

Your News

A NEWSPAPER FOR LEARNING

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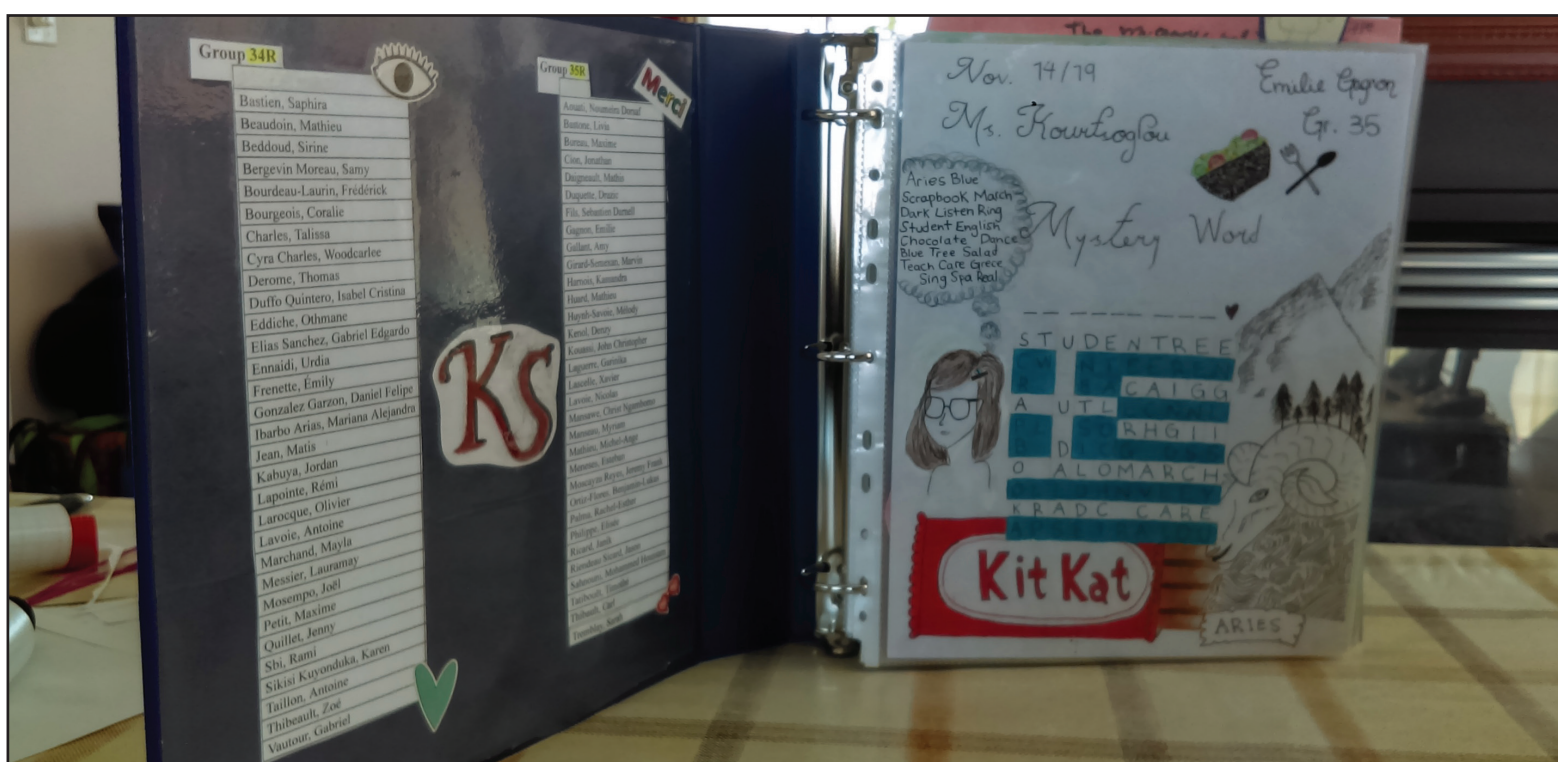
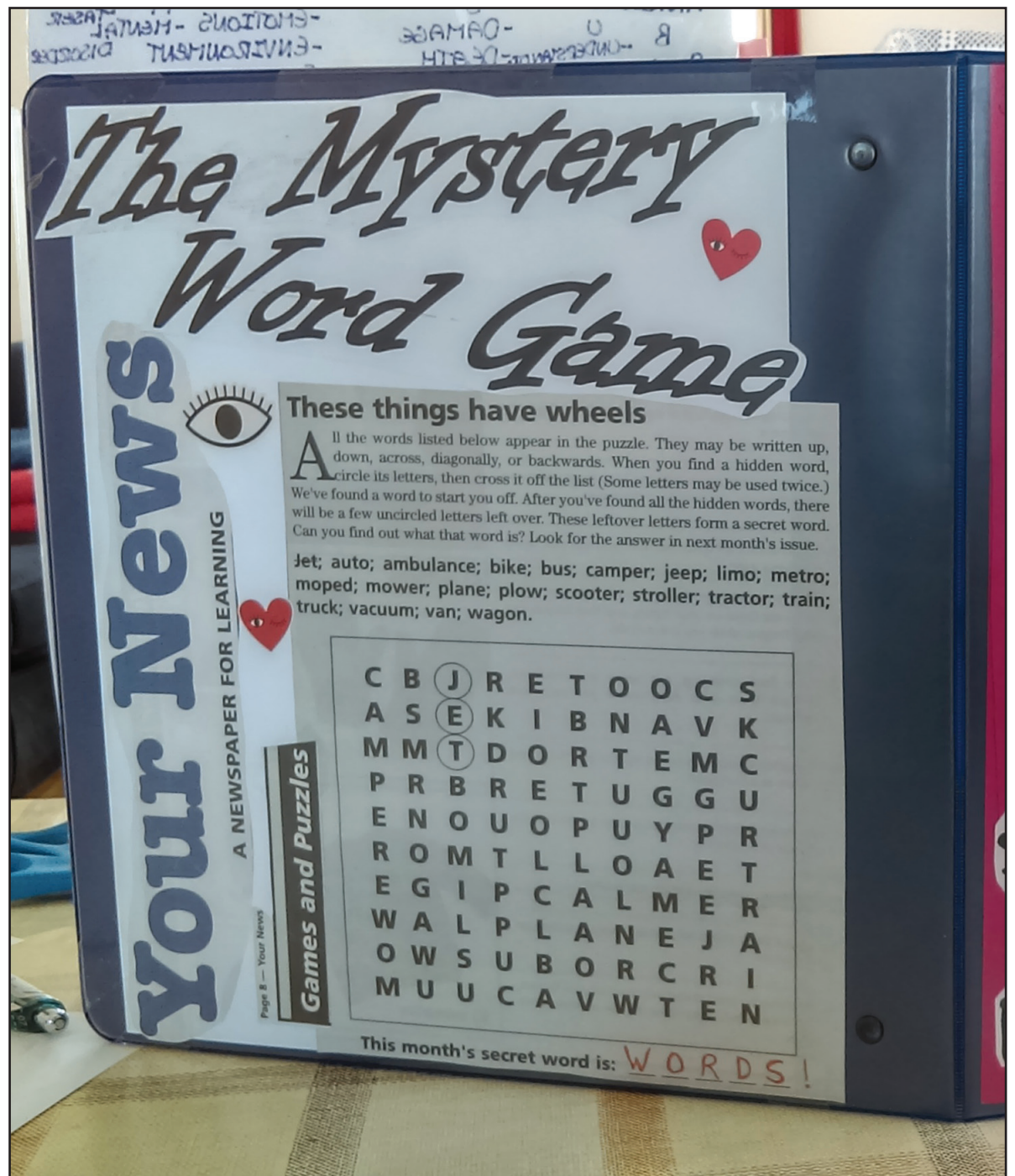
Inspired by *Your News*, students create their own activity to help them learn English

