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Level 6

School says Hello Kitty Christmas tree can stay

25th December, 2015

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1512/151225-christmas-tree.html>

Contents

The Article	2	Discussion (Student-Created Qs)	14
Warm-Ups	3	Language Work (Cloze)	15
Before Reading / Listening	4	Spelling	16
While Reading / Listening	5	Put The Text Back Together	17
Match The Sentences And Listen	6	Put The Words In The Right Order	18
Listening Gap Fill	7	Circle The Correct Word	19
Comprehension Questions	8	Insert The Vowels (a, e, i, o, u)	20
Multiple Choice - Quiz	9	Punctuate The Text And Add Capitals	21
Role Play	10	Put A Slash (/) Where The Spaces Are	22
After Reading / Listening	11	Free Writing	23
Student Survey	12	Academic Writing	24
Discussion (20 Questions)	13	Homework	25
		Answers	26

Please try Levels 4 and 5 (they are easier).

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THE ARTICLE

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1512/151225-christmas-tree.html>

A maths teacher at a high school in Maine, USA has been allowed to keep her pink Hello Kitty Christmas tree in her classroom. The tree was made from pink plastic and was adorned with Hello Kitty ornaments. The teacher, Catherine Gordon, had earlier been ordered by the school principal Paul Butler to remove it after he decided it was an "inappropriate" Christmas decoration. Mr Butler explained to ABC News that he initially believed the tree did not fit with the way the school celebrated the different religious events happening at this time of the year. He said: "A concern was shared with me regarding an inconsistency with our balanced approach to holiday observances."

Ms Gordon said: "I didn't think a pink Hello Kitty tree was offensive....It's a tree that's been up in my classroom for years." She posted her story on Facebook and it quickly went viral. She wrote: "The tree had no religious symbols on it whatsoever. No crosses or angels, just pink Hello Kitties and my students really enjoyed it." She added that society was becoming too worried about upsetting different people. She said: "I feel that this is definitely a turning point in our society when everything offends everyone all the time. It just sucks the joy out of everything." She told the local newspaper that: "It just seems that in our quest to be tolerant of everything, we've become intolerant to everything."

Sources: <http://abcnews.go.com/US/hs-teacher-told-remove-kitty-christmas-tree-classroom/story?id=35908832>
<http://www.buzzfeed.com/mbvd/teacher-asked-to-remove-hello-kitty-christmas-tree-from-clas#.lmqaZqqK6>
<http://fox4kc.com/2015/12/22/after-forcing-teacher-to-remove-christmas-tree-school-backs-down/>

WARM-UPS

1. CHRISTMAS TREES: Students walk around the class and talk to other students about Christmas trees. Change partners often and share your findings.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, talk about these topics or words from the article. What will the article say about them? What can you say about these words and your life?

maths teacher / Christmas tree / ornaments / school principal / believed / balanced / pink / offensive / religious symbols / worried / society / offends everyone / intolerant

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. CHRISTMAS: How important are these Christmas things? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners often and share what you wrote.

	How important?	Why?
Helping others		
Presents		
Turkey		
Parties		
Trees		
Movies		

4. CARTOON CHARACTERS: Students A **strongly** believe cartoon characters should never be used in religious celebrations; Students B **strongly** believe it's no problem if they are. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

5. CARTOON CHARACTERS: Rank these with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- Hello Kitty
- Mickey Mouse
- Superman
- Snoopy
- Elsa from Frozen
- Woody from Toy Story
- Shrek
- Wonder Woman

6. PINK: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "pink". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1512/151225-christmas-tree.html>

1. TRUE / FALSE: Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. A school had an issue over a pink Christmas tree. | T / F |
| b. The principal of the school ordered a teacher to remove a Xmas tree. | T / F |
| c. The principal said the tree did not match its religious events policy. | T / F |
| d. The principal said the school needed a balanced approach to Xmas. | T / F |
| e. The teacher said she thought the tree might have been offensive. | T / F |
| f. The tree had small crosses and angels on it. | T / F |
| g. The teacher said society seems to be offended by everything. | T / F |
| h. The teacher said society was becoming more tolerant. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article.

