

Our 25th Anniversary

This month marks the 25th anniversary of *Newcomer's Almanac*. Twenty-five years ago:

· ...I literally cut and pasted the pictures into the newsletter. With scissors and rubber cement.

· ...I knew my local reference librarian really well. Now I only visit the library for fun.

· ...My five-year-old helped me fold the paper newsletters, put on stamps and mailing labels and walk them to the mailbox. Now all delivery is electronic and my daughter provides tech support.

· ...I never mentioned the internet. It took me till 2000 to include URLs routinely. That year, I also explained what amazon.com is...

Over the years, I've tried to help readers understand current events by explaining the background context and the divergent views, but not taking sides. Honestly, that's gotten harder in recent years as American politics has become so polarized.

Looking back on 25 years, the list of [then] "current events" I wrote about tells a social history of the US::

· the OJ Simpson trial (1995) - Simpson was a celebrity African American athlete and actor, accused but found not guilty of murdering his white wife;

· the Monica Lewinsky scandal (1998) - Lewinsky was an intern at the White House; she and

then-President Bill Clinton had a sexual affair;

· school shootings, first at Columbine High School (1999) and then tragically too often after that;

· September 11, 2001, and all that has followed;

· the selection of six Supreme Court justices (Roberts, Alito, Sotomayor, Kagan, Gorsuch and now, perhaps, Kavanaugh - see this issue) and the decisions that Court made (on marriage equality, affirmative action, and the Affordable [Health] Care Act, for example);

· six presidential campaigns (1996, 2000, 2004, 2008, 2012 and 2016, explaining the issues that concerned voters at that time, campaign financing, low voter turnout, primaries and -- ee gads -- the electoral college.

I've written monthly about some American inventor, personality or historical figure that Americans know but who might not have made it into the history books of your country.

I've written about the unpleasant (personal hygiene expectations, financial scandals, obesity, drunk driving, and telemarketers), as well as the good (picnics, gift giving, baking tips).

Mostly, I've tried to give you, dear reader, the kind of information I'd want if I were moving to a new country.

Happy Anniversary!



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English at Large

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What Kinds of Labor are Americans Doing?

- ♦ Full-time employed people spend an average of 8.06 hours working on a weekday (Monday-Friday) and 5.5 hours on a weekend day (Saturday-Sunday).
- ♦ On the days they worked at their jobs, 23% workers did some or all of their work at home. That number was higher for multiple jobholders (32%) and those with a college degree (38%). Not surprisingly, it was more common to work at least a few hours at home (average 2.9-3.6 hours) for those in professional (35%) and management (38%) occupations, compared to those whose work is harder to do at home — but even some of those in sales (22.1%), construction (16.2%), office support (11.2%), and transportation (7.7%) work at home. People with higher incomes are more likely to work some of the time from home: 35.5% of those earning \$1381/week or higher vs. 13% of those earning \$561-870/week, for example.
- ♦ On an average day, 84% women and 68% men also did some household activities (housework, cooking, paying bills, lawn care) — 2.2 hours/day for women and 1.4 hours/day for men.
- ♦ Of this housework, 12% men did interior cleaning (compared to 34% women); 7% men and 24% women did laundry. More men did food preparation or clean up (46%) though still not as many as women (69%). More men (11%) did lawn care than women (8%),

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Labor Day

Labor Day, the first Monday in September (this year, September 3), is a legal holiday in all 50 states. The holiday began over 100 years ago as a day to honor people who worked in factories, usually for low pay and under poor conditions. During that time, many labor unions were formed to protect the US workers. Unions grew in size, to a peak in the mid-1940s.

Today in the US there are unions for actors, musicians, postal workers, police, teachers, nurses, farm workers, painters, and more — about 80 unions in all. The American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) and the Change to Win Foundation are both a kind of union of unions; together they have over 14 million members.

The highest union membership rate is among public sector workers. Workers in protective service jobs (like police and firefighters) and those in education, training and library occupations have the highest union membership

rates. Overall, the proportion of workers who are union members has decreased steadily in the last 50 years (to a record low now of about 11%), as has the number of work stoppages, or strikes.

Labor Day has an unofficial meaning in the US as well. It marks the end of summer. Outdoor swimming pools may close. Museums and parks begin new winter hours. Many public schools and universities begin the new academic year in “the week after Labor Day,” whenever that happens to be. For students in the US, Labor Day is a kind of New Year holiday.

Labor Day Weekend is a time for families to enjoy one last piece of summer. Picnics are traditional. But beware! On Friday and Monday afternoons, the highways will be crowded with cars filled with bicycles, barbecue equipment, canoes, ice coolers, suitcases, camping tents, children, and dogs. Plan your driving carefully.

