

## Study shows there are two divorce seasons

25th August, 2016



Couples might want to put a little extra effort into their marriage just before March and August every year. Sociologists have identified annual spikes in the number of divorces filed in these two months. Researchers from the University of

Washington analysed data for divorces filed in the U.S. state of Washington between 2001 and 2015. There were almost 25,000 divorces filed in the state in 2014 alone. The scientists found that over the 14-year period of the study, divorce rates peaked in August, after the summer holidays, and in March, after the Christmas and New Year holidays. Some researchers said the divorces could be due to financial problems caused by the winter and summer holidays.

Researcher Julie Brines suggested that the anti-climax felt after the build-up to holidays, and the holidays themselves, may leave couples feeling stressed and deflated. She said: "People tend to face the holidays with rising expectations, despite what disappointments they might have had in years past." She added: "[Holidays] represent periods in the year when there's the anticipation or the opportunity for a new beginning, a new start, something different, a transition into a new period of life. It's like an optimism cycle." Couples generally spend more time in closer proximity to each other during holidays, which may actually exacerbate tensions rather than rekindle romance.

Sources: [sciencealert.com](http://sciencealert.com) / [medicalnewstoday.com](http://medicalnewstoday.com) / [dailymail.com](http://dailymail.com)

## Writing

What are the pros and cons of making divorce illegal? What's your opinion? Why?

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

couples / effort / marriage / divorce / alone / summer holidays / financial problems / anti-climax / stressed / deflated / expectations / disappointments / start / optimism

## True / False

- Researchers say divorce season is March and August every year. T / F
- Researchers looked at all the divorces in the USA between 2001 and 2015. T / F
- There were nearly 25,000 divorces in Washington state in 2014. T / F
- Summer holidays could be a reason that many couples get divorced. T / F
- A researcher said holidays can leave couples feeling down. T / F
- The researcher said people have low expectations of holidays. T / F
- The researcher said holidays do not represent anything new. T / F
- The researcher said holidays usually fire up lost romances. T / F

## Synonym Match

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

- |                        |                   |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. <b>extra</b>        | a. submitted      |
| 2. <b>identified</b>   | b. positiveness   |
| 3. <b>filed</b>        | c. monetary       |
| 4. <b>due to</b>       | d. pinpointed     |
| 5. <b>financial</b>    | e. worsen         |
| 6. <b>anti-climax</b>  | f. additional     |
| 7. <b>expectations</b> | g. nearness       |
| 8. <b>optimism</b>     | h. disappointment |
| 9. <b>proximity</b>    | i. hopes          |
| 10. <b>exacerbate</b>  | j. because of     |

## Discussion – Student A

- Why do so many marriages end in divorce?
- What do you think about what you read?
- Should couples make an extra effort around divorce season?
- Should engaged couples take a test to see if their marriage will last?
- Who suffers the most from a divorce?
- How can we prevent divorce?
- What do you think of making divorce illegal?
- What do you think of the idea that marriage is forever?

# BreakingNewsEnglish - The Mini Lesson

## Phrase Match

- Couples might want to put a little extra
- Sociologists have identified annual spikes
- 25,000 divorces filed in the state in 2014
- over the 14-year period
- the divorces could be due to
- the anti-
- leave couples feeling stressed and
- spend more time in closer
- exacerbate
- rekindle
- a. in the number of divorces
- b. of the study
- c. climax felt after the build-up
- d. proximity to each other
- e. effort into their marriage
- f. romance
- g. tensions
- h. alone
- i. deflated
- j. financial problems

## Discussion – Student B

- What makes couples stressed?
- Are family holidays always fun?
- What stresses are there associated with holidays?
- Why is a holiday "the opportunity for a new beginning"?
- What is your advice for a successful marriage?
- Why do couples need to spend some time apart?
- Would it be better for couples to go on separate holidays?
- What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

## Spelling

- fentiddei annual spikes
- daynales (UK) / Idaanyze (USA) data for divorces
- 25,000 divorces ldefi in the state
- the 14-year oriped of the study
- divorce rates apdeke in August
- divorces could be due to Inianiacf problems
- the aitn-ilacmx felt after the build-up
- feeling stressed and ftededla
- It's like an imiompst
- in closer yxpoiirmt to each other
- rxaeabctae tensions
- lirnkdee romance

### Answers – Synonym Match

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

## Role Play

### Role A – Money

You think money causes the biggest stress in a marriage. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as stressful. Also, tell the others which is the least stressful of these (and why): housework, in-laws or cheating.

### Role B – Housework

You think housework causes the biggest stress in a marriage. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as stressful. Also, tell the others which is the least stressful of these (and why): money, in-laws or cheating.

### Role C – In-laws

You think in-laws cause the biggest stress in a marriage. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as stressful. Also, tell the others which is the least stressful of these (and why): housework, money or cheating.

### Role D – Cheating

You think cheating causes the biggest stress in a marriage. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as stressful. Also, tell the others which is the least stressful of these (and why): housework, in-laws or money.

## Speaking – Stresses

Rank these with your partner. Put the biggest stresses in a marriage at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- money
- housework
- cheating
- in-laws
- children
- abuse
- marrying too young
- different interests

### Answers – True False

a	T	b	F	c	T	d	T	e	T	f	F	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.