Alexandra Kourtsoglou is an English teacher at Jean-Baptiste-Meilleur secondary school in Repentigny, Quebec. Recently, before the COVID-19 pandemic forced schools to close across the country, 60 students at the high school participated in creating their own activity that was inspired by one of the games featured every month on page 8 of this newspaper. They called it “The Mystery Word Game”.

Each of Alexandra’s students came up with their own versions of the word-find puzzle, and illustrated them with pictures, hints, and clues. They could then share the puzzles with each other, each student helping the other to improve their English vocabulary skills.

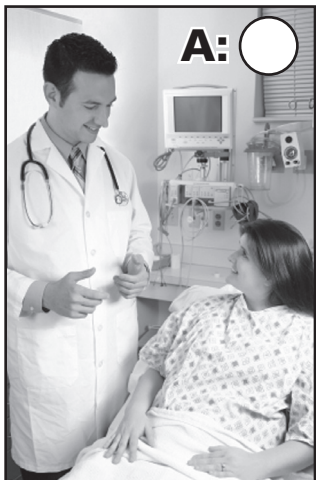
The writer Charles Caleb Colton once wrote that “imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.” The staff and contributors at *Your News* are both flattered and thrilled that their work influenced and inspired students to create their own learning activity. We would like to congratulate all the students who participated in this project, and Alexandra Kourtsoglou for having shared her students’ hard work with us all. Thank you!

Right: Alexandra’s ring binder is illustrated with the title “The Mystery Word Game”, and includes a cut-out of the word game from *Your News* she used to inspire her students to create their own puzzles. **Below:** One of the student-created puzzles that was compiled in the binder.



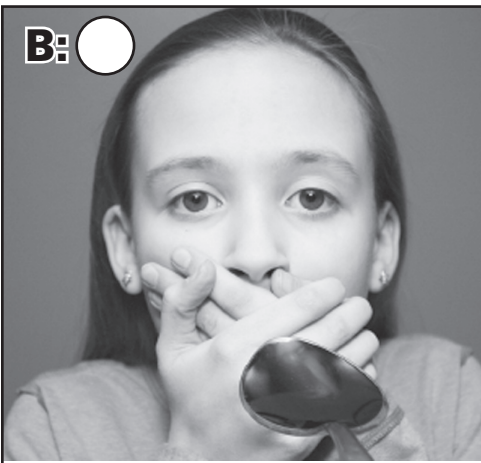
(MAILING LABEL)

Weird and wonderful words: medical health idioms



A: ○

Jane thought a vacation in the sun was exactly what she needed.



B: ○

If a person doesn't want to get treated the same way they treat others, he or she shouldn't speak badly about other people.



C: ○

My brother had to have surgery to fix the torn ligament in his knee.



D: ○

"Hello, boss? I can't come into work today because I am not feeling well."

The underlined words under each illustration could be replaced by an idiomatic expression. Find the expression among those given below that best matches the picture. Write the corresponding number in the circle next to each illustration. Now say each sentence again, out loud, using the expression instead of the underlined words.