Hot Sweet Apple Cider

In September, you will probably see a lot of sweet apple cider for sale in stores. This cider is like apple juice — not fermented or alcoholic. But unlike apple juice, sweet cider has not been filtered or pasteurized (heated, to kill bacteria). (You can also buy hard cider, with 3-7% alcohol, where wine and beer are sold, but it is not as popular in the US. American hard cider tends to be fruitier and sweeter than imported hard cider.) Sweet cider is good cold. But I especially love it prepared hot on a cool fall night with a friend:



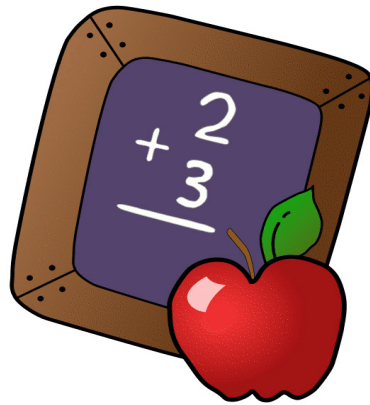
Put a half gallon of sweet cider in a pot. Add the following spices (available at most supermarkets): two cinnamon sticks, 12 whole cloves, 12 whole allspice, a small piece of peeled fresh ginger, and the peel from half an orange. If you have a cloth bag, put the spices in the bag. Or, just add them to the pot and strain them out later by pouring the cider through a sieve.

Heat the cider slowly for about a half hour. It should be very hot, but not boiling. Your home will smell wonderful and, when you drink a cup, your heart and your friend's will be warmed.

Apple Season

September is apple-picking month in most of the US. Enjoy the freshness now — the apples you buy next January or June are likely to have been picked the previous September and stored in sealed rooms filled with nitrogen, at 32° - 34°F (or imported from the southern hemisphere). You will probably see some new kinds of apples in US stores, and not see other kinds that you ate in your home country. There are 7,500 varieties of apples in the world, and 2,500 in the US (but fewer than 100 types are commercially grown here).

The most common type of apple grown in the US is the Red Delicious, although an increasing share of these 54 million bushels are being exported, as Americans demand something different. “Delicious” apples have been bred to travel well, and to be “perfect” looking — dark red, and shiny. But I think they forgot about taste...



Today, supermarkets sell a narrow range of choices: Gala, Fuji, McIntosh, Golden Delicious, Granny Smith, Braeburn. About 20 years ago, new varieties entered the market and are worth trying: Honeycrisp, Cosmic Crisp, Ambrosia, Jazz, Sweetango, Opal, SnapDragon. Even the names are more interesting than the wrongly-named Delicious!

Still, in a *USA Today* poll, 39% of teachers in the US said their favorite apple was the Red Delicious. Why would a newspaper ask teachers about apples? Because of an old custom of children giving their teacher an apple, hoping she would love it...and them. This probably began in the days when school teachers in small towns were paid in food and services rather than money. Today, an apple is a common symbol of school and teaching.

Not Just for Eating and Drinking

Did you go apple picking this fall and end up with more apples than you can eat? Here are some other uses for this wonderful fruit:

- Speed up the ripening of tomatoes by putting them into a paper bag along with an already-ripe apple. Apples (and apricots, avocados, bananas, cantaloupe, and peaches) naturally produce ethylene gas, a ripening agent. This gas will speed your tomatoes from green to red. Speed is not always good, though. This same gas will make cut flowers wilt and potatoes sprout buds faster, so keep your fruit away from your flowers and potatoes! We say “One rotten apple can spoil the whole bunch” and this is why it’s true!
- A piece of apple will keep a cake fresh — store them together and the cake will stay moist longer. Same thing with brown sugar — if it has gotten hard as a rock, put it in a plastic bag with a piece of apple; in a day or two the sugar will be soft again. Store tightly wrapped.
- Stuff a chicken with an apple before you roast it. The chicken will be moist and yummy. (Throw the apple away, though; it will have done its job for you already.)
- Did you put too much salt into your soup or stew? Add a quarter of an apple to the pot for 10 minutes then remove it; the apple will absorb some of the salt!

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as well as more home maintenance (4% men vs 2% women).

- ♦ 29% women and 20% men say they spend some time each day caring for or helping other household members. Parents of children under age 18 spend an average of 1.4 hours/day caring for and helping their children (1 hour for fathers, 1.7 hours for mothers).

- ♦ Almost everyone (96%) spends some time in leisure on an average day - 5.5 hours for men and 5 hours for women. The most common leisure activity is watching TV. How much TV depends on timing -- men watch an average 3.8 hours on a weekend day (compared to 2.6 hours on a weekday). For women, it’s 3 hours on a weekend and 2.4 on a weekday.

- ♦ The next most common activity is socializing and communicating -- specially 15-24-year-olds (48 minutes/day). People 65+ years old read the most (42 minutes/day), and also watch a lot more TV than younger people (4.4 hours/day).

- ♦ Americans also spend quite a bit of time traveling to do these various things -- about 70 minutes/day! The longest travel times are for shopping (average 17 minutes), work (16 minutes) and leisure and sports (13 minutes).

- ♦ Here’s my favorite, and something to think about this Labor Day Weekend. How much weekend time do Americans spend “relaxing or thinking?” An average of 21 minutes. I hope they’re fast!

Source: American Time Use Survey

Vocabulary for the First Day of School

Open House: A night when parents come to the school to meet the teacher, visit the classroom, and hear about the plans for the year.

