

News Currents

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Week of January 19, 2009

The Obama inauguration



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Who Am I?

Can you answer this question? If not, here are some clues.

BASIC/GENERAL

A) I was born in 1947 in Illinois. After college, I went to law school where I met my future husband. We moved to Arkansas in the 1970s and my husband served as the governor of Arkansas for a number of years. In 1992, he became the 42nd president of the United States and I became the first lady.

B) In 2000, as my husband's second presidential term was ending, I became the first "first lady" to run for public election. I won the election to become a U.S. senator from the state of New York. In 2007, I announced plans to run for the Democratic presidential nomination in the 2008 election. Although I was considered the frontrunner at first, Barack Obama won the nomination after a long and tough campaign.

C) Now, President-elect Obama has nominated me for a very important position in his Cabinet. In this position I will be in charge of the department that deals with foreign countries. Last week, the Senate interviewed me for this position. It is their job to decide whether or not to approve me for this position. **Who am I?** (*Hillary Clinton.*) **What Cabinet job has Obama chosen me for?** (*Secretary of state.*) **Has the Senate confirmed me for the position yet?**

News Names, News Places, News Words

News Names

Abraham Lincoln — The 16th president of the United States; **Barack Obama** — The 44th president of the United States; **Elizabeth Alexander** — African American poet; **Ottoman Empire** — Turkish empire that covered much of Asia and Europe from the 13th through the 19th century; **Queen Victoria** — British queen who ruled from 1837 to 1901; **Robert Frost** — Famous American poet.

News Places

Bulgaria; Great Britain; Italy; New York City; Russia; Washington, D.C.

ADVANCED

A) Born in 1947 in the suburban Chicago area, I was always an excellent student and a high achiever. I attended Wellesley College and then Yale Law School, where I met my future husband. My husband and I moved to Arkansas in 1974. He served as governor of that state for a number of years. In 1992, my husband was elected the 42nd president of the United States. As first lady, I took a very active role in my husband's administration, even making an unsuccessful attempt at health care reform.

B) As my husband's presidency was ending in 2000, I ran for the U.S. Senate seat from New York. I became the only former first lady to run for public office and the only one to become a senator. In 2007, I announced my intention to run for the Democratic nomination for the presidency. Initially considered the frontrunner in this race, I was defeated in a long and hard-fought campaign by Barack Obama.

C) After winning the election, Barack Obama nominated me to be the secretary of state in his new cabinet. Last week, during my Senate confirmation hearings, I drew applause when I said, "diplomacy will be the vanguard of our new foreign policy." It was expected that I would be easily confirmed. **Who am I?** (*Hillary Clinton.*) **Who were the two secretaries of state during the Bush administration?** (*Colin Powell and Condoleezza Rice.*)

News Words

addictive — Causing or likely to cause someone to become dependent on something; **agenda** — A list of things to be done or problems to be addressed; **census** — An official survey or count of a population; **empire** — An extensive group of states or countries under a single supreme authority; **fresco** — A painting done quickly on wet plaster on a wall or ceiling; **inauguration** — The ceremony of swearing someone into public office; **marine** — In this case, having to do with the ocean; **oath** — A solemn promise; **sponge** — In this case, a marine invertebrate with a soft, porous body.

The Obama Inauguration

On Tuesday, Barack Obama will be inaugurated as our president.

BASIC

Our nation's capital is getting ready to host a very big party. **What city is the U.S. capital?** (*Washington, D.C.*) **Can you find Washington, D.C., on a map of the United States?** Millions of people are expected to come to Washington to see this historic event. At noon on Jan. 20th, Barack Obama will officially become the United States president in a special ceremony called the inauguration. At the inauguration he will take the oath of office. **Do you know what an oath is?** (*A promise.*) Here you see the words of the oath. Every president promises to obey the rules of the Constitution.

Barack Obama will swear his oath on the same Bible used by Abraham



Lincoln when he took the oath of office. Right after the president takes the oath, the U.S. Army Band plays something called “ruffles and flourishes,” with bugles and drums. Ruffles and flourishes are only played for very important people. Then the band will play a song that is always used to introduce the president at big events: “Hail to the Chief.” **Do you plan to watch any of the inauguration?** NEXT

GENERAL

Washington, D.C. is preparing to host a big party with millions of guests. **What is the occasion?** (*The swearing-in of the new president.*) **Why is this such a historic event?** (*Barack Obama is the first African American president.*) Up to 4 million people were predicted to be in Washington for the event on January 20th. Obama said he wanted his inauguration to be open to all Americans, not just the rich and powerful. **Would you like to see this event in person?**

The ceremony of swearing in a new president is called the inauguration. Every president takes the oath of office when he is sworn in, and here you see the words to that oath. The oath is a promise that the president will do everything he can to obey and protect the Constitution. All presidents

except one, Franklin Pierce, have taken the oath on a Bible, although this is not a requirement. Barack Obama will take the oath on the same Bible that Abraham Lincoln used when he was sworn into office in 1861. **Why do you think Obama chose to use this Bible to take his oath?** Every inauguration has a theme, and this one's theme is celebrating the 200th anniversary of Lincoln's birth.

After the president is sworn in, the U.S. Army Band will play something called “ruffles and flourishes” on drums and bugles. Then the band will play the song reserved only for the president of the United States. **Do you know what it is called?** (*“Hail to the Chief.”*) **Why do you think there are so many traditions surrounding the inauguration of a new president?** NEXT

ADVANCED

The nation's capital has been preparing for up to 4 million visitors to attend the historic inauguration of Barack Obama, which would be a record-setting crowd. **What makes this such a historic event? Would you like to see it in person? Why or why not?**

The actual inauguration takes place at noon on Jan. 20th, but inaugural events began on the 18th, and continue for four nights of celebration, including more than 10 inaugural balls. Planners are calling the inauguration “the most open and accessible” in history. **Why do you think they wanted it that way?**

The most important event is the swearing-in, which takes place on the grounds of the Capitol. Those with tickets to the inauguration can watch it from the National Mall. Obama will recite the oath of office shown here. All presidents except Franklin Pierce

have taken the oath on a Bible, although this is not a requirement. Most presidents swear the oath on a Bible of historical significance. **Who knows what Bible Obama is using?** (*The one that was used for Abraham Lincoln's inauguration.*) This is in keeping with the theme of this inauguration, which is “A New Birth of Freedom,” celebrating the 200th anniversary of Lincoln's birth. **Why do you think this was chosen as the theme?**

Every step of the inaugural ceremony is laden with tradition. Nearly all presidents add “so help me God” after their oath, which is followed by the playing of four “ruffles and flourishes” by the U.S. Army Band on drums and bugles. The band then plays “Hail to the Chief” before the firing of a 21-gun salute. **Why do you think there is so much pomp and ceremony surrounding the inauguration?** NEXT

The Obama Inauguration (cont'd)

There is a long history of inaugural ceremonies in the United States.