1) **Under the weather:** In olden times, people believed being out in bad weather caused sickness. This saying means to be not feeling well.

2) **Just what the doctor ordered:** Since doctors are traditionally respected in the community for giving good advice to patients, this

expression describes something that is appropriate, or something that is exactly what is needed or wanted.

3) **Taste one's own medicine:** Since medicine has had, over the years, a reputation for tasting bad, this expression means to get the same kind of bad treatment you give out to other people.

4) **Go under the knife:** When surgeons operate on a patient, they must cut into the flesh using a tool called a scalpel, which is like a very sharp knife. This expression means to get an operation or to have surgery.

How to subscribe

A subscription consists of 10 issues, one per month for one year from the start date (except for July and August when **Your News** is not published).

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Your News

A newspaper for learning

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Special thanks to Jason Myles for suggesting this topic and contributing to this article

Endangered species in Canada

Loss of habitat and climate change put animals at risk

Many animals in Canada face the risk of extinction. There are 531 kinds of animals that are considered at risk in this country. Animals are put at risk for several reasons, including climate change, the loss of natural habitats due to humans converting grasslands for farming or cutting down forests to expand cities, hunting, fishing, and the pollution of lakes and rivers. Here are just a few of the animals that are at risk:

Sea Otter

During the late 1700s and 1800s, the sea otter was heavily hunted on the Pacific coast. By 1900, sea otters were on the verge of extinction. In 1911, an international treaty gave protection to the endangered sea otters. Between 1969 and 1972, some sea otters from Alaska were moved to the west coast of Vancouver Island. The move was successful, and there are now now several thousand sea otters living on the coast of British Columbia.



Leatherback Sea Turtle

The leatherback turtle is a large marine reptile that breeds on sandy tropical beaches. It migrates to Canadian waters in the summer to feed on jellyfish. Although adult turtles are occasionally tangled in fishing gear in Canadian waters, most are killed in tropical waters. In tropical parts of the world, humans collect and eat turtle eggs, and sometimes kill and eat adult turtles. The leatherback turtle is considered endangered in Canada, as well as throughout the world. The conservation of this species requires international co-operation.



Peregrine Falcon

Many populations of peregrine falcons in Canada were wiped out by pesticides and other chemicals. These chemicals would reducing the amount of calcium in eggshells so that they broke under the weight of the parent sitting on them. However, since the manufacturing and use of certain pesticides was banned in the 1970s, populations of peregrine falcons are now increasing.

Greater Prairie-Chicken

Large populations of greater prairie chickens once lived in the prairies of Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario, but they are now all gone. Greater prairie chickens lived on native grasslands, and continued to flourish when small-scale farms developed in the early 1900s. However, when vast amounts of prairie grassland were converted to cultivate crops, the habitat was no longer suitable and the species disappeared in Canada. The greater prairie chicken still survives in the United States, where it is endangered.



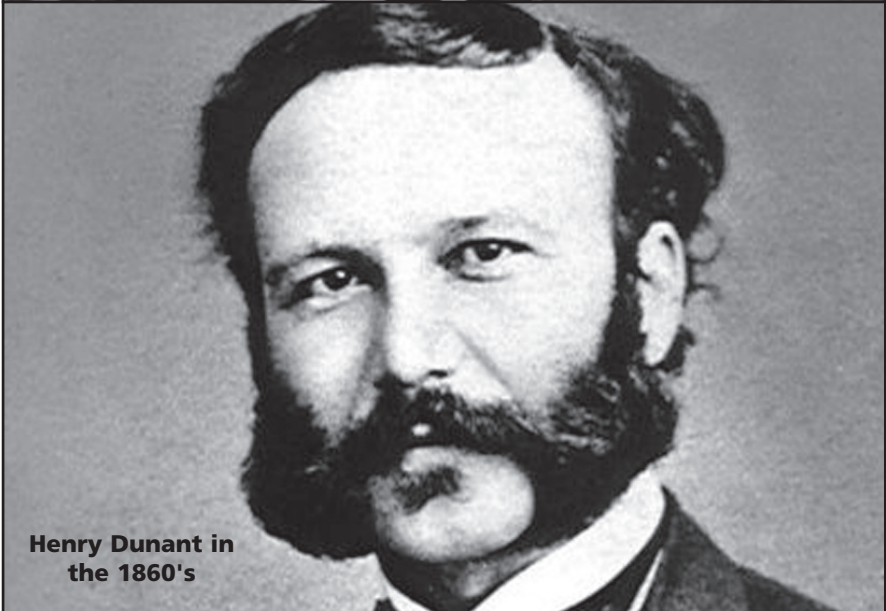
Caribou

There are several populations of caribou in Canada. Most of the animals live in the northern reaches of the country, in every province and territory except Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Climate change is one of the biggest reasons why caribou are at risk in Canada. Warmer temperatures mean that many of caribou's predators, including wolves, cougars and coyotes, are able to live further north. Climate change is also changing the timing of when Arctic ice melts and freezes. Since caribou use ice to travel, these changes affect their migration patterns and access to food.

Habitat Protection

To save a species from extinction, the animals must be protected from hunting and fishing. Natural habitats must also be protected. Various organizations work to conserve animal habitats. The most highly protected areas are ecological reserves and wilderness areas where human activities are limited to hiking and nature study.

