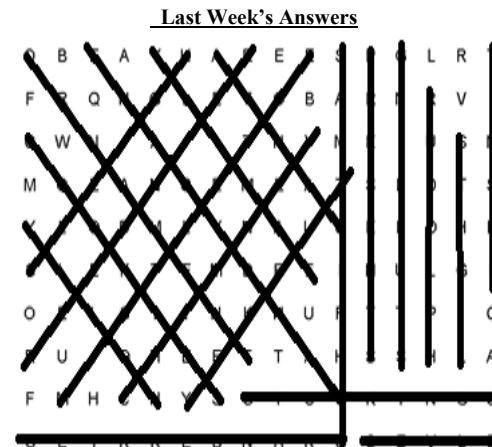


We're finally here! Yeah! It's Christmas time!! Last Christmas I gave you my heart and the very next day... I love Christmas! And, talking of¹ Christmas, Krystal has made a wonderful Christmas display for the English notice board. She has even made a quiz!! All you have to do is find the answers and you get a prize! I might try myself. You should all try before the end of the term. If you haven't seen it yet, the notice board is on the second floor by the student exit stairs. Anyway, HAVE A GREAT CHRISTMAS VACATION!!

Something You Didn't Know (Santa)

1. There are 2 billion children in the world, but, apparently², Santa doesn't visit the Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims etc, so that's about 700,000,000 children. If we assume³ three children per house that's about 233,000,000 houses. If the houses are evenly spaced⁴, and Santa has about 32 hours (if he travels from east to west with the sun), then he needs to travel at a speed of 10,703,437 km/h or 2896km per second. He also needs to visit 822 houses every second. So, he has 1/822th of a second to come into your house, put your presents under the tree and leave. If each child gets 1kg of presents, then his sleigh will weigh 700,000 tons. That is the same as 14 Titanics! The average⁵ reindeer⁶ can pull about 150kg. That means Santa will need 3,000,000 reindeer to pull his sleigh. If each present costs 5,000 yen then Santa must spend 3,500,000,000,000 yen. That's the same as the GDP⁷ of Paraguay⁸. Merry Christmas!!



Announcements

Mon: Hallelujah. Mon and Tues PM:
Xmas prep Wed: classes 1 and 2,
Hallelujah 3, cleaning 4. Thurs: Christmas
assembly 13:00. Sun: Christmas.

Christmas Arrives at Space Station

Last Tuesday, the 13th of December, Christmas arrived at the International Space Station. It wasn't Santa, but the Japanese Space Exploration Agency's robotic H-II Transfer Vehicle. It isn't quite as romantic as a sleigh pulled by flying reindeer but they do both arrived stuffed⁹ with presents. In this case the vehicle was carrying over 5 tons of supplies. What does Santa carry?



It took the crew a few hours to catch the vehicle and bring it in for docking¹⁰. The capsule is filled with water, spare parts¹¹, regular supplies¹² for the space station and Christmas presents. There is an international crew aboard¹³ so it will be interesting to see what each of them receives. They must be lonely so far from home.

Geographically¹⁴ they are only about 400km from their home, a little further than here to Hakodate, but in actual fact¹⁵ they are more isolated¹⁶ than anybody else on the planet. The capsule will stay with them for five weeks before it is sent back to earth filled with trash that will be released¹⁷ to burn up in the earth's atmosphere¹⁸. I wonder if any astronaut will take the opportunity to¹⁹ release unfashionable²⁰ Christmas sweaters²¹ at the same time! Happy Christmas Spacemen!



1. Talking of ~ と言え 2. Apparently ~ らしい 3. Assume ~ と仮定する 4. Evenly spaced 等間隔
5. Average 平均の 6. Reindeer トナカイ 7. Gross Domestic Product 国内総生産 8. Paraguay パラグアイ
9. Stuff 詰める 10. Dock ドッキングする 11. Spare parts 予備の部品 12. Supplies 供給品 13. Aboard
乗船して 14. Geographically 地理的に 15. In actual fact 実は 16. Isolated 孤立した 17. Release 放り投
げる 18. Burn up in the earth's atmosphere 大気圏で燃え尽きる 19. Take the opportunity to その機
会を利用して 20. Unfashionable ださい 21. Sweater セーター