BASIC

The picture on the left shows the decorations for the very first inauguration of our nation's first president, in 1789. **Who was the first president?** (*George Washington.*) That event took place in New York City, because that's where Congress met at that time. The photo on the right shows the inauguration of President John F. Kennedy in 1961. He was the first president to have a poet read a poem at his inauguration. Poet Robert Frost couldn't read the poem he brought with him because of the glare from the sun on the snow. So instead he recited one

of his poems he knew by heart. Every president gives a speech after his inauguration.

President Kennedy famously said in his speech, "ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country." **What do you think this means? What kind of speech do you think Barack Obama will give on his inauguration?** NEXT



GENERAL

The picture on the left shows some of the decorations for the inauguration of the first U.S. president, George Washington. **Who knows when he was elected?** (*1789.*) That inauguration was held in New York City, which at the time was the U.S. capital. The first inauguration was held on April 30th, 1789. For more than 100 years after that, inaugurations were held on March 4th. This gave members of the Electoral College almost four months after Election Day to make their votes for president. It also gave the new president plenty of time to make the long trip to the capital, in the times before air travel or even railroads. In 1937, Congress passed the 20th Amendment, changing the inauguration date to January 20th. Today, some people think there should be even less

of a delay between Election Day and the inauguration. **Do you agree or disagree? Why?**

The other picture here shows a more recent inauguration ceremony, of John F. Kennedy in 1961. Kennedy was the first president to include the reading of a poem at his inauguration. Poet Robert Frost had written a poem for the occasion, but couldn't read it because of the sun's glare off the snow. So instead Frost recited another of his poems by heart. African American poet Elizabeth Alexander will read a poem at the Obama inauguration, and she will be only the fourth poet ever to be part of an inauguration. She is writing a special poem for the occasion. **What kind of poem would you write for the inauguration of Barack Obama?** NEXT

ADVANCED

The illustration on the left shows the preparations for George Washington's inauguration in 1789. Washington took the oath of office on the balcony of Federal Hall in New York, which was then the site of the nation's capital. It was Washington who first ended the oath with "so help me God," which is now tradition. Until 1937, the inaugural date was March 4th, giving presidents ample time to make the journey to the capital in the era before air travel or even railroad travel. The 20th Amendment moved the date to Jan. 20th. This year particularly, many people have said that the date should be moved up sooner, to lessen the effects of the transition of power in a time of crisis. **Do you agree or disagree? Why?**

The photo on the right shows John F. Kennedy's inauguration in 1961. His was the first inauguration to include a poet.

Robert Frost was to read a newly written poem, but he was unable to read it because of the sun's glare on the snow. Instead, he recited his poem "The Gift Outright" from memory. **Do you know this poem?** African American poet Elizabeth Alexander will become just the fourth poet to take part in an inauguration, and the first since 1997, when she reads a poem written for Obama's inauguration.

There is a long tradition of presidents giving formal inaugural speeches detailing their presidential agendas. Kennedy famously said, "ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country." **What kind of agenda do you think President Obama will lay out in his speech?** NEXT

The Obama Inauguration (cont'd)

What's on President Obama's agenda?

BASIC

Once the inauguration is over, President Obama will have a lot of hard work to do. Very few presidents have had to take office with as many problems to deal with as Obama has. **What do you think the biggest of those problems are?** Some of them are listed here. An "agenda" is a list of things that need to be done. At the top of the list is the economy. Obama wants to spend billions of dollars to help American people and businesses, but he may have a tough time getting it passed in Congress. Obama will also have to deal with two wars that U.S.

troops are fighting, in Iraq and Afghanistan. Obama promised during the campaign to invest a lot of money in something called "infrastructure." This means things like roads, bridges, and other things that need repairing all over the country. **What other things do you think should be on President Obama's agenda? What do you think his biggest challenges will be as president? What kind of a president do you think he will be?** END



GENERAL

Once all of the inaugural celebrations are over, President Obama will have a lot of hard work ahead of him. Few presidents have taken office with as many serious problems to deal with as Obama has. **What do you think the biggest of these problems is?** Here you see just a few of the big items on President Obama's agenda. Right now, the most urgent item on the agenda is the economy. **What do you know about the state of the U.S. economy right now?** Most economic experts say the economy is in a recession. Unemployment has risen, and many people are worried that they might lose their jobs. Many businesses are failing or are at risk of failing. Obama says he wants the U.S. government to spend hundreds of billions of dollars to help stimulate the economy. Part of that money could

be for tax cuts, and part of it could be on different programs to help people economically. But the new president will have to get his plan passed in Congress first. **Do you think it will be difficult to get Congress to agree on an economic plan? Why or why not?**

President Obama also takes control of the U.S. military while it is involved in two wars. **Where are they?** (*Iraq and Afghanistan.*) Obama has said he wants to take more troops out of Iraq, and put more troops into Afghanistan. During the campaign, Obama promised to spend a lot of money on "infrastructure," which means things like roads and bridges that are used by many people and are in need of repair. **What do you think should be at the top of President Obama's agenda? Why?** END

ADVANCED

Once all the speeches and inaugural balls have ended, President Obama will be faced with one of the toughest situations faced by any incoming president. The economy is entering its biggest downturn since the Great Depression. Unemployment numbers have risen sharply, and the possible collapse of the U.S. auto industry has threatened to add to the crisis. Obama proposes spending nearly \$800 billion on an economic stimulus package, dwarfing last year's \$170 billion economic bailout. **What kind of federal spending, if any, do you think could help the U.S. economy?** Part of Obama's plan includes tax cuts for businesses and middle income Americans. It also includes investment in jobs programs, alternative energy programs, education and health care.

During the campaign, Obama promised to reform health care to allow people to enroll in a government health care program if they chose to. He also promised to invest heavily in infrastructure in all 50 states.

In terms of foreign policy, President Obama takes office at a time when military operations in Iraq are winding down. But the process of rebuilding Iraq is a fragile one, and will no doubt be difficult. Obama says that he wants to move more troops from Iraq to Afghanistan, where the U.S. is still fighting al Qaeda. And the peace process in the Middle East has been shaken by Israel's military operations in Gaza recently. **How do you think this will affect President Obama's foreign policy? Do you think President Obama will be able to successfully carry out his agenda? Why or why not?** END

Ocean "census" discovers undersea wonders



A huge "census" of marine life involves more than 2,000 scientists from 82 countries.

BASIC

Part of our planet has been explored far less than any other, and it's home to millions of different plant and animal species. **Who can guess what it is?** It's our oceans! They are so vast and so deep that it is impossible to explore more than a small part of them. But more than 2,000 scientists are taking part in a huge "census" of our oceans. A census is an official count of a population. In this case, the researchers are trying to list as many undersea species as possible, and to get

information on as many new species as they

can. Here you see three of the strange and colorful creatures that live in our oceans. At top right is a type of coral, which is made up of thousands of tiny living things joined together. Below it is a sea star, or starfish, and the third photo is of a sea sponge, which survives by having water flow through its body. **What's the most interesting ocean animal you've seen?** NEXT

GENERAL

Have you ever gone diving in the ocean?

