



English

**A compilation of newsTicker  
articles and exercises**

*September 2007*

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06/09/2007

## HENDRIX ON DVD

*Stunning performance at Monterey*

Jimi Hendrix's breakthrough performance at the Monterey Pop Festival in 1967 will be released for the first time on DVD on October 16.

The DVD, called, "The Jimi Hendrix Experience Live At Monterey", from Universal Music includes original Hendrix tunes like "Hey Joe" and "Purple Haze," and various covers from the Rolling Stones and Bob Dylan. Also included on the DVD is a documentary that presents unseen interviews and rare pictures.



Hendrix, popular in England but virtually unknown in the U.S., gained an American following after his spectacular performance at Monterey. During his debut concert, he astonished the crowd with his mastery of the guitar, even playing it behind his back. For the finale, Hendrix set his guitar on fire, smashed it and threw the pieces into the crowd.

## **EXERCISE**

Read the article and complete the following activities.

- 1. Name some songs by Jimi Hendrix that are not listed in the article.**
- 2. Do some research on your own to find out what the music scene was like in the 1960s. Who were some of the most popular bands then and what was this time famous for?**
- 3. How would you describe Hendrix's performance at Monterey? What present day musicians are similar to Hendrix both in skill and style?**

07/09/2007

## BULLYING IN THE WORKPLACE

*A common occurrence*

Almost half of the workers in America have suffered bullying at their place of employment, according to a new survey.

Workplace bullying includes behaviors like verbal abuse, job sabotage or destruction of relationships on the job.



In an on-line poll conducted by Workplace Bullying Institute and Zogby Interactive, 37 percent of workers in the U.S. reported that they had experienced some form of bullying during their career. In most cases, the bosses (72 percent) are the ones who are bullying their subordinates.

Gary Namie, the poll's director, said that bullying in the workplace is a form of adult competition. Bullying can be very destructive but is still tolerated because it produces positive results for businesses. Namie adds that employers need to set up a healthy work environment to eliminate bullying.

## **EXERCISE**

**Bullying at school is something that is not tolerated in the United States. Answer the following questions about bullying.**

- 1. Does bullying happen at your school? Describe a situation where you have seen someone being bullied or experienced it yourself.**
- 2. What is your school policy on bullying? What happens when someone is bullied?**
- 3. Work with a partner. What kinds of behaviors do bullies typically demonstrate? Make up a possible consequence for each behavior you listed.**

10/09/2007

## CABBIE TELLS ALL

*Adventure in New York*

A tough, petite, young woman from New York quit her office job to become a taxi cab driver in the Big Apple.

At age 29, Melissa Plaut needed an adventure and she certainly found

one. Three years ago, she began working as a cabbie driving the night shift in Manhattan. Plaut began to photograph the odd and interesting things she saw from her taxi, like traffic jams, her passengers and the scenery, and posted it all on her blog. Her blunt recounts of the experiences she had as a cabbie became very popular.

As a result, she was offered to turn her blog into a book, called "Hack -- How I Stopped Worrying About What To Do With My Life And Started Driving A Yellow Cab."



## **EXERCISE**

Read the article and answer the following questions.

1. Why did Plaut change jobs?
2. What kind of information did Plaut include in her blog?
3. Describe some differences and similarities between Plauts' office job and driving a taxi.
4. What kind of job do you consider to be boring/exciting? Explain.

11/09/2007

## PAID TO PLAY?

*Gamers come forward*

Employees busily focussed on their BlackBerry, phone or laptop at the office, may not actually be working. One out of four video gamers admit they play at work.



Gaming is much more common among workers than you think. In an online survey of visitors to the PopCap.com game provider's Web site, 2,842 office workers answered questions about their gaming habits. About 24 percent admitted to playing video games during the workday. The percentage increased to 35 percent for chief or senior executives who said they were guilty of gaming at work.

Sixty-one percent said they only played during their official breaks, while 14 percent admitted to playing during meetings and phone calls. Most workers said that playing helped them de-stress and improve their memory

## **EXERCISE**

Read the article and complete the activities that follow.

1. How much time do you spend playing video games? When do you usually game? At school, at home?
2. How does gaming help you? Does it affect you in a negative way? Explain.
3. What are your 3 favorite games? What games are you not allowed to play and why?
4. Do you think people should be able to play video games at work? Why or why not?

