

## **ESL News for the week of May 9, 2016**

### **Story 1. Local news**

As part of a global marijuana demonstration on Saturday, dozens of people disrupted traffic on the Cambie Street Bridge on a march from the Vancouver Art Gallery to City Hall. 300 such marches took place in 80 countries around the world to protest laws making marijuana illegal. March organizer Neil Magnusen, who has been participating in the annual march for 18 years, said it is usually well-received by most people even though they are inconvenienced by the disruption in traffic. Presently, recreational use of marijuana is illegal in Canada, but the federal government has promised to make it legal in the spring of 2017.

### **Story 2. National news**

Sunday was Mother's Day in North America. Although the day is celebrated in many countries around the world, it's not on the same day, the second Sunday in May. Canadians spent almost \$500 million on gifts for their mother, but according to a Mediabrands survey, 6 in 10 moms said what they wanted most was to spend time with their families. Many people think the day has become too commercial with the sale of flowers and cards. The founder of this holiday, Anna Jarvis, also thought Mother's Day was too commercial, and that was back in 1922. As an interesting note, Canadians sent 12 million text messages to their mothers on that day.

### **Story 3. National news**

The Fort McMurray fire in northern Alberta is still out of control and continues to grow, but cooler weather and a little rain has slowed its progress. The fire has now destroyed 1610 square kilometres. There are still strong winds blowing the fire toward Saskatchewan, and it is now only 30 kilometres away from the border. The smoke from this massive fire has spread all the way to the Gulf of Mexico. Officials worked hard to evacuate the whole population of Fort McMurray, over 60,000 people, in a short period of time. These people still don't know when they will be allowed to return. Donations that people make to help the people displaced by the fire will be matched by the federal government.

### **Story 4. Space news**

On Monday it was possible to see the planet Mercury pass in front of the sun. This is very rare and only happens 13 times a century. Mercury appeared as a tiny dot on the east side of the sun and took 7 ½ hours to move across the sun. Mercury, the closest planet to the sun, is usually hard to see because it appears close to the horizon just before sunrise and just after sunset. Of course, seeing it with your bare eyes would be impossible, but there were public viewing events that made it much larger and safe to watch. If you missed it, you can see it online. The last Mercury transit was in 2006 and the next one will be in 2019.

## **Story 5. Sports news**

A Canadian horse ridden by a Canadian jockey has won the Kentucky Derby. This is probably the most famous horse race in the world with a 142-year history. The 3-year-old horse's name is Nyquist, and he became the 8<sup>th</sup> unbeaten winner in the race's history. The jockey was Mario Gutierrez, who raced at Vancouver's Hastings Racecourse for many years. At Hastings on Saturday the stands were packed with people watching on a big screen their local hero ride to his second derby win. The horse is owned by J. Paul Reddam of Windsor, Ontario.