If so, what did you see? Our oceans contain life in all sorts of shapes, sizes, and colors. Our oceans are so vast and deep that it's impossible to explore more than a tiny part of them. However, marine scientists are currently taking a huge "census" of ocean life. **What's a census?** (*An official count or survey of a population.*) More than 2,000 scientists from 82 countries are taking part in the Census of Marine Life, which is expected to be complete in 2010. Scientists hope to catalogue, or create a list of, as many undersea species as possible. On the screen are three interesting undersea creatures. At top right is a type of coral. Coral is actually made up of thousands and thousands of tiny, identical organisms that join together. At

bottom right is a red-knobbed sea star, or starfish, an organism known for its ability to grow new arms if it loses any. The other photo is a type of sea sponge. This strange-looking creature has no nervous, digestive, or circulatory system. Instead, it relies on water flow through its body to get food and oxygen and remove wastes. Humans, of course, use an item just like this organism in our kitchens. **What do you think scientists can learn from studying these unusual life forms?** Besides new species, census scientists report other interesting discoveries, like a shark gathering spot they have nicknamed the "White Shark Café." They discovered that white sharks travel great distances to meet at a spot in the mid-Pacific, and scientists still aren't sure why the sharks do this. **What do you think?** NEXT

ADVANCED

Some of the most bizarre and beautiful creatures on Earth live in one of our planet's greatest, and least explored, treasures: the oceans. **Have you ever gone diving in the ocean? If so, what kinds of life did you see?** Marine scientists say there is still much to be learned about undersea life, but a huge "census" is under way in an attempt to catalogue and gain a greater understanding of the thousands of species living beneath the waves. More than 2,000 scientists from 82 nations are taking part in the Census of Marine Life, which is to be complete in 2010. At top right is a form of coral, an organism made up of thousands of small polyps. Over thousands of generations, coral sometimes creates reefs, which host a wealth of biodiversity. At bottom right is a red-knobbed sea star, or starfish, an organism known for its ability to

regenerate arms. The other photo is a type of sea sponge, a creature that has no nervous, digestive, or circulatory system; it relies on water flow through its body to get food and oxygen and remove wastes. **How could humanity benefit from understanding more about these unusual forms of life?** Besides new species, census scientists report other interesting discoveries. A vast "city" of brittle stars, a form of starfish, was found off the coast of New Zealand, and scientists also found what they're nicknaming the "White Shark Café." Satellite tagging showed that white sharks travel huge distances each year to meet at a spot in the Pacific, where sharks of both sexes make frequent dives to depths of nearly 1,000 feet. The reason they congregate here is still in question. **What do you think might be a reason?** END

Undersea wonders (cont'd)

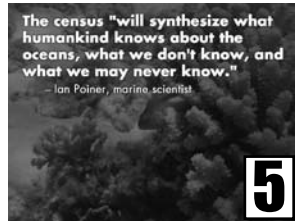
Scientists will use information from the marine census to help protect marine life from manmade threats and climate change.

BASIC

Can you read the quote on the screen?

“Synthesize” means to combine parts to make a whole. **Do you understand what the scientist means?** Besides discovering new species, the scientists in this study want to get a better understanding of undersea life. They hope to use this knowledge to better protect marine life from threats like fishing, pollution, and climate change. **Do you understand why this study is so important?** The census is expected to include more than 230,000 species

— still only a tiny amount of the species thought to exist in the oceans. Researchers, so far, have identified 5,300 species that are probably new. **Does it surprise you that Earth’s oceans are home to so many, many different plants and animals? What else do you think undersea life can teach us? Would you like to learn more about marine life?** END



GENERAL

Do you understand the quote on the screen?

“Synthesize” means to combine elements to make a whole. The goals of the marine census project aren’t just discovering new species; researchers also want to gain a better understanding of how these species live and what kind of environment makes them thrive. Through this information, they hope to find ways to protect undersea life from threats like over-fishing, pollution, and climate change. **Why do you think this is so important?** The census is expected to include more than 230,000 species — still only a fraction of the amount of species thought to exist in the oceans. Researchers have identified 5,300 species that are probably new. About 1,400 new marine species are being catalogued each year. **Does it surprise**

you that our oceans are home to such a vast number of species? What do you think scientists can learn from discovering new species? One very interesting area noted by the researchers is the mid-Atlantic ridge, halfway between the United States and Europe. Researchers believe the area is home to hundreds of species rare or unknown elsewhere. It also includes the world’s deepest known active hot vent, a place where a crack in the ocean floor spews boiling water from under the Earth’s crust. This vent is more than 13,300 feet deep, and densely populated with anemones, sea worms, and shrimp. **Is it amazing that there is life that deep down? What do you think of the quote on the screen? Would you like to be an undersea explorer?** END

ADVANCED

It’s not just intellectual curiosity that’s

prompting the first Census of Marine Life; researchers are working to protect marine life from threats like over-fishing, pollution, and climate change. The census is expected to include more than 230,000 species — still only a fraction of the amount of species thought to exist in the oceans. Researchers have identified 5,300 species that are likely new, and confirmed 110 as new. About 1,400 new marine species are being catalogued each year; researchers say it could take more than five centuries to catalogue all the species. **Does it surprise you that our oceans are home to such a vast number of species? Why do you think scientists are placing so much importance on this census?** The census researchers say that even after their exhaustive work, as much

of 95 percent of the ocean will remain unexplored. **Does that surprise you?** One particularly mysterious area is the mid-Atlantic ridge halfway between the United States and Europe. Researchers believe the area is home to hundreds of species rare or unknown elsewhere. The ridge includes the world’s deepest known active hot vent, a crack in Earth’s surface that spews hot water and creates a unique ecosystem. It’s more than 13,300 feet deep and populated by anemones, sea worms, and shrimp. **What do you think of the quote on the screen? Why do you think there is a sense of urgency about exploring the oceans? Do you think there is a chance we might lose species from manmade threats before we ever have a chance to learn about them? Why might this be harmful?** END

Can sugar be addictive?

A new study showed that sugar can be addictive.

BASIC

What is your favorite sweet treat? When you start eating something sweet that's really delicious, like chocolate, do you find yourself wanting to eat more and more? Some people think that sugar can be addictive. **Who knows what "addictive" means?** (*In this case, that you begin to crave more and more of it. Truly "addictive" things are dangerous substances like nicotine, alcohol, and some drugs.*) A new study found that eating a lot of sugar caused brain changes similar to the changes caused by addiction to

drugs. Scientists trained lab rats to become dependent on

large amounts of sugar. They found that rats that had sugar taken away from them for a long time worked harder to get it when it was reintroduced. And, they ate even more of it than they had before. **Does this surprise you? Do you think sugar truly can have addictive effects? What are some other bad effects of eating a lot of sugar?** NEXT



GENERAL

Candy bars, doughnuts, cookies, cakes ... most of us love sweets, and some of us end up eating too much of them. **What is your favorite sweet treat? Do you find it hard to stop eating it if you start?** Some people think sugar has an addictive quality — meaning that eating it is habit forming, and that the more sugar you eat, the more you'll want. **Do you agree with that? How do you feel when you eat a lot of sweets? Have you ever tried to cut down on how many sweets you eat?** But a new study actually found that eating a lot of sugar caused brain changes similar to those caused by addiction to drugs. Scientists trained lab rats to become dependent on large amounts of sugar. Then they took

the sugar away from some of them. They found that rats that were denied sugar for a long time worked harder to get it when it was reintroduced. And, they ate even more of it than they had before. They also found that rats who ate a lot of sugar showed chemical changes in the brain that looked like those produced by addictive substances like nicotine, the substance in cigarettes, and dangerous drugs like cocaine. **Does this surprise you? Do you think sugar truly can have addictive effects?** The scientists who did this study think it might help them to find better ways to treat people with eating disorders. **What are some other negative effects of eating a lot of sugar?** NEXT