12/09/2007

## SETTING AN EXAMPLE

*Driving habits contagious*

Parents, be careful of how you drive, because your children are more observant than you think.

Marketing Services Research conducted a survey on behalf of

Nationwide Mutual Insurance and found that out of 2,250 U.S. parents and children interviewed, 8 out of 10 children between the ages of 10 and 18 said they pay attention to how their parents are driving. Kids are aware of their parents' bad driving habits like speeding, sending text messages and weaving between lanes.

Parents should model good driving habits because children are apt to copy their behavior when it is their turn behind the wheel. Ann McCartt of the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety said that if the parents have bad driving records, most likely their children will too.



## **EXERCISE**

Read the article and answer the following questions.

- 1. Describe some bad habits you have seen other drivers do while on the road. Do you think any of these habits could cause an accident? Explain.**
- 2. List 5 positive habits that are essential for drivers. Discuss your list with the rest of the class.**
- 3. Using a cell phone while driving should be illegal. Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not? Discuss as a class.**

13/09/2007

## SOLAR PLANT

*Set for California desert*

A private solar energy company has filed for permits to start construction of a 400-megawatt solar plant in the Mojave Desert.



BrightSource Energy Inc's project includes three plants: two 100 MW plants and one 200 MW plant. The site will be spread out over 3,000-3,500 acres in an area southeast of Las Vegas and close to Nevada's border.

The technology will include thousands of tiny mirrors to catch and reflect sunlight on boilers set on top of towers that measure 300 feet tall. The sunlight heats the water, which produces steam to power the turbines.

The target for the project completion date is set for 2010 for the first plant. The cost for building the plants has not yet been disclosed

## **EXERCISE**

Read the article and answer each statement with either True or False. Make each false statement true.

- 1. The energy company plans to build a giant plant that will produce natural gas.**
- 2. The plant will use wind to power the turbines.**
- 3. The project will be completed in approximately 3 years.**
- 4. Metal sheets will trap sunlight to heat underground boilers.**
- 5. Special permits have been issued for the project.**

14/09/2007

## BRAD PITT IS NO OUTLAW

*Doesn't share stardom approach*

Brad Pitt stars as the 19th century outlaw Jesse James in his new movie, but he doesn't let stardom get the better of him.



Pitt plays the legendary bandit who was shot by a member of his gang in, "The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford". The movie shows how James became too consumed with his notoriety, which later brought him down.

Pitt said he saw some similarities between James' life and his own as an international celebrity, but the actor has a different approach to keep himself grounded; he focuses on what he really values, his family life.

The film was recently debuted at the Toronto International Film festival and Pitt was honored with the best actor award from the Venice film festival.

## **EXERCISE**

Do some research on your own and find out the answers to the following questions about Jesse James.

1. Who was Jesse James and what exactly was he famous for?
2. What happened to James that changed his life?
3. What major political event was going on during James' life?
4. Where was James shot? What was he doing when it happened?

17/09/2007

## GRAY WHALES

*Numbers still greatly reduced*

Even though scientists claim that Pacific gray whales have made a full comeback, their population is still only a fraction of what it was before the whaling industry nearly wiped them out.

Researchers from Stanford University and the University of Washington studied DNA samples from gray whales.

Based on the data, researchers estimated there were between 76,000 and 118,000 gray whales in the Pacific Ocean prior to the hunting frenzy. Now they number 22,000; a definite improvement since the early 1900s when there were only a few thousand left.

Gray whales measure about 46-feet long and weigh up to 40 metric tons. They migrate from North America's Pacific Coast between arctic seas and the lagoons off of Mexico.

The whales became fully protected in 1947 by the International Whaling Commission.



## **EXERCISE**

**Do some research on your and find the answers to the following questions about gray whales.**

- 1. What is another name for gray whales?**
- 2. Describe the whales' skin color. What makes it look gray?**
- 3. What do gray whales feed on?**
- 4. How do gray whale mothers act?**

18/09/2007

## BURGER KING

*To limit children's ads*

Burger King Holdings Inc has announced they will start a new advertising campaign for children under 12. The new ads will be limited to only foods and drinks that are nutritionally recommended for that age group.

The fast food chain has also agreed to advertise only Kids' Meals that have a maximum of 560 calories, less than 30 percent of calories from fat and no additional trans fats. New kids' meals include broiled chicken tenders, organic unsweetened apple sauce, low-fat milk and fresh apple slices. The new meals will be available in late 2008.