- | | |
|------------------|---------------|
| 1. adorned | a. at first |
| 2. ordered | b. insulting |
| 3. inappropriate | c. troubling |
| 4. initially | d. unsuitable |
| 5. concern | e. at all |
| 6. offensive | f. decorated |
| 7. whatsoever | g. worry |
| 8. upsetting | h. accepting |
| 9. joy | i. instructed |
| 10. tolerant | j. pleasure |

3. PHRASE MATCH: (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. adorned with | a. point in our society |
| 2. the school | b. to everything |
| 3. he initially believed the tree | c. holiday observances |
| 4. the school celebrated the different religious | d. whatsoever |
| 5. our balanced approach to | e. principal |
| 6. it quickly went | f. out of everything |
| 7. no religious symbols on it | g. events |
| 8. this is definitely a turning | h. viral |
| 9. It just sucks the joy | i. did not fit |
| 10. we've become intolerant | j. Hello Kitty ornaments |

GAP FILL

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1512/151225-christmas-tree.html>

A maths teacher at a high school in Maine, USA has been allowed to (1) _____ her pink Hello Kitty Christmas tree in her classroom. The tree was made from pink (2) _____ and was adorned with Hello Kitty ornaments. The teacher, Catherine Gordon, had earlier been (3) _____ by the school principal Paul Butler to (4) _____ it after he decided it was an "inappropriate" Christmas decoration. Mr Butler explained to ABC News that he (5) _____ believed the tree did not fit with the way the school celebrated the different (6) _____ events happening at this time of the year. He said: "A (7) _____ was shared with me regarding an inconsistency with our (8) _____ approach to holiday observances."

plastic
concern
remove
balanced
keep
religious
ordered
initially

Ms Gordon said: "I didn't think a pink Hello Kitty tree was (9) _____It's a tree that's been up in my classroom for years." She posted her story on Facebook and it quickly went (10) _____. She wrote: "The tree had no religious (11) _____ on it whatsoever. No crosses or (12) _____, just pink Hello Kitties and my students really enjoyed it." She added that society was becoming too (13) _____ about upsetting different people. She said: "I feel that this is definitely a (14) _____ point in our society when everything offends everyone all the time. It just (15) _____ the joy out of everything." She told the local newspaper that: "It just seems that in our quest to be tolerant of everything, we've become (16) _____ to everything."

angels
viral
turning
intolerant
offensive
symbols
sucks
worried

LISTENING – Guess the answers. Listen to check.

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1512/151225-christmas-tree.html>

- 1) The tree was made from pink plastic and was adorned with _____
 - a. Hello Kitty ornaments
 - b. Hello Kitty ornament
 - c. Hello Kitty ornamental
 - d. Hello Kitty adornments
- 2) The teacher, Catherine Gordon, had earlier been ordered by _____
 - a. the school principal
 - b. the school principle
 - c. the school principals
 - d. the school principles
- 3) remove it after he decided it was an "inappropriate" _____
 - a. Christmas decorations
 - b. Christmas decorative
 - c. Christmas decorated
 - d. Christmas decoration
- 4) the school celebrated the different religious events happening at _____ year
 - a. this time in the
 - b. this time at the
 - c. this time of the
 - d. this time by the
- 5) regarding an inconsistency with our balanced approach to _____
 - a. holiday observance is
 - b. holiday observances
 - c. holiday observance
 - d. holiday observe ants is
- 6) I didn't think a pink Hello Kitty tree _____
 - a. was offensive
 - b. was defensive
 - c. was offended
 - d. was offensively
- 7) She posted her story on Facebook and it _____
 - a. quickly went vital
 - b. quickly went pivotal
 - c. quickly went revival
 - d. quickly went viral
- 8) She added that society was becoming too worried about upsetting _____
 - a. differently people
 - b. difference people
 - c. differential people
 - d. different people
- 9) a turning point in our society when everything offends everyone _____
 - a. all the time
 - b. all this time
 - c. all the times
 - d. all these times
- 10) in our quest to be tolerant of everything, we've become _____
 - a. intolerant too everything
 - b. intolerant two everything
 - c. intolerant to everything
 - d. intolerance to everything

LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1512/151225-christmas-tree.html>

A maths teacher at a high school in Maine, USA (1) _____ to keep her pink Hello Kitty Christmas tree in her classroom. The tree was made from pink plastic (2) _____ with Hello Kitty ornaments. The teacher, Catherine Gordon, had earlier been ordered by the school principal Paul Butler to (3) _____ he decided it was an "inappropriate" Christmas decoration. Mr Butler explained to ABC News that he initially believed the tree (4) _____ the way the school celebrated the different religious events happening at this time of the year. He said: "A concern was (5) _____ regarding an inconsistency with (6) _____ to holiday observances."

Ms Gordon said: "I didn't think a pink Hello Kitty (7) _____ ...It's a tree that's been up in my classroom for years." She posted her story on Facebook and it (8) _____. She wrote: "The tree had no religious symbols on it whatsoever. No (9) _____, just pink Hello Kitties and my students really enjoyed it." She added that society was becoming too worried about (10) _____ different people. She said: "I feel that this is definitely a turning point in our society when (11) _____ everyone all the time. It just sucks the joy out of everything." She told the local newspaper that: "It just seems that in our quest to be tolerant of everything, we've (12) _____ everything."

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1512/151225-christmas-tree.html>

1. Where can a teacher now keep her Christmas tree?

2. What kind of ornaments was the tree adorned with?

3. What kind of Christmas decoration did the principal call the tree?

4. Which news agency did the principal talk to?

5. What approach does the school have towards holiday observances?

6. For how long has the tree been in the classroom?

7. What kind of symbols are not on the tree?

8. What kind of point in society did the teacher talk about?

9. What did the teacher say is sucked out of everything?

10. What did the teacher say we've become intolerant of?

MULTIPLE CHOICE - QUIZ

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1512/151225-christmas-tree.html>

1. Where can a teacher now keep her Christmas tree?
 - a) in the school yard
 - b) in her classroom
 - c) in her garden
 - d) at home
2. What kind of ornaments was the tree adorned with?
 - a) expensive ones
 - b) angels
 - c) Hello Kitty ones
 - d) handmade ones
3. What kind of Christmas decoration did the principal call the tree?
 - a) unacceptable
 - b) ugly
 - c) beautiful
 - d) inappropriate
4. Which news agency did the principal talk to?
 - a) BBC
 - b) ABC
 - c) CNN
 - d) CBC
5. What approach does the school have towards holiday observances?
 - a) a balanced one
 - b) a considered
 - c) two
 - d) major ones
6. For how long has the tree been in the classroom?
 - a) years
 - b) months
 - c) weeks
 - d) days
7. What kind of symbols are not on the tree?
 - a) Christmas ones
 - b) maths ones
 - c) beautiful ones
 - d) religious ones
8. What kind of point in society did the teacher talk about?
 - a) point blank
 - b) a point of view
 - c) a turning point
 - d) a focal point
9. What did the teacher say is sucked out of everything?
 - a) education
 - b) passion
 - c) money
 - d) joy
10. What did the teacher say we've become intolerant to?
 - a) tolerance
 - b) everything
 - c) society
 - d) Christmas

ROLE PLAY

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1512/151225-christmas-tree.html>

Role A – Hello Kitty

You think Hello Kitty is the best cartoon character. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their characters aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): Mickey Mouse, Snoopy or Elsa from Frozen.

Role B – Mickey Mouse

You think Mickey Mouse is the best cartoon character. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their characters aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): Hello Kitty, Snoopy or Elsa from Frozen.

Role C – Snoopy

You think Snoopy is the best cartoon character. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their characters aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): Mickey Mouse, Hello Kitty or Elsa from Frozen.