Field Trip: A class trip away from the school — perhaps to a museum, historic site, factory, farm, etc. May cost extra money (for bus travel, admission fees, or snacks) but schools usually have a fund to help children pay if necessary.

Permission Slip: A form signed by a parent, giving permission to do a special activity or go on a field trip.

Show and Tell: In younger grades, there may be a regular time during the week for children to show something (like a picture of a grandparent who visited) or tell about something (like a trip to the zoo) to the class.

Report Card: A written notice about a child's progress in different subjects in school.

Recess: A time during the school day for (younger) children to play outside.

PTO or PTA: Parent-Teacher Organization (or Association). A voluntary group that serves as a liaison between parents and school officials. It may offer regular evening meetings, discussion groups, and lectures. It may hold orientation activities for new

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Learning to Understand the Teacher

This Fall, if you have a child in a US school (any age, private or public), you will probably be invited to an “Open House” or “Back to School” event. On this night, you can visit your child's classroom(s) and meet the teacher(s). What the teachers do that night may surprise you unless you understand something about the values they are hoping to communicate. For example:

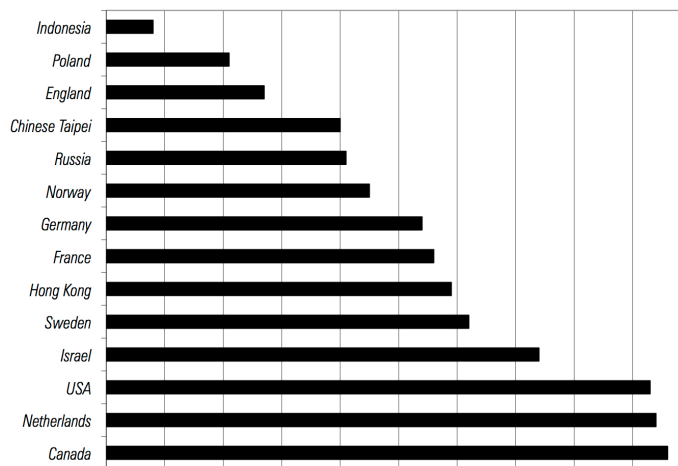
Parental Involvement

The teacher does this: invites you to volunteer your special skills and opportunities with the class. Do you work in a restaurant? a laboratory? have an interesting craft collection? know how to draw animation? Can you bring the class to your workplace or go to the school to explain your work or skill to them?

The teacher intends: to work as a partner with you and to use your skills to enhance the classroom experience in creative ways.

But you may think: education should be left to the experts. (One mother said to me, “In my country, we leave the teaching to the teachers, just as we leave surgery to a surgeon. We don't expect to be invited into the operating room and we don't expect to be invited into the classroom.”) See the chart below for evidence

% Principals who said parents are invited to conference or events, receive letters or newsletters about school, and receive written reports of child's progress multiple times during year.



Source: *Progress in International Reading Literacy Study*

about principals' expectations around the world about parental involvement.

Promote Individualism

The teacher does this: tells a cute story about a boy in her class who corrected her description of something they were studying.

The teacher intends: to communicate that she encourages independent thinking in her students.

But you may think: the teacher is risking losing the students' respect; with so much to learn, you may feel, it is best for the teacher to do the explaining, describing, lecturing. Researchers asked eighth grade students how much they agreed with this statement: “In my mathematics class students do exactly as the teacher says.” In the US, 48.8% agreed or strongly agreed with that statement. Compare this with 73.8% in Taiwan, 79.8% in England, 69% in Japan, and 85.1% in Jordan. While this might reflect a difference in teachers' abilities to maintain discipline, I think instead that it reflects a difference in teachers' willingness to allow - even encourage - challenge and interruption.

Student-Led Learning

The teacher does this: tells you that children will be expected to read books of their own choosing, both in school and at home.

The teacher intends: to encourage student-driven learning (which presumably will be more meaningful to the children) and expand the range of information present in class discussions.

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But you may think: it would be better for teachers, as experts, to select the best works to be read. When researchers asked fourth graders how often they read a book during school hours that they had chosen by themselves, 71.9% of American children said they did this every day or almost every day, much more often than children in many other countries (see chart below).

Teacher Feedback

The teacher does this: hands you a folder of your child's recent work, with stickers and "Great Job!" written at the top of each one.