May 8 is World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day



Lending a helping hand in the world's war-torn places

Make sense of this story about the International Red Cross by putting these words where they belong:

businessman; Europe; medical; network; peace; soldiers; treaties; volunteer.

1) _____	5) _____
2) _____	6) _____
3) _____	7) _____
4) _____	8) _____

Up until the middle of the 19th century, there were no organized and well-established systems for treating wounded 1 in battle. At the time, there were no safe or protected institutions to help and treat people who were injured during a war.

One day in June 1859, a Swiss 2 named Henry Dunant travelled to Italy to meet French emperor Napoléon III. When he arrived in the small town of Solferino on the evening of June 24, he witnessed the Battle of Solferino, an engagement in the Austro-Sardinian War. In a single day, about 40,000 soldiers on both sides died or were left wounded on the field.

Mr. Dunant was shocked by the terrible aftermath of the battle, the suffering of the wounded soldiers, and the almost complete lack of 3 attention and basic care. He completely abandoned the original purpose of his trip, and for several days he devoted himself to helping with the treatment and caring for the wounded. He succeeded in motivating the local population to help anybody who was hurt, without discriminating against them if they were enemy soldiers.

Back in his home in Geneva, he decided to write a book entitled A Memory of Solferino which he published with his own money in 1862. He sent copies of the book to leading political and military figures throughout 4. He advocated the formation of national voluntary relief

organizations to help care for wounded soldiers in the case of war. In addition, he called for the development of international 5 to protect people wounded on the battlefield, as well as the medical personnel who take care of them.

Today, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement form the world's largest humanitarian 6, with a presence and activities in almost every country. It is based in Geneva, Switzerland. There are Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in more than 170 countries around the world, with more than 97 million members and volunteers worldwide. This also makes them the world's largest 7 force, helping nearly 233 million people each year.

World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day was born in 1922, just after World War I, when the Red Cross National Society in the Czech Republic proclaimed a three-day truce during the Easter holiday to promote 8. The idea behind the truce was to recognize one day every year during which the Red Cross would appeal for the relief of human suffering from disease, war, and conflict around the world. Ever since, May 8, which was Henry Dunant's birthday, is celebrated as World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day. This year, remember all the good work this international movement does to help people in the world.

May 31 is World No Tobacco Day

It is never too late to quit smoking

Tobacco is the leading cause of death in the world that might otherwise be prevented. It is the only legal **consumer** product that kills one third to one half of those who use it regularly. Tobacco users also live shorter lives, an average of 15 years shorter than people who do not smoke or use tobacco products.

There are approximately 2 billion young people between the ages of 10 and 24 living in the world today, and more than 85% live in developing countries. Having survived the vulnerable childhood period, these young people are generally healthy.

However, as the international tobacco industry tries to **hook** new, young and potentially life-long tobacco users, young people’s health is increasingly **threatened** by their **exposure** to tobacco products.

Nicotine is a highly **addictive** substance found in all tobacco products. Experimentation can easily lead to a lifetime of tobacco dependence and causes many health problems.

Around the world, many people start smoking before the age of 18, and almost a quarter of **youths** who smoke began using tobacco before the age of 10. The younger children are when they first try smoking, the more likely they are to become regular tobacco users and the less likely they are to **quit**.

It has been widely known for many years that impressionable young people who are exposed to advertising for tobacco products are most likely to become smokers. Since the tobacco industry spends tens of billions of dollars worldwide every year to advertise its products in as many ways as possible, the World Health Organization wants to spread the message that all advertising and promotion of tobacco products should be banned around the world.



Vocabulary

- consumer** – a person who purchases goods and services for personal use
- hook** – expression meaning to make somebody dependent on something; to cause somebody to become addicted
- threatened** – causing someone or something to be vulnerable or at risk; to be endangered
- exposure** – being put in contact with something; experiencing
- addictive** – causing a mental or physical dependence
- youths** – young people (before they reach adulthood); teenagers
- quit** – to stop doing something permanently; to discontinue an activity

True or False quiz

	T	F
1) Tobacco is the leading cause of preventable death in the world _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2) Tobacco can kill up to one half of people who use it regularly ____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3) Most young people living around the world today come from prosperous, developed countries _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4) Nicotine is a highly addictive chemical _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5) The younger children are when they start smoking, the more likely they are to become regular tobacco users _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6) The World Health Organization is not opposed to tobacco ads ____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



How to be prepared in case of an emergency

Emergency preparedness week

Emergency Preparedness Week is an annual event that takes place each year during the first full week of May. During Emergency Preparedness Week, activities are organized across Canada to raise awareness about the three simple steps that people can follow to prepare themselves for any type of emergency:

- Identify the risks in the region where you live;
- Create an emergency plan;
- Prepare an emergency kit.

Identifying the risks in your area

Canada is a vast country with extreme weather conditions and **dramatic** geological features. The wide variety of terrain and weather can cause several natural **hazards** that are particular to a specific region (for example, if you live in the Rocky Mountains, there is a greater risk of avalanches than in other parts of the country). A natural hazard might not necessarily lead to a natural disaster, but being prepared for the possibility makes good sense. Here are some common hazards that can be found in different regions across Canada, at different times of the year:

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| • Avalanches | • Severe storms |
| • Earthquakes | • Storm surges |
| • Floods | • Tornadoes |
| • Hurricanes | • Tsunamis |
| • Landslides | • Wildfires |

Making an emergency plan

A family emergency plan will help you and your family know what to do in case of an emergency. Every household should have an emergency plan. A good plan should consider:

- The location of all the exits from your home and your **neighbourhood**, in case you have to evacuate your home;
- Meeting places to reunite with family or roommates in case you are separated;
- The name of a **designated** person who will pick up children if you are a parent and you are not at home during an emergency;
- The names, locations, and phone numbers of friends and family members who live nearby, and also those who live farther away;
- A list of health information about the members of your household;
- A safe place for your pets to stay;
- The location of your fire extinguisher, water valve, electrical box, gas valve and floor drain.

