

We are getting closer to Christmas. When I walk down the corridors, I can see people making Christmas cards and we're going to start making stained glass this week. People are practicing for the pageant. There are Christmas decorations up in lots of different classrooms and the tree outside has been lit. I can hear people singing "Hallelujah" in their music classes and humming¹ it as they walk around school. The whole school is getting into a Christmas mood. This is the last full week. Are you excited? Have you decorated your classroom? Have you started to get Christmas presents for people? Not long to go.



15 differences

I made a mistake last week. Did you notice? My spot the difference didn't have any differences. Sorry. I made it on my computer and I accidentally saved the same picture twice. So, I am giving you the same picture again. Good luck this time.

Something you didn't know about maple syrup:

1. It takes 50 liters of syrup to make 1 liter of maple syrup.
2. One maple syrup tree can produce about 25 liters of syrup, so you need two trees to produce 1 liter of maple syrup.
3. The sap is 98% water and 2% sugar when it is taken from the tree and has to be boiled down². Finished maple syrup is 66% sugar.
4. Maple syrup flavor changes depending on when it is tapped³ in the season. Early syrup is yellow and light in flavor. Later maple syrup is brown and has a rich taste.
5. Maple syrup has a lot of healthy antioxidants⁴, but it also has a lot of sugar.

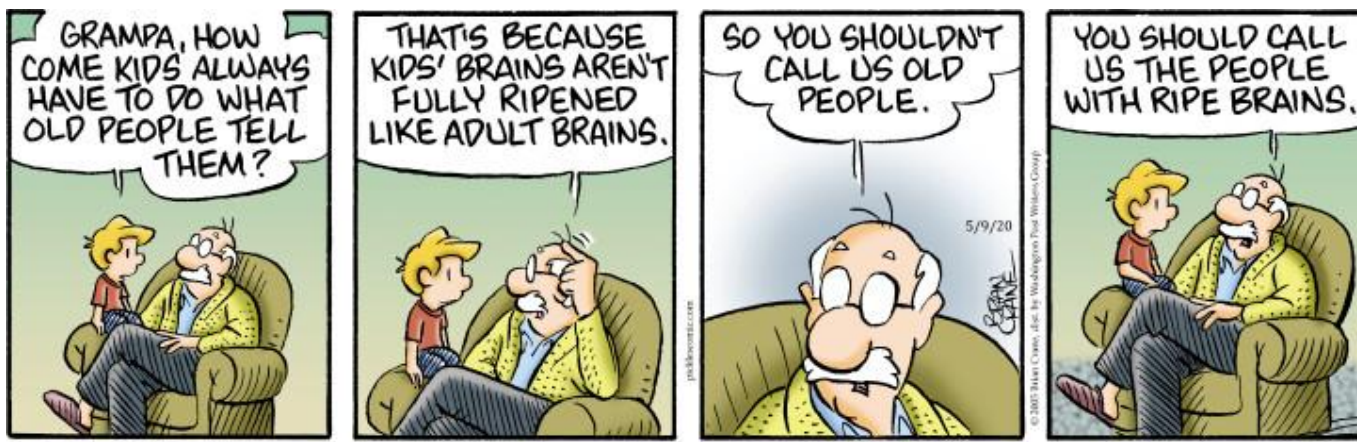
Canada Releases 22 Million kgs of Maple Syrup

Last week, the Federation of Quebec Maple Syrup Producers (FQMSP), decided to release 22 million kgs of maple syrup from their stockpile⁵. It is the only stockpile of maple syrup in the world. The FQMSP is sometimes called the OPEC of the maple syrup world. OPEC⁶ are the oil producing countries and they can control the price of oil by increasing or decreasing the supply of oil. The FQMSP can do the same thing with maple syrup. They always keep some in reserve⁷ so that the supply is not too high and they can keep the price high. This time, though, they have released 22 million kgs of maple syrup to cope⁸ with a worldwide maple syrup shortage. Two things have caused the shortage. The first was that the syrup harvesting season was short. The temperature has to be below freezing at night and above freezing during the day. This year, the weather warmed up very quickly, and the harvest was very short. The second thing is that the pandemic has raised the consumption⁹ of maple syrup by 36%. The pandemic has meant that a lot of people have to work from home. People who are working from home get bored and they eat a lot more maple syrup. The FQMSP have released half of their maple syrup reserves to make sure that people don't have to go without their syrup. Climate change means that the maple syrup harvest could be short every year from now on. To deal with this, the FQMSP says they will tap 7 million more trees next year.

The FQMSP was in the news in 2013 because thieves¹⁰ stole 3 million kgs of maple syrup. I don't know how. Maybe in a maple syrup tanker.



- 1.hum 鼻唄を歌う 2.boil down 鼻唄を歌う 3.tap 穴を開ける 4.antioxidant 抗酸化物質 5.stockpile 食糧備蓄 6.OPEC 石油輸出国機構 7.keep in reserve ~を買い置きをする 8.cope うまく処理する 9.consumption 食物摂取 10.thief 泥棒



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World record

This is not a record that any of you will be able to beat, but Mr. Asari, the principal, might be able to. You see, the first requirement¹ is that you must have a beard. I have a goatee beard, but that isn't big enough. You need a full beard and Mr. Asari is the only teacher with a beard. The record is for the most toothpicks² in a beard and the current record is 3,500! It is held by American Joel Strasser, and it took him over three hours to get all of the toothpicks in his beard. Do you think we could beat that at school? I write about a world record every week and I thought I would run out of records after a while, but there seem to be far more world records than I make English Newses. It's always amazing to see the records that some people attempt. I wonder how they think of them. Anyway, if the principal is willing³, I will go to the hundred yen shop and buy 4,000 toothpicks.



This week's quote: If you can't explain something simply, you don't understand it well enough.

A building

Let's have a look at the Empire State Building. It is a very famous landmark and is probably a building that almost everybody knows. It is 102 stories⁴ high, and it was opened in 1931. The Empire State Building takes its name from the nickname for the state of New York. Planning for the building began in 1929, and it was only going to be 50 stories tall. However, at that time, a lot of different groups of people were trying to make the tallest building in the world. It was called "the race for the sky". The group of investors⁵ building the Empire State Building wanted their building to be the tallest, so the plan was changed to 80 stories. The Chrysler Building in New York was the other main contender⁶. Both buildings started construction at the same time. The Chrysler Building's plans were kept secret. As it got taller, the investors realized it would be taller than the Empire State Building, so they ordered the plans to be changed so the Empire State Building would be 282m tall. They didn't realize that the Chrysler Building designers had changed their roof design to make it into a very tall spire⁷. When it was finished it was much taller than the Empire State Building at 319m. The designers didn't want to lose, so they added 5 more floors to the Empire State Building. This would only make it 1m taller than the Chrysler Building, and they were worried the Chrysler Building designers would add a mast, making it taller. To be safe, they added a pointed metal roof, and a mooring mast⁸ for airships⁹. This made the Empire State Building 443m tall, the tallest building in the world. It was the world's tallest building until the Twin Towers were built in New York in 1970.



- 1.requirement 必要なもの 2.toothpick つまようじ 3.willing to~する意思がある
- 4.story 階 5.investor 投資家 6.contender 競争者 7.spire 尖塔 8.mooring mast 係留柱
- 9.airship 飛行船