ADVANCED

Do you have a sweet tooth? Do you ever find that once you start snacking on a favorite treat, it's hard to stop? Whether sugar actually can be physically addictive is something often debated. Some nutritionists believe that getting in the habit of eating sugary treats will in turn lead to more cravings than in those who normally abstain. But a new study by Princeton University scientists found that sugar had a similar effect on the brains of lab animals as the effect caused by known addictive drugs. Scientist Bart Hoebel has long been interested in the brain mechanism that controls appetite and body weight. He and his team trained lab rats to become dependent on large doses of sugar. They found that lab rats that were then denied sugar for a prolonged period

after learning to "binge" on it, worked harder to get it when it was reintroduced to them. And they consumed even more sugar than they had before, suggesting craving and relapse behavior, which are considered key components of addiction. The researchers found that rats that ate large amounts of sugar when hungry underwent neurochemical changes in the brain that appeared to mimic those produced by addictive substances like nicotine, morphine, and cocaine. **Does this surprise you? Do you think sugar truly can have addictive effects?** The scientists conducting this study think the findings eventually could have implications for the treatment of humans with eating disorders. **Do you think elements of the study could also provide help in treating other addictions?** NEXT

Can sugar be addictive? (cont'd)

Americans consume far too many sweetened soft drinks.



BASIC

Does the sentence on the screen surprise you? Do you like to drink soda or some other kind of sweetened drink? If so, how much of it do you think you drink in an average week? If you walk down the beverage aisle of a supermarket, you'll see dozens of different things to drink, and many of them are loaded with sugar or other sweeteners. Even some flavored bottled water contains added sweeteners. Researchers also note that the number of children 2 to 18 who drink milk

has gone down. Doctors worry that children and teens who drink less milk may not get enough calcium and vitamins. **How much milk do you normally drink?** Medical experts hope Americans will start switching to healthier beverages, like water, milk, or tea. **What do you think could be done to get people to drink fewer sugary soft drinks?** END

GENERAL

What do you think of the sentence on the screen? Does it surprise you? Do you regularly drink soda, or some other kind of soft drink? Many Americans are "hooked" on sugar, and it seems that more and more of our sugary calories are coming from sweetened beverages like soda. When you watch TV, you're likely to see many ads for different beverages. The soft-drink industry is enormous and the different companies are always competing with each other. The recent "energy drink" craze has added even more choices to the supermarket aisle. Even some fruit juice has too much sugar and "empty calories," and some flavored bottled water contains added sweeteners. **Who can explain the phrase "empty calories"?** One study showed that teens who drink

soft drinks get nearly 15 percent of their total calories from those drinks. Researchers note that the number of children aged 2 to 18 who drink milk has decreased. This raises concerns among doctors and nutritionists, who worry that children and teens who drink less milk also consume less calcium and vitamins. **How much milk do you normally drink?** Of course, another major problem linked to sweetened soft drinks is obesity, considered one of the worst health crises of our country. **What are some of the health problems obesity can cause?** (*Diabetes, heart disease.*) Medical experts hope Americans will start switching to healthier beverages, like water, milk, or tea. **What do you think could be done to get people to drink fewer sugary soft drinks?** END

ADVANCED

Americans are hooked on sugar, and more and more of it is coming from sweetened beverages. **Does the sentence on the screen surprise you? What type of beverages do you consume regularly? Have you tried to cut down on soda or some other type of soft drink?** Partly fueled by vast advertising campaigns, plenty of Americans are addicted to sugary beverages. And it's not just soda: It seems like every month, a new specialized beverage is introduced. Even many types of bottled water are sweetened with sugar or sugar substitute. And the relatively recent "energy drink" craze added even more sticky-sweet calories to the marketplace and teens' diets. One study showed that teens who drink soft drinks get nearly 15

percent of their total calories from those drinks. Researchers note that the number of children 2 to 18 who drink milk has decreased, raising concerns about the calcium and vitamins they miss by drinking soft drinks instead of milk. And obviously, sweetened soft drinks are contributing to the nation's burgeoning waistlines. With obesity considered one of the nation's biggest public health crises, medical experts hope Americans will start switching to healthier beverages, like water, milk, or tea. **Do you think the government should take some initiative to urge people to drink fewer sweetened soft drinks? Why do you think soft-drink companies are so effective at marketing their products?** END

The Rediscovery of Pompeii

Mount Vesuvius erupted in the first century.

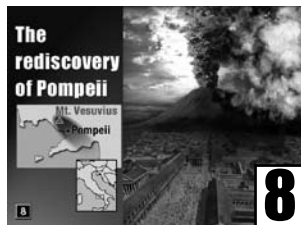
BASIC

Almost 2,000 years ago, a volcano called Mount Vesuvius erupted, blowing many tons of ash, dust, and rock 20 miles high. The city of Pompeii, in Italy, was completely buried. **Can you find Italy on a map? What do you think it would have been like to be in Pompeii when Mount Vesuvius erupted?** Obviously, we can't go back 2,000 years into the past to know what it was really like. But we can study the writings of the survivors who saw the eruption. And we can study the remains of buildings and other items that are still in the ruins

of Pompeii.

What do you think can be learned from these things?

The author of a new book about Pompeii used these clues and more to research what kind of a city it was, what kind of people lived there, and what life was like there before the volcano destroyed the city. **Would you be interested in reading a book about Pompeii? Why or why not?** NEXT



GENERAL

The big picture here shows what one of the world's most famous disasters might have looked like. Nearly 2,000 years ago, the eruption of a volcano called Mount Vesuvius buried the city of Pompeii, killing thousands of people. **Who knows where Pompeii is? (Italy.)**

Historians believe the eruption happened in the year 79. At that time, Pompeii was a busy city of about 20,000 people. There had been earthquakes in Pompeii before, and there were probably rumblings and smoke coming from Vesuvius from time to time before the eruption. **Why do you think the people of Pompeii didn't move away?** Historians say that Mount Vesuvius may have blown up on August 24th of the year 79. **Who knows what happens when**

a volcano erupts? (*Pressure builds up inside the volcano, until it breaks through the top, releasing steam, ash, and lava.*) The Vesuvius eruption blew the top of the mountain completely off, spewing tons of ash, rocks, and lava 20 miles into the air. It buried not only Pompeii, but some of the smaller towns in the area as well. No one is quite sure how many people died in the attack, but the total is estimated to be more than 4,000.

