also found that 79 per cent of americans will watch a christmas movie but only 59 per cent will go to church just 36 per cent will read the christmas story in the bible the average amount of money people spend on christmas is \$914 ten per cent of americans spend over \$2000 people most look forward to spending time with their family

PUT A SLASH (/) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1312/131220-happy-holidays.html>

A new report says Christmas in the USA is becoming less religious. Ninety out of ten Americans celebrate Christmas, but only about half think it is a religious holiday. The report is from the Pew Research Center. It asked 2,001 adults about their opinion on Christmas. Just over half of those questioned thought Christmas was a religious celebration, while 32 percent said it was, "more of a cultural holiday". Greg Smith from Pew Research said: "Younger adults are less likely than older adults to see Christmas as a religious rather than a cultural holiday. They're less likely to say they will attend [church at] Christmas... and they are less likely to believe in the virgin birth." People are also changing what they say to each other at Christmas and what they write in cards. More and more people are choosing to say "Happy Holidays" instead of "Merry Christmas". This is because there are also non-Christian holidays happening around the same time as Christmas. Many people want to include all holidays in their holiday wishes. The research also found that 79 percent of Americans will watch a Christmas movie, but only 59 percent will go to church. Just 36 percent will read the Christmas story in the Bible. The average amount of money people spend on Christmas is \$914. Ten percent of Americans spend over \$2,000. People most look forward to spending time with their family.

HOMework

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find out more about Christmas. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. CHRISTMAS: Make a poster about Christmas celebrations. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. RELIGIOUS: Write a magazine article about religious holidays around the world.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

5. WHAT HAPPENED NEXT? Write a newspaper article about the next stage in this news story. Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Give each other feedback on your articles.

6. LETTER: Write a letter to an expert on Christmas. Ask him/her three questions about it. Give him/her three of your opinions on it. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE (p.4)

a F b F c T d T e T f F g F h T

SYNONYM MATCH (p.4)

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| 1. report | a. study |
| 2. half | b. fifty per cent |
| 3. opinions | c. thoughts |
| 4. likely | d. probable |
| 5. attend | e. be present at |
| 6. choosing | f. opting |
| 7. instead of | g. rather than |
| 8. happening | h. taking place |
| 9. found | i. discovered |
| 10. amount | j. total |

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS (p.8)

1. Nine out of ten
2. Half
3. 2,001
4. Older adults
5. Younger adults
6. What they say to each other at Christmas
7. Non-Christian holidays
8. A movie
9. (the richest) Ten per cent of Americans
10. Spending time with their family

MULTIPLE CHOICE - QUIZ (p.9)

1. b 2. d 3. a 4. c 5. b 6. a 7. c 8. a 9. a 10. d

ALL OTHER EXERCISES

Please check for yourself by looking at the Article on page 2.
(It's good for your English ;-)