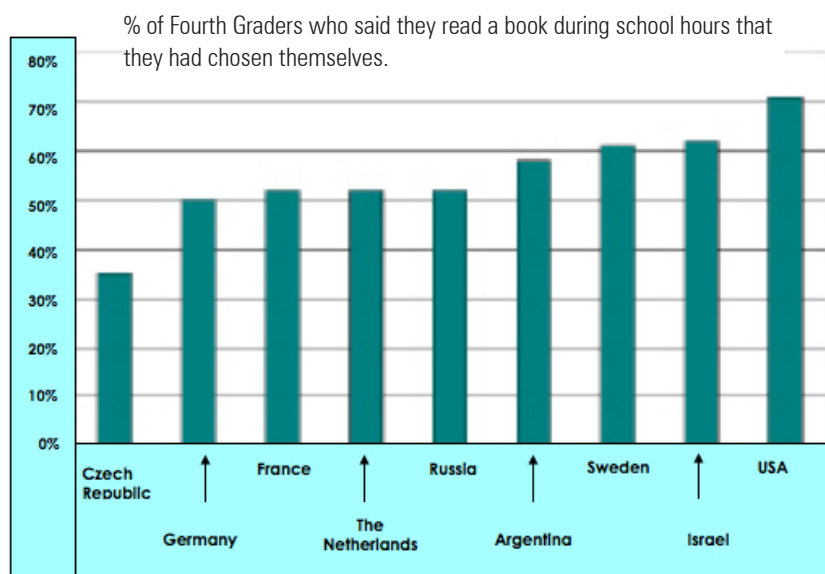
The teacher intends: to encourage children t

to feel like competent learners, and to solidify their base of self-esteem so they will grow into adults who love writing.

But you may think: the teacher seems to be rewarding mediocrity; truly, some of the essays in the folder are not "great" - not outstanding, not perfect. You may worry that if all students are told they are "great," the potentially motivating element of competition will be missing.

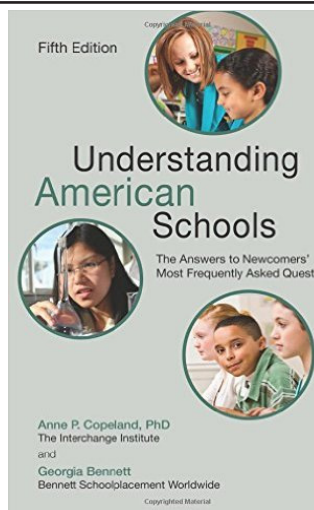
By the way, it's likely that, even if you have these misgivings at your first Open House, you'll come to appreciate some/much of what the US educational experience offers. The parents I know love joining their children's class,

they become regular parent volunteers, they come to understand the benefits of emphasizing each child's individual progress. But it takes a while to understand the teacher in context.



Source: Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study

Our book, *Understanding American Schools: Answers to Newcomers' Most Frequently Asked Questions* (by education specialist Georgia Bennett and me - Anne Copeland) has already helped over 10,000 newcomers to the US understand how to navigate the public and private school system. Order your copy of the Fifth Edition today at www.amazon.com. Need 20 or more copies for a group? Order at www.interchangeinstitute.org at a discount.



families or organize money-raising activities to supplement teachers' budgets for individual classroom budgets.

Science Fair: A school or district may invite students to demonstrate original science experiments or activities on one particular day; sometimes prizes are given. Or, science (and other) teachers may organize a day of interactive science activities.

Library Volunteer: Most US schools welcome parents' participation and involvement. One common way of helping is to volunteer to work in the school library. It's a fun way to catch a glimpse of your child at school, and help the school, too.

Homeroom: In grades in which children move from one classroom to another for different subjects (usual in middle and high school), this is the room (and teacher and group of children) in which they hear announcements. May be the first class of the day.

College vs. University: "College" usually refers to any four-year undergraduate program of education that follows high school. A "university" is similar but has several different degree programs, including a graduate program and research facilities. Universities are not necessarily higher in quality than colleges in the US.

Demography of the US Supreme Court

In the first 180 years of the Supreme Court, all the Justices were white men, almost all of them Protestant and all but one of northern European background. The main “diversity” consideration in the early days was geographic — were all regions of the US represented? The 20th century brought a different focus to the issue of representativeness:

- ♦ The first African-American Justice was Thurgood Marshall (1967-1991). Since then, only one other African American has served: Clarence Thomas (1991), still on the Court today.
- ♦ The first woman Justice was Sandra Day O’Connor (1980). Only three other women have served, all still on the Court: Ruth Bader Ginsburg (1993), Sonia Sotomayor (2009) (also the first Hispanic justice) and Elena Kagan (2010).
- ♦ The first non-Protestant Justice was Roger Taney (1836), a Catholic. The first Jewish one was Louis Brandeis (1916). Today’s court includes 4 Catholic and 3 Jewish justices; one was raised Catholic but attends a Protestant church now. Brett Kavanaugh is Catholic.
- ♦ The average age of today’s Supreme Court justices is 67. The average age at the time of appointment is about 53 and about 83 at time of retirement (or death). The oldest justice was Oliver Wendell Holmes who retired at age 90.
- ♦ President Trump’s two nominees to the Court are both white, Christian men.

The US Supreme Court Justices

In September, it is likely that the US Senate will begin the formal confirmation process for Brett Kavanaugh, the man chosen by President Trump to join the US Supreme Court. Kavanaugh would fill the seat left open when Justice Anthony Kennedy retired this summer. Americans will be watching this confirmation process carefully for several reasons. Here is some background:

It is important to understand that the Supreme Court’s decisions have a profound and lasting impact on Americans’ daily lives. Its job is to decide whether state or federal laws are consistent with the US Constitution. That document, passed in 1787 with only 27 *amendments* (additions) since then, is quite brief. (To be specific, I own a copy of the entire Constitution including Amendments that folds up and fits in my wallet.) The Constitution is therefore open to different interpretations as it is applied to modern day issues — that is the Supreme Court’s job.