Role D – Elsa from Frozen

You think Elsa from Frozen is the best cartoon character. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their characters aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): Mickey Mouse, Snoopy or Hello Kitty.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1512/151225-christmas-tree.html>

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionary / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'Christmas' and 'tree'.

Christmas	tree
------------------	-------------

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• keep• plastic• ordered• explained• events• balanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• offensive• story• symbols• enjoyed• joy• local
--	---

CHRISTMAS TREES SURVEY

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1512/151225-christmas-tree.html>

Write five GOOD questions about Christmas trees in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper. When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

CHRISTMAS TREES DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- 1) What did you think when you read the headline?
- 2) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'Christmas tree'?
- 3) What do you think about what you read?
- 4) Was the school principal right to have initially banned the tree?
- 5) What do you think of Hello Kitty being tied in with Christmas?
- 6) What do you think of Christmas trees?
- 7) Why might the tree have been thought of as inappropriate?
- 8) Should teachers be allowed to decorate their classrooms as they wish?
- 9) What is a 'balanced approach' to holiday observances?
- 10) What advice do you have for the school principal?

School says Hello Kitty Christmas tree can stay – 25th December, 2015
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CHRISTMAS TREES DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- 11) Did you like reading this article? Why/not?
- 12) What do you think of Hello Kitty?
- 13) Are we becoming a society that is too worried about upsetting people?
- 14) Why might some people find a pink Hello Kitty tree to be offensive?
- 15) What do you think of Christmas?
- 16) Why do we have Christmas trees at Christmas?
- 17) Do rules suck the joy out of everything?
- 18) Is society becoming more intolerant?
- 19) How do you observe your major religious holidays?
- 20) What questions would you like to ask Ms Gordon?

DISCUSSION (Write your own questions)

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

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DISCUSSION (Write your own questions)

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

LANGUAGE - CLOZE

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1512/151225-christmas-tree.html>

A maths teacher at a high school in Maine, USA has been (1) _____ to keep her pink Hello Kitty Christmas tree in her classroom. The tree was made from pink plastic and was (2) _____ with Hello Kitty ornaments. The teacher, Catherine Gordon, had earlier been ordered by the school principal Paul Butler to remove it (3) _____ he decided it was an "inappropriate" Christmas decoration. Mr Butler explained to ABC News that he (4) _____ believed the tree did not fit with the way the school celebrated the different religious events (5) _____ at this time of the year. He said: "A concern was shared with me (6) _____ an inconsistency with our balanced approach to holiday observances."

Ms Gordon said: "I didn't think a pink Hello Kitty tree was (7) _____It's a tree that's been up in my classroom for years." She posted her story on Facebook and it quickly went (8) _____. She wrote: "The tree had no religious symbols on it (9) _____. No crosses or angels, just pink Hello Kitties and my students really enjoyed it." She added that society was becoming too worried about upsetting different people. She said: "I feel that this is definitely a (10) _____ point in our society when everything offends everyone all the time. It just sucks the (11) _____ out of everything." She told the local newspaper that: "It just seems that in our (12) _____ to be tolerant of everything, we've become intolerant to everything."

Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- | | | | | |
|-----|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. | (a) allowable | (b) allowance | (c) allows | (d) allowed |
| 2. | (a) admonished | (b) adored | (c) addressed | (d) adorned |
| 3. | (a) then | (b) after | (c) that | (d) this |
| 4. | (a) initialled | (b) initialised | (c) initially | (d) initials |
| 5. | (a) happening | (b) happens | (c) happened | (d) happen |
| 6. | (a) regarding | (b) regaling | (c) regaining | (d) reclaiming |
| 7. | (a) preventative | (b) defensive | (c) fencing | (d) offensive |
| 8. | (a) viral | (b) vital | (c) virus | (d) vitally |
| 9. | (a) whichever | (b) whatsoever | (c) whereabouts | (d) whomsoever |
| 10. | (a) timing | (b) trading | (c) turning | (d) toning |
| 11. | (a) toy | (b) boy | (c) joy | (d) coy |
| 12. | (a) answer | (b) quest | (c) trip | (d) interrogate |