Preparing a basic emergency kit

Whatever you do, don't wait for a disaster to happen before preparing an emergency kit. A good emergency kit will help you get through the first 72 hours of an emergency. It should be well-organized and easy to carry, in case you have to take the items with you. A basic emergency kit should contain the following items:

- Two litres of water per person per day (Include small bottles that can be carried easily in you need to be evacuated);
- Food that won't **spoil**, such as canned food, energy bars and dried foods (remember to replace the food and water in your kit once a year);
- Manual can opener;
- Flashlight and extra batteries;
- Battery-powered or wind-up radio;
- First aid kit;
- Special items such as prescription medications, infant formula or equipment for people with disabilities;
- Extra keys for your car and house;
- Cash in case you need to stay at a hotel. Include smaller **denominations**, such as \$10 bills, and coins to use at pay phones and vending machines;
- Include a copy of your emergency plan in your emergency kit, and ensure it contains in-town and out-of-town contact information.

Rescue Equipment Match-Up game

Read the descriptions below, then match them to the pictures on the right side of the page:

- 1) This simple hand tool is used by firefighters to chop holes in a burning building:

- 2) Lifeguards use this round, floating device attached to a rope to rescue drowning swimmers:

- 3) This device lets rescue workers climb to the top of a large building:

- 4) Shaped like a cylinder, this device is used to put out small fires:

- 5) This is worn on the head for protection from falling objects and debris:

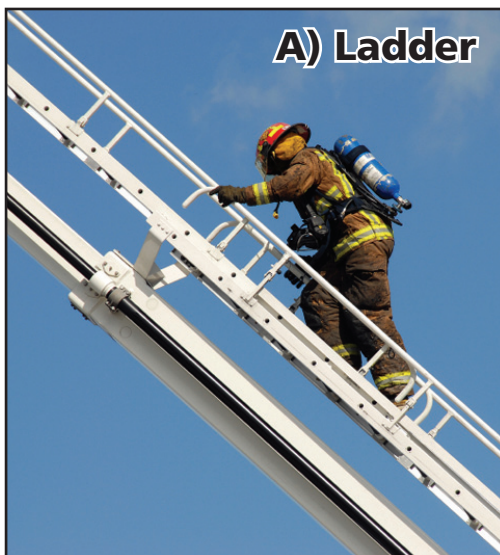
- 6) This special vehicle is used to transport injured or sick people to the hospital:

- 7) If a person is hurt in an accident and cannot walk, rescue workers will use this device to carry the victim to safety:

- 8) If people are trapped in a damaged car after an accident, this machine helps to open the doors:

- 9) This special truck is traditionally painted red:

- 10) If the power goes out during a crisis, these will help you to find your way out of a building:



A) Ladder



B) Helmet



C) Ambulance



D) Fire extinguisher



E) Emergency lights



F) Axe



H) Hydraulic spreader



G) Fire engine



I) Stretcher



J) Ring Buoy

Vocabulary (from page 6)

preparedness – the state of being ready for something

dramatic – sensational in appearance, thrilling in effect

hazards – dangers; risks

neighborhood – the local area or community surrounding your home

designate – to give a job or a task to somebody

spoil – to become unfit to eat; to go rotten

denomination – a number that indicates the value of a coin or paper money

Express yourself: first aid

With a partner or in a small group, discuss (in English) the following topic:

- Do you think that basic first aid should be added to the school curriculum?

Please remember to give reasons for your answers. There are no right or wrong answers.

An Anagram is a 'sword' made of 'words'

Anagrams are words or phrases formed by rearranging the letters of other words or phrases. For example, in the title of this game, the word 'sword' and 'words' contain the same letters. See if you can make anagrams for the following words. Do you know what every word means?

- 1) art
- 2) late
- 3) dog
- 4) stop
- 5) loop
- 6) tarts
- 7) flow
- 8) lump
- 9) ape
- 10) inch

What colour is that?

All the words listed below appear in the puzzle. They may be written up, down, across, diagonally, or backwards. When you find a hidden word, circle its letters, then cross it off the list. (Some letters may be used twice.) We've found a word to start you off. After you've found all the hidden words, there will be a few uncircled letters left over. These leftover letters form a secret word. Can you find out what that word is? Look for the answer in next month's issue.

aqua; burgundy; coral; ecru; emerald; fuschia; gray; indigo; ivory; jade; khaki; lemon; lime; loden; navy; olive; orchid; plum; purple; royal; ruby; rust; sage; teal.