The Council for Better Business Bureaus' children's food and beverage advertising initiative has proved to be quite successful. Other companies to join the initiative are McDonald's Corp, Kellogg Co and Coca-Cola Co, among others.



## **EXERCISE**

**Read the article and answer the following questions.**

- 1. What kind of an effect do you think the new ad campaigns will have on children?**
- 2. Explain how TV commercials or ads affect your decisions?**
- 3. Do you think it will be difficult to change children's eating habits at fast food restaurants? Explain.**

19/09/2007

## HELP WANTED

*Patrols to combat violence*

The Philadelphia police force and community leaders are asking for 10,000 male volunteers to protect the city streets from violent crimes.



Philadelphia has the highest violent crime rate in the United States. The unarmed and non-uniformed volunteers will patrol some of the most dangerous areas of the city. The volunteers, considered to be more like peacekeepers, will not be authorized to make arrests.

The Philadelphia Police Commissioner said the program will be launched on October 21 and the goal is to have volunteers patrolling the streets by early November. Volunteers' patrol duty will be for 3 hours a day during an initial 90 day period.

Philadelphia's plan is similar to the Guardian Angels patrol group in New York City.

## **EXERCISE**

**Read the article and answer the following questions.**

- 1. Do you think the volunteer patrol units will be successful in fighting crime? Why or why not?**
- 2. As a class discuss other possible ways to lower the crime rate in big cities. What ideas did you come up with? Which ones do you think would be most successful?**
- 3. If you were an adult, would you volunteer to be a peacekeeper? Why or why not?**

20/09/2007

## ALASKA WILDERNESS DRAMA

*Penn keeps it real*

Sean Penn literally went "by the book" when filming his new movie "Into the Wild", based on the non-fiction book by Jon Krakauer.



The film tells the story of how Christopher McCandless, played by Emile Hirsch, abandoned all his possessions to travel throughout America, before dying in an old bus in the Alaskan wilderness.

Penn used the book and photos that McCandless's family found after his death, matching mountains and locations as best they could to film in the places that McCandless had actually visited. They even used the real people who had crossed paths with him in the film.

The movie, due out September 21, was filmed last year from April to November, following the seasons described in the book.

## EXERCISE

Complete the Alaska fact sentences with the correct information.

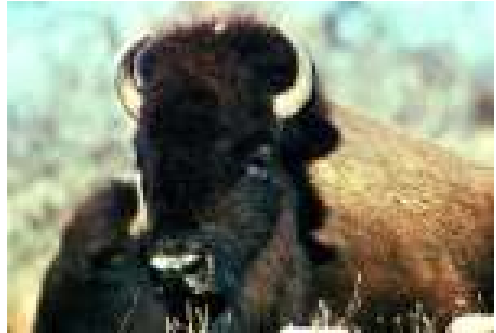
1. Alaska is big. It has.....square miles.
2. Alaska's mountain named.....is the highest in North America. It measures.....feet high.
3. Alaska's official state sport is.....
4. Alaska's coastlines are on three different seas. They are.....

21/09/2007

## BUFFALO HUNT

*Controversial cull in Wyoming*

A buffalo hunt in Wyoming, the first in almost a decade, plans to reduce the herd from 1,200 to 500 during the next five years.



The free-roaming herds located on the National Elk Refuge in Jackson Hole will be tracked and hunted in order to avoid overgrazing and the possibility of transmitting diseases to domestic livestock. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service aims to kill 300 bison by December.

Residents of Jackson are concerned that the number of tourists who come to see the buffalo will diminish. Animal rights groups say that because the buffalo are used to people, shooting them can hardly be considered a sport.

Buffalo numbered over 60 million before relentless hunting nearly extinguished them during the late 1880s.

## **EXERCISE**

Read the article and answer the following questions.

- 1. How did the Native Americans traditionally hunt buffalo?**
- 2. What did the Native Americans use the buffalo for?**
- 3. How do you think the buffalos will be hunted in the cull?**
- 4. Make up some basic rules for the buffalo hunt. Use these questions to help you with the rules: Who will be allowed to hunt them? How should the buffalo be hunted? How should the buffalo be used after it's dead?**

24/09/2007

## HEALTH CARE

*Clinton unveils plan*

Democratic presidential contender Hillary Clinton talked about her health care proposal that requires health insurance for all Americans and more affordable options.