People have always been fascinated by Pompeii. A new book by author Mary Beard looks at what kind of city it was, what kind of people lived there, and what life was like before the volcano destroyed the city. **What clues do you think she and other historians might have to answer these questions?** NEXT

ADVANCED

Pompeii was a city of 20,000 residents in the year 79 C.E. It was thought of as a very international city, considering its proximity to the Mediterranean Sea, and its architecture showed Egyptian and Greek influence. **What empire ruled this area, and most of Europe, at that time?** (*The Roman Empire.*) Pompeii and the other smaller towns in the area were prone to earthquakes — in fact, a large quake had wreaked havoc only 13 years before, and the city of Pompeii was still recovering. Residents were used to the ground shaking every once in a while.

The date isn't certain, but historians think that on August 24th, Pompeii met its sudden and violent end. **What happened?** (*The nearby Mount Vesuvius erupted.*) The eruption was swift and ferocious,

blowing the entire top of the mountain off, and sending tons of scalding steam, ash, and rock 20 miles in the air. This explosion was so huge that material from Vesuvius fell in the city of Constantinople, more than 1,000 miles away. As residents began to flee, clouds of material from this volcano swept through the city, burying approximately 4,000 of its people underneath tons of ash and rock. Pompeii and neighboring smaller cities were gone.

Some survivors did escape, and their eyewitness accounts gave history the story of Pompeii. The city itself remained buried until uncovered by excavation in 1748. What was discovered there has provided us with an intimate and detailed glimpse of life in Pompeii in the first century. **Have you seen the ruins of Pompeii before?** NEXT

The Rediscovery of Pompeii (cont'd)



Pompeii remained buried for centuries.

BASIC

Pompeii stayed buried for hundreds of years, until 1748 when it was re-discovered. Since then, scientists have found many things there, like the painting shown at the top left. Many homes in Pompeii had paintings on the walls, called frescoes. These frescoes helped historians learn a lot about what people looked like — how they dressed and how they wore their hair, for example. **What do you think the woman in this painting was like when she was alive almost 2,000 years ago?**

Archeologists also found the outlines of actual people who were buried in ash

when Pompeii erupted. The ash hardened into rock over hundreds of years, while the bodies underneath decayed to dust. By pouring plaster into the holes under the rock, casts were created of people and animals in the exact position they were in when they died. You can see one of those casts here, of a man. **Do you think it would be interesting to see these casts, and the rest of Pompeii that has been uncovered?** END

GENERAL

The story of Pompeii was passed down for generations, but no one knew where the city really was until it was found in 1748. The re-discovery of Pompeii was a huge event, and people traveled from all over Europe to see the efforts to uncover Pompeii. Since then, scientists have been digging through the layers of dirt and hardened volcanic ash to try to learn what they could about the Roman society of the time. They have found works of art as well as everyday objects. Many of the homes in Pompeii had paintings on the walls, called frescoes, like the one shown here on the left. These frescoes have given us a good idea of what people looked like in Pompeii in the first century. The discoveries at Pompeii in 1748 even influenced art and

fashion at that time, as you can see by the engraving on the right. **Does it look similar to the fresco on the left to you?**

As archeologists dug further down into the ruins of Pompeii, they discovered more. The ash that covered the victims had hardened over centuries into rock, even as the bodies underneath decayed to dust. Archeologists poured plaster into these holes, and made casts. **Have you ever made a cast of something in an art class?** In this way, they were able to capture the positions of people and animals exactly as they were when they died. Here you see one of those forms, of a Pompeiian man. **Do you think it would be interesting to see these casts, as well as the other remains of Pompeii? Why or why not?** END

ADVANCED

Author Mary Beard has recreated the city of Pompeii in her new book, “The Fires of Vesuvius.” She describes what she calls the “Pompeii paradox,” meaning that, quote, “we simultaneously know a huge amount and very little about life [in Pompeii.]” **What do you think life was like there before the city was destroyed?**

Thousands of artifacts have been found, ranging from works of art to everyday objects. The discoveries paint a picture of a vibrant, diverse, and thriving city. The Pompeiians created what is considered the oldest known brand name — a wine labeled “Vesuvinum,” a pun combining the name “Vesuvius” and the Latin term for wine, “vinum.” Many well-preserved frescoes were discovered decorating the walls of homes and buildings, such as the one

on the left. The Pompeii discoveries created a sensation in Europe at the time, and helped spark an intense interest in the art, philosophy, literature, and design of the ancient Greeks and Romans. **Does anyone know what this period in European history is called?** (*The Enlightenment.*) That interest is reflected in the 18th century engraving shown on the right.

The Pompeii artifacts that many people find most fascinating are the casts. Layers of ash covering the victims hardened to stone, as the bodies decayed underneath. Archeologists poured plaster into the hollow spaces, creating casts like the one shown here, of a Pompeiian man. The casts depict people and animals in the positions in which they died. **Why do you think people remain so fascinated by Pompeii?** END

Country of the Week: Bulgaria



Bulgaria, under communist rule for decades, is slowly catching on as a tourist destination.

BASIC

This week we travel to Eastern Europe to a little country called Bulgaria. It's a very beautiful country, with mountains, forests, and coastline on the Black Sea. **Can you locate the Black Sea on the map?** In the photo is Bulgaria's capital city, Sofia, a city full of grand buildings. Until 1990, Bulgaria was a communist country. Communism centers on the belief that the government owns all property. Since then, it has been struggling to find its own way

as a free country. Tourists are finally discovering its charms, especially the little villages in the countryside, with cobblestone streets and villagers dressed in traditional clothes like their ancestors wore. Bulgaria is a relatively poor country, compared with the rest of Europe, but things are slowly improving. **Would you like to visit Bulgaria?** NEXT

GENERAL

This week's country is Bulgaria, a small and little-known nation in Eastern Europe. **Have you ever heard of Bulgaria?** Bulgaria, which has about 7.6 million residents, is a very beautiful country. Much of it is mountainous, and it has dense forests where wildlife like bears and lynx, which are relatively rare in Europe, live. Bulgaria also has a long stretch of beautiful coastline on the Black Sea. Tourists are finally starting to discover Bulgaria's treasures. In the photo at top is Bulgaria's capital, Sofia. Set at the foot of a mountain, Sofia is home to some of the country's grandest architecture and is the country's cultural center. Tourists also love to explore the villages in the countryside, which often look like they are from another century, with cobblestone

streets and people in traditional clothes like their ancestors wore. **What do you think it would be like to live in a village like the one shown here?** For more than four decades, Bulgaria was part of the Soviet Union and under communist rule. Today, it is a less wealthy country than many others in Europe, but its economy is slowly improving. One big problem, though, is that powerful criminals have a lot of control. They control a lot of the country's wealth, and also have a lot of influence in Bulgaria's political system. Bulgaria was finally allowed to join the European Union in 2007, but faces losing millions in funding because its leaders have made little progress in cleaning up this problem. **Why do you think this is so?** NEXT

ADVANCED

This week we travel to Eastern Europe to a little-known country called Bulgaria. **What's your impression of Bulgaria?** Trapped behind the "Iron Curtain" during the Cold War, this small nation is now a democracy but is still a relatively poor country. It is rich, however, in geographic beauty; more than half of the country is mountainous, made up of several ranges, including the Balkans. The country has spectacular coastline on the Black Sea, and dense forests full of wildlife like lynx and bears. Tourism is finally beginning to increase here, as travelers discover the country's treasures: its stunning landscapes, Roman ruins, and storybook villages with their cobblestone streets and stone-and-timber houses. **What do these photos tell you about Bulgaria? Would you like to visit Bulgaria?** The main

photo shows Bulgaria's medieval capital city, Sofia. Bulgaria today has about 7.6 million residents. Its transition to democracy and a market economy hasn't been easy. During the 1990s, the country was shaken by political instability and strikes. Bulgaria finally was accepted into the European Union in 2007, but it risks losing millions in EU funds because of its lack of progress on battling the nation's intense corruption and organized crime. Powerful underground barons control as much as 25 percent of the country's economy and they have a grip on many of the country's political dealings. Bulgaria has seen some 150 mafia-style killings since the fall of communism in 1989, and not a single conviction. **Can you think of other countries, or U.S. cities, that are strongly affected by organized crime?** NEXT

Country of the Week: Bulgaria (cont'd)

For centuries, Bulgaria was controlled by outsiders.