For example, the entire Second Amendment that provides the framework for all gun ownership laws in the US reads:

“A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.”

This is the only mention of guns (“Arms”) in the Constitution. Any law passed in the US (about who can own a gun, how old you have to be, what license you might need, etc.) has to pass the test of “constitutionality” — that is, it must be consistent with this Second Amendment. Judging constitutionality is the main function of the US Supreme Court.

The nine Supreme Court judges can keep their jobs for the rest of their lives, so the impact of the choice will be felt for many years (Brett Kavanaugh is 53 years old.) Supreme

Court decisions must pass by a “simple majority” — that is, by a vote of at least 5 to 4. While Justice Kennedy tended to vote with the most conservative justices (Thomas, Alito, Roberts and Gorsuch), he was also the fifth vote in support of several more liberal decisions. Brett Kavanaugh is generally seen as likely to be more consistently conservative than Kennedy.

The process of confirmation is this: first the Senate Judiciary Committee reviews the nominee, by reading papers he has written and trying to learn about his philosophy of law. The Judiciary Committee includes 11 Republicans (including the Chair, Chuck Grassley) and 10 Democrats. They will hold interviews with Kavanaugh, which you can watch live on webcasts or TV. This committee can make a recommendation to the full Senate for either Rejection or Approval, or it can forward the nomination to the Senate without any recommendation. The full Senate then holds its own set of hearings, and then votes. The Senate must approve the nominee by a simple majority (one more than 50%). (Of the 100 Senators, 47 are Democrats, 51 are Republicans, 2 are Independents who usually vote with the Democrats).

In history, about 18% of the nominees for Supreme Court Justice have been rejected, withdrawn or not voted on. To avoid controversy, nominees often try to answer interview questions in general ways. Justice Elena Kagan has written that these hearings have become a “charade” (something that pretends to be true but is false) because potential Justices try to avoid giving any answer that could be controversial.

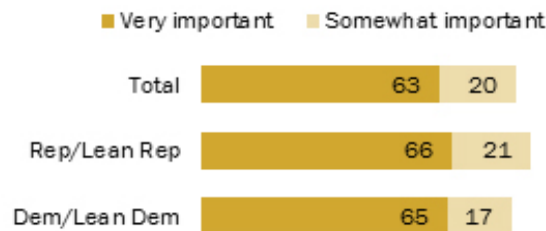
On average, historically, the whole process takes about two and a half months.

The Supreme Court and Social Issues

The nine justices on the Supreme Court make many decisions that have real-life consequences for people living in the US. As seen in this chart, a big majority of both Republicans and Democrats agree that the choice of the next justice is either “very” or “somewhat” important to them personally -- a rare moment of agreement.

No partisan gap in views of importance of choice of next Supreme Court justice

% who say the choice of the next Supreme Court justice is ___ to them personally

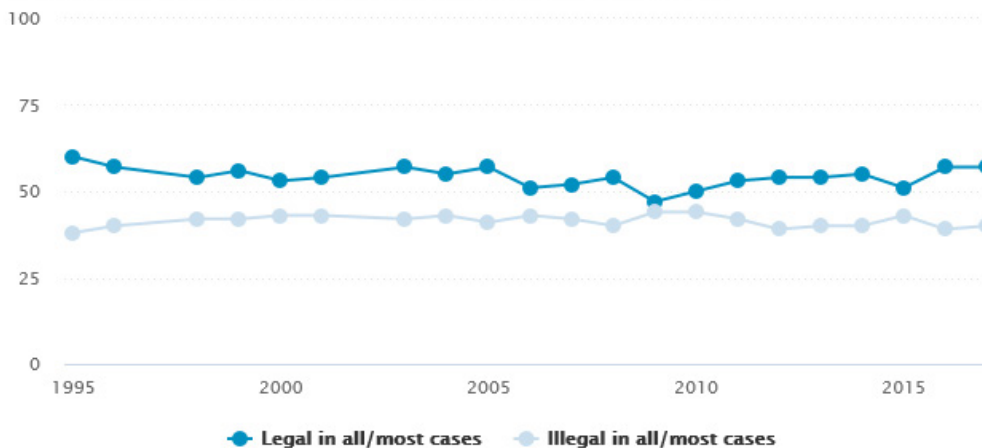


Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted July 11-15, 2018.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

You may hear a lot of discussion this month about a Supreme Court case called “Roe v Wade” which concerned the constitutionality of laws that restrict access to abortions. In this case, decided in 1973, the Court said that the Constitution’s 14th Amendment supports a woman’s right to privacy in seeking an abortion. Many observers think an increasingly conservative Supreme Court might be open to re-considering the constitutionality of this issue. As background, note the fairly consistent pattern of attitudes about abortion among Americans over the past 20+ years.

