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## **Level 2**

# **Christmas becoming less religious in U.S.**

**20th December, 2013**

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1312/131220-happy-holidays-2.html>

## **Contents**

The Reading	2
Matching	3
Listening Gap Fill	4
No Spaces	5
Discussion	6
Writing	7

**Please try Levels 0 and 1 (easier) and the 26–page Level 3 (harder).**

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# THE READING

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1312/131220-happy-holidays-2.html>

A report from the Pew Research Center says Christmas in the USA is getting less religious. Nine out of ten Americans celebrate Christmas, but only about half think it is a religious holiday. Over two thousand people took a survey about Christmas. Just over 30 per cent said it was "more of a cultural holiday" than a religious one. Greg Smith from Pew Research said: "Younger adults are less likely than older adults to see Christmas as a religious...holiday. They're less likely to...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 and what they write in cards. More people are choosing to say "Happy Holidays" instead of "Merry Christmas". This is because there are also non-Christian holidays at the same time as Christmas. Many people want to include all holidays in their holiday wishes. Almost 80 per cent of Americans will watch a Christmas movie, but only 59 per cent will go to church. The average amount of money people spend on Christmas is \$914. 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.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](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/12/18/christmas-non-religious_n_4453828.html)

# MATCHING

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1312/131220-happy-holidays-2.html>

## PARAGRAPH ONE:

- |                                   |                        |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. A report from the              | a. took a survey       |
| 2 getting less                    | b. than older adults   |
| 3. Nine out of                    | c. a cultural holiday  |
| 4. Over two thousand people       | d. birth               |
| 5. it was more of                 | e. ten Americans       |
| 6. Younger adults are less likely | f. attend church       |
| 7. less likely to                 | g. Pew Research Center |
| 8. believe in the virgin          | h. religious           |

## PARAGRAPH TWO:

- |                                       |                           |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. People are also changing what they | a. go to church           |
| 2 what they write                     | b. of money people spend  |
| 3. say "Happy Holidays" instead       | c. same time as Christmas |
| 4. non-Christian holidays at the      | d. time with their family |
| 5. holiday                            | e. say to each other      |
| 6. only 59 per cent will              | f. of "Merry Christmas"   |
| 7. The average amount                 | g. wishes                 |
| 8. look forward to spending           | h. in cards               |

# LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1312/131220-happy-holidays-2.html>

(1) \_\_\_\_\_ Pew Research Center says Christmas in the USA is getting less religious. (2) \_\_\_\_\_ Americans celebrate Christmas, but only (3) \_\_\_\_\_ it is a religious holiday. Over two thousand people took a survey about Christmas. Just over 30 per cent said it was "more of a cultural holiday" than (4) \_\_\_\_\_. Greg Smith from Pew Research said: "Younger adults are (5) \_\_\_\_\_ older adults to see Christmas as a religious...holiday. They're less likely to...attend [church at] Christmas...and they are less likely to believe (6) \_\_\_\_\_."

People are also changing (7) \_\_\_\_\_ to each other and what they write in cards. More people (8) \_\_\_\_\_ say "Happy Holidays" instead of "Merry Christmas". This is because there are also (9) \_\_\_\_\_ at the same time as Christmas. Many people want to include all holidays in (10) \_\_\_\_\_. Almost 80 per cent of Americans will watch a Christmas movie, but only 59 per cent (11) \_\_\_\_\_. The average amount of money people spend on Christmas is \$914. People most look (12) \_\_\_\_\_ time with their family.

# PUT A SLASH ( / ) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1312/131220-happy-holidays-2.html>

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## WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

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

a)

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b)

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c)

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d)

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e)

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f)

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g)

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h)

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## WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

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

a)

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b)

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c)

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d)

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e)

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f)

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g)

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h)

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