BASIC

On the left is an item from Bulgaria's famous "Thracian Treasures." The Thracians lived here many thousands of years ago. They left behind many beautiful gold and silver items, which have only recently been discovered. **Would you like to see the Thracian Treasures?** The nation of Bulgaria became very powerful during the ninth and tenth centuries, but in the 14th century, it was conquered by the mighty Ottoman Empire. By the 19th century, Bulgarians were tired of being ruled by outsiders. Vasil Levski, in the photo, led a freedom movement. He is considered the country's national hero. After

World War Two, Bulgaria was ruled by a strict dictator. It wasn't until 1990

that this country got its freedom. Today, Bulgarians are very proud of their traditions and culture. The photo shows some girls in traditional Bulgarian dress, which Bulgarians often wear during holidays and festivals. **What do you think of their outfits? Does your community ever have cultural celebrations where people wear traditional clothing?** END



GENERAL

On the left is an item from Bulgaria's famous "Thracian Treasures." The Thracians were a group of people living in this part of Europe as far back as 3000 BCE. They were very skilled in working with silver, gold, and other precious metals. More than 80 priceless objects like this one have been found in Bulgaria. **Would you like to see the Thracian Treasures?** The state of Bulgaria was founded in 681 BCE; it is the oldest civilization in Europe. Bulgaria became a major European power in the ninth and the tenth centuries, but in the 14th century, it was conquered by the Ottoman Empire. By the 19th century, Bulgarians were tired of being ruled by outsiders, and a freedom movement began, led by the man in the photo, Vasil Levski. The freedom movement was unsuccessful, but Levski is considered

Bulgaria's national hero. Russia finally helped Bulgaria break free from the Ottoman Empire in 1877. After World War Two, it became known as the People's Republic of Bulgaria, but it was effectively controlled by the Soviet Union. **Who knows what the Soviet Union was?** (*A large group of nations, centered by Russia, under communist rule. Communism centers on the belief that all property belongs to the government. The Soviet Union dissolved in 1991.*) Today, Bulgarians are finally free to practice their own religion and to cherish the traditional customs of their culture. The photo shows some girls in traditional Bulgarian dress, which Bulgarians often wear during holidays and festivals. **What effect do you think centuries of outside rule would have on a country?** END

ADVANCED

Bulgaria, founded in 681 BCE, is the oldest state in Europe. But civilization in this region dates back many thousands of years. On the left you see an artifact from Bulgaria's "Thracian Treasures." The Thracians were an Indo-European group who lived in this part of Eastern Europe as far back as 3000 BCE. They were skillful craftsmen who made ornate gold and silver objects, which they sometimes buried to hide them from enemy invasions. Most of the 80-some artifacts discovered in Bulgaria were only found in the last 30 years. **Why do you think it took so long to find these treasures?** Bulgaria was part of the Ottoman Empire for 500 years before gaining its independence in the 19th century. During that century, a Bulgarian nationalist movement began, led by the man in the photo, Vasil Levski. Levski

instigated a nationwide uprising against Ottoman rule. Levski was captured and executed in 1873. Today he is considered the national hero of Bulgaria, and monuments to him dot the country. Russia finally helped oust the Ottomans in 1877, leaving Bulgaria permanently in Russia's debt. That might be why Bulgaria put up little fight when the Soviet Union took over after World War Two. Bulgaria was ruled by a hard-line dictator until 1989. Today, post-communist Bulgarians are again free to cherish their Slavic culture and to practice the Orthodox religion that had been suppressed for four decades. The photo shows some Bulgarian girls in traditional Bulgarian dress. **Do you know anyone who practices an Orthodox religion? What effect do you think centuries of outside rule would have on a country?** END

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

Queen Victoria, beloved by her subjects, died in 1901.



GENERAL

When Queen Victoria died on January 22th, 1901, she was the only monarch most of her British subjects had ever known. She had been Queen for 63 years, the longest reign in British history. These years saw the growth of a huge empire. **What is an empire?** (*A network of colonies all controlled by the same country.*) **Why do you think they say “the sun never set on the British Empire”?** (*The British Empire reached so far and wide that the sun was always shining on part of it.*)

Victoria was queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland from 1837 to 1901 and empress of India. We know more about Queen Victoria than almost any other person in history. For more than 80 years people commented on almost everything she did. From age 13 until a week before she died, she kept a diary. She wrote hundreds of letters to her friends and family around the world and most of them have been saved. She wrote two books about her life. There are many portraits of her and she was the first British monarch to be photographed.

She was born in 1819 and grew up at Kensington Palace in London. **Can you name another English princess who lived at Kensington Palace?** (*Diana, Princess of Wales.*) Victoria was an intelligent girl. She read lots of books, spoke several languages, and could sing and draw. But she was an only child and lived a secluded life. The center of her life as a princess was her doll collection. She owned 132 dolls with fancy costumes and unusual names. **Does this sound like a good way to grow up?**

Victoria became queen after the death of her uncle, King William IV, in 1837. She was only eighteen years old at the time. Two years later, her cousin Albert, a German prince, came to visit

the English court.

Albert was very handsome and Victoria immediately fell in love with him. She proposed to him five days after his arrival. Prince Albert accepted, and in February 1840 they were married. He soon became the most important influence in her life and served as her private secretary.