% of adults who say abortion should be legal/illegal (1995-2017)



PEW RESEARCH CENTER

During the upcoming Senate hearings with Brett Kavanaugh, President Trump’s nominee to the Supreme Court, some Senators surely will ask Kavanaugh about his views on abortion and other social issues. The American Bar Association (the national professional organization of lawyers) has a Model Code of Judicial Conduct that says judicial nominees should not comment publicly on issues or cases that might come before them in court. For a long time, but especially in recent years, Supreme Court nominees have given only very general answers to questions about social issues, citing this Model Code. Expect a struggle between more liberal Senators who want to know his views and the nominee Kavanaugh who has every motivation to keep them private.

Birthday Biography: Margaret Sanger

Margaret Sanger, a pioneer in the field of women’s reproductive health, was born in Corning, NY, on September 4, 1879. She is said to have popularized the term *birth control*.

Sanger was an *obstetric* nurse (specializing in delivering babies). As a young woman, she worked in the Lower East Side of New York City, a poor area. She saw many examples of poor women having unwanted pregnancies and of the medical consequences of women trying to end pregnancies on their own.

In 1912, Sanger gave up her nursing job and spent several years writing and teaching about birth control and sex education. One pamphlet was called *What Every Girl Should Know*.

In 1916, she opened the first birth control clinic in the US, in Brooklyn, NY. For that act (“creating a public nuisance”), she served 30 days in prison. Popular opinion was on her side, however. She worked, successfully, to change laws so that doctors could legally give information and advice about birth control and could import and prescribe contraceptives. Sanger was careful to distinguish between *birth control* and *abortion*. Her work was primarily to make birth control (contraception) more widely available.

Sanger founded the American Birth Control League, the foundation for today’s Planned Parenthood organization.

Happy Birthday, Mrs. Sanger.

Newcomer's Almanac is published monthly by The Interchange Institute, for people who have recently moved to the United States. Its goal is to promote international understanding by providing information about the American holidays, customs, values, social issues, and language that often confuse and surprise newcomers. It is written by Anne P. Copeland, PhD, who is a clinical psychologist and the Director of The Interchange Institute. She is an American and has lived and worked overseas with her family.

The Interchange Institute is a not-for-profit organization that studies the impact of intercultural transitions on individuals, their families, and the organizations for which they work. From the results of this research, the Institute offers seminars and workshops, produces publications, and provides consultative services to the international newcomers, their organizations, and to host communities, recognizing that change and insight on both sides facilitates smooth transition.

Subscriptions: Please contact The Interchange Institute for information about subscription fees, site licenses, and discount rates.

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That Crazy English: Blue

Sometimes a color takes on its own emotional meaning. Here are some "blue" idioms:

He was *talking a blue streak* and we could not get him to listen. (He was *talking for a very long time, very fast*, and we could not get him to listen.)

She only comes to town *once in a blue moon* so we were happy to see her. (She *rarely* comes to town so we were happy to see her. — A "blue moon" refers to the second full moon in a calendar month, a rare event.)

A *blue ribbon panel* is coming to inspect our factory. (A *group of very important, knowledgeable people* is coming to inspect our factory. — Top awards for excellence are traditionally given as *blue ribbons*.)

The letter arrived *out of the blue* and surprised us all. (The letter arrived *completely unexpectedly* and surprised us all.)

I have been *in a blue funk* all month but feel better now. (I have been *depressed* all month but feel better now.)

You can talk *till you're blue in the face* but you will not change my mind. (You can talk *for a very long time* but you will not change my mind.)

She is a *true blue* friend. (She is a *very loyal* friend.)

UNDERSTANDING WHAT YOU READ

Read [*Learning to Understand the Teacher*](#) on pages 4 and 5. Pick the better phrase to complete each sentence below:

1. Open Houses are held _____ every fall:
 - a. in US elementary schools.
 - b. in US schools of all levels
2. US principals are _____ likely than Indonesian principals to say they have invited parents to a school conference or event.
 - a. more
 - b. less
3. To an American teacher, a child who disagrees with something she has said
 - a. is showing disrespect and should be punished.
 - b. is showing independence of thought and should be encouraged.
4. Doing exactly what the teacher says to do is _____ common in a US classroom than an English one.
 - a. more
 - b. less
5. Fourth graders in US schools are _____ likely to read books they chose themselves during school.
 - a. not very
 - b. quite
6. When a US teacher writes "Great job!" at the top of a student paper, it means
 - a. that the paper is unusually well done, truly extraordinary.
 - b. that she intends to encourage the student to continue working hard.
7. Teachers in the Czech Republic are _____ likely to select the books their children read during school.
 - a. not very
 - b. quite
8. Parents who are worried about some of the things they see in their child's US classroom should
 - a. first discuss these with the teacher and/or someone who understands US practices.
 - b. look for a different school.

HOMEWORK

WITH A PEN

1. Read [Vocabulary for the First Day of School](#) on pages 4 and 5. Write a list of 5-8 words or phrases (in your home language) that a newcomer to your country would need to know about schools. Write a short definition, in English, of each.

