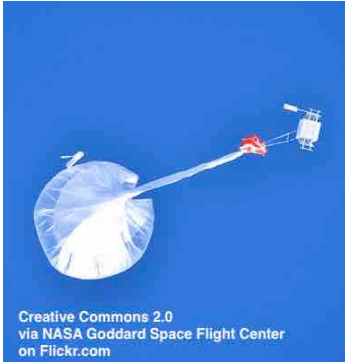


## White House says no aliens in weather balloons

16th February 2023



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Strange goings-on are happening in the skies above North America. This month, US fighter jets have shot down four UFOs (Unidentified Flying Objects) in US and Canadian airspace. Officials said the objects were balloons that were causing a danger to

airplanes. They were flying at an altitude of around 40,000 feet (12,200 metres). The White House said yesterday that there were no signs the objects were linked to alien life. National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby said: "I don't think the American people need to worry about aliens with respect to these crafts." Earlier in the week, a US official said aliens could not be counted out as a possible explanation for the balloons.

The balloon saga has created tit-for-tat exchanges between the USA and China. US officials suspect the balloons were being used for spying. However, they have no proof of this. Rescue teams have gathered debris from the balloons off the US coast. Experts are currently looking at the electronics they have found. China said the balloons were for tracking weather patterns. It has denied they were spy balloons. Beijing has claimed that US high-altitude balloons have flown in China's airspace without permission more than 10 times in the past year. The White House said this was untrue. A balloon shooting in early February resulted in US Secretary of State Antony Blinken cancelling a visit to China.

Sources: [abc.net.au](http://abc.net.au) / [theconversation.com](http://theconversation.com) / [news.cn](http://news.cn)

## Writing

Aliens exist. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

strange / skies / North America / UFO / flying / airplanes / aliens / life / balloons / tit-for-tat / spying / rescue / coast / experts / electronics / weather / the past / China

## True / False

- 1) The article said there were comings and goings in the sky above the US. T / F
- 2) The acronym "UFO" means Uninvited Flying Object. T / F
- 3) The balloons were at a height of over 12,000 metres. T / F
- 4) A National Security Spokesperson was worried about aliens. T / F
- 5) The USA believes the balloons may have been used for spying. T / F
- 6) Rescue teams are looking for the balloons, but have not found any. T / F
- 7) China says the balloons were used for monitoring the weather. T / F
- 8) China accused the US of flying balloons in Chinese airspace. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                        |              |
|------------------------|--------------|
| 1. <b>goings-on</b>    | a. story     |
| 2. <b>danger</b>       | b. reason    |
| 3. <b>altitude</b>     | c. risk      |
| 4. <b>linked</b>       | d. led to    |
| 5. <b>explanation</b>  | e. connected |
| 6. <b>saga</b>         | f. evidence  |
| 7. <b>suspect</b>      | g. events    |
| 8. <b>proof</b>        | h. following |
| 9. <b>tracking</b>     | i. think     |
| 10. <b>resulted in</b> | j. height    |

## Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think of aliens?
- b) Why do we think aliens might exist?
- c) What do you know about the balloons in the article?
- d) Could the shootings increase tensions between the US and China?
- e) Are you happy that the balloons had no aliens?
- f) What advice do you have for the USA and China?
- g) What do you think aliens look like?
- h) What would aliens think of humans?

## Phrase Match

- |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. Strange                                  | a. debris                |
| 2. fighter                                  | b. of around 40,000 feet |
| 3. They were flying at an altitude          | c. weather patterns      |
| 4. the objects were linked                  | d. jets                  |
| 5. I don't think the American people        | e. exchanges             |
| 6. The balloon saga has created tit-for-tat | f. to China              |
| 7. they have no proof                       | g. goings-on             |
| 8. Rescue teams have gathered               | h. need to worry         |
| 9. the balloons were for tracking           | i. of this               |
| 10. cancelling a visit                      | j. to alien life         |

## Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- Why are relations between the USA and China not so good?
- What do you think of spying?
- Do you think your country spies on other countries?
- Should weather balloons be banned?
- Why would a country use spy balloons instead of satellites?
- What would you do if an alien was in your house?
- What questions would you like to ask an alien?

## Spelling

- US rgfthie jets
- flying at an taudeitl of around 40,000 feet
- signs the boesjtc were linked to alien life
- with pcetsre to these crafts
- a US fifiaoc
- a possible nxiltaopena
- tit-for-tat ghxenaesc
- they have no foopr of this
- gathered rdeibs from the balloons
- It has ideden they were spy balloons
- flown in China's airspace without psriniosem
- neialnlcgc a visit to China

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. c	3. j	4. e	5. b
6. a	7. i	8. f	9. h	10. d

## Role Play

### Role A – Boiling Hot

You think boiling hot weather is the worst weather. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their weather. Also, tell the others which is the best of these (and why): freezing cold, raining cats and dogs or heavy snow.

### Role B – Freezing Cold

You think freezing cold weather is the worst weather. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their weather. Also, tell the others which is the best of these (and why): boiling hot, raining cats and dogs or heavy snow.

### Role C – Raining Cats and Dogs

You think raining cats and dogs is the worst weather. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their weather. Also, tell the others which is the best of these (and why): freezing cold, boiling hot or heavy snow.

### Role D – Heavy Snow

You think heavy snow is the worst weather. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their weather. Also, tell the others which is the best of these (and why): freezing cold, raining cats and dogs or boiling hot.

## Speaking – Weather

Rank these with your partner. Put the worst weather at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |                 |                         |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| • Boiling hot   | • Overcast and cloudy   |
| • Heavy snow    | • Stormy                |
| • Strong winds  | • Foggy                 |
| • Freezing cold | • Raining cats and dogs |

### Answers – True False

1 F	2 F	3 T	4 F	5 T	6 F	7 T	8 T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.