Victoria and Albert built royal residences on the Isle of Wight and at Balmoral Castle in Scotland, and never spent much time in London. They had nine children. In 1861, Prince Albert caught typhoid and died at the young age of 42. Victoria was so grief-stricken that she did not appear in public for three years. She never entirely got over the loss of Albert. She was a widow for 40 years, and until the end of her life she had her maids lay out Albert's clothes for the next day. Throughout her reign, Queen Victoria worked hard to carry out her ceremonial duties as head of state. **Do you know who actually runs the government in Great Britain?** (*The Prime Minister and Parliament.*)

Victoria's long reign, and the pride that people associated with her name, gave rise to the term "Victorian England." This was a period that was characterized by styles and values that reflected Victoria's own personal tastes and beliefs. She had forty grandchildren and forty great-grandchildren. Their marriages with other kings and queens gave her the name of "grandmother of Europe." **Do you think that British royalty today has the kind of influence Victoria had? Why are we still so fascinated by the British royalty?** END

FACES AND PLACES

Leon Panetta

President-elect Barack Obama has tapped a former Clinton administration insider, Leon Panetta, to be the director of the CIA. The news surprised some, because Panetta has no direct experience in intelligence or counterterrorism, except for overseeing the budgets of all federal agencies. He does, however, have a long history of public service. Now 70, Panetta served as budget director and White House chief of staff during the Clinton administration, and more recently, he was part of the Iraq Study Group. Before that, he served in Congress for 16 years, representing a district in California. **Do you think Panetta's lack of intelligence experience will be a hindrance for him?**

Winnie the Pooh

The world's beloved "bear of very little brain" is back. The estate of author A.A. Milne, who published "Winnie-the-Pooh" and "The House at Pooh Corner" in the 1920s, has authorized a sequel. "Return to the Hundred Acre Wood," written by author David Benedictus and illustrated by Mark Burgess, will be published in October 2009. Milne's books centered on sole human character Christopher Robin, named after Milne's son, and a cast of animal characters, including Pooh, Piglet, Eeyore, and the other inhabitants of the "Hundred Acre Wood." The stories' gentle whimsy has captured the imagination of millions of children through the years and Milne's books have been translated into more than 50 languages. **Are you or were you a fan of the "Pooh" books?**



Russia

A payment dispute between Russia and neighboring Ukraine has left hundreds of thousands of people in Eastern Europe without heat for more than a week. Earlier this month Russia shut off natural gas supplies that are routed through Ukraine. More than a dozen European countries depend on these gas supplies. The situation was becoming increasingly urgent; some countries have had to close schools and public buildings. The European Union has warned Russian and Ukrainian gas companies that it will take legal action if the issue is not resolved. Diplomatic pressure was growing; the prime ministers of Bulgaria, Slovakia, and Moldova held talks in Moscow and Kiev. **From your news reading, has this situation been resolved?**

Texas

This state is ready to become home again to a very high-profile native: outgoing President George W. Bush. George and Laura Bush have bought a \$2.1 million home in Preston Hollow, one of the wealthiest areas of Dallas. They lived in Dallas between December 1988 and January 1995 before moving to the Texas governor's mansion in Austin. The Bushes plan to spend weekends at their ranch in Crawford. Bush said he will spend his time raising funds for his presidential library and writing his memoir. The Bushes also plan to build a "Freedom Institute" at Laura Bush's alma mater, Southern Methodist University. **How do you think history will judge Bush's presidency?**

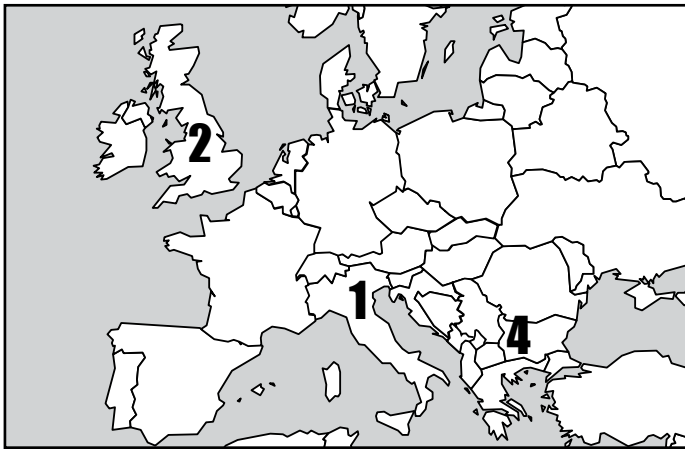
WHERE IN THE WORLD?

reproducible activity

Write the names and numbers of the locations on the map next to their descriptions below.

- a. George W. Bush is moving to this U.S. state.
- b. The inauguration of Barack Obama takes place in this U.S. city.
- c. The city of Pompeii is in this European country.
- d. Queen Victoria was the monarch of this European country.
- e. Ukraine is involved with a dispute over gas prices with this Eurasian nation.
- f. This European country is on the Black Sea.

Answers on inside back cover



Cartoon of the Week

Barack Obama has broken the “color barrier.”

BASIC

This week’s cartoon was drawn by Julianna Gross, a 6th grader at Oakwood School in North Hollywood, California. Her cartoon is about the election of Barack Obama as U.S. president. **What do you think the cartoonist means by “the color barrier”?** (*Barack Obama is the first person of African American heritage to be elected president.*) The cartoonist compares this accomplishment to the accomplishment of another African American — Jackie Robinson. Robinson was the first African American man to play major league

GENERAL

This week’s cartoon was created by Julianna Gross, a 6th grader at Oakwood School in North Hollywood, California. **What do you think the cartoonist means here by “the color barrier”?** The cartoonist is comparing two situations where African Americans broke the color barrier for the first time. As you know, Barack Obama is the first African American to be elected president of the United States. The name “Robinson” on the jersey here refers to Jackie Robinson. **Have you heard of Jackie Robinson before?** Robinson was the first African American to play major league baseball in the modern era. He played in the segregated Negro League at first, but in 1947 he joined the Brooklyn Dodgers. **What do you think it was like to be the first**

ADVANCED

This week’s cartoon is the work of Julianna Gross, a 6th grader at Oakwood School in North Hollywood, California. Her cartoon compares the election of Barack Obama to the accomplishment of another African American who broke the color barrier in American history. **Who is he?** (*Jackie Robinson.*) **What do you know about Jackie Robinson?** Robinson was not the first black professional baseball player, but he was the first black player in the modern major leagues. **What is the significance of the “44” on the jersey here?** (*When he was a Brooklyn Dodger, Jackie Robinson’s jersey number was 42. Barack Obama is the 44th president of the United States.*) Robinson started off playing in the segregated Negro League, but in 1947 the Brooklyn Dodgers called him up from its triple-A team. Robinson faced vitriolic criticism,

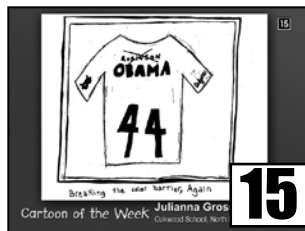
baseball in modern times. Robinson played for the Brooklyn Dodgers from 1947 to 1956. His jersey number was 42. **Who can guess why the jersey in this cartoon is number 44?** (*Barack Obama is the 44th president of the United States.*) **Are you proud of the United States for electing the first African American president? Do you think this is a good editorial cartoon? Why or why not?** END

black player in major league baseball? How do you think this experience compares to being the first black president of the United States? Why do you think the jersey number here is 44? (*Barack Obama is the 44th president of the United States.*) **Do you think electing an African American president is a major milestone in American history? Why or why not? How do you think future generations will view this event? Do you think this is an effective editorial cartoon? Why or why not?**

As the Obama presidency gets underway, NewsCurrents would like to hear your opinions of his performance. Send us your editorial cartoons and you could see yours in this space in upcoming weeks. END

racist comments, and death threats from fans and players who opposed the integration of baseball. He retired in 1956 with a career batting average of .311, having won the National League MVP once and played in the World Series six times, including one championship. He was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1962. **How do you think Robinson’s experiences and accomplishments compare with those of Barack Obama? Do you think the racial attitudes of America have changed much since the mid-20th century? If so, how have they changed? What makes this an effective editorial cartoon?**

As the Obama administration gets underway, NewsCurrents wants to get your opinions on its performance. Send us your editorial cartoons and you’ll be entered in our NewsCurrents Editorial Cartoon Contest. END



NEWSPAPER ACTIVITIES

Inauguration ceremony

On January 20th, Barack Obama will take the oath of office and become the 44th president of the United States. Read news stories about the inauguration ceremony. Based on what you read, answer the following questions: What oath does the president take during the ceremony? What important official asks the president to take this oath? Where did the ceremony take place? About how many people were there?