SPELLING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1512/151225-christmas-tree.html>

Paragraph 1

1. adorned with Hello Kitty rmsnntaoe
2. Christmas tcoieoradn
3. he ainiytlil believed the tree did not fit
4. A noeccnr was shared
5. our lbncaaed approach
6. holiday brenavsesoc

Paragraph 2

7. a pink Hello Kitty tree was fneesfovi
8. no ruigsiole symbols on it whatsoever
9. styocie was becoming too worried
10. ltdfneiiey a turning point
11. everything offdens everyone all the time
12. we've become nonertlait to everything

PUT THE TEXT BACK TOGETHER

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1512/151225-christmas-tree.html>

Number these lines in the correct order.

()	ornaments. The teacher, Catherine Gordon, had earlier been ordered by the school principal Paul Butler to remove
()	up in my classroom for years." She posted her story on Facebook and it quickly went viral. She wrote: "The tree had no
(1)	A maths teacher at a high school in Maine, USA has been allowed to keep her pink Hello Kitty Christmas
()	religious symbols on it whatsoever. No crosses or angels, just pink Hello Kitties and my students really
()	to ABC News that he initially believed the tree did not fit with the way the school celebrated the different religious
()	inconsistency with our balanced approach to holiday observances."
()	quest to be tolerant of everything, we've become intolerant to everything."
()	tree in her classroom. The tree was made from pink plastic and was adorned with Hello Kitty
()	events happening at this time of the year. He said: "A concern was shared with me regarding an
()	enjoyed it." She added that society was becoming too worried about upsetting different people. She said: "I feel
()	it after he decided it was an "inappropriate" Christmas decoration. Mr Butler explained
()	Ms Gordon said: "I didn't think a pink Hello Kitty tree was offensive....It's a tree that's been
()	the joy out of everything." She told the local newspaper that: "It just seems that in our
()	that this is definitely a turning point in our society when everything offends everyone all the time. It just sucks

PUT THE WORDS IN THE RIGHT ORDER

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1512/151225-christmas-tree.html>

1. teacher high Maine maths a in A at school .

2. He inappropriate decided Christmas it decoration was an .

3. did tree The celebrated school the way the with fit not .

4. happening time year events this the religious at of Different .

5. with balanced inconsistency our approach An .

6. pink Hello Kitty tree was offensive I didn't think a .

7. tree religious it The no on had symbols whatsoever .

8. turning our This a in definitely point society is .

9. just of sucks everything the joy It out .

10. of quest everything to be In tolerant our .

CIRCLE THE CORRECT WORD (20 PAIRS)

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1512/151225-christmas-tree.html>

A maths teacher at a high school in Maine, USA has been *allowing* / *allowed* to keep her pink Hello Kitty Christmas tree in her classroom. The tree was *made* / *making* from pink plastic and was *adorned* / *adorns* with Hello Kitty ornaments. The teacher, Catherine Gordon, had earlier been ordered by the school principal Paul Butler to remove it *then* / *after* he decided it was an "inappropriate" Christmas *decoration* / *decorative*. Mr Butler explained to ABC News that he *initialed* / *initially* believed the tree did not *fitting* / *fit* with the way the school celebrated the *difference* / *different* religious events happening at this time *of* / *for* the year. He said: "A concern was shared with me regarding an inconsistency with our *balanced* / *balance* approach to holiday observances."

Ms Gordon said: "I didn't think a pink Hello Kitty tree was *defensive* / *offensive*....It's a tree that's been *down* / *up* in my classroom for years." She posted her story on Facebook and it quickly went *vital* / *viral*. She wrote: "The tree had no religious *symbolic* / *symbols* on it whatsoever. No crosses or angels, just pink Hello Kitties and my students really *enjoyed* / *enjoying* it." She added that society was becoming too *worries* / *worried* about upsetting different people. She said: "I feel that this is *definitely* / *definite* a turning point in our society when everything *offensive* / *offends* everyone all the time. It just sucks the *joy* / *joyous* out of everything." She told the local newspaper that: "It just seems that in our quest to be tolerant of everything, we've become *intolerant* / *intolerance* to everything."