D	L	A	R	E	M	E	T	R	A
I	C	N	A	V	Y	E	U	H	U
H	Y	L	E	I	A	S	B	R	Q
C	R	A	R	L	T	U	C	E	A
R	O	R	R	O	R	E	R	L	I
O	V	O	E	G	A	S	E	P	H
Y	I	C	U	I	E	M	M	R	C
A	B	N	E	D	O	L	I	U	S
L	D	U	A	N	M	U	L	P	U
Y	Y	J	R	I	K	A	H	K	F

This month's secret word is: _____

Words beginning with 'M'

Complete the words on the left using the clues on the right to guide you:

- 1) M _____
- 2) M _____
- 3) M _____
- 4) M _____
- 5) M _____
- 6) M _____
- 7) M _____
- 8) M _____
- 9) M _____
- 10) M _____
- abbreviation for 'Mister'
- coffee cup
- referring to the masculine gender
- jazz, rock 'n roll, blues (for example)
- country south of the United States
- half woman / half fish
- Prairie province
- hair grown on the upper lip
- person who grooms fingernails
- a major river in North America

Build a word

How many words of two or more letters can you build from the letters in this word?

INDIGO

You don't have to use every letter. You may use the letters in any order. You may also use the same letter more than once. We found at least 22 words that were not proper names. How about you?

Please Note: this puzzle is the copyright of Your News. It may not be reproduced by any means whatsoever.

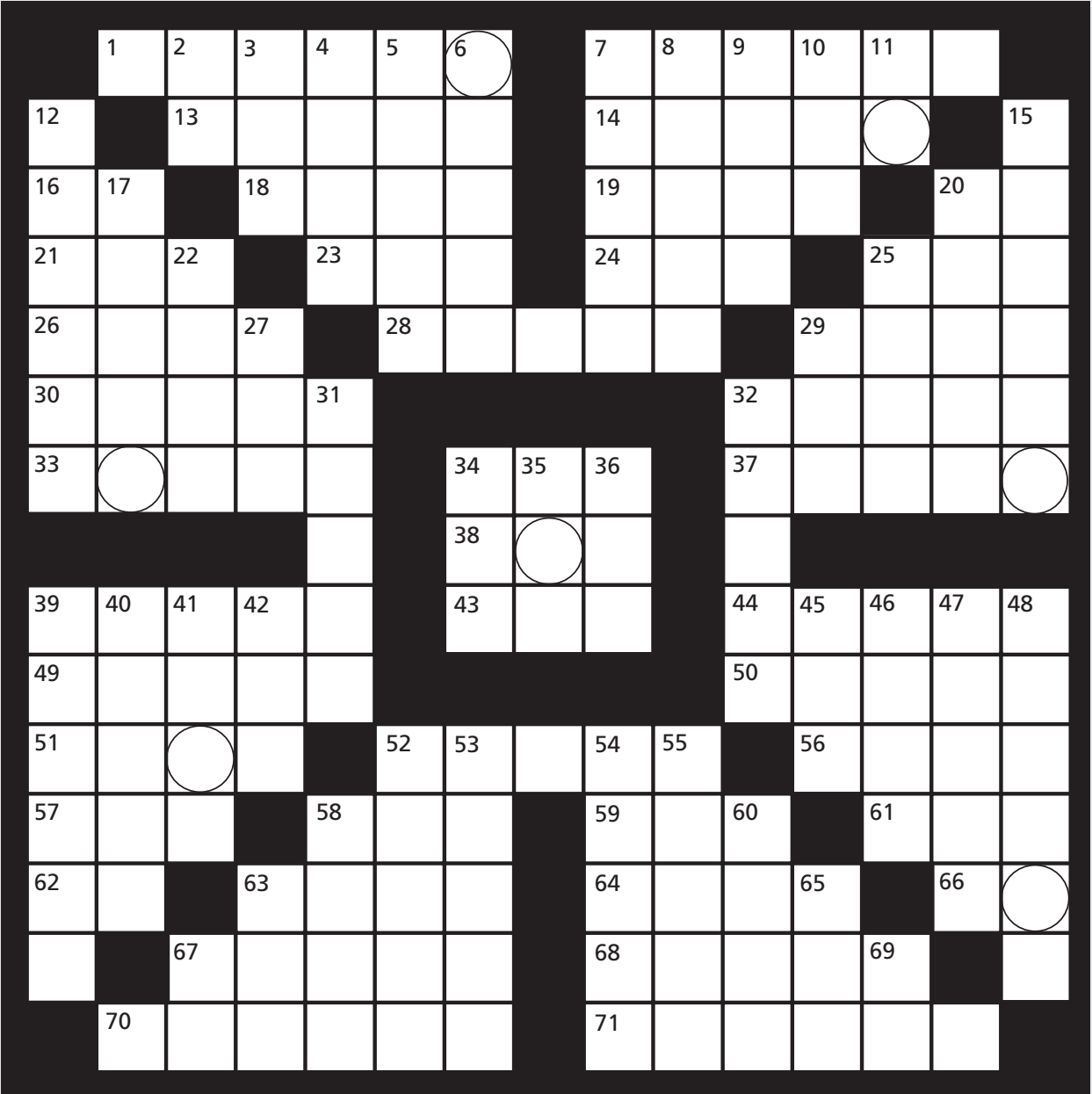
May Crossword

Clues across:

- 1) soft cushion for the head when sleeping
- 7) structure used in climbing
- 13) bony parts of the mouth used for chewing
- 14) small green or black fruit crushed for oil
- 16) sixth note on the music scale
- 18) opening in a fence
- 19) folded piece of paper given on special occasions
- 20) common verb “to ____”
- 21) a type of beer
- 23) each; for each
- 24) any painting, sculpture or drawing
- 25) edge of material on a skirt
- 26) Biblical ark builder
- 28) kingdom; domain
- 29) violent anger; be violent
- 30) to hurl or toss; to send through the air
- 32) ancient Roman language
- 33) Christmas visitor
- 34) took in food; dined
- 37) one who represents another; one who arranges things for others
- 38) timid; bashful or fearful
- 39) to move swiftly down a surface
- 43) garden tool
- 44) Mexican food
- 49) beverage made by pressing apples
- 50) walk with a swagger or in an arrogant way
- 51) baking part of a stove
- 52) people who lack good sense; tricks someone
- 56) one of a pair; husband or wife
- 57) grassy pasture
- 58) scientist’s workplace
- 59) high or low card in a deck
- 61) stinging insect that produces honey
- 62) doctor (abbreviated)
- 63) to rescue; keep money for later use
- 64) garment of ancient Rome
- 66) Rail Road (abbreviated)
- 67) carved model of a bird used to attract real birds
- 68) period of history
- 70) tall, high, thin structures
- 71) slept or relaxed

Clues down:

- 2) pronoun; third person neuter pronoun
- 3) limb from the lower torso
- 4) to jump over something
- 5) furry mammal that lives near water
- 6) adverb used to ask the location of something
- 7) near your house; having to do with the area where you live
- 8) device that warns of danger
- 9) earth, soil or mud
- 10) Digital Video Disc (abbreviated)
- 11) Electrical Engineering (abbreviated)



- 12) puts seeds in the ground
- 15) concrete; hard surface of walks or roads
- 17) Hawaiian greeting
- 20) to start
- 22) to receive payment for work
- 25) to despise; loathe; detest
- 27) opposite of “cold”
- 29) piece of old, worn-out cloth
- 31) colorless liquid that falls as rain
- 32) endures; stays in good condition
- 34) powder that remains after burning
- 35) though (abbreviated)
- 36) organ of sight
- 39) finds fault; tells another in an angry voice of their bad deeds
- 40) major organ of the body
- 41) thought; plan
- 42) home of some wild animals
- 45) automated teller machine (abbreviated)
- 46) creature with a shell and claws
- 47) opposite of “inner”
- 48) directs a plane or car
- 52) kind or helpful act done for another
- 53) follows orders; listens to
- 54) at a future time
- 55) area or range of operation
- 58) cord on a shoe or boot that is tied
- 60) the self (plural)
- 63) to use a needle and thread
- 65) to perform in a play
- 67) first note on the music scale
- 69) opposite of “she”

Circled letters form the word: _____

Choose from these words for your answer:

A.T.M., ace, act, agent, alarm, ale, aloha, art, ash, ate, be, bee, begin, card, cement, cider, crab, decoy, den, dirt, do, Dr., DVD, E.E., earn, egos, epoch, eye, favor, fools, gate, hate, he, hem, hoe, hot, idea, it, la, lab, lace, ladder, lasts, later, Latin, lea, leap, leg, liver, local, mate, Noah, obeys, olive, otter, outer, oven, per, pillow, plants, R.R., rag, rage, realm, rested, Santa, save, scolds, scope, sew, shy, slide, steers, strut, tacos, teeth, tho’, throw, toga, towers, water, where.



(Advanced students: Cut out this box to make the puzzle more challenging)

A black and white photograph showing a person standing on a long, narrow wooden pier that stretches from the foreground into a calm body of water. The person is silhouetted against the bright sky. The sky is filled with large, dramatic clouds, and the water reflects the light from the sky. In the distance, a small boat is visible on the water, and a distant shoreline can be seen.

— *W. B. Yeats*

arise – get up; to wake up and get out of bed

wattles – mats of woven sticks and weeds and covered in clay, used to make walls

glade – an open space in the forest

veil – a traditional head covering worn by women that hides or obscures the face

glimmer – dim, glowing light

linnet – small bird native to Europe

lapping – soft sound made by splashing water

- 1) What three words in line three of the poem are used to describe what the poet plans to grow in his garden?
- 2) What four words in line six of the poem describe the thin morning fog or mist on the island?

W. B. Yeats is one of Ireland's most famous poets. He was born in 1865 and died in 1939. The central theme in Yeats' poems is Ireland, its history, folklore and public life. He received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1923.

1) In what year was the first World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day celebrated?

2) What is the name of the highly addictive chemical found in all tobacco products?

3) This will help you and your family know what to do in case of an emergency:

4) How much water (per person, per day) should be put into a household emergency kit?

5) What is the traditional English nickname for “the media”?

6) What kind of freedom is essential for any true democracy to function?

Page 12: World Health day word find: throat, oat, at, ate, tee, teeth, the, ear, earth, art, high, hip, pal, palm, alm, muscle, us, clear, ear, ears, ski, skin, kin, in, no, nose, elbow, bow, wrist, is.

Answers for April 2020

Should teens be allowed to get cosmetic surgery to change the way they look?

For young people who have suffered terrible burns or injuries that have deformed their appearance, cosmetic surgery is a real gift. It can help accident victims regain their self-confidence, to feel like they are not ugly to other people. But what if a young person simply dislikes the shape of their nose or the fat around their waist? Should they be allowed to get cosmetic surgery just because they don't like the way they look naturally?

Some doctors who perform cosmetic surgery think that simpler procedures such as reshaping the nose or pinning the ears back can be appropriate for adolescents with awkward features. But there are many other cosmetic surgery techniques, including breast augmentation, collagen injection, eyelid surgery, and liposuction that can be used to reshape almost every other part of the body. More and more doctors are getting requests from young people who want to use these medical procedures to completely change their appearance for the rest of their lives.