2. Read [Learning to Understand the Teacher](#) on pages 4 and 5. Write a list of the values described that are different in your home country's education system. Add any values that you think are missing from the US school system.

3. Read [Hot Sweet Apple Cider](#) on page 2. Write a recipe for a traditional drink from your home country. Explain or describe any ingredients or tools that might be unfamiliar to someone from the US.

4. Read [Our 25th Anniversary](#) on page 1. Imagine a newsletter about moving to your home country. Write a list of social issues it would have covered over the last 25 years -- political changes, new technologies, different viewpoints.

5. Read [That Crazy English: Blue](#) on page 8. Write a list of idioms that include "blue" (or other colors), first in your home language then translated, word for word, in English. What does each mean?

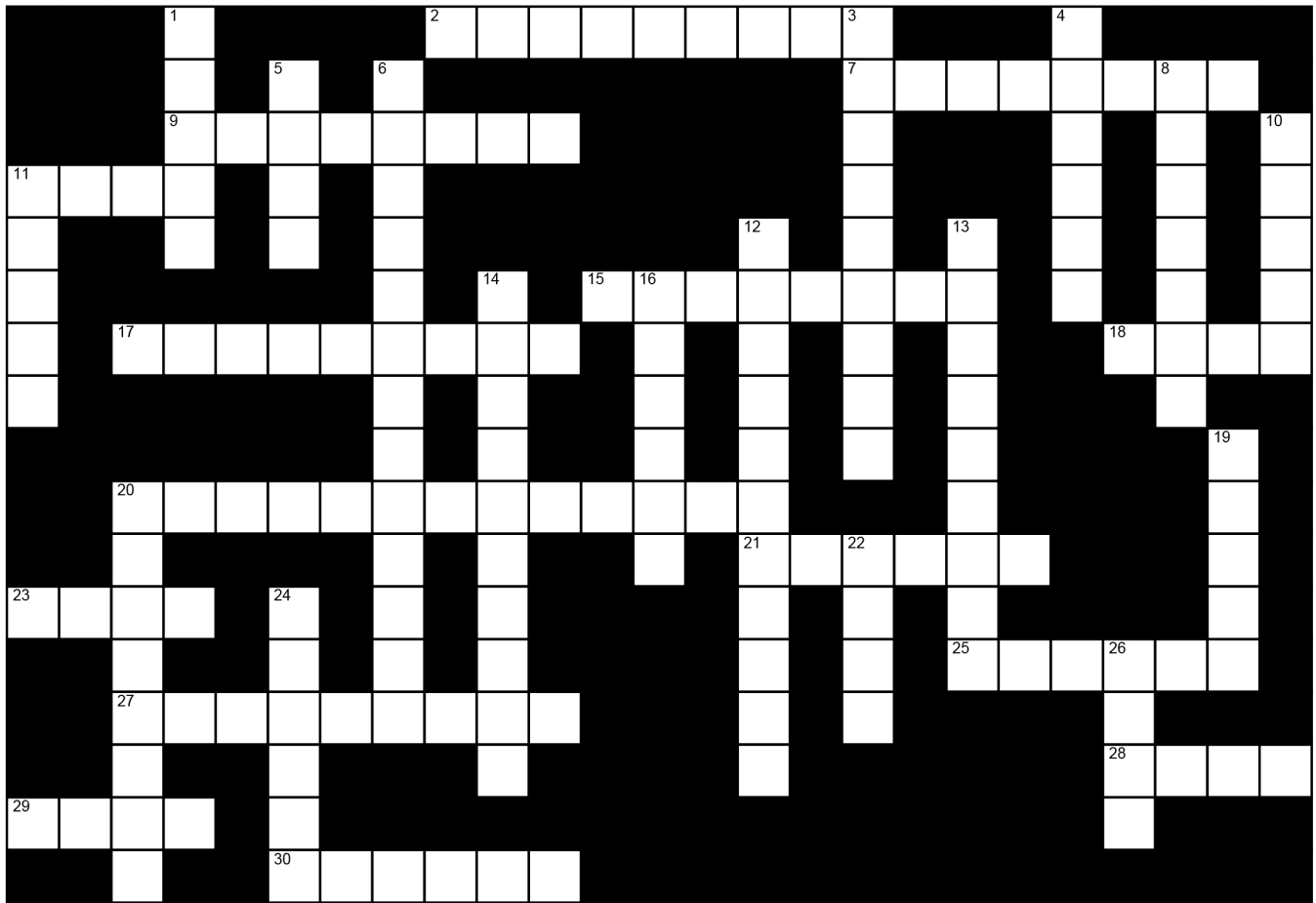
VOCABULARY LESSON

Read [Vocabulary for the First Day of School](#) on pages 4 and 5. Write in the correct word/words from that list in the sentences below:

1. Jan's favorite part of the school day is _____ because she loves to run and play games with other children.
2. Do not forget to have your parent sign your _____ and bring it tomorrow, or else you will not be allowed to go on the _____ with the rest of the class.
3. His last _____ was so poor that his mother asked to speak with the teacher.
4. I always enjoy going to _____ meetings because I like to get to know the other parents and teachers.
5. At tonight's _____, parents will learn about what their high school students must do to be admitted to _____.
6. Every morning she is greeted cheerfully by her _____ teacher.
7. What are you going to talk about during _____ — your new baby sister or your latest soccer game?
8. Jason is going to the state _____ to get his PhD in math.