Talk about the connection between each pair of words in italics, and why the correct word is correct.

INSERT THE VOWELS (a, e, i, o, u)

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1512/151225-christmas-tree.html>

_ m _ ths t _ ch _ r _ t _ h _ gh sch _ _ l _ n M _ _ n _ , _ S _ h _ s
b _ _ n _ ll w _ d t _ k _ p h _ r p _ nk H _ ll _ K _ tty Chr _ stm _ s
tr _ _ _ n h _ r cl _ ssr _ _ m . Th _ tr _ _ w _ s m _ d _ fr _ m p _ nk
pl _ st _ c _ nd w _ s _ d _ rn _ d w _ th H _ ll _ K _ tty _ rn _ m _ nts .
Th _ t _ ch _ r , C _ th _ r _ n _ G _ rd _ n , h _ d _ _ rl _ r b _ n
_ rd _ r _ d by th _ sch _ _ l pr _ nc _ p _ l P _ _ l B _ tl _ r t _ r _ m _ v _
_ t _ ft _ r h _ d _ c _ d _ d _ t w _ s _ n " _ n _ ppr _ pr _ _ t _"
Chr _ stm _ s d _ c _ r _ t _ n . Mr B _ tl _ r _ xpl _ _ n _ d t _ _ BC
N _ ws th _ t h _ _ n _ t _ lly b _ l _ v _ d th _ tr _ _ d _ d _ n _ t _ f _ t
w _ th th _ w _ y th _ sch _ _ l c _ l _ br _ t _ d th _ d _ ff _ r _ nt
r _ l _ g _ _ s _ v _ nts h _ pp _ n _ ng _ t th _ s _ t _ m _ _ f th _ y _ _ r .
H _ s _ _ d : " _ c _ nc _ rn w _ s sh _ r _ d w _ th m _ r _ g _ rd _ ng _ n
_ nc _ ns _ st _ ncy w _ th _ _ r b _ l _ nc _ d _ ppr _ _ ch _ t _ h _ l _ d _ y
_ bs _ rv _ nc _ s ."

Ms G _ rd _ n s _ _ d : " _ d _ dn ' t th _ nk _ p _ nk H _ ll _ K _ tty
tr _ _ w _ s _ ff _ ns _ v _ _ _ . t 's _ tr _ _ th _ t 's b _ _ n _ p _ n my
cl _ ssr _ _ m _ fr _ y _ _ rs . " Sh _ p _ st _ d h _ r _ st _ ry _ n
F _ c _ b _ _ k _ nd _ t q _ _ ckly w _ nt v _ r _ l . Sh _ wr _ t _ : " Th _
tr _ _ h _ d _ n _ r _ l _ g _ _ s symb _ ls _ n _ t wh _ ts _ _ v _ r . N _
cr _ ss _ s _ r _ ng _ ls , j _ st p _ nk H _ ll _ K _ tt _ s _ nd my
st _ d _ nts r _ _ lly _ nj _ y _ d _ t . " Sh _ _ dd _ d th _ t s _ c _ ty
w _ s b _ c _ m _ ng t _ _ w _ rr _ _ d _ b _ _ t _ ps _ tt _ ng d _ ff _ r _ nt
p _ _ pl _ . Sh _ s _ _ d : " _ f _ l _ th _ t th _ s _ s _ d _ f _ n _ t _ ly _
t _ rn _ ng p _ _ nt _ n _ _ r _ s _ c _ ty wh _ n _ v _ ryth _ ng _ ff _ nds
_ v _ ry _ n _ _ ll th _ t _ m _ . _ t j _ st s _ cks th _ j _ y _ _ t _ f
_ v _ ryth _ ng . " Sh _ t _ ld th _ l _ c _ l _ n _ w _ sp _ p _ r th _ t : " _ t
j _ st s _ ms th _ t _ n _ _ r _ q _ st _ t _ b _ _ t _ l _ r _ nt _ f
_ v _ ryth _ ng , w _ ' v _ b _ c _ m _ _ nt _ l _ r _ nt _ t _ _ v _ ryth _ ng . "

