

Feb.26, 2016

Story 1:

Joaquim Garcia worked at the water treatment plant in Cadiz, Spain for 20 years. His annual salary was \$41,500. A government official went to visit him at work to give him a medal for his long service. However, he couldn't find Mr. Garcia. Nobody at the plant knew him. In fact, Mr. Garcia didn't set foot in his office for the last six years and nobody noticed. He still got paid. Mr. Garcia said there was no work for him to do, so he stayed home and read philosophy books. The court fined him \$30,000.

Story 2:

Would you like to know more about Canada's French Canadian culture? Then go to the Festival du Bois in Coquitlam. The largest Francophone festival on the West Coast will take place at Mackin Park in Coquitlam from March 4 – 6. You can try some French Canadian dishes such as poutine. Poutine is a dish made of French Fries, cheese curds and gravy. Another dish is tourtiere, a meat pie with special spices. You can listen to French Canadian music and learn about French Canadian history. Children can enjoy activities such face painting, story-telling and juggling. Hours are Saturday 11:00am to 8:00pm and Sunday 10:00 am – 4:30pm. Read about the festival on the website: [www.festivaldubois.ca](http://www.festivaldubois.ca)

Story 3:

Starting this summer, there will be a new way to get around downtown Vancouver. In June, Vancouver will launch a public bike share system (PBS). A network of bicycles will be available for short term use for a fee. 1500 bikes will be parked at 150 stations that are spaced about two or three city blocks apart. The service area will include downtown and extend to Arbutus Street, 16th Avenue and Main Street. "Vancouver's cycling numbers are skyrocketing and we've been hearing from many residents wanting a bike share network here," says Mayor Gregor Robertson. All bikes use smart technology. In order to use a bike you will have to buy a pass card, set up a pin and then simply tap the control box to unlock

the bike. The proposed fares are \$2.50 for a thirty-minute trip or \$20 a month for unlimited thirty-minute trips. Bicycle helmets will be available at every station for free.

#### Story 4:

Are you paying too much for cable TV? Canadians complained to the government that they could not pick the individual channels they wanted. Instead they had to buy big bundles of channels which were expensive. Now, all cable and satellite companies have to offer a “skinny” package as of March 01, 2016. The package must not cost more than \$25. It has to contain mandatory local and regional channels. In Vancouver, these channels are CBC, CTV, City and Global. As well, companies must let customers top up their package with pick-and-pay channels. If you want to switch to the “skinny” package you need to call your cable provider. Shaw started its basic package on Feb.16, but did not advertise it to its customers.

#### Story 5: What’s in a name?

A University of Toronto study found that job applicants with white-sounding names were more successful in getting a job interview than applicants with Chinese or Indian sounding names. As a result, Member of Parliament Ahmed Hussen has asked the Canadian government to adopt a “blind- recruitment” policy. Blind recruitment means that the job applicant’s name is removed and replaced by a number. This ensures that the person reading the application form will not know the job seeker’s ethnic background or gender. Hussen believes that this will prevent racism and discrimination. Visible minorities make up almost 20% of Canada’s population, but only 14% are employed in Canada’s civil service. Britain adopted a blind-recruitment policy for its civil service in October 2015. The Toronto Symphony began to audition musicians blindly in 1980. They put the applicants behind a screen, so the hiring committee could only hear them. They could not see them. Now the orchestra is almost half female and much more diverse. In the 1970s the orchestra was made up almost entirely of white men.

Sound file can be downloaded at: <http://esldivlabs.vcc.ca/Downloads.html>