IDIOMS

Read [That Crazy English: Blue](#) on page 8. Write an imaginary conversation between two people, using as many of these idioms as you can.



Across

2. American women do more ___ than men: 84% vs 68%.
7. The Roe vs Wade Supreme Court decision had to do with ___.
9. US teachers generally expect ___ involvement.
11. talk till you are blue in the ___, for a long time
15. American men do more ___ (two words) than women - 11% vs 8%.
17. The Senate ___ Committee starts the approval process for Supreme Court nominees.
18. On days they worked, 23% of Americans worked at ___.
20. birth control method
21. a blue ___ panel, an important one
23. in a blue ___, unhappy
25. Labor Day marks the end of ___ in the US.
27. addition to the original US Constitution
28. ___ house, a time for parents to visit their child's school and meet the teacher(s)
29. ___ and tell, a time for students to talk to their whole class about something important to them
30. a time to play, rather than work, at school

Down

1. Put an apple in a bag of tomatoes to speed up how fast the tomatoes ___.
3. the current Supreme Court nominee
4. talk a blue ___, talk a lot
5. a ___ blue friend, a loyal one
6. a value that US teachers often try to encourage
8. the first woman Supreme Court justice
10. Rubber cement is a kind of ___.
11. ___ trip, when a school group visits somewhere in the community
12. a one-year marker
13. the most commonly-produced kind of apple in the US
14. Historically, but not now, most Supreme Court justices were ___.
16. a union of unions (abbreviation)
19. unfermented apple juice
20. a good spice to add to a hot fall drink
22. out of the ___, suddenly
24. Margaret ___ popularized the term 'birth control.'
26. once in a blue ___, not very often

OUT AND ABOUT

1. Read [Labor Day](#) on page 2. Make a list of changes that happen on Labor Day in your US community — like opening hours for museums, swimming pools, or parks.

2. Read [What Kind of Labor are Americans Doing](#) on pages 2 and 3. Compare your daily work and leisure activities to the statistics in the article. How would these compare to statistics from your home country?

IF YOU USE THE WEB

1. Read [Hot Sweet Apple Cider](#) on page 2. If you like to be v-e-r-y careful when you cook, and like precise instructions, see this recipe: www.cookingforengineers.com/recipe/151/Mulled-Cider-Spiced-Apple-Cider. Note it's from a website called "Cooking for Engineers!" There are pictures for each step, which could be helpful to you if you do not know American kitchen vocabulary. Look at their Recipe File (top bar) for lots of basic recipes.

3. Read [Birthday Biography: Margaret Sanger](#). Watch a short biography video about her here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ndQXLx3pdA

4. Read [What Kinds of Labor are Americans Doing?](#) on pages 2 and 3. Explore more comparisons here: www.bls.gov/tus/charts.htm. Click on a chart that interests you, then on a group (at the top of the page) to compare.

5. Read [Apple Season](#) on page 3. Go to www.youtube.com/watch?v=QGURNgLIUa4 for some "apple hacks."



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WITH A FRIEND

1. Read [What Kinds of Labor are Americans Doing?](#) on pages 2 and 3. Describe to a friend or partner how these statistics would compare to your home country. Are you a "typical American" in these ways?

2. Read [Learning to Understand the Teacher](#) on pages 4 and 5. Hold a debate with a friend or partner about this statement:

"It is very important for teachers to promote individualism, allow student-led learning, and give positive feedback."

In a debate, each person speaks either in agreement with the statement, or in disagreement. Do not discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each side. One of you should say why it is important for teachers to stress these things and the other of you should say why that is *not* what a teacher should do. You do not have to agree with what you are saying! If you like, you can switch sides after five minutes.

3. Read the articles about the [US Supreme Court](#) on pages 6 and 7. With a friend or partner, discuss:

- ♦ the court system in your home country. How are social and legal issues settled there? Is there a sequence of courts, from local to national, to decide conflicts?
- ♦ who serves on the highest court in your country? How are those people appointed or elected? How long do they serve in that role? Who gets to choose them?
- ♦ thinking of your home country's highest court, or some other small group of influential decision-makers in your government, what is its demographic makeup? Men vs women? Age? Religion? Geographic location? Political views? What other considerations are important in your home country?

4. Read [The Supreme Court and Social Issues](#) on page 7. Describe to a partner or friend the laws in your home country about birth control, abortion and/or family planning.

ANSWER CORNER

Understanding What You Read

1b 2a 3b 4b 5b 6b 7b 8a

Vocabulary Lesson

1 recess 2 permission slip, field trip 3 report card 4 PTO (or PTA) 5 Open House 6 home room 7 Show and Tell 8 university