PUNCTUATE THE TEXT AND ADD CAPITALS

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1512/151225-christmas-tree.html>

a maths teacher at a high school in maine usa has been allowed to keep her pink hello kitty christmas tree in her classroom the tree was made from pink plastic and was adorned with hello kitty ornaments the teacher catherine gordon had earlier been ordered by the school principal paul butler to remove it after he decided it was an "inappropriate" christmas decoration mr butler explained to abc news that he initially believed the tree did not fit with the way the school celebrated the different religious events happening at this time of the year he said "a concern was shared with me regarding an inconsistency with our balanced approach to holiday observances"

ms gordon said "i didn't think a pink hello kitty tree was offensive...it's a tree that's been up in my classroom for years" she posted her story on facebook and it quickly went viral she wrote "the tree had no religious symbols on it whatsoever no crosses or angels just pink hello kitties and my students really enjoyed it" she added that society was becoming too worried about upsetting different people she said "i feel that this is definitely a turning point in our society when everything offends everyone all the time it just sucks the joy out of everything" she told the local newspaper that "it just seems that in our quest to be tolerant of everything we've become intolerant to everything"

PUT A SLASH (/) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1512/151225-christmas-tree.html>

A math teacher at a high school in Maine, USA has been allowed to keep her pink Hello Kitty Christmas tree in her classroom. The tree was made from pink plastic and was adorned with Hello Kitty ornaments. The teacher, Catherine Gordon, had earlier been ordered by the school principal Paul Butler to remove it after he decided it was an "inappropriate" Christmas decoration. Mr Butler explained to ABC News that he initially believed the tree did not fit with the way the school celebrated the different religious events happening at this time of the year. He said: "A concern was shared with me regarding an inconsistency with our balanced approach to holiday observances." Ms Gordon said: "I didn't think a pink Hello Kitty tree was offensive.... It's a tree that's been up in my classroom for years." She posted her story on Facebook and it quickly went viral. She wrote: "The tree had no religious symbols on it whatsoever. No crosses or angels, just pink Hello Kitties and my students really enjoyed it." She added that society was becoming too worried about upsetting different people. She said: "I feel that this is definitely a turning point in our society when everything offends everyone all the time. It just sucks the joy out of everything." She told the local newspaper that: "It just seems that in our quest to be tolerant of everything, we've become intolerant to everything."

HOMework

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find out more about Christmas trees. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. CHRISTMAS TREES: Make a poster about Christmas trees. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. TOLERANCE: Write a magazine article about tolerance in society. Include imaginary interviews with people who believe we are becoming more tolerant, and with those who believe we are becoming less tolerant.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

5. WHAT HAPPENED NEXT? Write a newspaper article about the next stage in this news story. Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Give each other feedback on your articles.

6. LETTER: Write a letter to an expert on Christmas. Ask him/her three questions about it. Give him/her three ideas on how we can celebrate it better. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE (p.4)

a T b T c T d F e F f F g T h F

SYNONYM MATCH (p.4)

- | | |
|------------------|---------------|
| 1. adorned | a. decorated |
| 2. ordered | b. instructed |
| 3. inappropriate | c. unsuitable |
| 4. initially | d. at first |
| 5. concern | e. worry |
| 6. offensive | f. troubling |
| 7. whatsoever | g. at all |
| 8. upsetting | h. insulting |
| 9. joy | i. pleasure |
| 10. tolerant | j. accepting |

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS (p.8)

1. In her classroom
2. Hello Kitty ones
3. Inappropriate
4. ABC News
5. A balanced one
6. For years
7. Religious symbols
8. A turning point
9. Joy
10. Everything

MULTIPLE CHOICE - QUIZ (p.9)

1. b 2. c 3. d 4. b 5. a 6. a 7. d 8. c 9. d 10. b

ALL OTHER EXERCISES

Please check for yourself by looking at the Article on page 2.
(It's good for your English ;-)