Some people think minors are not generally considered ready to make such big decisions that can change the way they look forever. They argue that in the case of adolescents, their moods can change often and unpredictably, and because of that, they may find themselves even more dissatisfied with their appearance afterwards. Also, young people might not carefully consider the risks associated with having any surgery performed on them.

Others worry that there is too much pressure in society for young people to be perfect, which is reinforced by the media, especially in advertising that shows only thin, physically fit, attractive models and actors. Young people who do not look exactly like these models can be under a great deal of pressure to want to look more like them.

What do you think? Should voluntary cosmetic surgery be performed only on adults? How long should cosmetic surgeons make a young person wait until they are allowed to permanently change their appearance? Please send your opinions to: info@yournews.ca

What do you say?



Looking at both sides of a question

Often there are no simple answers to difficult questions. If you are going to make clear judgments, it's important to be able to see all sides of a question. The purpose of the **"what do you say"** feature that appears on this page each month is, of course, to help you practice and improve your English speaking and writing skills. While the feature is designed to enhance these abilities, it can also give you the opportunity to get into the habit of examining both sides of an issue. Today's exercise helps you do just that. Even though you may already have an opinion about year-round schooling, this oral exercise will help you practice looking at both sides of the question. **Due to the coronavirus pandemic causing the cancellation of classes, join your classmates or friends in an online chat or videoconference if you can, or perform this activity with your family members at home.**

What to do:

- 1) Divide into two groups. Choose a person to be the leader of the first group, and another to be the leader of the second group.
- 2) The leader of the first group will take two small pieces of

paper, and write "yes" on one piece, and "no" on the other. Fold these papers so that "yes" or "no" cannot be seen. Mix them up, and hide each paper inside your closed hand.

- 3) Have the leader from the other group choose one hand or the other hand.
- 4) If the "yes" paper is chosen, that group must consider all the reasons why year-round schooling is a good idea (You don't have to agree with the viewpoint to come up with good reasons).
- 5) The group that is left will must consider all the reasons why year-round schooling is a bad idea. (You don't have to agree with the viewpoint to come up with good reasons).
- 6) Send a text message, online chat message, or email to the your group leader with a reason for agreeing, or disagreeing, with the topic.
- 7) The group leader collects everyone's comments and opinions.
- 8) Each group leader will then share the opinions that their group came up with. At this point individuals from both groups could offer their opinions on which point-of-view they actually prefer, and suggest other topics they might discuss in the future.

May 3 is World Press Freedom Day

In order for people to engage in open **debate** and to hold their governments and public figures accountable for their actions, citizens must have access to free, independent and professional news media. In English, the traditional nickname for the news media is "the press." World Press Freedom Day celebrates and promotes freedom of expression, and reminds us that many parts of the world do not **guarantee** the open exchange of ideas.

News outlets communicate to us through the Internet, television, radio, newspapers like this one, and magazines. They provide a means of access to information and a way to start discussions between people.

Fueling democratic discussion

The media can fulfill a **watchdog** role by reporting on the activities of governments, civil society and public and private industry. To make sure that the media can look and report openly on these activities, it is important that there are different kinds of media outlets. Having a wide range of news to read about also ensures that different opinions can be expressed.

The media enables citizens to be informed and participate in their society. Accurate, fair and unbiased reporting is the best defense against ignorance and uninformed decision-making. If people let those who hold powerful positions in society manipulate what journalists say, the media risks becoming a dishonest tool for controlling people's opinions, or for spreading lies to promote a dishonest political agenda.



Illustration: istock.com

Vocabulary

debate – discussion; dialogue

guarantee – to promise or assure something

watchdog – a guard dog (this phrase is used to describe an organization that looks closely at public figures and institutions, to protect people's right to information)

accountable – responsible for

behaviour – way of acting; the way people conduct themselves when they interact

Springtime Word Find

How many words can you find around the flower? Start at the top, then go to the right. Don't skip any letters. Some long words have shorter words within them. There are at least 46 words in all.



Protecting freedom of expression

A black and white photograph of a man's face. He has a serious expression and is looking directly at the camera. A piece of white paper is torn out of his mouth, leaving a jagged, irregular hole. The background is dark and out of focus.

photo: istock.com

Freedom of expression is crucial in any true democracy, because open discussions are essential for voters to make informed decisions during elections. It is through free expression that people can influence their government's choice of policies. Open criticism of public officials also makes sure that they can be held **accountable** for their actions, allowing citizens to replace them if they do a bad job.

A major argument that supports protecting freedom of expression is that it is essential for discovering the truth about current and historical events. An independent news media ensures that events get reported as truthfully as possible.

Some people feel that freedom of expression is also the key to promoting tolerance as a basic value in our society. They argue that tolerance is a desirable, if not essential, value, and even protecting the right of people to express some unpopular points of view is itself an act of tolerance. According to this idea, acceptance serves as a model that encourages more tolerant **behaviour** throughout society.

But some critics argue that society should not tolerate the intolerance of others. They argue that preventing people from expressing hateful policies can be much more important than being tolerant of the people who argue for them. For example, there are laws in Canada preventing people from expressing great harm, such as people who advocate genocide or other forms of violence against a specific religious or cultural group, or a minority community.

Nevertheless, it is clear that for our society to be truly democratic, it is crucial that we find a balance between freedom of expression and protecting people from hate speech, threats, defamation, and those who encourage acts of violence.