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**Level 2 – 16th February 2023**

## **White House says no aliens in weather balloons**

**FREE online quizzes, mp3 listening and more for this lesson here:**

<https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2302/230216-balloons-aliens-2.html>

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**Please try Levels 0, 1 and 3. They are (a little) harder.**

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# THE READING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2302/230216-balloons-aliens-2.html>

Strange things are happening in the sky above North America. US fighter jets have shot down four UFOs in US and Canadian airspace. Officials said the UFOs were balloons that were a danger to airplanes. They were flying at an altitude of around 12,200 metres. The USA said there were no signs the balloons were linked to aliens. A White House spokesperson said: "I don't think the American people need to worry about aliens with respect to these crafts." Earlier in the week, a different official said aliens could not be counted out as a possible explanation for the balloons.

The USA and China exchanged tit-for-tat messages because of the balloons. The US believes the balloons are being used for spying. There is no proof of this. Experts are currently looking at the electronics they have found from the balloons. China said the balloons were for tracking weather and were not spy balloons. Beijing said US high-altitude balloons have flown in China's airspace without permission more than ten times in the past year. The White House said this was untrue. A balloon shooting in early February resulted in the US Secretary of State cancelling a visit to China.

Sources: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-02-14/spy-balloon-alien-white-house-china-surveillance-aircraft/101969384>  
<https://theconversation.com/no-indication-of-aliens-spy-balloon-saga-continues-to-surprise-amid-rising-us-china-tension-199769>  
<https://english.news.cn/20230205/fbbeecffa7ff48119880de4170d97495/c.html>

# PHRASE MATCHING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2302/230216-balloons-aliens-2.html>

## PARAGRAPH ONE:

- |                             |                         |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Strange things           | a. counted out          |
| 2. in the sky               | b. for the balloons     |
| 3. US fighter               | c. about aliens         |
| 4. flying at an altitude of | d. above North America  |
| 5. the balloons were linked | e. around 12,200 metres |
| 6. worry                    | f. jets                 |
| 7. aliens could not be      | g. are happening        |
| 8. a possible explanation   | h. to aliens            |

## PARAGRAPH TWO:

- |                                   |                       |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. exchanged tit-for-             | a. at the electronics |
| 2. the balloons are being         | b. visit to China     |
| 3. There is no proof              | c. weather            |
| 4. Experts are currently looking  | d. used for spying    |
| 5. the balloons were for tracking | e. the past year      |
| 6. US high-                       | f. of this            |
| 7. more than ten times in         | g. altitude balloons  |
| 8. cancelling a                   | h. tat messages       |

# LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2302/230216-balloons-aliens-2.html>

Strange things are happening in (1) \_\_\_\_\_ North America. US fighter jets have (2) \_\_\_\_\_ UFOs in US and Canadian airspace. Officials said the UFOs were balloons that were a danger to airplanes. They were flying (3) \_\_\_\_\_ of around 12,200 metres. The USA said there were no signs the balloons were (4) \_\_\_\_\_. A White House spokesperson said: "I don't think the American people need to worry about aliens (5) \_\_\_\_\_ these crafts." Earlier in the week, a different official said aliens could not be (6) \_\_\_\_\_ a possible explanation for the balloons.

The USA and China exchanged (7) \_\_\_\_\_ because of the balloons. The US believes the balloons are being used for spying. There is (8) \_\_\_\_\_ this. Experts are currently looking at the electronics they have found from the balloons. China said the balloons (9) \_\_\_\_\_ weather and were not spy balloons. Beijing said US high-altitude balloons (10) \_\_\_\_\_ China's airspace without permission more than ten times (11) \_\_\_\_\_ year. The White House said this was untrue. A balloon shooting in early February resulted in the US Secretary of State (12) \_\_\_\_\_ to China.

# PUT A SLASH ( / ) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2302/230216-balloons-aliens-2.html>

StrangethingsarehappeningintheskyaboveNorthAmerica.USfighter jetshaveshotdownfourUFOsinUSandCanadianairspace.Officialsaid theUFOswereballoonsthatwereadangertoairplanes.Theywereflying atanaltitudeofaround12,200metres.TheUSAidtherewerenosignst heballoonswerelinkedtoaliens.AWhiteHousespokespersonsaid:"Ido n'tthinktheAmericanpeopleneedtoworryaboutalienswithrespecttoth esecrafts."Earlierintheweek,adifferentofficialsaidalienscouldnotbec ountedoutasapossibleexplanationfortheballoons.TheUSAandChina exchangedtit-for-tatmessagesbecauseoftheballoons.TheUSbeliev estheballoonsarebeingusedforspying.Thereisnoproofofthis.Expertsa recurrentlylookingattheelectronicstheyhavefoundfromtheballoons. Chinasaidtheballoonswerefortrackingweatherandwerenotspyballoo ns.BeijingsaidUShigh-altitudeballoonshaveflowninChina'sairspac ewithoutpermissionmorethantentimesinthepastyear.TheWhiteHou sesaidthiswasuntrue.AballoonshootinginearlyFebruaryresultedinth eUSSecretaryofStatecancellingavisittoChina.

# BALLOONS SURVEY

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2302/230216-balloons-aliens-2.html>

Write five GOOD questions about balloons 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.

## WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student A: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) \_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_

d) \_\_\_\_\_

e) \_\_\_\_\_

f) \_\_\_\_\_

*White House says no aliens in weather balloons – 16th February 2023*  
More free lessons at [breakingnewsenglish.com](http://breakingnewsenglish.com)

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## WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student B: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) \_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_

d) \_\_\_\_\_

e) \_\_\_\_\_

f) \_\_\_\_\_