Time capsule

Imagine you are in charge of preparing a time capsule that will be opened in 200 years. A good time capsule should give people living in the future an idea of what life was like when the time capsule was made. Using the advertisements in your newspaper, select five things you think are important to people today. Find things that you think would tell people of the future something about the world we live in now. Attach a paragraph to each item you clip out, explaining why it would go in your time capsule.

Teams across the United States

Using the sports section of your newspaper, cut out the names of all the sports teams you find. Tape them to a map of the United States in the states where they are located.

WRITING ACTIVITY

Use your thesaurus

Peter Mark Roget, who wrote "Roget's Thesaurus," was born on January 18th, 1779. Clip an interesting newspaper article and circle five to ten words that are important in describing what happened in the story. Then find synonyms for those words in a thesaurus. Rewrite the story, substituting the synonyms for the original words. Compare the new and old stories to see which sounds better.



Word Search

In observance of Inauguration Day, this week's word search contains the names of twelve former Commanders-in-Chief.

CLEVELAND
COOLIDGE
EISENHOWER
FILLMORE
GRANT
JACKSON

LINCOLN
MCKINLEY
POLK
TRUMAN
VAN BUREN
WASHINGTON

Solution on inside back cover

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

BASIC REVIEW QUIZ

- 1) The first inauguration was held in (CHOOSE ONE: New York City; Washington, D.C.)
- 2) Barack Obama will be sworn in on a Bible used at the swearing-in of (CHOOSE ONE: George Washington, Abraham Lincoln).
- 3) Scientists taking part in the “ocean census” want to find as many (CHOOSE ONE: whales, species) as they can.
- 4) TRUE OR FALSE: Scientists want to use the “ocean census” to help protect marine life from manmade threats.
- 5) TRUE OR FALSE: A new study found that eating a lot of sugar caused brain changes similar to the changes caused by addiction to drugs.
- 6) Researchers have noted that the number of children aged 2 to 18 who drink _____ has gone down.
- 7) Pompeii was destroyed by a (CHOOSE ONE: flood, volcano).
- 8) Bulgaria has a coastline on the (CHOOSE ONE: Black Sea, Pacific Ocean).
- 9) Bulgaria’s capital is (CHOOSE ONE: Istanbul, Sofia).
- 10) Queen _____ of Great Britain died on January 22, 1901.

ESSAY OR DEBATE QUESTION

Do you think there should be more regulation of unhealthy food — for example, “warning labels” on junk food? Why or why not?

GENERAL REVIEW QUIZ

- 1) The first inauguration was held in the city of _____.
- 2) Barack Obama will be sworn in on a Bible used by President _____.
- 3) The (CHOOSE ONE: sea sponge, starfish) gets its food and oxygen via water flowing through its body.
- 4) A “hot vent” is caused by (CHOOSE ONE: a crack in the ocean floor, an underwater volcano).
- 5) A new study found that eating a lot of sugar causes (CHOOSE ONE: chemical changes in the brain, acne).
- 6) One study showed that teens who drink soft drinks get nearly (CHOOSE ONE: 15, 50) percent of their total calories from those drinks.
- 7) The city of _____ was destroyed by Mount Vesuvius.
- 8) During much of the 20th century, Bulgaria was under the control of _____.
- 9) For centuries, Bulgaria was part of the (Ottoman, Holy Roman) Empire.
- 10) Queen Victoria ruled _____ for 63 years, the longest reign in that country’s history.

ESSAY OR DEBATE QUESTION

Why do you think our oceans’ “health” is so essential for life on Earth?

ADVANCED REVIEW QUIZ

- 1) The theme of Barack Obama's inauguration commemorates the anniversary of _____.
- 2) The first poet to take part in an inauguration was _____.
- 3) The starfish is probably best known for its ability to _____.
- 4) The area known as the mid-Atlantic ridge is home to the world's deepest active _____.
- 5) Scientists involved in the Princeton University study on sugar think their findings could have implications for the treatment of people with _____.
- 6) Since 1950, soft-drink consumption per capita in this country has (CHOOSE ONE: doubled, quadrupled).
- 7) The intellectual movement influenced by the rediscovery of Pompeii in 1748 is called The _____.
- 8) Bulgaria's capital is _____.
- 9) Bulgaria was part of the _____ Empire for 500 years.
- 10) Queen Victoria ruled over a huge British Empire, about which it was said that "the sun _____."

ESSAY OR DEBATE QUESTION

What do you think are the top five issues that President Obama should address in his inaugural speech? Explain why you think these issues are so critical.

Answers to Where in the World:

a-3, Texas; b-5, Washington, D.C.; c-1, Italy;
d-2, United Kingdom; e-6, Russia; f-4, Bulgaria

Solution to Word Search:

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

Quiz Answers

BASIC QUIZ

- 1-New York City
- 2-Abraham Lincoln
- 3-species
- 4-TRUE
- 5-TRUE
- 6-milk
- 7-volcano
- 8-Black Sea
- 9-Sofia
- 10-Victoria

GENERAL QUIZ

- 1-New York
- 2-Abraham Lincoln
- 3-sea sponge
- 4-a crack in the ocean floor
- 5-chemical changes in the brain
- 6-15
- 7-Pompeii
- 8-the Soviet Union
- 9-Ottoman
- 10-the United Kingdom (or Great Britain)

ADVANCED QUIZ

- 1-Abraham Lincoln's birth
- 2-Robert Frost
- 3-regenerate its arms
- 4-hot vent
- 5-eating disorders
- 6-quadrupled
- 7-Enlightenment
- 8-Sofia
- 9-Ottoman
- 10-never set

NewsCurrents Student Editorial Cartoon Contest

THE RULES: Entrants can submit original cartoons on any subject of national or international interest. Students may submit as many cartoons as they wish. Each cartoon must be verified as the original work of the student by one of the student's teachers. The teacher's signature on the back of the cartoon will serve as verification. NewsCurrents does not accept responsibility for the authenticity of any cartoons. Each cartoon must include the student's name, grade, address, and home telephone number, and the teacher's name, name of school, school address, and school telephone number. Please print this information legibly on the back of each cartoon. Cartoons without this information will be disqualified.

FIRST, SECOND, AND THIRD PRIZE winners will be chosen in each of three competition categories: K-6; 7-9; 10-12. Prize winners will receive U.S. Savings Bonds.

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Cartoons must be postmarked by **March 2, 2009**, to be eligible. Please mail entries to:

**NewsCurrents Cartoon Contest
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