Clinton wants the 47 million uninsured Americans to have mandated coverage and at the same time maintain private insurance companies that have more choices for their customers. The



proposal also provides tax credits for people who can't afford to be covered and for small businesses who struggle to provide it to their employees.

Clinton also seeks to end the pre-existing conditions clause which she calls unfair. Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program would be expanded.

The plan is expected to cost around \$110 billion each year and will be paid for through various cost savings plans and fewer tax cuts for the wealthy.

## **EXERCISE**

**Read the article and complete the activities.**

- 1. Describe your country's health care plan. Who pays for health coverage?**
- 2. Do you agree with Clinton's proposal? Should the United States government be responsible for its citizens health care? Explain.**
- 3. Why is health care such an important issue in the U.S.?**

25/09/2007

## HANKS AND HBO

*JFK miniseries*

HBO and Tom Hanks' production company have joined to make a miniseries of Vincent Bugliosi's "Reclaiming History: The Assassination of President John F. Kennedy".



Bugliosi does not agree with the JFK conspiracy theories and argues that Lee Harvey Oswald was the only person responsible for Kennedy's assassination in 1963. Bugliosi said that only 19 percent of people believe the Warren Commission's findings that Oswald acted alone. He hopes that Hanks, through his 10 part miniseries, will bring the truth to more of the American public.

HBO actor Bill Paxton, who has always been fascinated with the assassination of Kennedy, will work with Hanks as executive producer. Paxton thought that with the upcoming 50th anniversary of Kennedy's inauguration, this was the best time to work on the project.

## **EXERCISE**

**Read the article and complete the activities.**

- 1. Write a short biography on JFK. Include the answers to the following questions. What kind of president was he? How old was he when he became president? What was his religious background and why was it important? How long was he in office?**
- 2. Add some interesting facts about JFK's life and death to your biography.**
- 3. Share your biography with your classmates. What information or facts did you learn from your classmates' work?**

26/09/2007

## POKEMON

*Top of holiday toys*

The hottest toys for children's holiday wish lists include Pokemon and Transformers.

The Pokemon trading card game has made a huge comeback thanks to the extremely popular "Pokemon Diamond & Pearl," cartoon series.



The "Diamond" and "Pearl" versions of the Pokemon game have been top sellers this year for Nintendo's DS gaming system. Over 3 million copies were sold in the United States.

Hasbro's Transformers toy line is especially hot with kids ever since the action and adventure movie came out. Other toys expected to be popular this year are The Rubik's Revolution, an electronic version of the original game, Power Rangers mission helmets and, of course, a wide range of electronic gadgets like MP3 players, cell phones and video cameras

## **EXERCISE**

Read the article and answer the following questions.

1. What are your favorite video games?
2. Have you ever played the Pokemon gameboy games? Why do you think they are so popular?
3. What video game would you like to see created? Maybe something from a favorite movie? Describe your ideal game.
4. What would you most want from the toys listed below. Explain why.

27/09/2007

## FAKE BOMB ART

*MIT coed arrested*

Policemen arrested a student from MIT who entered Boston's Logan International Airport wearing a computer circuit board and wiring on her sweatshirt.



Troopers reacted with speed when they saw Star Simpson, 19, enter the airport wearing a black hooded sweatshirt with a white circuit board covering her chest. There was also a battery-powered device with flashing lights on it, and Simpson was carrying Play-Doh in her hands. Simpson was surprised at being held at gunpoint by authorities. She claimed what she was wearing was just art, not a bomb.

Simpson was promptly charged with possessing a hoax device. She pleaded not guilty and was released on \$750 bail. Simpson's lawyer said authorities had simply overreacted, and characterised their behaviour as paranoid.

## **EXERCISE**

Read the article and answer the following questions.

- 1. How would you react if you saw Star Simpson enter the airport as she was dressed? What would you do? How would you feel?**
- 2. Do you think the troopers acted accordingly or do you agree with Simpson's lawyer? Explain.**
- 3. Do you agree with Simpson that her outfit was just an artform? What do you consider to be art?**



## **EXERCISE**

Read the article and complete the following activities.

1. Why did the shuttle need repair work?
2. What is the shuttle's mission?
3. Find out what happened in the Columbia disaster in 2003. Give details.
4. Why is there a rush for the shuttles to complete their work?