

ESL NEWS FOR THE WEEK OF JANUARY 09, 2017  
STORY 1- CANADIAN NEWS-Canada's 150<sup>th</sup> Birthday

Welcome to the year 2017! This new year marks the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Confederation of Canada. To celebrate the anniversary, or rather the Sesquicentennial, which means 150<sup>th</sup>, the Federal government of Canada plans to spend the entire year hosting various events. Though the government will feature various events throughout the country, the major events will be held in Canada's main cities.

The most important week of this birthday year will happen during the week of July 1<sup>st</sup>. On that day in 1867, Canadian leaders proclaimed the creation of the Dominion of Canada. These leaders are called the "Fathers of Confederation." At that time, only four provinces were created. The old province of Canada was broken into two and called Quebec and Ontario. Also, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia were added.

Many in Canada disagree with the July 1<sup>st</sup> 1867 date however. There are many other possible founding dates. For example, some consider the year 1840 when the original province of Canada was created-by the joining together of both Ontario and Quebec. Others consider the year 1931 when Canada went from being a Dominion under British influence to a Commonwealth which had a lot more independent power. A third possible date could be 1949, when Newfoundland, our 10<sup>th</sup> and final province joined Canada.

There are 2 other dates that could be thought of as the beginning of the Canada we know and love. In 1982, Canada "patriated" the constitution. That is, they received a document from Britain giving Canada total control over itself. This process led to complete Canadian sovereignty. From that year on, Canada has been able to change its Constitution without having to ask Britain. Finally, we could choose the year 1999 when Canada added its final Territory-Nunavut-creating the 10 Provinces and 3 Territories-creating the Canada we know now.

Finally, if we ask our First Nations citizens they often say that as they've always lived in the country called Canada there is no need for a birthday celebration at all. Which date do you think is the best?

## STORY 2- LOWER MAINLAND NEWS-Icy Sidewalks and Roads Anger Citizens of the Lower Mainland

The Lower Mainland has been receiving numerous snowfalls throughout December and it seems as if there will more bad weather to come. Most of its Cities and Municipalities are receiving many complaints from residents. The main problem is that both sidewalks and side streets are buried under huge piles of snow and ice. If the city work crews and residents do not shovel right away, it quickly turns to ice which becomes permanent. This is creating a very dangerous situation. More and more vehicles are getting into accidents and more and more people are slipping and falling. As more snowfall is expected this seems to be an ever-growing problem.

Residents in Vancouver and many other areas would like to see more city workers clearing side streets and sidewalks. The problem here is that there just aren't enough crews to clean all of the streets. There are also shortages of salt throughout the area. Salt is often the only thing that can melt this icy snow. People are asking the city to make sure that salt can be given out at various Fire Stations in the Lower Mainland.

Residents are also very angry with the fact that as many as 70% of all sidewalks in various areas are still covered in ice. Sidewalks around most city parks are often too dangerous to walk around. Also, as many residents are away from the Lower Mainland during the winter, they aren't around to shovel them. The result is that in many locations, icy snow is covering sidewalks up to a metre in height. The city has the right to fine residents who fail to properly shovel around their homes but this isn't being enforced properly. Many feel that we need to keep ice and snow under control now as much more snowy weather will be arriving in January.

### STORY 3-HEALTH NEWS-Giving Peanuts to Infants may Prevent Allergies

Many doctors are now recommending that new infants should be fed peanut products in order to stop allergies. Doctors are saying that families should start feeding foods, such as peanut flour and peanut butter, to babies as young as 6 months old in order to prevent the development of peanut allergies. These allergies affect as many as 1 in 50 Canadian children in later life. These recommendations have been created by a panel of doctors organized by the US government. This is building on information that eating peanuts from an early age can prevent the development of peanut allergies.

“These new instructions contradict (go against) what many parents have been hearing-that they should be cautious about feeding peanut food to infants” said Dr. Edmond Chan the only Canadian member of the panel. “But this has probably led to more peanut allergies.” However, the panel recommends that “High Risk” infants with severe allergies be tested before they are fed peanut products.

### STORY 4- ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS-Giraffes, Put on Extinction Watch List

The giraffe, the tallest land animal in the world, is now at risk of extinction, biologists say. The giraffe population has fallen by 40% over the last 30 years.

In 1985 there were around 160,000 giraffe but in 2015 the population had dropped to around 98,000. The giraffe is the only mammal whose status changed on the official list of animals in danger of disappearing this year. The probable reason for this disappearance is habitat loss. Living areas where the animal can live are vanishing quickly.

This news has come as a big surprise as ,while everyone has been carefully watching the disappearance of elephants, giraffes have been ignored. Actually, there are now 4 times as many elephants as giraffes. Both Julian Fennessy and Noelle Kumpel, co-chairs of the group of biologists responsible for the list, call what's happening to giraffes a "silent extinction." "Everyone assumes giraffes are everywhere," says Fennessy "but they're not." "There's a strong tendency to think that familiar species (such as giraffes, chimps, etc) must be OK because they are familiar and we see them in zoos," said Duke University conservation biologist Stuart Pim, "This is dangerous."

Giraffe numbers are plunging mostly in Central and Eastern Africa as people are moving into giraffe areas according to Fennessy.

#### STORY 5-ENTERTAINMENT NEWS-Double Deaths Surprise Fans

Just before the end of the year 2016, 2 actors died suddenly. The interesting thing about this was that they were a mother and a daughter. Both Carrie Fisher and her mother Debbie Reynolds, passed away in the last week of December.

Carrie Fisher, who played the part of Princess Leia in the original Star Wars films plus in the most recent film, "The Force Awakens" died on December 27<sup>th</sup> at the age of 60 in Los Angeles California. Her heart stopped on a flight home and she was taken to a hospital where she never recovered. The cause of death was not obvious at the time. Fisher, was not only an actress but she was also a screenwriter (writing the stories for movies) and a great writer of humorous books

In what people are calling a coincidence, Fisher's mother, Debbie Reynolds, also passed away a day later on December 28<sup>th</sup>. Debbie Reynold was 84 years old at the time.

Reynolds was a major actress in the 1950s and 1960s. She was not only an actress, but also a talented singer and dancer. She starred in such famous films as "Singing in the Rain" and "How the West was Won" In Hollywood at that time she was thought to be "Hollywood Royalty"

In recent years, both Reynolds and Fisher grew closer together and spent lots of time with each other. Some are saying that Reynolds may have died of a broken heart.