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Christmas in England

In your team, read the sentences below and guess the missing adverb of frequency.

almost always	usually	often	sometimes	not often
hardly ever	almost never	never		

You can ask for a hint before you guess. You get five points if you guess correctly without a hint, two points if you guess correctly after a hint.

5 points = correct guess

2 points = correct guess with a hint

1. It _____ snows in London on Christmas Day.
2. English people _____ eat out on Christmas Day.
3. English people _____ decorate the outside of their houses with Christmas decorations.
4. English people _____ have fireworks on Christmas Day.
5. There is _____ fog in London on Christmas Day.
6. English people _____ leave their Christmas decorations up until the 12th of January.
7. English Christmas trees _____ have a Santa Claus on the top.
8. Trains _____ run on Christmas Day in England.
9. In England, Christmas pudding is _____ served hot.
10. English people _____ cook turkey for Christmas.
11. English children _____ put out a glass of sherry and a mince pie on Christmas Eve.
12. English people _____ put a coin in the Christmas pudding.
13. English people _____ go to church on Christmas Day.
14. English people _____ listen to the Queen's speech on Christmas Day.
15. English people _____ use the expression 'Santa' or 'Santa Claus'.
16. English people _____ put presents in stockings.
17. English kids _____ go carol singing outside people's houses.
18. English people _____ invite friends around for Christmas dinner.



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Here is an imaginative ESL activity that combines the topic of Christmas with adverbs of frequency.

Before class, make one copy of the worksheet for each student.

Procedure

Put the students into teams of four to six and give each student a copy of the worksheet.

Read the first sentence to the class.

Teams that want to guess without a hint give you their answers first.

Teams that want a hint must wait until all the answers are given from the other teams, before they listen to the hint.

The teams that listen to the hint then give you their answers.

The correct answer is then given and points are awarded accordingly.

Teams get five points if they guess correctly without the hint, two points if they guess correctly after the hint.

The teams with the highest score after all the sentences have been completed wins.

The answer key and hints are below.

Answer key and hints - The parts in brackets after each sentence are possible hints you can give if the teams ask for them.

1. It hardly ever snows in London on Christmas Day.
(The weather is much warmer now than it used to be in the winter.)
2. English people hardly ever eat out on Christmas Day.
(Christmas is generally considered a day for staying at home with your family.)
3. English people hardly ever decorate the outside of their houses with Christmas decorations. (Showing off is not considered a very English thing to do. A few lights in the window are much more common.)
4. English people almost never have fireworks on Christmas Day.
(November the 5th is the most popular time for fireworks, with some cities having fireworks at midnight on New Year's Eve too.)
5. There is almost never fog in London on Christmas Day.
(The fog in Victorian times that you see in Jack the Ripper and Sherlock Holmes films was actually smog from the factories in London.)
6. English people almost never leave their Christmas decorations up until the 12th of January. (It is considered bad luck to leave your decorations up after the 6th of January.)
7. English Christmas trees almost never have a Santa Claus on the top.
(A star or an angel is traditional.)
8. Trains never run on Christmas Day in England.
(Christmas is the biggest holiday of the year.)
9. In England, Christmas pudding is almost always served hot.
(It is steamed and served with hot brandy sauce.)
10. English people usually cook turkey for Christmas.
(There are quite a few vegetarians, but few families are all vegetarian.)
11. English children often put out a glass of sherry and a mince pie on Christmas Eve.
(This is for Father Christmas to eat and drink when he arrives.)
12. English people sometimes put a coin in the Christmas pudding.
(This is a traditional practice that gives good luck to the person who finds it, but is only possible with a homemade pudding.)
13. English people sometimes go to church on Christmas Day.
(Going to church is not very common in England nowadays, but Christmas is one of the most popular times along with weddings and funerals.)
14. English people sometimes listen to the Queen's speech on Christmas Day.
(Most people want to know what the Queen says, but the highlights are also played on the evening news.)
15. English people sometimes use the expression 'Santa' or 'Santa Claus'.
(Father Christmas is the traditional name for this character, but the American name is becoming more popular.)
16. English people sometimes put presents in stockings.
(This is usually only used for some smaller presents for children, all the big presents and all the presents for adults go under the Christmas tree.)
17. English kids don't often go carol singing outside people's homes.
(It's too dangerous nowadays for kids to go out in the evening on their own. It is more common to go carol singing outside the houses of people you know, but even then it is usually a mixture of adults and children.)
18. English people don't often invite friends around for Christmas dinner.
(Christmas is usually just a family affair, but long-term boyfriends and girlfriends who are considered part of the family might be invited.)